

Player Transition Out of Football to Protect Wellbeing: A Dual Career Identity Study

Dr. Gavin Breslin, Mr. Kyle Ferguson, Dr. Stephen Shannon, Mrs. Tandy Haughey & Mr Sean Connor.

Ulster University, School of Sport.

Corresponding author: Dr Gavin Breslin, g.breslin1@ulster.ac.uk

This final research report includes the subheadings and guidance provided by UEFA



An executive summary fully detailing the importance and interest of the research for football and UEFA

High-level athletes who train and compete face multiple competing demands on their time, with many missing out on educational opportunities that could help them prepare for their transition to a career after they retire from sport. The current programme of research was conducted to explore the views of football associations across Europe on; (a) dual careers, (b) wellbeing of players and coaches, and (c) to provide recommendations on how players and coaches can be better supported.

After a series of meetings with the sector and UEFA it was agreed that a four-phase research programme would be conducted:

- 1) A review of the literature,
- 2) A cross sectional survey of football associations in Europe,
- 3) Interviews with ex-professional players on what they would advise younger players to do in preparation for transition out of football, and finally
- 4) A scoping review of dual career programmes and opportunities available in sports outside of football.

The review showed a dearth of research in dual careers in football, and that lessons could be learned from other sports. The survey of football associations, player associations and league representatives highlighted three main areas: policy/strategic developments; the need to consider mental health, wellbeing and welfare training for players and coaches; barriers and facilitators of a players dual career at an individual and association level. The interviews with ex-professional football players brought advice that could be shared with young football players to support dual careers. Finally, examples of successful dual career programmes available in other sports were described for consideration by UEFA.

The report concludes with eighteen recommendations for consideration by UEFA in the development of a dual career and wellbeing strategy/action plan for professional football players.

An introduction that indicates the context of the research and its relevance for UEFA

Athletes often face challenges to combine their sporting career with education and/or work, which can have implications for their wellbeing and psychosocial development (European Commission, 2012). Young, high-level athletes who train and compete throughout Europe face multiple competing demands on their time, with many missing out on educational opportunities that could help them prepare for their transition to a career after they retire from sport. A contemporary way to conceptualise the challenges athletes experience in their sporting and non-sporting development is viewing the athlete holistically, that is, as a 'whole person' with multiple identities and interests, rather than solely as an athlete. According to the guidelines by the European Commission, the Lifespan Model of Athletes' Career Transitions (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004; 2013), more recently referred to as the Holistic Athlete Career Model (Wylleman & Rosier, 2016), provides an appropriate framework to interpret athlete development that includes psychosocial development.

The Holistic Athlete Career Model conceptualises that an athlete develops in multiple domains concurrently. The emphasis of this model is not solely positioned on athletic development but on athletic, vocational, psychological, psychosocial and financial development. While this model is to be commended, there are gaps, including the critical role of the organisation and environment in which the athlete is supported. It is the Holistic Athlete Career Model that will be adopted for the current study with UEFA, with the addition of incorporating the organisational/environmental viewpoint. This is the first instance this model has been extended in this manner to football associations.

It has been shown that athletes involved in dual career programmes differ to those who do not, as shown in table 1. A 'Dual Career' is defined as, successfully achieving on the national or international stage in sport while maintaining or completing compulsory education with necessary grades to facilitate further study or higher education. The European Commission (2012) provide guidelines on supporting athlete dual career development, that include the model described above. Within 7 years there have been an uptake of dual careers research and evidence base, but plenty of work to still be completed.

Table 1: Athlete benefits of dual career involvement

Health-related benefits	Balanced lifestyle, reduced stress levels, increased wellbeing
Developmental benefits	Better conditions to develop life skills applicable in sport, education and other spheres of life, development of personal identity, positive effects on athletes' self-regulation abilities
Social benefits	Positive socialisation effects such as expanded social networks and social support systems and better peer relationships

Benefits related to athletic retirement and adaptation in life after sport	Better career/retirement planning, shorter adaptation period, prevention of identity crisis
Enhanced future employment prospects	Higher employability and access to well-paid jobs

It is therefore intuitive when supporting a dual career, the 'whole person' approach to athlete development is incorporated as this will support the wellbeing of the athlete. Indeed, without dual career emphasis, a narrow social identity (as an athlete only) may arise leading to key transitional stages of development being missed. This can have a negative impact on an athlete's psychosocial, mental health and well-being development (Breslin et al, 2017).

The World Health Organisation (WHO, 2014) define mental health as more than just the absence of mental illness and refers to 'a state of well-being in which each individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community'. Mental health is determined by being a co-existing and interacting individual (e.g. genetic, psychological) and social (e.g. socio-demographic) factors (Hupert, 2009). For example, mental well-being is associated with positive physical health, pro-social behaviour and the ability to self-regulate and cope with adversity (Huppert, 2009; Ryan & Deci, 2017). Conversely, mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety are ranked as the 1st and 6th largest contributors to global disability (WHO, 2017) as one in four individuals experience a mental health problem during any given year (McManus, Meltzer, Brugha, Bebbington & Jenkins, 2009). This is a public health concern, wherein more information to assist help-seeking behaviours should be made available to the public. Consistent with the general population, mental illness estimates are also visible in the athletic population. There is visibly a lack of help-seeking behaviour which is attributed to stigma wherein help-seeking is considered to be a sign of weakness in a culture of; competition, desire to be selected, and high performance (Putukian, 2015). A high performing athlete with a 'winning at all' cost sport identity can be problematic especially for those athletes experiencing; transition, injury or lack of selection (Breslin and Leavey, 2019).

The recent and rapid expansion in the number of disseminated evidence-based public mental health awareness programmes in sport is welcomed. Indeed, these programmes have created great opportunities to further; (a) programme conception; (b) design and measurement; (c) delivery methods; (d) use of theory; and (e) evaluation approaches (Breslin, Shannon, Haughey, Donnelly, and Leavey 2017; Breslin and Leavey, 2019). Moreover, recently published consensus statements have focused on elite athletes or elite athlete clinical service provision (Schinke, Stambulova, Si, & Moore, 2017, Henriksen, Schinke, Moesch, McCann, Parham, Larsen, & Terry. 2019; Moesch, Kenttä, Kleinert, Quignon-Fleuret, Cecil, & Bertollo, 2018; Schinke, Natalia, Stambulova, Gangyan & Moore, 2018) with an effort to raise awareness of supporting athlete's mental health.

Therefore, to fully understand the effects of a dual career on players wellbeing, a thorough literature review, survey of associations, interviews with football players and a scoping exercise of how other sports beyond football support athletes is warranted. The current multidisciplinary and mixed methods

programme of research addresses this gap in knowledge, and for the first time assesses dual career and mental health and wellbeing together with an aim of providing UEFA with guidance on how to support their athletes' holistic journey through a dual career development process.

A clear statement of the research question(s), and the aims and objectives of the research

There are four phases to the current programme of research:

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literature review conducted of peer reviewed articles on athlete dual careers with the aim of establishing the current state of: Knowledge, Methodology and Insights into how athletes are supported. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross sectional survey of football associations in Europe was conducted to assess current practice that supports a player's dual career. Focusing specifically on whether associations are aware of : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EU guidance and dual career development models To determine whether associations have policies/strategies in place that reflect the EU guidance Establish what courses or scholarships are available to support dual careers Establish what is available in the governing bodies Identify barriers that exist to developing a dual career, and how associations believe they could better support dual careers As holistic player development is central to wellbeing, the survey also established what mental health and wellbeing support was provided to players. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with footballers: Ex-professional football players on their experience of being supported with a dual career. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case studies of Career Assistance Programs (CAPS) that have adopted a holistic approach to athletes in other sports other than football to guide how football players can be best supported.

Collectively the findings will help to inform UEFA on the development of a strategy to support dual careers and wellbeing of football players. The research will also inform National Football Associations across Europe on; (a) staff training requirements and (b) player career engagement activities in each component of the lifespan model (i.e., athletic, vocational, psychological psychosocial, financial development, and for the first time organisational/environmental development).

A literature review identifying the current state of knowledge, methodology and insights on the research topic and justifying the theory, design and method of the current study

Phase 1: Literature Review

Six electronic databases were searched: Psychinfo, Medline (OVID interface), Scopus, Cochrane, Cinahl and Sport Discus, from their year of inception to February 2019, with the term dual careers in sport. Reference sections of the peer reviewed articles were scanned for subsequent articles of interest. In addition, websites and social media outlets that we were informed about, where dual career programmes had been summarised, were accessed.

Athletic career development and transitions out of sport has spawned a wide variety of research in recent decades. The quantity and quality have increased substantially (Strambulova, Alfermann, Statler & Cote, 2009), with several theoretical models covering athletic career development emerging from this body of work (Strambulova, 2003; Strambulova et al, 2009; Talyor & Olgivie, 1994, 2001; Wylleman & Lavelle, 2004). A small number of career assistance programmes have been established to aid an athlete with their; (i) athletic and personal life balance or (ii) to maximise their post athletic career (e.g., Olympic Job Opportunities Program, Athletic Career and Education Program, to review see, Gordon, Lavelle, & Grove, 2005). More recently, Wylleman, Reints and Knop (2013), enhanced the developmental model of transitions faced by athletes (Wylleman & Lavelle, 2004) and designed the Holistic Athletic Career model. The model looks at the transitions athletes will face throughout their career.

Transitions at the athletic level happen simultaneously and are reciprocal with the other areas of an athlete's life; academic, psychosocial and financial (Tekavc, Wylleman & Epric, 2015). An athlete must then develop their sporting career whilst pursuing their education, with the significance and importance of each component varying at different stages in the athlete's life (EU Guidelines on Dual careers of Athletes, 2012). Numerous studies (Lavelle, 2005; Petitpas et al 2009; Brewer & Van Raaltre, 2009; Pummell et al, 2008; Reints, 2011; Stambulova et al 2007) have highlighted how a dual career benefits an athlete at various levels. From a positive socialisation effect, this expands their social networks and support systems. With respect to the athlete's health, there is a more balanced lifestyle, reduction in stress and a positive effect on wellbeing. Finally, from a developmental level, there is an increased opportunity to develop multiple life skills and a positive effect on self-regulation and personal identity (Tekavc et al 2015).

Conceptualisation of these challenges, faced by dual career athletes, in their athletic and non-athletic development is achieved by looking at the athlete as a 'whole person' as opposed to an athlete only. The Lifespan Model of Athlete's Career Transitions (Wylleman & Lavelle, 2004; 2013) as recommended by the EU, recently has been updated and referred to as The Holistic Athletic Career Model (Wylleman & Rosier, 2016). These both provide a pertinent heuristic to interpret athlete development that accounts for their psychosocial development. The model, figure 1 below, views athletic development in multiple

domains alongside the principle athletic development (i.e. as a soccer player) which accounts for their vocational, psychological, psychosocial and financial aspects. However, the model fails to consider the environment and organisational context within which the athlete operates (Breslin et al 2017).

