Evaluate the direct access to Superior Education Institutions of the top athletes in Portugal



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The problem



In the last 16 years top Portuguese athletes have been granted some special rights. One of them was to have direct access to superior education institutions without being evaluated by grades as all other students. The normal students complained about this special right and the government considered revising or even eliminating this right

The trigger

"4ª Policy:
"The current policies of special access to Superior Education will be reviewed and remodeled whose exceptionally tends to be seen today as a source of injustices without enough justification, especially when it leads to the exclusion of students of merit and high qualifications, who are neglected in face of special groups, who in certain cases, don't even have the minimum admission requirements."



Intervention of the Science, Technology and Superior Education Minister, in the National Republic Assembly, 16 of June of 2006

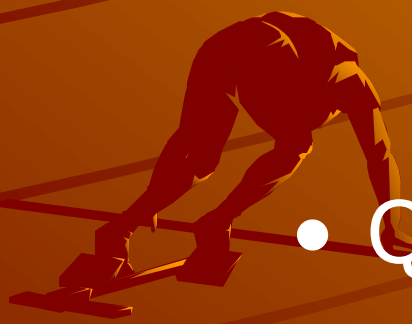
The question



Should the top Portuguese Athletes continue to have this right? If yes, under which conditions?

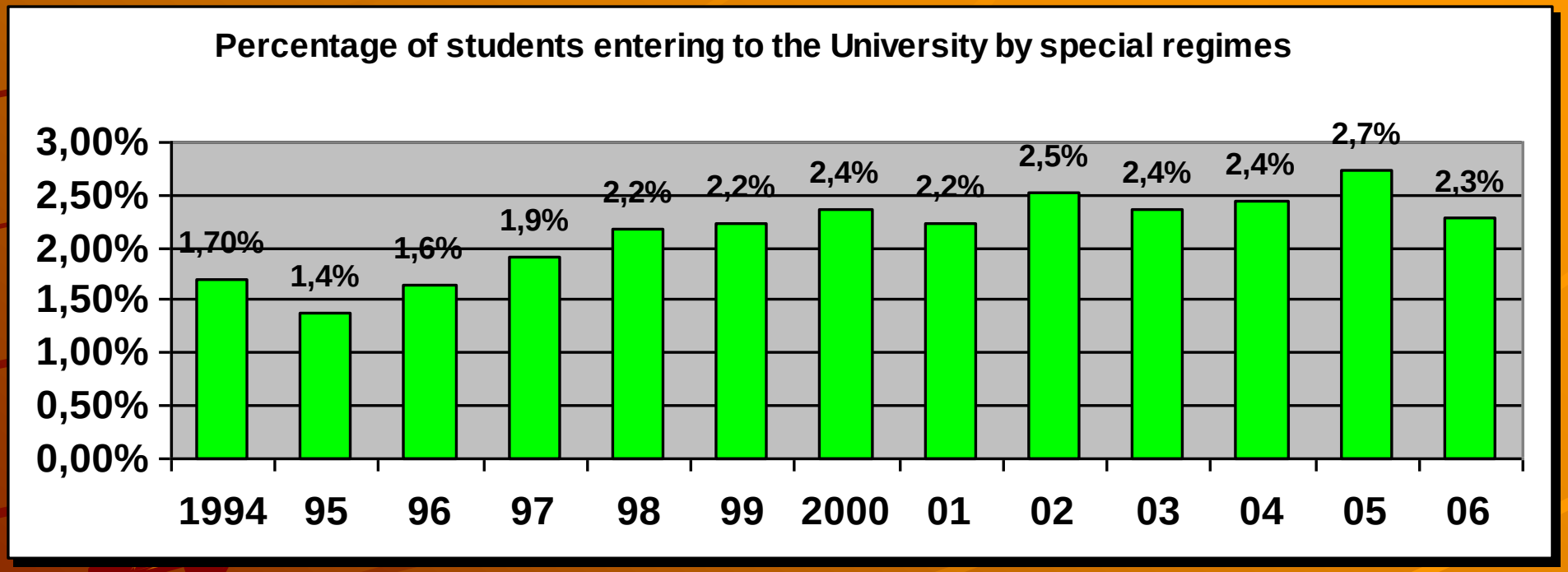
The methodology:

- Literature review
  - Two former studies in Portugal
  - Comparision with other countries (Spain, Netherlands, EUA, Canada)
  - Studies at the European Level
  - Media Position



- Qualitative Analysis
  - Interviews and questionnaires were made to all the stakeholders
- Quantitative Study

