



TIME OUT



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
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FIBA

We Are Basketball



**TIME
OUT**

Dual career advice for basketball players

Foreword

The FIBA TIME-OUT project supported by Erasmus+ is the first ever program led by FIBA in the field of dual careers that focuses on the integration of basketball players into the labour market, showing the importance of thinking in advance about the life that follows after sport.



"With this unique degree, we believe players have in their hands the tools for them to make the transition to their next professions that we hope, for the majority, will be in the field of basketball, as they work with us at FIBA and their federations to contribute to the growth and health of basketball in Europe and further abroad."

Turgay Demirel
President of FIBA Europe
Former elite basketball player

"With the TIME-OUT project we aimed to help players achieve their professional goals. Through the improvement of their management skills and knowledge, the gaining of valuable expertise in basketball-specific issues, and the support of our elite experts, we have made them ready for their next careers."

Kamil Novak
FIBA Executive Director Europe
Former elite basketball player



As experienced professional sportspersons, most elite basketball players already have a wealth of leadership skills and competences topped up by work ethic and competitive spirit. They also have vast experience in living and working with people from a wide range of backgrounds.

The **TIME-OUT** program provided an opportunity for 80 male and female players from across Europe to study in a specially designed 3-tier educational program comprising a business degree in Leadership & Management, a FIBA Event Manager qualification, and a TALS certificate. The flexibility of the program, delivered predominantly through blended learning and designated workshops and seminars, provided a unique variety of theoretical and practical learning opportunities.

Furthermore, the experience of the players going through the program and their desire to share their advice with future generations of basketball players as well as with the management team of **TIME-OUT** is the basis for the creation of this tool-book.

The goal of **FIBA Europe** is to continue to work with various partners, basketball players' networks, various stakeholders from within and outside basketball, and with the European Commission in order to develop a sustainable support mechanism for players across Europe. Providing opportunities for combining strong flexible education with sport will reduce dropout, increase the participation of young people in sport, and will develop stronger social and professional partnerships.

Introduction:

– an overview of the tool-book



“I always had in my mind that dual career is important for an athlete, because I know that playing a sport is not eternal and at some point, it ends. For this reason, I have always applied myself to prepare a career outside of basketball.”

Raffaella Masciadri

From the time they enter the basketball court, many athletes often make a professional career in sport their goal. The path of a professional player's career in basketball is often an exciting, varied journey full of countless opportunities and challenges.

Professional sport impacts people's lives in many ways, including economically and socially. What we are proposing to do is to concentrate on the impact that a professional career has on the overall athlete. One of the most significant moments in a professional player's life is at the crossroads of their playing career ending and the beginning of their professional career.

In the EU's White Paper on Sport, which was published in 2007, the dual career is highlighted in the following paragraph:

“In order to ensure the reintegration of professional sportspersons into the labour market at the end of their sporting careers, the Commission emphasises the importance of taking into account at an early stage the need to provide “dual career” training for young sportsmen and sportswomen and to provide high quality local training centers to safeguard their moral, educational and professional interests.”¹

¹ EU's White Paper on Sport, 2007

In this tool-book we aim to uncover dual career opportunities and provide a “master key” to create post-career guidance which can be used and tailored to different age groups and regions so that an opportunity will be created for professional and soon-to-be professional players to seize the given opportunities to prepare for life after stepping off the court.



Why is the Dual Career concept important?