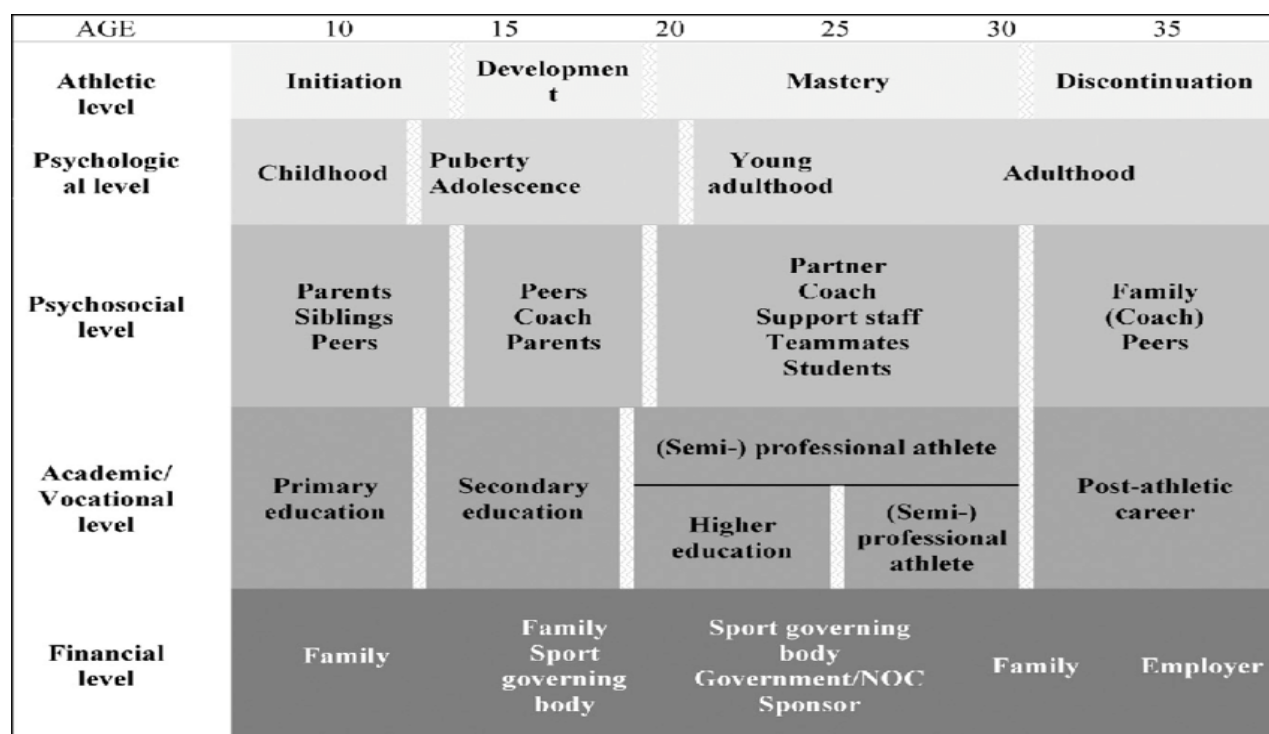


Fig. 1 The Holistic athletic career model (Cited from Wylleman et al., 2013).

It has been established that athletes following a dual career pathway differ significantly from those who do not undertake this route (Ryba et al 2014; Knight, Harwood & Sellars, 2018).

Some of the benefits encountered of a dual career are listed as follows:

1. Health related benefits (balanced lifestyle, reduced stress, increased wellbeing)
2. Developmental benefits (better equipped with life skills beneficial to sport, education and relationships, development of personal identity and self-regulation skills)
3. Social benefits (positive socialisation with extended social networks, social support mechanisms and stronger peer relationships)
4. Retirement and adaption benefits (career/retirement planning, reduced adaption period and the prevention of identity crisis)
5. Future employment benefits (increased rates for employability and access to better paid jobs)

Research has highlighted that those athletes who have gained academic qualifications are better prepared to deal with their transitions from the athletic/sporting sphere. They cope with anticipated and unexpected exit from sports better with the potential to make a positive impact to both the workplace and society at large (Torregrosa Ramis, Pallares, Azocar, & Silva, 2015). However, research also

highlights several negative consequences of maintaining a dual career: fatigue, decrease in motivation as well as a lack of opportunities to be active in other areas of life away from sport and academic/vocational study. In conjunction with these, there is the risk of athlete overload and an increase risk of injury (Mc Cormack & Walseth, 2015). It has been highlighted generally, that competitive sport may contribute to poor mental health (Bauman, 2016). Some of the specific factors which impact upon this risk have been cited as extended periods of separation from family, negative consequences of injury, and negative media reports.

Transitioning out of elite sport is stressful with a re-evaluation of the athletes professional, social and physical domains occurring (Lavelle 1997). These changes in an athlete's view of their world, their perspective and perceptions of their abilities and skills (Kim & Moen, 2001) have implications for their wellbeing. As detailed by the Holistic Athletic Career Model (see Figure 1), changes are not synonymous with transitioning out of sport, but rather a result of continuous interactions and conflicts between the various levels of the athlete's development throughout their career (Tekavc, Wyllemann, & Erpic, 2015). It has been shown that transitions within an athlete's athletic landscape are both concurrent and reciprocal with transitions in other domains of an athlete's life (e.g. academic, psychosocial and financial). Athletes must therefore be adaptable, to juggle between the development of a successful athletic career and the coexistent pursuit of an academic/vocation or other domains which have importance at various times in an athlete's life (Tekavc et al 2015).

Following the EU Guidelines (2012) European football associations, similar to other sports, have an obligation to support elite athletes within their programme with a dual career option and framework. Unfortunately, it remains unclear how football associations have achieved this. This is mainly due to the majority of studies to date have been inclusive of multiple sports and not solely focusing on one area (O'Neill et al, 2013, Strambulova et al, 2015).

Career Assistance Programmes (CAPs) have been established internationally, initially being founded in the United States during the 1980's. Today these programmes are both advanced and developed throughout Europe and Australia, especially since the EU report on Dual Careers of Athletes developed in 2012. Initially programmes had more of a focus on the retirement phase of athlete development, but today programmes have a more holistic lifestyle approach with the focus extending to preparing the athlete "for a healthy lifestyle before, during and after the peak sports performance phase" (Lopez de Subijana et al, 2015, p.58). In Australia this programme is known as the Athlete Career and Education Programme (ACE), currently named the Personal Excellence Program (Chambers et al, 2013), where over 3000 athletes have received online support. There was a high level of awareness by players involved in the ACE programme of an option for them to engage in a dual career (69%) and there was a high level of satisfaction amongst athletes who took part (74%) (Albion & Fogarty, 2003).

Similar programmes exist within European countries, with some more advanced and established than others. In Sweden for example, since the 1970's there has been a system of National Elite Sports

Schools (RIG's), with a focus on the development of both the student and athletic identities of the athlete. The introduction of RIGs, has led to the establishment of minimum standards for dual career athletes, utilising a cross-sectional and inter-ministerial approach at the national level (Strambulova et al, 2015). In this process they have identified (and provided) support services, with National Career Guidelines, which are available at all stages of the development pathway. For example, one of the changes which has been made, is the expansion of both regional and locally certified sports schools closer to the athletes' home to accommodate the athlete living with family (Strambulova & Johnson, 2013). These adjustments, in response to looking at the athlete's overall well-being, have helped to maintain and advance the ideas behind the original RIG schools. Strambulova et al, (2015) highlighted the RIG schools are a network of dual career programmes facilitating adolescent Swedish athlete's combination of sport and academic studies which help provide a route to further education.

"Winning in the long run" is considered to be a more recent Swedish Sports Confederation programme, with the 'long run' referring to the athletes post sport career. The aim of this programme is to provide an idiosyncratic, flexible support to talented athletes, ensuring they achieve their full potential as an athlete and a valued and satisfied member of society (Lindahl, 2011). In the UK, the ACE programme is called "The Performance Lifestyle" programme. The programme has been expanded and grown since the 1990's to include more athletes and provide a greater level of assistance to all involved. However, there are concerns in relation to this programme which have been raised by student-athletes at a British University. Specific concerns raised are with regards to; (1) Establishment of priorities, (2) Relationships with academia, and (3) A lack of support and understanding (McKenna & Dunstan-Lewis, 2004). These concerns in part highlight that establishing support programmes for student-athletes in isolation is not enough to ensure their needs are catered for. Currently there is a lack of quality research in this area, further research is required to understand specifically the satisfaction levels amongst student-athletes that have had experience of a dual career pathway. In particular, as with the current research project, a football specific study is required, as each sport has a unique, cultural, organisational and historic context which impact competing athletes.

Existing research on football is limited but has allowed for conjecture around dual careers. Most studies have previously examined talent development (Gledhill & Harwood, 2014; Holt & Dunn, 2004; Van Yperen, 2009) and have led to the identification of the psychological assets of elite soccer players. This has been achieved by analysing the perspective and understanding of; (i) coaches, (ii) performance managers and (iii) support staff (responsible for the development of male soccer players to an elite level). In the research conducted by Morley & Morgan et al (2014), they were able to profile personal competencies that aided normative career transitions in soccer.

Supplementary research conducted by Gledhill and Harwood (2015), with female soccer players, assessed; athletic, psychological, psychosocial and academic processes. The findings from their research enabled them to develop a five-part grounded theory on factors affecting career/athletic progress in female soccer players. However, there is a need to conduct further research in dual careers

in football to determine what structures and support are in place for players. Taken the evidence collectively, to date, research across multiple football associations on dual careers and wellbeing has yet to be conducted. In response to this dearth of research we conducted a four-phased programme of research. Before we describe this research, it's imperative that we highlight how the role of coaches and players can be central to cultural change in sport, as they act as mentors and leaders in sport. For dual careers to be given serious importance by young players they have to see leaders, as role models in their clubs raising awareness of the benefits.

Coaches are leaders within the club and international sports environment, they form a bond with the players, exerting influence over their players, both on the pitch and more broadly in offering advice about education and employment (Snyder 1972). In studies of sociology and psychology in sport it has been shown that the relationship between coaches and players (or programme participants) is crucial in engaging with (life skills or education) interventions (Ferguson et al, 2018). This engagement is sustained through what Pawson (2006) referred to as mentoring, skill acquisition and guided pathways. Peer leaders (such as teammates) are also key enablers to influence behavioural change (Crabbe 2008). Although coaches and players have the ability to act as role models and enablers, they too can be presented with barriers in promoting dual careers, therefore what works for one individual might not work for another, thus a one size fits all approach is not effective, rather coaching or education programmes must take account of context, culture of the sport in order to be effective. The research outlined below considered the role of associations, coaches and players in develop a dual career.

