

Report WP3: Transnational exchange opportunities for Dual Career services for migrating student-athletes

Introduction

Previous reports on WP1 and WP2 of the AMiD-project depicted the current state of Dual Career (DC) migration in the EU and criteria that need to be accounted for, respectively. Consequently, the next step was to exchange and develop applicable support services. The objective of WP3 was described in the application form of the project: “For developing applicable support structures [...], transnational exchange opportunities need to be explored (WP3) before these findings can be implemented and tested (WP4).” In the original application, the content to be tackled in each sub-package of WP3 was defined quite precisely, namely as “Transnational exchange opportunities for flexible exams” (WP3.1), “[...] for study programmes” (WP3.2), and “[...] for Dual Career services” (WP3.3). However, WP1 and WP2 showed that there are more opportunities than the ones known during the application stage and that the diverse criteria of DC migration need to be accounted for when implementing appropriate services. In consideration of the results of WP1 and WP2, the project team found the focus on specific measures that were predefined during the application inadequate. To build on the new knowledge derived from WP1 and WP2 and to strengthen the outcomes of WP3 to develop applicable and appropriate support services, the project team agreed to define the sub-packages as follows:

WP3.1 Transnational exchange of feasible support services at national levels

WP3.2 Specificity of Dual Career migration characteristics and needs

WP3.3 Selection of support services appropriate for specific target groups

WP3.1: Transnational exchange of feasible support services at national levels

Increased sports globalisation highly relies on the relocation of athletes. However, there is limited evidence on the actual challenges, needs, and possible solutions of European DC athletes with a long-term geographic (national and/or transnational) migration due to work, athletic, educational or personal development and opportunities (Agergaard, 2015; Besnier, 2016; Popp, 2011). This is the situation even though mobility of people and geographical unity is one of the founding principles of the EU (Heffernan 1998), supported strongly by the Bologna process and the member states contribution to it. Furthermore, due to the peculiarity of the collegiate sport system

in the U.S.A., transcontinental migration is an appealing option for European elite athletes (Ryba et al., 2015). In fact, in Europe the different sports and educational contexts, various socio-cultural influences, and diverse DC approaches of the Member States restrain the identification of clear transnational exchange opportunities for migrating DC athletes.

Considering that the European Guidelines for DC of athletes recommend flexible forms of education, distance learning, and DC services, the AMiD partner institutions provided information on the actual opportunities of flexibility for examinations, individualised study programmes, distance learning opportunities, and DC services in place.

Student-athletes enrolled at the University of Salzburg (AUT), University of Cassino and Lazio Meridionale (ITA), Lapland University of Applied Sciences (FIN), University of Hamburg (GER), and University of Ljubljana (SLO) have the possibility to arrange flexible exams.

None of the participating universities reported individualised study programmes specifically designed for athletes. The development of agreements of common educational curricula between universities could help migrating student-athletes managing their DC. Furthermore, only the Universities of Salzburg (AUT) and Ljubljana (SLO) offer e-learning platforms and distance learning programmes to help athletes during absence from courses. Lapland University of Applied Sciences can provide distance learning option as usual practice that is also applied in other syllabi than sport, particularly to students who work parallel to their studies.

Finally, the partner universities provide various support services for athletes at academic, sports, and/or DC institutions. Consulting/tutoring and academic services are available with no charge in all partner institutions. Moreover, all partners provide training facilities on campus or in cooperation with a sports institution (e.g. Olympic of national sports federations training centres, sports clubs). Noteworthy, the Lapland University of Applied Sciences (FIN), is involved in the “Lapland Sport Academy”, a unique support system providing an outstanding range of high-quality services in the fields of sports for student-athletes, also accessible for migrating student-athletes at a 250€ annual fee. The academy was initiated with the support of the European Social Fund and nowadays operates as regular DC structure. In Austria, the governmentally financed agency “KADA” provides free of charge individual tutoring, career planning, and logistic support with a personal coach for athletes. The University of Cassino and Lazio Meridionale (ITA) provides accommodation and adapts services to the special needs of student-athletes. The University of Hamburg (GER) offers

benefits to high-level elite athletes, including an award system and PR-activities, marketing, and career services.

Interestingly, the partners envisaged possible implementation of services, also requiring additional costs (Table 1).

Table 1. Overview of feasible services to support migrating student-athletes.

Type of service	Feasibility				
Particular service [details]	AT	DE	FI	IT	SI
Accommodation on/near campus	€	€		✓	
Consulting/Tutoring					
Local/student/student-athlete tutor [support in daily life matters, information on available access, local regulations and policies]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Academic coordinator/professor [consultation in academics, communication with other lecturers]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Personal Dual Career coach [communication between sports and university, individual arrangements, identity as student-athlete]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Academics					
Distance exams [supervision of external exams for incoming students]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Flexibility in exam dates	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Enhanced attendance policy [e.g. via e-learning, acceptance of absence caused by sports commitment]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reduction of fees (or absence of fees)	(✓)	✓		✓	✓
Sports					
Training facilities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sports coaching/training [incl. training groups]	€		✓		
Nutrition and mental coaching			✓		✓
Performance testing	€		✓		✓
Health care and regeneration [e.g. massage, physiotherapy, sauna]	€		€		✓
Others					
Inclusion in academic and social awards		✓			
Integration in PR-activities, marketing, and lobbying		✓			

Note: ✓ = potentially free of charge (generally or under conditions, e.g. membership); € = additional costs required; AT=Austria; DE=Germany; FI=Finland; IT=Italy; SI=Slovenia.

Conclusion

Despite the differences in DC policies and services in place at the partner universities, the present findings indicate that a wide range of DC services are available, including accommodation, DC tutors, sports facilities, professional coaches, nutritional advisors, and health care services. Interestingly, committed efforts to improve DC for student-athletes emerged. Therefore, the

commonalities between universities could allow exploring opportunities for merging and exchanging support services for migrating athletes. Conversely, only the University of Salzburg and the University of Ljubljana provide opportunity for e-learning, which is crucial to allow migrating student athletes to keep up with their educational commitments. Considering that distance learning programmes could require a heavy investment of resources and a wide experience to validate educational material, inter-institutional agreements and clear guidelines for the development and/or implementation of effective approaches for flexible education are strongly needed.

WP3.2: Specificity of Dual Career migration characteristics and needs

Migration could be conceptualised as a time-space phenomenon, encompassing a permanent or semi-permanent shift of residence within or to another country (King et al., 2002). In general, interviews and surveys could be valuable means to investigate push factors operating within the home country initiating the student-athlete's decision to relocate and pull factors operating within the host institution to make relocation relatively more attractive than other potential destinations. In a globalised world, sports- and education-migration could allow to study migration as a form of social mobility in modern society, involving aspects related to institutions, organisations, networks, and social interactions (Pennix, 2002).

