

Progress DC – End of WP2 TPM 2

30 December, 2025



The **ProgressDC partnership** met in **Nicosia, Cyprus** for the project's **2nd Transnational Project Meeting**, reviewing research findings and early implementation progress that support professional athletes—particularly **professional football players**—to pursue a sustainable **dual career** (sport + education/work) during and after their sporting life.

About ProgressDC

ProgressDC (*PROfessional GRowth through Education in the Sport Sector by pursuing a Dual Career*) is an **Erasmus+** project that responds to the reality that elite sporting careers can be **intense and short-lived**, and that athletes often face uncertainty when transitioning out of sport due to age, injury, or limited long-term financial security. The project aligns with the direction of the **EU Guidelines on Dual Careers of Athletes (2012)** by strengthening structured support for athletes' parallel development and post-sport employability.

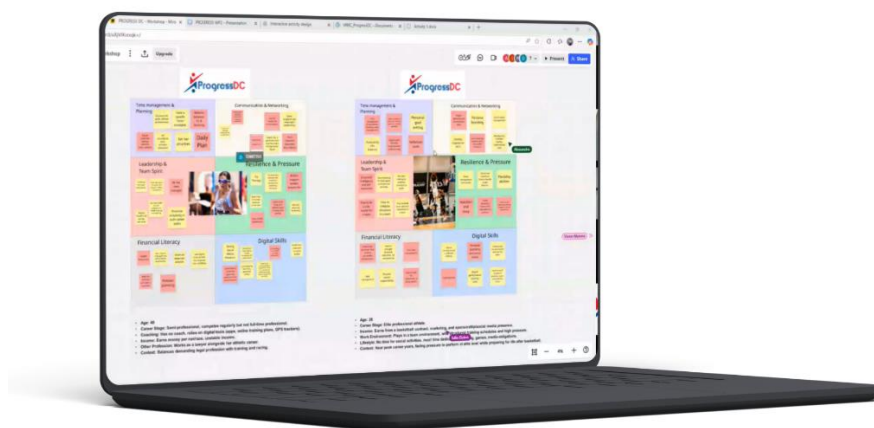
ProgressDC operates on three levels:

- Empowering sports organizations **by training and certifying** Dual Career Advisers (DC Advisers)
- Equipping athletes **with transversal skills development and personalized career guidance**
- Raising awareness **among stakeholders and policymakers on the need for dual-career pathways**

Key results presented at the meeting: WP2 research evidence and performance

Partners reviewed the outcomes of WP2: “Profiling Possible Career Paths and Identifying Athletes’ Missing Skills”, led by DIMITRA Education & Consulting, which forms the research foundation for upcoming educational, advisory, and digital interventions. WP2 combined a best-practice review, the deployment of the Athlete Skills Inventory Tool (ASIT), and interviews with former professional athletes, to build an evidence-based picture of strengths, gaps, and transition needs.

- Best practices identified: 10
- Athletes used the ASIT tool: 156 **across 4 countries**
- Ex-professional athletes participating in interviews: 15 **across 4 countries**



What the research shows: why dual career support must be strengthened

Findings presented and discussed at the meeting highlight that in Cyprus, Greece, Romania, and Poland, there is no cohesive national dual career strategy, and support is often fragmented across institutions and initiatives—leaving athletes to rely heavily on personal initiative and informal networks.

At the same time, the evidence shows athletes have a strong foundation of transferable competences shaped by sport—especially motivation and perseverance, self-awareness, ethical thinking, creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and wellbeing management—but repeatedly report gaps that affect employability and transition readiness.



Consortium-wide competence picture

Across countries, recurring development needs include:

- Financial literacy & resource mobilization, initiative-taking, planning/strategic career management.
- Career-oriented digital skills, such as professional networking and content creation.
- Sustainability competences beyond values—more critical thinking, future literacy, and action-oriented skills.



Interviews also underline the emotional dimension of transition (loss of identity/routine) and the value of early career planning, flexible education pathways, tailored guidance, and mental health support for sustainable post-sport careers.

Moving forward

The 2nd Transnational Project Meeting confirmed a shared roadmap to translate robust research insights into **practical training content, advisory capacity, and digital resources** that strengthen athletes' dual career pathways and facilitate smoother transitions into the labour market across Europe.



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