**A review of the proposed research design and strategy. This should include the following:
Justification of the design (longitudinal, cross-sectional, experimental etc.)**

The literature review was conducted between November 2018 and March 2019.

A cross sectional design was implemented as this facilitated; (1) access to football association to complete a survey, and (2) players' experiences of taking part in a dual career programme via interviews. There was no requirement to follow-up associations or players across time given the timeline for the research to be completed.

Case studies were identified based on the literature review, and views of experts through personal contacts in other sports.

Justification of the measurement approach and assumptions about the research topic

A mixed methods approach was adopted. A quantitative survey was conducted to gain the widest reach across football associations in Europe. The survey was available and translated into four languages: English, French, German and Spanish to increase completion rates.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to capture the lived experiences and views of ex professional football players whilst being supported in a dual career. Interviews were conducted via telephone and recorded for later transcription and analysis. Semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were used which helped to explore in more depth a wide range of issues that emerged.

An outline of the key variables for quantitative work, and/or the concepts and dimensions examined by qualitative research

The key variables/questions in the survey (appendix 1) were developed for football associations to determine:

- What percentage of associations have a dual career programme?
- What educational support is provided to players?
- Whether associations are aware of the EU guideline on dual careers?
- What are the barriers to developing a dual career?
- Whether associations support a player's holistic development: Athletic, Vocational, Psychological, Psychosocial, Financial, and Environmental development.
- Whether associations have the structural, financial and human resource capacity to support a player's dual career.
- Whether athletes and coach's mental health, wellbeing and welfare are supported.

The interview questions (see appendix 2) were developed to determine ex-professional football players views on:

- Developing a dual career
- What support they received (educational, financial and by whom) or not.
- What barriers they perceived to developing a dual career
- What advice they can offer in terms of supporting younger players dual careers.

The sample frame and size, and the interviewee selection process

For Phase 2 of this study, all football associations in Europe were emailed with the link to the survey. To establish a representative sample of suitable responders the Irish Football Association (IFA) was consulted to provide a list of contacts whose remit it is to support player development. These included: Elite Performance Directors, Head of Coach Education, Player Welfare Managers, Player Mental Health and Wellbeing Officers, Player Association / Unions or other roles within Associations. Initial contact was made with each of the participants to ask if they would take part or refer the research team to a suitable person with subject knowledge to complete the survey. A total of 41 participants completed the survey (male=38, female 3, mean age = 47.5, SD= 11.25), with representation from 28 Football Associations in Europe.

For the interviews in Phase 3, initial contact was made with ex-players to ask if they would take part. Once verbal agreement was attained the participant was emailed an information sheet and informed consent form for completion (appendix 3 and 4). Following this a suitable time was arranged, with each player, for the interview to take place. A total of 7 ex-professional footballers (n=7) volunteered to participate in this research. Participants with a mean age of 37.3 years (SD = 1.89 years) and a mean age of 29.4 years at retirement (SD= 1.75 years) from; Austria, Bosnia, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Scotland, Holland and England were interviewed.

An outline of the hypothesis(-es) addressed, the analysis strategy and techniques used, and the strength and significance of the results

The aims are listed above. To analyse the data, percentages, mean average scores and standard deviation scores were presented for the cross-sectional survey in response to each of the questions posed. All interview data was transcribed verbatim by the author. Themes were developed, the analysis process started with the detailed examination of one case, this process is continued with a second case and through all cases. The researchers undertook a cross-case analysis, to interpret the participant making sense of their social and personal world of a dual career, themes were then listed.

The validity and reliability of the instruments and variables applied, or the qualitative equivalent (e.g. authenticity)

In the survey analysis, the data from each participant was encoded to ensure that each participant cannot be identified. The data was then exported, fully labelled to Microsoft Excel. Data validity and reliability checks were performed before the final analysis.

In regard to the interviews following transcription of each interview, each participant was presented with a copy to read and verify their transcript as being a true and valid verbatim account of the interview. Each participant also agreed to take follow up calls to clarify any information gathered from the interviews. Two researchers, aided with the thematic analysis and coding of the interviews, these were cross referenced between authors.

An overview of any ethical issues and how they are addressed

Ethical approval was granted by Ulster Universities Research Ethics Filter Committee. No ethical issues were reported during the delivery of the project.

Methodology

The final research design was amended following a video conference with the UEFA expert research panel creating a four-phased approach:

1. A desk-based literature review of the evidence surrounding dual careers in sport and football was conducted.
2. A cross sectional survey across all UEFA members in Europe both from within the National Associations to include: Elite Performance Directors, Head of Coach Education, Player Welfare Managers, Mental Health Managers and those associated with the National Association to include: Players Union, Football League representatives, Education Partners and externals expert partners involved in: Mental Health, Education and Welfare.
3. Ex-players were interviewed on their experience of developing a dual career.
4. Finally, we Identified five case studies of good practice dual career programmes outside football to help guide associations on how football players could be supported.

Overview of ethical issues and how they are addressed

See above.

An overview of the main research findings, with a clear focus on the research question(s)

Phase 1, literature review, is presented on page 6. Phase 2, 3 and 4 are presented below.

Phase 2: Cross Sectional Survey**Demographics**

A total of 41 participants completed the survey (male=38, female 3, mean age = 47.5, SD= 11.25).

Football Association Represented

Due to more than one response from a person in an association, when duplicates were removed a total of 28 football associations were represented: Azerbaijan, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, England, Estonia, Faroe Islands, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Republic of Ireland, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Northern Ireland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine and Wales.

Participants Position/Job title

15% were Elite Performance Directors, 32% Head of Coach Education, 2% Player Welfare Managers, 0% Player Mental Health and Wellbeing Officers, 18% Player Association / Union and 34% stated other (specialist in coach education, expert coach, lecturer in coach education, technical director, or grassroots football managers). 73% of respondents worked in both men and women's football, while 27% in men's football only.

Dual Career Awareness and Support Available**Does your Football Association have a dual career strategy, objective or target?**

This question was completed by 26 participants, 60% responded yes, 40% no. Of these 26 participants 70% said they provided support to players to develop a dual career, while 30% said no. This would suggest that even without a strategy or objective in place some associations are supporting players in their dual careers.

Below are some of the examples of support provided by associations, these have been themed into guidance, support, and education:

Guidance	Support	Education
By providing guidance and pointing them to an education pathway that suits them and what they are interested in	Education Grants, education support, career guidance.	We provide an online learning course (BA in Sports Management) for our Union members.

Players can always ask me if they have any questions about dual career.	We support players with Coach Education whilst they are still playing	We manage the football section of the National Sport School and we balance their football training and academic career. We control and help in the time management (Training and study) to our Youth national team players. We also provide rooms for youth team players when once a week they arrive early from school. We also invite personnel from JobsPlus to inform Youth National team players about future job opportunities.
A footballer accumulates a large toolbox of skills of tremendous benefit in later working life.	I support players with all the information we get from schools and Sports ministry.	We have an Mou with colleges so that professional players have their lectures held outside training session hours.
The aim of the Players Union is to help players identify these skills and write them down	I provide absolute support to both people who played football at a professional level and people who played at a lower level, because I think that everyone deserves a chance and the best will be recognized	
Player to Coach Pathway Development		

Are you aware of the European Union's guidelines on supporting athlete dual careers?

25% responded yes, 38% no, and 38% were unsure. Participants were then asked are they aware of the Holistic Athlete Career Model (HACM), 38% said yes, 62% no.

Participants were asked does their association support a players athletic, vocational, psychological, psychosocial, financial and environmental development in line with the HACM, 18 participants responded (See table below). Football associations were most likely to agree or strongly agree that they supported players athletic development (72%), followed by vocational (61%), psychological (56%), psychosocial (50%), environment (33%) and financial developments (28%).

	DONT KNOW	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL
Athletic development	27.78% 5	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	44.44% 8	27.78% 5	18
Vocational development	22.22% 4	5.56% 1	11.11% 2	38.89% 7	22.22% 4	18
Psychological development	22.22% 4	5.56% 1	16.67% 3	44.44% 8	11.11% 2	18
Psychosocial development	22.22% 4	5.56% 1	22.22% 4	38.89% 7	11.11% 2	18
Financial development	22.22% 4	16.67% 3	33.33% 6	22.22% 4	5.56% 1	18
Environmental development	50.00% 9	0.00% 0	16.67% 3	22.22% 4	11.11% 2	18

Table showing reponses to a question asking do association support a players athletic, vocational, psychological, psychosocial, financial and environmental development?

To determine whether football associations had the structural capacity, financial or human resource capacity to support players, the below questions were asked. The graphs summarise the findings.

In your view does your football association have the structural capacity to support player dual careers (Planning of provision, infrastructure, and relationships with external organisations in the delivery)?

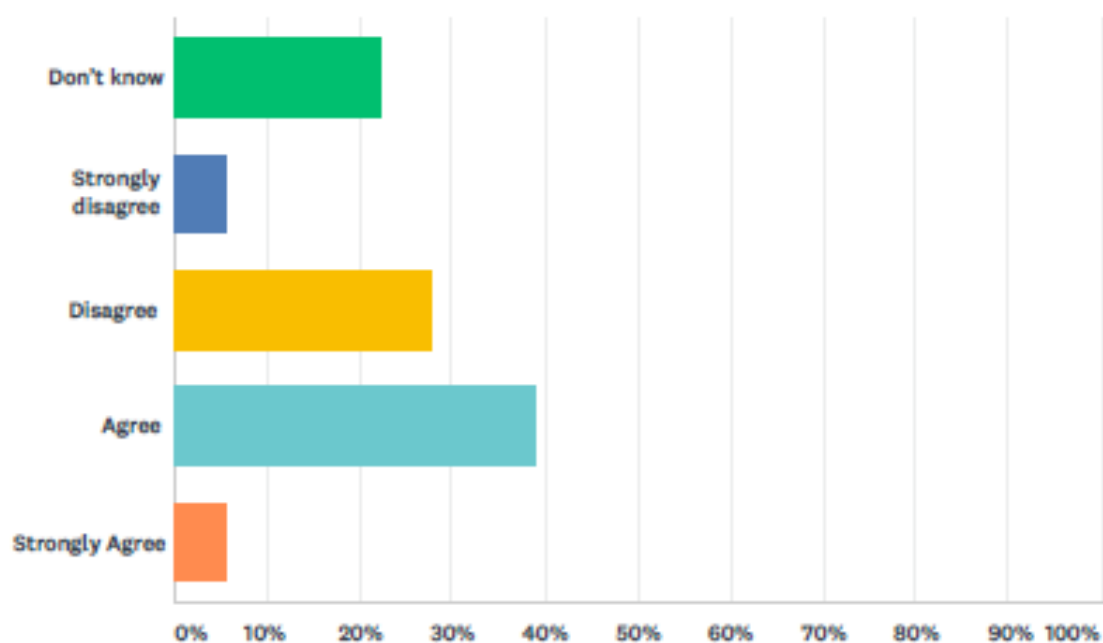


Figure 2: Outlining association views on whether they had the structural capability to provide dual career support.