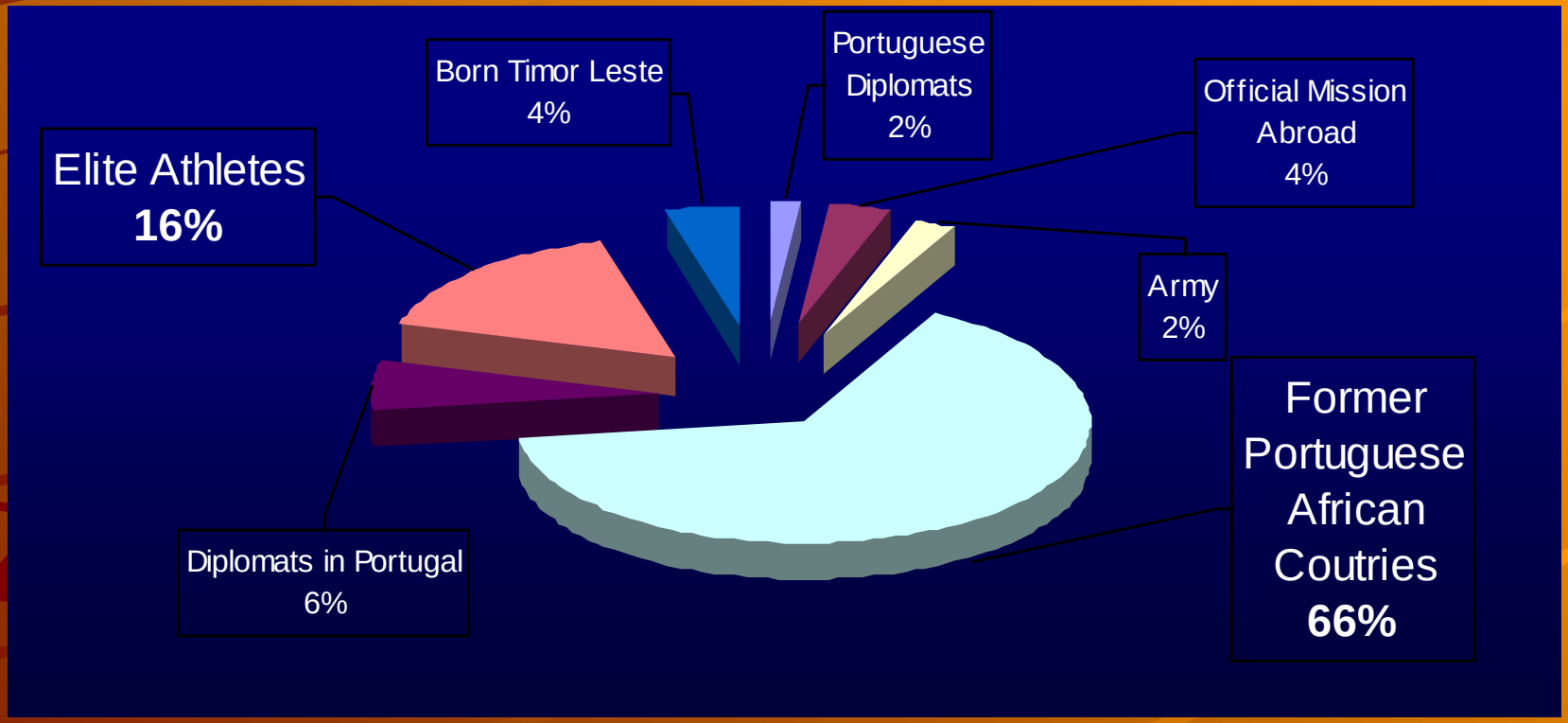
Quantitative Study



In average only **2,15%** of the students entering into the university every year do it because of this special regimes

Quantitative Study

In Portugal there are **7 different special regimes** let allows the students enter the university without being evaluated by grades as all other students



In average 2/3 (66%) of this special students are Former Portuguese African Countries and only **16%** are effectively **Top Elite Athletes**

