



The career and economy of national team athletes in Finland

Findings from the athlete survey 2020

FINNISH CONGRESS ON SPORT SCIENCES 2021 THEME
SESSION: ELITE ATHLETE'S STATUS AND RIGHTS



TOPICS

1. RESEARCH BACKGROUND
2. PERCEPTIONS OF PROFESSIONALISM
3. TYPES AND SHARES OF INCOMES
4. PERCEPTIONS OF FINANCIAL SITUATION
5. DUAL CAREER
6. INTERNATIONAL LEVEL REQUIREMENTS
7. CONCLUSION

Background



- + The survey was targeted to all athletes (16+ year) at the national team level.
- + A questionnaire was sent to 3,752 athletes, which covers the whole population.
- + 782 responses (21%)
- + Questionnaire covers wide range of athletes' activities: training and preparation for competition, satisfaction with their own competitive performance and support structures, athlete's everyday life, finances, study, work, dual career, athlete career paths, sport choices, turning points and future.
- + Research team
 - + Jarmo Mäkinen, YTT, senior researcher, KIHU, (PI)
 - + Kaisu Mononen, LitT, senior researcher, KIHU
 - + Minna Blomqvist, LitT, senior expert, KIHU
 - + Sanna Pusa, LitM, project researcher, KIHU
 - + Sami Kokko, TtT, associate professor, University of Jyväskylä
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 - + Sami Kalaja, LitT, professor of practise, EduFutura



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URHEILIJAKYSELY 2020 – Aikuiset maajoukkueurheilijat

Sanna Pusa, Jarmo Mäkinen, Kaisu Mononen ja Minna Blomqvist



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URHEILIJAKYSELY 2020 – Nuoret maajoukkueurheilijat

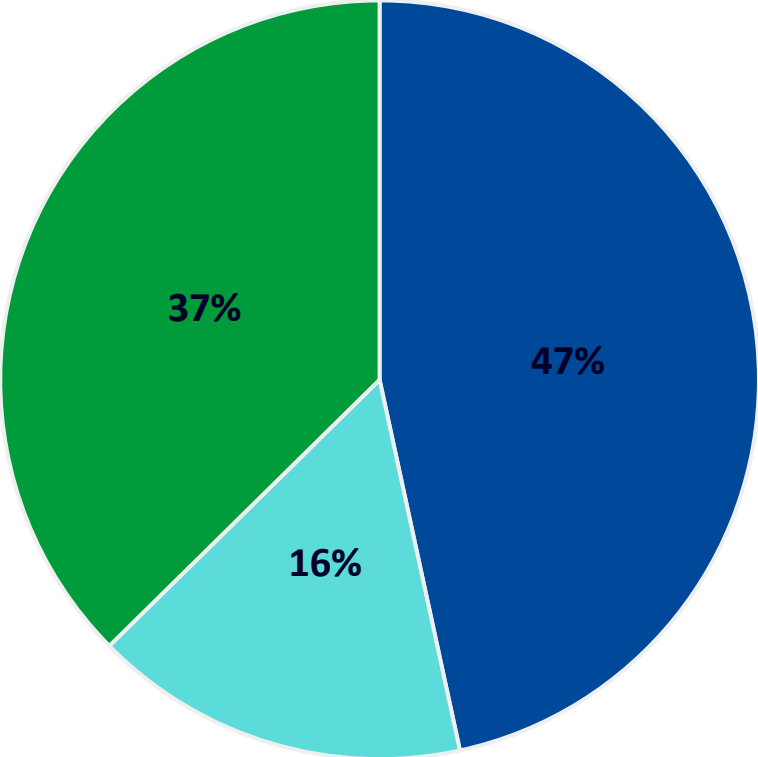
Kaisu Mononen, Minna Blomqvist, Sanna Pusa, Jarmo Mäkinen



YOUTH (16-20 years,
n=412) **AND**
ADULTS (20+ years,
n=368)
**TWO SUBGROUPS –
TWO REPORTS**