Only 45% of associations agreed or strongly agreed that they had the structural capacity to support dual careers, 32% disagreed or strongly disagreed. It must be noted that 22% were unsure of the answer to this question.

In your view does your football association have the financial capacity to support player dual careers?

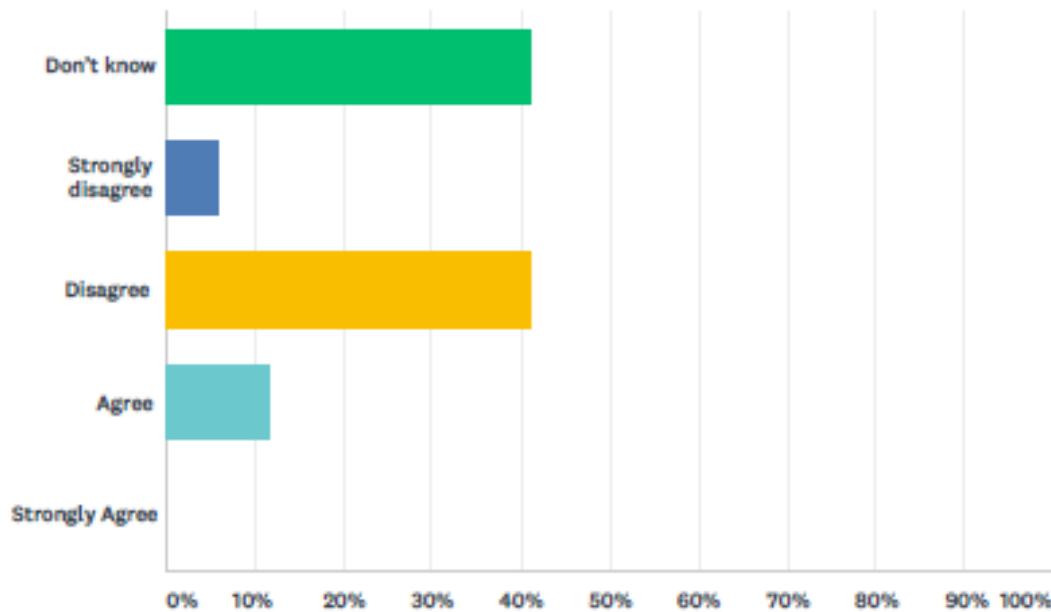


Figure 3: Outlining association views on whether they had the financial capability to provide dual career support.

47% of associations disagreed or strongly disagreed that they had the financial capacity to support dual careers, only 11% of the sample agreed, none strongly agreed and 41% did not know.

In your view does your football association have the people/human resource to support player dual careers?

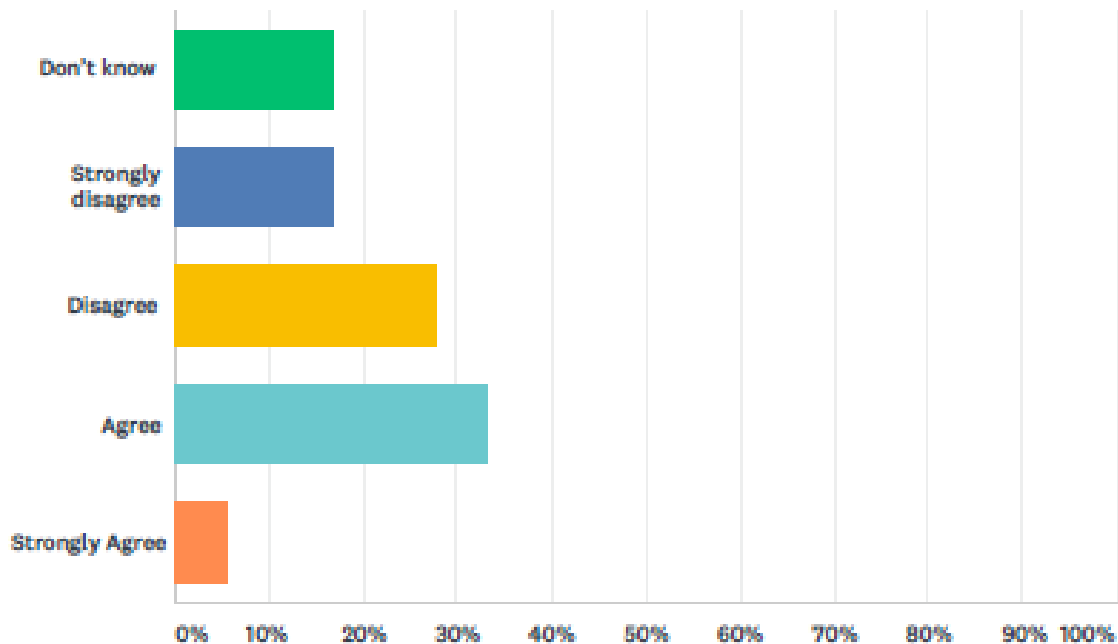


Figure 4: Outlining association views on whether they had the people/human resource to provide dual career support.

When associations were asked do they have the people/human resource to support player dual careers, 45% disagreed or strongly disagreed while 39% agreed or strongly agreed (17% did not know).

Do you provide formal educational programmes outside of coaching to support the transition of players outside the game?

42% yes, 58% no. If the answer was yes, examples of programmes included:

LMA and PFA Programme	FIFPro Online Academy - Various College programmes Started 2018-19 Program with university of applied sciences to have studies and coaching combined.	JobsPlus University education for all professional athletes during their football career.
Career Guidance support. Transition from Playing to Coaching Workshop.	Sports Mgt degree, FIFPro on line academy with university of Denmark.	We have a partnership with a University where players can study and complete there UEFA

		B Licence during the same course should they enrol.
		In our university we have PE program where not only footballers can be PE teachers or football coaches after they finish this program. https://jpy.fi/en/dual-career/study4player

From the programmes available, have you referred a player to these?

52% yes, 48% no. The number of players referred ranged from 1 to all players.

When asked do you offer coach education programmes that are tailored to support players career transition; 48% responded yes, 52% no. For those that said yes, they offer:

Support	Coaching Awards	Extend Education
All programs CEC FAM will support candidates to stay in football	Specific UEFA B for current and former elite players	Our co-operation with some universities is tailored for professional players.
We lead them to start our coaching football course at our centre starting with the CYF course (Coaching Young Footballers) or we address them to the Academy of the referees' association	We hold UEFA B Residential courses during the off season to support current players. the players have to meet the criteria set out by UEFA to attend the course	Free Education for our Elite Players playing in U15, U17 and U19 National Leagues. Discounted education for current players. Educational grants for external education such as college or university courses.
thefa.com	UEFA B Elite player courses, targeted both male and female players	
	We offer for the moment only C Licence.	

Players when leaving the game require support during this transition, what support is provided?

Career advice	Programme(s)/Education	Coaching Awards
Players Association is mainly supporting during this transition. www.jpjy.fi	PFA AND LMA Programmes	We immediately include them through the National C license and for the players who played in the first football league, we include them through the UEFA B license
We offer them possibility to make them easier to start a new career, especially knowing that professional athletes retire at young age.	At this time, we offer only educational options.	Coach Education, Player Development opportunities to work with the next generation, ambassador work plus many more
Players would have already established their career at this stage.	Financial grants towards education	
The majority of players still work while playing for their team. So when they stop playing football most of them already are into employment.	The associations also provided educational programmes to players across all stages of their involvement in football (initiation, development, mastery and discontinuation)	
We organize meetings for TOP senior players (for active and non active) to advise them and introduce them possible future working possibilities in football at EFA and Club level (coaching, club administration, scouting etc).		
Our Union has decided to devote time and efforts to		

support players during the transition period, a separate foundation dealing with the issue is just being established.		
One to one Career Guidance Educational Grants		

When asked does your association offer scholarships to support players develop dual careers

23% said yes while 77% said no.

What are the barriers to developing dual career?

When asked what the barriers for a player are to develop a dual career multiple examples were provided, and are summarised under the below themes.

Coaching	Time	Support
Complex issue. During career they are focused strictly on football, often not paying attention to education and other skills. Then, most of them want to stay in football as coaches, which is not possible in reality.	Time management, especially when working and playing at the same time.	Support from parents who support more the academic part than the dual carrier

Further comments included the following:

Most often, because of a player's career, they are not able to fully devote themselves to coaching career. After finishing a player's career, in most cases, they give themselves a complete coaching career

Time limit. It is very difficult for a professional player to find time to combine studies & career.

Time to do it, because of work and family. Possibly have to travel far, because it is not done widely nationally.

Not enough time, lack of understanding how important and hard is for someone in professional sport to educate and at same time to play professional sport (e.g. coaches, head coaches, club staff etc.).

No barriers, our players are amateurs

Lack of financial support, infrastructure

Low education base. No club support. Financial, cost too high. Entrance level too high and education base of player very low.

Time - around their playing commitments but we have to be flexible and individualised through mentoring and support

I think lack of self-confidence, responsibility and creativeness

Lack of know how

Having a weekly program for an active player, it is a common barrier that individual schedule and special timetable would be required to be able to attend the courses; - players realize the importance of studying only at a later age which even might be too late to get back to school;- clubs do not support enough those players who want to study further

Time - Balancing playing commitments and education commitments.

Free time and adaptation to become a coach

How could these barriers be overcome?

Support	Programs	Time
Education, counselling	Quality programs, great work and huge dedication.	We managed to have an agreement with 2 colleges not to have lectures and training sessions at the same time.
As we do not have full-time professional teams overcoming this barrier is difficult unless football wages are higher or at par with what a player can earn from a profession.	National plan and regional planning.	Individual schedule - special timetable - online and flexible courses - to provide players information in a more effective way - to make familiar the players with the importance of dual career
More support full time player development manager.		

Flexible study programs, financial support to study.

Online programmes and off season courses help.

If they find a job where they support his playing. Teams have a cooperation with companies who would take that kind of employee who play football.

