

Title: Dual Career through the Elite University Student-Athletes' Lenses - The International FISU-EAS Survey

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Aims: The purpose of this study was to investigate the dual career phenomenon through the international student-athletes' views.

Method: Student-athletes competing at the 2017 Summer Universiade were recruited to respond a 31-item online survey encompassing demographic characteristics (Q1-8), sport and university engagement (Q9-13), student-athletes' knowledge and possible sources of information regarding dual career (Q14-22); and dual career support at personal, sport, and academic levels (Q23-31). Four hundred twenty-six respondents (males: 46%, females 54%), competing in 22 different sports (individual: 74%, team: 26%) from Africa (4%), America (20%), Asia (34%), Europe (39%), and Oceania (3), had experienced previous international sports events (94%).

Results and Practical Implications: Differences among continents emerged for sport ($p < 0.001$) and university ($p = 0.039$) engagement, and transfer time from home to the training venue ($p = 0.030$). Individual sports student-athletes showed higher sport engagement ($p = 0.003$) compared to team sports counterparts. Differences among university majors emerged for university engagement ($p < 0.001$). Long absence from classes

(57%), limited leisure time (50%), financial uncertainty (44%), reduction of training due to education (42%), and overload feelings (37%) emerged. The majority of the sample resulted

not familiar with dual career programmes (60%) and public authorities (69%), envisaging national dual career policies at university (37%) and sport (25%) levels. Multiple relevant dual career supporters at personal, sport, and university levels were identified, mainly parents (86%) and coaches (65%). In particular, some major needs emerged: 1) to establish an international agreement on the minimum standard of dual career services; 2) to provide specific educational programmes for dual career service providers able to negotiate flexible requirements at academic and sport levels, as well as for those having a close relationship with the student-athlete and a strong supportive dual career role (e.g., parents, coaches, and university staff); and 3) to inform the student-athletes on their dual career rights, policies, programmes, services, financial resources, and logistic support in place in their home country, in addition to availability of assets and opportunities as transnational student-athletes. In this respect, it is strongly envisaged a strict cooperation between dual career stakeholders and media in developing supporting materials such as pamphlets, brochures, and communication campaigns. The common efforts of FISU and EAS in fostering the cultural process that sustains elite student-athletes in education should be supported by an enhancement of dual career policies at global level.

TASS have produced this lay summary. The full article is available (permissions may apply):
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6774511/>