Since 1987, the European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (ERASMUS) programme has financed the mobility of students within the European Union (EU) to improve their European identity, European citizenship, and international competence. Furthermore, policy recommendations on educational mobility of European students have been provided based on empirical evidence due to distance and time as well as financial, educational, and cultural determinants affecting mobility flows (González, Mesanza, & Mariel, 2011). Despite the extended sports networks developed to search for talented athletes on a global scale (Walters & Rossi, 2009), there is a limited research on international student-athlete mobility. Recently, transnational career development and transitions of six athletes in the Nordic countries have been investigated by means of an interview-type study (Ryba et al., 2015). Due to the limited sample size and the geographical context of this study, the findings are not comprehensive and there is a needed to expand the knowledge of relevant cross-national and gender-related differences in educational, sports, and cultural challenges as well as effective DC services for migrating student athletes. In fact, the

heterogeneous DC policies and the characteristics of home and host countries of the Member States could determine different approaches to DC migration.

To characterise different DC cultures, approaches, and praxis in Europe (Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences et al., 2016; Aquilina & Henry, 2010; Capranica & Guidotti, 2016; Stambulova & Ryba, 2013), the perspectives of migrating student-athletes from Austria, Finland, Germany, Italy and Slovenia has been deemed valuable to raise awareness and to generate novel research questions on migrating student-athletes. An online AMiD survey on current opportunities for national and transnational exchange of student-athletes in the partner countries has been developed. Findings were expected to be valuable to inform national policy makers, DC stakeholders, and scholars for further implementation of DC policies and services specifically targeting student-athlete migration, which is considered integral for the advancement of a DC culture in a globalised society.

Therefore, the aim was to allow a thorough interpretation of the phenomenon through the point of view of student-athletes from five European Member States with different DC policies in place. Relevant information was gathered on 1) socio-demographic characteristics of migrating student-athletes to frame this population; 2) the student-athletes' motivation for migration and their support from academic institutions, sport bodies, and DC service providers; and 3) the student-athletes' awareness of available DC support and their suggestions for DC improvements.

It has been hypothesised that differences in migration experience of student-athletes emerge with respect to sex, age, country, career levels, and characteristics of sports and migration.

3.2.1 Characteristic of the survey

The Institutional Review Board of the Department of Human Sciences, Society and Health of the University of Cassino and Southern Lazio approved the present study (approval number 14357.2019.06.18) in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki. A 50-item AMiD questionnaire (annexed) was constructed in English to gather information on the following major themes of DC of migrating student-athletes:

- Demographic characteristics of the sample (Q1-7), including the practiced sport, country, gender, age, university level, and athletic level and commitment;
- Previous migration experience (Q8);

- Characteristics and satisfaction level of the financial support (Q9-18);
- Reasons for migration (Q19-23);
- Availability of tutoring, including information on sources (Q24-32);
- Availability of organisational and online support (Q33-36);
- Moving challenges and their effects on performances (Q37-47);
- Awareness of good practices and possible suggestion for Dc implementation (Q48-50).

The questionnaire included open, closed, or dichotomous (yes/no) responses. To measure the level of satisfaction with the different services a 5-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 (“not at all”) to 5 (“absolutely”), with the lowest values (1 and 2) and the highest values (4 and 5) subsequently merged into negative and positive response categories. Furthermore, respondents were also allowed to elaborate further on their answers for questions related to envisaged good practices and possible solutions for DC challenges related to migration.

Language has an impact on the responses to questions and might obscure important differences between countries (Harzing, 2005). The questionnaires in this study needed to be translated from Finnish, German, Italian, and Slovenian to English. To produce a conceptually and semantic equivalent of the questionnaire, forward and backward translations were performed (Su & Parham, 2002), and cognitive interviews with students who experienced sport-related migration were carried out to ascertain the reasons behind responses, and to verify the clarity of the instructions, items, and responses options. Then, the AMiD questionnaire was considered suitable to be administered to Austrian, Finnish, German, Italian, and Slovenian student-athletes.

The inclusion criteria for the recruitment of participants encompassed: 1) to be enrolled in a higher education degree; and 2) to compete in organised sports. The definition of the sampling frame differed between countries, ranging from the availability of the national database of student-athletes (AUT) to a lack of a database (ITA). To recruit respondents in compliance with the country-specific regulations and standards of general data protection regulations and safeguarding privacy rights of personal data, a pre-notification email providing information on AMiD online survey for DC of migrating student-athletes and its link was prepared and sent to local/regional/national references (Academic staff, Sport staff, and DC services) who were required to recruit the target population of student-athletes (Deutskens et al., 2004; Hooley, Marriott, & Wellens, 2012). Participation was voluntary and anonymous, and athletes were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time without providing any reason. Incomplete responses were not

considered. Informed consent was assumed with subjects' compilation of the online survey. Over three months, an online data collection via quota sampling by means of a non-probability sampling method was achieved.

For statistical analysis, data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science, version 24.0 (SPSS Inc., Chicago Illinois), with a 0.05 alpha level of significance. Descriptive statistics encompassed means and standard deviations and frequency of occurrence expressed in percentages for which a single response or multiple responses were allowed. For inferential statistics, the Chi-Square (χ^2) test was applied to ascertain differences between sexes and countries.

3.2.2 Demographic characteristics of the sample (Q1-7)

To meet the standards of general data protection regulations and safeguarding privacy rights of personal data according to country-specific regulations, different recruitment strategies have been applied:

- the University of Salzburg distributed the link to the online questionnaire in cooperation with the DC agency KADA;
- the Lapland University of Applied Sciences distribution of the questionnaire in cooperation with Finnish Olympic Committee and regional sport academies;
- the University of Hamburg distributed the questionnaire link directly to athletes included in a regional sports scholarship programme, in cooperation with the University Sport Service Hamburg and the German athletes union;
- the University of Cassino and Southern Lazio send the online link to universities with established DC programmes, national sport federations, individual researchers, coaches and student-athletes personally known, as well as through social media;
- the University of Ljubljana distributed the online-link to the student-athletes registered with the Slovenian University Sport Association that includes students competing in university games, at the website of the Faculty of Sport, and to individual students-athletes attending academic lectures.

The total sample (Figure 1) was evenly distributed between countries (range: 17-26%), and comprised a total of 245 (42% males and 58% females) student-athletes (age 23 ± 4 years) engaged at bachelor (69%), master (24%), and PhD (6%) level and competing in aesthetic sports (2%),

athletics (21%), ball sports (43%), combat sports (11%), shooting and archery (6%), skiing (11%), and water sports (18%) with a sport commitment of 17.4 ± 9.5 hours per week. No country- or gender-related differences regarding the academic level emerged.