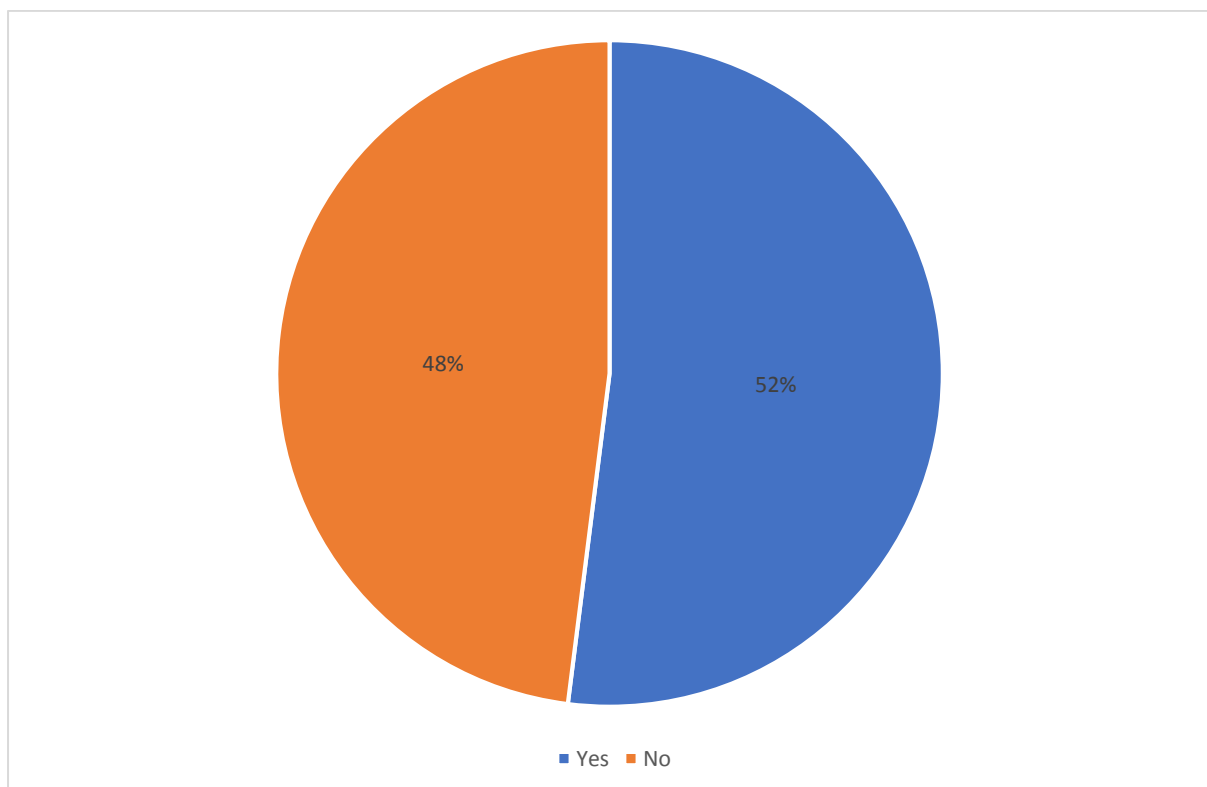
With tailor made programs which will be flexible for players in order to combine studies and career.

After our Football Federation where accepted in Uefa and Fifa we are getting support in all areas in few years we can start new path in dual career for players and football in general.

Additional support. Tailor made programmes spread out over a longer period of time

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Do you provide players with an opportunity to learn about their mental health and wellbeing?



There were 25 responses to this question, of which 52% answered yes, while 48% said no.

For those that said yes, they provided learning opportunities in various ways. Some examples of how mental health awareness was delivered across a number of associations is detailed below:

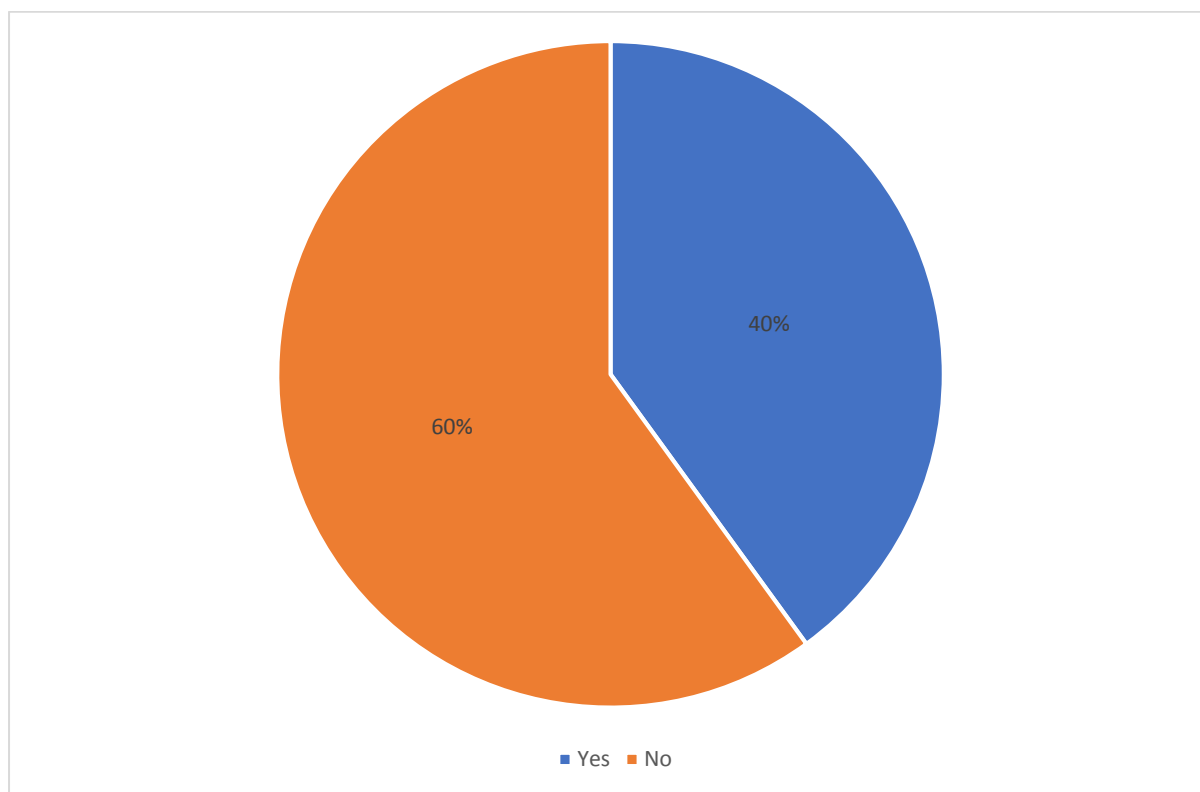
- U 14's and U 15's recently completed a session called ahead of the game, TAHMI developed this with the IFA. On this course the players were directed where to go to, but also who to speak to in the programme if they need help. We are also going to be doing mental health training through Sport NI and Aware in the next month or two. This will also be for staff. Also Sporting chance will be doing sessions for players and staff on addictions, gambling, alcohol, drugs, which all affect mental health.
- Mental Health Training LGBTI Training for staff and coaches
- FIFPro campaign recently + we have a cooperation with a psychologist to provide support for Players

- Our upper secondary schools have this on their Education plan
- We organise lectures and conferences on this topic, also we are working with a team of sports psychologists who are permanently working with athletes on their mental health, its improvement and noticing the first signs of any problem.
- Yes, at the beginning of each season all players of all age groups would have a group meeting with their relevant head coaches. We also use Metrifit that players fill in both in and out of international cam
- We offer to our Youth National Team players lectures by our Sport Psychologist on mental strength and mindset and wellbeing by our medical staff

- Through club visits.

Do you direct players to mental health and wellbeing support?

40% said yes, while 60% responded no.



What education programmes are available that support players and coaches welfare?

Only 10 respondents completed this question indicating they had educational programmes to support players and/or coaches. Examples of these are:

Players	Coaches
CEC FAM programs, through education on licenses	CEC FAM programs, through education on licenses, through quality socialized work contribute to the whole society.
LGBTI Training Programmes. External companies with subject matter experts, example Jigsaw. https://www.jigsaw.ie	During our Coaching Education courses and meetings with our medical staff
Our medical staff takes care of the welfare of players who find great support from our coaches	No programmes. Work health care.
We have a welfare department who focus on this aspect for players	This is integrated in the coach education pathway

One association indicated they were in the developing phase	In each course we have modules to support players welfare, each coach has to attend a Child Welfare course should they be working with children or vulnerable adults
5 indicating they do not have programmes/welfare support	Modules in formal coach education and CPD training in the area of safeguarding, mental health, LGBTI, and Welfare.
	Team doctor
	We don't have any educational programs to support coach welfare.
	None. Coaches are not members of our Union.

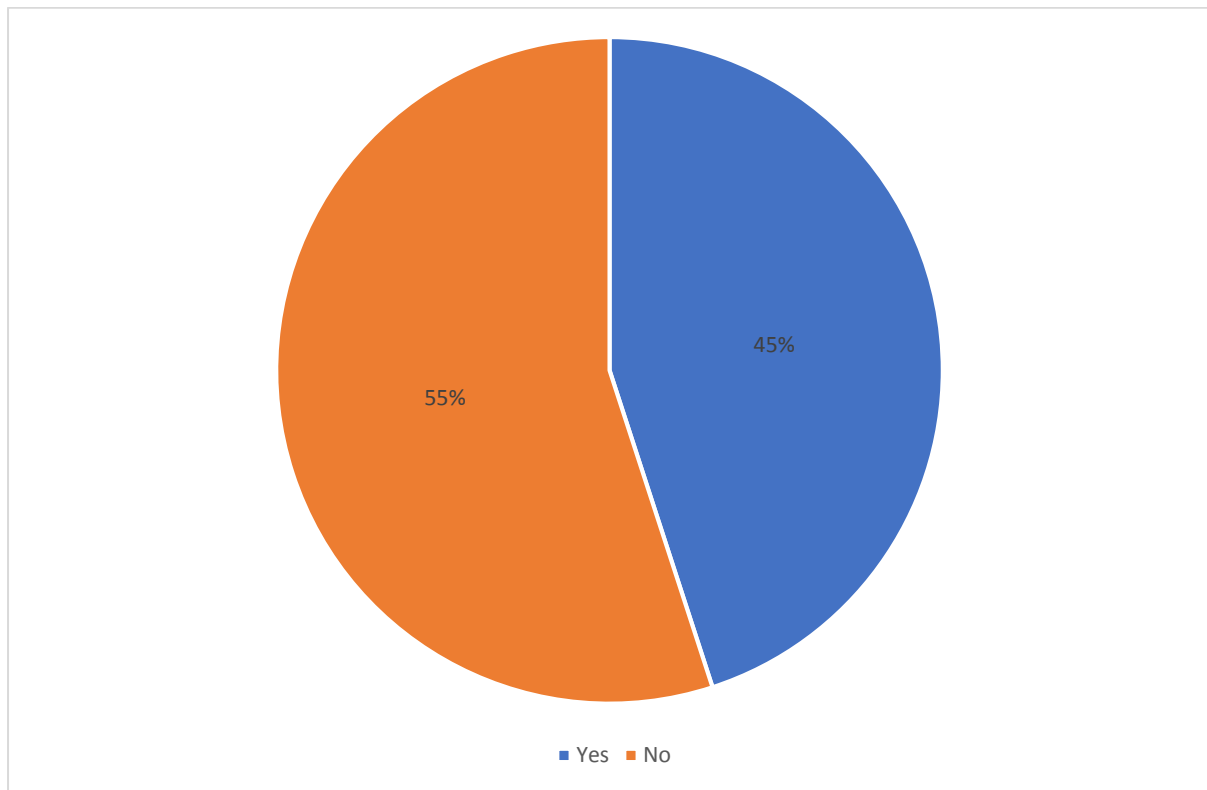
When asked who provides mental health and wellbeing welfare support and services to players?