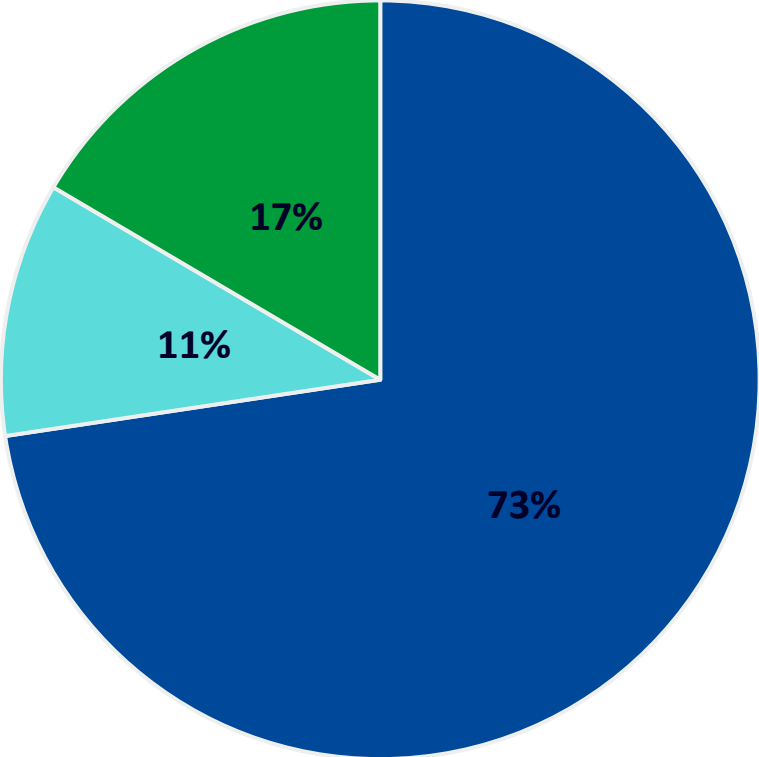
Sports groups represented in the respondents

Youth (n=412)



■ Individual ■ Team ■ Team ball

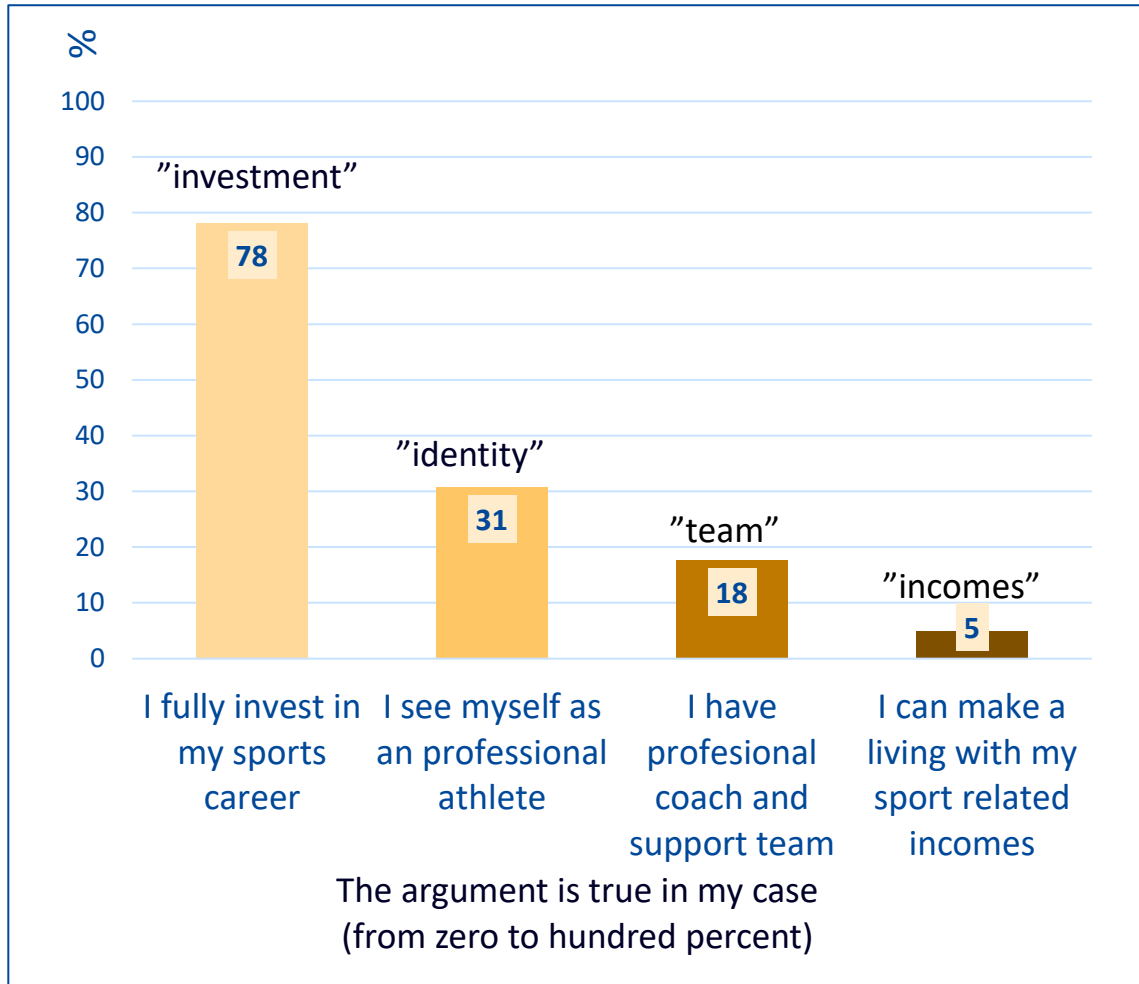
Adults (n=369)