Most of the athletes already experienced migration (52.5%), few are going to migrate (5.8%) or would like to migrate (14.2%) in the future, and around a quarter (27.5%) did not intend to migrate (Figure 2).

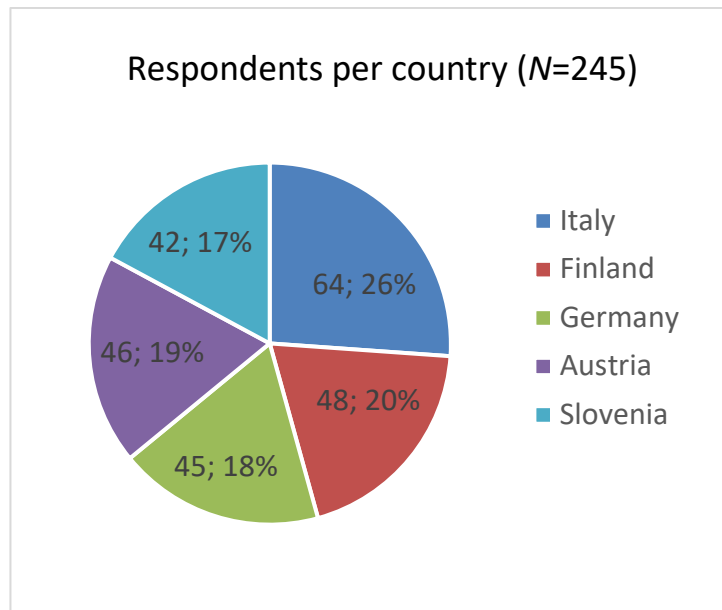


Figure 1. Distribution of respondents (n; %) in the partner countries.

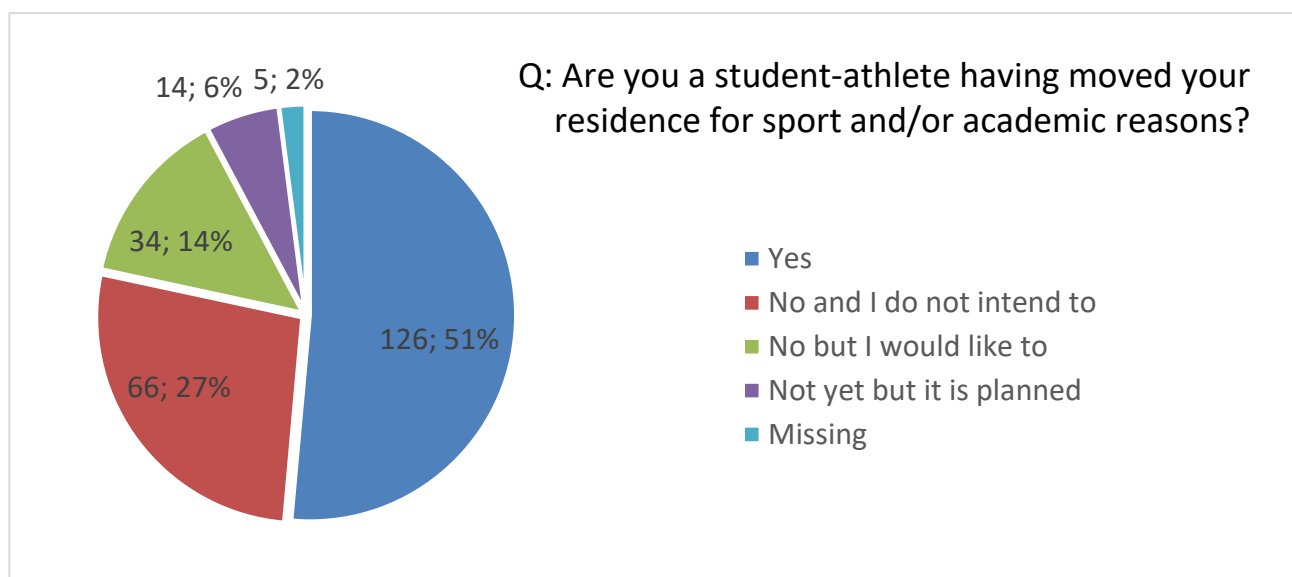


Figure 2. Distribution of respondents (n; %) in relation to migration of student-athletes.

Whilst no gender-related differences were found, country-related differences ($X^2_{(4,4)} p < 0.0001$) emerged for the migrating sub-samples (Figure 3). Compared with Austria, Finland, Germany, and Slovenia, Italian student-athletes showed the lowest values for those who experienced migration (42%) and the highest for those willing to migrate in the future (37%). Furthermore, 40% (Finnish and German), 29% (Austrian), 26% (Slovenian), and 11% (Italian) student-athletes did not intend to migrate.