From the responses it was clear that there was not a clearly defined support mechanism or service for players. Examples of what was available in associations are detailed below:

PFA	FAW Welfare department	Players Association www.jpjy.fi
Player Union	Coach Education Centre	Work health care.
Clubs, work related medical care.	Sports Psychologists and 3 Medical psychologists. For well-being we have 2 Sport Medical Doctors for youth teams (1 full time and another part-time). We also have a part-time sport dietician	Mental training centre
Our (national) Union provides support in terms of a FIFPro campaign recently and additionally we have a cooperation with a psychologist to provide support for players.	Coach Education and Development Officer Staff. External experts provide training and support example Jigsaw.	
No support and services for players We don't have such service.		

Have you used these services for players in your association?

Of 22 respondents, 45% said yes and 55% no.



Can you estimate how many players have used these services?

The response to this question was varied and ranged from 5 players to all youth players called to the national team in an association.

Participants were asked did their National Association have a strategy/policy to support players and coaches' welfare, mental health and education.

21 participants responded. Policies/ strategies were most likely to be in place for coach and players education, compared to mental health and welfare where the majority of association did not have a policy or strategy in place. A player mental health policy/strategy was least likely to be in place for mental health, 65% of the associations did not have one, 60% did not have a welfare policy or strategy (See Figure below).

85% of the associations did not have a policy/strategy in place for mental health or welfare of their coaches.

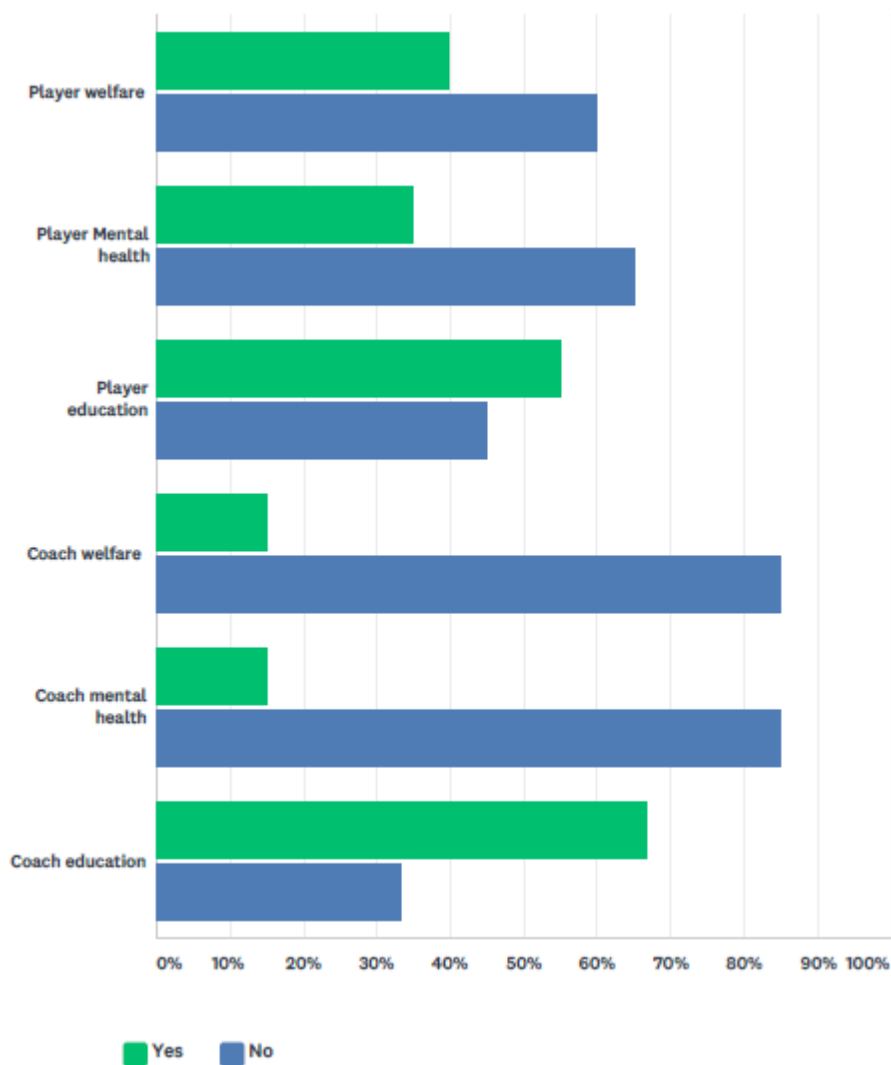


Figure 10: illustrating whether National Associations had a strategy/policy to support players and coaches' welfare, mental health and education.

Mental health and wellbeing of players is important during transition. Can you provide some suggestions to how players could be supported?

As identified by the associations:

<p>Links</p>	<p>A high quality and strong link from the club to the association can contribute to a better transition of players to new football jobs</p>
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	Contact and supporting them in a similar environment, creating a link to the same and ensuring they are not isolated.
Support	They should be offered a concrete service.
	Psychologically. They need support and we have to show which qualities are the best on them and how they can use them. We have to help find them a job and it would be if we would find job in football. Manager, coach, assistant, media etc.
	Players have to be supported during their career in order to be ready when they retire. This can happen from the unions and their teams by informing and training them in such matters.
	Continuous help and that player knows that in every moment he can ask someone for help, or advice. It is very important that unions and football clubs offer these information to players at least every week in order that these problems stop being tabu and that all sports participants must be aware in all time that mental health during and after professional career is very important and must be observed.
As a researcher I can conclude that Mental health and wellbeing of players are also very important topics in this case. The basics of these topics we need firstly to put into the players development system. It's important mental health, but we still don't support it.	

Phase 3: Interview Results

Several key themes emerged from the data collected. These included, motivation to study, availability of courses, the ease of access for the players to the courses, the environment for the players, including the overarching game environment, peers, and those individuals with a stake in the players development.

In respect to motivation, a lot of the participants felt the decision to study was their own, even if the opportunities where there, they had to want to do it; "like for some it was a box ticking exercise" or "I could not wait to get out of there". One participant admitted that even if he was afforded the opportunity to study he would have been reluctant, "No, I would not have done it, it was not for me."

Stakeholders were important in terms of both encouragement or lack of, as well as making it easy to continue to study and train. For example; “No one took it seriously, he couldn’t wait to get out of there and neither could we,” this was the impression of one participant towards the tutor of the course run by the club. One player got assistance from his coaches as they understood his and the families desire to stay at school, “the coaches knew my family and they were quite understanding.”

Financial help was also welcomed, when questioned about who paid for a course, one participant replied, “No it was the club, I guess that was a part of the trade off, they managed to get us that.”

In the table below, participants data (quotes), the main theme and sub themes are outlined:

Participant Data	Main Theme	Sub Theme
<p>“My last six months of, I suppose, it was more reading newspapers rather than TV, I had a play station or whatever, so I spent more time reading and it was at that point, that I thought this could be the end and I started to look into it” P1</p> <p>“It just wouldn’t have, it would not have been for me. I wouldn’t have done it and to be honest they never offered” P2</p> <p>“The 2nd year I did not want to go but it was compulsory, so I went”</p> <p>“at that age, I don’t think it’s difficult, I just think there’s a lack of interest”</p> <p>“it’s about the person, as much as people think footballers are stupid, if I had wanted to do a course, I would have”</p>	<p>Motivation</p>	<p>Intrinsic (understanding a need to) Extrinsic (reward based) Amotivation</p>
<p>“ No, no that was the club. I guess it was a trade-off between going to college, they managed to get us that was handy,”</p> <p>“ both from similar class backgrounds, we just got on with it”</p> <p>“I got support in terms of travel and stuff”</p>	<p>Environment</p>	<p>Familial (Cultural) Club The Game support</p>

<p>"I think it's more egotistical ...in football you tend to conform, on ideas, on mindsets, on fashion."</p> <p>"I played 18 times for the Under 21's, not once was I told about what to do after my career"</p> <p>" the coaches knew my family, and they were quite understanding for me to stay onto 5th year, so I got my Highers"</p> <p>", my mum and dad would have been the main people behind me"</p> <p>"when I was at Spurs as a kid, we had someone come in once a week"</p> <p>"the PFA, were great, when I was playing, but in a way, you had to go and look for the help"</p> <p>"the PFA could be more hands on "</p>	<p>Stakeholders</p>	<p>Parents Coaches Peers Associations PFA etc</p>
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Table illustrating the main themes from the interviews with players

Ex-professional players views of barriers to a dual career

The main barriers to development of a dual career, appears to come from several sources, historical (the game and its macho image) and the individuals desire first and foremost to succeed as a player. It was also clear that those players who were older and entertained into professional football, prior to 2000, were less averse to seek a dual career. The environment of the club is vital, with respect to placing an importance on a dual career. It was stated within the interviews; "The club needs to hammer it into youth players, listen here is what you can do." Compared to the USA, players within Europe were more open to study, "I was let go from Ajax to an amateur team, at 14, my grades were not good enough, they kept the door open for me, but I had to perform at school."

Having to move away from home and train and/or study away from home was seen as a hinderance, "Having to live far way was a problem,"; "We had to travel over an hour each way." It was clear from these ex-players that time was the barrier to study.

