



“Dual Career of Student-Athletes with Disabilities as a Tool for Social Inclusion”

EXECUTIVE REPORT

Semi-structured interview results

IPV



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

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We will present the main ideas indicated by the 22 interviewees (4-UCAM; 4-Foro Itálico; 4 – U.Limerick, 6-IPV; 4 UNEFS) in the answers they gave to the various interview questions.

1. Do you think that the contents of the modules fulfill their purpose both in terms of depth and relevance of the topics covered? What other topics do you think should have been covered from your point of view?

The vast majority refer that the modules are consistent with the objectives, both in terms of depth and relevance of the topics covered.

To review:

- Some of the modules were very text heavy and some of the topics went too deep and could be a bit boring (e.g. aspects such as *laws or very specific regulations and description of the various types of adapted sports*).
- Always think about the contents and how to present them to promote the motivation of the participants.
- The assessment in the quizzes is wrong.
- Module 4, the subchapter “Diversity” has rough wording. Simpler wording is recommended.
- Module 5 seems something wrong, in the questions and results.
- Module 6 lacks a tool for case and context analysis.
- More practical applications from real contexts.
- It would be important to clearly communicate the level of knowledge of the English language at the beginning of the course.
- To include a folder where all downloadable documents are collected so that they are available for reference more easily.

Topics to be integrated:

- content related to the mental health of these athletes
- communication and stress management issues
- the gender perspective in general and in sport
- the development of a “Paralimits Logical Model” as a referral and road map for all universities from different countries which are willing to adopt this system.

- the introduction of a course chapter that describes the Paralimits vision which includes all the stakeholder links (internal and external), aims, resources, and outputs (short/medium/long term)
- to create a map/graph that explains the local, national, and global alignment of the Paralimits model in addition to the disability legislation, convention on rights, and international regulations

2. Do you think that the way of presenting the contents is appropriate for an online course? Would you include any changes in this regard?

The participants generally refer that the presentation of the contents is adequate.

Change suggestions:

- Placing the course in more alternative languages (e.g. French and Spanish) and always using sign language.
- There may be more images, more layouts, more videos and more animations
- Summarize the types of adapted sports
- Review technical failures in quizzes
- Some modules are very intense and heavy (Ex: module 2)
- In the videos, be people instead of avatars and always with text
- The clear presentation of the objectives at the beginning of each module and then at the end always ending with a summary
- A transcription of the videos should be accessible (for example in PDF), because sometimes there is a difference between what we can understand by listening and what we can understand by reading.
- Consider placing testimonies of people talking about their issues and this could form the motto for the presentations that follow
- Also put curiosities about Paralympic athletes that would motivate the participants.
- review gender representation in gender videos, as the majority tend to be male and white. It is also necessary to review the origin and nationality.

3. From your point of view, does the online platform meet the appropriate conditions for this type of course? What would you highlight as advantages or disadvantages with respect to the online platform?

Everyone recognizes that this online platform is suitable for this type of course.

Benefits:

- Simple, intuitive, allows you to go back and forward without any problem
- Allows autonomy and time management for each participant enabling a calmer and more individualized reflection (asynchronous training)
- Are content already sanctioned by someone
- The inclusion of different formats for presenting the content
- The self-assessments are very useful for monitoring the learning process.
- Cost-effectiveness (e.g., less expensive and more modifiable than a traditional physical classroom)",
- The fact that a forum/WhatsApp group, an email and a telephone number were created, which constituted a support service so that, in case of any doubt or problem, there could be an answer.

Disadvantages

- Technical failures in the quizzes/assessment and *Next* at each end of the modules
- When we go to see the results it doesn't tell us which ones are wrong
- Impossibility of social contact/sharing with others, giving suggestions and exchanging experiences.
- No practical componente
- Was it designed for different viewing platforms, be it mobile or PC?
- Sometimes it did not recognise the modules as complete or did not save the progress.
- It does not allow downloading certificates.

4. Is the order of the modules adequate or would you change the way they have been presented one by one? Justify why you would keep this order or why you would change it?

Most participants refer that the order is very appropriate.

There is a sequential order of themes.

As a suggestion, add at the beginning of the online course a general model/map of how this system should work within universities from the point of view of interested parties, but also within universities willing to implement the system.

5. Use this last question to share anything that you think is relevant and has not been asked before.

The course is very interesting, well thought out and will be a very important resource for this type of person.

To review:

- Reduce the longer texts a little and make this information simpler and more attractive.
- The answers should be available to provide knowledge.
- Check and deepen the division of disability and types of disability.
- The course is a bit heavy; it is true that it has videos and therefore is more interactive, but even so it has a lot of content to read and it is quite heavy.
- In module 5, the exam cannot be passed at all.
- It is long and presents a lot of information.
- The final questions were not easily answered after reading the topics, they were copies of specific parts of the text, which does not benefit learning.
- Think about how you can identify/measure the readiness of a university willing to implement the Paralimits system (A readiness questionnaire could be developed).

Attachment - Very specific aspects for review highlighted by an interview.

pre-test

I didn't understand why you need to enter the "ID number" (I filled it with 00000)

Question 17 - *does not make sense to be mandatory in case the answer in question 16 is "No".*

Question 26 – *I didn't understand the question.*

Module 1

Stakeholders

The schematic representation of Capranica & Guidotti, 2016 (figure 1) could be more readable. They indicate an article to read (Infusing disability into coach education and development: a critical review and agenda for change), but when the link is clicked, this is not the article that appears, but an article with the name "Supportive interpersonal relationships: a key

component to high-performance sport". Furthermore, the article is not available as "full text", so it is not possible to read it. I found the full text on ResearchGate...

Module 2

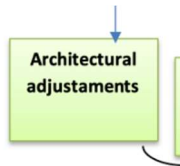
Much text followed. It becomes tiring.

Module 4

Difficulty in understanding the text in the 'diversity' tab on the bio-psycho-social paradigm.

Module 5

In the "Conceptual frame" tab – figure 1: I think it should be "adjustments".



In the quiz: Question 2 (true/false) doesn't make sense. There seems to be no indication of what you want to find out.

Module 6

In the "Good practices" tab, a link appears that seems to be out of context. It's a video of one of the previous assignments.

Final test

Just like the pre-test... Very extensive!



Project Erasmus+

Dual Career of Student-Athletes with Disabilities as a Tool for Social Inclusion - Para-Limits

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Introduction

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1. Do you think that the contents of the modules fulfill their purpose both in terms of depth and relevance of the topics covered? What other topics do you think should have been covered from your point of view?

The vast majority refer that the modules are consistent with the objectives, both in terms of depth and relevance of the topics covered.



To review

- Some of the modules were very text heavy
- Several topics went too deep and could be a bit boring (e.g. aspects such as *laws or very specific regulations and description of the various types of adapted sports*).
- The assessment in the quizzes is wrong.
- Module 4, the subchapter “Diversity” has rough wording. Simpler wording is recommended.
- Module 5 seems something wrong, in the questions and results.



- **Module 6 lacks a tool for case and context analysis.**
- **More practical applications from real contexts.**
- **It would be important to clearly communicate the level of knowledge of the English language at the beginning of the course.**
- **Include a folder where all downloadable documents are available to participants**



Topics to be integrated:

- **Content related to the mental health** of these athletes
- **Communication and stress management** issues
- **The gender perspective**, in general and in sport
- The **development of a “Paralimits Logical Model”** as a referral and road map for all universities from different countries which are willing to adopt this system.
- **The introduction of a course chapter that describes the Paralimits vision** which includes all the stakeholder links (internal and external), aims, resources, and outputs (short/medium/long term)
- **To create a map/graph that explains the local, national, and global alignment of the Paralimits model** in addition to the disability legislation, convention on rights, and international regulations

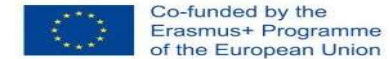


2. Do you think that the way of presenting the contents is appropriate for an online course? Would you include any changes in this regard?

Participants **generally** refer that the presentation of the contents is adequate.

Change suggestions:

- Placing the course in **more alternative languages** (e.g. French and Spanish) and always **using sign language**.
- There may be **more images, more layouts, more videos and more animations**
- **Summarize the types of adapted sports**



- **Review technical failures in quizzes**
- **Some modules are very intense and heavy** (Ex: module 2)
- In videos, **the presentation should preferably be by persons**, accompanied by text, instead of avatars.
- **The clear presentation of the objectives at the beginning of each module** and then at the end, always ending with a summary;
- **The transcript of the videos should be accessible** (for example, in PDF), because sometimes there is a difference between what we can understand by listening and what we can understand by reading.



- **Show personal testimonies about the problems experienced by dual career athletes**
- **Also put curiosities about Paralympic athletes that would motivate the participants.**
- **Review gender representation in videos, since most tend to be male and white. It is also necessary to review the origin and nationality.**



3. From your point of view, does the online platform meet the appropriate conditions for this type of course? What would you highlight as advantages or disadvantages with respect to the online platform?

Everyone recognizes that this online platform is suitable for this type of course.

Benefits:

- **Simple, intuitive**, allows to go back and forward without any problem
- **Allows autonomy and time management for each participant** enabling a calmer and more individualized reflection (asynchronous training)

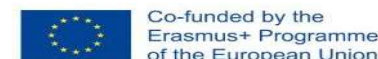


- **The inclusion of different formats** for presenting the content
- **The self-assessments are very useful for monitoring the learning process.**
- **Cost-effectiveness** (e.g., less expensive and more modifiable than a traditional physical classroom)
- The fact **that a forum/WhatsApp group**, an email and a telephone number were created, which constituted a support service so that, in case of any doubt or problem, there could be an answer.



Disadvantages

- **Technical failures in the quizzes/assessment and *Next* at each end of the modules**
- **When we go to see the results it doesn't tell us which ones are wrong**
- **Impossibility of social contact/sharing with others, giving suggestions and exchanging experiences.**
- **No practical componente**
- **Was it designed for different viewing platforms, be it mobile or PC?**
- **Sometimes it did not recognise the modules as complete or did not save the progress.**
- **It does not allow downloading certificates.**



4. Is the order of the modules adequate or would you change the way they have been presented one by one? Justify why you would keep this order or why you would change it?

- Most participants refer that **the order is very appropriate.**
- **There is a sequential order of themes.**
- As a suggestion, **add at the beginning of the online course a general model/map of how this system should work within universities** from the point of view of interested parties, but also within universities willing to implement the system.

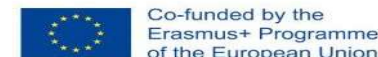


5. Use this last question to share anything that you think is relevant and has not been asked before.

The course is very interesting, well thought out and will be a very important resource for this type of person.

To review

- **Reduce the longer texts a little and make this information simpler and more attractive.**
- **The answers should be available to provide knowledge**
- **Check and deepen the division of disability and types of disability.**



- **The course is a bit heavy**; it is true that it has videos and therefore is more interactive, but even so it has a lot of content to read and it is quite heavy.
- **In module 5, the exam cannot be passed at all.**
- **It is long and presents a lot of information.**
- **The final questions were not easily answered after reading the topics**, they were copies of specific parts of the text, which does not benefit learning.
- **Think about how you can identify/measure the readiness of a university willing to implement the Paralimits system** (A readiness questionnaire could be developed).



Thank you for your attention



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EXECUTIVE REPORT

IPV



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Opinion about the training course - UCAM

POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

27 teachers from different countries (Ireland, Italy, Portugal; Netherlands, Romania and Spain) participated in the course.

The main results are the following:

- the course was neither too long nor short (76.2%)
- the content of the course was very relevant (66.7%)
- its language was adequate (95.2%)
- the activities were quite useful (57.1%) and were fairly well distributed (52.4%)
- the presentation was good (57.1%)
- It was not necessary to eliminate (90.5%) or include (81%) any different topic.

INTERVIEW RESULTS - IPV

The partners interviewed 22 people.

The main results are the following:

- The vast majority refer that the modules are consistent with the objectives, both in terms of depth and relevance of the topics covered. They present aspects to review and topics to be integrated.
- The participants generally refer that the presentation of the contents is adequate. They present change suggestions.
- The Pre-test and Final test are very extensive.
- Recognizes that this online platform is suitable for this type of course. Indicate its benefits and disadvantages.
- Most participants refer that the order is very appropriate.
- The course is very interesting. They present aspects to review.

See the results analysed in detail in the attached documents: *Pré-Post evaluation training course* (UCAM) and *Interview results* (IPV)

The data obtained reveal a very positive/good assessment of the pilot course. Its potentialities are praised and suggestions for improvement are also pointed out, both in technical terms and in terms of pre and post-test content and the various modules that constitute it.

Regarding the data obtained, especially those arising from the interviews, they point out the strengths and weaknesses as well as suggestions for improvement.

Next, we would like to point out the following:

Strong points

- The modules and their presentation are coherent with the objectives, both in terms of depth and relevance of the topics covered
- Allows autonomy and time management for each participant, enabling a calmer and more individualized reflection (asynchronous training)
- Simple and intuitive, it allows you to see the logic of the course.
- The inclusion of different formats for presenting the content
- Cost-effectiveness

Weaknesses

- Some of the modules were very text heavy
- Technical failures in the quizzes/assessment and Next at each end of the modules
- It is not possible to see the results to check which ones are wrong
- Impossibility of social contact/sharing with others, giving suggestions and exchanging experiences.
- No practical componente
- It does not allow downloading certificates.

Improvement suggestions

- Be clearly communicated at the beginning of the course the level of knowledge of the English language.
- Some topics are too intense and in-depth

- Improve/deepen the content related to mental health, communication and stress management and the gender perspective in general and in sport
- Placing the course in more alternative languages (e.g. French and Spanish) and always using sign language.
- There may be more images, more layouts, more videos and more animations
- Review technical failures in module quizzes/assessments
- In videos, people should be shown instead of avatars and always accompanied by text
- The clear presentation of the objectives at the beginning of each module and then at the end always ends with a summary.
- There should be access to the answers, to provide knowledge.
- The development of a “Paralimits Logical Model” as a referral and road map for all universities from different countries which are willing to adopt this system.
- The introduction of a course chapter that describes the Paralimits vision which includes all the stakeholder links (internal and external), aims, resources, and outputs (short/medium/long term)
- To create a map/graph that explains the local, national, and global alignment of the Paralimits model in addition to the disability legislation, convention on rights, and international regulations.

3

Final version of the training course - IPV

The general and specific conclusions are expressed in this document and in the attached documents. We propose that the colleagues responsible for each module and for the platform analyse them carefully and make the changes or adjustments they deem necessary.

Then they should send to Colleague Håkon Ege (hakan@collectiveinnovation.no) any new versions until June 11th.



DUAL CAREER OF STUDENT-ATHLETES WITH
DISABILITIES AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

PARA-LIMITS

PRE-POST evaluation training course

COUNTRY

.....Ireland.....

ORGANISATION

.....University of Limerick.....



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1

INTRODUCTION

Four participants completed the course. Three were female and one was male. Two of the participants worked within the Sport Department within the university and provided direct support to athletes and sporting clubs within the university. One of the participants was a lecturer in the area of Physical Education and the last participant was a technical officer in a department in the university. This last participant also coached female field-based sporting teams within the university. An email invitation went out to certain staff and these four participants volunteered and consented to take part in the course and to provide the feedback. The course was self-guided. They were given the link to the course and they completed it in their own time. At regular intervals during this period we emailed the participants to check in on them and how they were progressing. The final questionnaire was completed in written format by the participants. The questions were emailed to them and they responded with written answers.

2

RESULTS

In this section the results of the pre-post evaluation should be presented. To do so, a quantitative approach will be used, providing descriptive data according to the type of question (frequency, percentage, etc.) and using tables whenever possible for a better understanding.

The presentation of results, according to the structure of the questionnaire, should be made under the following headings:

2.1 Socio-demographic data.

In this section you must provide data concerning frequency and percentage when possible.

PRE-QUESTIONNAIRE**Participant 1:**

Male, 43yrs old, Ireland, University of Limerick. Public University. University Degrees, Postgraduate Masters. 10yrs teaching experience. Part Time (Teaching time accounts for 25% of working time). Permanent contract. 18yrs working at the University. Senior Technical Officer. Undergraduate Degree and University Doctorate. No previous training on disability. Has been an athlete in the past – Amateur level. Dual Career university student. No disability or family member with a disability.

Participant 2:

Female, 48yrs old, Ireland, University of Limerick. Public University. University Degree. 20yrs teaching experience. Full time permanent contract. 15yrs working at the University. Lecturer. Undergraduate and Masters Degree. No prior training on disability. Former athlete (Amateur status). Not a dual career athlete. No disability or family member with a disability.

Participant 3:

Female, 53yrs old. Ireland. University of Limerick. Public University. Does not teach-management role within the university. Full time permanent contract. 25yrs working at the

University. Management (Sports). University Masters Degree. No prior disability training. Non-athlete status, no dual career. No personal disability, family member with a disability.

Participant 4:

Female, 45yrs old. Ireland. University of Limerick. Public University. Teaches on University Degree Courses. 10yrs teaching experience. Full time permanent contract. Working at the university for 25yrs as a Sports Administrator. University Degree Qualification. No prior disability training. Non-athlete status, no dual career. No personal disability, no family member with a disability.

POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

None of the participants' employment status (university position, type of contract, contract centre, etc.) or country of residence has changed since you completed the initial questionnaire.

2.2 Importance of competences for successful dual career support.

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Q.21/Q.5. Provide a table with each item + frequency and percentage. E.g.

Item	PRE					POST				
	Unimportant	Slightly important	Important	Fairly Important	Very important	Unimportant	Slightly important	Important	Fairly Important	Very important
	Unimportant	Slightly important	Important	Fairly Important	Very important	Unimportant	Slightly important	Important	Fairly Important	Very important
Ability to collaborate with key stakeholders (e.g. coach,			1 (25%)		3 (75%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)

parents) in the student-athlete's life										
[Ability to reflect on own values and functioning to improve your practice]			1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)
[Ability to complete administrative tasks (e.g. mails, data processing, file maintenance...)]				4 (100%)					2 (50%)	2 (50%)
[Knowledge of the sports related to student-athletes you work with]			2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)			1 (25%)		3 (75%)
[Ability to enhance athlete's competencies concerning organisation and planning of the student-athlete's life]			1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)			1 (25%)		3 (75%)
[Ability to refer the student-athlete to another professional if necessary]			1 (25%)	3 (75%)				1 (25%)		3 (75%)
[Ability to negotiate with DC stakeholders (e.g. student-athletes, coaches, teachers) ensuring that the interests of all are considered in the integration			1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)

of a compatible outcome]										
[Ability to adapt the way of providing support in accordance to the feedback of others]			2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)					4 (100%)
[Ability to manage a variety of tasks (from one area to another) on a daily basis]			3 (75%)	1 (25%)						3 (75%)
[Knowledge of the educational system(s)]		1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)
[Ability to make student-athletes self-aware of their DC competencies]			2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)
[Ability to support student-athletes emotionally in the face of setbacks]			3 (75%)	1 (25%)					1 (25%)	3 (75%)
[Ability to build and coordinate a network of partners]			3 (75%)	1 (25%)					1 (25%)	3 (75%)
[Ability to maintain own well-being and energy level necessary for work with student-athletes]			1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
[Ability to be flexible in responding to unexpected events (e.g. injury) in the student-athlete's life]			1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)

[Understanding the key transition phases of student-athletes linked to the long term athlete development pathway]			3 (75%)		1 (25%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)
[Ability to stimulate autonomy in student-athletes]			1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
[Ability to maintain a trust based relationship with student-athletes]			1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)					4 (100%)
[Ability to collaborate with decision-making bodies advocating for interests of student-athletes]			2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)			1 (25%)		3 (75%)
[Commitment to keep (self-) developing as a Dual Career support provider]			2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
[Ability to coordinate different events in an effective manner]			2 (50%)	2 (50%)					2 (50%)	2 (50%)
[Ability to take into account the diverse background (e.g. socio-demographic) of the student-athlete]			1 (25%)	3 (75%)					1 (25%)	3 (75%)
[Ability to prepare student-athletes for the challenges of]			2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)

specific transitions]										
[Ability to treat each student-athlete in an individualised manner]			2 (50%)	2 (50%)					1 (25%)	3 (75%)
[Sensitivity to environmental contexts (e.g. federation, family) that student-athletes belong to]		1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)				1 (25%)		3 (75%)
[Ability to realistically monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of your practice]		2 (50%)		2 (50%)					2 (50%)	2 (50%)
[Ability to act in congruence with the mission of the organisation]			2 (50%)	2 (50%)				1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)
[Ability to take a holistic view of the studentathlete's life]			1 (25%)	3 (75%)					1 (25%)	3 (75%)
[Ability to enhance communication skills in student-athletes]			1 (25%)	3 (75%)					2 (50%)	2 (50%)
[Ability to conduct in-depth interviews for analysing the different steps of his/her life path]	1 (25%)	2 (50%)		1 (25%)				2 (50%)		2 (50%)
[Ability to make student-athletes aware of the importance of rest and recuperation]		2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)				1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)
[Ability to be an active and		1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)					1 (25%)	3 (75%)

supportive listener]										
[Ability to maintain clear expectations and boundaries in the student-athlete – support provider relationship]		1 (25%)		3 (75%)					2 (50%)	2 (50%)

2.3 Possession of competence.

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Q.22/Q.6. Provide a table with each item + frequency and percentage. E.g.

Item	PRE					POST				
	Very poor possession	Poor possession	Neutral	Good possession	Very good possession	Very poor possession	Poor possession	Neutral	Good possession	Very good possession
[Ability to collaborate with key stakeholders (e.g. coach, parents) in the student-athlete's life]		1 (25%)		2 (50%)	1 (25%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)
[Ability to reflect on own values and functioning to improve your practice]		1 (25%)		2 (50%)	1 (25%)				3 (75%)	1 (25%)
[Ability to complete administrative tasks (e.g. mails, data processing, file maintenance...)]				2 (50%)	2 (50%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)
[Knowledge of the sports related to student-athletes you work with]				3 (75%)	1 (25%)		1(25%)		1 (25%)	2 (50%)
[Ability to enhance		1 (25%)		3 (75%)				2 (50%)		2 (50%)

athlete's competencies concerning organisation and planning of the student-athlete's life]										
[Ability to refer the student-athlete to another professional if necessary]		1 (25%)		2 (50%)	1 (25%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)
[Ability to negotiate with DC stakeholders (e.g. student-athletes, coaches, teachers) ensuring that the interests of all are considered in the integration of a compatible outcome]			1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)			1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)
[Ability to adapt the way of providing support in accordance to the feedback of others]				3 (75%)	1 (25%)				3 (75%)	1 (25%)
[Ability to manage a variety of tasks (from one area to another) on a daily basis]		1 (25%)		2 (50%)	1 (25%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)
[Knowledge of the educational system(s)]		1 (25%)		2 (50%)	1 (25%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)
[Ability to make student-athletes self-aware of their DC competencies]		1 (25%)		3 (75%)					2 (50%)	2 (50%)

[Ability to support student-athletes emotionally in the face of setbacks]			1 (25%)	3 (75%)					2 (50%)	2 (50%)
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[Ability to maintain own well-being and energy level necessary for work with student-athletes]			1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)			1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)
[Ability to be flexible in responding to unexpected events (e.g. injury) in the student-athlete's life]				3 (75%)	1 (25%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
[Understanding the key transition phases of student-athletes linked to the long term athlete development pathway]		2 (50%)		2 (50%)					1 (25%)	3 (75%)
[Ability to stimulate autonomy in student-athletes]		1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)					2 (50%)	2 (50%)
[Ability to maintain a trust based relationship with student-athletes]				3 (75%)	1 (25%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
[Ability to collaborate with decision-making bodies advocating for			1 (25%)	3 (75%)					1 (25%)	3 (75%)

interests of student-athletes]										
[Commitment to keep (self-) developing as a Dual Career support provider]			3 (75%)		1 (25%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
[Ability to coordinate different events in an effective manner]		1 (25%)	1 (25%)		2 (50%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)
[Ability to take into account the diverse background (e.g. socio-demographic) of the student-athlete]			1 (25%)	3 (75%)					1 (25%)	3 (75%)
[Ability to prepare student-athletes for the challenges of specific transitions]			2 (50%)	2 (50%)				2 (50%)		2 (50%)
[Ability to treat each student-athlete in an individualised manner]			1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)
[Sensitivity to environmental contexts (e.g. federation, family) that student-athletes belong to]		1 (25%)		2 (50%)	1 (25%)				3 (75%)	1 (25%)
[Ability to realistically monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of your practice]		1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)			1 (25%)		3 (75%)
[Ability to act in congruence with		1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)				1 (25%)		3 (75%)

the mission of the organisation]										
[Ability to take a holistic view of the studentathlete's life]			2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)
[Ability to enhance communication skills in student-athletes]			1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
[Ability to conduct in-depth interviews for analysing the different steps of his/her life path]				2 (50%)	2 (50%)			1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)
[Ability to make student-athletes aware of the importance of rest and recuperation]		1 (25%)		2 (50%)	1 (25%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)
[Ability to be an active and supportive listener]		1 (25%)		1 (25%)	2 (50%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
[Ability to maintain clear expectations and boundaries in the student-athlete – support provider relationship]				3 (75%)	1 (25%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)

2.4 Types of disability can be restrictive in the students' college life.

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Q.23/Q.7. Provide a table with each item + frequency and percentage. E.g.

Item	PRE	POST
Visual impairment	1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Deafness or hearing loss		3 (75%)

Psychiatric disorder	2 (50%)	3 (75%)
Physical Disability	2 (50%)	3 (75%)
Learning Disability	1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Speech disorder	1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Chronic Illness	3 (75%)	3 (75%)
Multiple disabilities	4 (100%)	4 (100%)

2.5 Types of students who should have priority at admission.

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Q.24/Q.8.1. Provide a table with each item + frequency and percentage. Provide information about “other” also. E.g.

Item	PRE	POST
Students with disabilities		1 (25%)
All students treated equally	3 (75%)	3 (75%)
Students from disadvantaged families	1 (25%)	1 (25%)
Students with artistic or sports specialty		1 (25%)
Students with babies		1 (25%)

2.6 Primary stakeholders for inclusive higher education.

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Q.25/Q.9. Provide a table with each item + frequency and percentage. E.g.

Item	PRE				POST			
	Stakeholder number 1 (top 1)	Stakeholder number 2 (top 2)	Stakeholder number 3 (top 3)	Not in the top 3	Stakeholder number 1 (top 1)	Stakeholder number 2 (top 2)	Stakeholder number 3 (top 3)	Not in the top 3
Management system	1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)		1 (25%)	2 (50%)		1 (25%)
	1 (25%)	2 (50%)		1 (25%)		2 (50%)		2 (50%)
	2 (50%)	2 (50%)			1 (25%)	1 (25%)		2 (50%)
		2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)		1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)
		1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)		1 (25%)		3 (75%)
	1 (25%)	2 (50%)		1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)		2 (50%)
	1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)		1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)
		3 (75%)		1 (25%)		2 (50%)		3 (75%)

2.7 Importance of education center supports and services for Students with Disabilities (SwDs).

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Q.26/Q.10. Provide a table with each item + frequency and percentage. E.g.

Item	PRE	POST
Priority at admission		1 (25%)
Campus Orientation	4 (100%)	4 (100%)
Teaching equipment and resources	4 (100%)	3 (75%)
Assistance in completing course work	2 (50%)	3 (75%)
Substituted exam content	1 (25%)	1 (25%)
Substituted course content	1 (25%)	1 (25%)
Barrier free environments in the classroom	1 (25%)	4 (100%)
Individual study assistants	2 (50%)	2 (50%)
Ensuring full participation of swDs in class	1 (25%)	2 (50%)
Accessible teaching materials	1 (25%)	4 (100%)
Guidebooks for swDs	1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Specific Career Planning	1 (25%)	2 (50%)
Learning strategies	1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Extended time for exams	2 (50%)	3 (75%)
Reading & Writing Assistants	1 (25%)	4 (100%)
Accessible Media	1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Accessible Text	1 (25%)	4 (100%)
Variety of Exam Forms	1 (25%)	4 (100%)
Extra Financial Support		2 (50%)
Priority of selecting courses		1 (25%)

2.8 Perceived knowledge regarding the country's legal framework and available resources for students with disability.

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Q.27/Q.11. Provide a table with each item + frequency and percentage. E.g.

Item	PRE						POST					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I am sufficiently aware of the exact legal definition of disability according to the laws of my country		1 (25%)		1 (25%)	2 (50%)		2 (50%)	1 (25%)			1 (25%)	
[I am sufficiently aware of the legal framework as it applies to students with disabilities in higher education]		1 (25%)		1 (25%)	2 (50%)			3 (75%)		1 (25%)		
[I am sufficiently aware of the circular that concerns facilities for students with disabilities]			1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)		1 (25%)	2 (50%)			1 (25%)	
[At this stage I do not have sufficient knowledge to provide the appropriate facilities to students]	2 (50%)			1 (25%)	1 (25%)			1 (25%)		1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)

with disabilities in my courses]												
[I know the assistive technology that students with disabilities can use to help understand my course material]		2 (50%)		2 (50%)				3 (75%)			1 (25%)	
[I provide individual facilities to students who have revealed their disability to me]	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)				4 (100%)				
[I am willing to allow a student with a disability to complete extra credits for academic success even when this option is not listed on the curriculum]			3 (75%)	1 (25%)			1 (25%)	2 (50%)		1 (25%)		
[I am willing to allow any student to complete extra credits on my courses]			3 (75%)	1 (25%)			1 (25%)	2 (50%)		1 (25%)		
[I am willing to reduce the total material of my courses]				3 (75%)		1 (25%)		2 (50%)	1 (25%)		1 (25%)	

for a student with a certified disability even if I did not allow the total material to be reduced for the other students]												
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2.9 Beliefs about Dual Career.

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Q.28/Q.12. Provide a table with each item + frequency and percentage. E.g.

Item	PRE					POST				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
My undergraduate studies helped me develop positive attitudes towards integration	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)		1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)		
[My undergraduate studies helped me acquire the basic skills for educating students with special educational needs.]		1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)		1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	
[My undergraduate studies gave me basic reference material (i.e. literature,		1 (25%)		3 (75%)			1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)	

subject notes) which I can use when I need information about the education of students with special educational needs]										
[My undergraduate studies contributed in my shaping the belief that some categories of students with special educational needs should better be educated in special schools]			1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)			1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)
[I have a reasonable number of opportunities to be trained about the education of students with special educational needs if I want to]		1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)			1 (25%)	3 (75%)		
[I need more training so that I can be involved in the education of students with special educational	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)		1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)		

needs in the mainstream school]										
[I need more training so that I can contribute in the education of students with different types of special educational needs]	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)		1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)		
[I need more training about recommended ways of differentiation (of teaching, content, material)]		2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)		1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)		
[I need more training about the basic principles of the existing legislation about integration]		3 (75%)		1 (25%)		1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)		
[I need more training about the theoretical background of integration]		4 (100%)				1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)		
[A student with behavioural problems should be educated in a special school]			1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)			2 (50%)	1 (25%)
[A student with learning difficulties]			1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)

should be educated in a special school]										
[A student with visual problems should be educated in a special school]				3 (75%)	1 (25%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)
[Some categories of students with special educational needs should be educated in the mainstream school and others should not]	1 (25%)		1 (25%)	2 (50%)			1 (25%)		2 (50%)	1 (25%)
[A special educational needs student may not be able to be integrated successfully because of the type of his/her impairment]		2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)			1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)	
[A fundamental prerequisite for substantial integration is the time of special education allocated to the student]		1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)			2 (50%)	2 (50%)		
[A fundamental prerequisite for substantial integration is		1 (25%)		3 (75%)			1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)	

the type of impairment of the student]										
[The special teacher is the person who is primarily responsible for educating a students with special educational needs]		1 (25%)		3 (75%)			1 (25%)		2 (50%)	1 (25%)
[The official assessment of the Special Education Committee is essential for the mainstream class teacher to begin to be interested in the education of the students with special		1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)		2 (50%)		1 (25%)	1 (25%)
[The specialists who are involved in the education of students with special educational needs know better]		1 (25%)		3 (75%)			1 (25%)	3 (75%)		
[The term 'person with special abilities' is better than the term 'person with special needs']			1 (25%)	3 (75%)			3 (75%)	1 (25%)		

[Educational centers should promote charitable feelings towards students with special educational needs]		1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)			2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	
[The main goal of integrating a student with special educational needs in the mainstream educational center should be the person's socialization]		2 (50%)		2 (50%)			2 (50%)		2 (50%)	
[A fundamental prerequisite for substantial integration of a student with special educational needs is the mainstream class teacher's attitude]		1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)			2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	
[A fundamental prerequisite for substantial integration of a student with special educational needs is the classmates' attitudes]		1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)			2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	

[A fundamental prerequisite for substantial integration of a student with special educational needs is the attitude of the family]	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)				1 (25%)	2 (50%)		
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2.10 Opinion about the training course.

POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Q.4. Provide data concerning frequency and percentage when possible.

- Length of the course.

75% (3/4) felt that the course was just right with 25% (1/4) indicating that it was too long.

- Relevance of the topics.

50% (2/4) indicated that the topics were very relevant and 50% (2/4) said that they were quite relevant.

- Language.

100% (4/4) indicated that the language was just right.

- Activities.

75% (3/4) said that the activities were quite helpful while 25% (1/4) indicated that they were unhelpful.

- Handout.

50% (2/4) indicated that the handout was very useful, 25% (1/4) said that it was quite useful and 25% (1/4) said that it was useless.

- Presentation.

50% (2/4) said that the presentation was good. 25% (1/4) indicated that it was quite good and 25% (1/4) said that it was poor.

- Topics that should be missed out. Provide information about “some” also.

75% (3/4) indicated that no topics should be missed out. 25% (1/4) indicated that some should be missed out. Specifically, they stated that; *There is an amount of readings to be done may be better in a learning format or the version 2.0 of the course.*

- Topics that should be included. Provide information about “some” also.

75% (3/4) indicated that no other topics should be included. 25% (1/4) said some should be included but this person did not provide additional detail.

- Topics that should we have more information on. Provide information about “some” also.

100% (4/4) indicated that no topics should have additional information.

- Topics that should we have less information on. Provide information about “some” also.

75% (3/4) indicated that no topic should have less information. 25% (1/4) said that some topics should have less information and specifically they referred to the extra readings.

- Comments (from questionnaire and the post-interview questions as well)
- *I really did not like the visual person on the presentation. It content in each module needs to be more streamlined. I liked the quiz at the end of each module.*
- *Very informative and the recommended readings and other resources were super.*
- *I would like to have much more depth in all areas. I felt it needed much more about the para- athlete not just the dual athlete.*
- *I liked the you-tube clips with students discussing what they needed. More more of this and again more discussion with the dual para-athletes.*
- *Some of the modules were very text heavy.*
- *I think the concept of the course is a really good idea and will help staff understand how hard it is to be a dual para-athlete but I do feel the whole course need to be more polished and streamlined.*
- *I was happy with the way the contents was presented. However I had issues when moving from one task to the next. I do not think the system was designed for different viewing platforms, be it mobile or PC.*

- *The scoring system seemed to have errors in it. I was told that I had successfully answered the questions correctly in the quiz (5/5 or 4/5) and still told I had failed the module.*
- *On the dashboard, when I looked at how much of the modules I had completed, it would give various scores from 81/100 to 72/100, yet when I scrolled through the modules I could not find what else was to do. All the tasks were complete.*
- *Contents was good – set at a good level and very informative and enjoyable learning.*
- *The course material shared ie recommended readings, resources materials etc was excellent.*
- *The Quiz at the end were somewhat misleading – although scoring 5/5 and awarded 100% it stated as a “Failed”!!! This needs to be reviewed and was very misleading and confusing?*
- *I really enjoyed the online platform – the integrated videos and as previously noted the course content, the resources and recommended readings were excellent and very helpful.*
- *The order was very appropriate and although it noted at the end of each module after doing the “Quiz” that the module was ‘completed’, when you look at the dashboard its does not reflect this!? Very confusing.*
- *Overall a very informative and enjoyable learning experience and I do feel the learning outcomes / expectations were all met and the objectives of the course were certainly achieved. Some tweaking required.*
- *I would try have more video content this was interactive or even just audio to minimize the amount of extra reading.*
- *On the Get Certificate when you click generate nothing happens. On the part to get certificate it asks the users to confirm Name via a tick box when that is done it doesn’t accept that it is your name.*
- *Really liked the content and would really like to give it the time it deserves , I think some of the content could be pulled out to be used for all University staff such as terminology / definitions / do’s & Don’ts.*

3

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Overall the course was positively received by the four participants who completed the course. This is evident by the results presented here especially by the results outlined in the last section. The majority of participants found the course interesting and relevant and felt that the topics presented were relevant and appropriate. There appeared to be some aspects that could be improved as follows:

1. Ensure that the material presented is relevant for all university staff and not just lecturers.
2. Present more of the course in an interactive manner. At times the material is text heavy and the use of videos was received well and should have been used to a greater extent.
3. The format and font of the text throughout the course material should be consistent.
4. There appear to be errors with the portal, such as quiz results, completion rate and also the get certificate. These should be corrected and all of this should be working correctly.
5. No additions re information were suggested and the only suggested to change re the content was to remove some of the readings as there may be too many.
6. The key alteration is to present the material in a more interactive manner and try and reduce the text in each document. Videos and audio should be used to a greater extent with the presentation of the material.
7. All issues with the portal should also be addressed as this will result in a polished and professional course which will enhance the experience of the learner and the impact of the course.



**DUAL CAREER OF STUDENT-ATHLETES WITH
DISABILITIES AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION**

PARA-LIMITS

PRE-POST evaluation training course

COUNTRY

Italy

ORGANISATION

Foro Italico



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

1

INTRODUCTION

The sample consisted of 4 units and was selected from the staff of the University of Rome "Foro Italico" keeping in mind the predetermined selection criteria as much as possible. After providing preliminary information about the general purpose of the project and the online platform, the participants took the course completely on their own.

The first participant started the course on 14/02/2023, and the last one finished on 06/04/2023. The incoming and outgoing questionnaires were completed independently online.

2

RESULTS

2.1 Socio-demographic data.

The participants are 3 males and 1 female aged between 35 and 65 years ($M=53.2$; $SD=12.7$), living in Italy and employed at the public university of Rome "Foro Italico," where they teach in bachelor's and master's degree programs. 3 have permanent and 1 temporary contracts and have a teaching experience between 10 and 28 years ($M=18.5$; $SD=12.7$).

1 is an Associate Professor in the area of the Methods and Didactics of Motor Activities disciplines, one is a researcher in the same subject area, and 2 are laboratory technicians with teaching and research duties in the area of General Pedagogy and Special Pedagogy. They have all earned doctoral degrees and have prior training in disability. They have all played sports at amateur level and none of them have been student-athletes. In addition, none has a disability and only one has a family member with a disability.

None of the participants have changed job positions since they started the course.