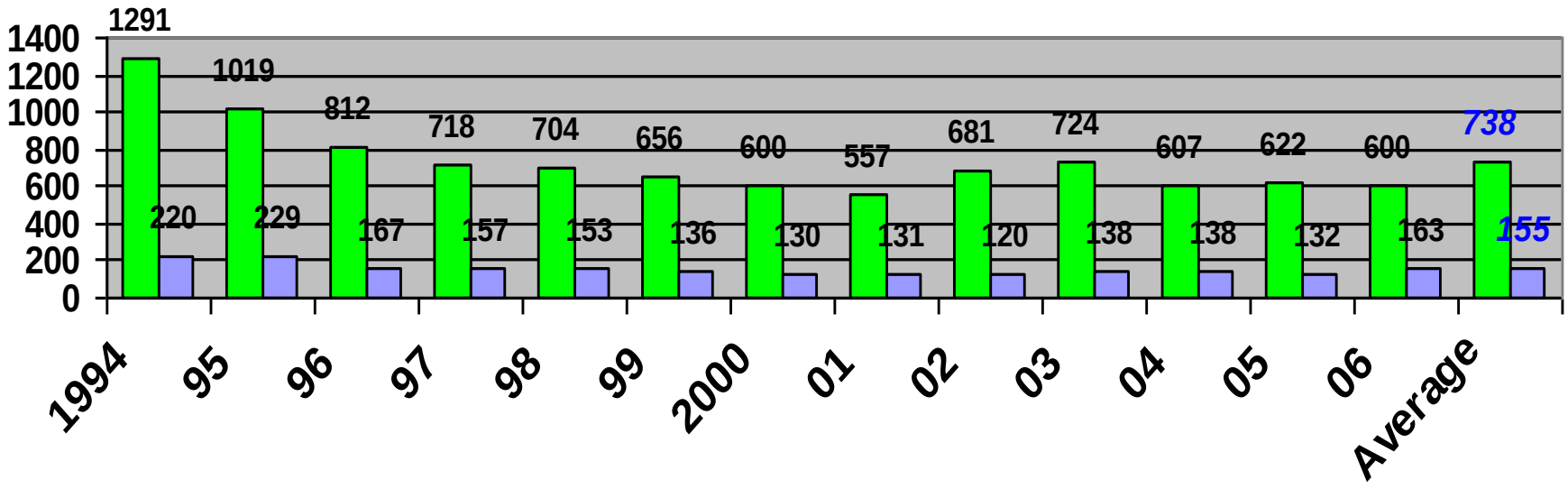
Quantitative Study



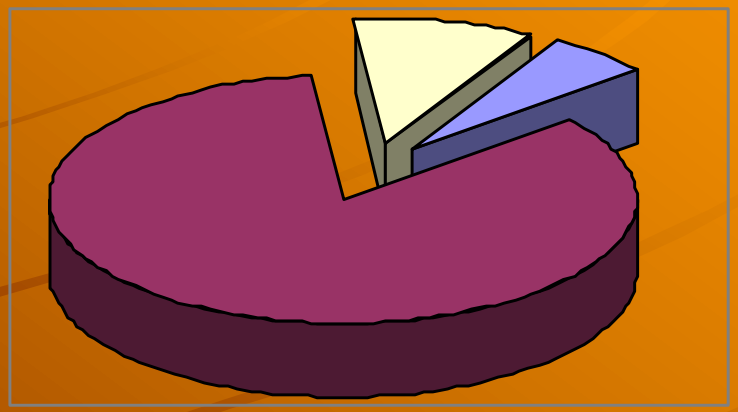
In one sentence we can say that in average from the **41.257** students entering into the university every year, **898** do it because of this special regimes and only **149** of them are Top Elite Athletes.

In fact only **0,36%** of the total.