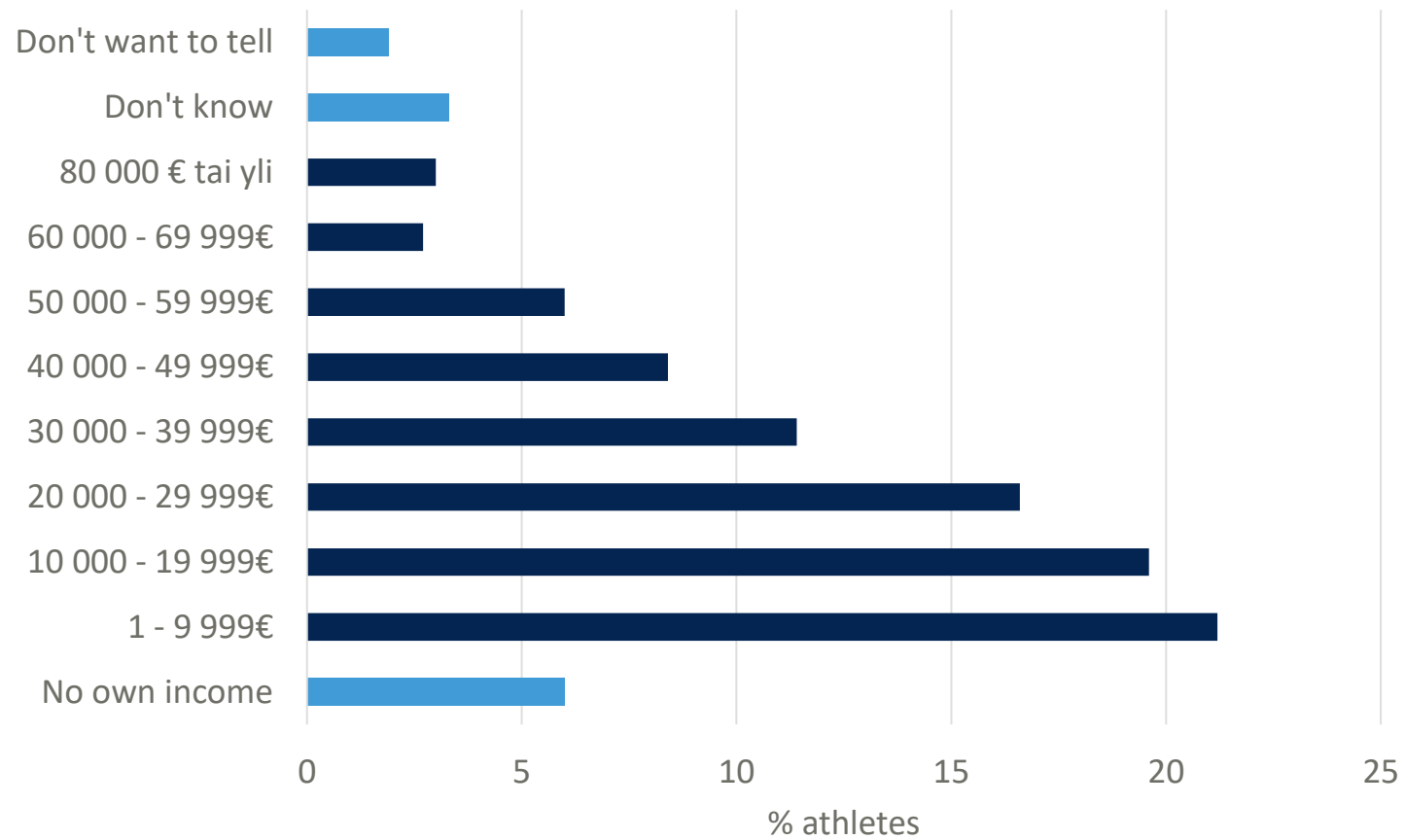
■ Individual ■ Team ■ Team ball



The level of professionalism



Adults: Gross annual income

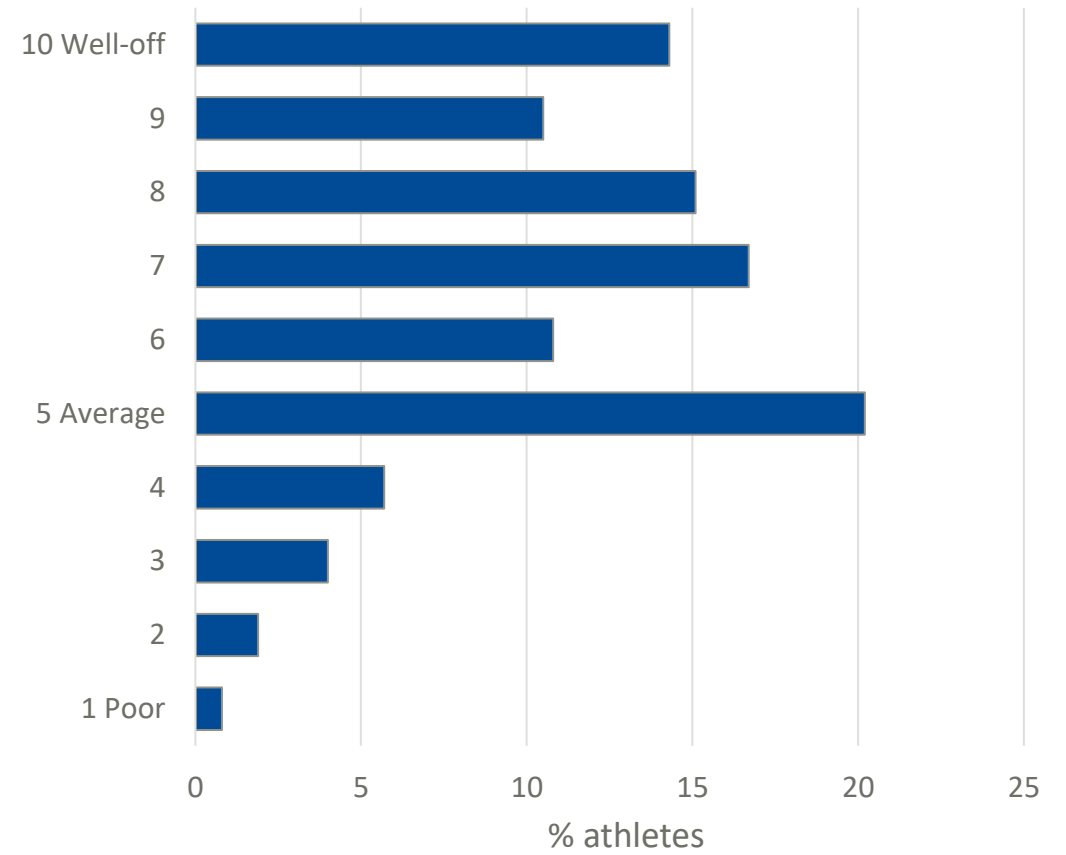


Types and shares of income

TYPES OF INCOME	YOUTH		ADULTS	
1 Sports income	3 %	s	6 %	s
2 Ministry athlete grants	1 %	p	6 %	p
3 Parental support for sports	43 %	o	4 %	o
4 Competition prizes	2 %	r	3 %	r
5 Sponsor incomes	7 %	t	7 %	t
6 Other sport incomes	4 %	61 %	2 %	28 %
7 Work (non-sport) salary	15 %		61 %	
8 Study grants	10 %		6 %	
9 Parental support for other	13 %		2 %	
10 Other incomes	2 %	39 %	2 %	72 %
TOTAL	100 %		100 %	