2.2 Importance of competences for successful dual career support.

Item	PRE					POST				
	Unimportant	Slightly important	Important	Fairly Important	Very important	Unimportant	Slightly important	Important	Fairly Important	Very important
1	0	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	0	0	0	1(0,8%)	3(2,3%)
2	0	0	2(1,5%)	0	2(1,5%)	0	0	0	2(1,5%)	2(1,5%)
3	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	0	0	1(0,8%)	0	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)
4	0	0	2(1,5%)	0	2(1,5%)	0	0	0	3(2,3%)	1(0,8%)
5	0	0	2(1,5%)	0	2(1,5%)	0	0	0	3(2,3%)	1(0,8%)
6	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)
7	0	0	0	1(0,8%)	3(2,3%)	0	0	0	1(0,8%)	3(2,3%)
8	0	0	2(1,5%)	0	2(1,5%)	0	0	0	2(1,5%)	2(1,5%)
9	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	2(1,5%)	0	0	2(1,5%)	0	2(1,5%)
10	0	1(0,8%)	0	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)
11	0	0	2(1,5%)	0	2(1,5%)	0	0	0	1(0,8%)	3(2,3%)
12	0	0	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	0	1(0,8%)	3(2,3%)
13	0	0	3(2,3%)	0	1(0,8%)	0	0	0	1(0,8%)	3(2,3%)
14	0	0	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	0	1(0,8%)	3(2,3%)
15	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	0	2(1,5%)	2(1,5%)
16	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	0	1(0,8%)	3(2,3%)
17	0	0	2(1,5%)	0	2(1,5%)	0	0	0	1(0,8%)	3(2,3%)
18	0	1(0,8%)	0	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	0	0	0	1(0,8%)	3(2,3%)
19	0	0	2(1,5%)	2(1,5%)	0	0	0	0	1(0,8%)	3(2,3%)
20	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	1(0,8%)	0	3(2,3%)
21	0	2(1,5%)	0	0	2(1,5%)	0	0	1(0,8%)	0	3(2,3%)
22	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)
23	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)
24	0	0	2(1,5%)	0	2(1,5%)	0	0	1(0,8%)	0	3(2,3%)
25	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)
26	0	0	2(1,5%)	0	2(1,5%)	0	0	0	1(0,8%)	3(2,3%)
27	0	2(1,5%)	0	0	2(1,5%)	0	0	1(0,8%)	0	3(2,3%)
28	0	0	2(1,5%)	0	2(1,5%)	0	0	0	1(0,8%)	3(2,3%)
29	0	2(1,5%)	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	0	2(1,5%)	2(1,5%)
30	0	0	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	0	2(1,5%)	2(1,5%)
31	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	0	3(2,3%)	0
32	0	1(0,8%)	0	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	0	1(0,8%)	3(2,3%)
33	0	1(0,8%)	0	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	0	0	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)
TOT (%)*	0	20 (15,2%)	39 (29,5%)	25 (18,9%)	48 (36,4%)	0	1 (0,8%)	12 (9,1%)	40 (30,3%)	78 (59,1%)

1) Ability to collaborate with key stakeholders (e.g. coach, parents) in the student-athlete's life; 2) Ability to reflect on own values and functioning to improve your practice; 3) Ability to complete administrative tasks (e.g. mails, data processing, file maintenance...); 4) Knowledge of the sports related to student-athletes you work with; 5) Ability to enhance athlete's competencies concerning organisation and planning of the student-athlete's life; 6) Ability to refer the student-athlete to another professional if necessary; 7) Ability to negotiate with DC stakeholders ensuring that the interests of all are considered; 8) Ability to adapt the way of providing support in accordance to the feedback of others; 9) Ability to manage a variety of tasks (from one area to another) on a daily basis; 10) Knowledge of the educational system(s); 11) Ability to make student-athletes self-aware of their DC competencies; 12) Ability to support student-athletes emotionally in

the face of setbacks; **13)** Ability to build and coordinate a network of partners; **14)** Ability to maintain own well-being and energy level necessary for work with student-athletes; **15)** Ability to be flexible in responding to unexpected events (e.g. injury) in the student-athlete's life; **16)** Understanding the key transition phases of student-athletes linked to the long term athlete ...; **17)** Ability to stimulate autonomy in student-athletes; **18)** Ability to maintain a trust based relationship with student-athletes; **19)** Ability to collaborate with decision-making bodies advocating for interests of student-athletes; **20)** Commitment to keep (self-) developing as a Dual Career support provider; **21)** Ability to coordinate different events in an effective manner; **22)** Ability to take into account the diverse background (e.g. socio-demographic) of the ...; **23)** Ability to prepare student-athletes for the challenges of specific transitions; **24)** Ability to treat each student-athlete in an individualised manner; **25)** Sensitivity to environmental contexts (e.g. federation, family) that student-athletes belong to; **26)** Ability to realistically monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of your practice; **27)** Ability to act in congruence with the mission of the organisation; **28)** Ability to take a holistic view of the student-athlete's life; **29)** Ability to enhance communication skills in student-athletes; **30)** Ability to conduct in-depth interviews for analysing the different steps of his/her life path; **31)** Ability to make student-athletes aware of the importance of rest and recuperation; **32)** Ability to be an active and supportive listener; **33)** Ability to maintain clear expectations and boundaries in the student-athlete – support provider relationship.* the percentages were calculated on the total number of responses (132)

2.3 Possession of competence.

Item	PRE					POST				
	Very poor possession	Poor possession	Neutral	Good possession	Very good possession	Very poor possession	Poor possession	Neutral	Good possession	Very good possession
1	1(0,8%)	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	0	3(2,3%)	1(0,8%)
2	0	0	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	0	2(1,5%)	2(1,5%)
3	0	1(0,8%)	0	3(2,3%)	0	0	0	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)
4	0	0	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	0	1(0,8%)	0	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)
5	0	0	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	0	4(3%)	0
6	0	0	2(1,5%)	0	2(1,5%)	0	0	1(0,8%)	3(2,3%)	0
7	0	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	0	1(0,8%)	0	0	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)
8	0	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	0	1(0,8%)	0	0	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)
9	0	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	0	0	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)
10	0	0	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	1(0,8%)	3(2,3%)	0
11	0	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	0	1(0,8%)	0	0	3(2,3%)	1(0,8%)	0
12	0	2(1,5%)	0	2(1,5%)	0	0	0	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)
13	0	1(0,8%)	0	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)
14	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	0	0	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)
15	0	0	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)
16	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	0	1(0,8%)	3(2,3%)	0
17	0	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	0	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)
18	0	0	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)
19	0	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	0	1(0,8%)	3(2,3%)	0
20	0	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	0	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)
21	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)
22	0	2(1,5%)	0	2(1,5%)	0	0	0	1(0,8%)	3(2,3%)	0
23	0	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	0	2(1,5%)	2(1,5%)	0
24	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)
25	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)
26	0	0	1(0,8%)	3(2,3%)	0	0	0	1(0,8%)	3(2,3%)	0
27	0	0	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)
28	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)
29	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	0	0	0	1(0,8%)	3(2,3%)	0

30	0	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	0	0	4(3%)	0
31	0	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	0	1(0,8%)	3(2,3%)	0
32	0	0	2(1,5%)	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	0	0	0	3(2,3%)	1(0,8%)
33	0	1(0,8%)	1(0,8%)	2(1,5%)	0	0	0	0	4(3%)	0
TOT	2	25	42	42	21	0	1	36	71	24
(%)*	(1,5%)	(18,9%)	(31,8%)	(31,8%)	(15,9%)	0	(0,8%)	(27,3%)	(53,8%)	(18,2%)

1) Ability to collaborate with key stakeholders (e.g. coach, parents) in the student-athlete's life; 2) Ability to reflect on own values and functioning to improve your practice; 3) Ability to complete administrative tasks (e.g. mails, data processing, file maintenance...); 4) Knowledge of the sports related to student-athletes you work with; 5) Ability to enhance athlete's competencies concerning organisation and planning of the student-athlete's life; 6) Ability to refer the student-athlete to another professional if necessary; 7) Ability to negotiate with DC stakeholders ensuring that the interests of all are considered; 8) Ability to adapt the way of providing support in accordance to the feedback of others; 9) Ability to manage a variety of tasks (from one area to another) on a daily basis; 10) Knowledge of the educational system(s); 11) Ability to make student-athletes self-aware of their DC competencies; 12) Ability to support student-athletes emotionally in the face of setbacks; 13) Ability to build and coordinate a network of partners; 14) Ability to maintain own well-being and energy level necessary for work with student-athletes; 15) Ability to be flexible in responding to unexpected events (e.g. injury) in the student-athlete's life; 16) Understanding the key transition phases of student-athletes linked to the long term athlete ...; 17) Ability to stimulate autonomy in student-athletes; 18) Ability to maintain a trust based relationship with student-athletes; 19) Ability to collaborate with decision-making bodies advocating for interests of student-athletes; 20) Commitment to keep (self-) developing as a Dual Career support provider; 21) Ability to coordinate different events in an effective manner; 22) Ability to take into account the diverse background (e.g. socio-demographic) of the ...; 23) Ability to prepare student-athletes for the challenges of specific transitions; 24) Ability to treat each student-athlete in an individualised manner; 25) Sensitivity to environmental contexts (e.g. federation, family) that student-athletes belong to; 26) Ability to realistically monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of your practice; 27) Ability to act in congruence with the mission of the organisation; 28) Ability to take a holistic view of the student-athlete's life; 29) Ability to enhance communication skills in student-athletes; 30) Ability to conduct in-depth interviews for analysing the different steps of his/her life path; 31) Ability to make student-athletes aware of the importance of rest and recuperation; 32) Ability to be an active and supportive listener; 33) Ability to maintain clear expectations and boundaries in the student-athlete – support provider relationship. * the percentages were calculated on the total number of responses (132)

2.4 Types of disability can be restrictive in the students' college life.

ITEM	PRE	POST
Visual impairment	1(7,7%)	1(7,15%)
Deafness or hearing loss	1(7,7%)	1(7,15%)
Psychiatric disorder	3(23,1%)	3(21,45%)
Physical disability	1(7,7%)	1(7,15%)
Learning disability	1(7,7%)	1(7,15%)
Speech disorder	1(7,7%)	1(7,15%)
Chronic illness	1(7,7%)	2(14,3%)
Multiple disabilities	4(30,7%)	4(28,5%)
Tot	13(100%)	14(100%)

2.5 Types of students who should have priority at admission.

ITEM	PRE	POST
Students with disabilities	2(20%)	3(23,1%)
Students from disadvantaged families	2(20%)	3(23,1%)
All students treated equally	2(20%)	1(7,7%)
Students having artistic or sports specialty	1(10%)	1(7,7%)
Graduates from vocational or technical secondary schools	0	0
Foreign students	1(10%)	2(15,4%)

Students with babies	2(20%)	2(15,4%)
Other (refugees)	0	1(7,6%)
Tot	10(100%)	13(100%)

2.6 Primary stakeholders for inclusive higher education.

Item	PRE				POST			
	Stakeholder number 1 (top 1)	Stakeholder number 2 (top 2)	Stakeholder number 3 (top 3)	Not in the top 3	Stakeholder number 1 (top 1)	Stakeholder number 2 (top 2)	Stakeholder number 3 (top 3)	Not in the top 3
1	1	2	1		1	2		1
2		3		1	1	2		1
3	2	1		1	1	2		1
4	2	1		1	2	2		
5	1	1	1	1	1		3	
6	2			2	2		1	1
7		2		2	1	2		1
8		2		2		1	1	2
1) Management system; 2) Educational centre administrators; 3) Service center for Students with Disabilities; 4) Educational centre teachers; 5) All educational centre students; 6) Students with disabilities; 7) Representative of organization for Students with Disabilities; 8) Representative of organization for all students								

2.7 Importance of education center supports and services for Students with Disabilities (SwDs).

Item	PRE	POST
Priority at admission	1 (2,4%)	2(3,2%)
Campus orientation	4 (9,7%)	4(6,4%)
Specific career planning	4 (9,7%)	2(3,2%)
Barrier-free environments in the classroom	1 (2,4%)	4(6,4%)
Individual study assistants	2 (4,8%)	4(6,4%)
Reading assistants	2 (4,8%)	3(4,8%)
Writing assistants	2 (4,8%)	3(4,8%)
Accessible media	2 (4,8%)	2(3,2%)
Accessible text	1(2,4%)	3(4,8%)
Extra financial support	3 (7,3%)	2(3,2%)
Teaching equipment and resources	2 (4,8%)	4(6,4%)
Ensuringfull participation of SwDs in class	2 (4,8%)	3(4,8%)
Accessible teaching materials	2 (4,8%)	3(4,8%)
Learning strategies	3 (7,3%)	4(6,4%)
Assistance in completing course work	2 (4,8%)	1(1,6%)
Variety of exam forms	2 (4,8%)	4(6,4%)
Extended time for exams	2 (4,8%)	4(6,4%)

Substituted exam content	1(2,4%)	3(4,8%)
Substituted course content	1(2,4%)	2(3,2%)
Decreased course content	1(2,4%)	2(3,2%)
Priority of selecting courses	0	2(3,2%)
Guidebooks for SwDs	1(2,4%)	1(1,6%)
Tot	41(100%)	62(100%)

2.8 Perceived knowledge regarding the country's legal framework and available resources for students with disability.

Item	PRE						POST					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	0	3(8,3%)	0	0	1(2,8%)	0	2(5,6%)	2(5,6%)	0	0	0	0
2	0	3(8,3%)	0	1(2,8%)	0	0	2(5,6%)	2(5,6%)	0	0	0	0
3	1(2,8%)	1(2,8%)	1(2,8)	0	1(2,8)	0	2(5,6%)	0	2(5,6%)	0	0	0
4	0	0	0	2(5,6%)	2(5,6%)	0	0	0	0	1(2,8%)	2(5,6%)	1(2,8%)
5	0	4(11,1%)	0	0	0	0	1(2,8%)	2(5,6%)	1(2,8%)	0	0	0
6	0	0	2(5,6%)	2(5,6%)	0	0	1(2,8%)	2(5,6%)	1(2,8%)	0	0	0
7	1(2,8%)	2(5,6%)	0	0	0	1(2,8%)	0	2(5,6%)	0	0	2(5,6%)	0
8	1(2,8%)	2(5,6%)	0	0	0	1(2,8%)	1(2,8%)	1(2,8%)	1(2,8%)	0	0	1(2,8%)
9	1(2,8%)	0	1(2,8%)	1(2,8%)	1(2,8%)	0	1(2,8%)	1(2,8%)	0	0	0	2(5,6%)
TOT	4	15	4	6	5	2	10	12	5	1	4	4
(%)	(11,1%)	(41,7%)	(11,1%)	(16,7%)	(13,9%)	(5,6%)	(27,8%)	(33,3%)	(13,9%)	(2,8%)	(11,1%)	(11,1%)

1) I am sufficiently aware of the exact legal definition of disability according to the laws of my country; 2) I am sufficiently aware of the legal framework as it applies to students with disabilities in higher education; 3) I am sufficiently aware of the circular that concerns facilities for students with disabilities; 4) At this stage I do not have sufficient knowledge to provide ... 5) I know the assistive technology that students with disabilities can use to help understand my course materia; 6) I provide individual facilities to students who have revealed their disability to me; 7) I am willing to allow a student with a disability to complete extra credits for academic success even when ...; 8) I am willing to allow any student to complete extra credits on my courses; 9) I am willing to reduce the total material of my courses for a student with a certified disability even if * the percentages were calculated on the total number of responses (36)

2.9 Beliefs about Dual Career.

Item	PRE					POST				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	1(1%)	1(1%)	1(1%)	1(1%)	0	1(1%)	1(1%)	1(1%)	1(1%)	0
2	1(1%)	0	1(1%)	2(1,9%)	0	1(1%)	0	2(1,9%)	1(1%)	0
3	0	0	1(1%)	3(2,9%)	0	0	1(1%)	2(1,9%)	1(1%)	0
4	0	0	1(1%)	2(1,9%)	1(1%)	1(1%)	0	0	3(2,9%)	0
5	1(1%)	1(1%)	1(1%)	1(1%)	0	0	3(2,9%)	1(1%)	0	0
6	0	3(2,9%)	1(1%)	0	0	0	2(1,9%)	2(1,9%)	0	0
7	1(1%)	2(1,9%)	0	1(1%)	0	0	2(1,9%)	2(1,9%)	0	0
8	1(1%)	2(1,9%)	0	1(1%)	0	0	1(1%)	3(2,9%)	0	0
9	2(1,9%)	0	1(1%)	0	1(1%)	0	1(1%)	1(1%)	1(1%)	1(1%)

10	1(1%)	1(1%)	0	1(1%)	1(1%)	0	0	2(1,9%)	1(1%)	1(1%)
11	0	0	0	1(1%)	3(2,9%)	0	0	0	1(1%)	3(2,9%)
12	0	0	0	1(1%)	3(2,9%)	0	0	0	1(1%)	3(2,9%)
13	0	0	0	1(1%)	3(2,9%)	0	0	0	1(1%)	3(2,9%)
14	0	0	1(1%)	1(1%)	2(1,9%)	0	0	1(1%)	1(1%)	2(1,9%)
15	0	0	0	2(1,9%)	2(1,9%)	0	0	1(1%)	1(1%)	2(1,9%)
16	1(1%)	1(1%)	2(1,9%)	0	0	0	3(2,9%)	0	0	1(1%)
17	0	0	1(1%)	2(1,9%)	1(1%)	0	0	1(1%)	2(1,9%)	1(1%)
18	0	1(1%)	2(1,9%)	1(1%)	0	0	2(1,9%)	1(1%)	0	1(1%)
19	0	0	3(2,9%)	0	1(1%)	0	2(1,9%)	2(1,9%)	0	0
20	1(1%)	0	3(2,9%)	0	0	0	3(2,9%)	1(1%)	0	0
21	1(1%)	0	2(1,9%)	0	1(1%)	1(1%)	0	1(1%)	0	2(1,9%)
22	1(1%)	2(1,9%)	0	0	1(1%)	1(1%)	0	1(1%)	0	2(1,9%)
23	1(1%)	2(1,9%)	1(1%)	0	0	1(1%)	0	2(1,9%)	0	1(1%)
24	1(1%)	3(2,9%)	0	0	0	1(1%)	2(1,9%)	1(1%)	0	0
25	1(1%)	2(1,9%)	1(1%)	0	0	2(1,9%)	2(1,9%)	0	0	0
26	2(1,9%)	2(1,9%)	0	0	0	2(1,9%)	2(1,9%)	0	0	0
TOT	17	23	23	21	20	11	27	28	15	23
(%)*	(16,3%)	(22,1%)	(22,1%)	(20,2%)	(19,2%)	(10,6%)	(26%)	(26,9%)	(14,4%)	(22,1%)

1) My undergraduate studies helped me develop positive attitudes towards integration; 2) My undergraduate studies helped me acquire the basic skills for educating students with special educational needs; 3) My undergraduate studies gave me basic reference material (i.e. literature, subject notes) which I can use when I need information ...; 4) My undergraduate studies contributed in my shaping the belief that some categories of students with special educational needs ...; 5) I have a reasonable number of opportunities to be trained about the education of students with special educational needs if I want to; 6) I need more training so that I can be involved in the education of students with special educational needs in the mainstream school; 7) I need more training so that I can contribute in the education of students with with different types of special educational needs; 8) I need more training about recommended ways of differentiation (of teaching, content, material); 9) I need more training about the basic principles of the existing legislation about integration; 10) I need more training about the theoretical background of integration; 11) A student with behavioural problems should be educated in a special school; 12) A student with learning difficulties should be educated in a special school; 13) A student with visual problems should be educated in a special school; 14) Some categories of students with special educational needs should be educated in the mainstream school and others should not; 15) A special educational needs student may not be able to be integrated successfully because of the type of his/her impairment; 16) A fundamental prerequisite for substantial integration is the time of special education allocated to the student; 17) A fundamental prerequisite for substantial integration is the type of impairment of the student; 18) The special teacher is the person who is primarily responsible for educating a students with special educational needs; 19) The official assessment of the Special Education Committee is essential for the mainstream class teacher to begin to be interested ...; 20) The specialists who are involved in the education of students with special educational needs know better; 21) The term 'person with special abilities' is better than the term 'person with special needs'; 22) Educational centers should promote charitable feelings towards students with special educational needs; 23) The main goal of integrating a student with special educational needs in the mainstream educational center should be the person's ...; 24) A fundamental prerequisite for substantial integration of a student with special educational needs is the mainstream class ...; 25) A fundamental prerequisite for substantial integration of a student with special educational needs is the classmates' attitudes; 26) A fundamental prerequisite for substantial integration of a student with special educational needs is the attitude of the family.* the percentage were calculated on the total number of responses (104).

2.10 Opinion about the training course.

INTERVIEWS REPORT

Qualitative data collection was carried out between April 2 and April 19, within a maximum of 1 week after each participant finished the course. 3 participants independently

completed the questionnaire with the open-ended questions, while only 1 semi-structured interview was conducted.

1. Do you think that the contents of the modules fulfill their purpose both in terms of depth and relevance of the topics covered? What other topics do you think should have been covered from your point of view?

There is general agreement among the participants that the course is appropriate either in terms of content, organisation and duration. S1 suggests technology as a possible further topic, while S4 would have liked less notion-oriented and more active training on relational skills.

2. Do you think that the way of presenting the contents is appropriate for an online course? Would you include any changes in this regard?

There is agreement that the mode of presentation is appropriate for an online course. S3 notes in particular that "When presenting online courses such as the Paralimits programme, it's important to keep in mind that learners may have different learning styles and preferences. Therefore, it's essential to use a variety of teaching methods and media to make the course engaging and accessible to learners. The Paralimits online course includes effectively: i) a clear and consistent layout; ii) multimedia content (e.g., videos, audio recordings, infographics); iii) interactive tools (e.g., tests and quizzes); iv) content divided in modules to help learners stay focused and motivated; v) exercises and assignments as practice opportunities". S2 also suggests that it would be useful to include a folder where all downloadable documents are collected so that they are available for reference more easily. S4 suggests instead that subtitles in different languages could be inserted and the layout modified (e.g. using a larger font) to make the content more accessible.

3. From your point of view, does the online platform meet the appropriate conditions for this type of course? What would you highlight as advantages or disadvantages with respect to the online platform?

In general, participants consider the platform appropriate to the course. S3 claims that the online mode has several advantages including "flexibility (e.g, with an online connection, learners can use it wherever and whenever they want); ii) scalability (e.g., it can accommodate large numbers of learners from different locations); iii) cost-effectiveness

(e.g., less expensive and more modifiable than a traditional physical classroom)”, nevertheless, he agrees with S4, that the main disadvantage of the platform is the impossibility of interaction and discussion with other participants.

4. Is the order of the modules adequate or would you change the way they have been presented one by one? Justify why you would keep this order or why you would change it?

No doubts exist on this points. The order is appropriate and allows readers to follow a logical path based on the links and interconnections between the concepts discussed.

5. Use this last question to share anything that you think is relevant and has not been asked before.

The only points not mentioned above concern technical aspects. They all complain that the message 'failed' appears at the end of the assessment questions and that although they have completed the tasks, they are not recognised as having completed 100% of the tasks. They also were not able to download the certificate.

3

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Regarding the "Importance of competences for successful dual career support" (Tab. 2.2), at the end of the course, participants most frequently felt that the various skills analysed were "fairly important" and "very important" compared to the beginning of the course. In fact, if a total of 25(18.9%) answers emerged in the pre-test "fairly important" and 48 (36,4%) answers "very important", the amount increases to 40(30,3%) and 78(59.1%) respectively in the post-test. Conversely, there is a decrease in 'Slightly important' and 'Important' responses from 20(15.2%) and 39(29.5%) pre-test to 1(0.8%) and 12(9.1%) post-test, respectively.

A similar trend emerges in relation to "Possession of competence" (Tab.3). In this case, a total of 42(31.8%) 'good possession' and 21(15,9%) 'very good possession' responses emerged in the pre-test, while in the post-test the responses increased to 71(53.8%) and 24(18.2%) respectively. On the other hand, the amount of 'very poor possession', 'poor possession' and 'neutral' responses decreased from 2(1.5%), 25(18.9%) and 42(31.8%) in the pre-test to 0(0%), 1(0.8%) and 36(27.3%) in the post-test respectively.

At the end of the test, the participants therefore perceive themselves to have more skills than before.

Regarding to "Types of disability can be restrictive in the students' college life" (Tab. 2.4), to "Types of students who should have priority at admission" (Tab. 2.5) and to "Primary stakeholders for inclusive higher education", no obvious and striking differences emerged between the pre-test and the post-test, while regarding the "Importance of education centre supports and services for Students with Disabilities" (Tab. 2.7), at the end of the test, a change was noted in particular in the following supports and services: Barrier-free environments in the classroom; Individual study assistants; Accessible text; Teaching equipment and resources; Variety of exam forms; Extended time for exams; Substituted exam content and Priority of selecting courses. In all these cases, there is an increase of at least 2 preferences at the post-test compared to the pre-test (from 1 to 3 or from 2 to 4). There is also an increase in the number of answers given, from 41 in the pre-test to 62 in the post-test.

Regarding the "Perceived knowledge regarding the country's legal framework and available resources for students with disability" (Tab. 2.8) the differences are rather nuanced, but at the end of the course the participants appear to be significantly more "strongly agree" with the statements (N=10; 27.8%) than at the beginning of the course (N=4; 11.1%).

Finally, also with regard to beliefs about dual career (Tab 2.9), the differences found appear negligible. In fact, they went from 17(16.3%) "Strongly agree" answers, 23(22.1%) "Agree" answers, 23(22.1%) "Neither agree nor disagree" answers, 21(20.2%) "Disagree" answers and 20(19.2%) "Strongly disagree" answers of the pre-test to 11(10.6%) 'Strongly agree', 27(26%) 'Agree', 28(26.9%) 'Neither agree nor disagree', 15(14.4%) 'Agree' and 23(22.1%) 'Strongly agree' responses of the post-test.

It should be emphasised that due to the small size of the sample it was not possible to carry out statistical analyses on the differences found which could have confirmed the impressions resulting from the descriptive analyses carried out and that, in any case, the lack of striking differences between the pre-test and the post-test must be interpreted bearing in mind that all the participants before starting the course already had a specific training in disability.

The data that emerged suggest that at the end of the course, the participants overall were more aware of the skills needed to support the dual career pathways of student-athletes with disabilities than at the beginning of the course and at the same time claim to be more competent in providing the different types of support needed.

These preliminary results encourage the use of the platform as a means of training future mentors of student-athletes with disabilities, especially when considered in light of the qualitative survey conducted at the end of the course. Indeed, participants agreed that the course was appropriate both in terms of content and in terms of organisation, duration, mode of presentation and order of the topics presented.

In addition, some useful suggestions emerge for integrating and improving the course and the platform. Some participants suggest that the course could be supplemented with an in-depth study of technologies, while other participants propose some useful suggestions to improve the accessibility of the platform, including, among others, a different layout, the inclusion of a folder as a repository of the course files/materials to have quick and easy Access to them, and the use of subtitles in various languages.

Finally, more than one participant felt that the lack of interaction with other people was the most obvious limitation of the course. It can be deduced that in the future, the course could be implemented by giving mentors the possibility to enrich their own training courses through discussion and interactions (e.g. by creating a dedicated blog within or outside the platform).



Meeting Romania (11-10-2022)

A11. Pre-post data collection and analysis and design of the final innovative course

Reports and Executive report

IPV + UCAM



- All the universities where **the pilot course has been applied must carry out a collection of the data** through the evaluation tools.

The actions for data collection are the following:

- **Pre-knowledge test**
- **Final-knowledge test**
- **Face-to-face interviews with the participants for feedback**



- The data collection should involve the **preparation of a summary report by each of the universities** where the pilot course has been carried out, with the conclusions and evidence found.
- Once the data has been collected, **summary reports will be sent to IPV** for collection.
- **IPV will be in charge of carrying out the Executive Report** in which the following items must be included:
 - Analysis of findings and process assessment.
 - Revising and updating training course.
 - Final version of the training course.



The presentation of the **summary report and the Executive Report** will take place in the Transnational Meeting 5.

In this meeting, **the final form of the innovative course will be given** so that it can be applied in the future in the form of MOOC for all the audiences.

- Deadlines?



DUAL CAREER OF STUDENT-ATHLETES WITH
DISABILITIES AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

PARA-LIMITS

PRE-POST EVALUATION TRAINING COURSE

COUNTRY

ROMANIA

ORGANISATION

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORT BUCHAREST



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

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1

INTRODUCTION

Romanian polices have very much opened to addressing multiple aspects related to disability, in its generic construct. On the social level specialists have understood the shifted paradigm with regard to the disability, namely the transition from the medical to social approach.

Literature reveals the core aspects of the adaptation, as “an art and science used by qualified professional of assessing and managing variables and services so as to meet the unique needs and achieve special outcomes”¹.

In order to accommodate specific needs specialists, have to assess three types of variables, as well as their interactions: task, person and environment.

All these are subject to adaptation processes that encompass modifications, accommodations and other types of support which facilitates one’s quality of life.

The Paralimits *training course for dual career tutors of sportsmen and women with functional diversity* embeds the core of the adaptation theory, with ideas theories, philosophies and examples of good practices, updated to present times. The content of the modules addresses six essential topics for raising awareness, conceive collaboratives models, design specific services, mapping teaching/counselling/coaching strategies, as well as advocating for changing attitudes and believes.

Any student-athlete with disabilities is part of a complex ecosystem, including family members, academic staff, sport entities, community and obviously policy makers.

Within this frame every single part act in a continuous interaction, in a field of enablers and barriers affected by specific contexts.

Sample size (number of participants)

National University of Physical Education and Sport form Bucharest has been involved in numerous projects dedicated to disabled athletes. In the last 20 years the academic staff has enriched its experience, becoming real advocates for providing knowledge and practices for different kinds of disabled persons involved in physical activities.

¹ Sherrill, C. (2004). Adapted physical activity, recreation and sport – crossdisciplinary and lifespan, McGraw Hill, p. 7.

In this context, we recruited 4 participants to take the Paralimits course, given their openness and will to make the university a better place to educate and coach student – athlete with disabilities.

Type of sampling

The participants were selected from UNEFS academic staff – 2 persons, according with their competences and experience; a former PhD student express the will to participate; an academic staff from the University of Polytechnic Bucharest – the biggest profile university from Romania.

How was the course conducted

Prior to attending the course, the 4 participants were invited to meet the Paralimits staff, who explained the aid of the project and its outcomes. Also, some details were provided in the terms of structure of the course, evaluation process, certification.

Afterwards the participants completed the course in autonomous manner.

Dates on which the data collection was carried out (pre and post).

The course was completed by the participants from February to April, 2023.

How the questionnaire was completed (online, face-to-face or both / pre and post).

The pre and post course questionnaires were completed online, via the Paralimits platform. Semi-structured interview was taken after the completion of the course, in a face-to-face meeting.

All the participants sent feedback to the Paralimits technical staff, during and after the course, regarding the technical issues encountered.

2

RESULTS

2.1 Socio-demographic data.

In this section you must provide data concerning frequency and percentage when possible.

PRE-QUESTIONNAIRE

Sex	female
Age (years)	Mean = 40,2
Country	Romania
University	75% UNEFS; 25% University of Polytechnic Bucharest
Public or private university	All are public university
What are you teaching?	16,66% Ph.D.; 33,33% Master; 33,33% University Degree; 16,33% sport coach Physical Education, Swimming, Leisure Time Activities, Adapted Sports Activities
How many years of teaching experience do you have?	Mean = 12,25 years
What kind of contract do you have at this centre?	100% full time
What kind of contract do you have?	75% permanent; 25% other (Ph.D. student)

How long have you been working in this centre?	Mean = 9,5 years
What is your position?	50% lecturer; 50% other – assistant professor and Ph.D. student
What is your education?	100% Ph.D. studies
Have you had prior training on disability?	25% yes; 75% no
Have you been an athlete?	75% yes; 25% no
What level were you as an athlete?	50% Professional; 25% Semi-professional; 25% Amateur
Were you a dual career university student?	50% yes; 50% no
Do you have a personal disability?	100% no
Do you have a family member with disability?	50% yes; 50% no

POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

The employment status (university position, type of contract, contract centre, etc.) or country of residence have not changed since the completion of the initial questionnaire.

2.2 Importance of competences for successful dual career support.

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Q.21/Q.5. Below there are a series of statements about competences. Please mark the option that most closely matches your consideration about how important is this competency for you to successfully provide Dual Career support

Item	PRE					POST				
	Unimportant	Slightly important	Important	Fairly Important	Very important	Unimportant	Slightly important	Important	Fairly Important	Very important

Ability to collaborate with key stakeholders (e.g. coach, parents) in the student-athlete's life				1 (25%)	3 (75%)					4 (100%)
Ability to reflect on own values and functioning to improve your practice				1 (25%)	3 (75%)			1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)
Ability to complete administrative tasks (e.g. mails, data processing, file maintenance...)			1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)			1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)
Knowledge of the sports related to student-athletes you work with				1 (25%)	3 75(%)			1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)
Ability to enhance athlete's competencies concerning organisation and planning of the student-athlete's life				1 (25%)	3 (75%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Ability to refer the student-athlete to another professional if necessary			1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)			1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)
Ability to negotiate with DC stakeholders (e.g. student-athletes,					4 (100%)					4 (100%)

coaches, teachers) ensuring that the interests of all are considered in the integration of a compatible outcome										
Ability to adapt the way of providing support in accordance to the feedback of others					4 (100%)					4 (100%)
Ability to manage a variety of tasks (from one area to another) on a daily basis					4 (100%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Knowledge of the educational system(s)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)					4 (100%)
Ability to make student-athletes self-aware of their DC competencies					4 (100%)					4 (100%)
Ability to support student-athletes emotionally in the face of setbacks					4 (100%)					4 (100%)
Ability to build and coordinate a network of partners				1 (25%)	3 (75%)					4 (100%)
Ability to maintain own well-being and energy level necessary for work with student-athletes					4 (100%)					4 (100%)

Ability to be flexible in responding to unexpected events (e.g. injury) in the student-athlete's life				1 (25%)	3 (75%)			1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 50(%)
Understanding the key transition phases of student-athletes linked to the long-term athlete development pathway					4 (100%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Ability to stimulate autonomy in student-athletes					4 (100%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Ability to maintain a trust-based relationship with student-athletes					4 (100%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Ability to collaborate with decision-making bodies advocating for interests of student-athletes					4 (100%)					4 (100%)
Commitment to keep (self-) developing as a Dual Career support provider			1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Ability to coordinate different events in an effective manner				1 (25%)	3 (75%)					4 (100%)
Ability to take into account the				2 (50%)	2 (50%)			1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)

diverse background (e.g., socio-demographic) of the student-athlete										
Ability to prepare student-athletes for the challenges of specific transitions				1 (25%)	3 (75%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Ability to treat each student-athlete in an individualised manner					4 (100%)					4 (100%)
Sensitivity to environmental contexts (e.g. federation, family) that student-athletes belong to				3 (75%)	1 (25%)					4 (100%)
Ability to realistically monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of your practice				2 (50%)	2 (50%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Ability to act in congruence with the mission of the organisation				3 (75%)	1 (25%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)
Ability to take a holistic view of the student-athlete's life				3 (25%)	1 (25%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Ability to enhance communication skills in student-athletes				3 (75%)	1 (25%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Ability to conduct in-depth				1 (25%)	3 (75%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)

interviews for analysing the different steps of his/her life path										
Ability to make student-athletes aware of the importance of rest and recuperation				1 (25%)	3 (75%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Ability to be an active and supportive listener				1 (25%)	3 (75%)					4 (100%)
Ability to maintain clear expectations and boundaries in the student-athlete – support provider relationship				2 (50%)	2 (50%)					4 (100%)

2.3 Possession of competence.

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Q.22/Q.6. Below there are a series of statements about competences. Please mark the option that most closely matches your consideration about to what extent do you POSSESS this competency

Item	PRE					POST				
	Very poor possession	Poor possession	Neutral	Good possession	Very good possession	Very poor possession	Poor possession	Neutral	Good possession	Very good possession
Ability to collaborate with key stakeholders (e.g. coach, parents) in the student-athlete's life			1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Ability to reflect on own values and				2 (50%)	2 (50%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)

functioning to improve your practice										
Ability to complete administrative tasks (e.g. mails, data processing, file maintenance...)				3 (75%)	1 (25%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)
Knowledge of the sports related to student-athletes you work with			1 (25%)	3 (75%)					4 (100%)	
Ability to enhance athlete's competencies concerning organisation and planning of the student-athlete's life			1 (25%)		3 (75%)				3 (75%)	1 (25%)
Ability to refer the student-athlete to another professional if necessary			1 (25%)	3 (75%)					3 (75%)	1 (25%)
Ability to negotiate with DC stakeholders (e.g. student-athletes, coaches, teachers) ensuring that the interests of all are considered in the integration of a compatible outcome			1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)				3 (75%)	1 (25%)
Ability to adapt the way of providing support in accordance to the feedback of others				2 (50%)	2 (50%)					4 (100%)
Ability to manage a variety of tasks (from one area to another) on a daily basis				2 (50%)	2 (50%)					4 (100%)

Knowledge of the educational system(s)			1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)
Ability to make student-athletes self-aware of their DC competencies			1 (25%)		3 (75%)					4 (100%)
Ability to support student-athletes emotionally in the face of setbacks			1 (25%)		3 (75%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Ability to build and coordinate a network of partners			1 (25%)		3 (75%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)
Ability to maintain own well-being and energy level necessary for work with student-athletes				2 (50%)	2 (50%)					4 (100%)
Ability to be flexible in responding to unexpected events (e.g. injury) in the student-athlete's life				1 (25%)	3 (75%)				3 (75%)	1 (25%)
Understanding the key transition phases of student-athletes linked to the long-term athlete development pathway			1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)
Ability to stimulate autonomy in student-athletes			1 (25%)		3 (75%)			1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)
Ability to maintain a trust-based relationship with student-athletes				1 (25%)	3 (75%)					4 (100%)
Ability to collaborate with decision-making bodies advocating for interests of student-athletes			1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)

Commitment to keep (self-) developing as a Dual Career support provider			1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Ability to coordinate different events in an effective manner			1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)					4 (100%)
Ability to take into account the diverse background (e.g., socio-demographic) of the student-athlete				1 (25%)	3 (75%)					4 (100%)
Ability to prepare student-athletes for the challenges of specific transitions			1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Ability to treat each student-athlete in an individualised manner				2 (50%)	2 (50%)					4 (100%)
Sensitivity to environmental contexts (e.g. federation, family) that student-athletes belong to			1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (50%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)
Ability to realistically monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of your practice			2 (50%)		2 (50%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Ability to act in congruence with the mission of the organisation				2 (50%)	2 (50%)				2 (50%)	2 (50%)
Ability to take a holistic view of the student athlete's life				3 (75%)	1 (25%)					4 (100%)
Ability to enhance communication skills in student-athletes				1 (25%)	3 (75%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Ability to conduct in-depth interviews for analysing the			1 (25%)		3 (75%)					4 (100%)

different steps of his/her life path										
Ability to make student-athletes aware of the importance of rest and recuperation					4 (100%)				1 (25%)	3 (75%)
Ability to be an active and supportive listener					4 (100%)					4 (100%)
Ability to maintain clear expectations and boundaries in the student-athlete – support provider relationship					4 (100%)					4 (100%)

2.4 Types of disability can be restrictive in the students' college life.

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Q.23/Q.7. In your opinion, which types of disability can be restrictive in the students' college life?

Item	PRE	POST
Visual impairment	2 (50%)	2 (50%)
Deafness or hearing loss	2 (50%)	2 (50%)
Psychiatric disorder	3 (75%)	4 (100%)
Physical disability	3 (75%)	2 (50%)
Learning disability	3 (75%)	1 (25%)
Speech disorder	2 (50%)	1 (25%)
Chronic illness	3 (75%)	1 (25%)
Multiple disabilities	4 (100%)	2 (50%)

2.5 Types of students who should have priority at admission.

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Q.24/Q.8.1. In your opinion, which types of students who should have priority at admission?

Item	PRE	POST
Students with disabilities	0 (0%)	1 (25%)

Students from disadvantaged families	1 (25%)	1 (25%)
All students treated equally	4 (100%)	3 (75%)
Students having artistic or sports specialty	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Graduates from vocational or technical secondary schools	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Foreign students	0 (0%)	1 (25%)
Students with babies	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Other	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

2.6 Primary stakeholders for inclusive higher education.

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Q.25/Q.9. In your opinion, which are the primary stakeholders for inclusive higher education?

Item	PRE				POST			
	Stakeholder number 1 (top 1)	Stakeholder number 2 (top 2)	Stakeholder number 3 (top 3)	Not in the top 3	Stakeholder number 1 (top 1)	Stakeholder number 2 (top 2)	Stakeholder number 3 (top 3)	Not in the top 3
Management system	2		1	1	3		1	
Educational centre administrators	1			3	1			3
Service centre for Students with Disabilities	2			2	1	2		1
Educational centre teachers	1			3	1	1		2
All educational centre students		3		1		1		3
Students with disabilities	2			2	1			3
Representative of organization for Students with Disabilities	1	1	1	1	1		2	1
Representative of organization for all students		1	1	2	1			3

2.7 Importance of education centre supports and services for Students with Disabilities (SwDs).

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Q.26/Q.10. In your opinion, which importance of education centre supports and services for Students with Disabilities (SwDs)?

Item	PRE	POST
Priority at admission	0 (0%)	1 (25%)
Campus orientation	2 (50%)	4 (100%)
Specific career planning	2 (50%)	4 (100%)
Barrier-free environments in the classroom	3 (75%)	3 (75%)
Individual study assistants	1 (25%)	2 (50%)
Reading assistants	1 (25%)	2 (50%)
Writing assistants	1 (25%)	2 (50%)
Accessible media	0 (0%)	1 (50%)
Accessible text	1 (25%)	1 (50%)
Extra financial support	1 (25%)	1 (50%)
Teaching equipment and resources	3 (75%)	2 (50%)
Ensuring full participation of SwDs in class	0 (0%)	3 (75%)
Accessible teaching materials	2 (50%)	3 (75%)
Learning strategies	2 (50%)	1 (50%)
Assistance in completing course work	0 (0%)	2 (50%)
Variety of exam forms	2 (50%)	2 (50%)
Extended time for exams	2 (50%)	3 (50%)
Substituted exam content	0 (0%)	1 (25%)
Substituted course content	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Decreased course content	1 (25%)	0 (0%)
Priority of selecting courses	0 (0%)	1 (25%)
Guidebooks for SwDs	3 (75%)	3 (75%)

2.8 Perceived knowledge regarding the country's legal framework and available resources for students with disability.

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Q.27/Q.11. Below there are a series of statements about your perceived knowledge regarding the country's legal framework and available resources for students with

disability. Please mark the option that most closely matches your level of agreement with each of them

Item	PRE						POST					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I am sufficiently aware of the exact legal definition of disability according to the laws of my country	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)				3 (75%)				1 (25%)
I am sufficiently aware of the legal framework as it applies to students with disabilities in higher education	1 (25%)		1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)			2 (50%)	1 (25%)		1 (25%)	
I am sufficiently aware of the circular that concerns facilities for students with disabilities		1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)			1 (25%)	2 (50%)			1 (25%)	
At this stage I do not have sufficient knowledge to provide	1 (25%)	3 (75%)						2 (50%)	1 (25%)			1 (25%)

the appropriate facilities to students with disabilities in my courses												
I know the assistive technology that students with disabilities can use to help understand my course material		1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)			2 (50%)	1 (50%)				1 (50%)
I provide individual facilities to students who have revealed their disability to me	1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)				2 (50%)	1 (25%)		1 (25%)		
I am willing to allow a student with a disability to complete extra credits for academic success even when this option is not listed on the curriculum	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)				2 (50%)	1 (25%)		1 (25%)		
I am willing to	1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)				3 (75%)	1 (25%)				

allow any student to complete extra credits on my courses												
I am willing to reduce the total material of my courses for a student with a certified disability even if I did not allow the total material to be reduced for the other students		4 (100%)					3 (75%)	1 (25%)				

2.9 Beliefs about Dual Career.

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Q.28/Q.12. Below there are a series of statements. Please mark the option that most closely matches your level of agreement with each of them. "I believe that..."

