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EUROPEAN OLYMPIC ACADEMIES

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3.2 /// EMPLOYS

Erasmus+ project on athletes' employment relations



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The concept of the EMPLOYS project is to understand the diverse socio-political landscape of athlete employment relations, evaluate current practices, and formulate concrete policy recommendations for key stakeholders to improve athlete employment relations.

EMPLOYS receives funding from the EU Erasmus+ programme under the lead of the German Sport University Cologne. The project partners include five academic institutions: German Sport University Cologne (GER), University of Rijeka (CRO), Universidade Europeia (POR), Edge Hill University (GBR) and the Institute for Sport Governance (POL). The European Olympic Academies and EU Athletes are partners for stakeholder involvement.

In 2021, the project team conducted a comprehensive and pioneering comparative analysis on the current situation of employment relations of athletes in the 27 EU countries plus the UK and Norway. On 22nd October 2021, the first Multiplier Sport Event of EMPLOYS took place in Cologne, Germany. The objectives of this first public conference were to present the preliminary study findings and discuss them with the participation of athlete representatives and transnational stakehold-

ers. Delegates from a variety of organisations were present, including the EOC, IOC, EU Athletes, Athletes Germany, German Olympic Sports Confederation and non-sport organisations such as the International Labour Organization, the Council of Europe, the German Government and the German Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Sport in Luxembourg and several European universities.



FIRST MULTIPLIER SPORT EVENT IN COLOGNE

Project leader Prof. Juergen Mittag (German Sport University Cologne) praised the abundance of data that the national experts had compiled so far. Thus, it was possible to obtain data for 29 European countries on national sports systems, the legal status of Olympic athletes and the roles of key actors in connection with athletes. Other topics such as sponsorship, health, safety, participation and bargaining are assessed in the study, which is available on the project website.

The numerous statements from the participants and subsequent debates reflected the diverse and unique context of each European country. A consensus emerged on the relevance of this study, which was stressed by athletes, sport governing bodies and political



SECOND MULTIPLIER SPORT EVENT OF EMPLOYS IN LISBON

stakeholders.

The second conference on 17th December in Lisbon gave the project team another opportunity to share the results of their study with stakeholders. Delegates from key sports organisations in Portugal, European athlete representatives and sports lawyers all commented on the findings in two panels, one with a special focus on the Portuguese context and the other from a comparative perspective of Western and Southern European countries.

In 2022, the project will move on to the next phase which will focus on the question of

good governance. There will be four additional conferences to further discuss what constitutes good governance in athlete employment relations and to foster mutual learning by bringing together key stakeholders from different levels of sports governance and public administration. The project will then culminate in a final report proposing recommendations for policy changes to improve good governance in athlete employment relations in Olympic sports in Europe.



/// Visit the website