Quantitative Study



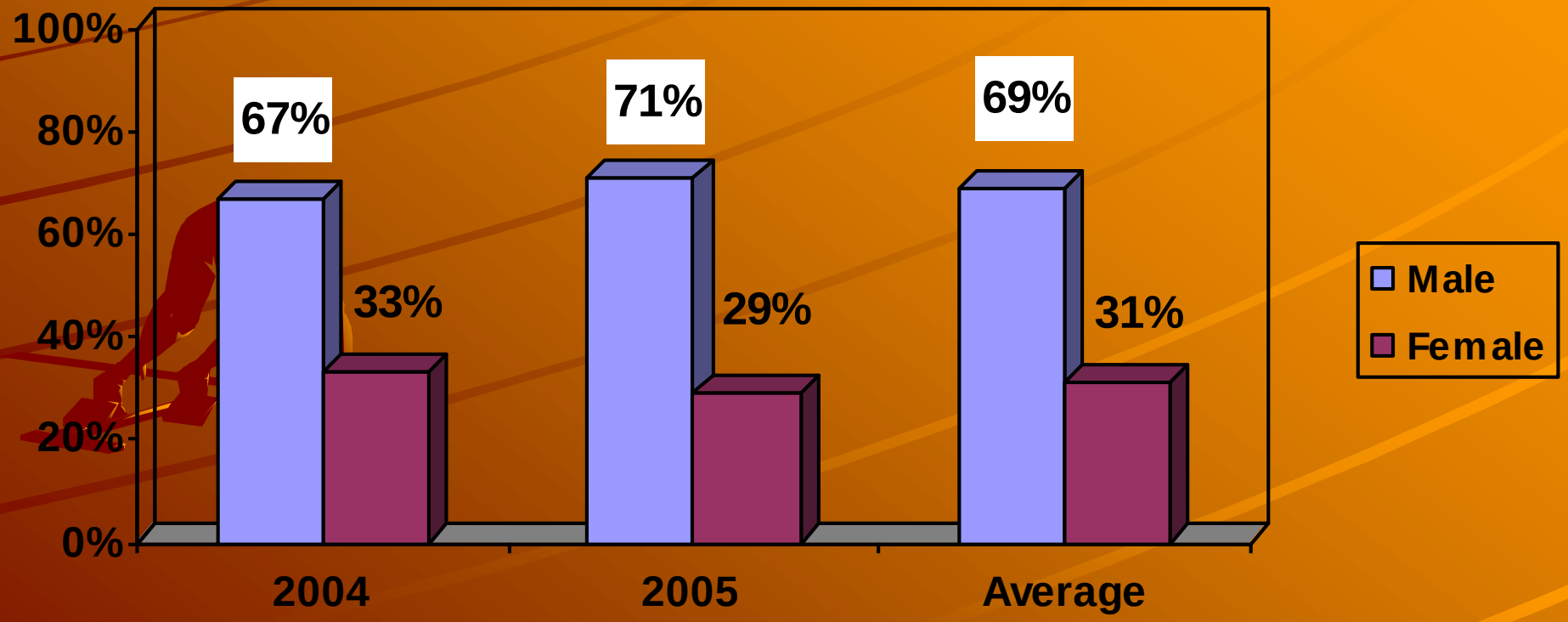
Quantitative Study





Although the percentage of the annual athletes asking for the special regime is 21%, based on the total number of TLA in fact, more than 90% of the Top Level Athletes use this special regime to enter a superior education institution.