Item	PRE					POST				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
My undergraduate studies helped me develop positive attitudes towards integration	2 (50%)	1 (25%)		1 (25%)		3 (75%)	1 (25%)			

My undergraduate studies helped me acquire the basic skills for educating students with special educational needs.	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)		2 (50%)	2 (50%)			
My undergraduate studies gave me basic reference material (i.e. literature, subject notes) which I can use when I need information about the education of students with special educational needs		2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)		2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)		
My undergraduate studies contributed in my shaping the belief that some categories of students with special educational needs should better be educated in special schools	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)			1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)		1 (25%)
I have a reasonable number of opportunities to be trained about the education of students with special educational needs if I want to		1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)			2 (50%)	2 (50%)		
I need more training so that I can be involved in the education of students with special educational needs in the mainstream school	3 (75%)	1 (25%)				1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)		
I need more training so that I can contribute in the education of students with different types of special educational needs	3 (75%)	1 (25%)				1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)		

I need more training about recommended ways of differentiation (of teaching, content, material)	3 (75%)	1 (25%)				2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)		
I need more training about the basic principles of the existing legislation about integration	3 (75%)	1 (25%)				2 (50%)	1 (25%)		1 (25%)	
I need more training about the theoretical background of integration	3 (75%)	1 (25%)				2 (50%)	1 (25%)		1 (25%)	
A student with behavioural problems should be educated in a special school		1 (25%)	3 (75%)			1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)		
A student with learning difficulties should be educated in a special school	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)				1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)	
A student with visual problems should be educated in a special school	2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)				1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)
Some categories of students with special educational needs should be educated in the mainstream school and others should not	2 (50%)	f (%)	2 (50%)				3 (75%)		1 (25%)	
A special educational needs student may not be able to be integrated successfully because of the type of his/her impairment	2 (50%)		1 (25%)	1 (25%)		1 (25%)	2 (50%)		1 (25%)	
A fundamental prerequisite for substantial integration is the time of special education allocated to the student	2 (50%)		2 (50%)			2 (50%)	2 (50%)			

A fundamental prerequisite for substantial integration is the type of impairment of the student	3 (75%)		1 (25%)			2 (50%)	2 (50%)			
The special teacher is the person who is primarily responsible for educating a student with special educational needs	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)			3 (75%)	1 (25%)			
The official assessment of the Special Education Committee is essential for the mainstream class teacher to begin to be interested in the education of the students with special educational needs	2 (50%)		2 (50%)			1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)		
The specialists who are involved in the education of students with special educational needs know better	4 (100%)					4 (100%)				
The term 'person with special abilities' is better than the term 'person with special needs'	3 (75%)			1 (25%)		4 (100%)				
Educational centers should promote charitable feelings towards students with special educational needs	3 (75%)	1 (25%)				1 (25%)	2 (50%)		1 (25%)	
The main goal of integrating a student with special educational needs in the mainstream educational center should be the person's socialization	2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)			3 (75%)	1 (25%)			

A fundamental prerequisite for substantial integration of a student with special educational needs is the mainstream class teacher's attitude	2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)			4 (100%)				
A fundamental prerequisite for substantial integration of a student with special educational needs is the classmates' attitudes	2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)			4 (100%)				
A fundamental prerequisite for substantial integration of a student with special educational needs is the attitude of the family	2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)			4 (100%)				

2.10 Opinion about the training course.

POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Q.4. Collected information about specific aspects to be taken into consideration when structuring a course.

	Frequency	%
Length of the course	2 too long	50
	2 just right	50
Relevance of the topics	1 quite relevant	25
	3 very relevant	75
Language	4 just right	100
Activities	2 quite helpful	50
	2 very helpful	50
Handout	2 quite useful	50
	1 very useful	25
	1 useless	25

Presentation	3 good	75
	1 poor	25
Topics that should be missed out.	4 none	100
Topics that should be included.	3 none	75
	1 some (a Paralimits logic model should be created as a road map for all universities willing to create / implement the system within their university)	25
Topics that should we have more information on.	4 none	100
Topics that should we have less information on.	4 none	100
Comments	<p>Too much general information and legislation.</p> <p>The course was interesting and I learned useful information which could help me in my activity.</p>	

3

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Socio-demographic data

The main socio-demographic aspects pertaining to the Romanian participants in the course reveal the following:

- the participants, female subjects have an average age of 40.2 years old, having academic careers. Their academic background is related to physical education, sport and psychology;
- their level of instruction is represented by Master and University degree (with of the prevalence of 66,66%), Ph.D. (16,66%) and sport coaching (16,66%);
- the participants have an average teaching experience of 12,2 years;

- most of the participants had know previous training on the disability, but have a sport experience, either professional, semi-professional or amateur;
- half of the respondents had a dual career while being students;
- none of the respondents have a personal disability, but half of them have a family member with disability.

In the following we will highlight the most relevant findings pertaining to:

- the competences required for a professional to succeed in the providing dual career;
- the level of competence had perceived by the participants;
- the types of disabilities which restrict the students' college life;
- the primary stakeholders involved in dual career;
- knowledge about legal framework and available resources for dual career;
- beliefs about dual career.

Competences required for a professional to succeed in the providing dual career

The analysis of the pre and post survey data emphasizes that the opinions regarding the competences needed for providing dual career changed after completion of the course. The respondents attached a greater importance to the following aspects:

- the ability to collaborate with the stakeholders;
- knowledge of the educational systems;
- ability to build and coordinate a network of the partners;
- ability to coordinate different events;
- sensitivity to environmental contexts;
- ability to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the practice;
- ability to take a holistic view of the student-athlete life.

Level of competence had perceived by the participants

In terms of the level of the perceived competences the respondents considered themselves stronger on the following levels:

- ability to collaborate with key stakeholders;
- ability to reflect on own values and functioning to improve practice;
- knowledge of the sports related to student-athletes;
- ability to enhance communication skills;
- ability to maintain clear expectations;
- ability to adapt the way of providing support in accordance to the feedback of others;
- ability to manage a variety of tasks;
- ability to make student-athletes self-aware of their dc competencies;
- ability to maintain own well-being and energy level necessary for work with student-athletes;
- ability to maintain a trust-based relationship with student-athletes;
- ability to coordinate different events;
- ability to prepare student-athletes for the challenges of specific transitions;
- ability to treat each student-athlete in an individualised manner;
- ability to take a holistic view of the student athlete's life;
- ability to conduct in-depth interviews.

Types of disabilities which restrict the students' college life

In this respect, the responses collected prior and post completion of the course emphasised that the types of disabilities, in the perception of the participants are considered as being restricted, even those the modules provided sufficient knowledge about how to overcome barriers. This could mean that one needs a long period to reflect and to experience working with disabled persons so that perceptions could improve and a more optimistic approach to become possible.

Primary stakeholders involved in dual career

Involving student-athletes with disabilities in mainstream education calls for the involvement of many professional, organizations, university entities etc. The data collected showed that the perception of the stakeholders' role did not significant exchange after the completion of the course. This could be explained probably by an insufficient level of awareness regarding the complementary functions that the stakeholders fulfil within this ecosystem.

Knowledge about legal framework and available resources for dual career

Regarding perceived knowledge on the legal framework and the available resources, 5 out of nine statements revealed a slight improvement:

- I am sufficiently aware of the circular that concerns facilities for students with disabilities;
- I provide individual facilities to students who have revealed their disability to me;
- I am willing to allow a student with a disability to complete extra credits for academic success even when this option is not listed on the curriculum;
- I am willing to allow any student to complete extra credits on my courses;
- I am willing to reduce the total material of my courses for a student with a certified disability even if I did not allow the total material to be reduced for the other students.

The general tendency though reflects that the participants need consistent further training so that they take advantage of the current legislation and ways to provide resources for the recipients of the dual career.

Believes about dual career

The following discussion relate to several aspects, pointing out the role of the undergraduate studies in managing students with special abilities, the need of the further training in order to enhance teaching strategies, educating students with

diverse disabilities in special schools and prerequisites for the substantial integration.

The responses collected within the course questionnaire revealed the undergraduate studies helped the participants to develop positive attitudes towards integration, to acquire the basic skills for educating students with special educational needs, to give me basic reference material.

The need for more training in special education area decrease after the course completion, meaning that the participants feel more confident in teaching or relating to student-athlete with disabilities.

Participants acknowledge after the Paralimits course that students with different types of disabilities should mostly register in mainstream schools and where they could have good chance to be successfully integrated.

Education settings are not to be seen as charitable institutions, their main goal being the empowerment and enhancement of the capabilities of the disabled persons.

The classmate's attitudes and the attitude of the family are seen by the participants as fundamental prerequisites.

Aspects reveal by the participants to the semi-structured interview

The responses of the 4 participants were provided via email, their business schedule being a block road for attending a face to face interview.

The respondents providing interesting information which could be useful for further improvements of this kind of content, and also for the technical infrastructural of the platform.

1. Do you think that the contents of the modules fulfill their purpose both in terms of depth and relevance of the topics covered? What other topics do you think should have been covered from your point of view?

All the participants appreciated the modules in terms of providing information related to the purpose of the project. The logical structure, the scientific background – state of the art was also mentioned as a strong point of the course. Some participants suggested the

development of a “Paralimits Logical Model” as a referral and road map for all universities from different countries which are willing to adopt this system.

Some respondents mentioned that it would have been interesting to have more practical applications from real contexts. Also, some recommended the introduction of a course chapter that describes the Paralimits vision which includes all the stakeholder links (internal and external), aims, resources, and outputs (short/medium/long term). It will be extremely beneficial to create a map/graph that explains the local, national, and global alignment of the Paralimits model in addition to the disability legislation, convention on rights, and international regulations

2. Do you think that the way of presenting the contents is appropriate for an online course? Would you include any changes in this regard?

In general, the respondents acknowledge the content which is structured according to the online course standards. The short videos, the iteratives way through which the information is transmitted, as well as graphs and tables, arouse the curiosity of the participants. The introduction videos (where applicable) provided great briefs about upcoming learning of the modules.

Most of the respondents mentioned that the pre-evaluation and final evaluation questionnaire are very long and include to many variables to take into account, this fact being very time-consuming. Also, it was mentioned that in module 4 the subchapter "Diversity" has rough wording; I recommend simpler wording considering that we are also addressing to people who are not native English speakers.

There were participants who thought the attention of the reader has to be focused mainly on the essential information, relevant for the project.

The pre-evaluation results and final-evaluation results, as well as the results of all quizzes could be automatically displayed to the participant as an end-course report which could come as an addition to the completion certificate.

3. From your point of view, does the online platform meet the appropriate conditions for this type of course? What would you highlight as advantages or disadvantages with respect to the online platform?

The Paralimits platform definitely meets the appropriate conditions for online learning – the links to articles, studies, books, legislations give instant support when information is needed. The easy access from PC or mobile phone is an advantage that use to be recognized.

Platform offers the advantage of having the opportunity to go through the course gradually, addressing each module separately. The final tests help to verify the information collected by going through the materials, and the status of each module encourages us to complete the course in the shortest possible time.

The respondents mentioned no specific disadvantages. However, strength will be offered by a multilingual offer of this course. The course is to be translated into multiple different foreign languages.

4. Is the order of the modules adequate or would you change the way they have been presented one by one? Justify why you would keep this order or why you would change it?

All the participants who were surveyed totally agreed with the order of the modules which helps progressing through the information, in successive transitions.

“I suggest adding at the beginning of the online course an overall model/map of how this system shall function within universities from a stakeholder perspective but also within the universities willing to implement the system; and then each part of the model to be described in following modules, followed by modules quiz and overall quiz at the end of the full course”.

5. Use this last question to share anything that you think is relevant and has not been asked before.

The Paralimits course was evaluated by the respondents as interesting, facilitating arising the awareness within the universities about the dual career of the student-athlete with disabilities. Also, the content provided insights about how to address the specific issues in the practical context. Useful information was found to include to our university courses.

“How can we identify/measure the readiness of a university willing to implement the Paralimits system? A readiness questionnaire could be developed”.



DUAL CAREER OF STUDENT-ATHLETES WITH
DISABILITIES AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

PARA-LIMITS

EXECUTIVE REPORT

PRE-POST evaluation training course



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1. Introduction
2. Results
3. Discussion and conclusions

1

INTRODUCTION

This document reflects the responses of 27 teachers of different countries (Ireland, Italy; Portugal; Netherlands, Romania and Spain) who participated as volunteers due to the fact that they fulfilled the profile defined for participation in the project. They were given general information about the aim of the project and the purpose of the course, as well as the email address of a contact person in case they had any questions. The pre-post data collection was carried out with sufficient time to be able to complete the questionnaires when all the participants had finished the course. Finally, the pre-post questionnaires were completed via Google Form (the same for all participating partners) so that respondents did not need to travel to complete the questionnaire in person, thus speeding up the data collection process and subsequent data analysis.

2

RESULTS

2.1 Socio-demographic data.

The participants who answered the questionnaire were equally distributed in relation to gender with 51.9% men and 48.1% women. 77.8% of those surveyed worked in a public center and 22.2% in a private institution, with a full-time (88.9%) and permanent (81.5%) contract. University education was the most selected response with 85.2% of responses, followed by Postgraduate-Master's degree with 9.6%. The average number of years dedicated to teaching was 12.6 years. 25.9% had the category of lecturer followed by Associated professor with 22.2%. The educational level of the respondents was a doctorate level with 85.2%, they had previous experience with training for the disabled (51.9%) and had previously been athletes (59.3%), although only 7.4% were at a professional level. None of the respondents had any type of disability, although 18.5% had a family member with a disability. Lastly, 22.2% of those surveyed were dual career university students.

2.2 Importance of competences for successful dual career support.

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

The survey analyzed the level of perceived competence of the tutor in the dual career, a series of competence statements were included in which respondents were asked to express their opinion on the importance of each competence to successfully support the dual career. The results in the pre-test showed that the main competencies where the "very important" value was selected to a greater extent by the respondents were "Ability to treat each student-athlete individually" with 62.9%; "Ability to maintain a relationship of trust with student-athletes" with 62.9%; and "Ability to collaborate with key stakeholders (eg, coach, parents) in the life of the student-athlete" with 59.2%. After completing the course, the post-test showed that the main competencies where the "very important" value was selected to a greater extent by the respondents were "Ability to negotiate with DC stakeholders (e.g. student-athletes, coaches, teachers) ensuring that the interests of all are considered in the integration of a compatible outcome" with 90% selection in the very

important option; "Ability to adapt the way of providing support in accordance to the feedback from others" with 85%; "Ability to maintain own well-being and energy level necessary for work with student-athletes" with 85%; and "Ability to be an active and supportive listener" with 85%.

2.3 Possession of competence.

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Simultaneously, respondents were asked about their consideration to what extent they possess these competencies. The results showed that in the pre-test the only competence where the value "Very good possession" ranked first was "Ability to be an active and supportive listener" with a 51.8%. Next, the value "Good possession" showed in "Ability to complete administrative tasks (e.g. mails, data processing, file maintenance...)" with 66.6% and "Ability to reflect on own values and functioning to improve your practice" with 55.5%. In the post-test the value "Very good possession" was obtained in 3 competencies mainly "Ability to be an active and supportive listener" with 70%; "Ability to maintain a trust based relationship with student-athletes" with 60% and "Ability to treat each student-athlete in an individualised manner" with 55%.

2.4 Types of disability can be restrictive in the students' college life.

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Participants were asked to indicate in their opinion which types of disabilities might be the most restrictive of students' college life. The results showed In order of repetition in first place they indicated "Multiple disabilities", followed by "Psychiatric disorder"; "Chronic disease" and finally "Visual impairment". In the post-test, the answers concerning which types of disability can be restrictive in the students' university life followed exactly the same order as in the pre-test. That is, in the first place, "Multiple disabilities", followed by "Psychiatric disorder"; "Chronic disease" and "Visual impairment".

2.5 Types of students who should have priority at admission.

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Participants were asked to indicate in their opinion which types of students who should have priority at admission. The results showed In order of repetition in first place they indicated “All students treated equally”, followed by “Students from disadvantaged families” and “Students with disabilities”. In the post-test, responses regarding which types of students should be given priority in admission, showed in the first position both “All students treated equally” and “Students with disabilities”. It is also interesting to note that some participants used the open question option to leave their opinion that each of the types of students described above could have priority in admission, but we cannot generalise. It is important to get to know the individual student and then make the best decision, respecting the rules of the organisation.

2.6 Primary stakeholders for inclusive higher education.

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Participants were asked to select which are the primary stakeholders for inclusive higher education? In the pre-test "Students with disabilities" came first 13 times, followed by "Management system" and "Service centre for students with disabilities", both of which came first 11 times. In the post-test, the trend changed and "Management system" came first with 14 selections, followed by "Students with disabilities" and "Service centre for students with disabilities".

2.7 Importance of education center supports and services for Students with Disabilities (SwDs).

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

In this section respondents were asked their opinion on which importance of education centre supports and services for Students with Disabilities (SwDs), in the pre-test the results showed in first place "Campus orientation" 21 times selected, followed by "Barrier-free classroom environment" and "Teaching equipment and resources" 17 times each. In last place, "Decreased course content" and "Priority of selecting courses" were

selected 4 times each. In the post-test, the results were similar in the first two positions "campus orientation" followed by "Barrier-free classroom environment", with "Accessible learning materials" appearing in third place. In the last positions, "Substituted course content" was selected 4 times and "Decreased course content" only 2 times.

2.8 Perceived knowledge regarding the country's legal framework and available resources for students with disability.

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Respondents were asked about their perceived knowledge of the country's legal framework and resources available for students with disabilities. In the pre-test the main item where participants showed "Strongly agree" was "At this stage I do not have sufficient knowledge to provide the appropriate facilities to students with disabilities in my courses" selected 4 times, followed by "I am sufficiently aware of the exact legal definition of disability according to the laws of my country"; "I am sufficiently aware of the legal framework that applies to students with disabilities in higher education"; "I provide individual facilities to students who have disclosed their disability to me" and "I am willing to allow a student with a disability to complete additional credits for their academic success even when this option is not in the curriculum" selected 3 times each of the items. In the post-test, the items valued with "Strongly agree" were "I am sufficiently aware of the exact legal definition of disability according to the laws of my country" and "I provide individual facilities to students who have revealed their disability to me" both with 6 evaluations.

2.9 Beliefs about Dual Career.

PRE-POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

In the last section of the survey, the participants were asked about their opinion about different items. The most indicated aspects in the pre-test were "My undergraduate studies helped me develop positive attitudes towards integration" 11 times; "A fundamental prerequisite for substantial integration of a student with special educational needs is the attitude of the family" 10 times; and "I need more training about the basic principles of the existing legislation about integration" 9 times. In the post-test, the participants first

indicated "A fundamental prerequisite for substantial integration of a student with special educational needs is the attitude of the family" 10 times, followed by "A fundamental prerequisite for substantial integration of a student with special educational needs is the classmates' attitudes" 9 times.

2.10 Opinion about the training course.

POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

The respondents completed some questions once the course was finished and the results were as follows. The course was neither too long nor short (76.2%). The content of the course was very relevant (66.7%). Its language was adequate (95.2%). The activities were quite useful (57.1%) and were fairly well distributed (52.4%). The presentation was good (57.1%). It was not necessary to eliminate (90.5%) or include (81%) any different topic.

3

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The results obtained show a trend among the respondents in line with the need to focus on key points to improve support for the dual career. The pre-post test evaluation showed some variations in the responses of the participants as a result of the intervention. Regarding similar strengths and weaknesses of the course, despite the fact that most of the respondents showed similar answers, it would be interesting to delve into the differentiating aspects obtained to open new strategic lines of research.



DUAL CAREER OF STUDENT-ATHLETES WITH
DISABILITIES AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

PARA-LIMITS

Field Research Activities - QUESTIONNAIRE

COUNTRY

ROMANIA

ORGANISATION

UNIVERSITATEA NATIONALA DE EDUCATIE FIZICA SI SPORT BUCHAREST



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

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1

INTRODUCTION

The situation of the disabled people in Romania has become topical especially after 1989, when the State Secretariate for the Disabled (SSD) was set up.

Once the paradigm shift occurred with regard to the notion of disability – from the medical to the social approach – and once the Convention on the rights of the disabled (2006) was adopted, the notion of disability falls into the category of human rights-related issues. In keeping with the legislation which fights discrimination, the principle of equality amongst citizens, the exclusion of privileges and discrimination are also safeguarded with regard to exercising the right to take part on equal terms in cultural and sports activities.

In order to secure the access of the disabled to culture, sports and tourism, public administration authorities must undertake the following specific measures:

- support the participation of people with disabilities and their families to cultural, sports and touristic events;
- organize – based on cooperation or partnership with legal entities, public or private – cultural, sports and leisure events and activities;
- provide adequate conditions for the practice of sports activities by people with disabilities;
- support the activity of sports organizations involving people with disabilities.

The 2016-2020 national strategy „A society with no hurdles for people with disabilities” and the operational plan on implementing the national strategy (Official Monitor nr. 737/2016) provide for the access and participation of people with disabilities to nonformal educational programmes and contexts, cultural, sports, leisure and recreational activities, shaped for their specific requirements and interests.

Although legal provisions are introduced within education and sport activities areas, National data on students with disabilities are scarce, the same reality applying on

the student-athletes with disabilities. There is no evidence-based analysis regarding the disabled who completed tertiary education, nor those who are involved in sport activities.

In this context, our study supports the idea of collecting valuable data on the dual career of the student athletes with disabilities and the barriers they have to face in this attempt.

For this purpose, a sociological tool was created by adapting an already existing Questionnaire about the perceptions of dual career student-athlete (ESTPORT)¹.

Our questionnaire consisted in 26 items among which were 5 opened-ended and 21 closed questions. For a clear data interpretation of the main ideas, the items were divided into the following topics:

- socio-demographic data
- sport-related data
- studies-related data
- barriers dual career
- ideas for improving the dual career.

The questionnaire was filled in by 50 participants (35 males, 14 females, 1 other). All of them were informed about the aim of the study and voluntarily gave their consent. The subjects could skip different questions and had the freedom to withdraw from the study at their will. There were no inclusion criteria, except for the disability status, educational background and type of disability.

Participants were selected from several universities enrolling disabled persons, some NGO's which promote sports activities for disabled, and special education high schools, being applied no sampling techniques. The participants are originated in Bucharest, Targoviste, Cluj Napoca, Iasi, Targu Mures, Galati, Brasov, etc.

¹ Sánchez-Pato, A., Calderón, A., Arias-Estero, J.L., García-Roca, J.A., Bada, J., Meroño, L., Isidori, E., Brunton, J., Decelis, A., Koustelios, A., Mallia, O., Fazio, A., Radcliffe, J., Sedgwick, M., 2016. Design and validation of a questionnaire about the perceptions of dual career student-athletes (ESTPORT). *Cultura, Ciencia y Deporte* 11, 127–147.. doi:10.12800/ccd.v11i32.713va

Data collection took place between August 2021, up to January 2022.

The questionnaire was completed online, some of the subjects (visually impaired) using the dictation in order to fill in the questionnaire.

2

RESULTS

2.1 Socio-demographic data

In this section, the data presented relate to some socio-demographic, working status and **disability profile**. We present in Table 1 the descriptive data emerged from the questionnaire.

Table 1 - Socio-demographic variables

		N	%	Mean
Age				33,32
Sex	Male	35	70	
	Female	14	28	
	Other	1	2	
	Total	50		
Level of education	High School (last year)	24	48	
	Licence degree	16	32	
	Master degree	7	14	
	Ph.D.	1	2	
Time dedicated to studies (hours/week)	Under 5	7	14	
	6 - 12	6	12	
	13 - 20	4	8	
	21 - 30	2	4	
	31 - 40	4	8	
	Above 40	2	4	
Disability Type	Physical	22	44	
	Auditory	5	10	
	Visual	14	28	
	CP	3	6	
	Other	4	8	
Disability level	Minimal	1	2	
	Moderate	14	28	
	Severe	31	62	
Working activity	Yes	22	44	
	No	27	54	
Working hours / week	Under 10	1	2	
	10 – 20	3	6	
	20 – 40	11	22	
	Above 40	1	2	
Source of income	Sport	3	6	
	Work	15	30	
	Family	16	32	
	Others	15	30	

2.2 Sport/exercise related data

The project team was focused on identifying several sports practice variables, which we find useful for assessing the way the dual career might be influenced by this type of aspects.

Table 2 – Data on sports practice variables

		N	%	Mean
Sport performed	Individual sports	21	42	
	Team sports	11	22	
	Combat sports	4	8	
	Artistic sports	1	2	
	Multiple sports	10	20	
Types of competitions attended	National competition	11	22	
	University competition	1	2	
	European Championships	3	6	
	World Championship s	10	20	
	Paralympic Games	6	12	
	Others	16	24	
Level of sport practice	Amateur	24	48	
	Semi-professional	15	30	
	Professional	10	20	
Stage in sports career	Beginner competitor	23	46	
	Peak level competitor	12	24	
	Final sport career	10	20	
Sport practice interfering with studies	Yes	10	20	
	No	38	76	
Level of difficulty in combining sport with education	Very easy	11	22	
	Easy	10	20	
	Neither easy nor difficult	17	34	
	Difficult	3	6	
	Very difficult	7	14	
Training hours / week	Under 10	24	48	
	10 – 20	14	28	
	20 – 40	4	8	

As noticed in Table 2, the surveyed participants practice different sports branches, with a prevalence of the individual sports, followed by team sports. Also, data revealed that 24% of the group practice multiple sports. Regarding the types of competitions attended the majority of the respondents (76%) participate in the official competitions, while 24% practice leisure sport activity as a hobby, health-related, pleasure or socialising mean.

Regarding sport practice which interfered with studies, the participants provided the following details:

- some of the respondents were able to schedule sport training after the academic courses, during the day;
- some participants acknowledged that the sports profile academic studies helped sports practice, so that the training process was perceived as more efficient;
- the negative interference was due to parallel sports trainings and academic / non-academic courses.

2.3 Studies – related data

The dual career is obviously influenced by the studies-related variables which are presented in the following.

Table 3 – Interference between studies and sport

		N	%	Mean
Studies interfering with sport activities	Yes	14	28	
	No	35	70	

The respondents who admitted that their studies interfered with sports practice provided the following explanations in this respect (Table 3):

- most of the times training practice took place at the same time with the academic studies, fact which hindered the possibility to properly attend both activities;
- the pandemic period was somehow beneficial to this dual career because the respondents managed to attend sports practice and courses simultaneously.

Table 4 – Self-perception related to dual career

		N	%	Mean
Self-perception related to dual career	Student / people / employee - athlete	32	64	

	Athlete - student / people / employee	10	20	
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The distribution of the results regarding the prevalent perception of the participants was further explained through the following detailed aspects (Table 4):

- most of the subjects perceive themselves as student – athletes, as on the long term, sport activities cannot be a source of income for them and for their families. Also, those who practice leisure sport activities focus on health-related exercises and physical therapy;
- studies, either at high school, university or master levels are the primary focus of our respondents, in view to prepare for a future profession and professional integration.

2.4 Barriers to dual career

Explicitly, the items of the questionnaire also addressed the barriers to dual carrier encountered by the participants in the survey. The following tables include the descriptive data pertaining to the university and physical exercise – induced limitations.

Table 5 – Barriers to dual career related to university

		Totally disagree	Partially disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Partially agree	Totally agree
University or high school are far from home	N	11	3	21	6	7
	%	22	6	42	12	14
University or high school are far from the training venue	N	11	8	12	5	11
	%	22	16	24	10	22
Lack of time for attending both activities	N	20	8	6	7	6
	%	40	16	12	14	12
Have to take care of my family	N	21	3	3	8	11
	%	42	6	6	16	22

I feel tired	N	13	4	12	8	9
	%	26	8	24	16	18
Lose tempo in my academic studies	N	20	5	7	11	2
	%	40	10	14	22	4
Lose contact with my colleagues from the university	N	18	7	8	10	2
	%	36	14	16	20	4
High tuition fees	N	18	7	8	7	6
	%	36	14	16	14	12
Lack of support from university	N	20	3	6	5	13
	%	40	6	12	10	26
Inflexible academic schedule	N	15	6	6	7	12
	%	30	12	12	14	24

Table 5 emphasizes the main limitations of the dual career which hierarchically refer to: inflexible academic schedule (38%), taking care of the family (38%), lack of the support from university (36%), the fatigue (34%), remote distance from the training venues (32%), remote distance from home, lack of time for dual career, lost tempo in the academic studies and high tuition fees (26%).

Table 6 – Barriers to dual career related to physical exercise

		Totally agree	Agree	Disagree	Totally disagree
Physical exercise takes too much time	N	3	7	17	20
	%	6	14	34	40
Physical exercise is tiresome	N	4	9	14	21
	%	8	18	28	42
Physical exercise venue is remote	N	4	10	17	17
	%	8	20	34	34
I do not feel comfortable when I practice physical exercise	N	7	6	11	25
	%	14	12	22	50
Physical exercise costs are too high	N	6	6	14	22
	%	12	12	28	44
	N	7	4	17	19

Inconvenient timetables for physical exercise	%	14	8	34	38
I feel tired when I exercise	N	5	10	9	24
	%	10	20	18	48
Family does not encourage me to exercise	N	3	3	9	32
	%	6	6	18	64
Physical exercise takes time from my family activities	N	4	8	12	24
	%	8	16	24	48
Sport equipment is funny	N	7	10	9	22
	%	14	20	18	44
Family members do not encourage me to exercise	N	3	3	8	34
	%	6	6	16	68
Physical exercise reduces time for family responsibilities	N	4	4	16	24
	%	8	8	32	48
Physical exercise is exhausting for me	N	3	1	16	27
	%	6	2	32	54
There are few training venues	N	19	10	8	11
	%	38	20	16	22

Table 6 emphasizes the main limitations of the dual career, induced by the physical exercise, which hierarchically refer to: few training venues (58%), fatigue (30%), remote training venues (28%), tiresome physical exercise (26%), discomfort associated to physical exercise (26%), high physical exercise costs (24%), time taken from the family activities (24%), inconvenient timetable for physical exercise (22%), too much time taken by physical exercise (20%).

As human perception is a fluid, personal experience, it greatly impacts how we think and feel about the reality around us. Exploring the prevalent athletic perception or study-oriented perception, gives us an insight about what is really the most important status that the subjects connect to. This reference might shape their future personal and professional development (Table 7).

Table 7 – Personal perception about sport significance

		Totally disagree 1	2	3	4	5	6	Strongly agree 7
I perceive myself as an athlete	N	3	4	6	9	4	5	17
	%	6	8	12	18	8	10	34
I have multiple sport-related objectives	N	3	5	5	10	7	4	14
	%	6	10	10	20	14	8	28
Most of my friends practice sports	N	2	7	6	16	4	5	9
	%	4	14	12	32	8	10	18
Sport is the most important part of my life	N	3	5	8	6	6	3	17
	%	6	10	16	12	12	6	34
I think about sport more than anything else	N	5	6	9	8	4	6	10
	%	10	12	18	16	8	12	20
I feel bad when I have low sport results	N	7	8	8	8	3	4	10
	%	14	16	16	16	6	8	20
I would be depressed if a traumatic injury would hinder my sport activities	N	6	5	6	7	2	5	15
	%	12	10	12	14	4	10	30

Table 7 emphasizes the most relevant assertions related to sport as a personal and emotional experience, which hierarchically refer to: self-perception as athlete, sport as a key part of their life (52%), numerous sport-related objectives (50%), traumatic injury which hinders sport practice (44%), dominant thoughts about sport (40%), friends practicing sports (36%) and low sport results cause bad feelings (34%).

2.5 Ideas for improving dual career

In order to analyse the responses for item 25 regarding the way universities and high school support sport activities for the disabled students, we established several categories of aspects, emphasized by the respondents:

- flexible school timetable – 10,86%
- accessibility for attending sport venues – 13,04%
- sport-dedicated classes within the school timetable – 13,04%
- less mandatory school activities – 2,17%
- physical therapy as support for sport activities – 2,17%

- more support from teaching staff – 15,21%
- financial support – 6,52%
- sport infrastructure – 17,39%.

We mention that 80,4% from the whole group offered responses to this item, while 19,6% did not give their insight on this issue.

In order to analyse the responses for item 26 regarding the way sport clubs and federations support the studies of the disabled students, we established several categories of aspects, emphasized by the respondents:

- sport infrastructure – 8,69%
- financial support – 19,56%
- lack of interest from the clubs – 4,34%
- flexible timetable – 8,69%
- support from the club and a better cooperation with the university / high school – 19,56%
- more sport infusion in mainstream school environment – 2,17%
- Don't know – 10,86%.

We mention that 73,87% from the whole group offered responses to this item, while 26,13% did not give their insight on this issue.

3

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The socio-demographic data collected through questionnaire emphasised very diverse participants profiles in terms of age, level of education, disability type and level, academic activities, working activities, sports performed, level of sports practice and most important, interfered between sports practice and academic achievements.

The participants surveyed within this study have a mean of 33 years old, including subjects from adolescents, youth and young adult population. In terms of gender distribution, most of the subjects were male, in a percentage of 70%.

The sample of this study included participants attending last year of high school, graduate and post-graduate studies (Figure 1).

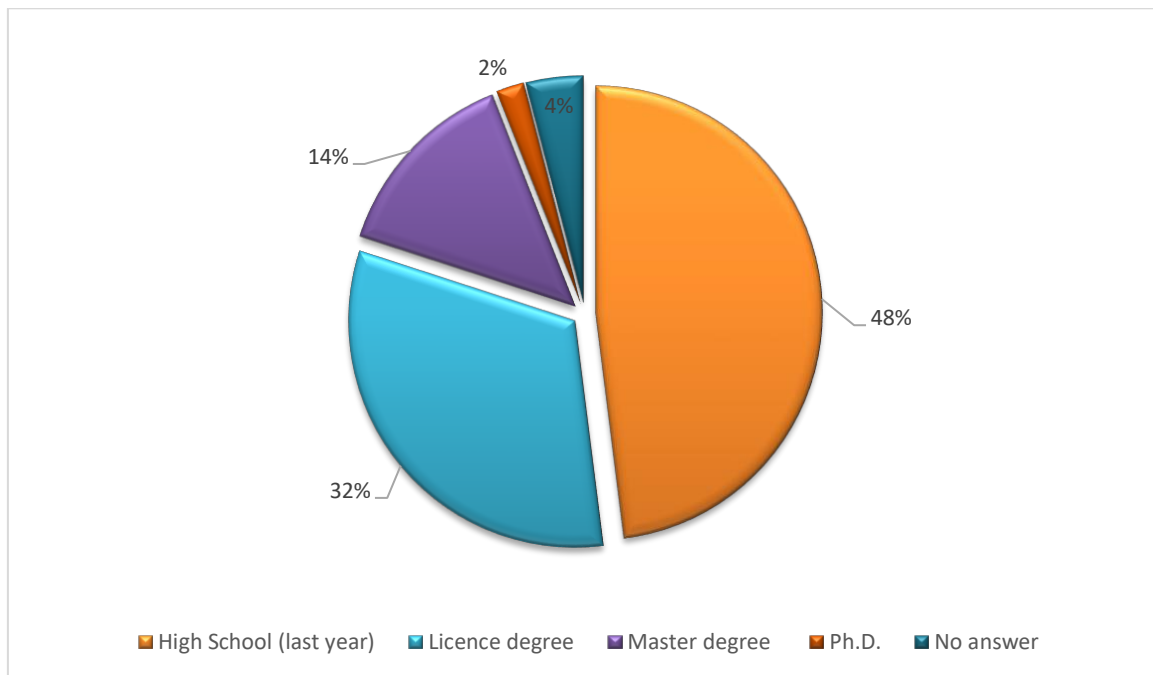


Figure 1. Level of education

Regarding the disability type of the respondents, we mention that the most prevalent was the physical impairment, aspect explained by the fact that most of the wheelchair users or other motor-limited subjects are perfectly capable of attending high education studies, due to their cognitive capacities. Hierarchically, the next special population completing this questionnaire was the visually impaired category who can achieve education goals if adapted psycho-pedagogical approaches are available (Figure 2).

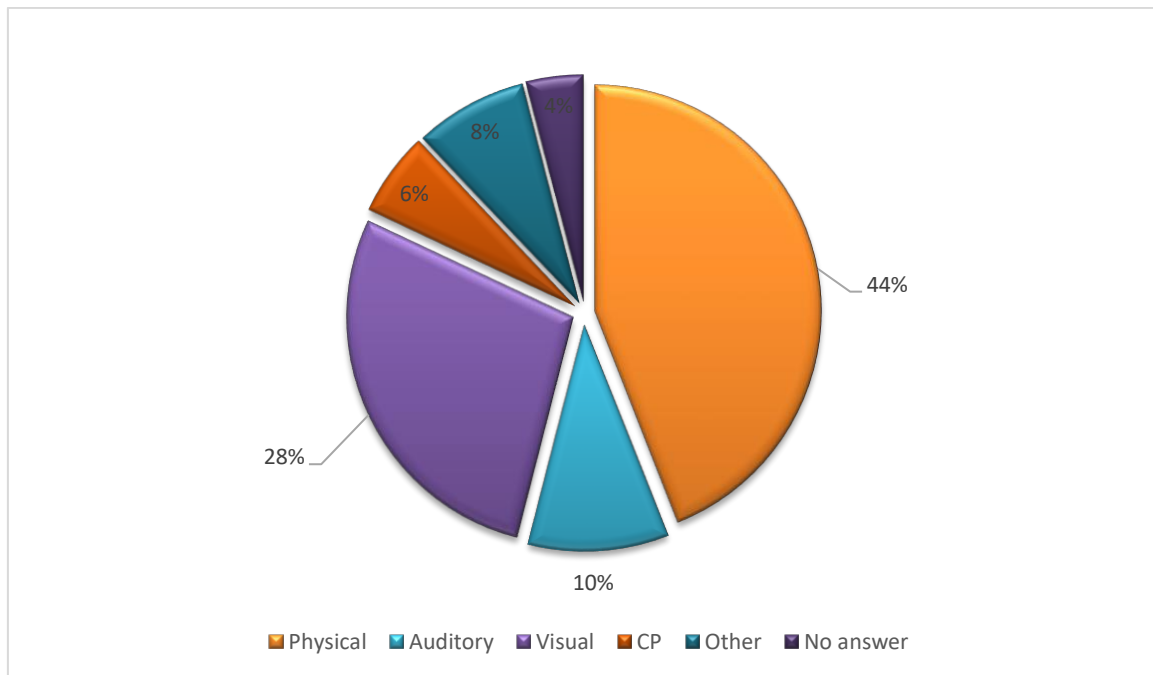


Figure 2. Type of disability

Most of the participants surveyed have severe health limitations, with a percentage of 62%, but, due to the compensation processes and positive self-acceptance they manage to attend graduate studies, post-graduate and even doctoral studies. Consequently, almost half of the respondents have professional activities, full time or part time, with different working loads per week, from 10 to 50 hours per week.

In terms of sport practice, the study highlighted a wide variety of aspects starting with the sport performed, types of the competitions attended, the level of sport practice, with of special focus on the interference between sport activities and academic path. The data revealed that the subjects practice individual sports, appropriate for their individual characteristics and needs, as well as team sports, combat sports or artistic sports, these covering the needs for social interaction, empowerment, surpassing their limits or emotionally fulfilling needs.

A significant part of the subjects attended European and World Championships, as well as the Paralympic Games, proving that physical, functional, motor and psychological progress is definitely achievable, if proper training and medical supports are provided on long term (Figure 3).