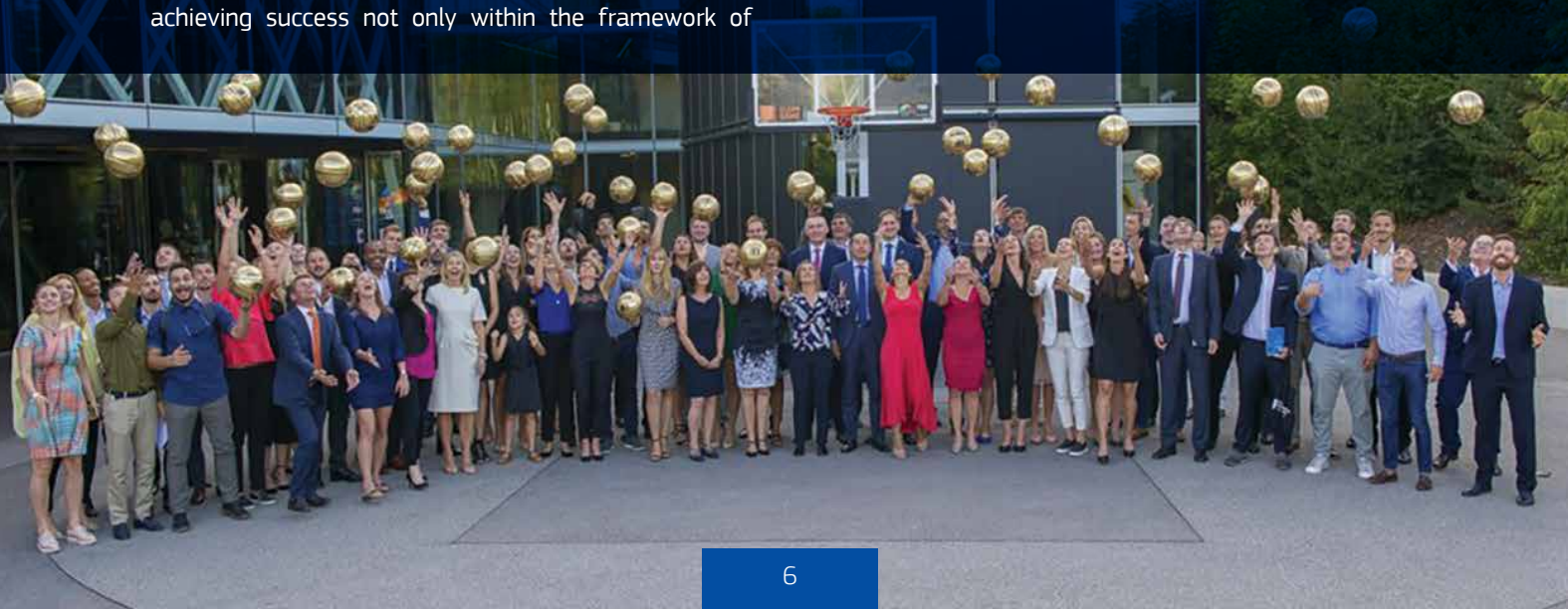


“I have always understood the importance of a post-sport career since professional athletes will have to face retirement one day, whether it is forced or not. Therefore, I have throughout my sport career taken actions to help and prepare myself to transition into a post-sport career.”

Anna Barthold

In 21st century contemporary society, the importance and role of high-performance sports has expanded rapidly. Sport itself as a phenomenon has played an important role in human development by contributing to society in various ways. However, as a consequence of the complexity and challenges of the contemporary world around us, many athletes have begun to rethink the importance of the factors that contribute to achieving success not only within the framework of

sports, but also in education, throughout their lifetimes. The European Union promotes the importance of education and supports the role of sports in the domain of education. Therefore, the idea of dual career comes to the surface. The concept of a dual career in high-performance sport is defined as “the necessity of helping athletes in planning and managing the areas of sport, education, gaining financial resources and social life”.²



Dual career is now promoted and supported by many institutions that are willing to support athletes in the development of their sport careers in parallel with their educational and professional development. The importance of the dual career is also emphasized by the European Commission under the “White Books of Sports”; by referring to the development of sports in a social, cultural and economic context, they will “ensure the integration of professional athletes into the labour market at the end of their sportive careers and to provide to the young athletes a formation for a dual career”. However, many athletes are aware that pursuing education while competing in high-performance sport can be a very difficult task. The increasing demands and expectations concerning their athletic performance put a certain pressure on athletes, which leads them to a crossroads decision between maximizing their athletic potential and obtaining a satisfying education for a post-athletic career. Studies show that this often leads to the premature discontinuation of the athletic career due to the prioritization of education or to lower investment in education as a consequence of greater focus on athletic success and career.

The successful arrangement of the dual career depends both on the goodwill of the athlete and individuals who are in the key positions of an organization or institution. Additionally, general and sustainable financial and legal support is equally important and needed. Therefore, various organizations and athletes have called attention to these challenges by pointing out the importance and concerns of receiving a quality education and, also, providing support services for young people who are involved in elite sport in Europe. Here are some of the above-mentioned challenges that are the biggest concerns of athletes:

- The safeguarding of the development of young athletes, especially of children in early sport specialization, young people in vocational education and training, and disabled athletes;
- The balance between sport training and education and, at a later stage of life, the balance between sports training and employment;
- The end-of-sporting-career phase of athletes, including those who leave the system earlier than planned.⁵

The tackling of the above-mentioned challenges differs from country to country. Even though the complexity of the dual career is a challenge to many individuals and institutions, there are countries which have managed to successfully overcome the obstacles. The case of France can serve as an example:

In France, each regional training center must sign a general agreement with an educational structure where athletes may follow their academic education. The aim of the agreement is to facilitate the time schedule of athletes, allow for personal planning of exams during competition time and provide tutoring.⁶

² Dualcareer.com | ³ The White Book of Sports, 2007, pg 6. | ⁴ Aries, McCarthy, Banaji, 2004

⁵ <http://www.pasap.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/dual-career-guidelines.pdf>

⁶ <http://www.pasap.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/dual-career-guidelines.pdf>

How can you benefit from Dual Career?



“In my opinion every athlete should start planning their future from the moment they decide to commit to sport. Exploring opportunities available to them to combine education and sport is critically important as well as the advice of their family, teachers and coaches. Being proactive rather than reactive is the key to finding the most suitable opportunities.”