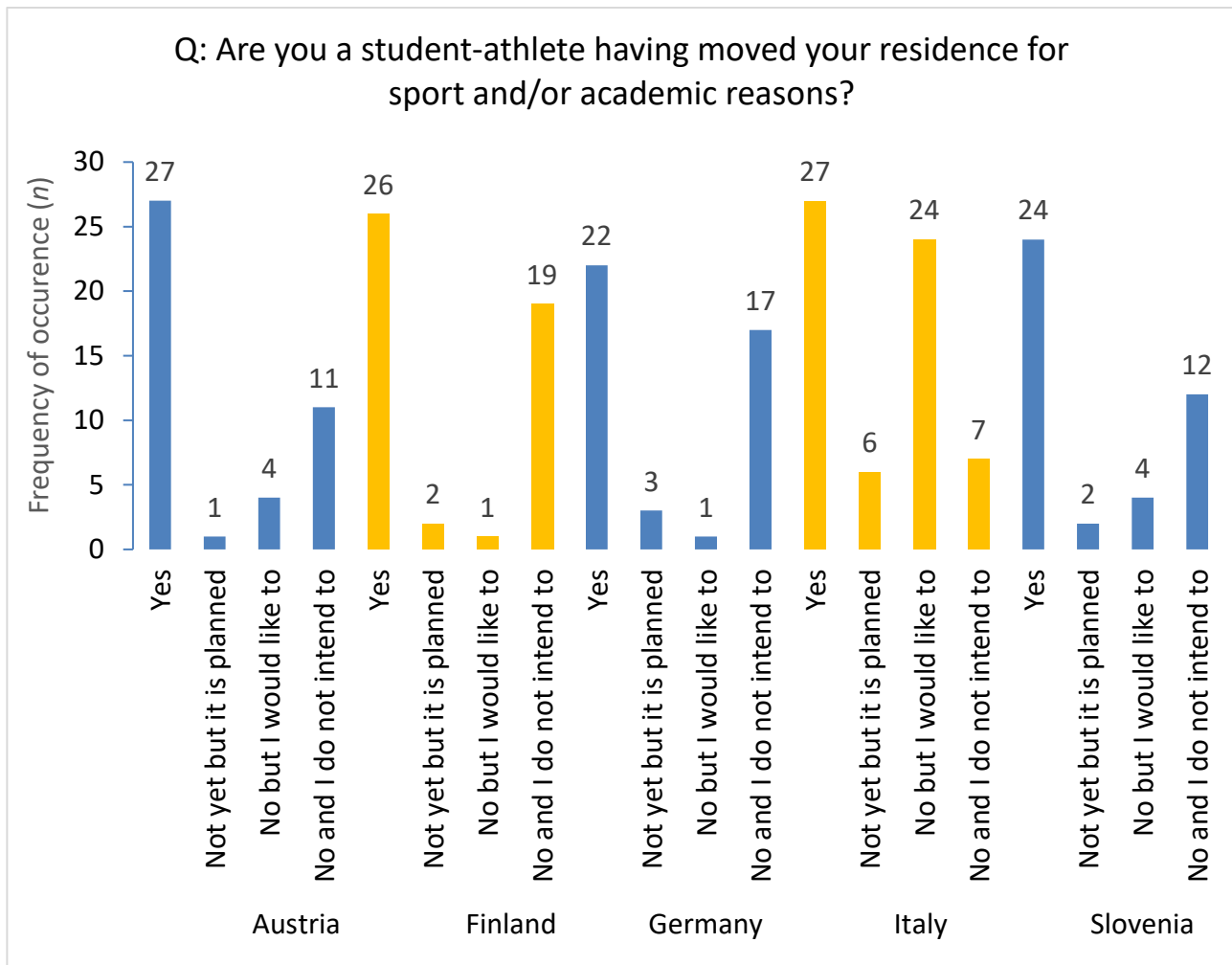


Figure 3. Country-related distribution of student-athletes (n) in relation to migration experiences.

3.2.3 Characteristics of the migrating student-athletes (Q8)

The proportion of athletes who experienced migration was comparable between countries (Figure 4) and gender (females: 41%; males: 59%). Student-athletes aged 21-23 years (37%) and 24-26 years (36%) were the most represented age groups, followed by participants aged 18-20 years (21%) and 27-29 years (6%).

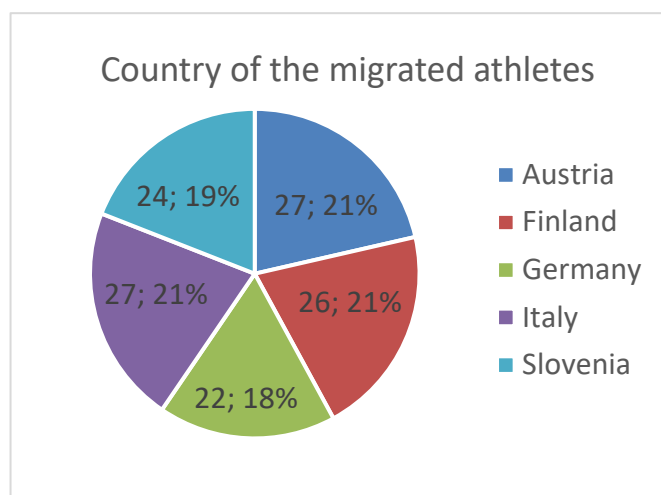


Figure 4. Country-specific proportion (n; %) of migrating student-athletes.

3.2.4 Characteristics and satisfaction level of the financial support (Q9-18)

Financial support was independent on gender and available only for 55% of the migrating student-athletes. Country-related differences ($\chi^2_{(5,2)}$, $p < 0.0001$) emerged (Figure 5) with higher occurrence of financial support for Slovenian (83%) and Austrian (63%) student-athletes compared with German, Finnish, and Italian counterparts (range: 41-48%). Financial support was provided by academic institutions (17%), sports bodies (31%), DC systems (8%), and other sources (36%), mainly family (44%), sponsors (16%), national funds (9%), sports clubs (9%), and a combination of family, club, sponsors, and national funds (20%).

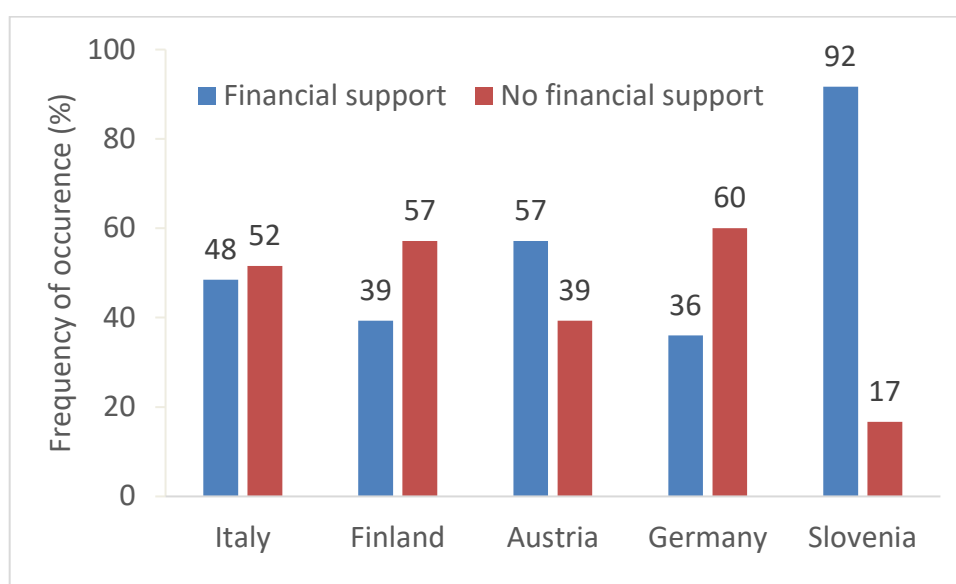


Figure 5. Frequency of occurrence (%) of financial support in relation to the country of the student-athletes.

In general, the respondents considered the received financial support very helpful (Figure 6).

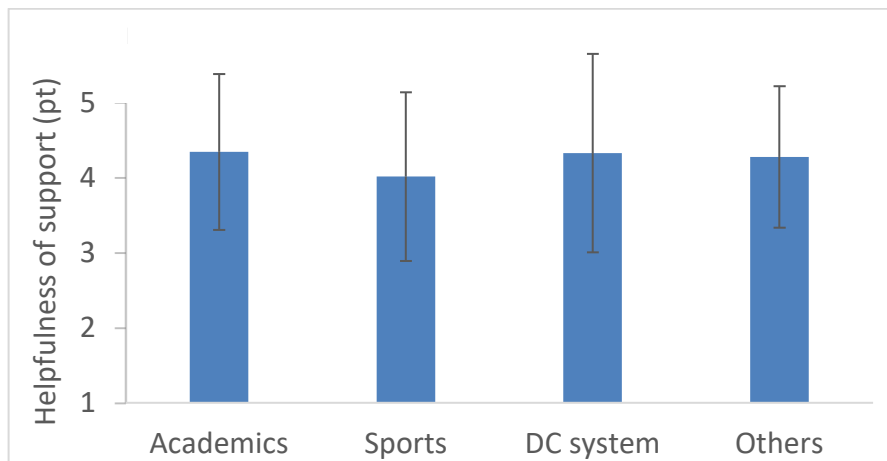


Figure 6. Helpfulness of the financial support received by the migrating athletes.

