



NEWSLETTER

This is the first ELIT-In newsletter, an exciting European Project funded by the Erasmus + programme. In this newsletter, you will find out more about the project and the results of a questionnaire disseminated to athletes all around Europe. We hope you'll enjoy the read !

The Elit-In team

About ELIT-in

Funded by The European project, led by Federación Andaluza de Natación (Spain), ELIT-in (Integration of elite athletes into the labour market through the valorisation of their transversal competences) aims to promote education in a through sport with special focus on skills development, as well support the implementation of the EU Guidelines on Dual Careers of Athletes.

Our objectives:

- To create a guide of best practices on the valorization and recognition of transversal competences or life skills of elite athletes.
- To design a methodological guide for the identification and recognition of the transversal competences acquired by high performance athletes throughout their sports careers, as well as for the tutoring and accompaniment of them towards their full socio-labour insertion.
- To create and implement a training package aimed at elite athletes in the field of transversal competences that are more difficult to acquire through sport practice, but very important in businesses.
- To develop and implement a quality label at European level for recognizing organisations that are actively working in the field of the valorization of transversal competences acquired by high performance athletes throughout their careers, helping them to integrate into the labour market once they retire.
- To contribute to the networking and cooperation between educational institution and sport bodies for the recognition of competences and qualifications that elite athletes acquire through the informal sports education as a part of or in addition to their formal education.
- To guarantee the exploitation and sustainability of project results.



Elite athletes: The most relevant and transferrable soft skills to the job market

The success of athletes in the job market is a much discussed topic due to a recent surge of interest in sports. The ELIT-in Project, part of Erasmus+, has been conceived to reduce the gap between education and the needs of the labour market, including those of athletes with future career prospects.

It is usually the athletes who undergo labour-oriented training the ones who become more employable in the end, and there are two ways to achieve this: During their sports career, on one side, athletes can be prepared for an eventual and secure transition to the labour market. Conversely, several of the skills that they have acquired as athletes can be also used in the job market.

Results of ELIT-in study

This study, part of ELIT-in Project, focus on this second case. **The aim of this work is to shed some light into the marketability of a series of “soft skills” (more personal skills, rather than concrete training or experience with jobs and tools) that athletes may possess.**

Said study has been possible thanks to the participation requests done by particular institutions, including ELIT-in partners, business associates and Olympic committees. In total, **280 athletes from 9 countries and 55 employers from 4 countries and 55 companies have been interviewed**, with groups of people such as recruiters from smaller and bigger sized companies, athletes from basic to elite levels, recruiters with or without direct acquaintances with elite athletes, and participants in team or individual sports.



A questionnaire has been used as a means for compiling the results of this study, and they show us which soft skills are deemed more or less useful in the job market. This Google Form survey was completed in 2018-2019 prior official ethical consent and in two versions, one for the athletes and one for the recruiters.

There is a whole array of soft skills that have been compiled in the final results, which were gathered and analysed accordingly. For example, those related to **personal performance** (persistence, tolerance, routines, etc.), **workplace protocol** (safety, results, flexibility, etc.) and **knowledge skills** (languages, verbal and nonverbal communication, informatics, etc.). **In summary, the study gives the following conclusions:**

- In general terms, **the highest priority soft skills for athletes include the need for discipline, teamwork, personal responsibility and competitiveness**, while the lowest include a global vision of business, language knowledge, transculturality and the use of social networks. No significant differences by gender, athletic performance, expertise or individual or team sport participation are found in these results.
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- Employers, however, **place the highest priority on skills like persistence, tolerance and discipline**. Meanwhile, transculturality, verbal and written communication, among other soft skills, rank the lowest.
- Taking into account criteria about the perceived importance of certain soft skills, the possession of these soft skills by athletes and whether they have been acquired during a sports career, **there is common ground between the answers of athletes and recruiters**, as skills including teamwork, discipline, safety and work ethics rank the highest in both groups, while languages, transculturality and a global vision rank the lowest.

Once these soft skills are classified in a different way, the results change. For example, according to performance level, athletes regard a soft skill such as “ethics” differently from athletes according to their participation in individual or team sports. In the case of employers, there is hardly any correlation between the highest and lowest priority soft skills when the answers are divided between types of recruiters (in the study, according to company size and companies with elite athletes in the workforce, for instance).

<http://www.elit-in.com/>

Next meeting – Rome, 12 December

Project's Partners



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