

## DUAL CAREERS FOR ALPINE SKI RACERS



Athletes face multiple challenges in combining their sport with education or employment. For a long time, in skiing – a grassroots sport for mountain areas - the problem of Dual Careers did not exist: it was natural (and often the only way to go) for athletes to transition from racing to teaching skiing or to other ski-related activities. This cycle greatly benefitted the social and economic development of the ski areas. However, in recent years, ski clubs have been experiencing early racing abandonment. Torn between school obligations, family pressure, training and competing, many talented athletes ultimately decide to abandon competitive. If un-responded, this phenomena will become a real challenge for the European Alpine/mountain economies and societies.

The project aims to: 1. Understand the needs and the challenges faced by athletes, families and educators in ski racing. 2 Research specific transferable talents that ski racers gain. 3. Map the specific long term health benefits that athletes gain for alpine ski racing. 4. Show the link between ski racing and a sustainable economic and social development of the mountain areas. 5. Learn from the experience of top US Ski Academies and collegiate ski racing; 6. Propose European-wide policy solutions to promote Dual Careers in Alpine Ski Racing.

In sum, the project aims to show cultural, educational and work environments supporting dual careers in alpine ski racing is not only beneficial for the athletes in many different ways - from long term health benefits, to talents that can be transferred to the education and subsequently professional life -but also for the sustainable economic and social development of the mountain areas where Ski Clubs operates. The project therefore aims to advocate for the development of European best practices in the field of dual careers for Alpine ski racers like for instance the creation of European Ski Academies and the creation of European collegiate Alpine ski teams and racing.

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