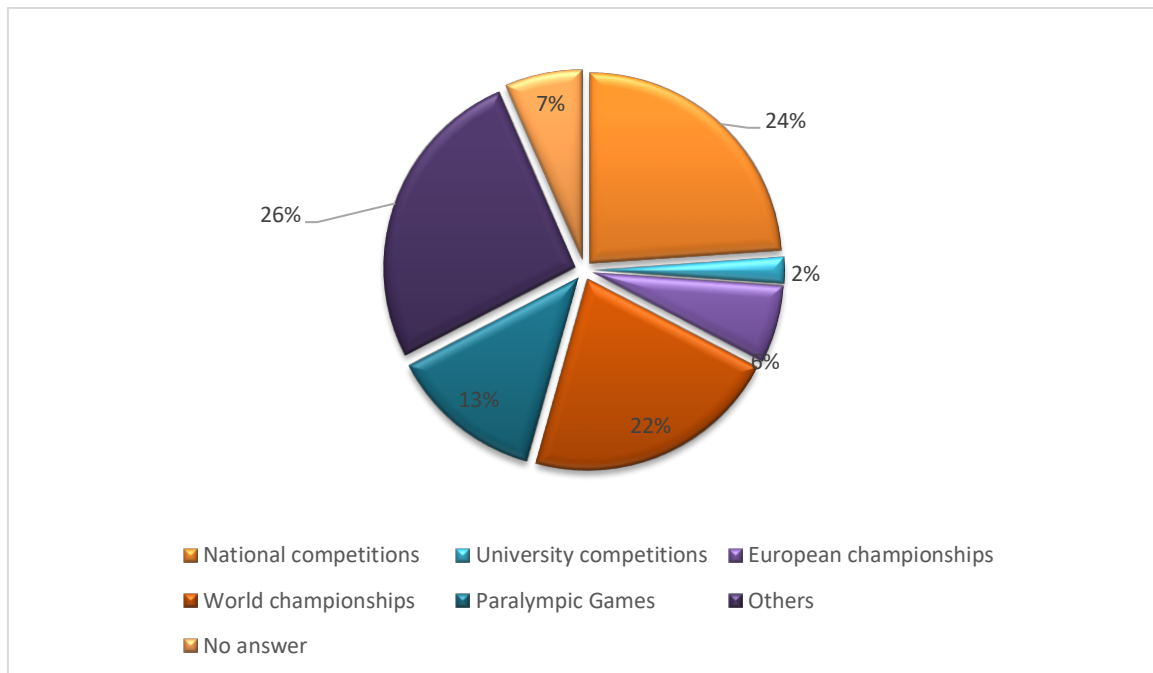


Figure 3. Types of competitions attended

A quarter of the subjects are committed to leisure sports and physical activities in order to have an increased level of fitness, relaxation time, pleasure or good quality of life.

Another central point of this survey was to identify the perception of the subjects related to the difficulty to combine sport and education, in other words the interference between these two activities. In this respect data highlighted that more than 75% of the subjects asserted that there was no interference between sport practice and academic endeavours, while 20% acknowledged this interference. In correlation, 42% of the respondents had no difficulties in combining sport and education, 20% experienced difficulties, while 34% of the subjects were neutral (Figure 4).

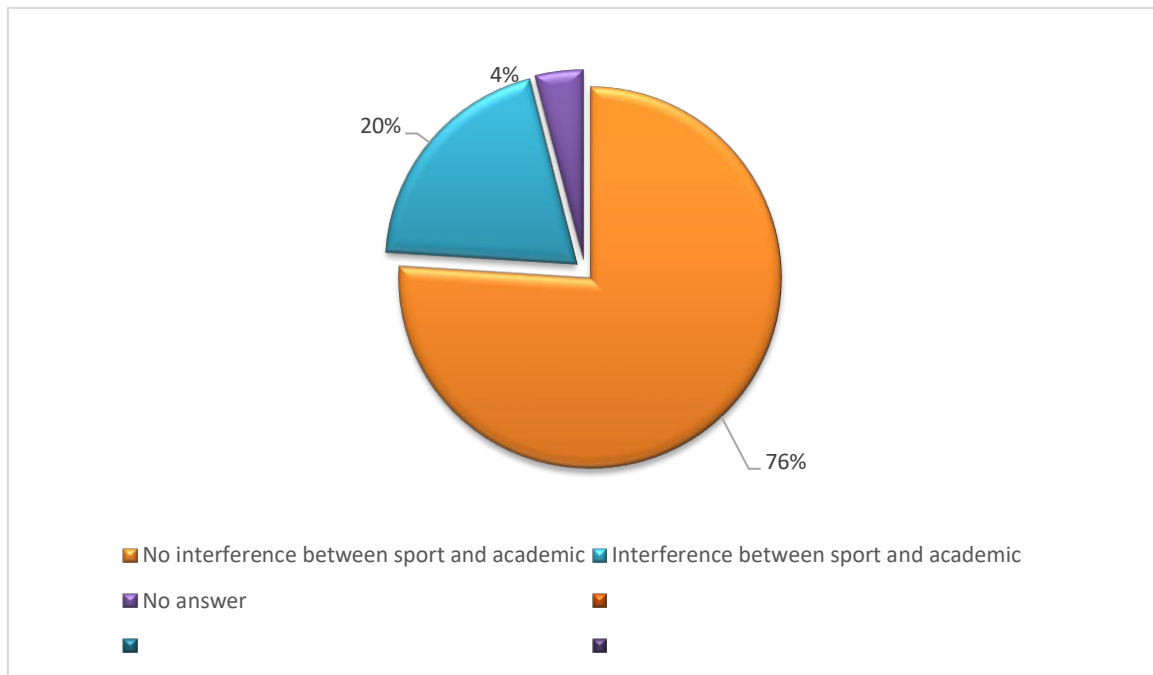


Figure 4. Sports interfering with studies

On this level the participants provided relevant explanations about the way they perceived this interference in terms of caring out in parallel sport training and academic courses. On the other hand, the subjects mentioned that attending sport profile universities helped them in better understanding and participating in the training process.

In terms of academic studies – related data, we noticed that the majority of respondents did not perceive any interference between studies and sport practice (70%) versus 28% who experienced this interference (Figure 5).

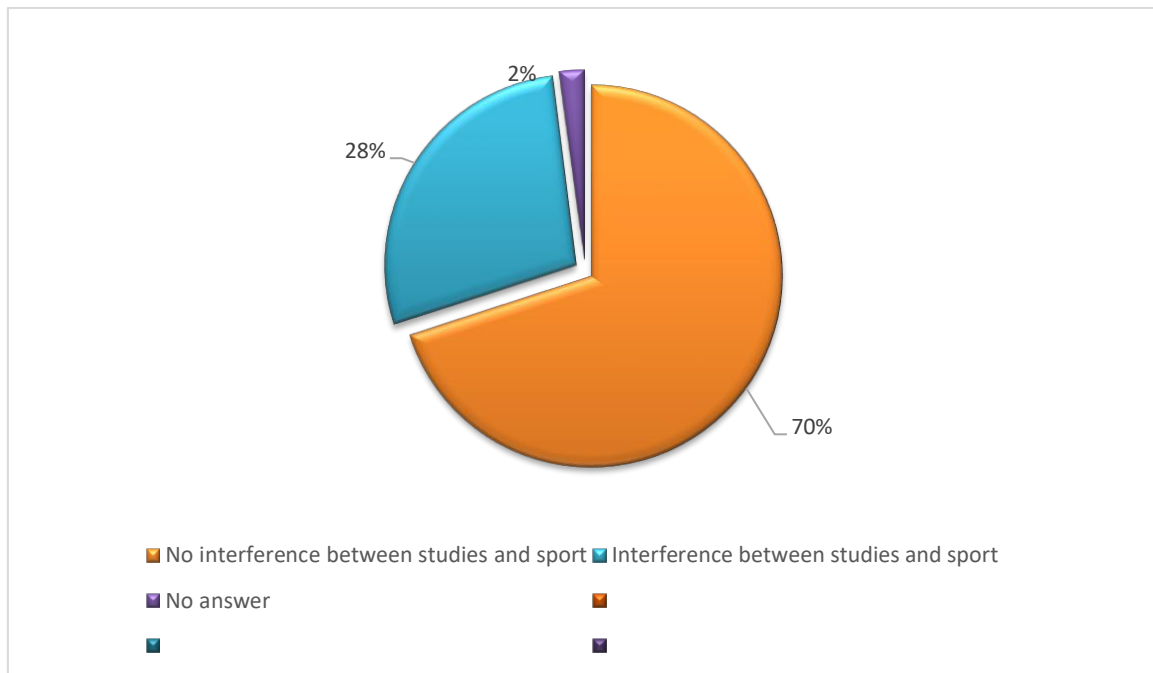


Figure 5. Studies interfering with sports

The explanations offered as arguments were related to simultaneous training practice and studies which obviously hindered the possibility to perform optimally in both areas. The online training approach delivered during the pandemic was perceived as positive for the dual career of the disabled students because they could attend at the same time both activities (at a formal level).

Item related to the way participants perceived themselves as student – athlete or athlete – student indicated a clear prevalence of those who have as a primary goal achieving an academic degree, evidently linked to their future profession. This approach is in accordance with the indicated source of income, wherein sport is credited by only 6% of the whole group. For 20% of the respondents, the athlete status is prevalent to the student status (Figure 6).

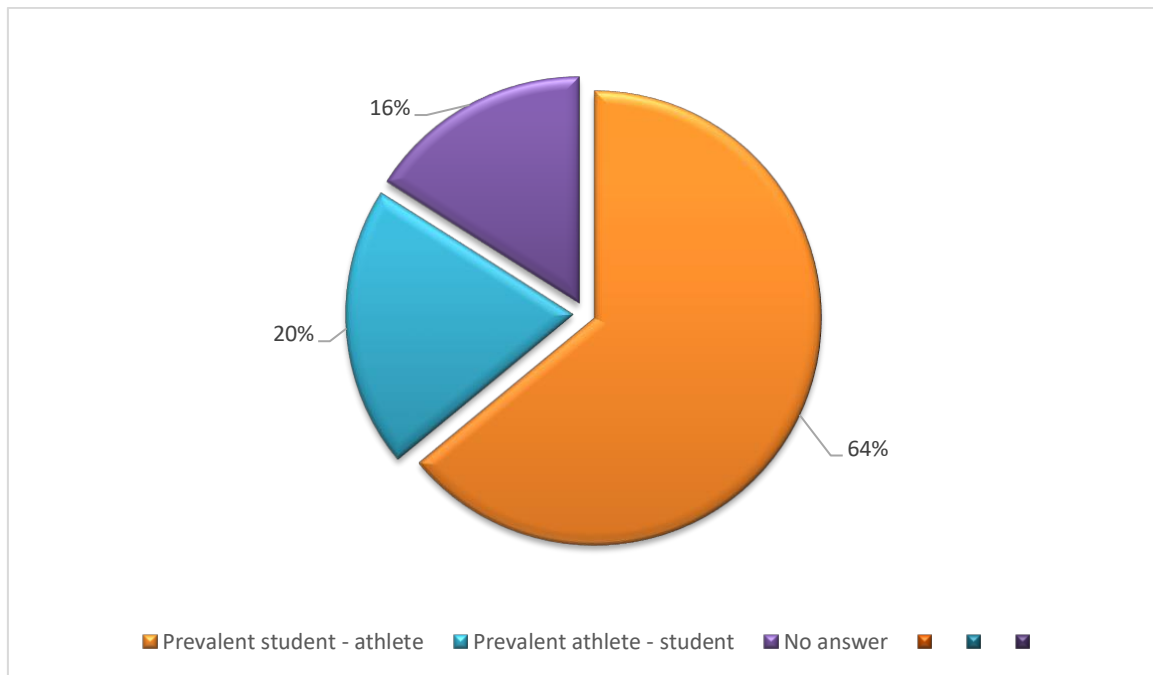


Figure 5. Self-perception related to dual career

In a predictable way, the subjects envision their future in a professional environment capable to support them and their families, so the educational approach seems decisive for this goal.

The focal point of this survey consists in identifying the barriers to the dual career of the participants, as perceived by them. For all ten assertions included in the item 22, the prevalent opinion indicated that subjects did not encounter relevant obstacles in pursuing the dual career. Still, some of them have a neutral opinion on the most of the assertions. The aspects that raised strong concern regarded the dual career pertained to the remote location of the training venues, the lack of support from the university, the inflexible academic schedule and the fatigue state.

The second type of the barriers for the dual career identified through the responses to item 23 revealed that for all fourteen assertions, subjects perceived in a majority opinion that physical exercise, negative feelings related to physical practice and family members were not considered as block roads to pursuing the dual career. The most important

concerns, even in a minority opinion, where related to the remote training venue, the sensation of fatigue, the lack of infrastructure and the less time spent with the family.

Processing the data from item 24 related to the meaning of sport on the personal level led to acknowledging levels of emotional involvement from medium to strong, for the majority of the respondents. A smaller percentage of the respondents lead to identifying a range of emotional involvement, from minimal to medium.

Obviously, sport is an important ingredient for wellbeing on physical, cognitive and emotional levels, as specially for the disabled persons. This unanimously recognised fact requires a special preoccupation of the educational, health and sport entities, in delivering instructional strategies and sport methodologies, both serving the dual career of the student athlete with disabilities.

Having as reference the above-mentioned barriers for the dual career, the surveyed participants provided pertinent points of view regarding the way the academic and respectively the sports entities could enable studies and sports activities at the same time. The study results revealed some important aspects to be addressed in the future by the decision makers: improving sport infrastructure, greater physical accessibility for attending sport venues, enhance financial support from sport clubs, as well as academic scholarships, flexible timetable agreed between sport clubs and universities / high schools, sport dedicated classes within the school timetable for non-profile universities and most important, moral support from universities and clubs and better cooperation between these two.

Another interesting idea emerged from the survey, was listing all the sport venues, indoor or outdoor which are accessible for the persons with disabilities without any subscriptions. Enlarging sport infrastructure within universities would also enable disabled students to embrace sports activities and participation in special or inclusive competitions.

Study limitations

An important limitation of this study was the number of participants. This was due to a lack of evidence for the disabled athlete students, which made very difficult the access to this population.

Generally speaking, in Romania, disabled persons have low access to academic studies fact which explain the difficulties encountered in this survey completion.

In contemporary society, diversity is seen as an important resource for progress in different areas, including education and sports. Diversity initiative in today education pertain to race, gender, ethnicity or level of abilities. Therefore, education, including tertiary education, has to develop instructional practices and educational models towards a more inclusive approach. Any subject included in academic or sport environment has to be seen as an equal partner and this can be operationalised through integrated education, differentiated instruction, collaborative approaches both in the areas of education and sports practice. In other words, the disabled athlete students are learning similar content, but with individually – tailored adapted methodologies.

In conclusion, the data emerging from this study stress the importance of a better access to tertiary education including sports participation without discrimination, on an equal basis with others. Such research data emphasise the weaknesses and strengths of the education and sport system in Romania, at the same time opening new possibilities to improve the dual career for the student athletes with disabilities. Replicating this study on a larger scale would be a more meaningful manner to generalise the results and raise pertinent evidence-based proposals in this area.



DUAL CAREER OF STUDENT-ATHLETES WITH
DISABILITIES AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

PARA-LIMITS

EXECUTIVE REPORT

Field Research Activities – QUESTIONNAIRE (qualitative analysis)

PARTICIPANT COUNTRIES

Spain, Italy, Romania, Ireland, Portugal

This executive report is part of the intellectual outputs of the project, namely the IO2, corresponding to the research activities, aimed at identifying obstacles, needs and barriers of the targeted group, in their sports and academic careers and commitments, according to their personal characteristics.

This evidence-based information, emerged from a sociological survey will serve as a starting point in developing a guide to boost the dual career among athletes with disabilities and creating an innovative course for the university staff as sports mentors specialized in student-athletes with disabilities. Further on, the creation of the Observatory on Dual Career, Disability and Sport will sustain the positive projected outcomes of this model beyond the completion of the project.

This report includes:

- the National reports which collected relevant information from the 5 partner countries
- a comparative qualitative analysis of the main topical aspects of the survey.

ORGANISATION

UCAM with the cooperation of ONCE



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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Results
3. Discussion and conclusions

1

INTRODUCTION

Eighty-seven Spanish Paralympic athletes have completed the survey. A 62.1% (n=54) were men and 37.9% (n=33) were women, from 15 to 44 years-old.

A 6.9% (n=6) were studding Obligatory Secondary Education, a 34.5% (n=30) were studding professional education, a 44.8% (n=39) were studying a university degree, a 10.3% (n=9) were studying a master degree, and a 3.4% (n=3) were studying a doctorate.

A 40.2% (n=35) had physical disability; a 19.5% (n=17) had visual disability; a 21.8% (n=19) had hearing disability; a 23% (n=20) had cerebral palsy; and a 1.1% (n=1) had other type of disability.

An 8% (n=7) competed at university level; 58.6% (n=51) competed at national level; 20.7% (n=18) competed at European level; 37.9% (n=33) competed at world level; 27.6% (n=24) competed in the Olympic Games and 13.8% (n=12) competed at other levels.

2

RESULTS

A 33.3% (n=29) of the participants considered themselves sportingly professional; a 41.4% (n=36) were semi-professional; and a 25.3% (n=22) were amateur. A 54% (n=47) considered themselves as student-athletes; and a 46% (n=40) considered themselves as athlete- students.

A 52.9% (n=46) considered that they were at the beginning of the competition at the high level; a 35.6% (n=31) at the peak of their sporting level; and a 11.5% (n=10) at the end of their sporting career.

A 23% (n=20) also worked, while a 77% (n=67) did not work.

Regarding their main source of income, a 35.6% (n=31) had the sport as main source of income, a 23% (n=20) had a job outside sport, a 47.1% (n=41) had the family as main economic support and a 17.2% (n=15) had other main source of income.

A 55.2% (n=48) of the participants felt that their studies interfered with their sporting performance and 44.8% (n=39) felt that there was no such interference. On the other

hand, 50.6% (n=44) considered that their sports performance influenced their studies, while 49.4% (n=43) considered that there was no such interference. Regarding the level of difficulty in reconciling sport and academic life, a 2.3% (n=2) considered it very easy, a 13.8% (n=12) considered it easy, a 42.5% (n=37) considered it regular, a 32.2% (n=28) considered it difficult and a 9.2% (n=8) considered it very difficult.

The main barriers identified by the athletes for the success of the dual career were:

- The university is far from my training centre (n=41 vs n=28).
- I do not have enough support from the university (n=38 vs n=29).
- Study schedules are not flexible (n=40 vs. n=27).
- Spend more time thinking about sport than anything else (n=54 vs. n=24).
- They feel bad about themselves when they do badly in sport (n=49 vs. n=25).

With regard to their conception of themselves as athletes, the most salient points were:

- Exercise makes me tired (n=49 vs n=38).
- I think that when people wear sports clothes, they look good (n=66 vs n=21).

Finally, also on their conception of themselves as sportsmen and women, it is worth noting that:

- Consider themselves athletes (n=65 vs. n=14).
- They have many sport-related goals (n=68 vs. 14).
- Most of their friends are athletes (n=52 vs n=25).
- Sport is the most important part of their life (n=60 vs n=16).
- They would feel depressed if they were injured and could not compete in sport (n=56 vs n=24).

In relation to the qualitative answers, the participants responded that the university could facilitate the dual career through:

- 1. Flexibility of timetables (54.12%).
- 2. Being more permissive when handing in assignments (14.67%).

- 3. With the introduction of a personal tutor for support (13,76%).
- 4. Through a greater number of financial aids (12,84%).
- 5. Promoting adapted transport or eliminating physical barriers (4,61%).

Finally, the participants responded that sport institutions or federations can facilitate dual careers through:

- 1. Institutional agreements / scholarships (40.28%).
- 2. Flexibility between competitions and academic calendar (38.89%).
- 3. Direct contact with educational institution (11.11%).
- 4. Improvement of facilities / proximity to facilities (9.72%).

3

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, Spanish dual career disabled athletes consider themselves to be athletes first and foremost, they consider that there is interference between their academic and sporting life and that reconciling both is not easy.

The main barriers come from the academic field, highlighting the distance from the study centre, the support from the university and the lack of flexibility in timetables.

Universities could improve the dual career of athletes with more flexible schedules and sports federations through agreements with institutions/scholarships.

These aspects should be reviewed in order to facilitate the success of the Paralympic athlete in the two main areas of his or her dual career.



DUAL CAREER OF STUDENT-ATHLETES WITH
DISABILITIES AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

PARA-LIMITS

Field Research Activities - QUESTIONNAIRE

COUNTRY

Italy

ORGANISATION

University of Rome “Foro Italico”

1

INTRODUCTION

In this study, 3 different non-probabilistic sampling strategies were used:

1) reasoned choice: the referents of the national section of the CIP (Italian Paralympic Committee) of the regional sections of the CIP, of the different sport federations recognised by the CIP and of the CNUUD (National University Conference of Disability Delegates), were contacted by phone to clarify the aims of the project, define sample criteria and collaboration request. The phone call was followed by an email with the link to the questionnaire to be circulated among student-athletes with disabilities.

2) convenience sampling: we tried to recruit other candidates directly networking at the University of "Foro Italico". All athletes with disabilities currently enrolled in any degree course at the university of Foro Italico were involved.

3) snowball sampling: In the confirmation message at the end of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to share the link with other student-athletes with disabilities.

A total of 66 questionnaires were completed.

Recruitment began on September 10th, 2021 and responses were received from September, 19th to January, 30th, 2022.

Many questionnaires were self-completed online. Only 12 subjects (18,9%) were submitted to structured face-to-face interviews. The interview answers were copied in paper questionnaires and then aligned to the online format.

2

RESULTS

2.1 Preliminary analysis

4 respondents were cleared out due to inconsistency with the sample selection criteria. In particular, the deleted respondents were neither university students, nor enrolled in a training course or in the last year of high school.

In total, the actual sample consists of 62 respondents.

2.2- Socio-demographic characteristics

The main results regarding socio-demographic variables and sporting activity are shown in tables 1.

We recorded 40 male respondents (64,5%) e 22 female ones (35,5%). Their age ranges from 16 to 38 year (M=22,6).

30 (48,4%) subjects are currently enrolled in the Bachelor degree (BA), 16 (25,8%) are in their final year of high school, 12 (19,4%) are mastering in Sports studies (MA students) , 2 (3,2%) a master and 2(3,2%) a professional training course.

Table 1 - Main socio-demographic variables

		N (%)	Mean (SD)	Range
Age			22,6 (5,2)	16-38
Sex	Male	40 (64,5)		
	Female	22 (35,5)		
Geographical origin	North	28 (45,2)		
	Center	26 (41,9)		
	South	8 (12,9)		
Study	High School (last year)	16 (25,8)	30 (14,9)*	2-70
	Under degree	30 (48,4)		
	Master degree	12 (19,4)		
	Post-graduate	2 (3,2)		
	Vocational education	2 (3,2)		
Disability Type	Phyical	19 (30,6)		
	Auditory	16 (25,8)		
	Visual	15 (24,2)		
	Cerebral palsy	11 (17,8)		
	Other	1 (1,6)		
Disability	Mild/Minimal	23 (37,1)		

level	Sever	39 (62,9)		
Working	Yes	11 (17,7)		
	No	51 (82,3)		
Main source of income**	Disability pension	10 (16,1)		
	Family	42 (67,7)		
	Work (outside sport)	11 (17,7)		
	Sport	6 (9,7)		
* Hours a week dedicated to study; ** the sum exceeds the total because it was possible to choose more than one answer option				

The educational institutes to which they are affiliated are mainly located in Northern Italy (N=28; 45,2%) and Centre Italy (N=26; 41,9%), while the south of Italy is barely represented (N=8; 12,9%).

19 (30,6%) subjects have a physical disability, 16 (25,8%) have a hearing impairment, 15 (24,2%) have a visual impairment, 11 (17,8%) a cerebral palsy and 1(1,6%) have an intellectual disability.

For most of them, the family is an important source of financial support, while sport is declared as a source of income only for 6 subjects (9,7%).

Table 2 – Main data on Sport

		N (%)	Mean (SD)
Competition*	Regional Championship	6 (9,7)	
	Italian Championship	57 (91,9)	
	European Championship	29 (32,2)	
	World Championship	10 (16,1)	
	Paralympic Games	8 (12,9)	
Level	Amateur	26 (41,9)	
	Semi-professional	29 (46,8)	
	Professional	7 (11,3)	
Stage	Start	37 (59,7)	
	Higher level	29 (32,2)	
	End	10 (16,1)	
Time dedicated to Sport			10,6 (3,6)
* the sum exceeds the total because it was possible to choose more than one answer option			

Almost all student-athletes participate in different kinds of competitions: 57 (91,9%) participate in the Italian championship, 29 (32,2%) in the European championship, 10 (16,1%) in the world and 8 (12,9%) in the Paralympic Games. In addition, 6(9,7%) participate in the Regional championship¹.

Respondents considered themselves to be semi-professional athletes in 29 cases (46,8%), amateur in 26 cases (41,9%) and professional 7 cases (11,3%). In addition, 37 (59,7%) claim to be at the beginning of their career, 29 (32,2%) at the top level of their career and 10 (16,1%) towards the end of their career.

As expected, there was a positive correlation between the phase of the sport's career and age ($r=.409$; $p<.01$), while the level of activity carried out (amateur, semi-professional or professional) correlates with the time dedicated to sport².

More than 2/3 of the sample perceives itself as a student-athlete (N=45; 72,5%). Student-athletes tend to focus on higher education path (in terms of time, commitment and objectives) and consider it crucial for building a career other than sports, as they don't believe that sport will ever become a real profession and/or allow them to achieve their financial independence ("volleyball won't give me a living"; "I like sport a lot, but I don't think it will ever become my profession"; "sport is a hobby I'm very keen on and I'm willing to sacrifice myself for it, but it won't give me a living"; "I have to study to have a future"; etc.).

On the other hand, 17 (27,4%) consider themselves as athlete-students. These subjects tend to put his/her passion/commitment in the first place. ("I have always been more interested in sport than in education"; "I love sport more and education is not as much"; "sport is the most fulfilling thing for me"; "sport has always been at the very core of my life"; etc.).

2.3 - Barriers to dual career

¹ The sum of the percentage points exceeds the total of 100 because it was possible to tick more than one answer.

² To determine the correlation index, the categorical variables 'career stage' and "activity level" were transformed into an ordinal variable on a 3 points scale.

When asked 'how difficult is it to manage sports and study?', just over half of the sample answered, 'so and so'. (N=33; 53,2%), no one thinks it is 'very easy' and few think it is 'easy'. (N=10; 16,1%). Almost 1/3 of the sample thought it was "difficult" (N=17; 27,4%) or "very difficult". (N=2; 3,2%).

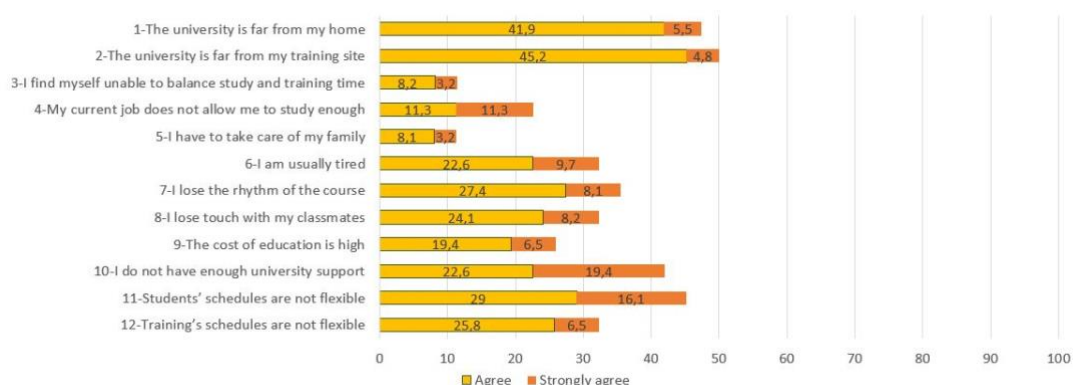
29 (46.8%) subjects felt that their studies interfered with their sporting performance and admitted to having some personal difficulty in effectively balancing their commitments on the two dimensions due to either lack of time or time overlapping between classes, exams on the one hand, training and competitions on the other. 30 (48,4%) subjects also felt that their sporting performance affected their studies.

Answers to items 15 and 16, although not perfectly overlapping, are significantly associated ($V=.690$; $p<.01$)³. In fact, as many as 87,5% of subjects for whom studies affect sports performance, the opposite is also true.

The dual career barrier scale has an average of 2,7 (SD=0,7), has a very high internal consistency ($\alpha=0,815$). Moreover, as we might expect it correlates positively with item 18 "How difficult is it to match sporting activity with study?". ($r=0,390$; $p<0,01$).

The percentage frequencies of those who agree or completely agree with the statements are shown in the diagram in Figure1.

Figure 1 – Barriers to Dual Career (Percentage)



The total of the percentage frequencies shows that the main factors perceived as barriers to achieve a good balance between sporting life and studies are: "The university is far

³ Cramer's V index for categorical variables was used to measure the degree of association.

from my training site” (item 2) (50%); “The university is far from my home” (item 1) (47,4%); “Students’ schedules are not flexible” (item 11) (45,1%), and “I do not have enough university support” (item 10) (42%).

Other significant barriers are “I lose the rhythm of the course (item 7) (35,5%); “Training’s schedules are not flexible” (item 9) (35,3%); “I lose touch with my classmates”(item 8) (32,3%) and “I am usually tired’ (item 6) (32,3%).

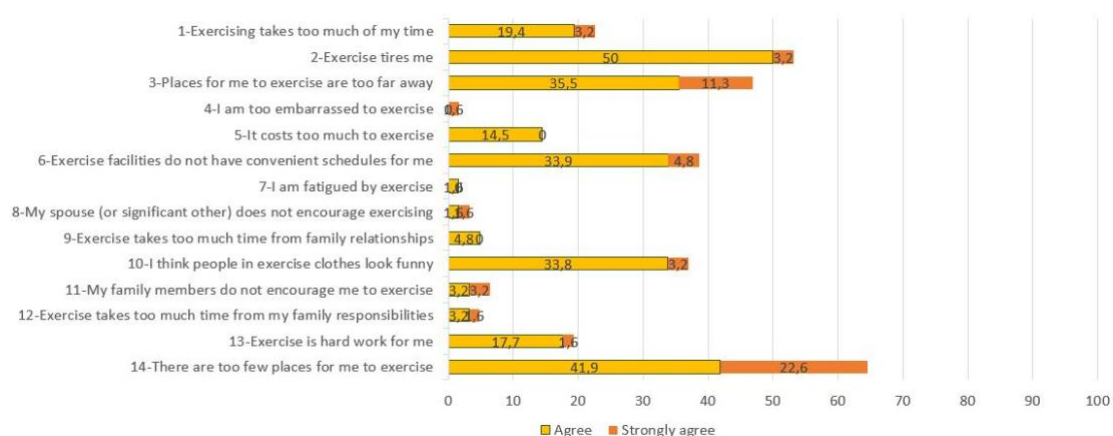
Finally, factors that are not perceived so much as barriers are “The cost of education is high (item 9) (25,9%); “The current job does not allow me to study enough” (item 4) (22,6%); “I find myself unable to balance study and training time (item 3) (11,4%) and “I have to take care of my family “(item 5) (11,3%).

2.4 - Barriers to exercise

The scale of barriers to exercise has a mean of 3,175 (DS=0,4), shows a good internal consistency ($\alpha=0,794$), and correlates negatively whit the barriers to dual career scale ($r=-0,350$; $p<0,01$)⁴.

The percentage frequencies of those who agree or completely agree with the statements are shown in diagram in Figure 2.

Figure 2 – Barriers to Exercise



⁴ it should be note that the responses to the items of the barriers to exercise scale are inversely coded with respect to the dual career scale (1=Strongly agree; 2=agree; 3=disagree; 4=Strongly disagree).

The total of the percentage frequencies shows that contextual barriers are: “There are too few places for me to exercise” (item 14) (64,5%), “Places to exercise are too far away” (item 3) (46,8%), and “Exercise facilities do not have convenient schedules for me” (item 6) (38,7%). Another significative barrier is “Exercise tires me” (item 2) (53,2%).

Other barriers that are not as much significant as those mentioned but still important are “I think people in exercise clothes look funny” (item 10) (37%), “Exercising takes too much of my time” (item 1) (22,6%), “Exercise is hard work for me” (item 13) (19,3%), and “It costs too much to exercise” (item 5) (14,5%).

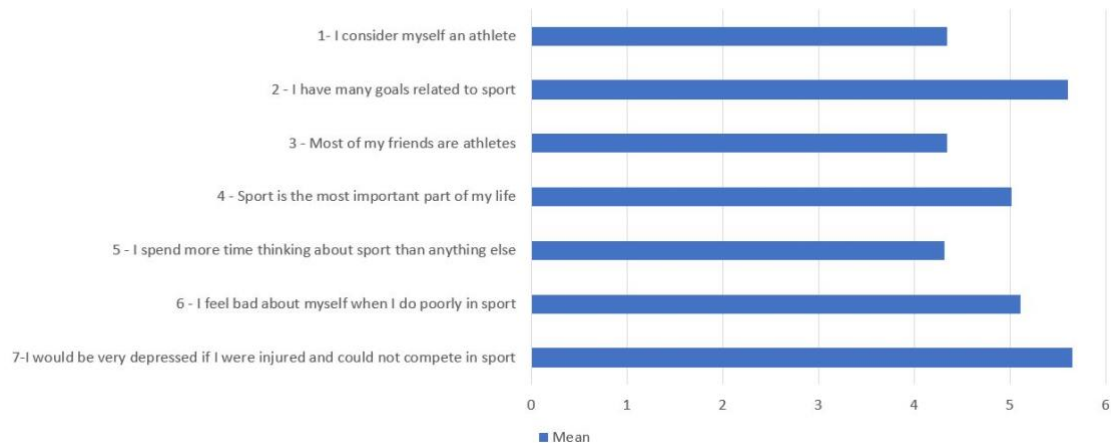
The lowest barriers do not exceed the threshold of 7%. Four (4) out of these refer to the family context: "Exercise takes too much time from my family responsibilities" (item 12), "My family members do not encourage me to exercise" (item 11), Exercise takes too much time from my family relationships "(Item 9) and" My spouse (or significant other) does not encourage exercising "(item 8). These are followed by personal factors “I am fatigued (tired) by exercise "(item 7), and" I am too embarrassed to exercise "(Item 4).

2.5 – Athletic Identity

The Athletic Identity scale ranges from 3,14 to 6,85, 5,05 mean (SD=0,95); and it shows a good internal consistency ($\alpha=0,807$). Furthermore, as expected, Athletes-students have a significantly higher average than student-athletes (5.84 vs 4.75; $F = 20.829$; $p < 0.01$).

Diagram in Figure 3 shows the distribution of item mean values.

Figure 3 – Items of the Athletic Identity Scale



3

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Due to the lack of a census of student-athletes with disabilities, a probabilistic sample selection strategy was not applied. So, the results cannot be generalised to the reference population.

Despite the small sample used for this study, regarding the main socio-demographic variables (age, sex, areas of study, types and gravity of disability, level of sports practice and disciplines practiced) the sample is quite heterogeneous.

It emerged also a certain degree of internal consistency thus reassuring with what concerns the results' reliability. The scales used showed a good level of internal consistency and several analyses confirmed the expected results. Furthermore, regarding the barriers to dual carrier and exercise, comparison between the results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses are consistent/coherent (Item 24, 25) as discussed in the previous report.

First, although the athletic identity is quite high (mean value 5 considering a scale from 1 to 7), just 9 subjects (11.3%) consider themselves professionals, only 6 (9.7%) declare that sport is among the sources of income. Second, most subjects consider themselves as student-athlete and prefer to invest more time and energy in studying, because they doubt that sports will ever become a real profession and / or allow provide them economic independence.

These preliminary results must be interpreted in the light of a national cultural-legislative context that still does not recognize the professional status of the vast majority of sports disciplines and in which only a few very lucky athletes are able to obtain some economic recognition.

Considering these premises almost half of the sample felt that their studies interfered with their sports performance and vice versa, while more than 1/3 found it difficult to balance their sports and study commitments.

The data revealed that the many multifaceted barriers to dual careers are related to both the personal and environmental spheres, confirming the importance of a holistic approach.

However, among the main barriers that emerged we find the lack of flexibility in the study programs and support from the university, suggesting that the Dual Career paths of student-athletes with disabilities could be facilitated starting from organizational interventions like the introduction of recorded lessons or sessions of additional exams, and the introduction of a figure with a tutoring function to support the athlete in the university career.

These preliminary results are very consistent with the results of a previous study carried out with Italian student-athletes without disabilities⁵. The authors of this study concluded their analysis of a sample of 711 units by stating that “the flexibility (and not the reduction) of the academic demands could represent the first step to support student-athletes in dual career” and that “better schedules of lessons and exams could represent the most crucial solutions to effectively combine sport and academic demands”⁶.

In addition to these organisational factors, there are other, more structural factors, which seem to affect students with disabilities, and which relate to the well-known lack of accessible facilities and services.

⁵ Brustio, P.R., Rainoldi, A., Mosso, C.O., Lopez de Subijana, C., Lupo, R. (2020). Italian student-athletes only need a more effective daily schedule to support their dual career. “*Sport Sciences for Health*”, 16, 177-182.

⁶ Brustio et al. (2020), pp. 181-182.

Over 60% of the sample complained about the lack of facilities for training, around 33% felt they were too far away, and around 44% felt that the distance between university and training centres was an obstacle to dual careers.

As already discussed in the qualitative analysis report (item 24 and 25), a large part of the respondents believe that dual career paths could be facilitated if universities offered student athletes space and time to train and if sports federations provided more accessible sports facilities to people with disabilities as well as well-equipped training centres.

Finally, it should be considered that for approximately 33% of the sample, the loss of contact with fellow students represents a further barrier to dual careers. This leads us to believe that the involvement of course mates is a fundamental component of any tutoring programme.

Further investigation will be necessary to analyze differences between the groups related to the main socio-demographic variables.



DUAL CAREER OF STUDENT-ATHLETES WITH DISABILITIES AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

PARA-LIMITS

Field Research Activities - QUESTIONNAIRE

COUNTRY

ROMANIA

ORGANISATION

UNIVERSITATEA NATIONALA DE EDUCATIE FIZICA SI SPORT BUCHAREST

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1. Introduction
2. Results
3. Discussion and conclusions

1

INTRODUCTION

The situation of the disabled people in Romania has become topical especially after 1989, when the State Secretariate for the Disabled (SSD) was set up.

Once the paradigm shift occurred with regard to the notion of disability – from the medical to the social approach – and once the Convention on the rights of the disabled (2006) was adopted, the notion of disability falls into the category of human rights-related issues. In keeping with the legislation which fights discrimination, the principle of equality amongst citizens, the exclusion of privileges and discrimination are also safeguarded with regard to exercising the right to take part on equal terms in cultural and sports activities.

In order to secure the access of the disabled to culture, sports and tourism, public administration authorities must undertake the following specific measures:

- support the participation of people with disabilities and their families to cultural, sports and touristic events;
- organize – based on cooperation or partnership with legal entities, public or private – cultural, sports and leisure events and activities;
- provide adequate conditions for the practice of sports activities by people with disabilities;
- support the activity of sports organizations involving people with disabilities.

The 2016-2020 national strategy „A society with no hurdles for people with disabilities” and the operational plan on implementing the national strategy (Official Monitor nr. 737/2016) provide for the access and participation of people with disabilities to nonformal educational programmes and contexts, cultural, sports, leisure and recreational activities, shaped for their specific requirements and interests.

Although legal provisions are introduced within education and sport activities areas, National data on students with disabilities are scarce, the same reality applying on the student-athletes with disabilities. There is no evidence-based analysis regarding the disabled who completed tertiary education, nor those who are involved in sport activities.

In this context, our study supports the idea of collecting valuable data on the dual career of the student athletes with disabilities and the barriers they have to face in this attempt.

For this purpose, a sociological tool was created by adapting an already existing Questionnaire about the perceptions of dual career student-athlete (ESTPORT)⁷.

Our questionnaire consisted in 26 items among which were 5 opened-ended and 21 closed questions. For a clear data interpretation of the main ideas, the items were divided into the following topics:

- socio-demographic data
- sport-related data
- studies-related data
- barriers dual career
- ideas for improving the dual career.

The questionnaire was filled in by 50 participants (35 males, 14 females, 1 other). All of them were informed about the aim of the study and voluntarily gave their consent. The subjects could skip different questions and had the freedom to withdraw from the study at their will. There were no inclusion criteria, except for the disability status, educational background and type of disability.

Participants were selected from several universities enrolling disabled persons, some NGO's which promote sports activities for disabled, and special education high schools, being applied no sampling techniques. The participants are originated in Bucharest, Targoviste, Cluj Napoca, Iasi, Targu Mures, Galati, Brasov, etc.

Data collection took place between August 2021, up to January 2022.

The questionnaire was completed online, some of the subjects (visually impaired) using the dictation in order to fill in the questionnaire.