Quantitative Study - Gender



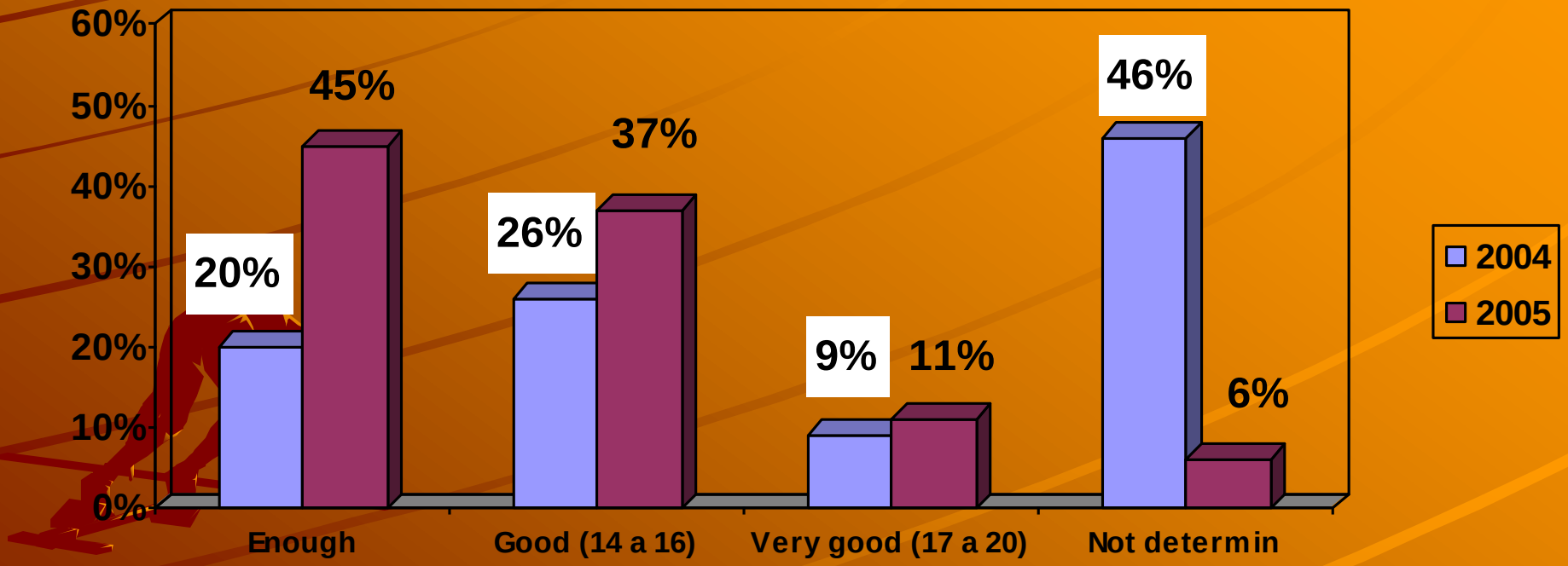
Quantitative Study - Age

	Years			
	2004		2005	
Age	Nº	%	Nº	%
17	12	8,7%	10	7,7%
18	**62**	**44,9%**	**52**	**40,0%**
19	**34**	**24,6%**	**40**	**30,8%**
20	17	12,3%	7	5,4%
21	3	2,2%	8	6,2%
22	2	1,4%	4	3,1%
23	2	1,4%	3	2,3%
24	1	0,7%	1	0,8%
25	3	2,2%	1	0,8%
26	2	1,4%	2	1,5%
27			1	0,8%
28				
29			1	0,8%



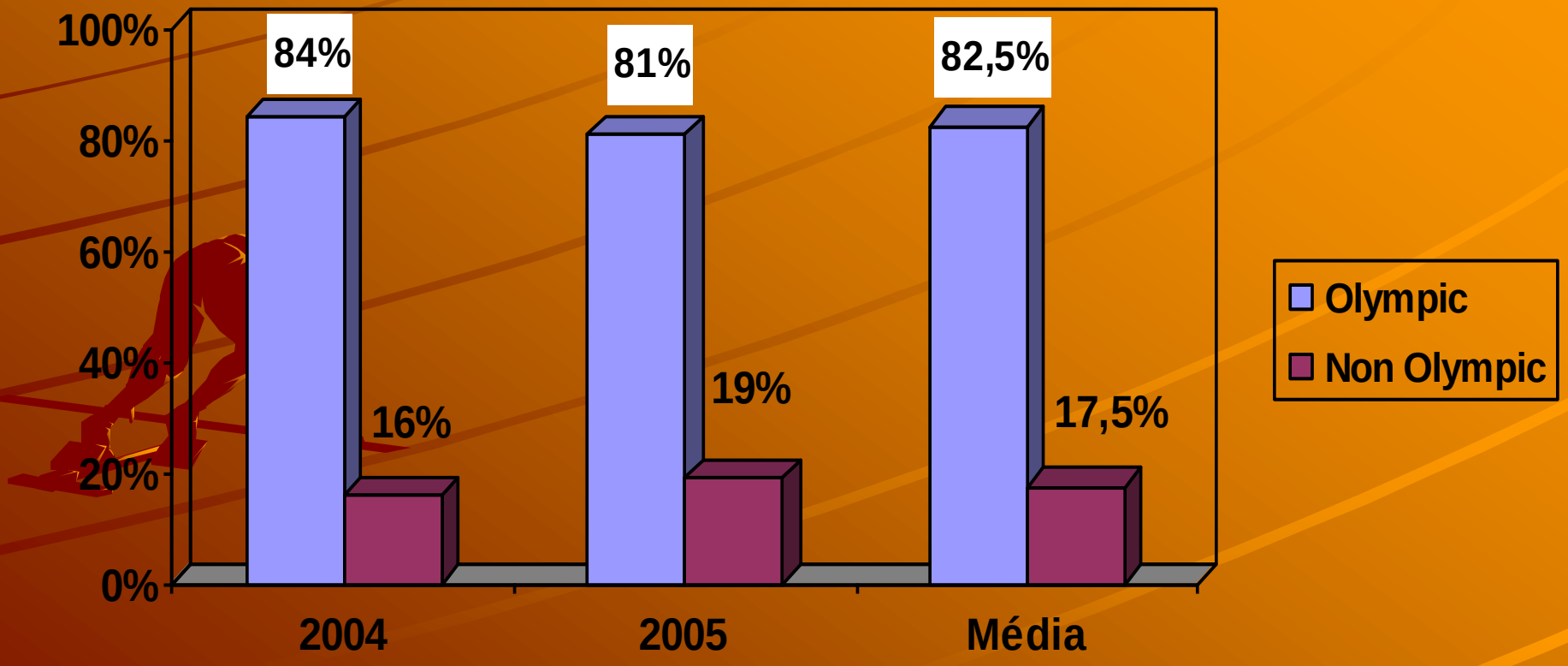
More than 70% of these young athletes have 18 or 19 years age, precisely the traditional age for students to enter the superior education institutions