3.2.5 Reasons for migration (Q19-23)

Irrespective of gender and country, 63% of migrating student-athletes experienced relocation only once in their life, 26% relocated up to once per year, and 11% relocated more than once per year (Figure 7). Whilst most respondents (62%) relocated for >12 months, a country-related difference ($\chi^2_{(5,5)}$, $p=0.04$) emerged with only Italian student-athletes relocating more frequently for 6-7 months (Figure 8). Furthermore, relocation occurred more frequently at national (79%) than at international level (21%). Independently from gender and country, most respondents (74%) declared that they relocated for both educational and sports reasons (Figure 9), whereas the proportion of student-athletes relocating for sports or academics were 30% and 23%, respectively.

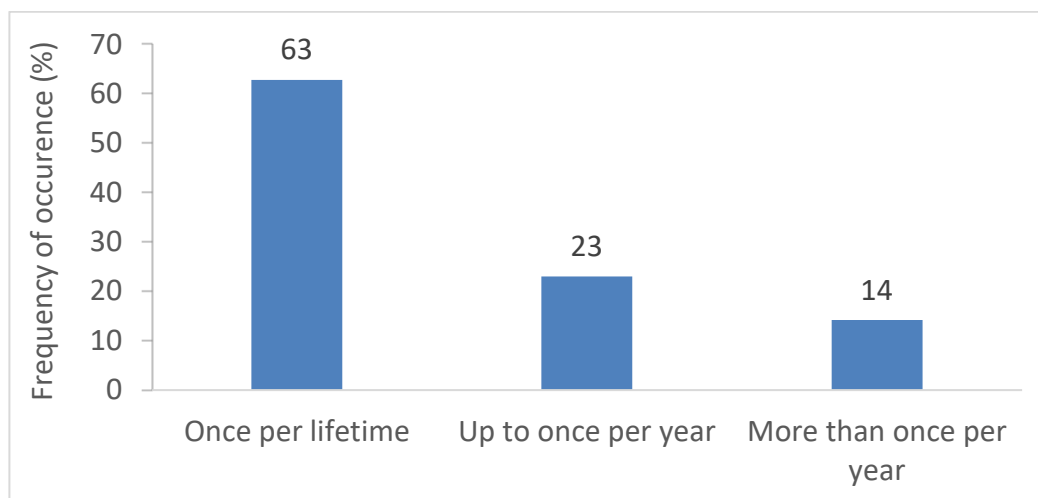


Figure 7. Frequency of relocation of migrating student-athletes.

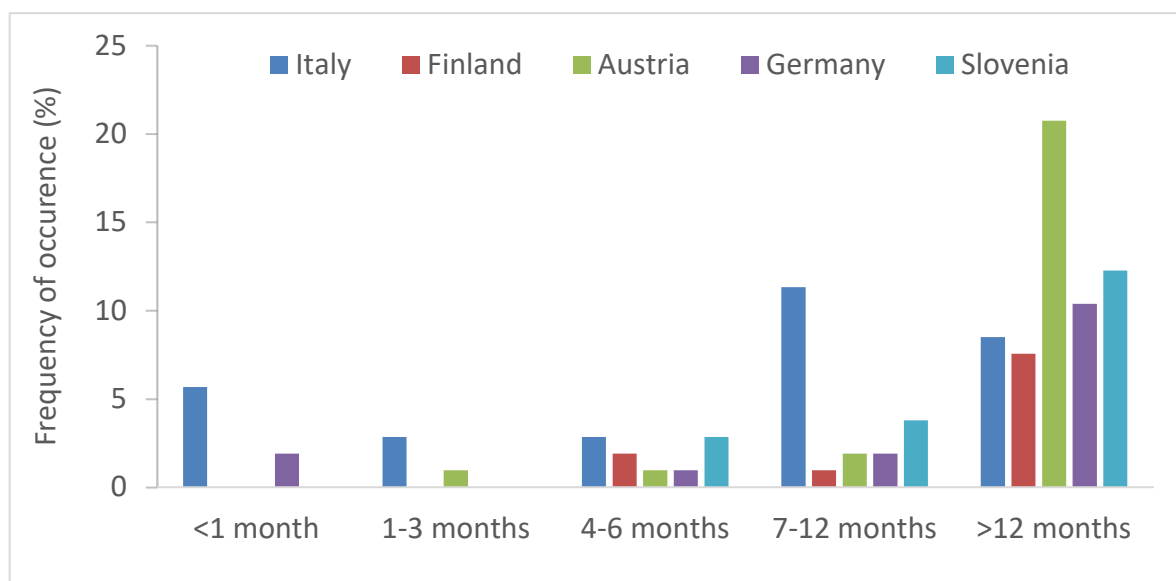


Figure 8. Duration of relocation of migrating student-athletes.

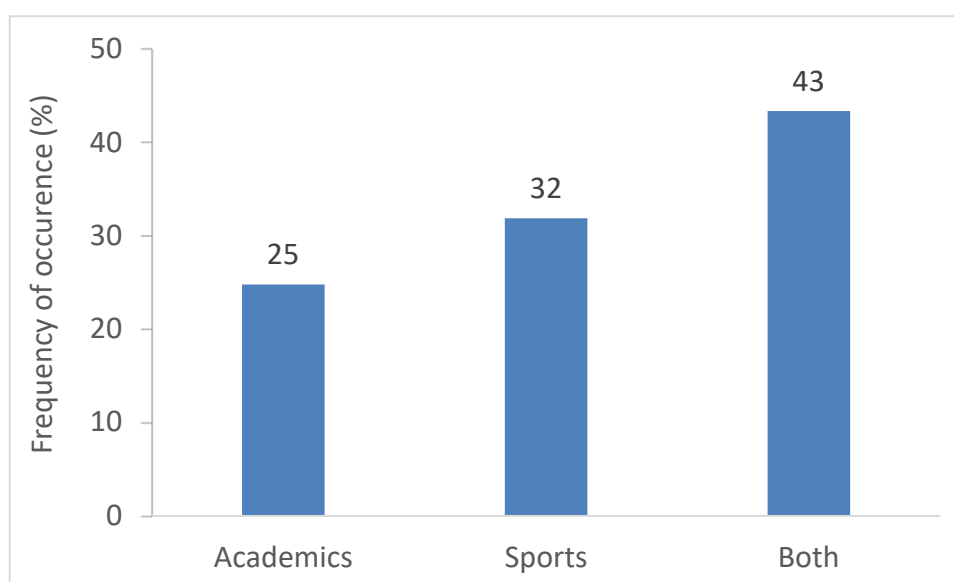


Figure 9. Reasons for relocation of migrating student-athletes.