⁷ Sánchez-Pato, A., Calderón, A., Arias-Estero, J.L., García-Roca, J.A., Bada, J., Meroño, L., Isidori, E., Brunton, J., Decelis, A., Koustelios, A., Mallia, O., Fazio, A., Radcliffe, J., Sedgwick, M., 2016. Design and validation of a questionnaire about the perceptions of dual career student-athletes (ESTPORT). *Cultura, Ciencia y Deporte* 11, 127–147.. doi:10.12800/ccd.v11i32.713va

2

RESULTS

2.1 Socio-demographic data

In this section, the data presented relate to some socio-demographic, working status and **disability profile**. We present in Table 1 the descriptive data emerged from the questionnaire.

Table 1 - Socio-demographic variables

		N	%	Mean
Age				33,32
Sex	Male	35	70	
	Female	14	28	
	Other	1	2	
	Total	50		
Level of education	High School (last year)	24	48	
	Licence degree	16	32	
	Master degree	7	14	
	Ph.D.	1	2	
Time dedicated to studies (hours/week)	Under 5	7	14	
	6 - 12	6	12	
	13 - 20	4	8	
	21 - 30	2	4	
	31 - 40	4	8	
	Above 40	2	4	
Disability Type	Physical	22	44	
	Auditory	5	10	
	Visual	14	28	
	CP	3	6	
	Other	4	8	
Disability level	Minimal	1	2	
	Moderate	14	28	
	Severe	31	62	
Working activity	Yes	22	44	
	No	27	54	
Working hours / week	Under 10	1	2	
	10 – 20	3	6	
	20 – 40	11	22	
	Above 40	1	2	
Source of income	Sport	3	6	
	Work	15	30	
	Family	16	32	
	Others	15	30	

2.2 Sport/exercise related data

The project team was focused on identifying several sports practice variables, which we find useful for assessing the way the dual career might be influenced by this type of aspects.

Table 2 – Data on sports practice variables

		N	%	Mean
Sport performed	Individual sports	21	42	
	Team sports	11	22	
	Combat sports	4	8	
	Artistic sports	1	2	
	Multiple sports	10	20	
Types of competitions attended	National competition	11	22	
	University competition	1	2	
	European Championships	3	6	
	World Championship s	10	20	
	Paralympic Games	6	12	
	Others	16	24	
Level of sport practice	Amateur	24	48	
	Semi-professional	15	30	
	Professional	10	20	
Stage in sports career	Beginner competitor	23	46	
	Peak level competitor	12	24	
	Final sport career	10	20	
Sport practice interfering with studies	Yes	10	20	
	No	38	76	
Level of difficulty in combining sport with education	Very easy	11	22	
	Easy	10	20	
	Neither easy nor difficult	17	34	
	Difficult	3	6	
	Very difficult	7	14	
Training hours / week	Under 10	24	48	
	10 – 20	14	28	
	20 – 40	4	8	

As noticed in Table 2, the surveyed participants practice different sports branches, with a prevalence of the individual sports, followed by team sports. Also, data revealed that 24% of the group practice multiple sports. Regarding the types of competitions attended the majority of the respondents (76%) participate in the official competitions, while 24% practice leisure sport activity as a hobby, health-related, pleasure or socialising mean.

Regarding sport practice which interfered with studies, the participants provided the following details:

- some of the respondents were able to schedule sport training after the academic courses, during the day;
- some participants acknowledged that the sports profile academic studies helped sports practice, so that the training process was perceived as more efficient;
- the negative interference was due to parallel sports trainings and academic / non-academic courses.

2.3 Studies – related data

The dual career is obviously influenced by the studies-related variables which are presented in the following.

Table 3 – Interference between studies and sport

		N	%	Mean
Studies interfering with sport activities	Yes	14	28	
	No	35	70	

The respondents who admitted that their studies interfered with sports practice provided the following explanations in this respect (Table 3):

- most of the times training practice took place at the same time with the academic studies, fact which hindered the possibility to properly attend both activities;
- the pandemic period was somehow beneficial to this dual career because the respondents managed to attend sports practice and courses simultaneously.

Table 4 – Self-perception related to dual career

		N	%	Mean
Self-perception related to dual career	Student / people / employee - athlete	32	64	

	Athlete - student / people / employee	10	20	
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The distribution of the results regarding the prevalent perception of the participants was further explained through the following detailed aspects (Table 4):

- most of the subjects perceive themselves as student – athletes, as on the long term, sport activities cannot be a source of income for them and for their families. Also, those who practice leisure sport activities focus on health-related exercises and physical therapy;
- studies, either at high school, university or master levels are the primary focus of our respondents, in view to prepare for a future profession and professional integration.

2.4 Barriers to dual career

Explicitly, the items of the questionnaire also addressed the barriers to dual carrier encountered by the participants in the survey. The following tables include the descriptive data pertaining to the university and physical exercise – induced limitations.

Table 5 – Barriers to dual career related to university

		Totally disagree	Partially disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Partially agree	Totally agree
University or high school are far from home	N	11	3	21	6	7
	%	22	6	42	12	14
University or high school are far from the training venue	N	11	8	12	5	11
	%	22	16	24	10	22
Lack of time for attending both activities	N	20	8	6	7	6
	%	40	16	12	14	12
Have to take care of my family	N	21	3	3	8	11
	%	42	6	6	16	22
I feel tired	N	13	4	12	8	9

	%	26	8	24	16	18
Lose tempo in my academic studies	N	20	5	7	11	2
	%	40	10	14	22	4
Lose contact with my colleagues from the university	N	18	7	8	10	2
	%	36	14	16	20	4
High tuition fees	N	18	7	8	7	6
	%	36	14	16	14	12
Lack of support from university	N	20	3	6	5	13
	%	40	6	12	10	26
Inflexible academic schedule	N	15	6	6	7	12
	%	30	12	12	14	24

Table 5 emphasizes the main limitations of the dual career which hierarchically refer to: inflexible academic schedule (38%), taking care of the family (38%), lack of the support from university (36%), the fatigue (34%), remote distance from the training venues (32%), remote distance from home, lack of time for dual career, lost tempo in the academic studies and high tuition fees (26%).

Table 6 – Barriers to dual career related to physical exercise

		Totally agree	Agree	Disagree	Totally disagree
Physical exercise takes too much time	N	3	7	17	20
	%	6	14	34	40
Physical exercise is tiresome	N	4	9	14	21
	%	8	18	28	42
Physical exercise venue is remote	N	4	10	17	17
	%	8	20	34	34
I do not feel comfortable when I practice physical exercise	N	7	6	11	25
	%	14	12	22	50
Physical exercise costs are too high	N	6	6	14	22
	%	12	12	28	44
Inconvenient timetables for physical exercise	N	7	4	17	19
	%	14	8	34	38

I feel tired when I exercise	N	5	10	9	24
	%	10	20	18	48
Family does not encourage me to exercise	N	3	3	9	32
	%	6	6	18	64
Physical exercise takes time from my family activities	N	4	8	12	24
	%	8	16	24	48
Sport equipment is funny	N	7	10	9	22
	%	14	20	18	44
Family members do not encourage me to exercise	N	3	3	8	34
	%	6	6	16	68
Physical exercise reduces time for family responsibilities	N	4	4	16	24
	%	8	8	32	48
Physical exercise is exhausting for me	N	3	1	16	27
	%	6	2	32	54
There are few training venues	N	19	10	8	11
	%	38	20	16	22

Table 6 emphasizes the main limitations of the dual career, induced by the physical exercise, which hierarchically refer to: few training venues (58%), fatigue (30%), remote training venues (28%), tiresome physical exercise (26%), discomfort associated to physical exercise (26%), high physical exercise costs (24%), time taken from the family activities (24%), inconvenient timetable for physical exercise (22%), too much time taken by physical exercise (20%).

As human perception is a fluid, personal experience, it greatly impacts how we think and feel about the reality around us. Exploring the prevalent athletic perception or study-oriented perception, gives us an insight about what is really the most important status that the subjects connect to. This reference might shape their future personal and professional development (Table 7).

Table 7 – Personal perception about sport significance

		Totally disagree 1	2	3	4	5	6	Strongly agree 7
I perceive myself as an athlete	N	3	4	6	9	4	5	17
	%	6	8	12	18	8	10	34
I have multiple sport-related objectives	N	3	5	5	10	7	4	14
	%	6	10	10	20	14	8	28
Most of my friends practice sports	N	2	7	6	16	4	5	9
	%	4	14	12	32	8	10	18
Sport is the most important part of my life	N	3	5	8	6	6	3	17
	%	6	10	16	12	12	6	34
I think about sport more than anything else	N	5	6	9	8	4	6	10
	%	10	12	18	16	8	12	20
I feel bad when I have low sport results	N	7	8	8	8	3	4	10
	%	14	16	16	16	6	8	20
I would be depressed if a traumatic injury would hinder my sport activities	N	6	5	6	7	2	5	15
	%	12	10	12	14	4	10	30

Table 7 emphasizes the most relevant assertions related to sport as a personal and emotional experience, which hierarchically refer to: self-perception as athlete, sport as a key part of their life (52%), numerous sport-related objectives (50%), traumatic injury which hinders sport practice (44%), dominant thoughts about sport (40%), friends practicing sports (36%) and low sport results cause bad feelings (34%).

2.5 Ideas for improving dual career

In order to analyse the responses for item 25 regarding the way universities and high school support sport activities for the disabled students, we established several categories of aspects, emphasized by the respondents:

- flexible school timetable – 10,86%
- accessibility for attending sport venues – 13,04%
- sport-dedicated classes within the school timetable – 13,04%
- less mandatory school activities – 2,17%
- physical therapy as support for sport activities – 2,17%
- more support from teaching staff – 15,21%

- financial support – 6,52%
- sport infrastructure – 17,39%.

We mention that 80,4% from the whole group offered responses to this item, while 19,6% did not give their insight on this issue.

In order to analyse the responses for item 26 regarding the way sport clubs and federations support the studies of the disabled students, we established several categories of aspects, emphasized by the respondents:

- sport infrastructure – 8,69%
- financial support – 19,56%
- lack of interest from the clubs – 4,34%
- flexible timetable – 8,69%
- support from the club and a better cooperation with the university / high school – 19,56%
- more sport infusion in mainstream school environment – 2,17%
- Don't know – 10,86%.

We mention that 73,87% from the whole group offered responses to this item, while 26,13% did not give their insight on this issue.

3

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The socio-demographic data collected through questionnaire emphasised very diverse participants profiles in terms of age, level of education, disability type and level, academic activities, working activities, sports performed, level of sports practice and most important, interfered between sports practice and academic achievements.

The participants surveyed within this study have a mean of 33 years old, including subjects from adolescents, youth and young adult population. In terms of gender distribution, most of the subjects were male, in a percentage of 70%.

The sample of this study included participants attending last year of high school, graduate and post-graduate studies (Figure 1).

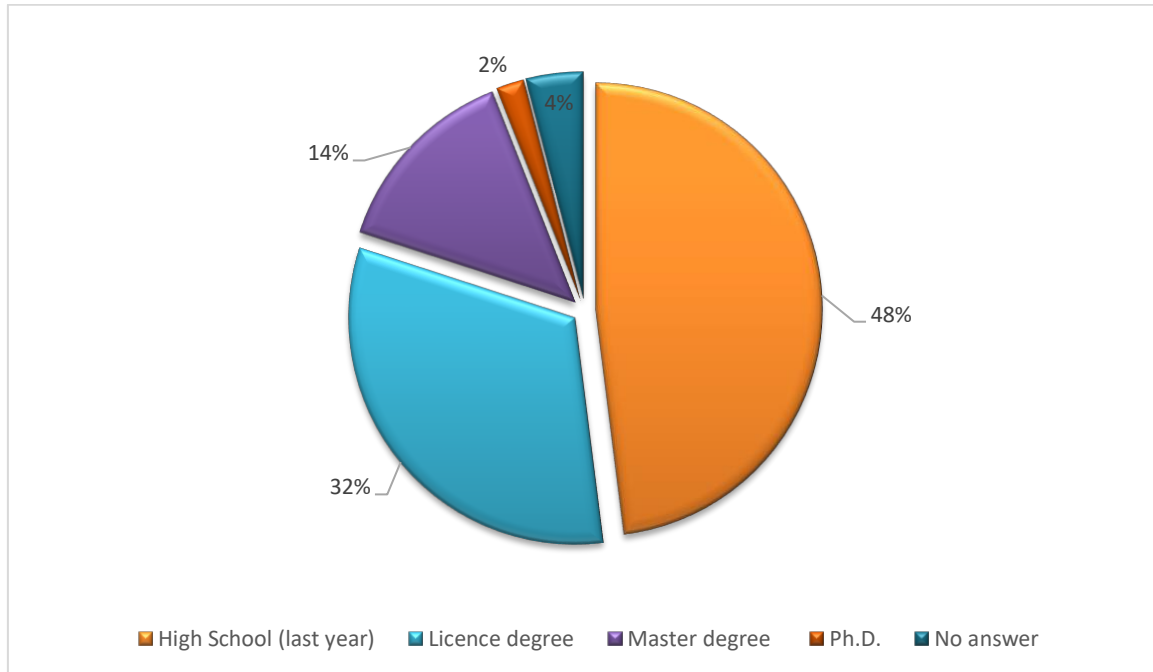


Figure 1. Level of education

Regarding the disability type of the respondents, we mention that the most prevalent was the physical impairment, aspect explained by the fact that most of the wheelchair users or other motor-limited subjects are perfectly capable of attending high education studies, due to their cognitive capacities. Hierarchically, the next special population completing this questionnaire was the visually impaired category who can achieve education goals if adapted psycho-pedagogical approaches are available (Figure 2).

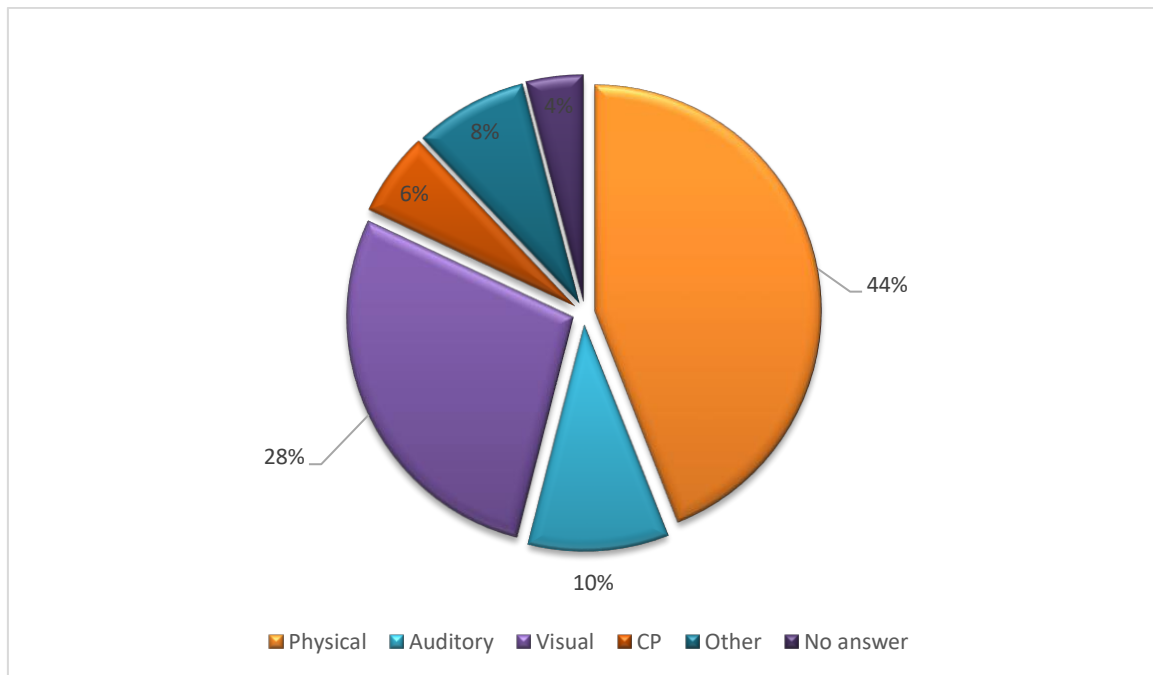


Figure 2. Type of disability

Most of the participants surveyed have severe health limitations, with a percentage of 62%, but, due to the compensation processes and positive self-acceptance they manage to attend graduate studies, post-graduate and even doctoral studies. Consequently, almost half of the respondents have professional activities, full time or part time, with different working loads per week, from 10 to 50 hours per week.

In terms of sport practice, the study highlighted a wide variety of aspects starting with the sport performed, types of the competitions attended, the level of sport practice, with of special focus on the interference between sport activities and academic path. The data revealed that the subjects practice individual sports, appropriate for their individual characteristics and needs, as well as team sports, combat sports or artistic sports, these covering the needs for social interaction, empowerment, surpassing their limits or emotionally fulfilling needs.

A significant part of the subjects attended European and World Championships, as well as the Paralympic Games, proving that physical, functional, motor and psychological progress is definitely achievable, if proper training and medical supports are provided on long term (Figure 3).

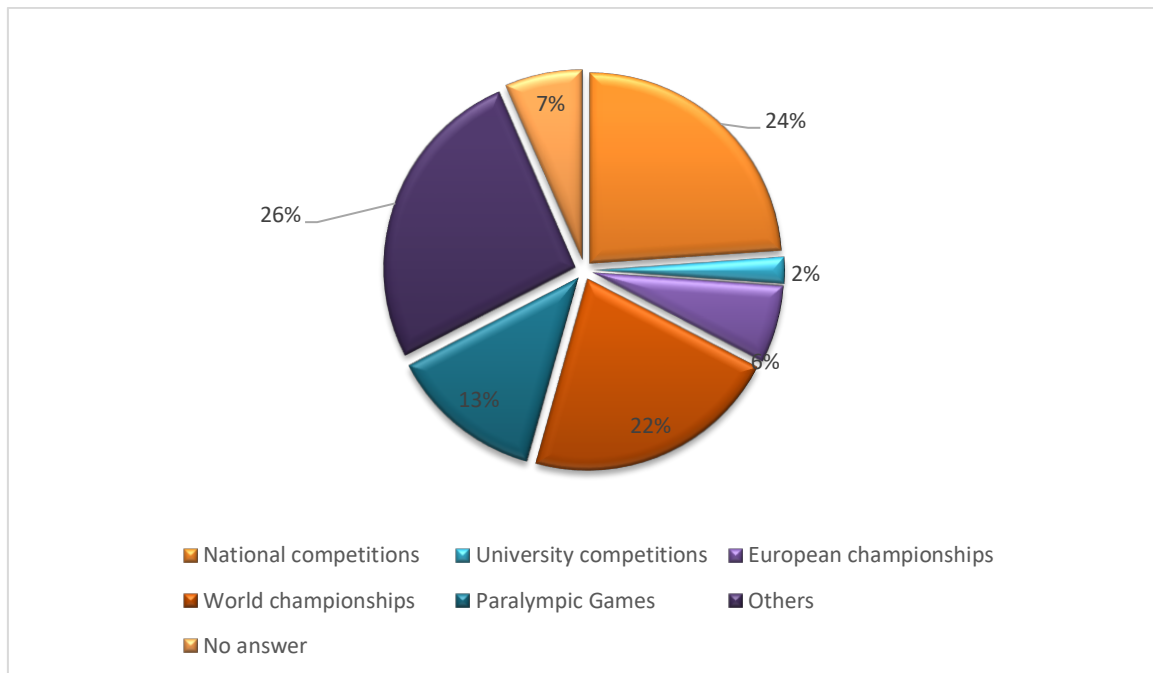


Figure 3. Types of competitions attended

A quarter of the subjects are committed to leisure sports and physical activities in order to have an increased level of fitness, relaxation time, pleasure or good quality of life.

Another central point of this survey was to identify the perception of the subjects related to the difficulty to combine sport and education, in other words the interference between these two activities. In this respect data highlighted that more than 75% of the subjects asserted that there was no interference between sport practice and academic endeavours, while 20% acknowledged this interference. In correlation, 42% of the respondents had no difficulties in combining sport and education, 20% experienced difficulties, while 34% of the subjects were neutral (Figure 4).

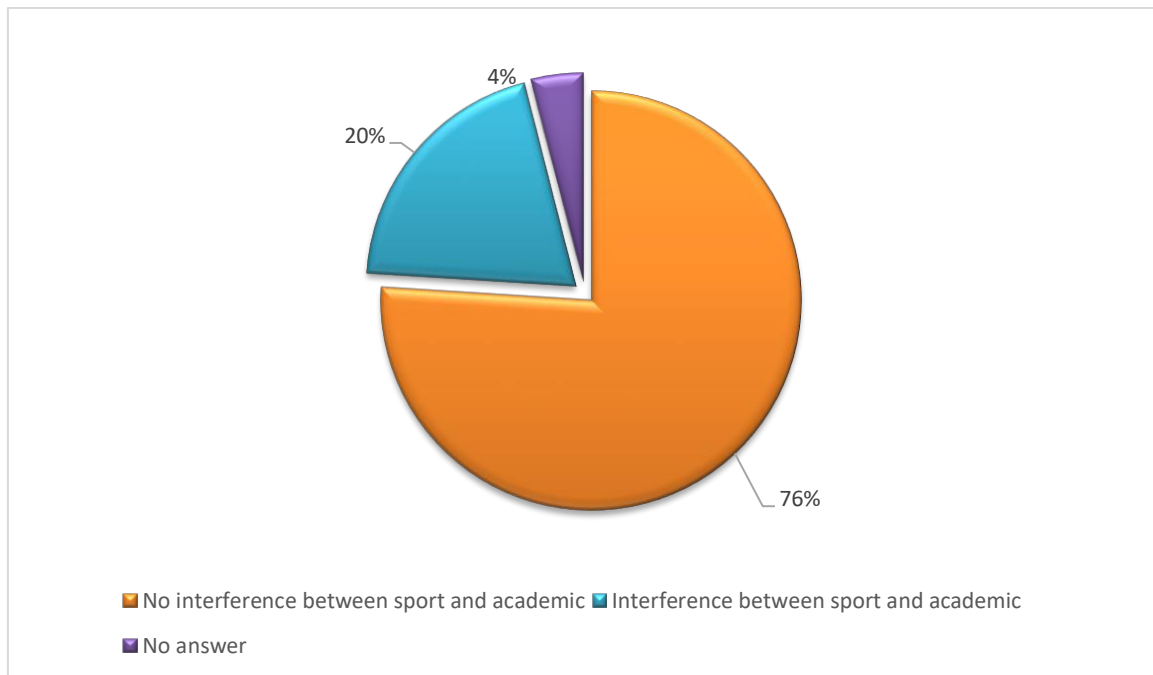


Figure 4. Sports interfering with studies

On this level the participants provided relevant explanations about the way they perceived this interference in terms of caring out in parallel sport training and academic courses. On the other hand, the subjects mentioned that attending sport profile universities helped them in better understanding and participating in the training process.

In terms of academic studies – related data, we noticed that the majority of respondents did not perceive any interference between studies and sport practice (70%) versus 28% who experienced this interference (Figure 5).

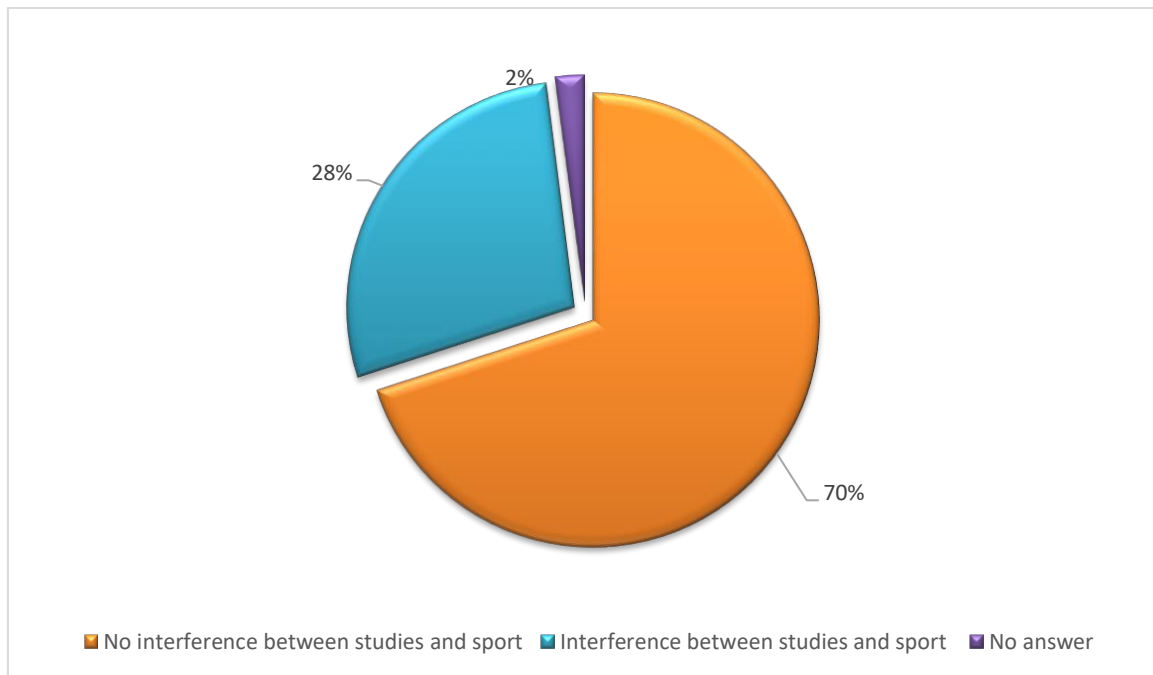


Figure 5. Studies interfering with sports

The explanations offered as arguments were related to simultaneous training practice and studies which obviously hindered the possibility to perform optimally in both areas. The online training approach delivered during the pandemic was perceived as positive for the dual career of the disabled students because they could attend at the same time both activities (at a formal level).

Item related to the way participants perceived themselves as student – athlete or athlete – student, indicated a clear prevalence of those who have as a primary goal achieving an academic degree, evidently linked to their future profession. This approach is in accordance with the indicated source of income, wherein sport is credited by only 6% of the whole group. For 20% of the respondents, the athlete status is prevalent to the student status (Figure 6).

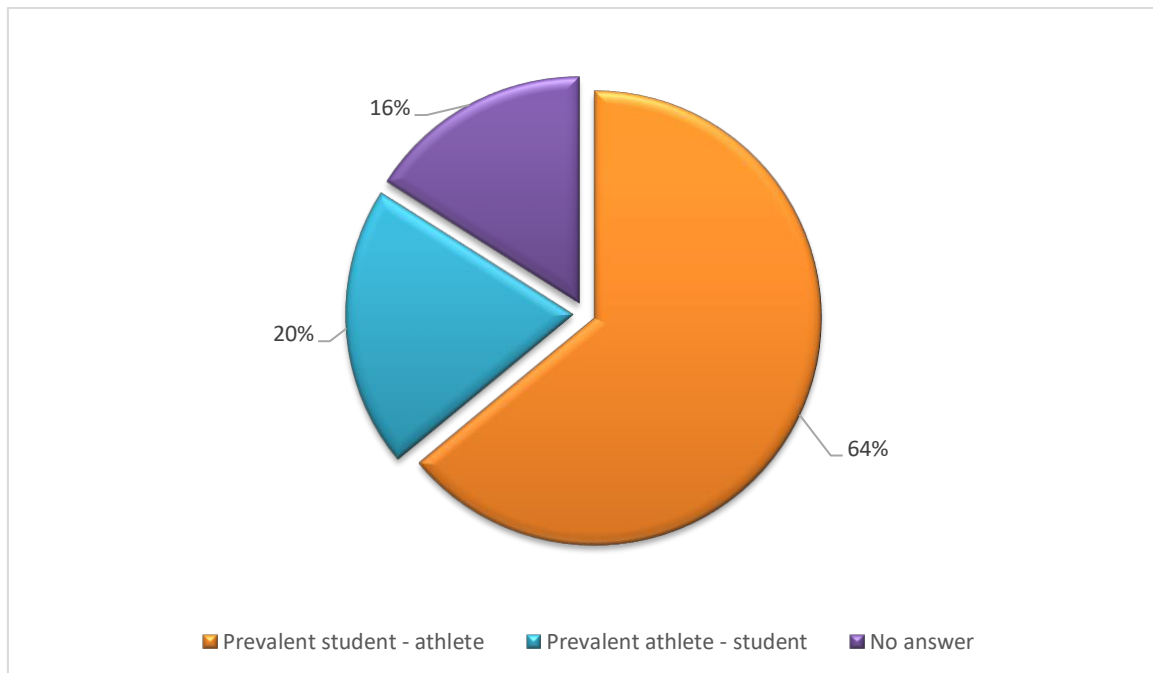


Figure 5. Self-perception related to dual career

In a predictable way, the subjects envision their future in a professional environment capable to support them and their families, so the educational approach seems decisive for this goal.

The focal point of this survey consists in identifying the barriers to the dual career of the participants, as perceived by them. For all ten assertions included in the item 22, the prevalent opinion indicated that subjects did not encounter relevant obstacles in pursuing the dual career. Still, some of them have a neutral opinion on the most of the assertions. The aspects that raised strong concern regarded the dual career pertained to the remote location of the training venues, the lack of support from the university, the inflexible academic schedule and the fatigue state.

The second type of the barriers for the dual career identified through the responses to item 23 revealed that for all fourteen assertions, subjects perceived in a majority opinion that physical exercise, negative feelings related to physical practice and family members were not considered as block roads to pursuing the dual career. The most important

concerns, even in a minority opinion, where related to the remote training venue, the sensation of fatigue, the lack of infrastructure and the less time spent with the family.

Processing the data from item 24 related to the meaning of sport on the personal level led to acknowledging levels of emotional involvement from medium to strong, for the majority of the respondents. A smaller percentage of the respondents lead to identifying a range of emotional involvement, from minimal to medium.

Obviously, sport is an important ingredient for wellbeing on physical, cognitive and emotional levels, as specially for the disabled persons. This unanimously recognised fact requires a special preoccupation of the educational, health and sport entities, in delivering instructional strategies and sport methodologies, both serving the dual career of the student athlete with disabilities.

Having as reference the above-mentioned barriers for the dual career, the surveyed participants provided pertinent points of view regarding the way the academic and respectively the sports entities could enable studies and sports activities at the same time. The study results revealed some important aspects to be addressed in the future by the decision makers: improving sport infrastructure, greater physical accessibility for attending sport venues, enhance financial support from sport clubs, as well as academic scholarships, flexible timetable agreed between sport clubs and universities / high schools, sport dedicated classes within the school timetable for non-profile universities and most important, moral support from universities and clubs and better cooperation between these two.

Another interesting idea emerged from the survey, was listing all the sport venues, indoor or outdoor which are accessible for the persons with disabilities without any subscriptions. Enlarging sport infrastructure within universities would also enable disabled students to embrace sports activities and participation in special or inclusive competitions.

Study limitations

An important limitation of this study was the number of participants. This was due to a lack of evidence for the disabled athlete students, which made very difficult the access to this population.

Generally speaking, in Romania, disabled persons have low access to academic studies fact which explain the difficulties encountered in this survey completion.

In contemporary society, diversity is seen as an important resource for progress in different areas, including education and sports. Diversity initiative in today education pertain to race, gender, ethnicity or level of abilities. Therefore, education, including tertiary education, has to develop instructional practices and educational models towards a more inclusive approach. Any subject included in academic or sport environment has to be seen as an equal partner and this can be operationalised through integrated education, differentiated instruction, collaborative approaches both in the areas of education and sports practice. In other words, the disabled athlete students are learning similar content, but with individually – tailored adapted methodologies.

In conclusion, the data emerging from this study stress the importance of a better access to tertiary education including sports participation without discrimination, on an equal basis with others. Such research data emphasise the weaknesses and strengths of the education and sport system in Romania, at the same time opening new possibilities to improve the dual career for the student athletes with disabilities. Replicating this study on a larger scale would be a more meaningful manner to generalise the results and raise pertinent evidence-based proposals in this area.



DUAL CAREER OF STUDENT-ATHLETES WITH
DISABILITIES AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

PARA-LIMITS

Field Research Activities – QUESTIONNAIRE (qualitative analysis)

COUNTRY

IRELAND

ORGANISATION (that carry out the qualitative analysis)

UCAM with the cooperation of ONCE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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2. Results
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1

INTRODUCTION

Seventeen Irish Paralympic athletes completed the survey. 64.7% (n=11) were men and 35.3% (n=6) were women, from 19 to 36 years-old.

66.7% (n=6) were studying a university degree, 26.7% (n=4) were studying a masters degree and 6.7% (n=1) were studying a doctorate.

70.6% (n=12) had a physical disability; 11.8% (n=2) had visual disability and 17.6% (n=3) had cerebral palsy.

5.9% (n=1) competed at university level; 76.5% (n=13) competed at national level; 58.8% (n=10) competed at European level; 17.6% (n=3) competed at world level; 23.5% (n=4) competed at the Paralympic Games and 17.6% (n=3) competed at other levels, (Marathon Major Series, EPYG Pajulati).

2

RESULTS

17.6% (n=3) of the participants considered themselves sportingly professional; 35.3% (n=6) were semi-professional; and 47.1% (n=8) were amateur. 35.3% (n=6) considered themselves as student-athletes and 64.7% (n=11) considered themselves as athlete-students.

68.8% (n=11) considered that they were at the beginning of the competition at the high level; 18.8% (n=3) at the peak of their sporting level; and 12.5% (n=2) at the end of their sporting career.

29.4% (n=5) also worked, while a 70.6% (n=12) did not work.

Regarding their main source of income, 23.5% (n=4) had sport as their main source of income, 35.3% (n=6) had a job outside sport, 17.6% (n=3) had the family as the main economic support and 52.9% (n=9) had other main source of income, e.g. disability allowance.

37.5% (n=6) of the participants felt that their studies interfered with their sporting performance and 62.5% (n=10) felt that there was no such interference. On the other

hand, 50% (n=8) considered that their sports performance influenced their studies, while 50% (n=8) considered that there was no such interference. On average participants spent approx. 26 ± 10 hours on their studies and 13 ± 6 hours on training and competitions. Regarding the level of difficulty in reconciling sport and academic life, 13.3% (n=2) considered it easy, 46.7% (n=7) considered it regular, 40% (n=6) considered it difficult.

The main barriers identified by the athletes for the success of the dual career were:

- The university is far from my training centre (n=8 vs n=6).
- I find myself unable to balance study and training time (n=8 vs v=5)
- I am usually tired (n=9 vs n=4)

With regard to their conception of themselves as athletes, the most salient point was:

- Exercise makes me tired (n=10 vs n=7).

Finally, also on their conception of themselves as sportsmen and women, it is worth noting that:

- Consider themselves athletes (n=10 vs. n=7).
- They have many sport-related goals (n=13 vs. n=2).
- Sport is the most important part of their life (n=13 vs n=4).
- I spend more time thinking about sport than anything else (n=16 vs n=4).
- I feel bad about myself when I do poorly in sport (n=10 vs n=5).
- They would feel depressed if they were injured and could not compete in sport (n=13 vs n=2).

In relation to the qualitative answers, the participants responded that the university could facilitate the dual career through:

- 1. Flexibility of timetables (n=9, 52.9%).
- 2. Scholarships and financial support (n=3, 17.7%)
- 3. Better communication (n=2, 11.8%)
- 4. Better access to facilities and supports (n=4, 23.6%)

Finally, the participants responded that sport institutions or federations can facilitate dual careers through:

- 1. Better lines of communication between institution and the university (n=3, 17.7%)
- 2. Flexibility (n=2, 11.8%).
- 3. Institution needs greater understanding of academic demands and needs to conduct player check ins (n=2, 11.8%)
- 4. Greater financial support (n=2, 11.8%)
- 5. Improvement of facilities and access (n=2, 11.8%).
- 6. Sport science support (n=2, 11.8%).

3

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, Irish dual career disabled athletes consider themselves to be athletes first and foremost, they consider that there is interference between their academic and sporting life and that reconciling both is not easy.

The main barriers come from the academic field, highlighting the distance from the study centre, and the difficulty in balancing study and training time. Feeling usually tired was identified as a barrier as well.

Universities could improve the dual career of athletes with more flexible schedules, better access to facilities and supports and by offering greater financial assistance and scholarships. Communication between universities and sporting institutions/ federations was identified as a method of improving dual career of athletes. In addition, sports federations can enhance the dual career of athletes by providing sport science support, financial assistance and by improving access to facilities.

These aspects should be reviewed in order to facilitate the success of the Paralympic athlete in the two main areas of his or her dual career.



DUAL CAREER OF STUDENT-ATHLETES WITH DISABILITIES AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

PARA-LIMITS

Field Research Activities - QUESTIONNAIRE

PORTUGAL

ORGANISATION

Instituto Politécnico de Viseu

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1. Introduction
2. Results
3. Discussion and conclusions

1

INTRODUCTION

- Sample size (number of participants).

Universe of current athletes and students: 11

Answers to the questionnaire: 10 (90%)

Universe of current athletes, but former students - 8 (Completed their studies in 2017-2018; 2018-2019)

Answer to the questionnaire - 3 (33.3%)

Total Universe - 19

Respondents to the questionnaire: 13 (68.4%)

- Type of sampling (how were participants selected?).

At an early stage, the Portuguese Olympic Committee and the Portuguese Federation of Sports for disabled were asked to list the identification of current high-level athletes with disabilities who attended higher education after their informed consent

With this list, and having verified that this group of individuals was small (11 in total), it is understood that it would be important to increase the number of individuals participating in this study. In this sense, a list of top-level athletes with disabilities who have attended and/or completed higher education in recent years were asked to these institutions. It was found that this group consisted of 8 individuals, who completed their studies between 2017-2018 and 2018-2019.

An email was then sent to all individuals on the two lists (19 in total) to invite them and raise their awareness for participation in this study by completing the respective questionnaire, accessed through the link included in that email.

After a week, as there was a reduced participation, the new email was sent to remind the invitation to participate in the study.

After another week, as participation continued to decline, all individuals were contacted by alternative means to recall the invitation made. Most individuals showed willingness to participate.

All athletes have given consent for this data to be passed on to us.

- Dates on which the data collection was carried out.

Data were collected between September 20 and October 8, 2021.

- How the questionnaire was completed (online, face-to-face or both).

The questionnaire was available for filling no link

<https://forms.gle/crLZaexg5MhJ3mSe7>

2

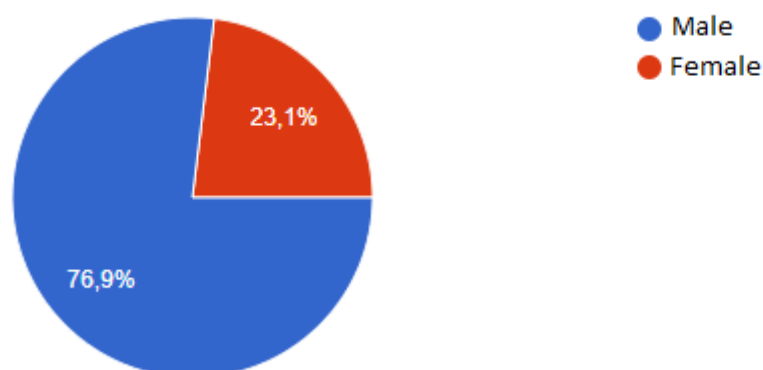
RESULTS

In this section the results of the questionnaire should be presented. To do so, both a qualitative approach (open questions, highlighting the main findings) and a quantitative approach will be used, providing descriptive data according to the type of question (frequency, percentage, arithmetic mean, etc.) and using tables whenever possible for a better understanding.

The presentation of results, according to the structure of the questionnaire, should be made under the following headings:

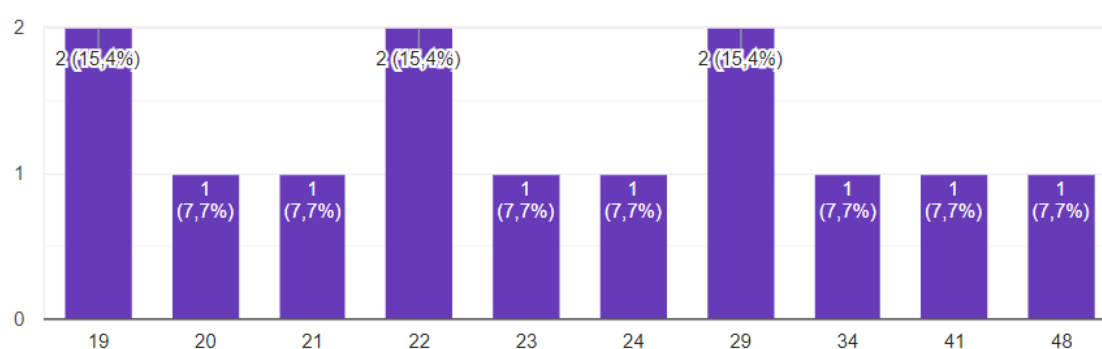
2.1 Socio-demographic data.

1 – SEX



Of the individuals who responded, 10 (76.9%) were male and 3 were female.

