



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Directorate-General for Education and Culture
Youth, Sport and Relation with the Citizen
Sport

Call for tenders N° DG EAC/33/03: <i>‘Call for tenders for four studies on education and sport’</i>	Lot 1
<i>Situation in Europe as regards the education of young sportsmen and sportswomen and their return to education and/or employment once their sporting careers have ended.</i>	PMP Consultancy, Guildford (GB), in partnership with the Institute of Sport and Leisure Policy (ISLP), Loughborough University (GB)

Summary

Secondary research covers all 25 European Union Member States. In addition, the UK, France, Germany and Poland were selected for supportive primary research. The aim of the study is to identify best practice and to provide an evidence base for policy recommendations. For the qualitative research, the study concentrated on seven sports: football, rugby, athletics, swimming, tennis, gymnastics and winter sports.

Sport provision during compulsory schooling: Over 90% of Member States reported positive measures in general education curriculum delivery to support the education of young sportspersons in compulsory education. Specialist sport schools are to be found in around 70% of Member States.

Post-compulsory education and sport: Around 60% of Member States have arrangements for their specialist sports schools to be linked to further education colleges, even if the sports school does not have academy status. Similarly, some further education institutions run specific programmes for élite athletes, in recognition of their requirements to combine training and education.

Professional and semi-professional sport: Approximately 60% of the Member States have specialised professional academies for élite sportspersons. These academies are typically sport specific, the most common of which are football and rugby, and enable programmes to be tailored for both the athletes’ educational and sporting needs.

Higher education and sport: Over 90% of Member States provide positive measures of support. Many universities have specific policies or programmes in place to facilitate entry requirements for élite sportspersons.

Vocational support and lifestyle management support: Over 70% of Member States now have policies or programmes in place to support athletes during their career and help them to prepare for, and secure, employment after their sporting careers have ended.

Achieving a balance between education and sport: Several findings have emerged from the research. The physical demands of elite sport can be very punishing and have a significant effect on an athlete's ability to achieve a balance.

Athlete support: Our research confirmed that it is rarely possible to combine education and sport successfully without some level of flexibility in educational programmes. Our findings were that a greater understanding of the demands an elite athlete faces (and therefore understanding of why an elite athlete needs flexibility) is required within the education sector.