Quantitative Study - Grades



Despite the high demanding sport preparations and daily training, half of these athletes are students with entering grades of “Good” and “Very Good”

Quantitative Study - Sport



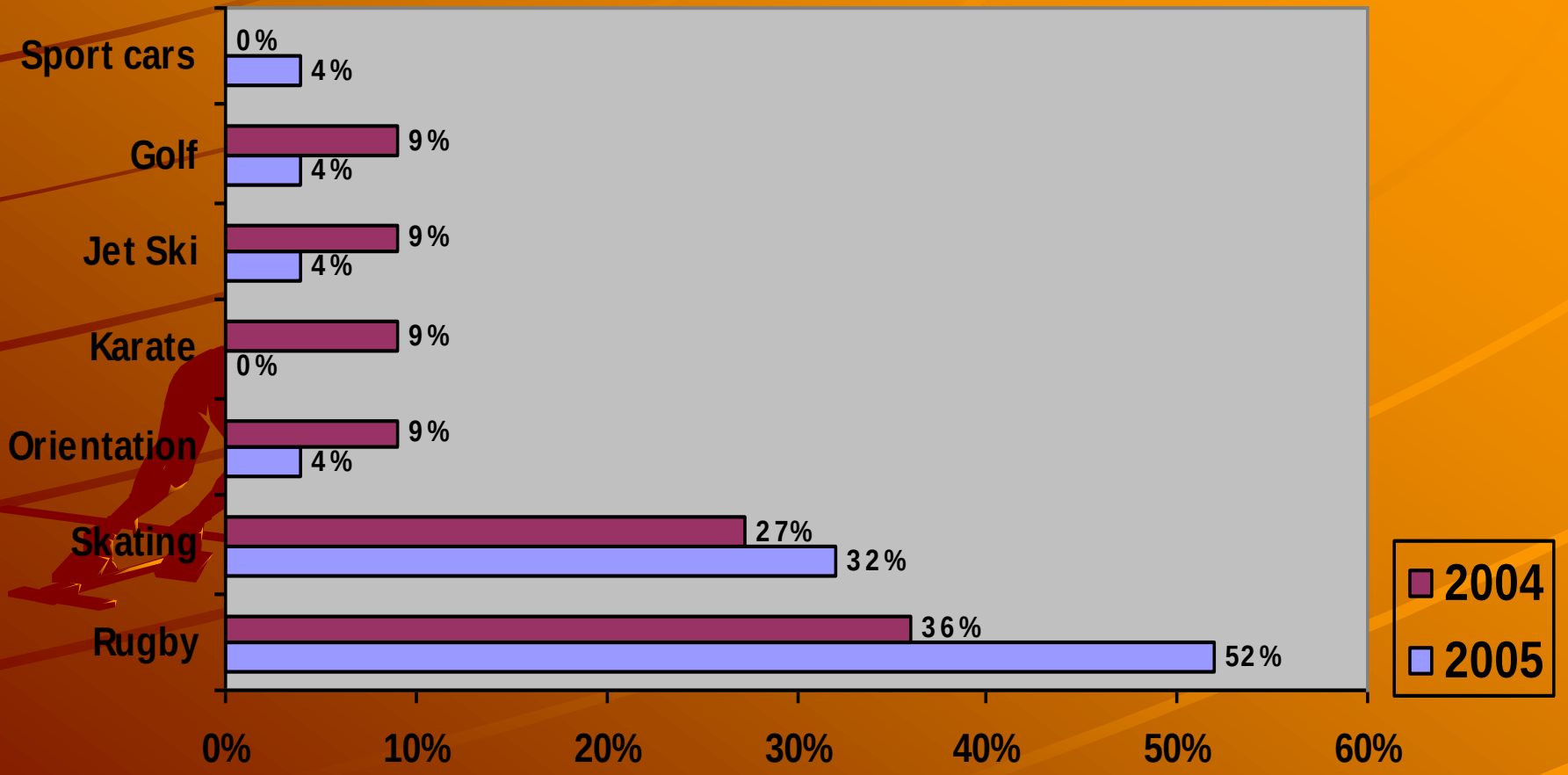
Quantitative Study - Sport



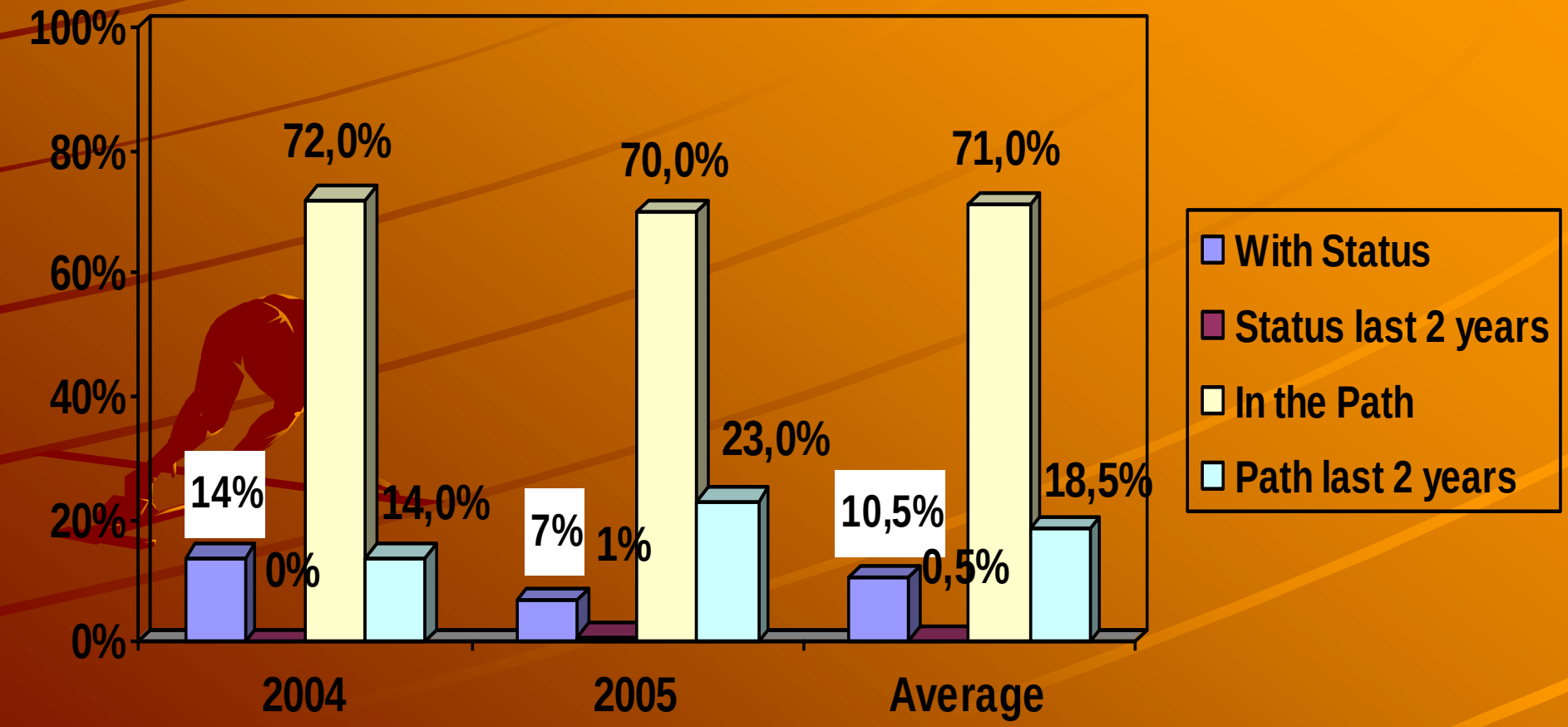
Olympic

Quantitative Study - Sport

Non Olympic



Quantitative Study - Type



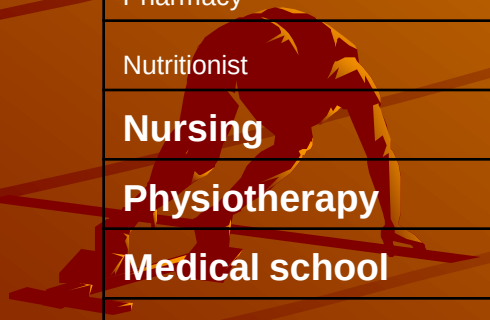
Quantitative Study – Study Field



	Years			
	2004		2005	
Study Area	Nº	%	Nº	%
Architecture	8	5,8%	4	3,0%
Arts	4	2,9%	3	2,3%
Life Sciences	2	1,4%	2	1,5%
Business Sciences	**17**	**12,3%**	**15**	**11,4%**
Human Social Sciences	6	4,3%	11	8,3%
Vet Sciences	1	0,7%	11	8,3%
Sport and Physical Education	**17**	**12,3%**	**11**	**8,3%**
Law	7	5,1%	4	3,0%
Education	0	0,0%	2	1,5%
Engineering	**12**	**8,7%**	**13**	**9,8%**
Humanities	1	0,7%	0	0,0%
Information / Journalism	2	1,4%	1	0,8%
Computer Science	3	2,2%	5	3,8%
Health	**57**	**41,3%**	**50**	**37,9%**
Services	1	0,7%	0	0,0%
	138	100,0%	132	100,0%