Advice

All participants who were interviewed when asked what advice would they give new players they would recommend all young players to continue with an education or vocational study as they pursued a career in football; "I would say stay in school." Advice and mentoring from ex professionals were also highly sought after, "I think talks with ex pros, letting you know that this will all end someday." Other comments related to how associations could help in creating opportunities and provision of vocational studies; "If they could come up with something that would give them experience of working in a field, actual roles, real jobs, rather than saying do a degree." Other participants admitted that you must focus on education, believing that in the end your ability will come through, "If you have talent, it will come through. So, focus on school."

Phase 4: Five case studies of good practice in supporting dual careers outside of football

A review of dual career programmes, outside of football, has identified a range of initiatives which focuses particular attention on three core themes: life skills, education and employment. In the section below, examples of five projects; (a) European Collaborations, (b) Embedding Dual Career Policy in Education, (c) University and Club Collaboration, (d) Global Support and Resources and (e) Language (life skills), which encompass dual careers in action are highlighted.

European Collaborations

The EU Erasmus Plus programme provides support for education, training, youth and sport in Europe. The programme's aim is to contribute to the growth of; (i) jobs, (ii) social equity and (iii) inclusion. Specifically, the Erasmus Plus Sport: Collaborative Partnership Action promotes the development, transfer and implementation of innovative practices in different areas relating to sport between various organisations within and outside sport. Within the pre-defined aims of this programme is the desire to 'support the implementation of EU policy documents in the field of sport' such as the EU Guidelines on Dual Careers of Athletes.

Most recently, a collaboration of three major European Handball clubs, together with the European Handball Federation, a European University and a pan European Industry sports federation, received support from the Erasmus+ Programme to promote and support dual careers in handball.

The project known as Handball 4 Dual Careers (H4DC) developed a comprehensive support service to guide the development of handball players from 12 years of age through until University age. The project followed a collaborative approach between sporting bodies (clubs, federations), educational organisations and private sector representatives.

The project involved creating bespoke development plans for each athlete based on a needs analysis exercise. This facilitated the design of training and individual guidance of dual career support services.

Further evaluation of the various pilot projects in this funded programme will inform the publication of future policy recommendations and transferable action points to other sporting clubs.

The uniqueness of the project is the make-up of the collaboration. This collaboration is built between; University, sports clubs, sports federation and private sector business across a number of EU countries. This approach combines expertise in the core areas of education, employment and life skills, in context, to create bespoke individualised support.

Embedding Dual Career Policy in Education

Research by Stambulova (2017) outlined the support for dual careers offered across Sweden. Here the support for dual careers is embedded within the education and higher education structures, with approximately 250 regional and local certified sport schools (NIUs) facilitating in excess of 6600 adolescent athletes. Transition is then facilitated to higher education with three National Sports Universities and eleven sports friendly Universities. These Universities facilitate dual careers through various partnerships and policies which enable the athlete to effectively combine flexible study with the demands of competing as an elite athlete. This is enabled by the implementation of Swedish National Dual Career Guidelines for Universities and supported by the National Digital Dual Careers Support System.

The key feature of this specific programme is the practical implementation of dual careers support in education as part of a joined-up policy.

University and club collaboration

Various examples exist across Europe where individual sports clubs offer education as a benefit within player contracts which is central to their recruitment. One such example is in Ice Hockey, where European based teams are consistently looking for competitive advantages in their offerings for players within financial restriction. The disparity in standard between North American Ice Hockey and European Ice Hockey means clubs in Europe target a specific standard of player and must present an attractive alternative to entice players from North America. To this end the Belfast Giants have established a collaborative partnership with Ulster University to offer prospective players the opportunity to study at university whilst playing for the Giants. This process attracts two categories of players; (a) those nearing the end of their careers, who are interested in preparing themselves for life after hockey and (b) young players coming from the NCAA college athletics system, who recognise the value of attaining a postgraduate master's degree. The Club then coordinate with the University the scheduling of training and classes. A further additional added value to these players is the opportunity to engage in a mentorship programme. This programme supports student players with input from local business and community organisations. The key feature in this partnership is the form of collaboration between the club and University for mutual benefit.

Global Support and Resources

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) Athletes Commission Initiative established the Athlete 365 Career + programme which is delivered by the Adecco group. The Programme supports athletes at all stages of their career, as they discover their potential and later prepare for and go through career transition. This programme is designed to develop life skills and education as a means of creating employment opportunities.

The Athlete 365 Career + programme further empowers athletes to maximise their education and employment opportunities by building confidence to transition to post sports career opportunities. This programme is delivered through a blended approach to learning, which incorporates; one to one advise, training and facilitating peer to peer learning. A portfolio of online resources supplements the face to face support. This is facilitated by a work placement used to enable elite athletes to successfully manage the transition from sport to a new career.

At a national level, national sporting federations, have established networks of Athlete Friendly Employers to support Athletes who want to manage a dual career and prepare for life after sport. These national initiatives provide mutual benefits to both the athlete and the business, with businesses acquiring high performing driven athletes and access to a strong national network, while generating positive PR as part of a high-profile social responsibility initiative

Language (life skills)

Globalisation of sport has increased the mobility expectations on players and coaches and thus their ability to be articulate in more than one language. A sports team can be seen as a special case of a multilingual working environment (Ringbom 2012) with those who can not speak a second language restricted in their playing and post playing career opportunities. Teaching language through sport gives immense benefits to learners.

Football spoken is a method to learn language through sport. The specific goal is to allow coaches and players, among other professionals, to develop language with ease in context. The life skills training course focuses on the understanding and use of technical vocabulary needed to set up and successfully; (i) carry out training sessions, (ii) communicate within the coaching framework and extended activities such as those required in a press setting. This is offered as either an online or face to face mentored programme to promote; life skills, break down barriers to employment and the education of sports people.

The limitations of the current study, including any issues of inherent partiality and any operational issues, such as data access

A strength to the current programme of research was the mixed methods approach and novelty of the research questions linking to player and coach welfare and mental health. Limitations included the cross-sectional research design and no follow up of associations or players. A longitudinal research design would have allowed for a monitoring of change in the development of dual careers for players. All associations did not contribute to the survey so there may be some dual career advances that were not picked up by the survey. The interviews with players was limited to a total of 7. Further time would have permitted the recruitment of a larger sample, and a gender balance. With the growth in female football, future research on dual careers should take this into account during design and recruitment of participants.

The impact of the research in terms of current theory, state of knowledge and/or practices, and the consequences/recommendations for UEFA and football

The findings from each phase of the project contribute to new knowledge in the area of dual careers in football. In phase 1, the review highlighted the research currently undertaken in dual careers beyond football and within football, and highlights some of the programmes that have been integrated into various sports. The literature review also highlights the dearth of research conducted on dual careers in football with the exception of a few studies that are cross sectional in nature. This research is therefore lacking in regards to monitoring the progress of players through their development pathways. The strength of the review was on the ability to highlight the few studies that have been conducted in this area of dual careers in football. These studies showed an appetite and necessity to put in place holistic support for footballers at all levels of the game for males and females. The literature review also informed the collection of new data in phase 2, 3 and 4 of this programme of research.

The survey findings in Phase 2 showed that 60% of associations surveyed had a dual career programme in place. 70% of those who had a dual career programme in place, were engaged in providing support. This was despite 76% of associations being unaware or unsure of the European Union Guidelines on athlete dual careers. In addition, 62 % were unaware of the Holistic Athlete Career Model (HACM) outlined in the European Union report.

Specific to the five components of the athlete career development model, associations were asked did they support player's athletic, vocational, psychological, psychosocial, and financial development. Associations were also asked did they support the environment in which a player develops, this was a component not included in the HACM that we added. The findings in this regard mainly reflect the structural capacity and commitment of the organisation to the players environment. Football associations were most likely to agree or strongly agree that they supported players athletic development (72%), followed by vocational (61%), psychological (56%), psychosocial (50%), organisation/environment (33%) and financial developments (28%).

Only 45% of associations agreed or strongly agreed that they had the structural capacity to support dual careers, 32% disagreed or strongly disagreed. It must be noted that 22% were unsure of the answer to this question. This may be reflective of the lack of understanding of dual career requirements or what resources the association have available to offer support. Similarly, related to the organisation/environmental support, when associations were asked do they have the people/human resource to support player dual careers, 45% disagreed or strongly disagreed while 39% agreed or strongly agreed, 17% did not know. Of particular interest was the view that 47% of associations disagreed or strongly disagreed that they had the financial capacity to support dual careers, only 11% of the sample agreed, none strongly agreed and 41% did not know. A further response showed that 23% of associations offered scholarships to players to study, 77% did not.

The survey showed that 52% of associations referred players to dual career programmes with many examples provided. Barriers and facilitators to developing a dual career were provided (see page 21). The main facilitators are; availability of quality programmes, flexible study, financial support, tailor made programmes, a national or regional plan to support players, education for staff on dual careers to raise awareness and more human resource to support players.

As the holistic development of players promotes; athletic, vocational, psychological, psychosocial, financial, and organisational/environmental development, the survey highlighted many areas for development around mental health. For example, 52% of associations provided opportunities for players to learn about their mental health, while 48% did not. Mental health awareness programmes were highlighted, and delivered by clubs, coach education centres, sport psychologists, wellbeing professionals, medical doctors, players union, external experts, and the welfare department. Participants were asked did their National Association have a strategy/policy to support players and coach's welfare, mental health and education. Policies/ strategies were most likely to be in place for coach and player's education, this figure was higher compared to mental health and welfare where the majority of associations did not have a policy or strategy in place.

A player's mental health policy/strategy was least likely to be in place for mental health, 65% of associations did not have one, 60% did not have a welfare policy or strategy (See Figure 10). For coaches, 85% of associations did not have a policy/strategy in place for mental health or welfare. Associations had the view that mental health should be supported, when asked about specific examples these were not provided when requested. This lack of information may have been a result of awareness raising of mental health in sport being in its infancy, suggesting awareness is needed at association training levels.

Phase 3: Included interviews with seven ex-professional football players on their experience of being supported with a dual career. The following key themes emerged: motivation to study, the environment for the players, and peer and stakeholder support. If flexible study was available ex-players were

adamant that young players should be encouraged to stay at school and be made aware that playing professional football will come to an end someday, so an education is required to increase career options.

Phase 4 included five case studies of Career Assistance Programmes (CAPS) or the embedding of a dual career were described. The EU Erasmus Plus programme, Embedding Dual Career Policy in Education, the University and club collaboration, the Global Support and Resources by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and Athletes Commission Initiative, and finally the language for life skills programmes may provide some direction for football players.

Recommendations

Taking all the evidence collectively, eighteen recommendations are provided for consideration by UEFA.