2 - Age



The majority (61.65%) of athletes are in the 19-25 age group.

3 - University:

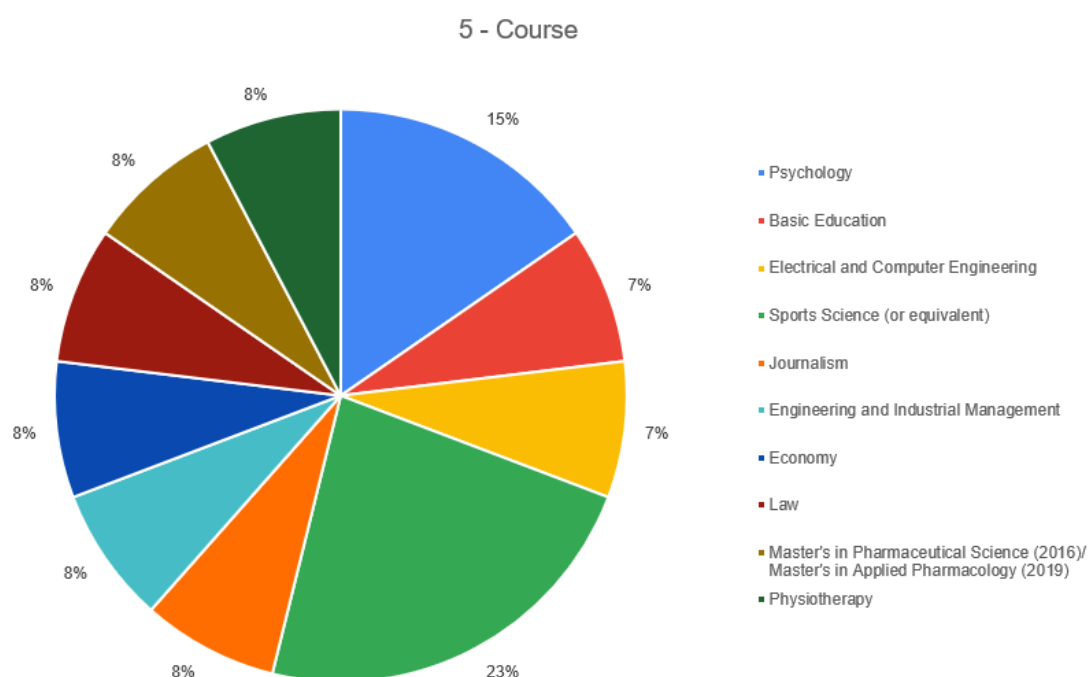
Athletes attend several institutions located on the coast of Portugal, namely in Lisbon, Porto, Coimbra and Aveiro.

4 - Course



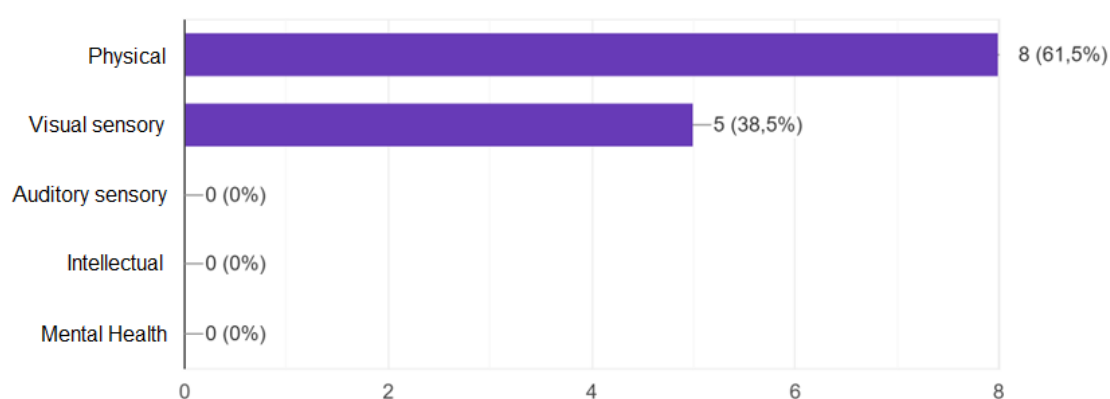
Most athletes (69.2%) attend a bachelor's degree.

5 - Course (Indicate 1,2,3,4...):



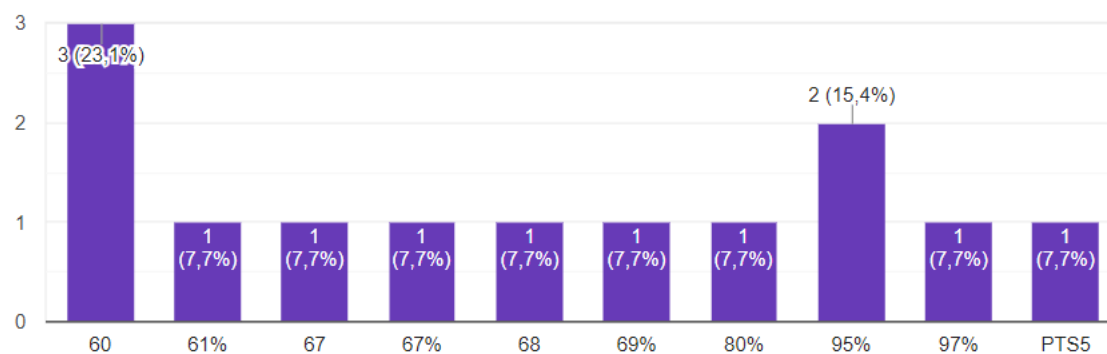
The areas of courses most attended by students are Sports Science (23%) and Psychology (15%). Others follow, such as Law, Basic Education, Physiotherapy, etc.

6 - Type of disability:



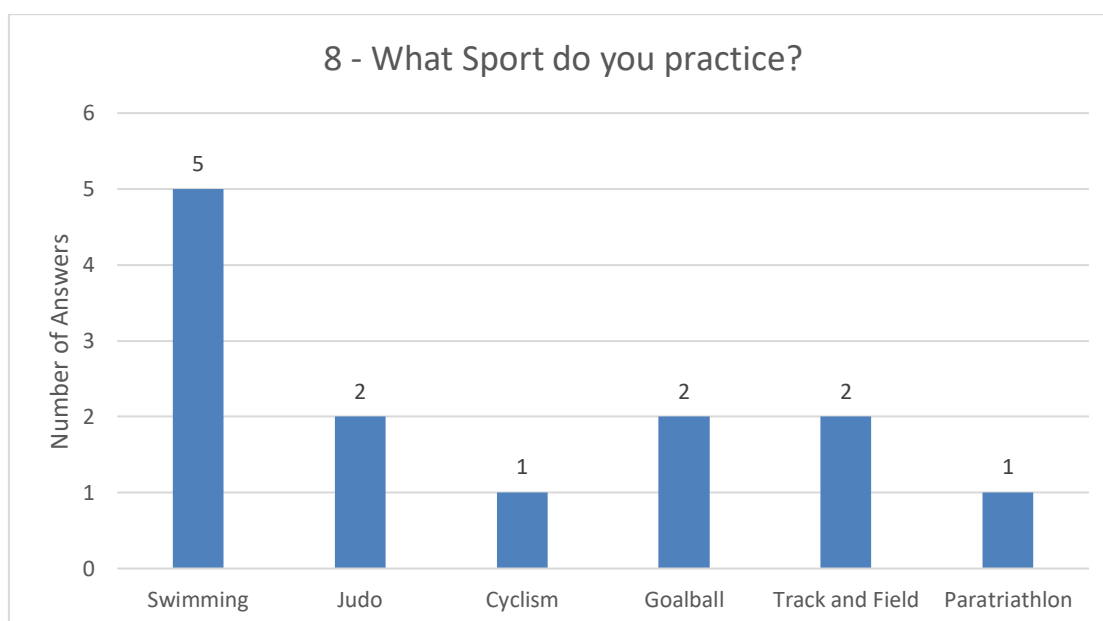
The most common type of disability among participating athletes is physical-motor (61.5%) followed by visual sensory (38.5%)

7- Degree of disability:



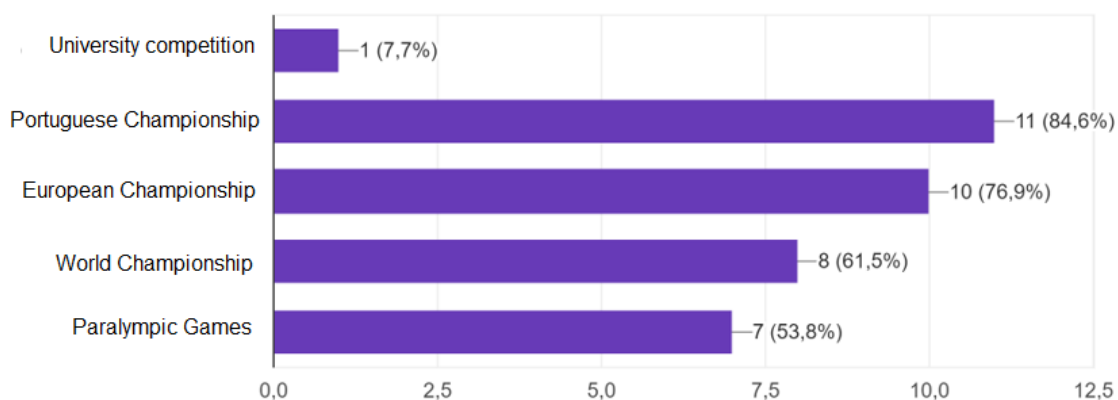
The majority (61.6%) are between 60 and 70% of incapacity

8- What sport do you practice?:



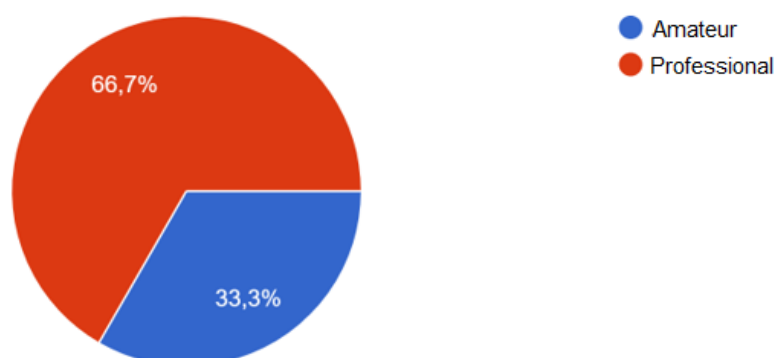
The most popular sport is swimming (38.4%), followed by judo, athletics (2) and goobal (each with 15.8%).

9- What level of competition do you participate in?



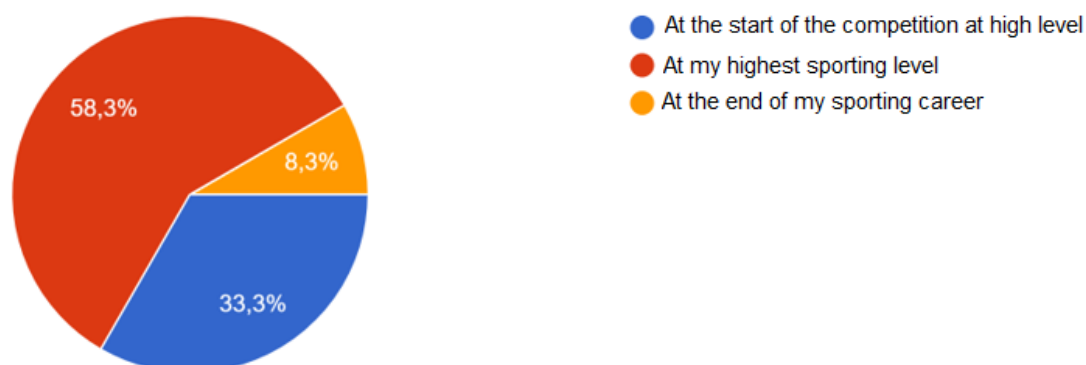
In international terms, the European championships are the competition with the most participations (84.6%). Next are the world championships (61.5%) and the Paralympic games (53.8%).

10- How do you consider yourself athletically?



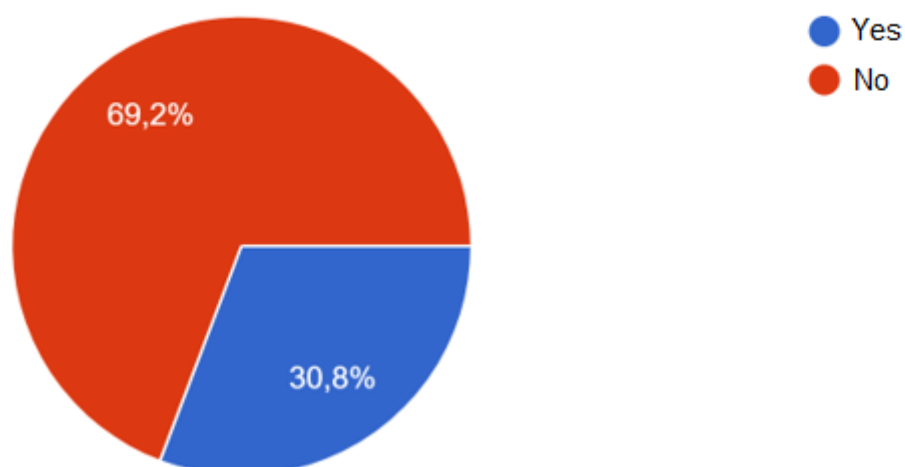
The majority (66.7%) of athletes have professional status.

11- Where are you in your high performance sporting career?



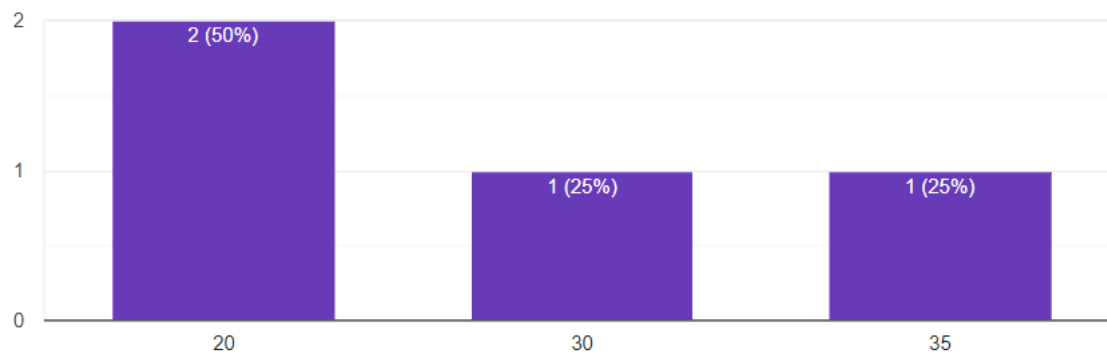
The majority (58.3%) of the athletes are in the highest phase of their career.

12- Do you work?



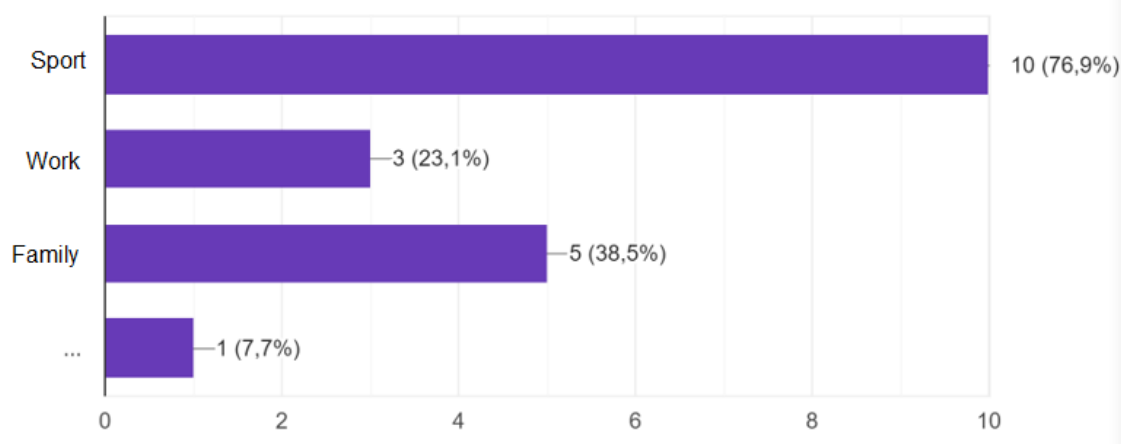
About 69.2% of athletes say they do not work.

Those who work say they do it in several areas: National Institute for Rehabilitation, Hospital Pharmacy, Sports and Physiotherapy.



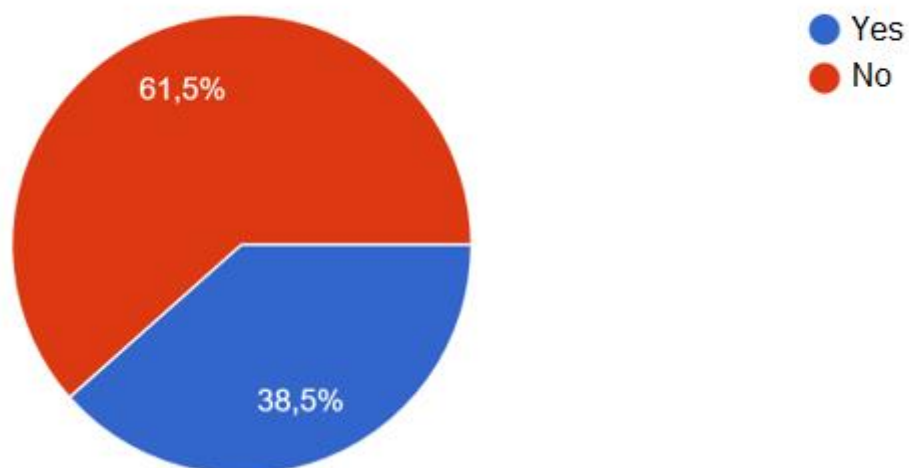
Regarding working athletes, 50% say they work 20 hours a week.

13- What is your main source of income? (tick as many options as are correct)



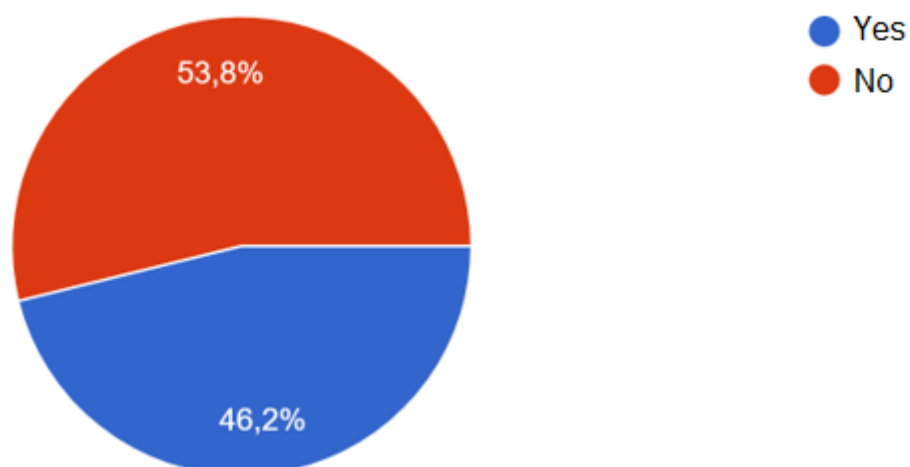
Most respondents (76.9%) say that their main source of income is sport. Family (38.5%) and work (23.1%) follow.

14- Do your studies interfere with your sporting performance?



Most respondents (61.5%) report that studies do not interfere with their sporting performance.

15- Does your sporting performance interfere with your studies?

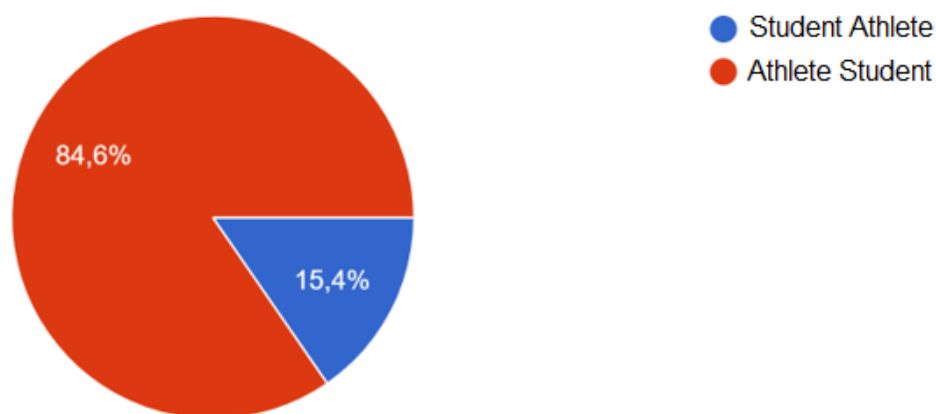


Most respondents (53.8%) say that their sporting performance does not interfere with their studies.

If yes, why?

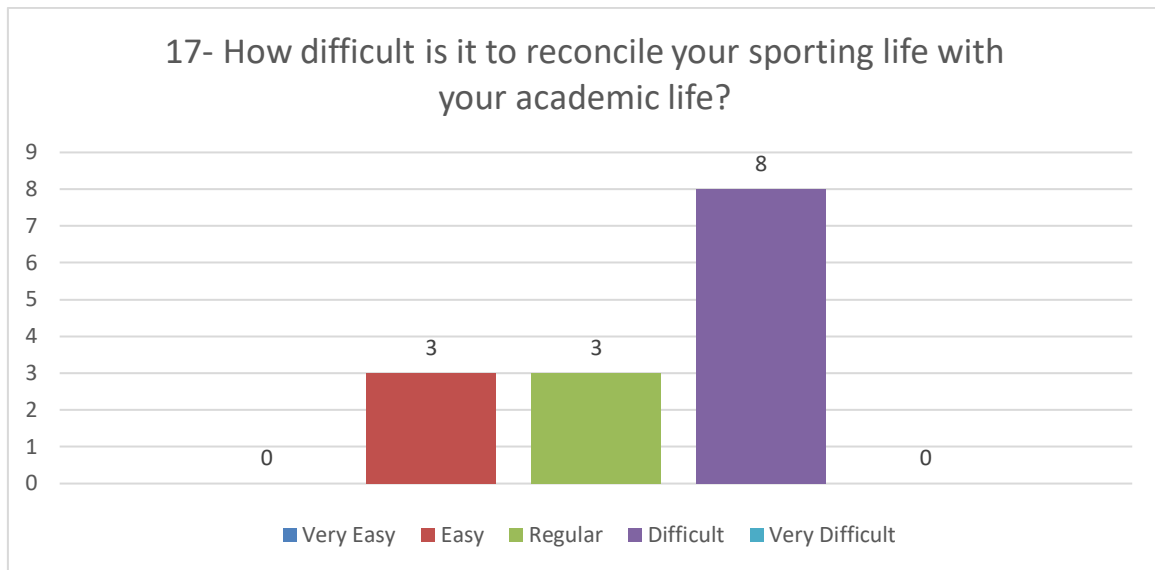
Those who claim that it interferes (46.2%), point to the following justifications: it takes a lot of daily effort to keep both dimensions with the desired performance; to reach the best competitive level implies being away from home and the country for a long time; there are important moments that require you to miss classes in order to go to European/World Championships. There are periods when it is very difficult to take hours from one to benefit the other; by the obligation to reconcile the two realities.

16- Do you consider yourself more of a...?



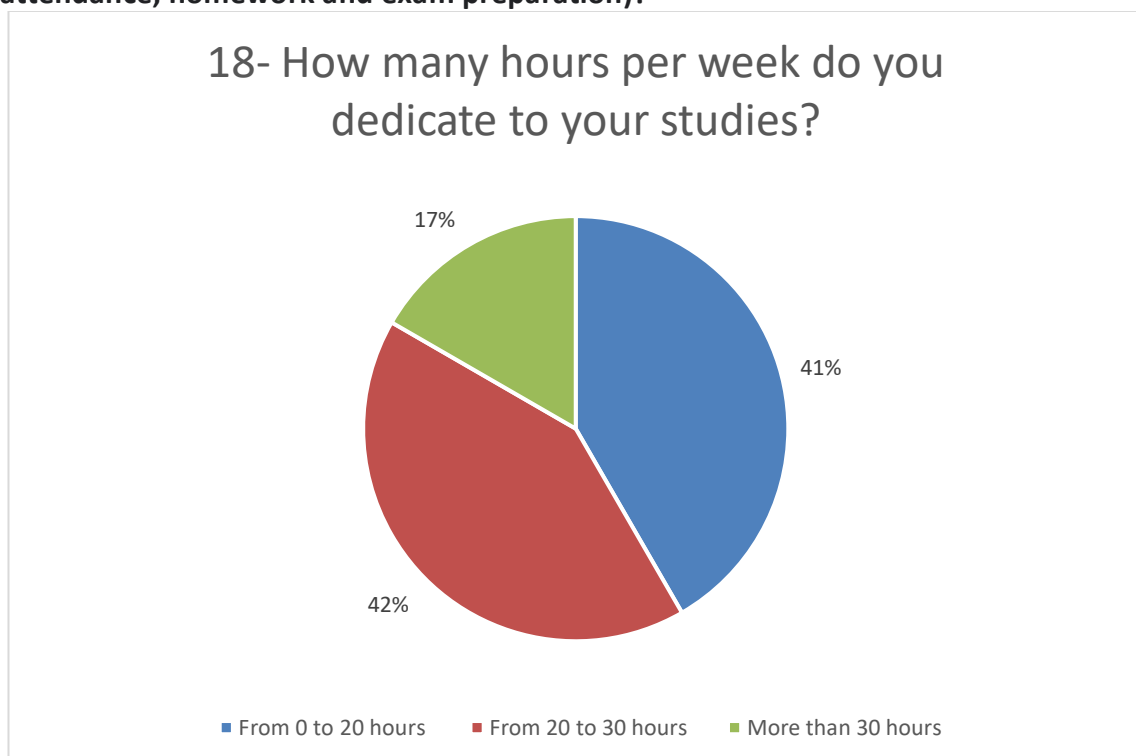
Most respondents (84.6%) say they consider themselves more of a student athlete.

17- How difficult is it to reconcile your sporting life with your academic life?



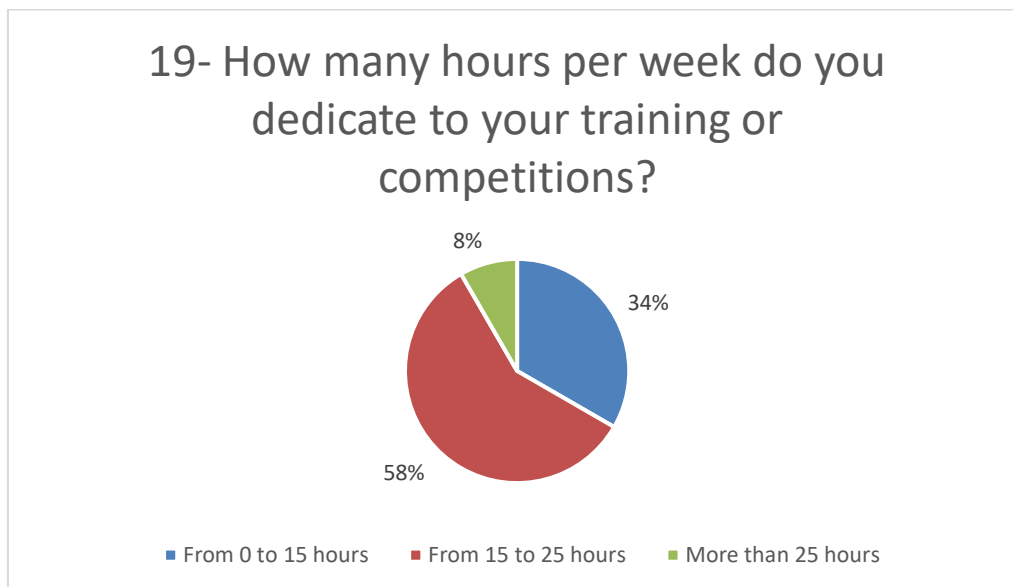
Most respondents (61.5%) say that it is difficult to reconcile their sporting and academic life.

18- How many hours per week do you dedicate to your studies (including class attendance, homework and exam preparation)?



About 42% say they dedicate between 20 to 30 hours to their studies, while 41% indicate between 0 to 20 and 17% dedicate more than 30 hours.

19- How many hours per week do you dedicate to your training or competitions?

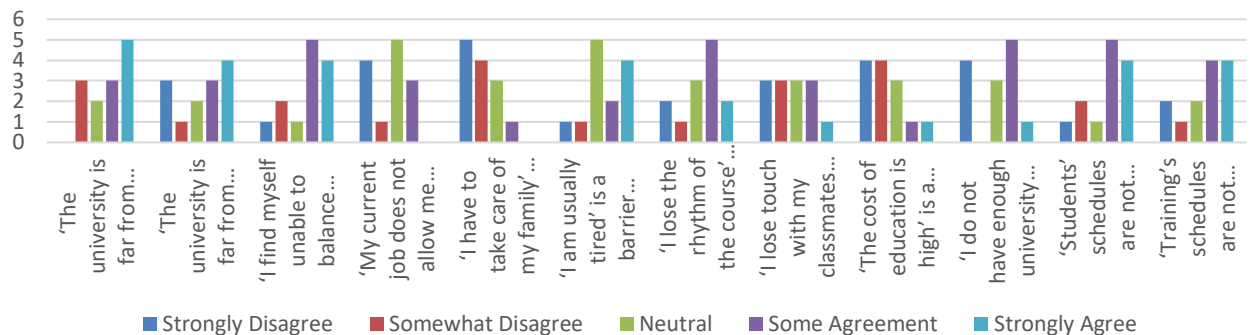


Most individuals (58%) report that they dedicate between 15 to 25 hours a week to training and competitions. Others (34%) indicate between 0 to 15 hours and 8% indicate more than 25 hours.

2.2 Barriers to dual career

20- Below are a series of statements about barriers to dual careers. Please mark the option that most closely matches your level of agreement with these statements:

20- Below are a series of statements about barriers to dual careers. Please mark the option that most closely matches your level of agreement with these statements:



Most respondents (61%) consider that “ The university is far from my home’ ” is a barrier to achieving a good balance between sporting life and their studies.

Most respondents (53.8%) say that “ The university is far from my training site’ ” is a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and studies.

The majority of respondents (69.2%) reported “ I find myself unable to balance study and training time’ ” is a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies.

About 38.4% neither agree nor disagree that "My current job doesn't allow me to study enough" is a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies. In turn, about 38.4% disagreed.

The majority of respondents (69.2%) disagreed that "'I have to take care of my family' " is a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies.

Only 45.1% agree that "'I am usually tired' is a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies.

The majority (53.85) agree that "I lose the rhythm of the course' " is a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies.

Only 46.1% disagreed that " I lose touch with my classmates' " constitutes a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies.

About 61.5 disagree that "The cost of education is high' " is a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies.

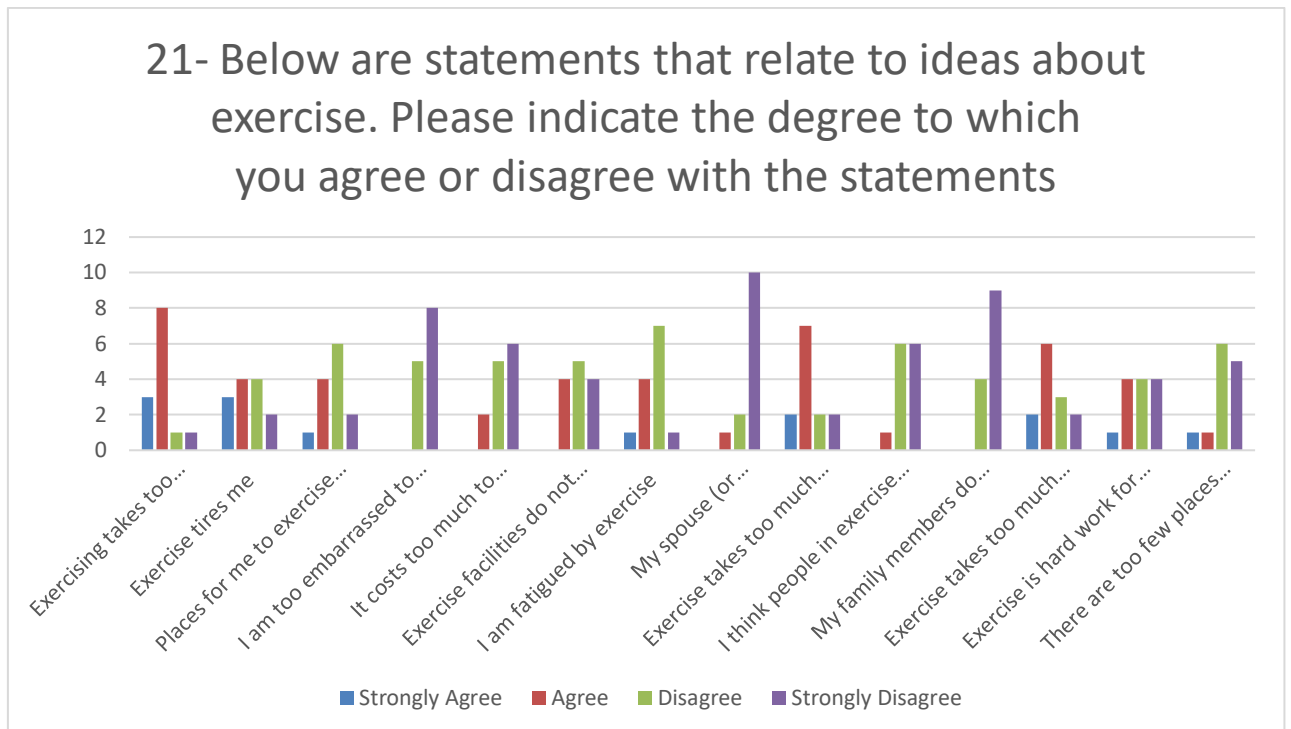
About 46.1% agree that "I do not have enough university support', which is a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies.

The majority (69.2%) agree 'Students' schedules are not flexible', which is a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies.

The majority (69.2%) of respondents agree "The training schedules are not flexible", which is a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies.

2.3 Ideas about exercise.

21- Below are statements that relate to ideas about exercise. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statements:



The majority (84.6) of respondents agree “ Exercising takes too much of my time ”.

About 53.8% agree that “ Exercise tires me ”.

A large part (61.5%) disagrees that " Places for me to exercise are too far away "

All respondents (100%) disagreed that “ I am too embarrassed to exercise ”

The majority (84.6%) of respondents disagreed that " It costs too much to exercise "

A large part (69.2%) disagrees that " Exercise facilities do not have convenient schedules for me

A large part (61.5%) disagrees that “ I am fatigued by exercise ”

The majority (76.9%) strongly disagree that " My spouse (or significant other) does not encourage exercising”

A large part (69.2%) agrees that " Exercise takes too much time from family relationships"

The overwhelming majority of respondents (92.3%) disagreed that “ I think people in exercise clothes look funny ”

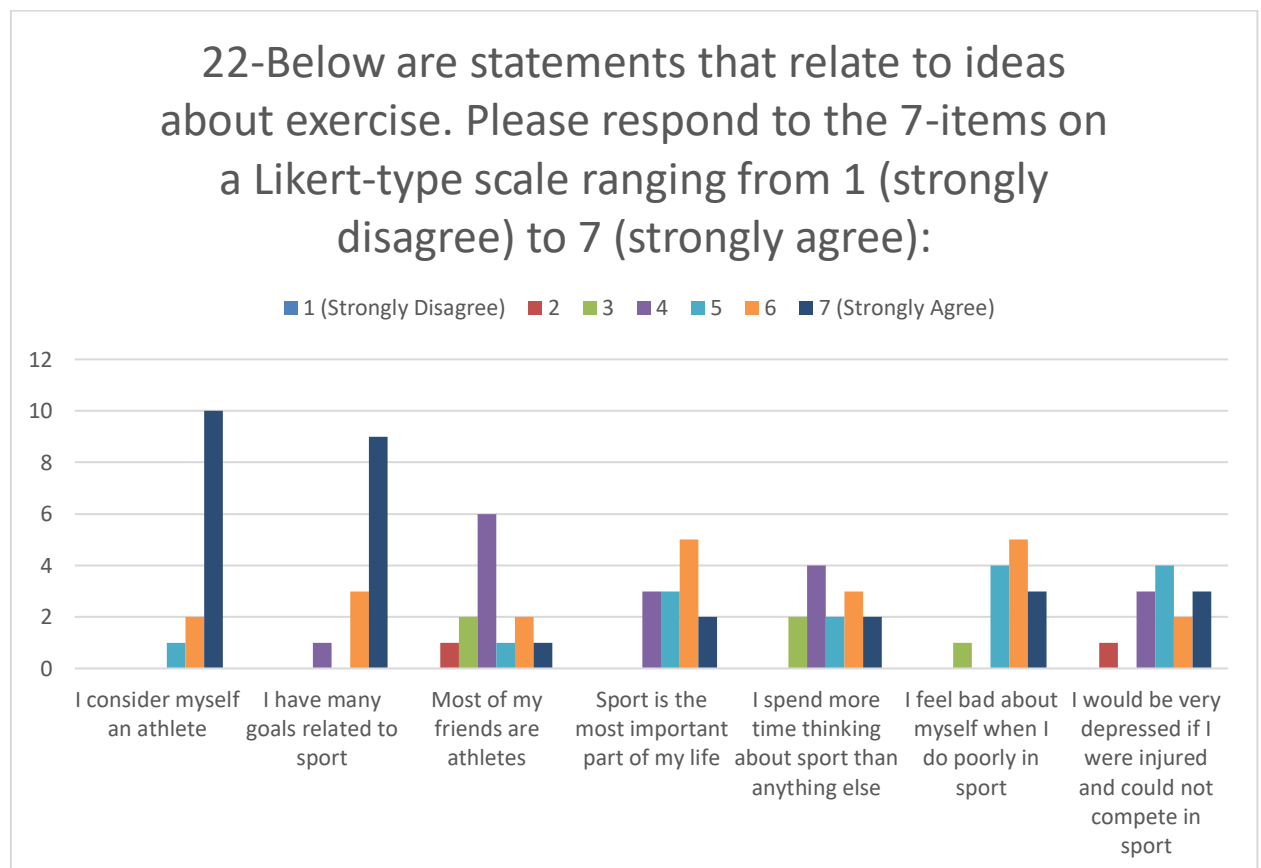
All respondents (100%) disagreed that “ My family members do not encourage me to exercise”

The majority (61.5%) agree that “ Exercise takes too much time from my family responsibilities ”.

A large part (61.5%) disagrees that “ Exercise is hard work for me ”.

The majority (84.6%) disagrees that “ There are too few places for me to exercise ”

22-Below are statements that relate to ideas about exercise. Please respond to the 7-items on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree):



The majority of respondents (76.9%) strongly agree that “I consider myself an athlete”.

A large part (69.2%) strongly agree that “I have many goals related to sport”

Only 30.7% agree that “Most of my friends are athletes”.

Most respondents (76.9%) agree that "Sport is the most important part of my life"

A large part (53.8%) agrees that “I spend more time thinking about sport than anything else”.

The overwhelming majority of respondents (92.3%) agree that “I feel bad when I have a poor sporting performance”

Most (69.2%) agree that " I would be very depressed if I were injured and could not compete in sport”

3

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The data obtained allow us to develop several reflections, among which we underline:

Socio-demographic data

There is a prevalence of male individuals (76.95%). It is suggested that there is a need to promote initiatives that raise awareness and motivate female individuals to enter higher education.

Only one student interrupted his studies. Which may indicate a lower school dropout rate than that of so-called normal individuals

A significant number of individuals attend studies in the field of sport, which until a few years ago would have been something very difficult due to the barriers that were imposed on entering this type of courses.

Respondents have only two types of disability: physical-motor and visual sensory (38.5%). It would be important to question and investigate whether this is due to the existence of barriers for individuals with other types of disabilities.

Most individuals practice individual sports. It is suggested to carry out research in order to try to understand why there are no more practitioners of team sports.

Most athletes have professional status, which may denote a great involvement in high competition sport with support for this to happen.

Most athletes claim that they are at the highest stage/moment of their career, which may imply a great involvement and commitment to the training process and the respective competitions

Most athletes claim they don't work. Those who work do it part time.

Most respondents say that their main source of income is sports, stating that they receive a Sports Practitioner's Scholarship.

Most say that their studies do not interfere with their sports performance and that their sports performance does not interfere with their studies. This could lead us to say that the majority manages to make a balanced compromise between an academic career and a sporting career, although the majority indicates that it is difficult to achieve such a compromise.

Most respondents (84.6%) say they consider themselves more of a student athlete. Among the most cited reasons for this option, it is worth noting the use of youth time to be in high competition and being at that level implies a great dedication to achieving the best results.

