

NIFU

Nordic Institute for Studies in
Innovation, Research and Education

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International student mobility: Russian students in Norway

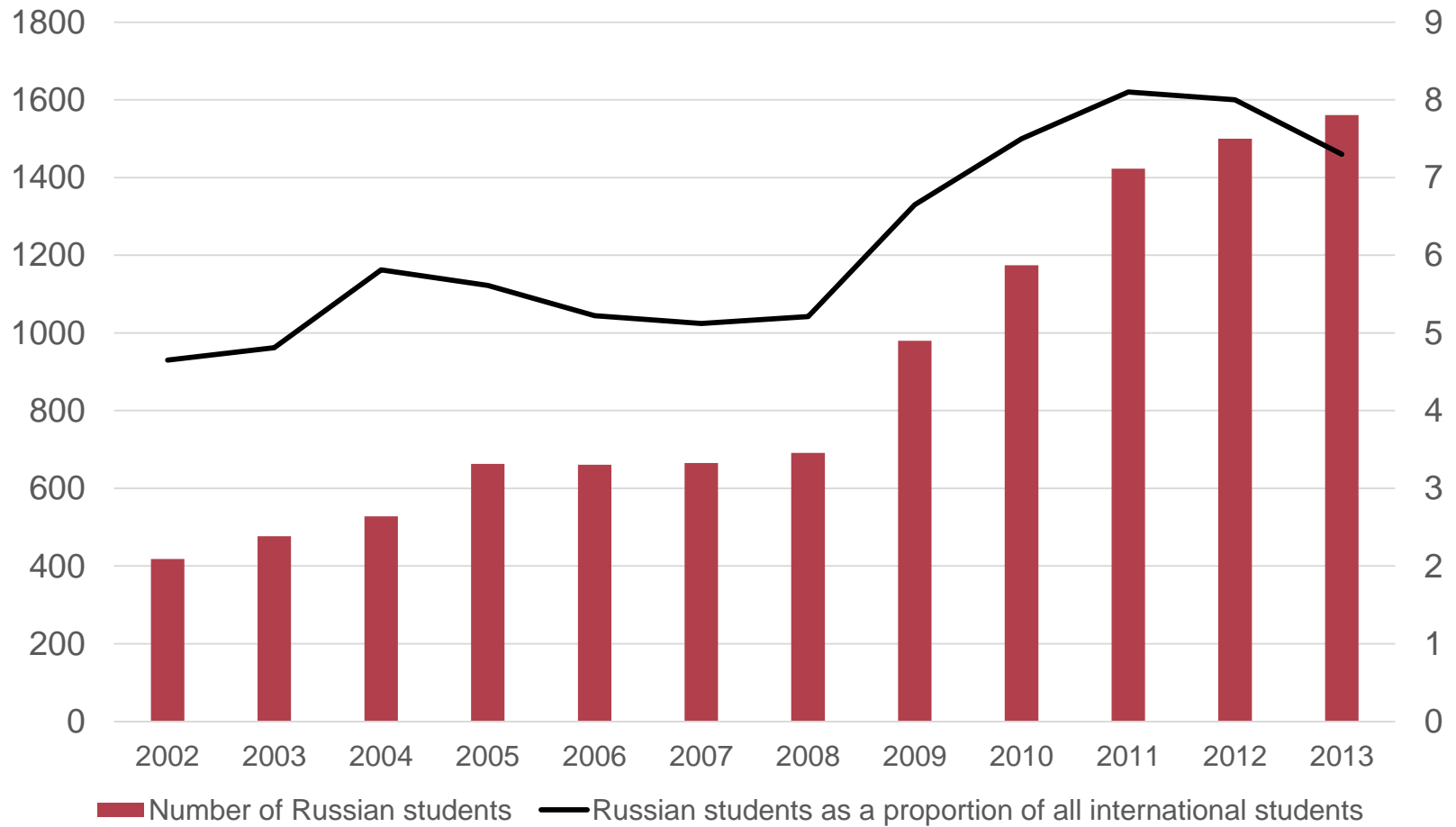
Part of the NORRUSS research project Higher education in the High North

Background

International student mobility on the rise

- The number of internationally mobile students is increasing
- Russia has traditionally had more incoming than outgoing students, but the number of outgoing students is growing
- According to UNESCO statistics, Norway is number 12 on the list of where Russian students go
- Many Russians study in Norway, while few Norwegians study in Russia