Radmila Turner

The discussion about the importance, challenges and the role of dual career in athletes' lives must be supported by highlighting its benefits as well. Many of these are articulated in sport research:

- Health-related benefits (e.g. balanced lifestyle, reduced stress levels, increased wellbeing);
- Developmental benefits (e.g. better conditions to develop life skills applicable to sport, education and other spheres of life, development of personal identity, positive effects on athletes' self-regulation abilities);
- Social benefits (e.g. positive socialization effects such as expanded social networks and social support systems and better peer relationships);
- Benefits related to athletic retirement and adaptation in life after sport (e.g. better career/retirement planning, shorter adaptation period, prevention of identity crisis);
- Enhanced future employment prospects (e.g. higher employability and access to well-paid jobs).⁷

⁷ <http://www.pasap.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/dual-career-guidelines.pdf>



It is not only athletes but also society and the greater field of sport which will benefit from the positive image of educated athletes who make the sport more attractive for others. These athletes also function as positive role models for young people and future generations of athletes and express the importance of excellence within one society.

The transition from basketball player to a job on the open market:

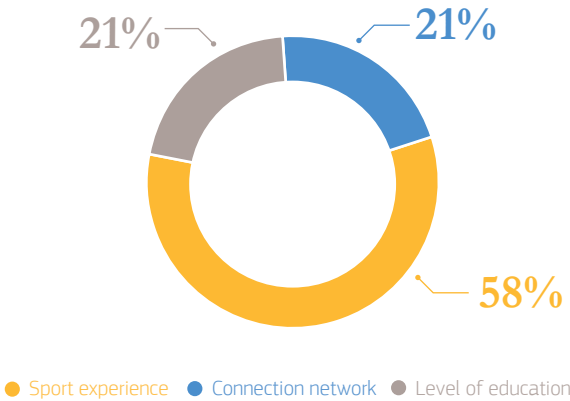


“Players should understand that at some point their career sport will finish and they should prepare themselves for their life after sport. The sooner an athlete realises this, the easier it will be for them to find pathways to connect them with the “real world” after sport. This is not an easy decision, when you are immersed in the sports-bubble, with only one life priority, to perform at the highest level. Therefore, it is very important to have a solid support network that helps you to find alternatives and solutions on how to balance sport and education.”

Elisabeth Cebrian-Scheurer

As stated in the previous section of the toolbook already, basketball players often face difficulties in maintaining and developing good educational standards while sustaining their place in the dynamic of their teams. A busy calendar full of daily practices and games at home or on the road leads to a very complex lifestyle for a player-student. Furthermore, the often poor planning or inadequate advice from their junior years lead to poor preparation when an athlete is making the transition from sporting to professional career. On a positive note, there are many ways to make this process easier for active players as well as for those who are preparing for their retirement from sport. Many studies have shown that in order to achieve a smooth and successful transition, players need to develop their personal resilience and skills, obtain a certain level of education and strengthen their network. While some players are able to develop these skills naturally, others require relevant support and coaching.

What was the key element which played the biggest role in helping your career transition?



Based on the answers of the TIME-OUT group members

Recommended Actions and Initiatives for Players in Different Age Groups

Each basketball player should plan and prepare for their long-term future outside basketball from an early age. This should be done with the strong support of family, school and club, national federation and their agents, if and when they get involved. Only when well prepared and surrounded by a strong support group can the young player strive in an environment that prepares them for a successful transition at the end of their playing career.



Recommended steps for specific age groups:

- **8th grade (12-14 years old):** research and start a list of high schools you are interested in, and try to get in touch with the teachers and coaches of the school clubs if possible. *Being an athlete can be a huge advantage.* Check the requirements of the high school you are

