



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



ENDURANCE: Entrepreneurial Capacity-building for Sport

Recommendations and Success/Failure Factors (SFFs) in linking Sports and Entrepreneurship for sustainable careers (ENDURANCE IO2T2 Output)

List of Recommendations and SFFs

Introduction

This document collects and summarizes the inputs from ENDURANCE project partners, who based on their analyses, production of IO2 outputs and expert insights from their respective countries, suggested the recommendations and critical factors for a smooth link between sports and entrepreneurship. It has been prepared as a part of the outputs within the ENDURANCE Intellectual Output 2, Task 1 “Establish correlations and overlaps between sports and entrepreneurship”. The main aim of this document is to highlight the factors playing a crucial role in creating a favourable context for a smooth link between sports and entrepreneurship to boost and advance entrepreneurial spirit and promote entrepreneurial pathways for the sports community, as well as the impediments of such interlink. The factors have been identified across multiple perspectives, and they have been organized into two main domains: individual domain of a sports person, and domain of support and encouragement initiatives (on various levels) from the perspective of their design and development. These findings represent one of the contributions of ENDURANCE to the debate on exploiting the synergies between sports and entrepreneurship for the benefit of individuals as well as entire communities, and also inform the next stages of the project.

Disclaimer

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

ENDURANCE LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

ENDURANCE partners have proposed the following **recommendations** to facilitate interlinks between sports and entrepreneurship for sustainable careers:

Recommendations for the support and encouragement initiatives

- Entrepreneurship support initiatives towards the sports community shall not be focused on athletes exclusively, but they should also cover other sports-related targets, such as various professionals in the sports-related fields, amateur athletes etc.
- All information, instructions, practical examples and training materials should be targeted towards the specific sports-related target groups.
- All information and instructions required to set up an enterprise within the sports domain should be made available through a single, easy-to-access “one-stop-shop” resource (e.g. website).
- Public awareness on the interlink between sports and entrepreneurship should be systematically increased, and success stories shall be highlighted.
- Besides the “traditional” sports entrepreneurship pathways, e.g. from an athlete to a coach or a club owner”, the entrepreneurial potential of the sports community should be also directed towards activities that are more innovative and generate higher added value.
- Support initiatives shall navigate athletes and other sports individuals towards domains that offer favourable career prospects, such as the IT sector.
- Sports entrepreneurship shall be emphasized as an opportunity to gain economic self-sufficiency by doing something a person enjoys. There are plenty of examples of sports people setting up enterprises within their sports domains.
- Sports entrepreneurship also connects with creating a social impact. There are examples of numerous projects generating a social impact in the fields such as social inclusion, awareness building, or community engagement and activation.
- Practical entrepreneurship education is needed at all educational institutions providing education and training related to sports.
- Also, entrepreneurship training provision and/or promotion shall be included in activities of sports organizations, associations, player organizations, etc.
- Design and development of training materials should benefit from the availability of existing official EU frameworks, such as the EntreComp or the DigiComp.
- Design and development of training materials shall take into consideration that a considerable part of the potential target group might not have a formal education background in business or management, and thus they might lack in business literacy.
- Entrepreneurship training shall be as content-inclusive as possible and take into consideration “a bit” of every function to provide learners a comprehensive overview of all different business’ dimensions.
- Entrepreneurship education and training shall emphasize the context that is most familiar for the specific target groups, e.g. their athletic discipline/sports sector.
- Entrepreneurship training materials shall stick to the “smart and simple” principle, both in terms of outlining the training structure and the actual outcomes. Where needed, links to additional resources shall be provided in the case targets wish to deepen their knowledge about some specific content.