Russian students in Norwegian Higher Education



Mobility and institutional cooperation

- Student mobility high on the political agenda in Norway since the 1980-ies, incoming mobility is facilitated (programmes in English etc.)
- Institutional cooperation between universities in Northern Norway and North-East Russia. Part of regional cooperation – Barents region /Arctic region
- Close to half of the Russian students are enrolled in universities and colleges in Northern Norway
- About 30% of Russian students registered in Norway are online students (in two Norwegian universities)
- Research project focusing on educational cooperation in the Barents region “Higher Education in the High North”

Survey to Russian students in Norway

Main questions

- Why are Russian students choosing Norway as a study destination?
- How do they assess the quality of study programmes?
- What kind of transitional challenges do they encounter?
- To what extent do they interact with Norwegian students and Norwegians in general?
- Is studying abroad a temporary sojourn, or a stepping stone for more permanent migration?
- To what extent do Russian students diverge from other groups of international students in Norway?

Background characteristics of students in the survey

- 72% females
- High social origin: 85 per cent have one or both parents with higher education
- Not everyone initially came to study: 22% of full degree students and 7% of exchange students were already living in Norway when enrolling in Norwegian higher education
- Mobility capital: 30% of students have previous sojourn(s) abroad. 25% have parents who have lived abroad

Why do students go abroad?