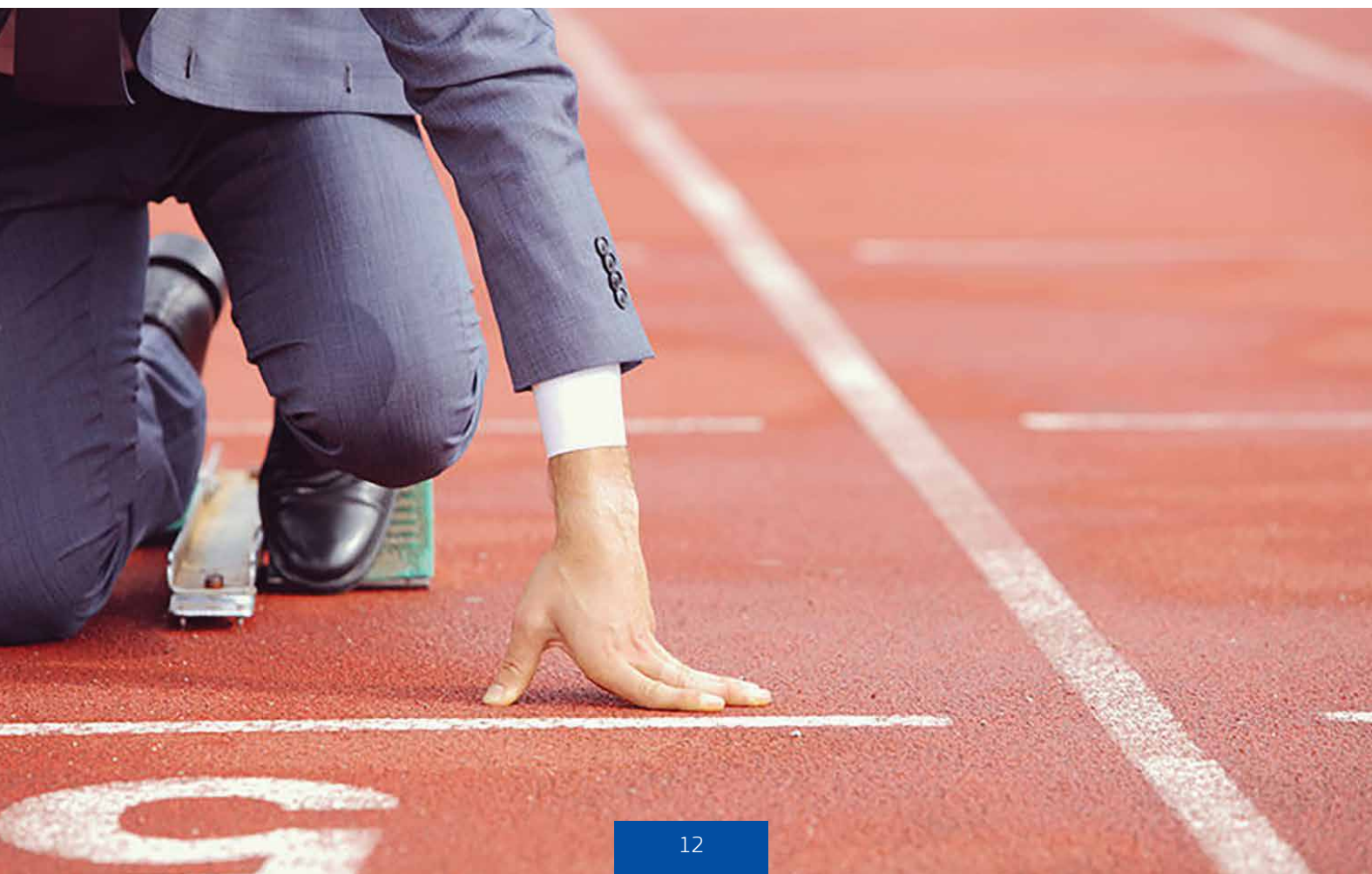
interested in, and work on specific required skills that will increase your chance of acceptance. Work on your studies and courses within your school; higher GPA's can influence your chance of acceptance. Make good choices every day and maintain a well-managed schedule that will help you to focus on your basketball development and studies at the same time. *Ask for help from your coaches, teachers, and family.* Their support is highly important.

- **High school (14-18 years old):** Continue your research for potential university programs that you can access, and start this process from your first year in high school. Check all entry requirements, both academic and sport-specific. Register for any additional courses that you may need during the summer months. Tell your coach about your goals and interests; they are often in a position to provide good advice and support. Try to get involved in your school teams and other activities because this develops your portfolio. Enroll in university camps and clinics and get to know staff and basketball coaches. Research funding opportunities such as: sport and academic scholarships, various grants and other opportunities that you could apply for. Check timeliness and deadlines for applications. Connect with older players who have been involved in the university program to learn about their experiences, and take advice. Keep more than one option open in case your first choice does not materialize.

- **Senior year (18+):** Senior year is one of the most important years in many players' and students' lives. It is important to keep in mind that the decisions made during this year can affect your future in different ways. For the players who want to continue into postgraduate programs, the same rules apply as for undergraduate programs. For players who decide to transition towards a professional sports career, it is important to not fully move out of the educational system. The high demand of constant traveling, training and games leave basketball players with limited time and choices to invest in their education. Therefore, the seeking out of support services and dual career programs (e.g. TIME-OUT) is of

high importance. These programs will allow players to prepare for a smooth transition in the future from sport career to employment in another field.

- **Soon to be retired players:** Any athlete can drop out at any given time for different reasons (see the section below). Therefore, athletes should be prepared for a transition beforehand. For those who successfully manage to keep up with their studies, it is easier for them to enter a post-sport career in different fields. However, for those who have limited access to educational institutions because of the high demand of their sport sector, there are many ways for them to keep up.



What to do - tips for a smoother transition

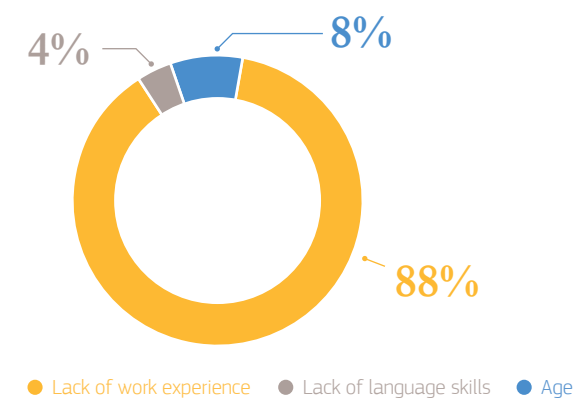


“Start planning as soon as possible. Work on your networking and educate yourself to the best of your abilities, so people will not see you just as a basketball player, but also as an educated businessman or entrepreneur.”