Quantitative Study – Health Field

Course	Years			
	2004		2005	
	Nº	%	Nº	%
Anatomy Pathologic, Cythologic and Tanathologic	1	1,8%	0	0,0%
Clinic Analyzes and Public Health	1	1,8%	2	4,0%
Pneumo-cardiologist	0	0,0%	2	4,0%
Pharmacy	0	0,0%	1	2,0%
Nutritionist	1	1,8%	0	0,0%
Nursing	**5**	**8,8%**	**6**	**12,0%**
Physiotherapy	**7**	**12,3%**	**11**	**22,0%**
Medical school	**38**	**66,7%**	**26**	**52,0%**
Dentistry	3	5,3%	0	0,0%
Radiologist	0	0,0%	1	2,0%
Psycho-motor Rehabilitation	0	0,0%	1	2,0%
Speech therapy	1	1,8%	0	0,0%
	57	100,0%	50	100,0%



Quantitative Study

The profile of this special group of athletes can be described as:

"Young teenagers, male, age between 18 to 19, with relevant international results in a Olympic sport, with good chances of becoming a Top Level Athlete, with a grade of "good" and that chooses Superior Education Institutions health related areas"



Qualitative Analysis

To this analysis, questionnaires and interviews were made to the following stakeholders:

- Government (Secretary of State for Sport)
- Government (National Sport Institute)
- Government (Secretary of State for High Education)
- National Federations (4+1)
- High Education – Universities and Polytechnic (3+3)
- Coaches (4+2)
- Top Level Athletes (8+2)
- Normal Students (12)



Qualitative Analysis



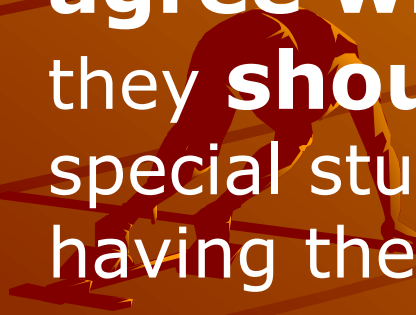
The Secretary of State of Youth and the Sport and the President of the National Institute of Sport, **agree with this supporting measure** to the Top Level Athletes, although some changes should happen

The secretary of State for Superior Education confirms that these athletes enter **"extra" numerus clausus** and if they have the necessary requirements they can be accepted according to the limits of each SEI

Qualitative Analysis

The national sports federations, coaches with top level athletes and the top level athletes **agree with this policy as expected**

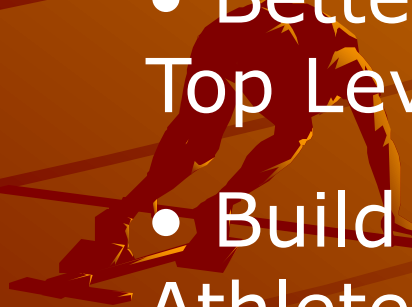
The Superior Education Institutions not only **agree with this status** but also agree that they **should give more attention** to these special students, seeing good opportunities in having them in their "campus"



Almost all the normal students surprisingly said that they **consider this special status fare** and they **would like to have more** of these student athletes by their side

Policy Suggestions

- Implement programs that would help the normal students, universities and also the top level athletes to understand this special right
- Better control of the identification of the Top Level Athletes – Constrain the access
- Build special facilities to host this Top Level Athletes – Schools and Universities
- The National Olympic Committee should take part of this process



Policy Suggestions

- Create quotas. Propose similar number of young athletes proportional to the number of athletes they have in the Olympic Games
- Avoid the courses that we know from the beginning that is very difficult to conciliate
- Tutorial teaching
- Created the ombudsman figure defending the general law for the athletes
- More information and communication



Strategic Actions

1. Change the law to the corrections point out on this study
2. Implement programs that inform the real data and help to understand the commitment and benefits of having Top Elite Athletes - Enhancing the National Sports Conscience
3. If a new crises come out “media attention”, should be diffused a several opinion articles with specific information and the introduction of actions against the crises

Strategic Actions

4. Certify that the new superior education institution evaluation regime real evaluate the support and facilities that each SEI gives to these athletes and also to the normal student population in general

5. Implement in each superior education institution a tutorial program similar to the Minho University program called TUTORUM



Thanks !!



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by Paulo Bernardo