3.2.6 Availability of tutoring (Q24-32)

Only 47% of migrating student-athletes received tutoring/counselling support. All of them received very helpful tutoring from academics, also in combination with DC services, sports, and others (Figure 10). Student-athletes appreciated more the tutoring/counselling received by academics (4.0 ± 1.0 pt) and other (4.1 ± 0.8 pt) sources, compared with that received from DC services (3.8 ± 0.9 pt) and sports (3.3 ± 0.9 pt).

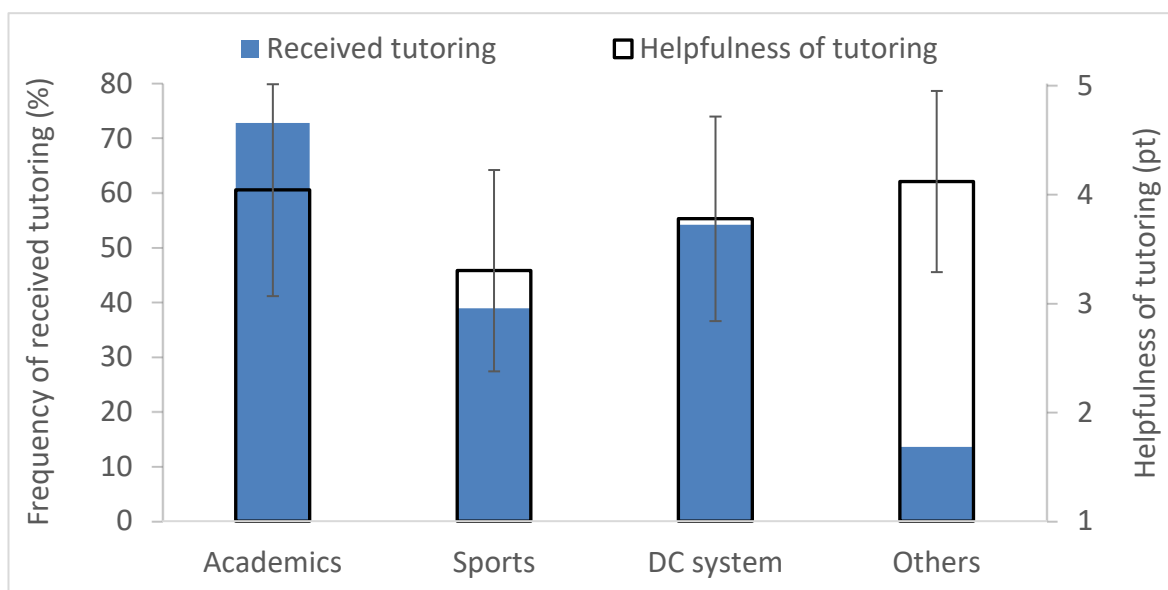


Figure 10. Left vertical axis: Tutoring/counselling provided to student-athletes by academics, sports, Dual Career (DC) systems, and others.
Right vertical axis: Helpfulness of tutoring services if received.

3.2.7 Availability of organisational and online support (Q33-38)

From academics, 45% of migrating student-athletes received organisational support and online support from academics, and only 29% received online support from sports. In general, the student-athletes received a combination of support (Figure 11), which was considered helpful (academics organisational: 4.0 ± 1.0 pt; academics online: 3.9 ± 0.9 pt; sports online: 3.9 ± 0.9 pt).

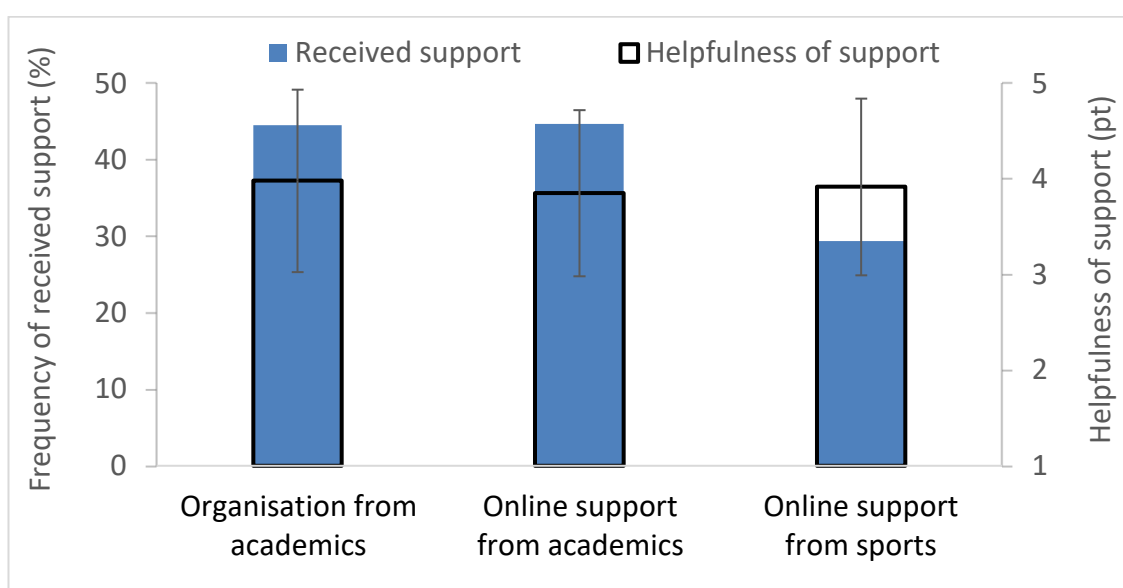


Figure 11. Left vertical axis: Organisational and online support provided by academics and sports.
Right vertical axis: Helpfulness of organisational and online support if received.

3.2.8 Moving challenges and their effects on performances (Q39-47)

Except for one, all respondents reported challenges due to relocations (Figure 12), most frequently emerging in the educational area (class attendance: 47%; exam schedule: 30%), followed by the sports area (training schedule: 28.1; coaches: 17%; teammates: 12%; training facilities: 10%), and the social area (social support: 17%; language barriers: 5%). Furthermore, other challenges (3%) were reported, specifically pertaining financial problems, homesickness, and difficulty to study after training due to fatigue and capability to individual learning without attending the classes. Overall, the reported severity of challenges was limited (academics: 2.7 ± 1.2 pt; sports: 2.5 ± 1.3 pt; other areas: 2.4 ± 1.1 pt).