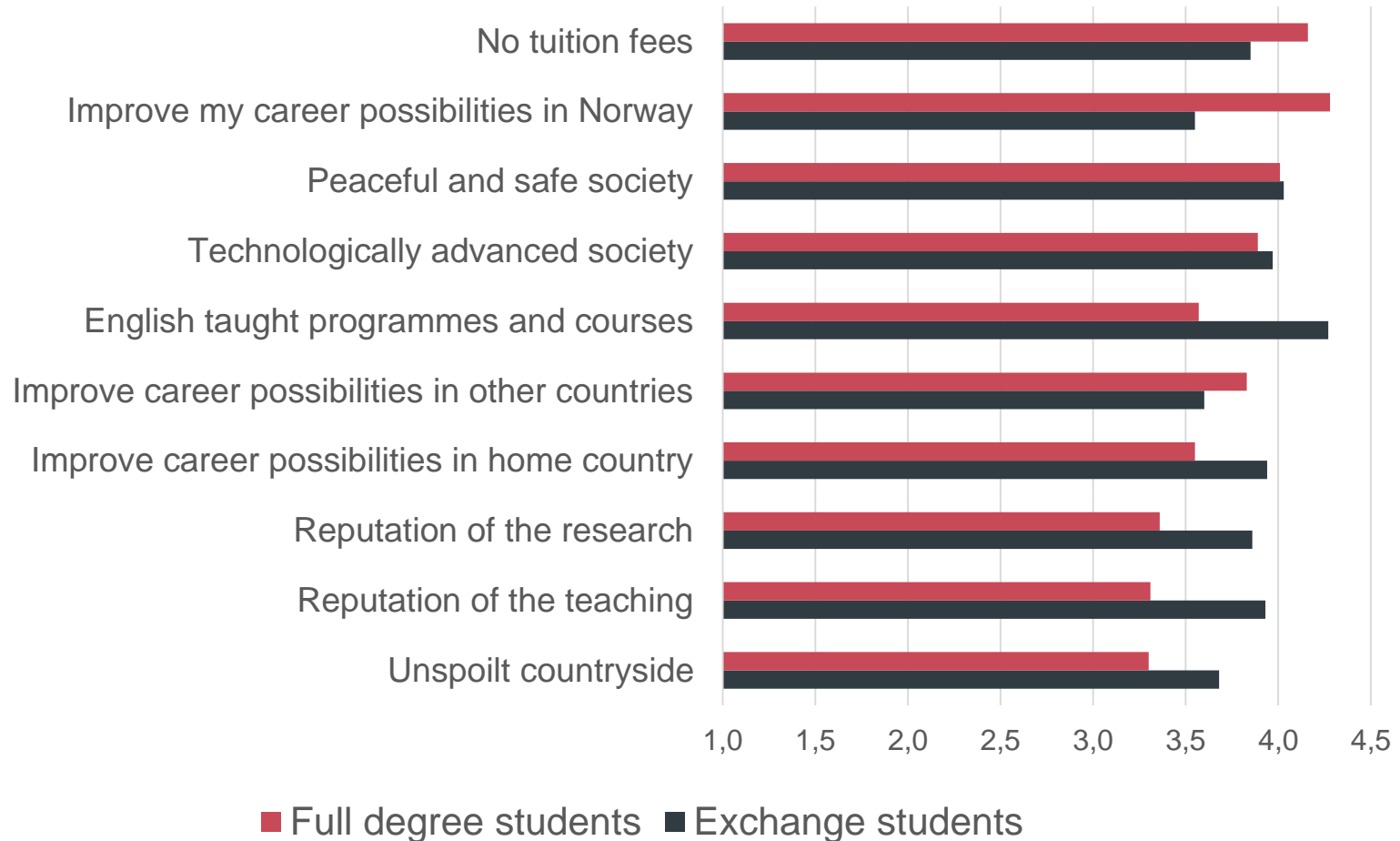
«Push» motives

- Related to conditions in the home country
- Lack of domestic opportunities (capacity, programmes offered, quality etc.)
- Non-academic/personal reasons