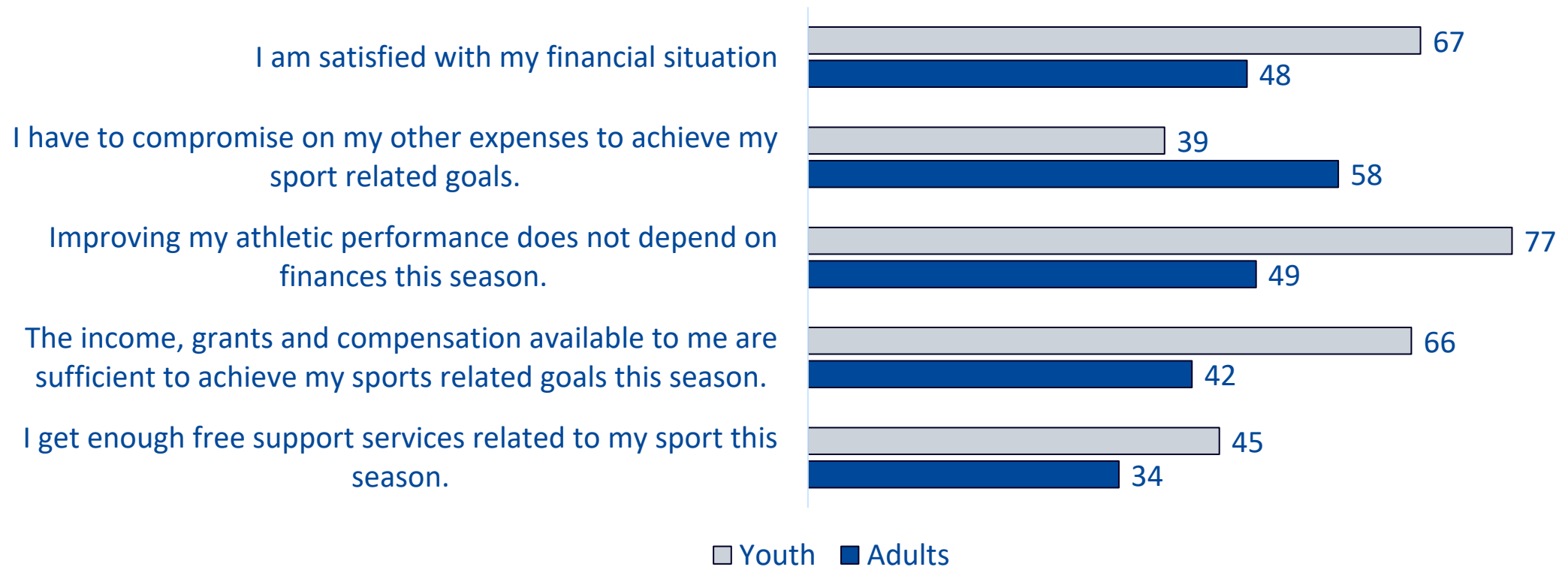


Youth: Household income level 2019

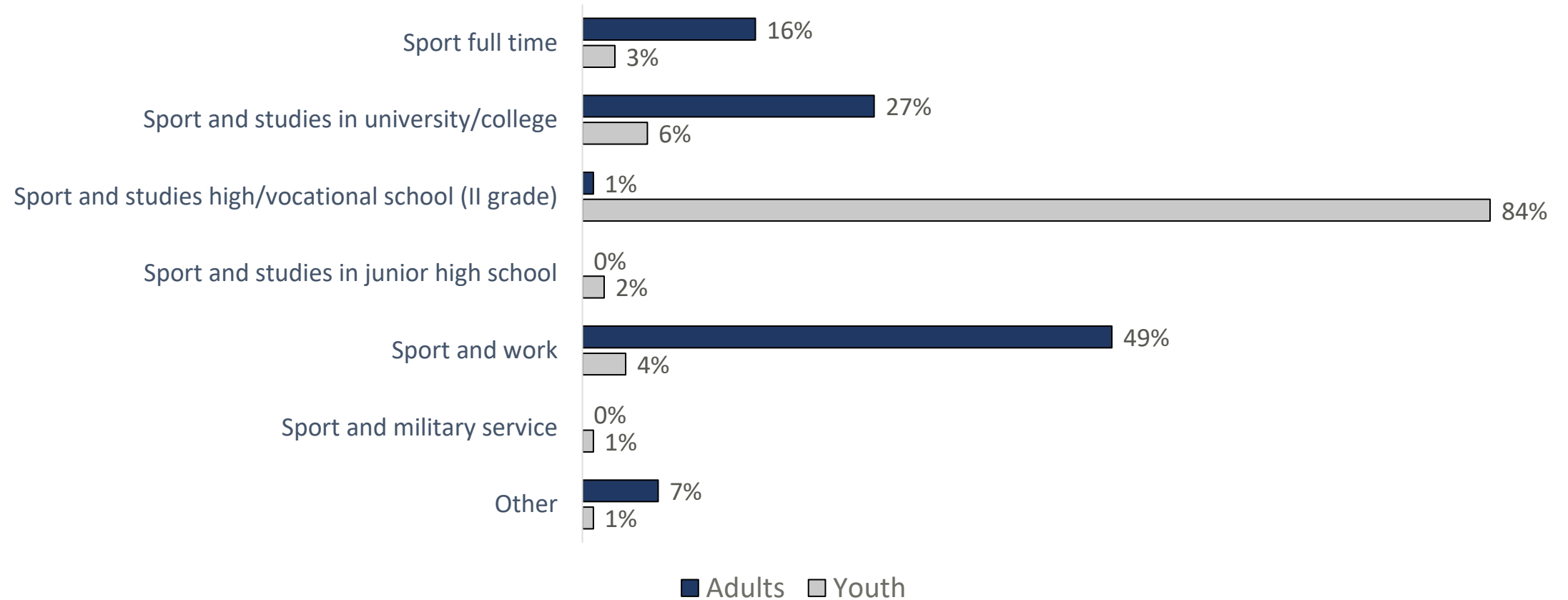


Financial claims

% agree with following claims