1. A proactive effort is required to encourage football associations to develop a dual career strategy, objective, or target as a means to promote strategic direction
2. The holistic athlete career model with the addition of the environment factor could be promoted to associations.
3. Although strategies and resources may be available, there is a need to facilitate engagement with the player, specifically to establish processes to encourage players to engage and to promote awareness of the opportunities
4. Establish a media campaign aimed at promoting a culture of holistic educational development ensuring that education is not seen as a distraction to players but rather a mutual benefit to both club and player.
5. Coaches play a vital role in setting both logistics and culture within a club or association, therefore coaches could be trained to become ambassadors for dual careers. These role models could then increase athletes and other coaches awareness of the benefits of developing a dual career, while facilitating access to education through logistical planning.
6. Consider implementing holistic education within required UEFA licence CPD courses for coaches as a means to promote the benefits of wider education and wellbeing.
7. An annual dual careers conference could be established across UEFA nations to showcase dual careers in action similar to the coach education conferences. The link between dual career and mental health should be highlighted.

8. Workshops and knowledge sharing study visits could be facilitated across football associations to determine ways of breaking down the barriers to developing a dual career.
9. Support the structural, financial and human resource capacity of football associations to promote and support players development of dual careers.
10. Consider the low levels of opportunities provided across football associations in the delivery of mental health awareness and consider developing or using evidenced based mental health in football awareness programmes that players can associate with.
11. Safe guarding and mental health strategies are not in place in each association for players, and less so coaches, consider providing training to associations to develop these.
12. Consider the case studies highlighted in this report of dual career programmes outside football, and with this report consider developing a UEFA policy on dual careers that will have impact to all players across Europe.
13. A lack of time has been identified as one of the key barriers to dual careers. Therefore, focused education programmes which are created bespoke for teams should be investigated as part of a pilot needs analysis.
14. In establishing resources consider the balance between generic online resources to reach a large population efficiently and the bespoke resources required to tackle individual issues, or indeed, overcome individual issues to engage.
15. Investigate mutually beneficial partnership opportunities with key stakeholders in dual careers.
16. Support the establishment of a network of national contact points for dual career and wellbeing optimisation in football.
17. Engage with educational providers across Europe to establish a network of providers who will adopt a specific sporting dual career policy, offering access to supported education in a flexible manner to meet the needs of current players.
18. Consider options for inclusion of the promotion of dual careers within Professional club licencing.

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Appendix 1: Survey

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Name:	
Country:	
Football Association:	
Gender:	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Age:	
Please tick those that apply, are you an:	<input type="checkbox"/> Elite Performance Director <input type="checkbox"/> Head of Coach Education <input type="checkbox"/> Player Welfare Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Player Mental Health and Wellbeing Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Player Association / Union <input type="checkbox"/> Other ___please state.

Education

A dual career is defined as achieving on the national or international stage while maintaining or completing compulsory education with necessary grades to facilitate further study at further or higher education level.

Does your football association have a dual career strategy objective or target?	Yes / No
In your role, do you provide support to players to develop a dual career?	Yes / No
If yes, what support do you offer to a player?	
If yes to please provide an online link that you may share to players to what support is available	
Do you provide formal educational programmes (outside of coaching) to support the transition of players outside the game?	Yes / No
If yes, what formal educational programmes are available to support players transition outside the game?	
Of those programmes available have you referred a player to these?	Yes / No If yes how many?
Do you offer coach education programmes which are tailored and adopted to support players transition inside the game?	Yes / No
If yes please provide further details	
Players when leaving the game require support during this transition, what support is provided?	
Do you provide educational programmes to players at?	Initiation (10-14) yes / no If yes, Please provide a link or example

	<p>development (15-19) yes / no If yes, Please provide a link or example</p> <p>Mastery (20-29) yes / no If yes, Please provide a link or example</p> <p>Discontinuation (30+) yes / no If yes, Please provide a link or example</p>
Does your association offer scholarships to support players dual careers outside the game?	If yes, What scholarships are available to support a player's dual career?
What are the main barriers for a player when they are developing a dual career?	
How could these barriers be overcome?	
We are planning on developing case studies of best practice in supporting a player's dual career development. Can you provide examples that you have come across of what you consider to be good practice in supporting a players transition out of football?	

Health and Wellbeing

Do you provide players with an opportunity to learn about their mental health and wellbeing?	Yes / No
How do you do this?	
Do you direct players to mental health and wellbeing support?	Yes / No
What education programmes are available that support players welfare?	
What education programme are available to support coaches welfare?	
Who provides mental health and wellbeing welfare support and services to players?	
Have you used these services for players in your association?	
Can you estimate how many players have used these services?	

Policy/Strategies

Are you aware of the EU guidelines on supporting athlete dual careers?	Yes / No/ Unsure
Do you have a National Association strategy/policy to support:	
Player welfare	Yes / No
Player Mental health	Yes / No
Player education	Yes / No
Coach welfare	Yes / No
Coach mental health	Yes / No
Coach education	Yes / No
We are interested to know what is available to support player's welfare/mental health/education in associations. Please provide some details and weblinks if available?	
Can you provide recommendations on what you view to be required to support player dual careers and transition out of football	
Mental health and wellbeing of players is important during transition. Can you provide some suggestions to how players could be supported	

Holistic Athlete Career Model (Wylleman & Rosier, 2016)

A contemporary way to conceptualise the challenges athletes experience in their sporting and non-sporting development is via viewing the athlete as a 'whole person' rather than as an athlete only. According to the guidelines by the European Commission the Lifespan Model of Athletes' Career Transitions or more recently referred to as the Holistic Athlete Career Model provides a framework to interpret athlete development that includes psychosocial development.

<u>Are you aware of the above model</u>	<u>Yes/ No</u>
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The model suggest that an athlete develops in multiple domains concurrently with an emphasis not only being placed on athletic development (initiation, development, mastery, discontinuation) but on, vocational (primary, secondary, higher education, and professional occupation) psychological (childhood, adolescence and adulthood), psychosocial (Parents, siblings, coaches partners, family), and financially.

<u>In your association do you feel you are supporting player dual careers by adopting a holistic approach?</u>	<u>Yes/No</u>
<u>In your view does your association support a player's:</u>	
<u>Athletic development</u>	<u>Don't know (0). Strongly disagree (1), Disagree(2), Agree(3) Strongly Agree(4)</u>
<u>Vocational development</u>	<u>Don't know (0). Strongly disagree (1), Disagree(2), Agree(3) Strongly Agree(4)</u>
<u>Psychological development</u>	<u>Don't know (0). Strongly disagree (1), Disagree(2), Agree(3) Strongly Agree(4)</u>
<u>Psychosocial development</u>	<u>Don't know (0). Strongly disagree (1), Disagree(2), Agree(3) Strongly Agree(4)</u>
<u>Financial development</u>	<u>Don't know (0). Strongly disagree (1), Disagree(2), Agree(3) Strongly Agree(4)</u>
<u>Environmental development</u>	<u>Don't know (0). Strongly disagree (1), Disagree(2), Agree(3) Strongly Agree(4)</u>

<p><u>In your view does your football association have the structural capacity to support player dual careers (Planning of provision, infrastructure, and relationships with external organisations in the delivery)?</u></p>	<p><u>Don't know (0). Strongly disagree (1), Disagree(2), Agree(3) Strongly Agree(4)</u></p>
<p><u>In your view does your football association have the financial capacity to support player dual careers?</u></p>	<p><u>Don't know (0). Strongly disagree (1), Disagree(2), Agree(3) Strongly Agree(4)</u></p>
<p><u>In your view does your football association have the people/human resource to support player dual careers?</u></p>	<p><u>Don't know (0). Strongly disagree (1), Disagree(2), Agree(3) Strongly Agree(4)</u></p>
<p>If you have additional comments you would like to add regarding supporting players dual careers and wellbeing please provide them here.</p>	

Thank you for completing the survey

Appendix 2: interview Schedule

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Name:	
Country:	
Football Association:	
Gender:	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Age:	
What is your highest academic qualification?	
When did you transition out of football?	
What is your current job?	

A dual career is defined as achieving on the national or international stage while maintaining or completing compulsory education with necessary grades to facilitate further study at further or higher education level.

Questions:

1. Tell us about your experience of playing football and developing a career
2. What support did you receive during childhood, adolescence, adulthood whilst playing football?
3. Where did the support come from? (probe - Parents, siblings, coaches partner, family)
4. What formal educational programmes are available to support players transition outside the game?
5. Did you receive financial support?
6. Did your football association support you, and how did they do this?
7. What are the barriers to developing a dual career?
8. What advice would you give to the football associations for the future development of dual careers for players?
9. What advice would you give younger players?

Appendix 3: Consent form

Project Title: **Player transition out of football to protect wellbeing: a dual career identity study**

Chief Investigator: Dr Gavin Breslin

- | | Please Initial |
|--|----------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I confirm that I have been given and have read and understood the information sheet for the above study and have asked and received answers to any questions raised. | [] |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without my rights being affected in any way. | [] |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand that the researchers will hold all information and data collected securely and in confidence in line with GDPR and that all efforts will be made to ensure that I cannot be identified as a participant in the study (except as might be required by law) and I give permission for the researchers to hold relevant personal data. | [] |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I agree to take part in the above study. | [] |

Name of Subject	Signature	Date
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Name of researcher	Signature	Date
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Appendix 4: Participant Information Sheet

Study Title

Player transition out of football to protect wellbeing: a dual career identity study

You are being invited to take part in a research study funded by UEFA. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important that you understand what the research is for and what you will be asked to do. Please read the following information and do not hesitate to ask any questions about anything that might not be clear to you. Make sure that you are happy before you decide what to do. Thank you for taking the time to consider this invitation.

What is the purpose of the Study?

The aim, in line with UEFA funder requirements is to assess what support is in place across national associations of football in Europe to assist player's development of dual careers. Specifically, this includes what training courses (short or extended), scholarships, policies are available to players. Having established what is available in the associations a second aim is to identify the barriers to supporting a dual career. The findings will provide information on which recommendations can be provided to UEFA for the future support of players.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen for this study as you satisfy the admission criteria in terms of your position in the Football Association in your country.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this study. The key components of the study include completing a survey on what support is provided to athletes in supporting their dual careers. If you do decide to take part, you will be asked to provide consent by clicking a tab. Taking part is voluntary, and you can change your mind at any time and withdraw from the study without giving a reason.

What do I have to do?

As a participant of this study you will be asked to complete a survey online lasting 10 minutes on what support is in place to support dual careers in your football association.

Risk and/or disadvantages to taking part in this study:

There are no probable risks or disadvantages within this study.

Are there any possible benefits in taking part?

By taking part in this study you are potentially helping researchers identify how dual careers can be promoted in football across Europe.

What if new information becomes available?

If new information becomes available during the course of the study, you will be kept informed and any options or requests/requirements will be fully explained. New information could result in termination of the study, withdrawal of certain participants and/or modification of the study