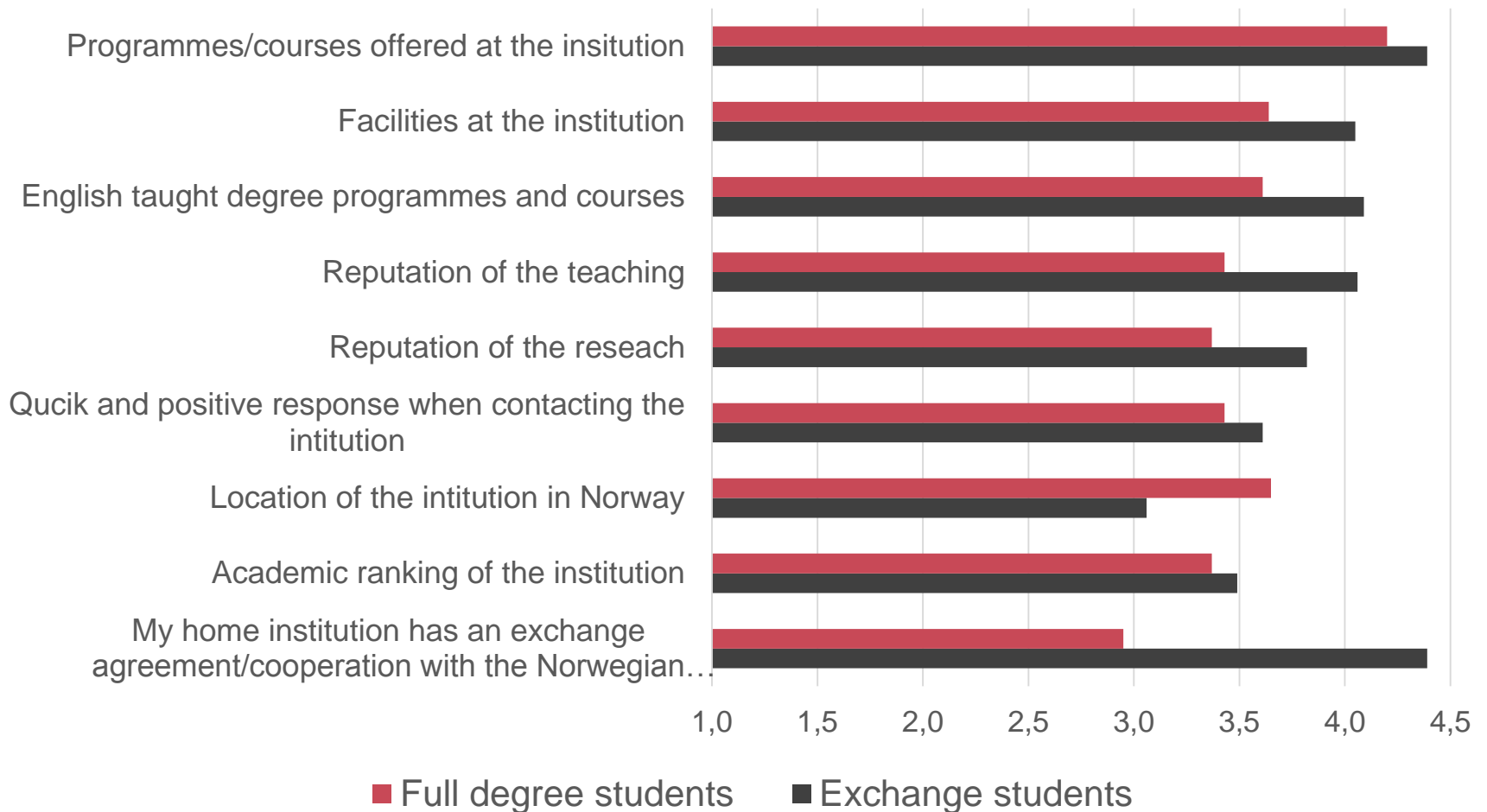
«Pull» motives

- Related to conditions in the country of destination
- Improving language skills
- Cultural skills
- Career plans
- Personal development
- Quality of HE abroad

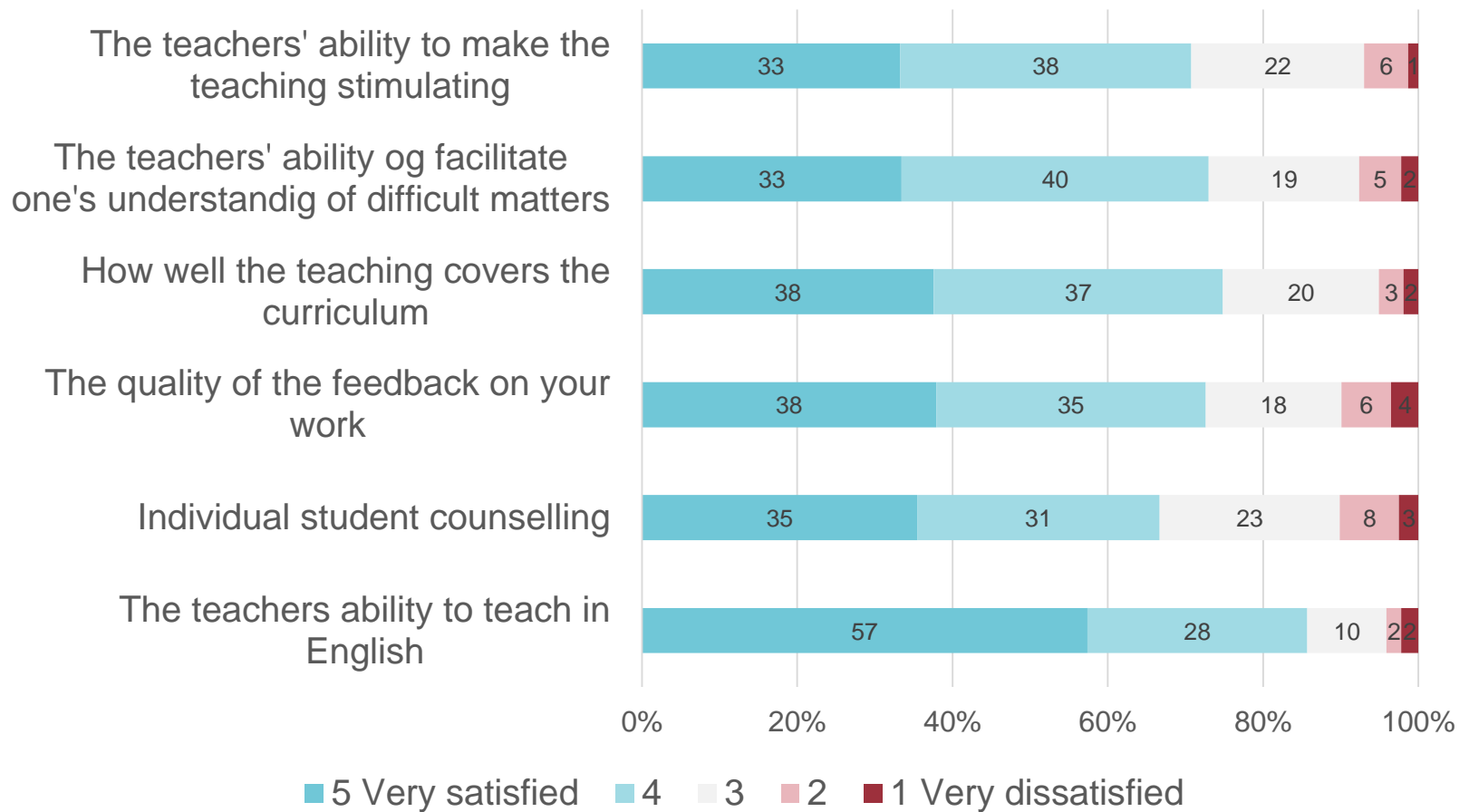
Factors influencing the decision to study in Norway