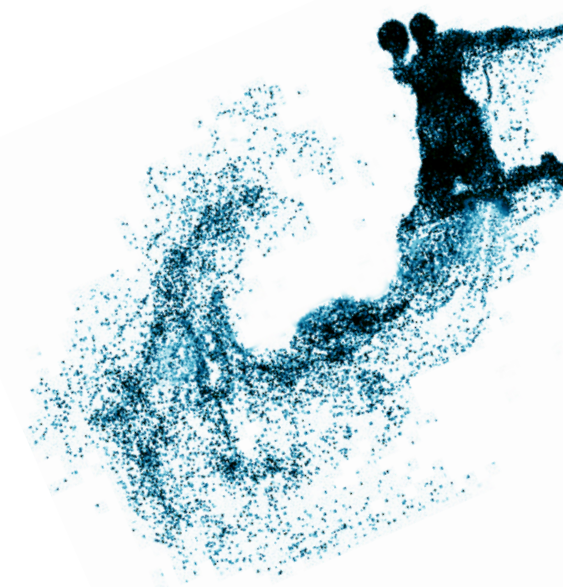
Bostjan Nachbar

- Start the process early.
- Do your research.
- Be up to date with programs/institutions that provide a dual career.
- Check online courses.
- Ask for advice from assigned individuals of certain institutions.
- Get involved in internships.
- Volunteer in organizations that are of interest to your future.
- Ask to shadow a professional person you wish to model yourself on.
- Ask questions and be eager to learn.

What were the biggest obstacle during the job seeking?



Based on the answers of the TIME-OUT group members



Drop out

– it can happen any time!⁸



“There are many examples of talented basketball players dropping out of school or university before completing their qualifications just to discover a few years down the line that they are unable to get a job. Injuries, bad contracts, and the negative influence of a player's entourage often lead to problems that leave them confused and at a crossroads. Clubs and leagues usually support their players until they are active, but very little help is available when they retire.”

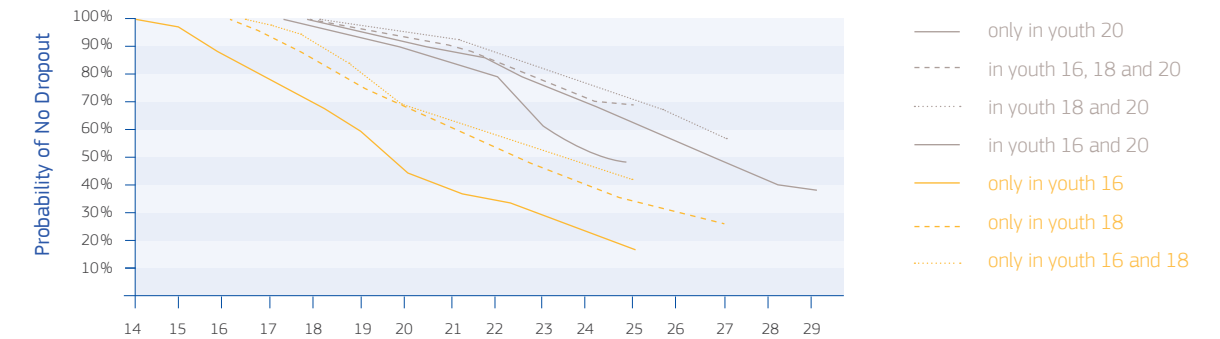
Radmila Turner

Dropping out of sports is usually an unexpected and unforeseen incident which may have many causes. It's often connected with developmental changes and transitions throughout a person's life, for example, changing schools, graduating, getting a job, getting married, having children, and so on. Dropping out from sports is not always the result of negative experiences, although injuries, poor coaching, exploitation, and abuse from coaches influence some decisions to change or end participation. Problems may occur for those who end long careers in sports, especially those who have no identities apart from sports or lack the social and material resources for making transitions into other careers and relationships. The drop out effect is stronger and more common for women because pregnancies cause stoppages in their sport careers and can accelerate the process of dropping out.



Athletes are surrounded by an entourage of supporters and stakeholders, who want to influence young sportspersons in ways they feel are best for their development:

- Sports stakeholders, such as coaches, physiotherapists, psychologists, nutritionists, medical advisers and others;
- Social environment, including family, friends and peers;
- Education specialists, e.g., teachers, tutors, mentors and others.



Probability of No Dropout by type of participation - women

Support from all the members of the player's network is the key to enabling athletes to achieve a balance between their education, sport, and social development. Athletes go through several stages of career transition when pressures and conflicts may become acute. During periods in which they move up to higher levels of competition, they may need additional help and support in terms of managing failure and dealing with the end of their sporting careers.

Typical reasons for dropout and early retirement:

- Injuries, burnout
- Dual career: sport and studies
- Institutional shortcomings: lack of career support
- Social isolation: peers
- Social isolation: family
- Social isolation: dating
- Work-family conflict
- Lack of social mobility
- Coaching styles, conflicts with the coach
- Psychological pressure

“The first step was becoming aware that my sports career was ending. Being clear and honest with oneself and knowing how to finish in the best of ways, and with serenity, a job that has lasted for more than twenty years has been decisive. Later I reflected on what I would like to do and I activated my knowledge and networks to get there. I also contacted some trusted people who were able to advise me on the right path to take.”