Only 20% of the respondents ($n=18$) maintained their performance at all areas (academics, sports, and other) during the migration, whereas reported decreases at academics (3.2 ± 1.0 pt) and sports (3.2 ± 1.1 pt) performances were 70% and 63%, respectively. Furthermore, low social life ($n=2$), self-esteem ($n=1$), finance and health ($n=1$), and time management were highlighted.

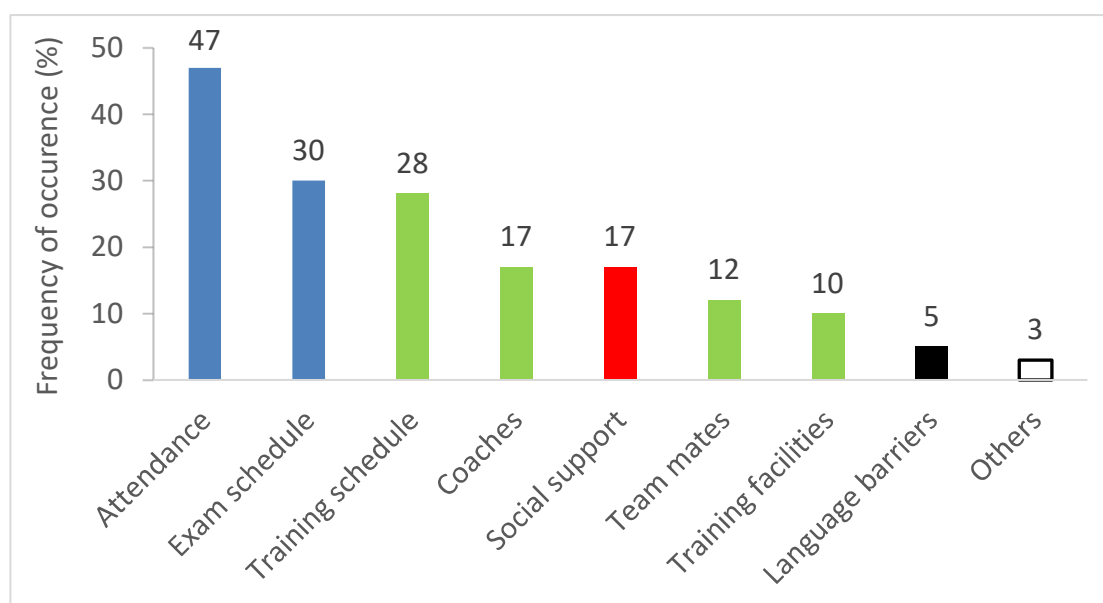


Figure 12. Frequency of occurrence (%) of the challenges reported by student-athletes because of migration, categorised as academic (blue), sports (green), social (red), language (black), and other (white) aspects.

Female athletes reported decreased academic performances less frequently (22%) compared with males (28%), whereas the opposite picture emerges for the sports level (females: 23%; males: 13%) (Figure 13).

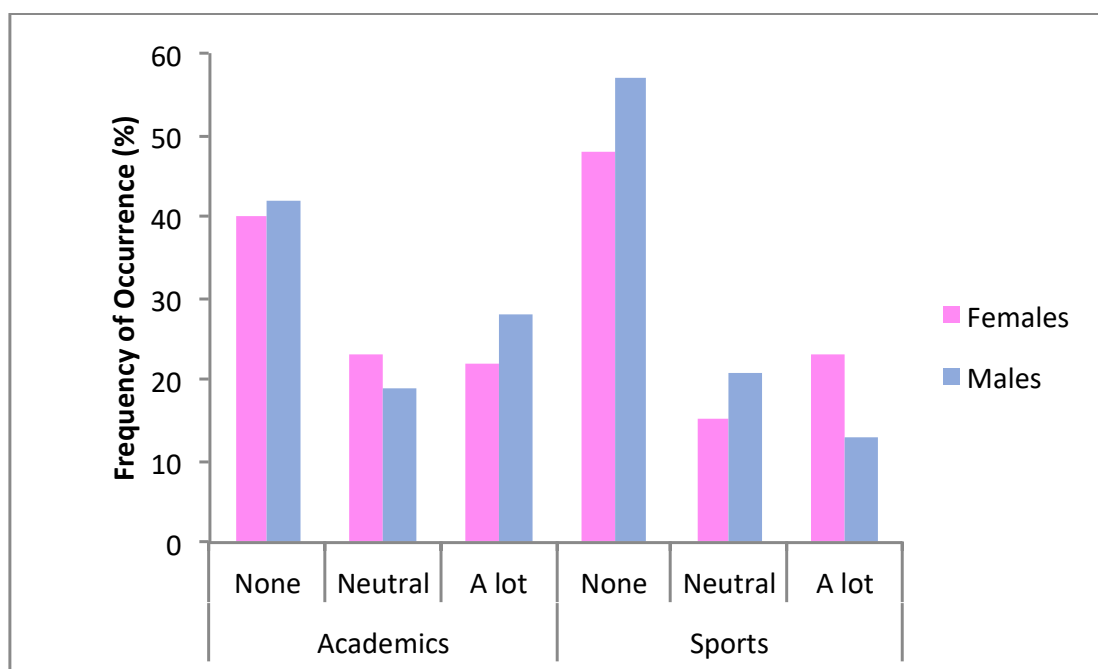


Figure 13. Frequency of occurrence (%) of decreased performances in relation to the gender of the student-athletes.

Country-specific differences emerged for decreases in performances at academic ($\chi^2_{(3,5)}=0.02$) and sports ($\chi^2_{(3,5)}=0.002$) levels (Figure 14). Austrian student-athletes rarely reported any decrease, whereas Italians reported decreases in both academic and sports performances.