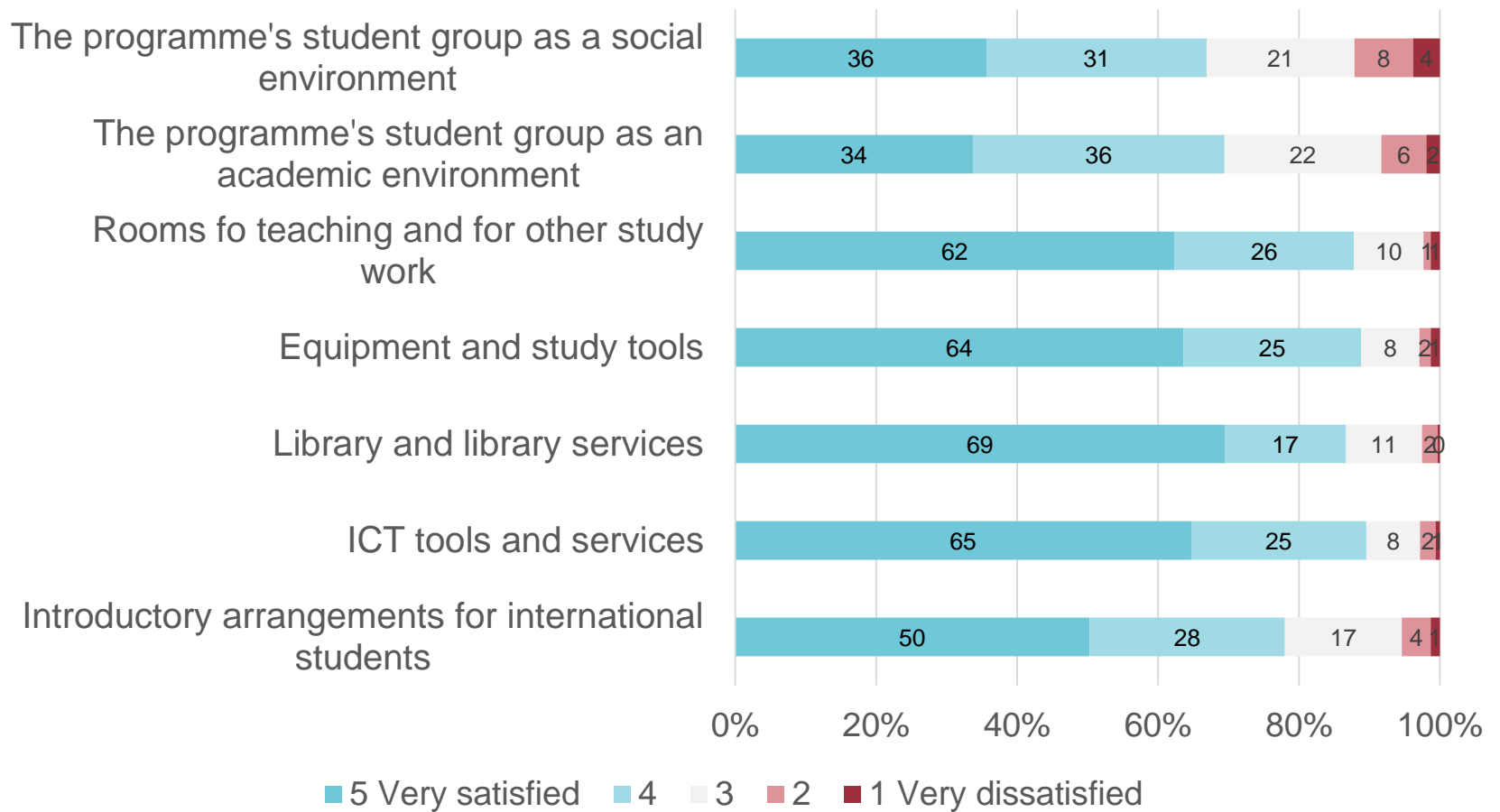
Factors influencing the choice of institution



