

# SUPPORTING ATHLETES BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER ATHLETIC RETIREMENT

## GENERAL GUIDELINES



### Information & awareness

*Provide information on and awareness about available career support services towards elite athletes and their environment.*



### Support from the sports world

*Create support and engagement from the sports world.*



### Tailor-made & holistic approach

*Focus on the specific needs of an elite athlete, taking into account the whole person.*



### Proactive approach

*Focus on preparation, strengthening competencies, and broad development during the athletic career.*



### Positive approach

*Approach preparation for a post-athletic career as a positive, (new) challenge for the broader development.*



### Personal contact

*Use of personal contact moments to sufficiently trigger the awareness of elite athletes (and their environment).*



### Online solutions

*Provide online solutions to promote the personal development.*



### Importance of follow-up

*Emphasize the continued availability of both formal and informal support and guidance, as well as the creation of openness.*



### Monitoring & evaluation

*Monitoring and evaluating the provided support, as well as the holistic progression of the elite athlete via both soft, and hard measures.*



### Continued support

*Continued support from various organisations and agencies during, and after the athletic career.*



### Integration & coordination

*Clear coordination and integration of the various support services and initiatives offered by different types of organisations.*



### Context

*Contextualization must be considered when implementing the basic principles.*





SPORT PSYCHOLOGY  
& MENTAL SUPPORT  
RESEARCH GROUP

# SUPPORTING ATHLETES **BEFORE, DURING** AND AFTER ATHLETIC RETIREMENT

Active athletes preparing their retirement have to cope with a set of specific **challenges and barriers**.



Single-minded focus on sport



Bad timing of career support services



Lack of free choice and autonomy



Lack of knowledge of career support services



Lack of duality in a DC



Lack of uniform DC services



## RATIONALE

**Personal development** is a part of the elite sporting career.

- Developing **resources** in various areas
- Support athletes in their **broadier development**
- Support athletes in the exploration of **professional interests and talents**

**Preventive guidelines** targeting athletes' entourage, career support providers, and athletes themselves.



Personal development plan



Transparent DC guidelines



Development of competencies



Individual career support trajectories



Tailor-made educational trajectories



Job/internship opportunities



E-learning options



Role models



Career coaching



Athletes' broader development as part of sport organisations' vision

# SUPPORTING ATHLETES BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER ATHLETIC RETIREMENT

During their retirement, former athletes have to cope with a set of specific **challenges and barriers**.



Needing support is taboo



Lack of interests outside of sport



Physical, psychological, and social adaptation



Lack of transition period

## RATIONALE

The **retirement period** is a part of the entire (sporting) career.

- It builds on **personal** and **holistic** development
- **Intensive and active support**
- Close monitoring if **crisis transitions** occur

**Intervention guidelines** targeting athletes' entourage, career support providers, and athletes themselves.



Personal development plan



Mental support for crisis transition



Development and awareness of (transferable) competencies



Facilitate contact with employers



Networking



Job search competencies



Continued financial support in specific cases



Career coaching



# SUPPORTING ATHLETES BEFORE, DURING AND **AFTER** ATHLETIC RETIREMENT

After their retirement, former athletes in a new, post-athletic career have to cope with a set of specific **challenges and barriers**.



Unrealistic expectations of job opportunities



Occupational delay



Lack of job experience



No desire for functions in sport

## RATIONALE

Build **autonomously** on the broader personal development

- Invest in building a **sustainable, new career**
- Support and guidance should remain accessible for at least **two years** after ending the sporting career
- Support has a more **reactive** character

**Reactive intervention guidelines** targeting athletes' entourage, career support providers, and athletes themselves.



Continued access to a multidisciplinary support team



Job search competencies



Networking



Mentorship in the workplace facilitated by the employer



Enhance interaction opportunities between the labour market and retired athletes

