

## Swedish university student-athletes' dual career scenarios and competences

Lukas Linnér<sup>a</sup>, Natalia B. Stambulova<sup>a</sup>, Kent Lindahl<sup>b</sup>, & Paul Wylleman<sup>cd</sup>

<sup>a</sup>School of Health and Welfare, Halmstad University, Sweden

<sup>b</sup>Swedish Sport Confederation, Stockholm, Sweden

<sup>c</sup>Faculty of Physical Education and Physiotherapy, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium

<sup>d</sup>Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium

### Abstract

The paper presents the Swedish data on university student-athletes' dual career (DC) competences and coping, from the European project 'Gold in Education and Elite Sport' (GEES). A cross-sectional quantitative design was implemented with the objectives to explore: (1) the student-athletes' perceived need to develop DC competences in order to successfully combine sport and study, (2) if the student-athletes experienced and how they coped with specific DC scenarios, and (3) what DC competences the student-athletes prioritized in coping with specific DC scenarios and how possession of prioritized DC competences could explain their scenario-specific coping. Seventy-one university student-athletes with a mean age of 25.21 completed the DC competence survey developed within GEES. The student-athletes reported their perception of importance and possession of 38 DC competences (e.g., cope with stress, prioritizing), as well as coping with seven DC scenarios (e.g., miss significant days of study), and selected the five most important competences (from the list of 38) to cope with each scenario. The results showed that the student-athletes: (a) perceived a strong need to develop DC competences to successfully combine sport and studies; (b) had experienced and coped average-to-good with the DC scenarios; and (c) that their possession of prioritized DC competences aided their coping in five of seven scenarios. The study supports previous research on the important role of competences (i.e., personal resources) in student-athletes' DC development and contributes to deeper understanding of Swedish university student-athletes DC experiences, supporting the development of Swedish national DC guidelines.

**Key words:** competences; coping; dual career; scenarios; student-athlete; university