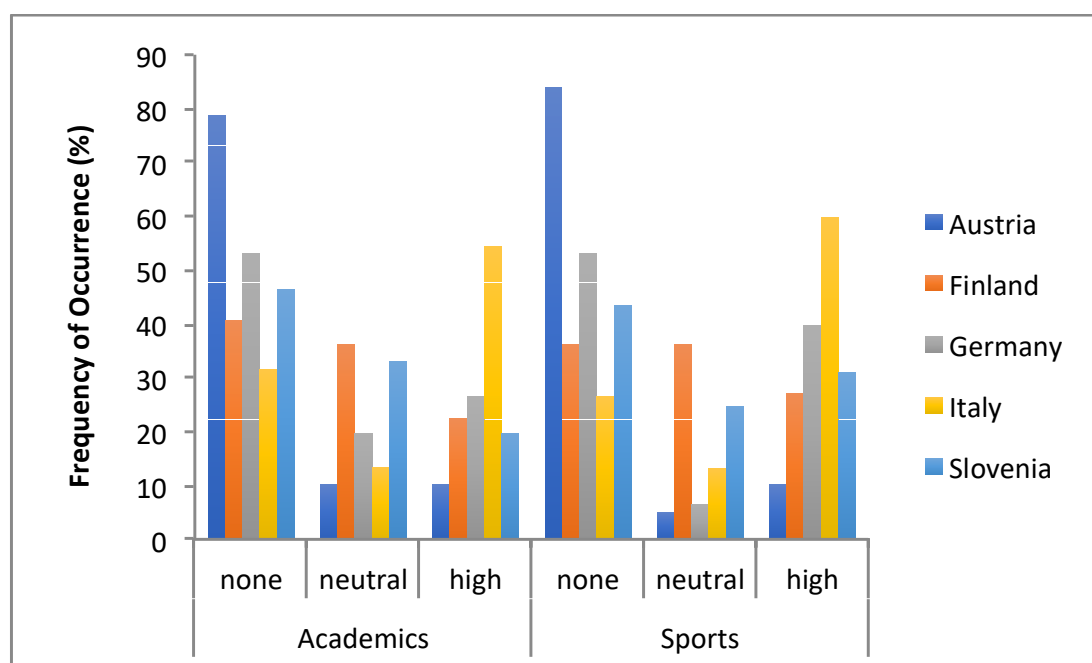


Figure 14. Frequency of occurrence (%) of decreased performances in relation to the country of the student-athletes.

3.2.9 Awareness of good practices and possible suggestion for DC implementation (Q48-50).

Only 22% of migrating student-athletes declared to be aware of good practices in DC, mainly from Italy (73%) and Finland (28%). Few of them ($n=22$) highlighted best practices, which were related to academic flexibility (class attendance, exam sessions, e-learning; 54%), training opportunities (23%), health care (15%), and DC service providers in other countries (15%).

Respondents suggested some DC implementations. In general, they envisaged the increase of the student-athlete's awareness of DC service providers, to increase the collaboration between academic institution and sport bodies, to establish clear DC policies, and to provide financial support and tutorship for logistics. At academic level, student-athletes appreciate an increased teachers' awareness of DC so that student-athletes can be supported, individualised study programmes, availability of study material online, flexible attendance and examinations. At sports level, organisational support for sports facilities and accommodation to allow smooth transition into new training environment has been outlined. At personal level, it has been suggested that student-athlete avoid setting goals for high academic standards not to interfere negatively with their sport performance, to establish a communication with teachers and classmates to keep up with the academic requirements, to have organisational skills and to carry always study material.

WP3.3: Selection of support services appropriate for specific target groups

To develop a European DC culture, over the last decade efforts have been devoted to integrating sports and education of student-athletes (European Commission, 2012). Whilst the ERASMUS programme financially supports the student mobility flows allowing for educational experiences in other countries at a crucial life-stage, no specific DC mobility programme is in place for student-athletes who face academic and sports challenges during migration. To suggest measures in support of DC migration, it is necessary to ascertain the factors influencing student-athletes mobility. For the first time, the present study attempted to investigate the DC phenomenon of migrating student-athletes through an online survey administered to European athletes from five Member States (e.g. Austria, Finland, Germany, Italy, and Slovenia) that have different DC policies in place. Although the present recruitment procedure did not allow for calculation of the probability and response rates (Callegaro, Manfreda, & Vehovar, 2015), the present data are unique because they support the understanding of the phenomenon of migration within sport and education among athletes.

The main findings deriving from the descriptive and inferential statistical approaches highlighted: 1) migration represents a relevant experience for student-athletes, with country-specific differences; 2) student-athletes migrate to pursue and strengthen both academic and sports careers; 3) due to migration, female athletes tend to present less serious decreases in academic performances, whereas sports performance is less affected in males; 4) financial support differs depending on the country of the migrating athletes; 5) the majority of migrating athletes did not receive tutoring/counselling support; and 6) student-athletes have limited awareness of DC policies. Based on these findings, some general recommendations were concluded to enhance DC migration.

At individual level, migration propensity clusters around two main time periods of education-to-work transitions, i.e. at late teens for school-leavers and early–mid 20s for university leavers (King et al. 2006). In DC, migration most frequently occurs around 21-26 years, substantiating that athletes tend to prolong their academic career. Student-athletes reported difficulties caused by relocation and related to the lack of flexibility at academic level, integration in the new sport environment, and the socio-cultural sphere. Most respondents reported a lack in organisational and/or online support from academic institutions and/or sport bodies. Therefore, the implementation of on-site and distance services to facilitate the integration of migrating student-athletes should be prioritised.

The present findings highlight that the migrating student-athletes consider academics and sports equally relevant. Indeed, migration could enhance competences or determine decreases in performance. Whilst student-athletes can enhance their competences and promote educational, sports, and cultural development during migration (Ryba et al., 2015), some can be overwhelmed by difficulties and experience decreases in academic and/or sports performances. The present findings highlight that less than 30% of respondents experienced relevant decreases in academic performance, with a higher incidence (6%) for male athletes compared with females. Within the globalised culture of elite sport, athletes might devote much of their time and energy to sport to the detriment of their academic achievements. This speculation could be corroborated by the lower occurrence of decreased sports performance, with a gender-dependent difference favouring male athletes (13%) compared with females (23%). To prevent decreases in academic performances, hosting institutions are encouraged to establish 1) academic study structures and systems that are harmonised with and recognised by the home institution and 2) specific DC agreements with sports bodies. Furthermore, particularly critical is the establishment of specialised tutoring and support aimed to prevent migration-related declines in sports and academic performances, the latter most

frequently reported by male athletes. Based on the specific and unique needs of each athlete, specialised DC tutoring should effectively cooperate with academics, sports, and professional services necessary for the student-athlete, proactively anticipating future requests of assistance and envisioning possible solutions and management strategies (Sanchez-Pato et al., 2017).

Financial support is a critical issue, which discriminates student-athletes migrating from different Member States. Despite ERASMUS programme sustains academic migration, athletes tend to rely more on the sport support, with families helping with the cost of living differences and distance. Therefore, a specific ERASMUS DC mobility programme should be introduced to financially support migrating student-athletes. Considering that this population tends to relocate for >12 months, the time frame of an ERASMUS DC programme should be longer with respect to that currently available for students.

To facilitate student-athletes exchanges, a recommendation that would encourage mobility would be to implement better marketing of the academic institutions that offer DC services and support, including helping athletes in writing and revising application documents, seeking funding schemes and scholarships, and participating in language courses. Furthermore, former migrating student-athletes could be engaged to inform the home student-athletes about their past experiences, the main issues favouring the integration of DC migrants into the new environment and establishing a personal network, and to what extent they benefited from their relocation for job-seeking and career planning.

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