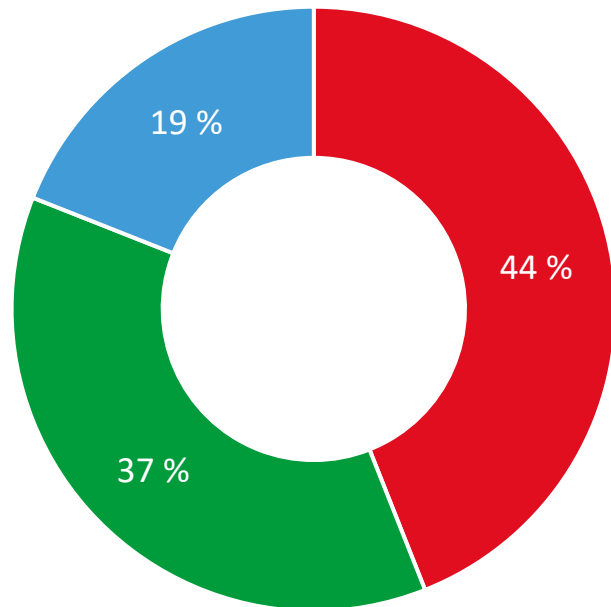


Dual career



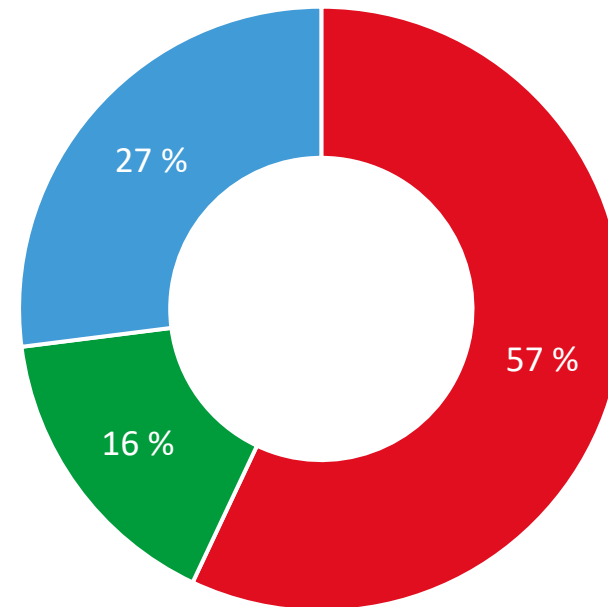
Are there factors that prevents you from reaching the international level as an athlete?