Most individuals report that they devote between 15 to 25 hours a week to training and competitions, which could indicate, eventually, a greater involvement in the sports career and less in academia.

Barriers to dual career.

Most respondents say that “The university / polytechnic is far from my home” and “The university / polytechnic is far from my training venue” is a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies. Such data may indicate the need to take measures that can minimize this situation.

They also refer to "Being unable to balance study and training time", which may imply the need for the various heads of institutions related to the two systems (higher education and sports) to dialogue with the purpose of finding solutions that help in the resolution of such a situation.

This need is reinforced by the fact that most student athletes report that schedules are not flexible. Indeed, when they state that 'Students' schedules are not flexible', and "The training schedules are not flexible", they elect them as barriers to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies.

Ideas about exercise.

A

Most respondents agree "Training takes up a lot of my time", which may indicate a great dedication and commitment to training processes and sports competitions.

A large part disagrees that "The places where I train are too far away" and that "There are few places for me to train". These indications may indicate that there is no shortage of spaces to train and that they are close to your place of residence.

The majority of respondents stated that "Training takes a lot of time away from family relationships". Such an indication may express difficulties in the conciliation between sporting life and family life.

Despite this, everyone disagrees that "My family members do not encourage me to train". In other words, despite all the constraints, the family seems to be a structure of great support and encouragement.

B

Most respondents consider themselves an athlete ; have many sport-related goals ; consider sport the most important part of their life ; spend a lot of time thinking about sport ; feel bad when they have poor sporting performances and would be very depressed if injured and unable to compete. These data reveal the high level of importance they

attach to sport, their passion for it and a great dedication and commitment throughout their sport preparation process.

Study limitations

The universe of study in Portugal is small.

(Note: the Paralympic Committee was asked to provide information about the number of high competition athletes that currently exist in Portugal)

Proposals for new lines of research

Consult the directors and coaches of the respective federations / national teams.

Consult the directors and coaches of the respective clubs.

Listening to family members and friends who are closest to dealing with athletes.

Consult the heads of higher education institutions as well as the coordinators and professors of the respective courses.

Comparative analysis

Prevalent identity

Spanish dual career disabled athletes consider themselves in a slight majority to be students first and foremost, they consider that there is a certain interference between their academic and sporting life and that reconciling both is not easy. The Dual Career paths of student-athletes with disabilities could be facilitated starting from organizational interventions like the introduction of recorded lessons or sessions of additional exams, and the introduction of a figure with a tutoring function to support the athlete in the university career.

In **Italy**, most subjects consider themselves as student-athlete and prefer to invest more time and energy in studying, because they doubt that sports will ever become a real profession.

In **Romania**, the item related to the way participants perceived themselves as student – athlete or athlete – student, indicated a clear prevalence of those who have as a primary goal achieving an academic degree, evidently linked to their future profession.

The **Irish** participants considered themselves in a prevalent manner, athletes rather than students, sport being an important part of their life, having many sport-related goals and spending a lot of time thinking about their sport commitment.

Portuguese respondents (84.6%) say they consider themselves more of a student athlete.

The main barriers

In **Spain**, they come from the academic field, highlighting the distance from the study center, the support from the university and the lack of flexibility in timetables.

In **Italy**, the data revealed that the many multifaceted barriers to dual careers are related to both the personal and environmental spheres, confirming the importance of a holistic approach. Among the main barriers that emerged we find the lack of flexibility in the study

programs and support from the university. In addition to these organisational factors, there are other, more structural factors, which seem to affect students with disabilities, and which relate to the well-known lack of accessible facilities and services.

In **Romania**, for all ten assertions included in the item 22, the prevalent opinion indicated that subjects did not encounter relevant obstacles in pursuing the dual career. Still, some of them have a neutral opinion on the most of the assertions. The aspects that raised strong concern regarded the dual career pertained to the remote location of the training venues, the lack of support from the university, the inflexible academic schedule and the fatigue state. The second type of the barriers for the dual career identified through the responses to item 23 revealed that for all fourteen assertions, subjects perceived in a majority opinion that physical exercise, negative feelings related to physical practice and family members were not considered as block roads to pursuing the dual career. The most important concerns, even in a minority opinion, were related to the remote training venue, the sensation of fatigue, the lack of infrastructure and the less time spent with the family.

The main barriers identified by the **Irish** athletes for the success of the dual career were mostly connected to the remote distance from my training centre, incapacity to balance study and training time and the fatigue experienced on a regular basis.

Most **Portuguese** respondents connect the barriers to dual career to the university / polytechnic being far from home and from the training venue, achieving a good balance between the sporting life and the studies. Such data may indicate the need to take measures that can minimize this situation. They also refer to being unable to balance study and training time, fact caused by the inflexible school and training schedules.

UNIVERSITIES/SPORT ENTITIES ROLES IN SUSTAINING DUAL CAREER

In **Spain**, universities could improve the dual career of athletes with more flexible schedules, more permissively in handing in the assignments and greater number of financial aids. and sports federations through agreements with institutions and scholarships. handing in assignments. In terms of sport entities role there were cited the institutional agreements / scholarships, flexibility between competitions and academic calendar and the direct contact with educational institution.

In **Italy**, these aspects should be reviewed in order to facilitate the success of the Paralympic athlete in the two main areas of his or her dual career. As already discussed in the qualitative analysis report (item 24 and 25), a large part of the respondents believe that dual career paths could be facilitated if universities offered student athletes space and time to train and if sports federations provided more accessible sports facilities to people with disabilities as well as well-equipped training centres. it should be considered that for approximately 33% of the sample, the loss of contact with fellow students represents a further barrier to dual careers. This leads us to believe that the involvement of course mates is a fundamental component of any tutoring programme.

In **Romania**, the study results revealed some important aspects to be addressed in the future by the decision makers: improving sport infrastructure, greater physical accessibility for attending sport venues, enhance financial support from sport clubs, as well as academic scholarships, flexible timetable agreed between sport clubs and universities / high schools, sport dedicated classes within the school timetable for non-profile universities and most important, moral support from universities and clubs and better cooperation between these two. An interesting idea emerged from the survey, was listing all the sport venues, indoor or outdoor which are accessible for the persons with disabilities without any subscriptions. Enlarging sport infrastructure within universities would also enable disabled students to embrace sports activities and participation in special or inclusive competitions.

În **Ireland**, the surveyed participants asserted that the university could facilitate the dual career through the flexibility of timetables, a better access to facilities and support,

scholarships and financial support and a better communication. Additionally, the sport institutions or federations can facilitate dual careers through better lines of communication between institution and the university, flexibility, reasonable academic demands, greater financial support or improvement of facilities and access.

CONCLUSIONS

Our research was carried out on a heterogenous group, with multiple profile characteristics, in terms of age, sex, type of disability, sports experience, different national legal provisions, various levels of understanding the importance of dual career for the student-athletes with disabilities.

The whole picture reveals this multi-faceted reality, but also some common projections which are enriching for the decision takers in order to create or consolidate the frame for encouraging the dual careers of the student-athletes with disabilities in European countries.



DUAL CAREER OF STUDENT-ATHLETES WITH
DISABILITIES AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

PARA-LIMITS

Field Research Activities - QUESTIONNAIRE

COUNTRY

Italy

ORGANISATION

University of Rome "Foro Italico"



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

1

INTRODUCTION

In this study, 3 different non-probabilistic sampling strategies were used:

1) reasoned choice: the referents of the national section of the CIP (Italian Paralympic Committee) of the regional sections of the CIP, of the different sport federations recognised by the CIP and of the CNUUD (National University Conference of Disability Delegates), were contacted by phone to clarify the aims of the project, define sample criteria and collaboration request. The phone call was followed by an email with the link to the questionnaire to be circulated among student-athletes with disabilities.

2) convenience sampling: we tried to recruit other candidates directly networkig at the University of "Foro Italico". All athletes with disabilities currently enrolled in any degree course at the university of Foro Italico were involved.

3) snowball sampling: In the confirmation message at the end of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to share the link with other student-athletes with disabilities.

A total of 66 questionnaires were completed.

Recruitment began on September 10th, 2021 and responses were received from September,19th to January, 30th, 2022.

Many questionnaires were self-completed online. Only 12 subjects (18,9%) were submitted to structured face-to-face interviews. The interview answers were copied in paper questionnaires and then aligned to the online format.

2

RESULTS

2.1 Preliminary analysis

4 respondents were cleared out due to inconsistency with the sample selection criteria. In particular, the deleted respondents were neither university students, nor enrolled in a training course or in the last year of high school.

In total, the actual sample consists of 62 respondents.

2.2- Socio-demographic characteristics

The main results regarding socio-demographic variables and sporting activity are shown in tables 1.

We recorded 40 male respondents (64,5%) e 22 female ones (35,5%). Their age ranges from 16 to 38 year (M=22,6).

30 (48,4%) subjects are currently enrolled in the Bachelor degree (BA), 16 (25,8%) are in their final year of high school, 12 (19,4%) are mastering in Sports studies (MA students) , 2 (3,2%) a master and 2(3,2%) a profesional training course.

Table 1 - Main socio-demographic variables

		N (%)	Mean (SD)	Range
Age			22,6 (5,2)	16-38
Sex	Male	40 (64,5)		
	Female	22 (35,5)		
Geographical origin	North	28 (45,2)		
	Center	26 (41,9)		
	South	8 (12,9)		
Study	High School (last year)	16 (25,8)	30 (14,9)*	2-70
	Under degree	30 (48,4)		
	Master degree	12 (19,4)		
	Post-graduate	2 (3,2)		
	Vocational education	2 (3,2)		
Disability Type	Physical	19 (30,6)		
	Auditory	16 (25,8)		
	Visual	15 (24,2)		
	Cerebral palsy	11 (17,8)		
	Other	1 (1,6)		
Disability level	Mild/Minimal	23 (37,1)		
	Sever	39 (62,9)		
Working	Yes	11 (17,7)		
	No	51 (82,3)		
Main source of income**	Disability pension	10 (16,1)		
	Family	42 (67,7)		
	Work (outside sport)	11 (17,7)		
	Sport	6 (9,7)		
* Hours a week dedicated to study; ** the sum exceeds the total because it was possible to choose more than one answer option				

The educational institutes to which they are affiliated are mainly located in Northern Italy (N=28; 45,2%) and Centre Italy (N=26; 41,9%), while the south of Italy is barely represented (N=8; 12,9%).

19 (30,6%) subjects have a physical disability, 16 (25,8%) have a hearing impairment, 15 (24,2%) have a visual impairment, 11 (17,8%) a cerebral palsy and 1(1,6%) have an intellectual disability.

For most of them, the family is an important source of financial support, while sport is declared as a source of income only for 6 subjects (9,7%).

Table 2 – Main data on Sport

		N (%)	Mean (SD)
Competition*	Regional Championship	6 (9,7)	
	Italian Championship	57 (91,9)	
	European Championship	29 (32,2)	
	World Championship	10 (16,1)	
	Paralympic Games	8 (12,9)	
Level	Amateur	26 (41,9)	
	Semi-professional	29 (46,8)	
	Professional	7 (11,3)	
Stage	Start	37 (59,7)	
	Higher level	29 (32,2)	
	End	10 (16,1)	
Time dedicated to Sport			10,6 (3,6)
* the sum exceeds the total because it was possible to choose more than one answer option			

Almost all student-athletes participate in different kinds of competitions: 57 (91,9%) participate in the Italian championship, 29 (32,2%) in the European championship, 10 (16,1%) in the world and 8 (12,9%) in the Paralympic Games. In addition, 6(9,7%) participate in the Regional championship¹.

Respondents considered themselves to be semi-professional athletes in 29 cases (46,8%), amateur in 26 cases (41,9%) and professional 7 cases (11,3%). In addition, 37 (59,7%) claim to be at the beginning of their career, 29 (32,2%) at the top level of their career and 10 (16,1%) towards the end of their career.

As expected, there was a positive correlation between the phase of the sport's career and age ($r=.409$; $p<.01$), while the level of activity carried out (amateur, semi-professional or professional) correlates with the time dedicated to sport².

More than 2/3 of the sample perceives itself as a student-athlete (N=45; 72,5%). Student-athletes tend to focus on higher education path (in terms of time, commitment and

¹ The sum of the percentage points exceeds the total of 100 because it was possible to tick more than one answer.

² To determine the correlation index, the categorical variables 'career stage' and "activity level" were transformed into an ordinal variable on a 3 points scale.

objectives) and consider it crucial for building a career other than sports, as they don't believe that sport will ever become a real profession and/or allow them to achieve their financial independence ("volleyball won't give me a living"; "I like sport a lot, but I don't think it will ever become my profession"; "sport is a hobby I'm very keen on and I'm willing to sacrifice myself for it, but it won't give me a living"; "I have to study to have a future"; etc.).

On the other hand, 17 (27,4%) consider themselves as athlete-students. These subjects tend to put his/her passion/commitment in the first place. ("I have always been more interested in sport than in education"; "I love sport more and education is not as much"; "sport is the most fulfilling thing for me"; "sport has always been at the very core of my life"; etc.).

2.3 - Barriers to dual career

When asked 'how difficult is it to manage sports and study?', just over half of the sample answered, 'so and so'. (N=33; 53,2%), no one thinks it is 'very easy' and few think it is 'easy'. (N=10; 16,1%). Almost 1/3 of the sample thought it was "difficult" (N=17; 27,4%) or "very difficult". (N=2; 3,2%).

29 (46.8%) subjects felt that their studies interfered with their sporting performance and admitted to having some personal difficulty in effectively balancing their commitments on the two dimensions due to either lack of time or time overlapping between classes, exams on the one hand, training and competitions on the other. 30 (48,4%) subjects also felt that their sporting performance affected their studies.

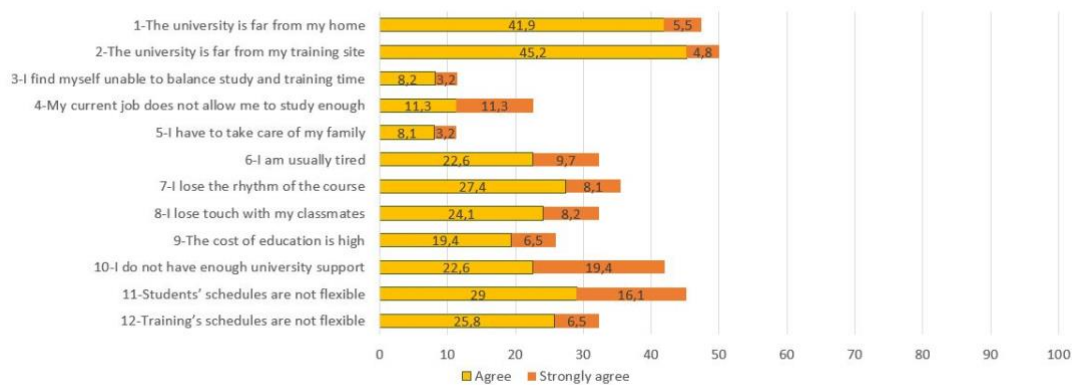
Answers to items 15 and 16, although not perfectly overlapping, are significantly associated ($V=.690$; $p<.01$)³. In fact, as many as 87,5% of subjects for whom studies affect sports performance, the opposite is also true.

The dual career barrier scale has an average of 2,7 (SD=0,7), has a very high internal consistency ($\alpha=0,815$). Moreover, as we might expect it correlates positively with item 18 "How difficult is it to match sporting activity with study?". ($r=0,390$; $p<0,01$).

The percentage frequencies of those who agree or completely agree with the statements are shown in the diagram in Figure1.

³ Cramer's V index for categorical variables was used to measure the degree of association.

Figure 1 – Barriers to Dual Career (Percentage)



The total of the percentage frequencies shows that the main factors perceived as barriers to achieve a good balance between sporting life and studies are: “The university is far from my training site” (item 2) (50%); “The university is far from my home” (item 1) (47,4%); “Students’ schedules are not flexible” (item 11) (45,1%), and “I do not have enough university support” (item 10) (42%).

Other significant barriers are “I lose the rhythm of the course (item 7) (35,5%); “Training’s schedules are not flexible” (item 9) (35,3%); “I lose touch with my classmates”(item 8) (32,3%) and “I am usually tired’ (item 6) (32,3%).

Finally, factors that are not perceived so much as barriers are “The cost of education is high (item 9) (25,9%); “The current job does not allow me to study enough” (item 4) (22,6%); “I find myself unable to balance study and training time (item 3) (11,4%) and “I have to take care of my family “(item 5) (11,3%).

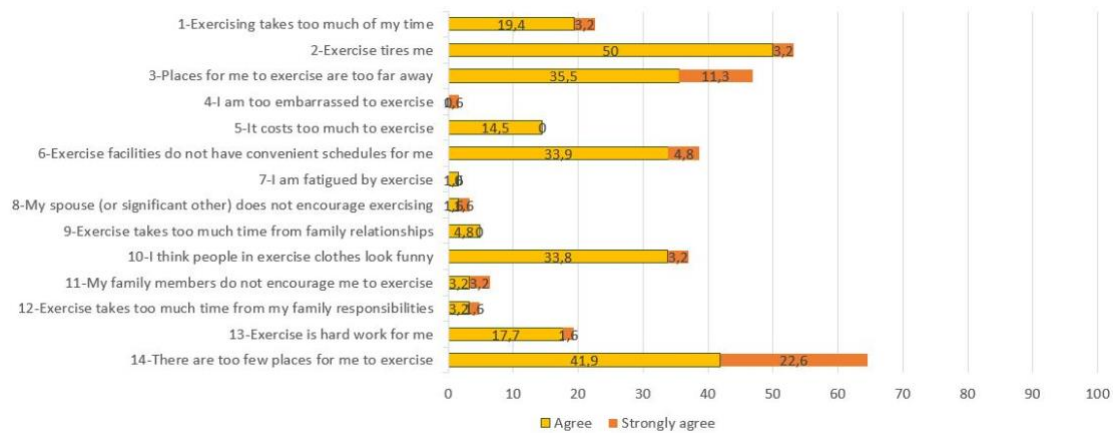
2.4 - Barriers to exercise

The scale of barriers to exercise has a mean of 3,175 (DS=0,4), shows a good internal consistency ($\alpha=0,794$), and correlates negatively whit the barriers to dual career scale ($r=-0,350$; $p<0,01$)⁴.

The percentage frequencies of those who agree or completely agree with the statements are shown in diagram in Figure 2.

⁴ it should be note that the responses to the items of the barriers to exercise scale are inversely coded with respect to the dual career scale (1=Strongly agree; 2=agree; 3=disagree; 4=Strongly disagree).

Figure 2 – Barriers to Exercise



The total of the percentage frequencies shows that contextual barriers are: “There are too few places for me to exercise” (item 14) (64,5%), “Places to exercise are too far away” (item 3) (46,8%), and “Exercise facilities do not have convenient schedules for me” (item 6) (38,7%). Another significative barrier is “Exercise tires me” (item 2) (53,2%).

Other barriers that are not as much significant as those mentioned but still important are “I think people in exercise clothes look funny” (item 10) (37%), “Exercising takes too much of my time” (item 1) (22,6%), “Exercise is hard work for me” (item 13) (19,3%), and “It costs too much to exercise” (item 5) (14,5%).

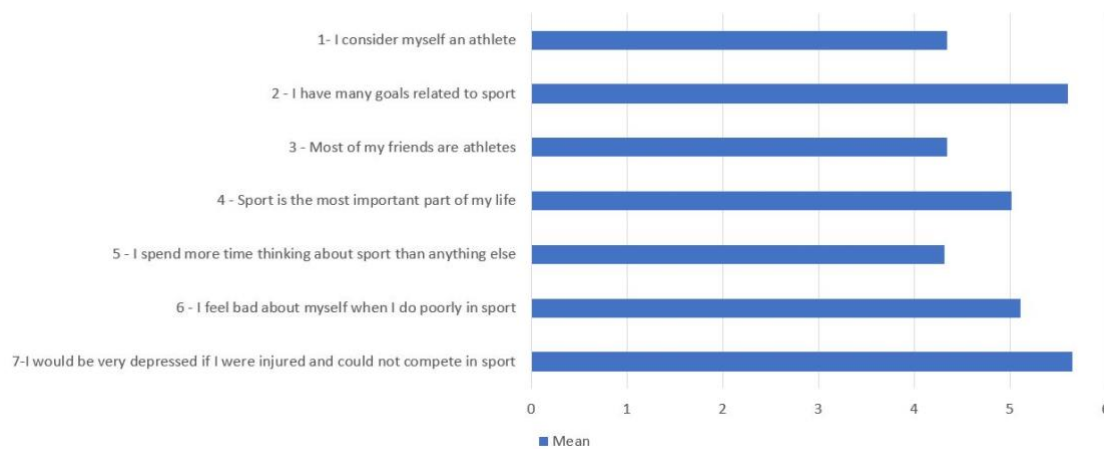
The lowest barriers do not exceed the threshold of 7%. Four (4) out of these refer to the family context: "Exercise takes too much time from my family responsibilities" (item 12), "My family members do not encourage me to exercise" (item 11), Exercise takes too much time from my family relationships "(Item 9) and" My spouse (or significant other) does not encourage exercising "(item 8). These are followed by personal factors “I am fatigued (tired) by exercise "(item 7), and" I am too embarrassed to exercise "(Item 4).

2.5 – Athletic Identity

The Athletic Identity scale ranges from 3,14 to 6,85, 5,05 mean (SD=0,95); and it shows a good internal consistency ($\alpha=0,807$). Furthermore, as expected, Athletes-students have a significantly higher average than student-athletes (5.84 vs 4.75; $F = 20.829$; $p < 0.01$).

Diagram in Figure 3 shows the distribution of item mean values.

Figure 3 – Items of the Athletic Identity Scale



3

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Due to the lack of a census of student-athletes with disabilities, a probabilistic sample selection strategy was not applied. So, the results cannot be generalised to the reference population.

Despite the small sample used for this study, regarding the main socio-demographic variables (age, sex, areas of study, types and gravity of disability, level of sports practice and disciplines practiced) the sample is quite heterogeneous.

It emerged also a certain degree of internal consistency thus reassuring with what concerns the results' reliability. The scales used showed a good level of internal consistency and several analyses confirmed the expected results. Furthermore, regarding the barriers to dual carrier and exercise, comparison between the results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses are consistent/coherent (Item 24, 25) as discussed in the previous report.

First, although the athletic identity is quite high (mean value 5 considering a scale from 1 to 7), just 9 subjects (11.3%) consider themselves professionals, only 6 (9.7%) declare that sport is among the sources of income. Second, most subjects consider themselves as student-athlete and prefer to invest more time and energy in studying, because they doubt that sports will ever become a real profession and / or allow provide them economic independence.

These preliminary results must be interpreted in the light of a national cultural-legislative context that still does not recognize the professional status of the vast majority of sports disciplines and in which only a few very lucky athletes are able to obtain some economic recognition.

Considering these premises almost half of the sample felt that their studies interfered with their sports performance and vice versa, while more than 1/3 found it difficult to balance their sports and study commitments.

The data revealed that the many multifaceted barriers to dual careers are related to both the personal and environmental spheres, confirming the importance of a holistic approach.

However, among the main barriers that emerged we find the lack of flexibility in the study programs and support from the university, suggesting that the Dual Career paths of student-athletes with disabilities could be facilitated starting from organizational interventions like the introduction of recorded lessons or sessions of additional exams, and the introduction of a figure with a tutoring function to support the athlete in the university career.

These preliminary results are very consistent with the results of a previous study carried out with Italian student-athletes without disabilities ⁵. The authors of this study concluded their analysis of a sample of 711 units by stating that “the flexibility (and not the reduction) of the academic demands could represent the first step to support student-athletes in dual career” and that “better schedules of lessons and exams could represent the most crucial solutions to effectively combine sport and academic demands”⁶.

In addition to these organisational factors, there are other, more structural factors, which seem to affect students with disabilities, and which relate to the well-known lack of accessible facilities and services.

Over 60% of the sample complained about the lack of facilities for training, around 33% felt they were too far away, and around 44% felt that the distance between university and training centres was an obstacle to dual careers.

As already discussed in the qualitative analysis report (item 24 e 25), a large part of the respondents believe that dual career paths could be facilitated if universities offered student

⁵ Brustio, P.R., Rainoldi, A., Mosso, C.O., Lopez de Subijana, C., Lupo, R. (2020). Italian student-athletes only need a more effective daily schedule to support their dual career. “*Sport Sciences for Health*”, 16, 177-182.

⁶ Brustio et al. (2020), pp. 181-182.

athletes space and time to train and if sports federations provided more accessible sports facilities to people with disabilities as well as well-equipped training centres.

Finally, it should be considered that for approximately 33% of the sample, the loss of contact with fellow students represents a further barrier to dual careers. This leads us to believe that the involvement of course mates is a fundamental component of any tutoring programme.

Further investigation will be necessary to analyze differences between the groups related to the main socio-demographic variables.



DUAL CAREER OF STUDENT-ATHLETES WITH
DISABILITIES AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

PARA-LIMITS

Field Research Activities - QUESTIONNAIRE

COUNTRY

Portugal

.....

ORGANISATION

Instituto Politécnico de Viseu

.....



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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Results
3. Discussion and conclusions

1

INTRODUCTION

- Sample size (number of participants).

Universe of current athletes and students: 11

Answers to the questionnaire: 10 (90%)

Universe of current athletes, but former students - 8 (Completed their studies in 2017-2018; 2018-2019)

Answer to the questionnaire - 3 (33.3%)

Total Universe - 19

Respondents to the questionnaire: 13 (68.4%)

- Type of sampling (how were participants selected?).

At an early stage, the Portuguese Olympic Committee and the Portuguese Federation of Sports for disabled were asked to list the identification of current high-level athletes with disabilities who attended higher education after their informed consent

With this list, and having verified that this group of individuals was small (11 in total), it is understood that it would be important to increase the number of individuals participating in this study. In this sense, a list of top-level athletes with disabilities who have attended and/or completed higher education in recent years were asked to these institutions. It was found that this group consisted of 8 individuals, who completed their studies between 2017-2018 and 2018-2019.

An email was then sent to all individuals on the two lists (19 in total) to invite them and raise their awareness for participation in this study by completing the respective questionnaire, accessed through the link included in that email.

After a week, as there was a reduced participation, the new email was sent to remind the invitation to participate in the study.

After another week, as participation continued to decline, all individuals were contacted by alternative means to recall the invitation made. Most individuals showed willingness to participate.

All athletes have given consent for this data to be passed on to us.

- Dates on which the data collection was carried out.

Data were collected between September 20 and October 8, 2021.

- How the questionnaire was completed (online, face-to-face or both).

The questionnaire was available for filling no link

<https://forms.gle/crLZaexg5MhJ3mSe7>

2

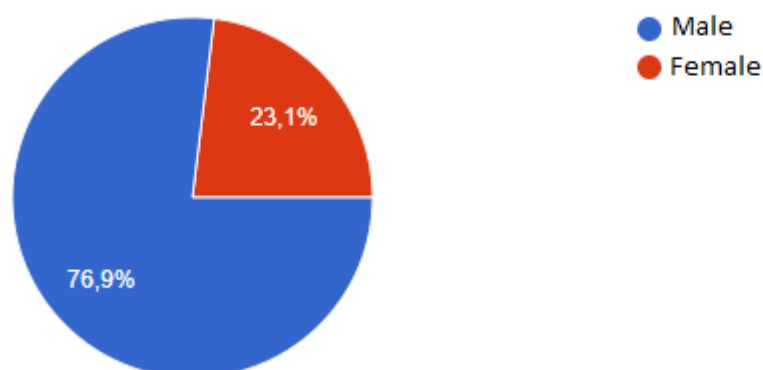
RESULTS

In this section the results of the questionnaire should be presented. To do so, both a qualitative approach (open questions, highlighting the main findings) and a quantitative approach will be used, providing descriptive data according to the type of question (frequency, percentage, arithmetic mean, etc.) and using tables whenever possible for a better understanding.

The presentation of results, according to the structure of the questionnaire, should be made under the following headings:

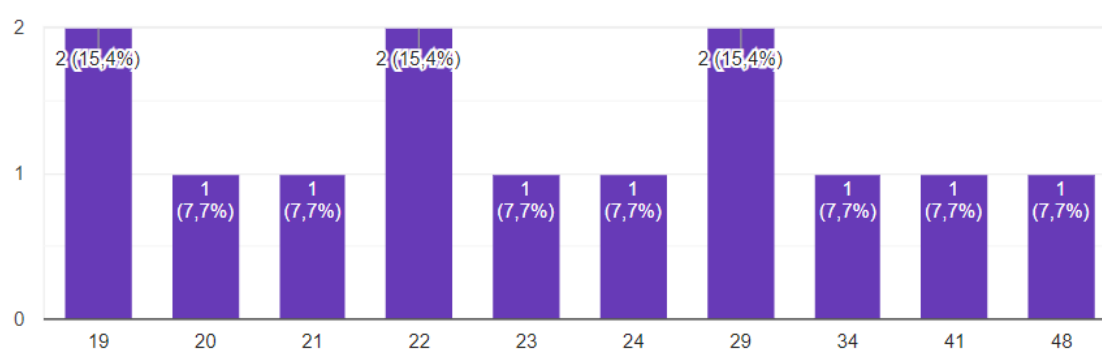
2.1 Socio-demographic data.

1 – SEX



Of the individuals who responded, 10 (76.9%) were male and 3 were female.

2 - Age

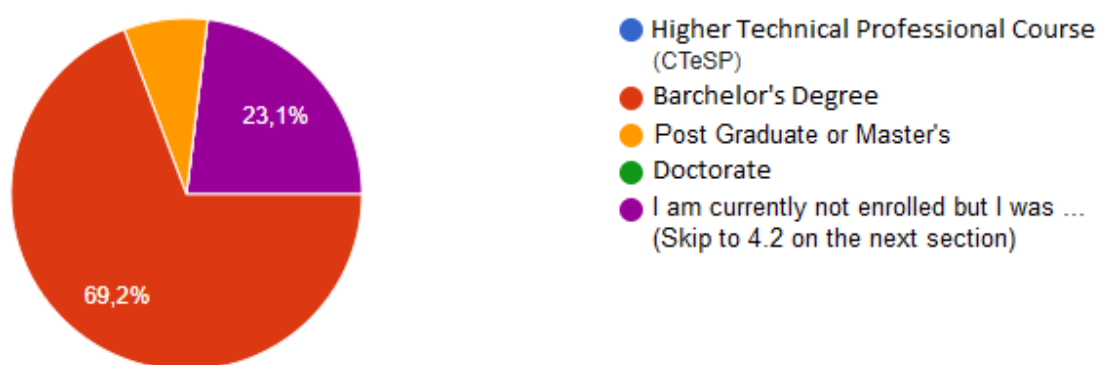


The majority (61.65%) of athletes are in the 19-25 age group.

3 - University:

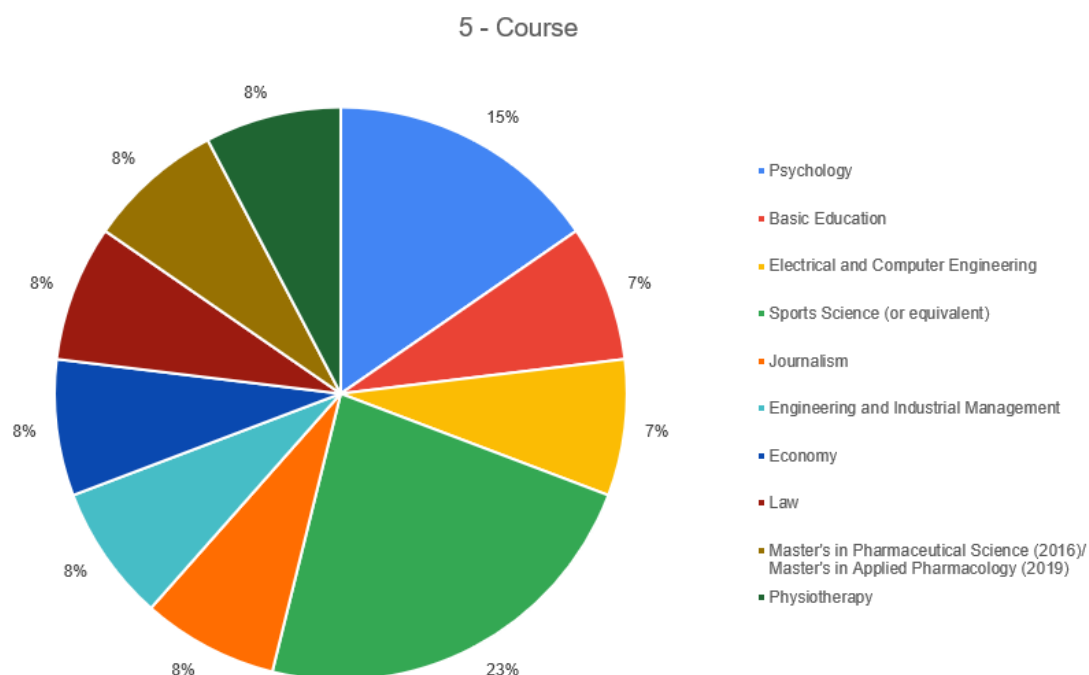
Athletes attend several institutions located on the coast of Portugal, namely in Lisbon, Porto, Coimbra and Aveiro.

4 - Course



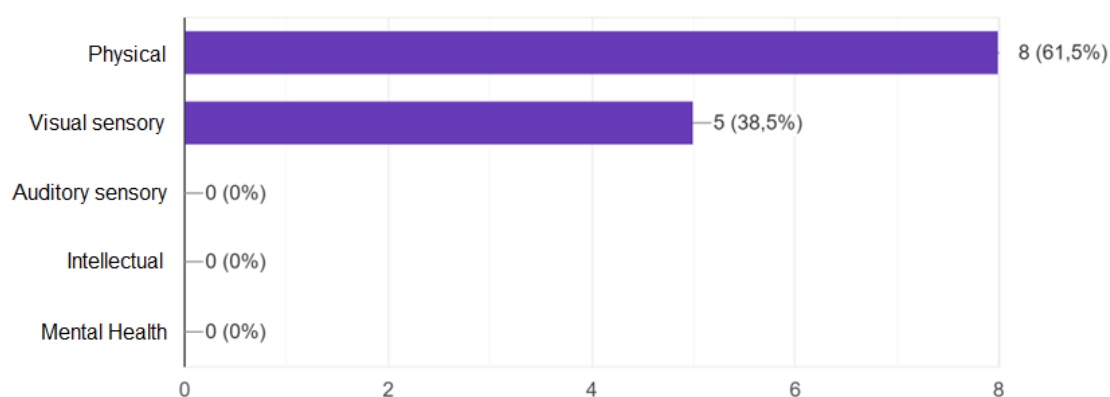
Most athletes (69.2%) attend a bachelor's degree.

5 - Course (Indicate 1,2,3,4...):



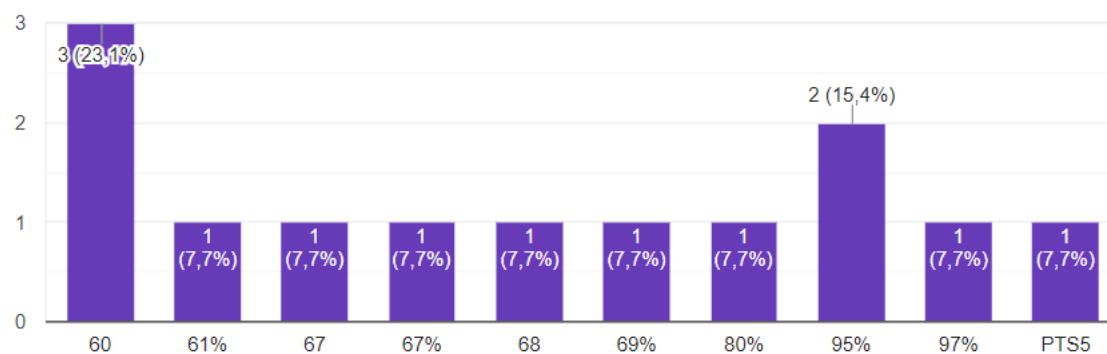
The areas of courses most attended by students are Sports Science (23%) and Psychology (15%). Others follow, such as Law, Basic Education, Physiotherapy, etc.

6 - Type of disability:



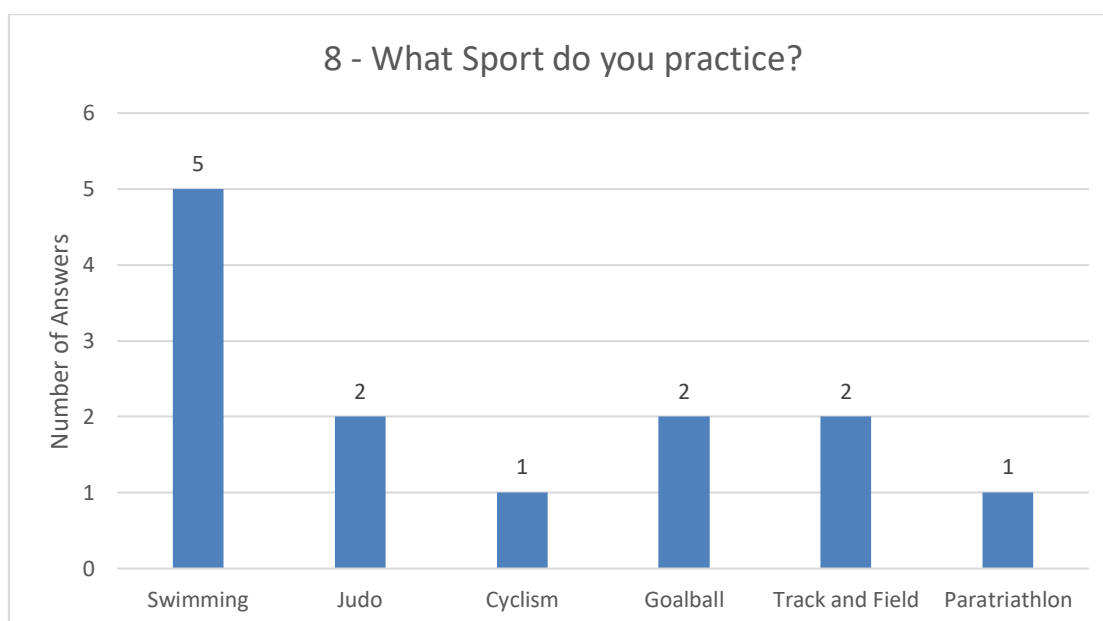
The most common type of disability among participating athletes is physical-motor (61.5%) followed by visual sensory (38.5%)

7- Degree of disability:



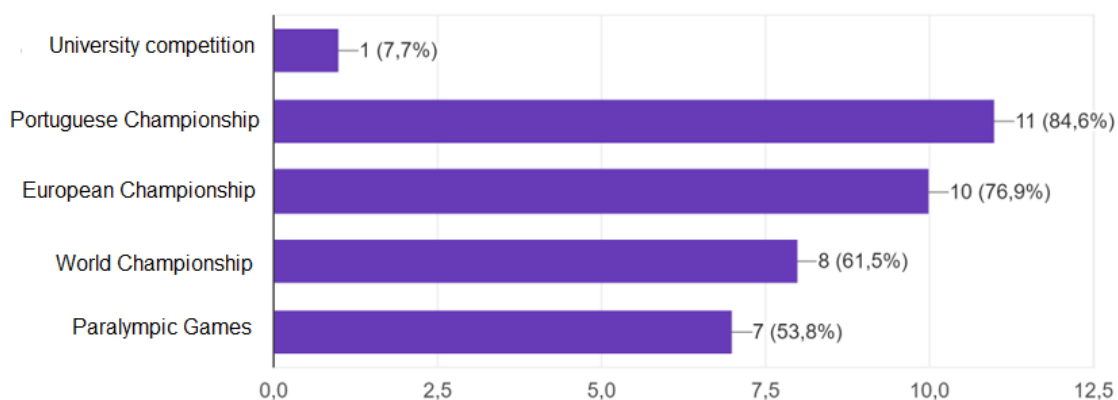
The majority (61.6%) are between 60 and 70% of incapacity

8- What sport do you practice?:



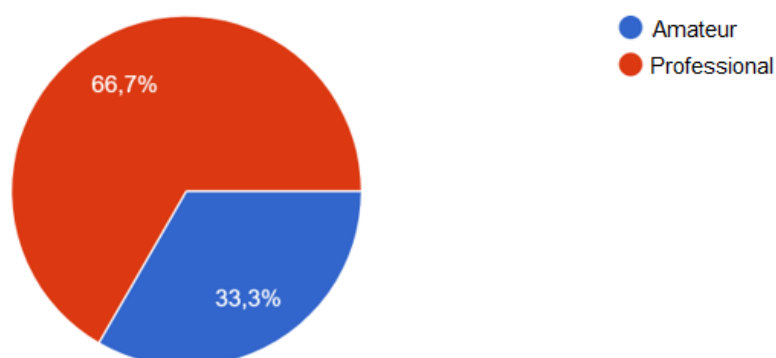
The most popular sport is swimming (38.4%), followed by judo, athletics (2) and goobal (each with 15.8%).

