



## PROfessional GRowth through Education in the Sport Sector by pursuing a Dual Career

*Beyond the Finish Line: Empowering Athletes for Life After Sport*



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## Dual Careers in Sports

For many professional athletes, success demands early specialization, intense training, and long-term dedication – often at the expense of academic or professional development. While these efforts may bring fame and achievement, sporting careers are typically short and uncertain, frequently ending due to injuries or unforeseen challenges. This leaves many athletes unprepared for life after sports. To address this, the European Union issued the EU Guidelines on Dual Careers of Athletes in 2012, which highlight the importance of supporting athletes in balancing sport with education or vocational training.



The Progress DC project embraces the principles of the EU Guidelines (2012) by supporting professional athletes through a structured approach: training and certifying Dual Career (DC) Advisers within sports organizations, offering athletes flexible training in transversal and digital skills, and raising awareness among stakeholders and policymakers. By bridging the gap between sports and education, Progress DC helps athletes thrive during and after their sporting careers.





# What is Progress DC about?



Progress DC (PROfessional GRowth through Education in the Sport Sector by pursuing a Dual Career) is a 36-month Erasmus+ Sport project that aims to support professional athletes in developing sustainable dual careers.

## **The project focuses on four main pillars:**

- Establishes the certified role of the DC Adviser within sports organizations.
- Equips the athletes with key transversal and digital skills that are necessary for the labour market.
- Creates a dedicated online platform – the DC platform.
- Raises awareness among stakeholders and policy makers about the importance of structured dual career pathways in sports.

## **Aim**

The overall aim of Progress DC is to empower professional athletes to successfully prepare for and pursue a dual career – combining their sporting commitments with education and professional development. Recognizing the challenges athletes face during and after their sporting careers, the project seeks to provide them with the necessary tools, guidance, and support to transition smoothly into the labour market. By introducing the role of the certified Dual Career Adviser within sports organisations, offering targeted training in transversal and digital skills, and fostering strong collaboration between the sports and education sectors, Progress DC aspires to build a sustainable framework that enables athletes to thrive both on and off the field.



# Main Objectives

1. To establish the **“DC Career Adviser”** qualification and to train, assess and qualify coaching and other key staff of sports clubs to become DC Advisers.
2. To **profile possible careers** that the professional athletes may follow, and through this to provide DC Advisors useful information.
3. To **develop the missing transversal skills**, that are necessary for employment of athletes.
4. To **provide dual career advice** (mentoring and coaching) through the DC Career Advisors and the VET providers to athletes.
5. To **develop a one-stop-shop, the “DC Platform”** that will include – among others – best practices identified for a dual career. Through this, coaches and staff of sports organisations will receive the training and get the certification.
6. To **raise awareness** about the importance of dual careers for athletes.
7. To **support the cooperation between VET providers and sports organisations** and exploit this cooperation for bigger impact and education.

## The DC Adviser

At the heart of the Progress DC project is the creation of a new role within sports organisations: The Dual Career (DC) Adviser. This role is specifically designed to support professional athletes in planning and developing their dual careers. DC Advisers will be trained and certified – under ISO17024 standards – to provide a personalised career guidance, mentoring and coaching tailored to the unique challenges athletes face. Whether it's helping athletes identify transferable skills, explore educational pathways or connect with job placement opportunities, the DC Adviser act as a trusted point of reference throughout an athlete's transition. By embedding this role directly within sports clubs and associations, Progress DC ensures long-term, sustainable support structures that make dual career planning an integral part of an athlete's journey – not an afterthought.





# What will Progress DC produce?

Progress DC will deliver a range of tangible outputs designed to support dual careers in the sports sector. More specifically, the project will produce:

1. A **Certified Training Program for DC Advisers**, including curricula and training materials, an ISO17024-certified qualification and a series of comprehensive assessment tools in the form of multiple-choice questions and structured interview guides.
2. **Training Programs for DC Advisers**, with practical guidelines, mentoring tips and techniques and real-life examples of dual career pathways.
3. The **PDC Platform** that will serve as a one-stop online hub for all resources, providing access to training, webinar and materials as well as job placement and job tasting opportunities for athletes.
4. **Athletes Skills Inventory Tool (ASIT)** – a self-assessment tool to identify existing and missing skills.
5. **Research and Best Practices Report** – integrating insights from interviews with ex-athletes, the identified challenges and successful strategies at national and EU level, as well as policy recommendations for dual career support.

## How can you benefit from Progress DC?



Whether you're a professional athlete, a sports club, a coach, or part of a vocational training institution, Progress DC offers concrete tools and opportunities to support your growth.

**Athletes** will gain access to free, flexible training in transversal and digital skills, receive personalized career guidance, and explore real job opportunities through job placements and job tasting.

**Sports organisations** will benefit from the presence of a certified *Dual Career Adviser* within their team—someone trained to guide athletes through their personal and professional development. **Coaches, staff, and other professionals** will be able to earn an *ISO17024 certification*, boosting their qualifications and career prospects. The **PDC Platform** will also serve as a valuable resource hub, connecting users with training materials, webinars, and best practices across Europe.

**Project Website:**  
[www.progressdc.projectsgallery.eu](http://www.progressdc.projectsgallery.eu)



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