Raffaella Masciadri



⁸ Uncharacteristically High Player Dropout in Women's Basketball in Relation to Dual Careers

(<http://www.fiba.basketball/en/Module/c9dad82f-01af-45e0-bb85-ee4cf50235b4/5ed3bc43-448e-4e61-97f0-5e6fb3affdd0>)

Dropout and IBMR

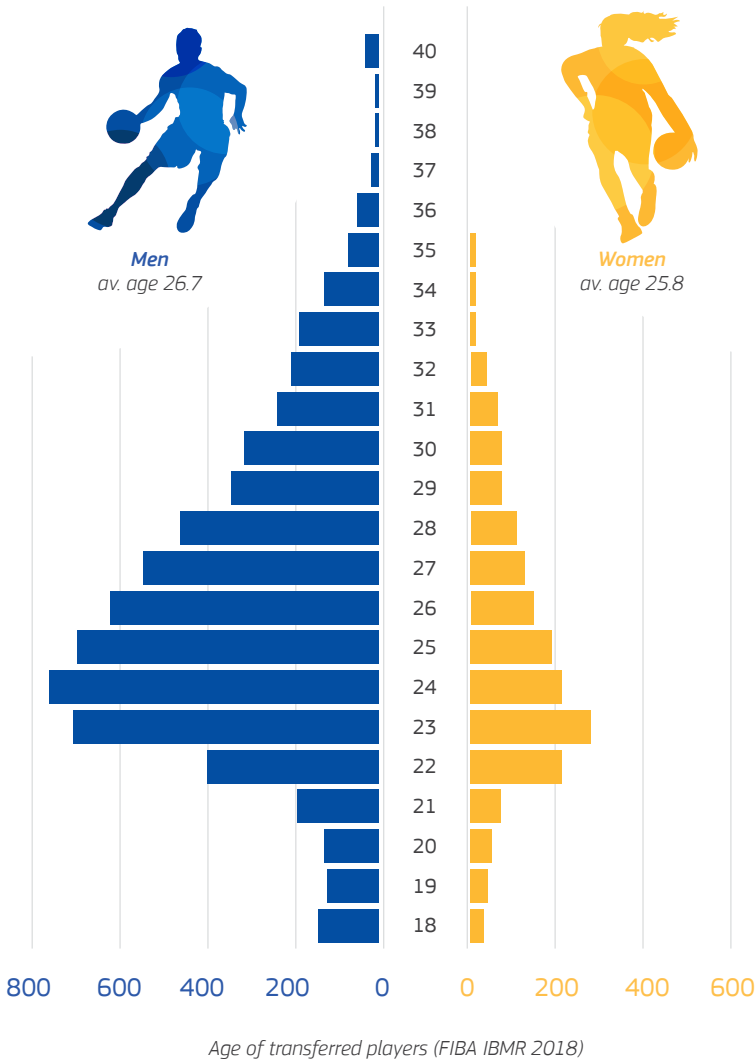
– the connection between them

The International Basketball Migration Report (IBMR) is put together annually by FIBA in collaboration with the Centre for Sport Studies (CIES). In the report, we can find valuable information regarding players' careers. If we cross-check these findings with the dropout effect, we can create a more detailed picture of the basketball player's career.

This graph shows us that the age of the transferred players decreases from the age of 24-25, which is in line with dropout time.

“... if I could give one advice then connect with as many people as you can during your playing carrer and keep those contacts alive because one day you will capitilize on them. Networking is huge.”