Recommendations towards the individual domain of sports persons

- Athletes and sports professionals shall be encouraged to reinvest their technical knowledge within the (typically sports-related) sector/industry they know the most and are more familiar with, and to leverage on concrete experiences they had in developing an entrepreneurial opportunity.
- Athletes have to take advantage of the educational opportunities available during their years as students, including opportunities to develop their entrepreneurial skills and business literacy. They need to pay attention to training and prioritize learning.
- Sports individuals can use the qualities learned from sports, like discipline, goal orientation, perseverance, or persistence, and apply them towards their future careers as entrepreneurs.
- Athletes must strap themselves with a lot of patience, success will not come overnight. Also, as entrepreneurs, athletes will have to embrace the mentality of daily training, stay focused on the journey, and maintain consistency. They should demonstrate studious commitment to their projects.
- Athletes shall maintain their failure coping abilities, as well as an ability to reflect on their own successes and failures and learn from them.
- Alike in sports, success is a team effort also in entrepreneurship. Thus, teamwork and valuing the opinions and ideas of others need to be maintained.
- Throughout their careers, athletes and sports professionals should keep their openness to new ideas that can yield potential connections between sports and entrepreneurship.
- Athletes and sports professionals should maintain their social networks and use the networks established during their sports career also in their entrepreneurial endeavour. Thus, they need to remain communicative in connecting all involved.
- When starting an enterprise, athletes and sports professionals will generally benefit from finding a reliable business partner or gaining support from experienced entrepreneurs and mentors.
- Also, looking for support and assistance from a local business support organization is encouraged, especially in the preliminary stage of creating a business.

ENDURANCE LIST OF SUCCESS FACTORS

ENDURANCE partners have identified the following **success factors** that foster links between sports and entrepreneurship:

Success factors within the support and encouragement initiatives

- Availability of dual-career initiatives aimed at athletes.
- Efficient outreach of support and encouragement initiatives towards the target groups,
- Initiatives are designed to satisfy the specific needs of the particular target group (e.g. young athletes in education, athletes approaching towards the end of the active career, sports professionals, etc.).
- Initiatives use role models to both inspire participants' mindset and make them familiar with the very practical implications of starting a business.
- Involvement of a diverse cohort of stakeholders in sports entrepreneurship support initiatives (i.e. policy makers, media and press, private sector's representatives) to enlarge the impact of positive outcomes.

- Clear legislative framework (either generic or specialized) setting the rules of the game for sports entrepreneurship.
- Supportive family environment. Support from the closest ones, i.e. family and friends.
- Stimulating and encouraging work environment.

Success factors within the individual domain

- Finding another passion already before the active sports career ends. Taking advantage of traveling and meeting new people, maintaining open mind and finding new interests that afterward can turn into passion.
- Maintaining the thick skin along with a “never quit” mentality to overcome the difficulties of the entrepreneurial world. Tolerance to frustration and uncertainty.
- Individual discipline and perseverance adopted through a sports career.
- Handling failure as a learning experience that allows reassessment and feedback, improving the future success prospects.
- Self-confidence and trust in one’s business idea, courage to follow one’s path.
- Participation in entrepreneurship training, acquisition of entrepreneurial skills, and business literacy.
- Use of networks and community engagement in developing own entrepreneurial project.

ENDURANCE LIST OF FAILURE FACTORS

ENDURANCE partners have identified the following **failure factors** acting as impediments of connections and transitions between sports and entrepreneurship:

Failure factors within the support and encouragement initiatives

- The topic of sports entrepreneurship and dual career for athletes is not mainstreamed, and there are few entities focused specifically on these domains, as well as few sports entities that include these domains in their scope of activities.
- Available training and education materials for the sports community on entrepreneurship (if any) are too generic and technical, and they lack focus on sports context.
- There is little attention paid to digital skills in the existing entrepreneurship training programs.
- Low engagement of citizens in amateur sports that leads to a decrease of not only the positive health and social impacts of sports, but also of the sports entrepreneurship potential.
- Missing support schemes and instruments for new entrepreneurs.
- High bureaucratic and administrative burden related to starting and especially running a business.

Failure factors within the individual domain

- Athletes and sports professionals don’t take advantage of the educational opportunities. While it is difficult to focus on both fronts, education is much needed in the post-sports career.
- Athletes and sports professionals exhibit attributes decreasing their entrepreneurial potential, such as fear of failure or low alertness to business opportunities.
- Low quality of individual business ideas and failing to follow the “fail fast strategy”.