

Progress DC Kick-Off Meeting***Larissa, Greece******25th – 26th of February, 2025***

On Tuesday and Wednesday, February 25th and 26th, 2025, the Progress DC partnership gathered for the first time in Larisa, Greece, to officially kick off the project. The two-day meeting provided an opportunity for productive discussions, strategic planning, and collaboration among all partners.

About Progress DC

Progress DC stands for "PROfessional GRowth through Education in the Sport Sector by pursuing a Dual Career." The project addresses the challenges professional athletes face in balancing their sporting careers with education or work commitments. Achieving success at the highest level in sports demands intensive training and frequent competitions, both domestically and internationally, which often conflicts with pursuing educational or career opportunities.

The overall objective of Progress DC is to support professional athletes in achieving dual careers, ensuring they acquire the necessary skills and guidance to transition smoothly from their sports careers to employment or other professional opportunities.

This will be accomplished through an extensive training program at two levels:

1. DC Advisers Training: Targeting individuals within sports organizations who will provide guidance and coaching to athletes on managing their dual careers.
2. Athlete Training: Delivering tailored training to athletes through synchronous and blended electronic learning, focusing on transversal and digital skills essential for career transition.

Meeting Day One

The first day began with a comprehensive project overview, including an in-depth presentation of the project's rationale and its alignment with European Union policies, with a special reference to “The EU Guidelines on Dual Careers for Athletes” (2012). This set the stage for understanding the project’s significance and strategic positioning within the EU framework.

Following this, partners were introduced to:

- Work Package 2: Profiling Possible Career Paths and Identifying Athletes’ Missing Skills through a three-stage research process.
- Work Package 3: Training of DC Advisers within Sport Organizations to Support Athletes’ Dual Career [Intervention to Sports].

These two work packages are central to the developmental phase of the project and are scheduled to be implemented within the first year.

The day concluded with a detailed discussion on the Financial and Reporting aspects of the project, ensuring that all partners are aligned with administrative requirements and financial procedures.

Meeting Day Two

The second day was dedicated to the CQJB Certification and the transition from the CQJB project to the Progress DC project. ACTA, the Certification body of the consortium responsible for certifying individuals with ISO17024 in this project, presented crucial aspects of the certification process. This certification is a vital component of the Progress DC project, ensuring high standards and credibility in the training and qualification of DC Advisers.

In addition, key processes and aspects for effective project management and coordination were discussed, ensuring that all partners are aligned to maintain the quality of the project and guarantee the timely submission of results.

Dissemination activities also played a significant role during the meeting, as they are integral to running all project processes and tasks throughout its lifetime.

The meeting concluded with the setting of important milestones and deadlines to ensure the achievement of project objectives.

Moving Forward

The Kick-off Meeting successfully established a clear roadmap for the upcoming phases of the project, reinforcing the partnership's commitment to achieving Progress DC’s objectives and empowering athletes to seamlessly transition from sports to professional careers.