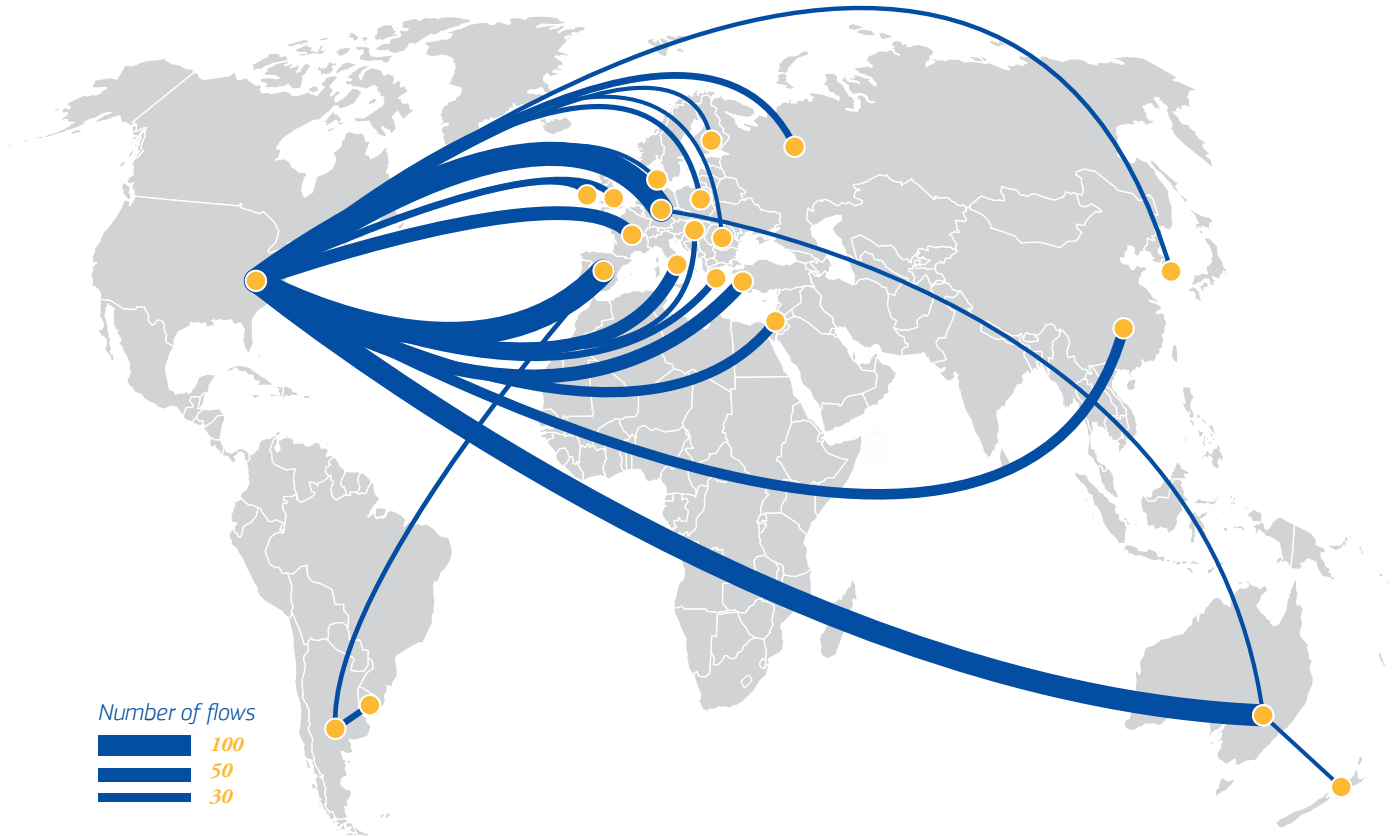
Jiri Welsch



There are also different trends in the transfer and the migration of players which are relevant to the dropout effect. Europe remains one of the top exporters of players to the US, and most of these players come back to Europe after a short period of time, so the migration of European players also plays a role in the life of the players.



Highest flows of players excluding intra european tranfers





What type of general competencies are required for Dual Career?

Communication competencies:

Under the communication competencies, athletes are highly advised to learn at least one of the official worldwide spoken languages, especially English. Language skills help athletes to make a much smoother transition to further employment in the open market. One's level of proficiency can vary among four dimensions: listening, speaking, reading and writing. The higher the level of proficiency, within all of the dimensions, the higher the possibility of obtaining an educational scholarship and employed in the future. The knowledge of a certain language not only provides more opportunities for the athlete, but it helps the individual to develop more skills, such as expressing and interpreting concepts, thoughts, and feelings and being more open and flexible within different cultural environments. Learning a language in a highly technological era such as the 21st century has

become easier than ever. Also, attending English language courses during high school and doing undergraduate and postgraduate studies is highly advised. If athletes do not have this opportunity, attending private courses, joining one of the many available online English courses, reading graded reader books and watching movies and television series in English are a few of the many ways to learn the language.

Personal and interpersonal skills:

Personal and interpersonal skills, also known as “life skills”, are of high importance in today's society, especially for individuals who are ready to make the transition into the world of work. They can be of help to athletes who are

dealing with uncertainty and change and also wish to develop personally and build successful interpersonal relations. All of the benefits of interpersonal skills can lead athletes to make more conscious and better decisions concerning their future. Additionally, interpersonal skills can be of high importance in the working world as well. A few of these many skills include: being self-confident, having a work ethic, body language, collaboration, listening, and a positive attitude.

Mathematical and basic competencies in science and technology:

Mathematical competencies involve the ability to use math-based modes of thought, such as logical thinking and presentations, like models, constructs, graphs, and charts. Technology-related competencies include using computers to store, produce, present and exchange information and also to allow communication and participation in a collaborative network via the internet to take place. Additionally, skills needed include the ability to search, collect and process information and use it in a critical and systematic way and to assess the relevance of information and distinguish the real from the virtual while recognizing links. It is important to note that with knowledge of computer-related programs, such as Microsoft Office, athletes will be able to apply these skills in most working environments since the use of technology is at a peak. Learning these skills can be easily done through online courses and videos, or by attending computer-related courses in educational institutions or private centers.