9- What level of competition do you participate in?



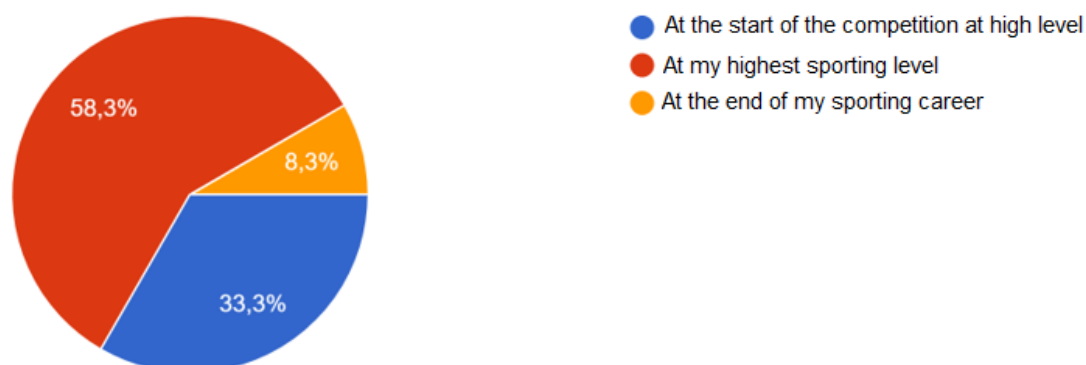
In international terms, the European championships are the competition with the most participations (84.6%). Next are the world championships (61.5%) and the Paralympic games (53.8%).

10- How do you consider yourself athletically?



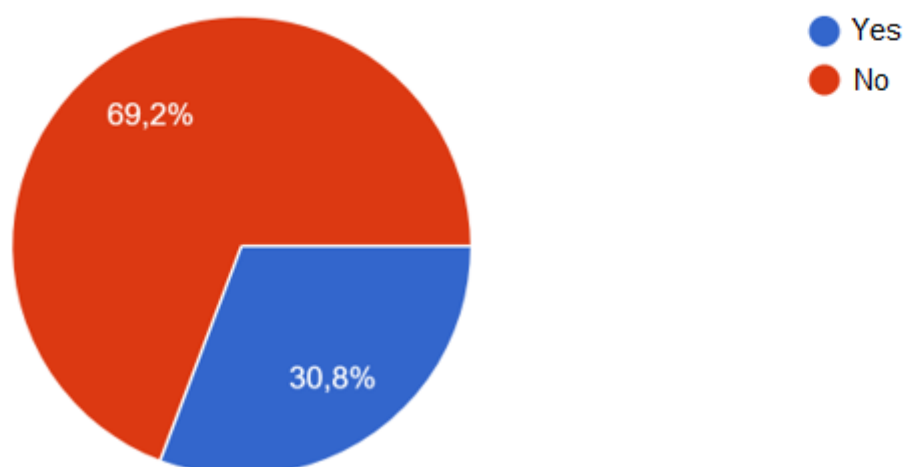
The majority (66.7%) of athletes have professional status.

11- Where are you in your high performance sporting career?



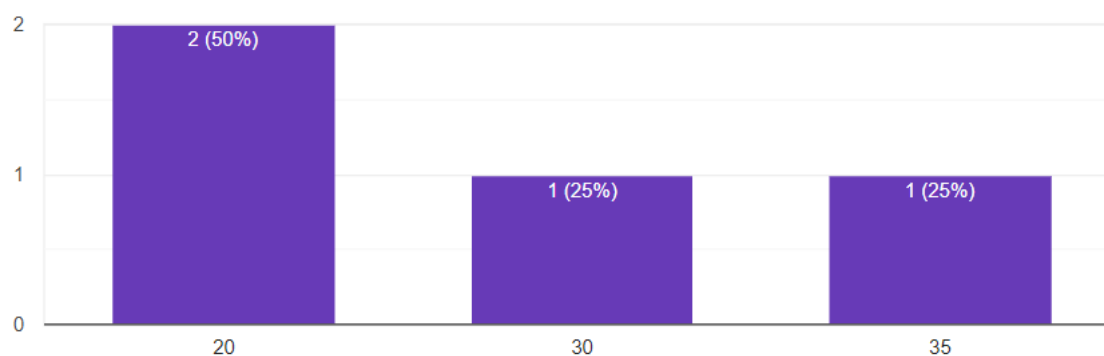
The majority (58.3%) of the athletes are in the highest phase of their career.

12- Do you work?



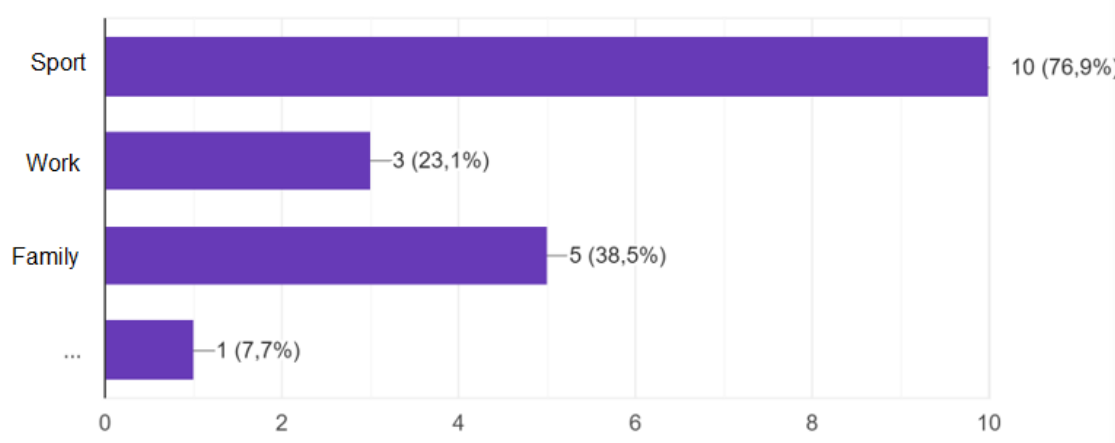
About 69.2% of athletes say they do not work.

Those who work say they do it in several areas: National Institute for Rehabilitation, Hospital Pharmacy, Sports and Physiotherapy.



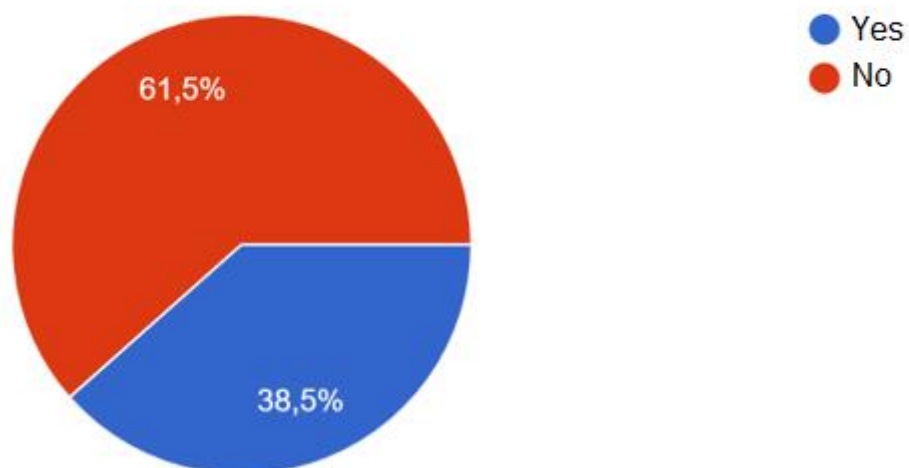
Regarding working athletes, 50% say they work 20 hours a week.

13- What is your main source of income? (tick as many options as are correct)



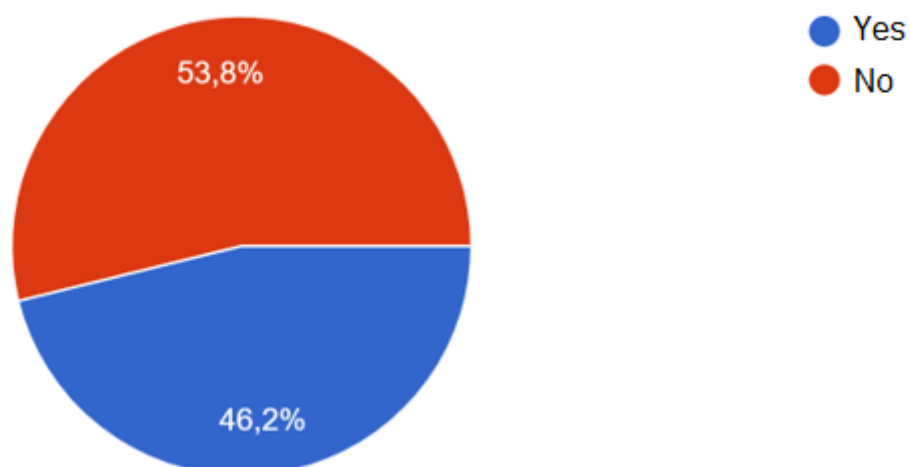
Most respondents (76.9%) say that their main source of income is sport. Family (38.5%) and work (23.1%) follow.

14- Do your studies interfere with your sporting performance?



Most respondents (61.5%) report that studies do not interfere with their sporting performance.

15- Does your sporting performance interfere with your studies?

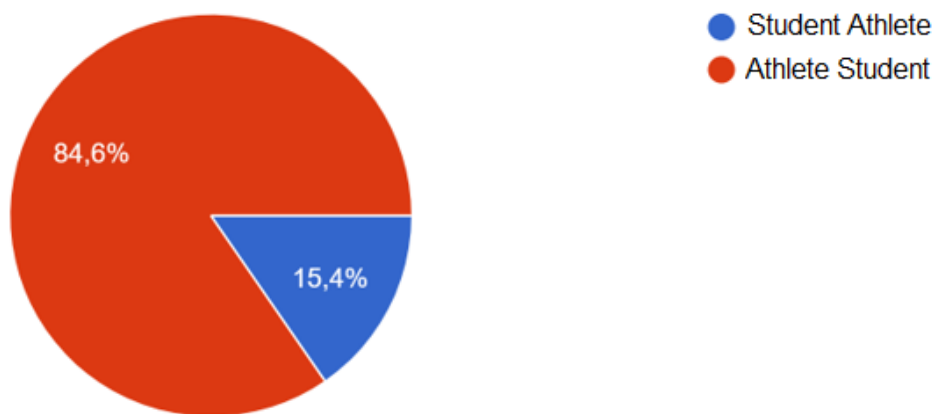


Most respondents (53.8%) say that their sporting performance does not interfere with their studies.

If yes, why?

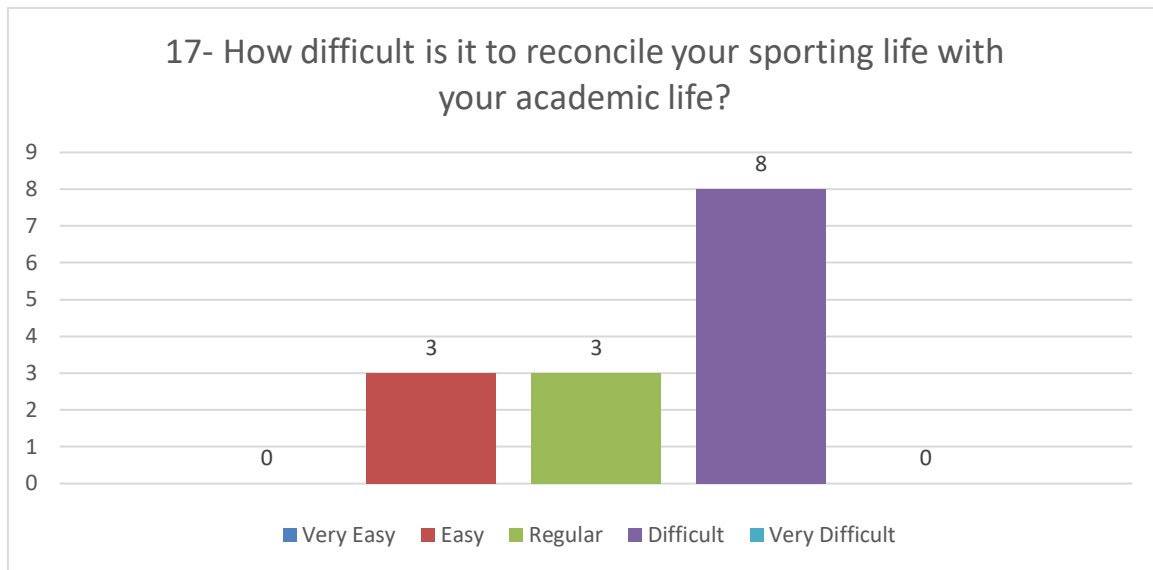
Those who claim that it interferes (46.2%), point to the following justifications: it takes a lot of daily effort to keep both dimensions with the desired performance; to reach the best competitive level implies being away from home and the country for a long time; there are important moments that require you to miss classes in order to go to European/World Championships. There are periods when it is very difficult to take hours from one to benefit the other; by the obligation to reconcile the two realities.

16- Do you consider yourself more of a...?



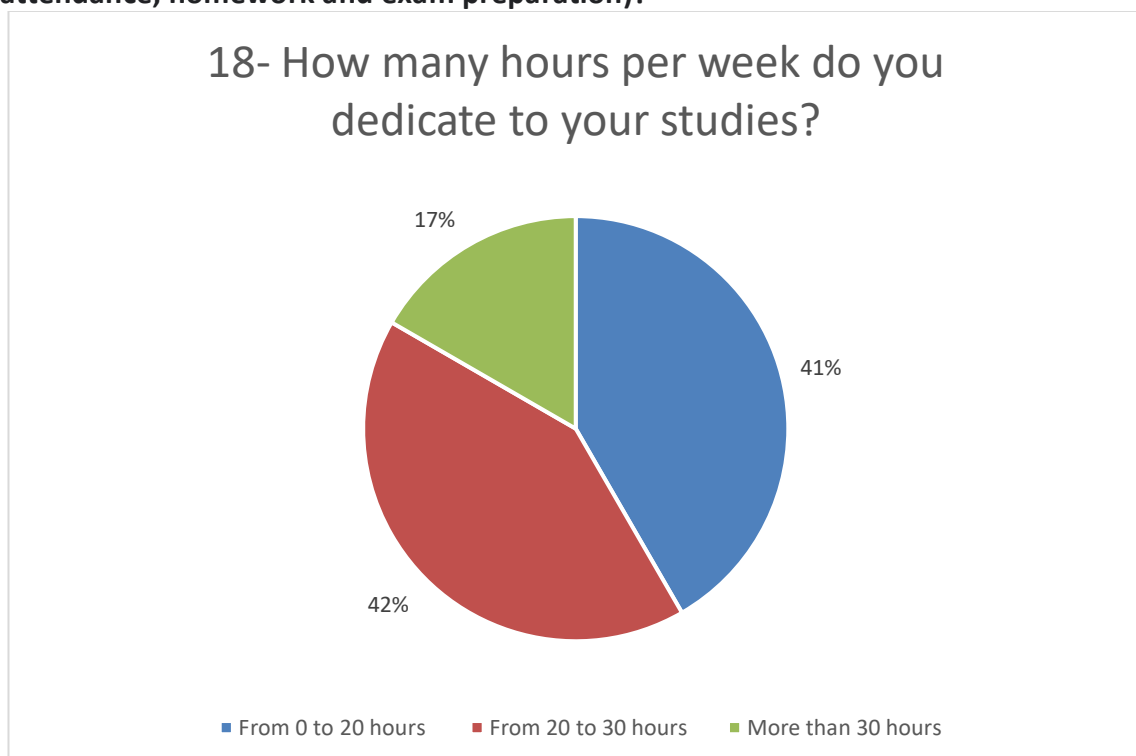
Most respondents (84.6%) say they consider themselves more of a student athlete.

17- How difficult is it to reconcile your sporting life with your academic life?



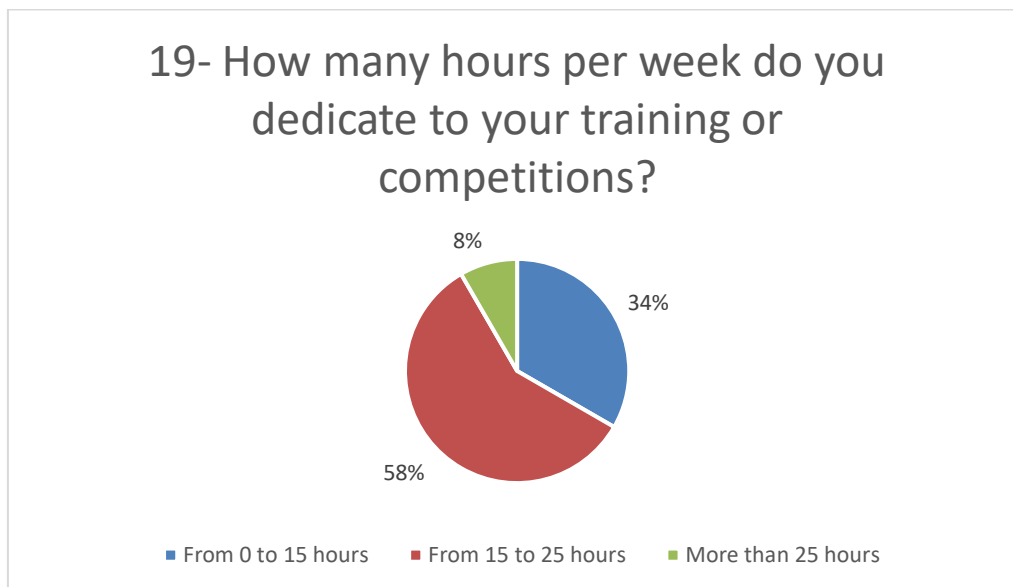
Most respondents (61.5%) say that it is difficult to reconcile their sporting and academic life.

18- How many hours per week do you dedicate to your studies (including class attendance, homework and exam preparation)?



About 42% say they dedicate between 20 to 30 hours to their studies, while 41% indicate between 0 to 20 and 17% dedicate more than 30 hours.

19- How many hours per week do you dedicate to your training or competitions?

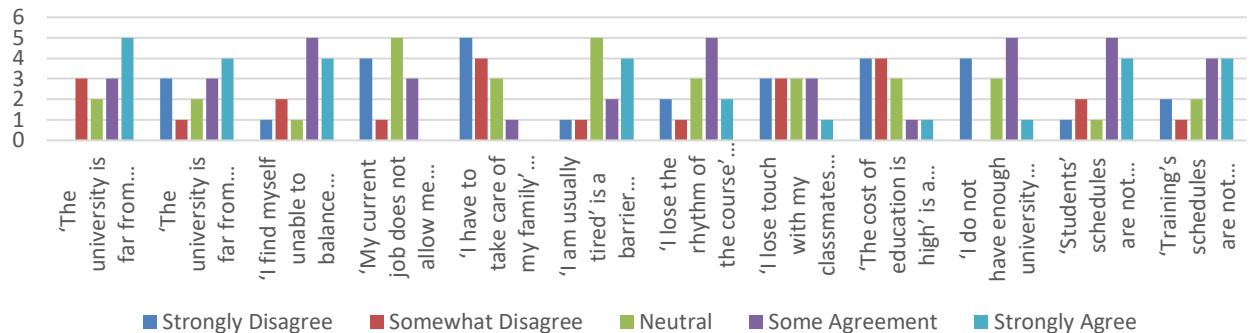


Most individuals (58%) report that they dedicate between 15 to 25 hours a week to training and competitions. Others (34%) indicate between 0 to 15 hours and 8% indicate more than 25 hours.

2.2 Barriers to dual career

20- Below are a series of statements about barriers to dual careers. Please mark the option that most closely matches your level of agreement with these statements:

20- Below are a series of statements about barriers to dual careers. Please mark the option that most closely matches your level of agreement with these statements:



Most respondents (61%) consider that “ The university is far from my home’ ” is a barrier to achieving a good balance between sporting life and their studies.

Most respondents (53.8%) say that “ The university is far from my training site’ ” is a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and studies.

The majority of respondents (69.2%) reported “ I find myself unable to balance study and training time’ ” is a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies.

About 38.4% neither agree nor disagree that "My current job doesn't allow me to study enough" is a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies. In turn, about 38.4% disagreed.

The majority of respondents (69.2%) disagreed that "'I have to take care of my family' " is a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies.

Only 45.1% agree that "'I am usually tired' is a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies.

The majority (53.85) agree that "I lose the rhythm of the course' " is a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies.

Only 46.1% disagreed that " I lose touch with my classmates' " constitutes a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies.

About 61.5 disagree that "The cost of education is high' " is a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies.

About 46.1% agree that "I do not have enough university support', which is a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies.

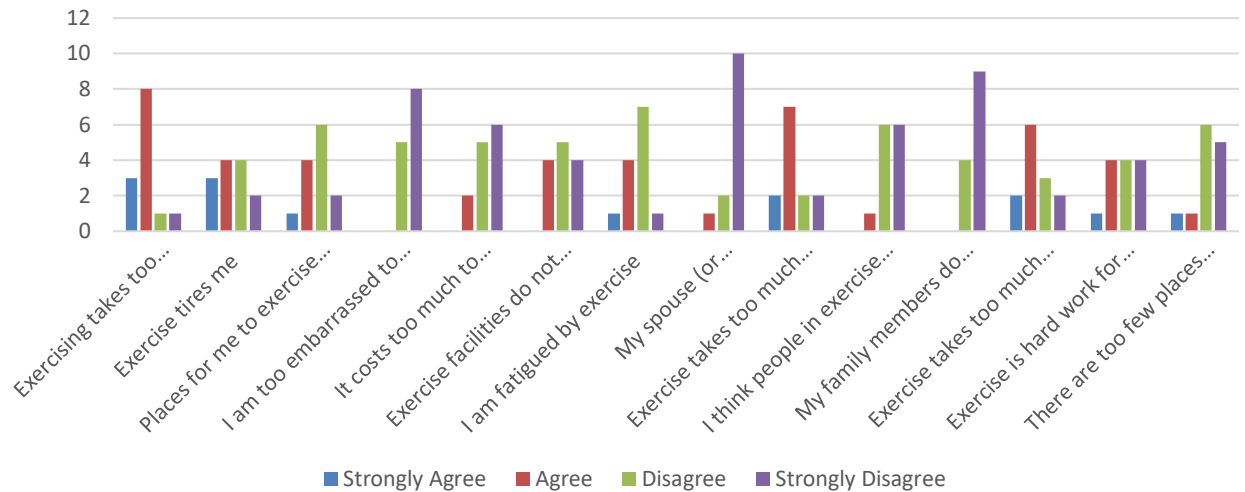
The majority (69.2%) agree 'Students' schedules are not flexible', which is a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies.

The majority (69.2%) of respondents agree "The training schedules are not flexible", which is a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies.

2.3 Ideas about exercise.

21- Below are statements that relate to ideas about exercise. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statements:

21- Below are statements that relate to ideas about exercise. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statements



The majority (84.6) of respondents agree “ Exercising takes too much of my time ”.

About 53.8% agree that “ Exercise tires me ”.

A large part (61.5%) disagrees that " Places for me to exercise are too far away "

All respondents (100%) disagreed that “ I am too embarrassed to exercise ”

The majority (84.6%) of respondents disagreed that " It costs too much to exercise "

A large part (69.2%) disagrees that " Exercise facilities do not have convenient schedules for me

A large part (61.5%) disagrees that “ I am fatigued by exercise ”

The majority (76.9%) strongly disagree that " My spouse (or significant other) does not encourage exercising”

A large part (69.2%) agrees that " Exercise takes too much time from family relationships"

The overwhelming majority of respondents (92.3%) disagreed that “ I think people in exercise clothes look funny ”

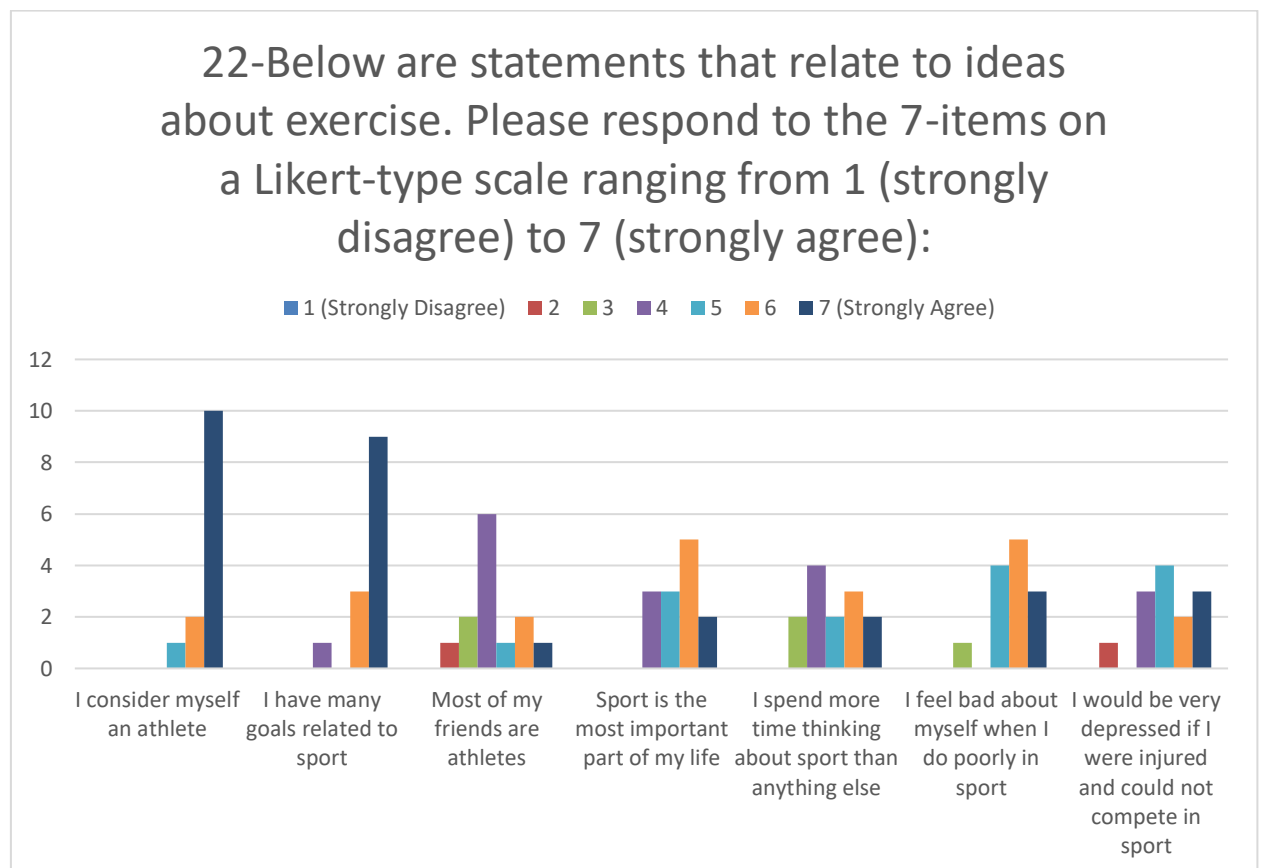
All respondents (100%) disagreed that “ My family members do not encourage me to exercise”

The majority (61.5%) agree that “ Exercise takes too much time from my family responsibilities ”.

A large part (61.5%) disagrees that “ Exercise is hard work for me ”.

The majority (84.6%) disagrees that “ There are too few places for me to exercise ”

22-Below are statements that relate to ideas about exercise. Please respond to the 7-items on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree):



The majority of respondents (76.9%) strongly agree that “I consider myself an athlete”.

A large part (69.2%) strongly agree that “I have many goals related to sport”

Only 30.7% agree that “Most of my friends are athletes”.

Most respondents (76.9%) agree that "Sport is the most important part of my life"

A large part (53.8%) agrees that “I spend more time thinking about sport than anything else”.

The overwhelming majority of respondents (92.3%) agree that “I feel bad when I have a poor sporting performance”

Most (69.2%) agree that " I would be very depressed if I were injured and could not compete in sport”

3

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The data obtained allow us to develop several reflections, among which we underline:

Socio-demographic data

There is a prevalence of male individuals (76.95%). It is suggested that there is a need to promote initiatives that raise awareness and motivate female individuals to enter higher education.

Only one student interrupted his studies. Which may indicate a lower school dropout rate than that of so-called normal individuals

A significant number of individuals attend studies in the field of sport, which until a few years ago would have been something very difficult due to the barriers that were imposed on entering this type of courses.

Respondents have only two types of disability: physical-motor and visual sensory (38.5%). It would be important to question and investigate whether this is due to the existence of barriers for individuals with other types of disabilities.

Most individuals practice individual sports. It is suggested to carry out research in order to try to understand why there are no more practitioners of team sports.

Most athletes have professional status, which may denote a great involvement in high competition sport with support for this to happen.

Most athletes claim that they are at the highest stage/moment of their career, which may imply a great involvement and commitment to the training process and the respective competitions

Most athletes claim they don't work. Those who work do it part time.

Most respondents say that their main source of income is sports, stating that they receive a Sports Practitioner's Scholarship.

Most say that their studies do not interfere with their sports performance and that their sports performance does not interfere with their studies. This could lead us to say that the majority manages to make a balanced compromise between an academic career and a sporting career, although the majority indicates that it is difficult to achieve such a compromise.

Most respondents (84.6%) say they consider themselves more of a student athlete. Among the most cited reasons for this option, it is worth noting the use of youth time to be in high competition and being at that level implies a great dedication to achieving the best results.

Most individuals report that they devote between 15 to 25 hours a week to training and competitions, which could indicate, eventually, a greater involvement in the sports career and less in academia.

Barriers to dual career.

Most respondents say that “The university / polytechnic is far from my home” and “The university / polytechnic is far from my training venue” is a barrier to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies. Such data may indicate the need to take measures that can minimize this situation.

They also refer to "Being unable to balance study and training time", which may imply the need for the various heads of institutions related to the two systems (higher education and sports) to dialogue with the purpose of finding solutions that help in the resolution of such a situation.

This need is reinforced by the fact that most student athletes report that schedules are not flexible. Indeed, when they state that 'Students' schedules are not flexible', and "The training schedules are not flexible", they elect them as barriers to achieving a good balance between their sporting life and their studies.

Ideas about exercise.

A

Most respondents agree "Training takes up a lot of my time", which may indicate a great dedication and commitment to training processes and sports competitions.

A large part disagrees that "The places where I train are too far away" and that "There are few places for me to train". These indications may indicate that there is no shortage of spaces to train and that they are close to your place of residence.

The majority of respondents stated that "Training takes a lot of time away from family relationships". Such an indication may express difficulties in the conciliation between sporting life and family life.

Despite this, everyone disagrees that "My family members do not encourage me to train". In other words, despite all the constraints, the family seems to be a structure of great support and encouragement.

B

Most respondents consider themselves an athlete ; have many sport-related goals ; consider sport the most important part of their life ; spend a lot of time thinking about sport ; feel bad when they have poor sporting performances and would be very depressed if injured and unable to compete. These data reveal the high level of importance they

attach to sport, their passion for it and a great dedication and commitment throughout their sport preparation process.

Study limitations

The universe of study in Portugal is small.

(Note: the Paralympic Committee was asked to provide information about the number of high competition athletes that currently exist in Portugal)

Proposals for new lines of research

Consult the directors and coaches of the respective federations / national teams.

Consult the directors and coaches of the respective clubs.

Listening to family members and friends who are closest to dealing with athletes.

Consult the heads of higher education institutions as well as the coordinators and professors of the respective courses.



DUAL CAREER OF STUDENT-ATHLETES WITH
DISABILITIES AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

PARA-LIMITS

Field Research Activities – QUESTIONNAIRE (qualitative analysis)

PARTICIPANT COUNTRIES (concerning the data)

Spain

ORGANISATION (that carry out the qualitative analysis)

UCAM with the cooperation of ONCE



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1. Introduction
2. Results
3. Discussion and conclusions

1

INTRODUCTION

Eighty-seven Spanish Paralympic athletes have completed the survey. A 62.1% (n=54) were men and 37.9% (n=33) were women, from 15 to 44 years-old.

A 6.9% (n=6) were studding Obligatory Secondary Education, a 34.5% (n=30) were studding professional education, a 44.8% (n=39) were studding a university degree, a 10.3% (n=9) were studding a master degree, and a 3.4% (n=3) were studding a doctorate.

A 40.2% (n=35) had physical disability; a 19.5% (n=17) had visual disability; a 21.8% (n=19) had hearing disability; a 23% (n=20) had cerebral palsy; and a 1.1% (n=1) had other type of disability.

An 8% (n=7) competed at university level; 58.6% (n=51) competed at national level; 20.7% (n=18) competed at European level; 37.9% (n=33) competed at world level; 27.6% (n=24) competed in the Olympic Games and 13.8% (n=12) competed at other levels.

2

RESULTS

A 33.3% (n=29) of the participants considered themselves sportingly professional; a 41.4% (n=36) were semi-professional; and a 25.3% (n=22) were amateur. A 54% (n=47) considered themselves as student-athletes; and a 46% (n=40) considered themselves as athlete- students.

A 52.9% (n=46) considered that they were at the beginning of the competition at the high level; a 35.6% (n=31) at the peak of their sporting level; and a 11.5% (n=10) at the end of their sporting career.

A 23% (n=20) also worked, while a 77% (n=67) did not work.

Regarding their main source of income, a 35.6% (n=31) had the sport as main source of income, a 23% (n=20) had a job outside sport, a 47.1% (n=41) had the family as main economic support and a 17.2% (n=15) had other main source of income.

A 55.2% (n=48) of the participants felt that their studies interfered with their sporting performance and 44.8% (n=39) felt that there was no such interference. On the other

hand, 50.6% (n=44) considered that their sports performance influenced their studies, while 49.4% (n=43) considered that there was no such interference. Regarding the level of difficulty in reconciling sport and academic life, a 2.3% (n=2) considered it very easy, a 13.8% (n=12) considered it easy, a 42.5% (n=37) considered it regular, a 32.2% (n=28) considered it difficult and a 9.2% (n=8) considered it very difficult.

The main barriers identified by the athletes for the success of the dual career were:

- The university is far from my training centre (n=41 vs n=28).
- I do not have enough support from the university (n=38 vs n=29).
- Study schedules are not flexible (n=40 vs. n=27).
- Spend more time thinking about sport than anything else (n=54 vs. n=24).
- They feel bad about themselves when they do badly in sport (n=49 vs. n=25).

With regard to their conception of themselves as athletes, the most salient points were:

- Exercise makes me tired (n=49 vs n=38).
- I think that when people wear sports clothes, they look good (n=66 vs n=21).

Finally, also on their conception of themselves as sportsmen and women, it is worth noting that:

- Consider themselves athletes (n=65 vs. n=14).
- They have many sport-related goals (n=68 vs. 14).
- Most of their friends are athletes (n=52 vs n=25).
- Sport is the most important part of their life (n=60 vs n=16).
- They would feel depressed if they were injured and could not compete in sport (n=56 vs n=24).

In relation to the qualitative answers, the participants responded that the university could facilitate the dual career through:

- 1. Flexibility of timetables (54.12%).
- 2. Being more permissive when handing in assignments (14.67%).

- 3. With the introduction of a personal tutor for support (13,76%).
- 4. Through a greater number of financial aids (12,84%).
- 5. Promoting adapted transport or eliminating physical barriers (4,61%).

Finally, the participants responded that sport institutions or federations can facilitate dual careers through:

- 1. Institutional agreements / scholarships (40.28%).
- 2. Flexibility between competitions and academic calendar (38.89%).
- 3. Direct contact with educational institution (11.11%).
- 4. Improvement of facilities / proximity to facilities (9.72%).

3

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, Spanish dual career disabled athletes consider themselves to be athletes first and foremost, they consider that there is interference between their academic and sporting life and that reconciling both is not easy.

The main barriers come from the academic field, highlighting the distance from the study centre, the support from the university and the lack of flexibility in timetables.

Universities could improve the dual career of athletes with more flexible schedules and sports federations through agreements with institutions/scholarships.

These aspects should be reviewed in order to facilitate the success of the Paralympic athlete in the two main areas of his or her dual career.



DUAL CAREER OF STUDENT-ATHLETES WITH
DISABILITIES AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

PARA-LIMITS

Field Research Activities – QUESTIONNAIRE (qualitative analysis)

PARTICIPANT COUNTRIES (concerning the data)

Ireland

ORGANISATION (that carry out the qualitative analysis)

UCAM with the cooperation of ONCE



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1**INTRODUCTION**

Seventeen Irish Paralympic athletes completed the survey. 64.7% (n=11) were men and 35.3% (n=6) were women, from 19 to 36 years-old.

66.7% (n=6) were studying a university degree, 26.7% (n=4) were studying a masters degree and 6.7% (n=1) were studying a doctorate.

70.6% (n=12) had a physical disability; 11.8% (n=2) had visual disability and 17.6% (n=3) had cerebral palsy.

5.9% (n=1) competed at university level; 76.5% (n=13) competed at national level; 58.8% (n=10) competed at European level; 17.6% (n=3) competed at world level; 23.5% (n=4) competed at the Paralympic Games and 17.6% (n=3) competed at other levels, (Marathon Major Series, EPYG Pajulati).

2**RESULTS**

17.6% (n=3) of the participants considered themselves sportingly professional; 35.3% (n=6) were semi-professional; and 47.1% (n=8) were amateur. 35.3% (n=6) considered themselves as student-athletes and 64.7% (n=11) considered themselves as athlete-students.

68.8% (n=11) considered that they were at the beginning of the competition at the high level; 18.8% (n=3) at the peak of their sporting level; and 12.5% (n=2) at the end of their sporting career.

29.4% (n=5) also worked, while a 70.6% (n=12) did not work.

Regarding their main source of income, 23.5% (n=4) had sport as their main source of income, 35.3% (n=6) had a job outside sport, 17.6% (n=3) had the family as the main economic support and 52.9% (n=9) had other main source of income, e.g. disability allowance.

37.5% (n=6) of the participants felt that their studies interfered with their sporting performance and 62.5% (n=10) felt that there was no such interference. On the other

hand, 50% (n=8) considered that their sports performance influenced their studies, while 50% (n=8) considered that there was no such interference. On average participants spent approx. 26 ± 10 hours on their studies and 13 ± 6 hours on training and competitions. Regarding the level of difficulty in reconciling sport and academic life, 13.3% (n=2) considered it easy, 46.7% (n=7) considered it regular, 40% (n=6) considered it difficult.

The main barriers identified by the athletes for the success of the dual career were:

- The university is far from my training centre (n=8 vs n=6).
- I find myself unable to balance study and training time (n=8 vs v=5)
- I am usually tired (n=9 vs n=4)

With regard to their conception of themselves as athletes, the most salient point was:

- Exercise makes me tired (n=10 vs n=7).

Finally, also on their conception of themselves as sportsmen and women, it is worth noting that:

- Consider themselves athletes (n=10 vs. n=7).
- They have many sport-related goals (n=13 vs. n=2).
- Sport is the most important part of their life (n=13 vs n=4).
- I spend more time thinking about sport than anything else (n=16 vs n=4).
- I feel bad about myself when I do poorly in sport (n=10 vs n=5).
- They would feel depressed if they were injured and could not compete in sport (n=13 vs n=2).

In relation to the qualitative answers, the participants responded that the university could facilitate the dual career through:

- 1. Flexibility of timetables (n=9, 52.9%).
- 2. Scholarships and financial support (n=3, 17.7%)
- 3. Better communication (n=2, 11.8%)
- 4. Better access to facilities and supports (n=4, 23.6%)

Finally, the participants responded that sport institutions or federations can facilitate dual careers through:

- 1. Better lines of communication between institution and the university (n=3, 17.7%)
- 2. Flexibility (n=2, 11.8%).
- 3. Institution needs greater understanding of academic demands and needs to conduct player check ins (n=2, 11.8%)
- 4. Greater financial support (n=2, 11.8%)
- 5. Improvement of facilities and access (n=2, 11.8%).
- 6. Sport science support (n=2, 11.8%).

3

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, Irish dual career disabled athletes consider themselves to be athletes first and foremost, they consider that there is interference between their academic and sporting life and that reconciling both is not easy.

The main barriers come from the academic field, highlighting the distance from the study centre, and the difficulty in balancing study and training time. Feeling usually tired was identified as a barrier as well.

Universities could improve the dual career of athletes with more flexible schedules, better access to facilities and supports and by offering greater financial assistance and scholarships. Communication between universities and sporting institutions/ federations was identified as a method of improving dual career of athletes. In addition, sports federations can enhance the dual career of athletes by providing sport science support, financial assistance and by improving access to facilities.

These aspects should be reviewed in order to facilitate the success of the Paralympic athlete in the two main areas of his or her dual career.