Adults (n=369)



■ No ■ Yes ■ Don't know

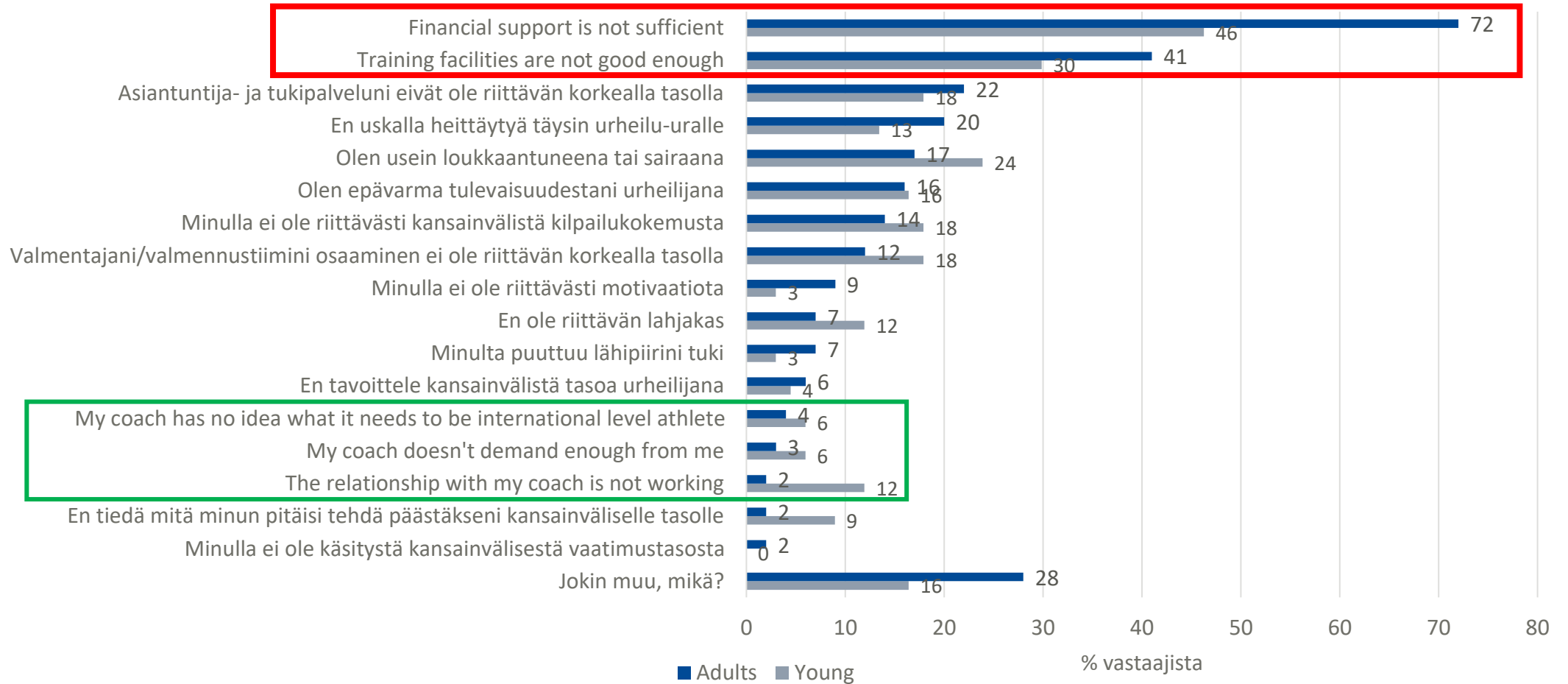
Youth (n=409)



■ No ■ Yes ■ Don't know



Factors preventing reach international level requirements



RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

- + The survey was targeted to 3,752 national team athletes, 782 athletes responded to the survey.
- + The major part of the adult athletes invest 100% in their sports careers, but only a small proportion can live on income from sports alone.
- + The estimated average income of adult athletes was 27 405 euros. Other than sport related work consisted for 61 percent of their total income. Only 16 per cent of the respondents received wage income from sports.
- + Parental financial support is most significant form of income for young athletes
- + 92 per cent of young athletes (16–20 years old) and 28 per cent of adults study. Despite the challenges posed by dual careers, the experience of exhaustion is quite rare in athletes
- + The most common sport-related main goal for athletes was to win or medal at the Olympics or World Championships. However, nearly 40% of young athletes and 16% of young people felt that there were factors in their careers that hindered or prevented them from reaching the international top. The most mentioned factors were insufficient financial support or inadequate training conditions.

