

**Title:** Investigation of Skills Acquired by Athletes during their Sporting Career

**Author(s):** Matsangos N., Gargalianos D., Coppola, S., Vastola, R., & Petrmilli A.

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**Keywords:** Sport; Athletes, skills, competencies, career transition, labour market

**Sport(s):** Not specified

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**Main Theme:** Transferable skills

**Secondary Theme:** Athletic retirement

**Aims:** The aim of the study was to investigate whether athletes develop any skills from their involvement in sport that they can use in their vocational careers after they finish their sporting career.

**Method:** This study used questionnaires and interviews to collect data from current athletes, former athletes and employers or Human Resources (HR) managers. The study was conducted in Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Poland, and Slovenia.

**Results and Practical Implications:** From the questionnaires, the average duration of the athletes' sporting career varied between the countries: Poland = 26 years, Bulgaria = 17 years, Italy = 15 years, Greece = 13 years, and Slovenia = 13 years. In total, 33,6% of athletes had a further education qualification, 27% had a bachelor's degree, 35% had a master's degree, 2% had a Doctorate degree, while only 2.4% were educated on primary level. Of the retired athletes 58.6% were employees and 29.6% were freelancers, while only 11.8% were unemployed. The highest percentage of these retired athlete now works in the sector "sport, leisure and tourism", followed by "Teaching & Education" (27%) and "Engineering & Technicians" (18%). The interview data identified the following skills as important in HR managers' recruitment: goal setting, initiative, communication / relationship skills, willingness to learn, teamwork, job management, organizational skills. Whereas, athletes'

identified the following skills as developed through sport: communication, teamwork, problem solving, creativity, commitment, leadership, planning, resilience, entrepreneurial thinking, critical thinking, discipline, psychological endurance, willingness to win, fair play, respect, will, resistance to high pressure, organization, skill, goal achievement, responsibility, willingness, self-confidence and perseverance in smaller percent. While HR managers' recognised the benefit of sport for developing transferable skills, these skills do not compensate for a lack of education or work experience in most cases.

TASS have produced this lay summary. The full article is available (permissions may apply): <https://www.jhse.ua.es/index.php/jhse/article/view/2020-v15-n3-skills-acquired-athletes-during-sporting-career>