Learning to learn:

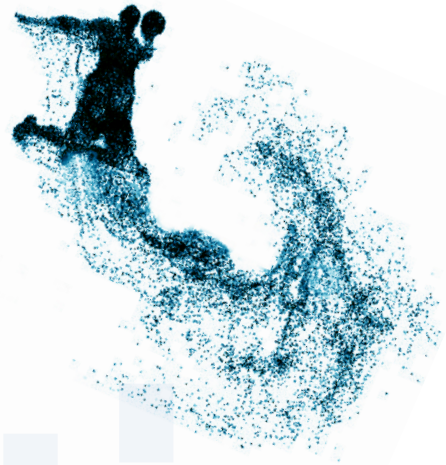
Learning to learn is a competence that is connected to all the other competencies. As the name itself describes, learning to learn is the ability to pursue and persist in learning by organizing one's own learning. This can be done by managing one's own time and information, both on an individual and group level. This competence is one of the most important ones when it comes to athletes. Since the sport career in many cases creates challenges for athletes in obtaining an education, learning on their own through various ways can come in handy. This includes awareness of one's learning process and needs by identifying opportunities, and most importantly, being able to overcome obstacles along the way to learn successfully. Learning to learn can help athletes build on prior learning and life experiences so they can use and apply their knowledge and different skills in different environments such as at home, at work, in education and training. It is important to note that motivation, desire, and self-confidence are crucial to an athlete's ability to learn and teach themselves. Hence, this will lead them to be more successful outside of their sports career, as well as open new opportunities in their post-sport life.

Once you're studying, it's also very important to build a good relationship with your school and let your teachers and tutors know all about your athletic commitments ahead of time so that they can offer you support when you need it most.

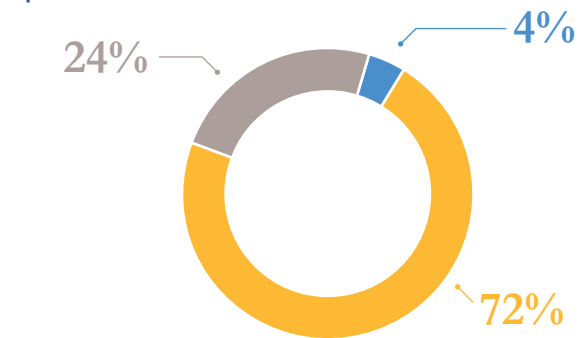
⁹<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX%3A52018SC0014&from=EN>

How to make the most of your time:¹⁰

- Write a to-do list
- Set yourself clear goals
- Prioritize your tasks
- Tackle the hardest tasks first
- Know what your commitments are and draw up a timetable
- Keep organized so you can stay on top of your tasks
- Try to get an early start on what you have to do



What would have helped the most during your sport career to make the transition as easy as possible?



- Post career guidance
- Individual mentoring
- Education programs

Based on the answers of the TIME-OUT group members

Skills sets by job types

- a guide to what to focus on^{11;12}



“If I would be 18-year-old then I would advise myself to use modern technologies to collect information about different academic alternatives that universities and schools provide nowadays. Many on-line tools and blended learning possibilities in many different areas are out there to support persons that are in special situations, like athletes.”

Elisabeth Cebrian-Scheurer



“Every basketball player should have a plan, use their time wisely and add important skills and qualifications that will help their transition to a post-playing career. Using the summer months when free to volunteer or work as intern in the field they are interested in is also a good way to make valuable contacts and add skills.”

Radmila Turner



“The two keys are education and knowledge. Make sure to educate yourselves and talk to people who have experienced this transition already in order to gain new and important knowledge.”

Anna Barthold

¹⁰ <https://www.olympic.org/athlete365/athlete-career-transition/education/>

¹¹ <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/hard-skills-vs-soft-skills-2063780>

¹² <https://www.jobsinsports.com/blog/2017/06/07/2109/>

Here is a quick map which can guide you through the different skills needed for some major professions. The hard and soft skills are the foundations of every job, acquiring them is a key element for a successful post sport career

Health Care	Hospitality	Digital Media	Legal	Retail	Social Media	Sport
Dental Job Skills	Therapy Job Skills	Communication Skills	Analytical Skills	Attention to Detail	Writing	Flexibility
Integrative Medicine Job Skills	Technician Job Skills	Content Management Skills	Communication Skills	Business Awareness Skills	Design	Time Management
Health Care Administration and Sales Job Skills	Hotel Operations Skills	Marketing Skills	Interpersonal Skills	Communication Skills	Public Speaking	Organization
Nurse and Medical Assistant Job Skills	Food Service Skills	Technical Computer Skills	Research Skills	Customer Service Skills	Customer Service	Communication
Medicine and Dietitian	Maintenance and Cleaning Skills	Website and Graphic Design Skills	Work Ethic	Information Technology (IT) Skills	Analytics	Analytical Mindset
	Management Skills	Web Analytics Skills		Interpersonal Skills		Creativity
				Numeracy Skills		
				Selling Skills		
				Retail Buyer Skills		

Hard Skills


Teachable abilities or skill sets that are easy to quantify:

- Proficiency in a foreign language
- A degree or certificate
- Typing speed
- Computer programming
- Machinal operation

Soft Skills

Also known as “people skills” or “interpersonal skills”:

- Communication
- Flexibility
- Leadership
- Teamwork
- Time management



Thank you for reading through our tool-book. We hope that this booklet gave you a detailed insight about the importance of studying beside sport career and you can use some tips from it for an easier transition.

“Let’s play basketball and have a smooth transition!”



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and **University of Physical Education, Hungary.**

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