Assessments of teaching and feedback



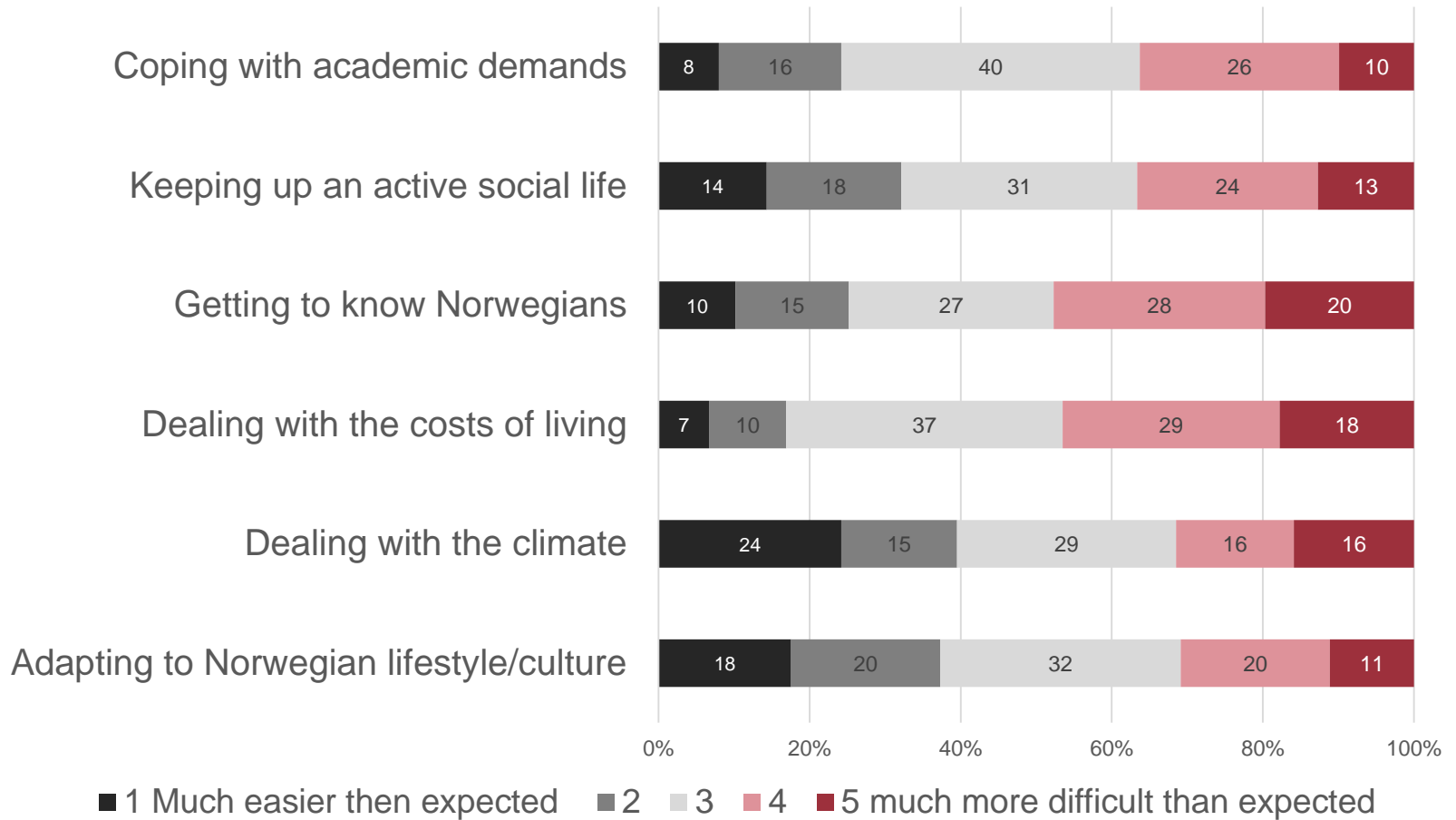
Assessments of study environment



Russian students compared to others

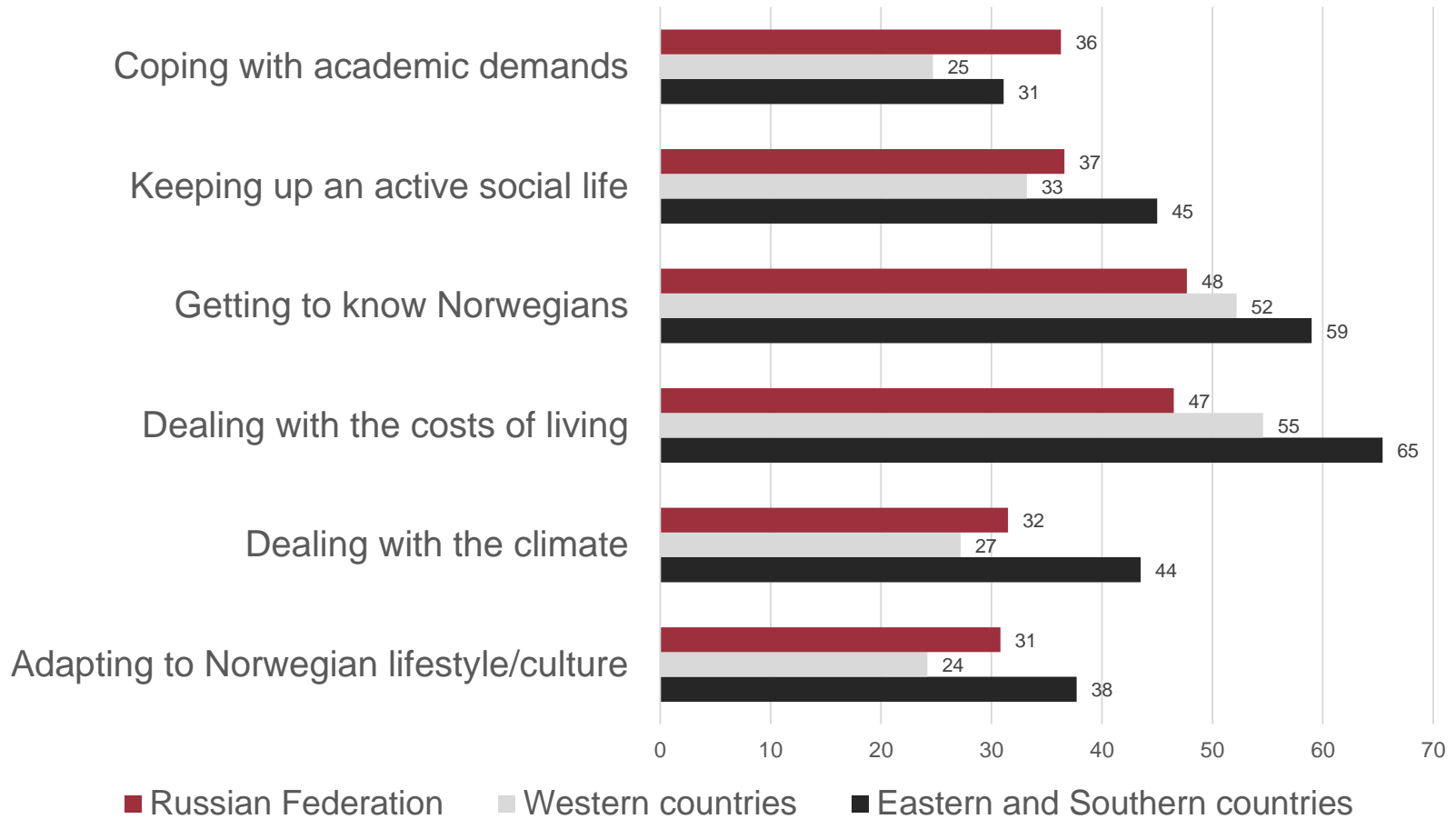
- More satisfied with teaching and learning environment than students from most other countries
- More satisfied with teaching and learning environment compared to Norwegian students, with one exception: the student group as a social and academic environment

Challenges

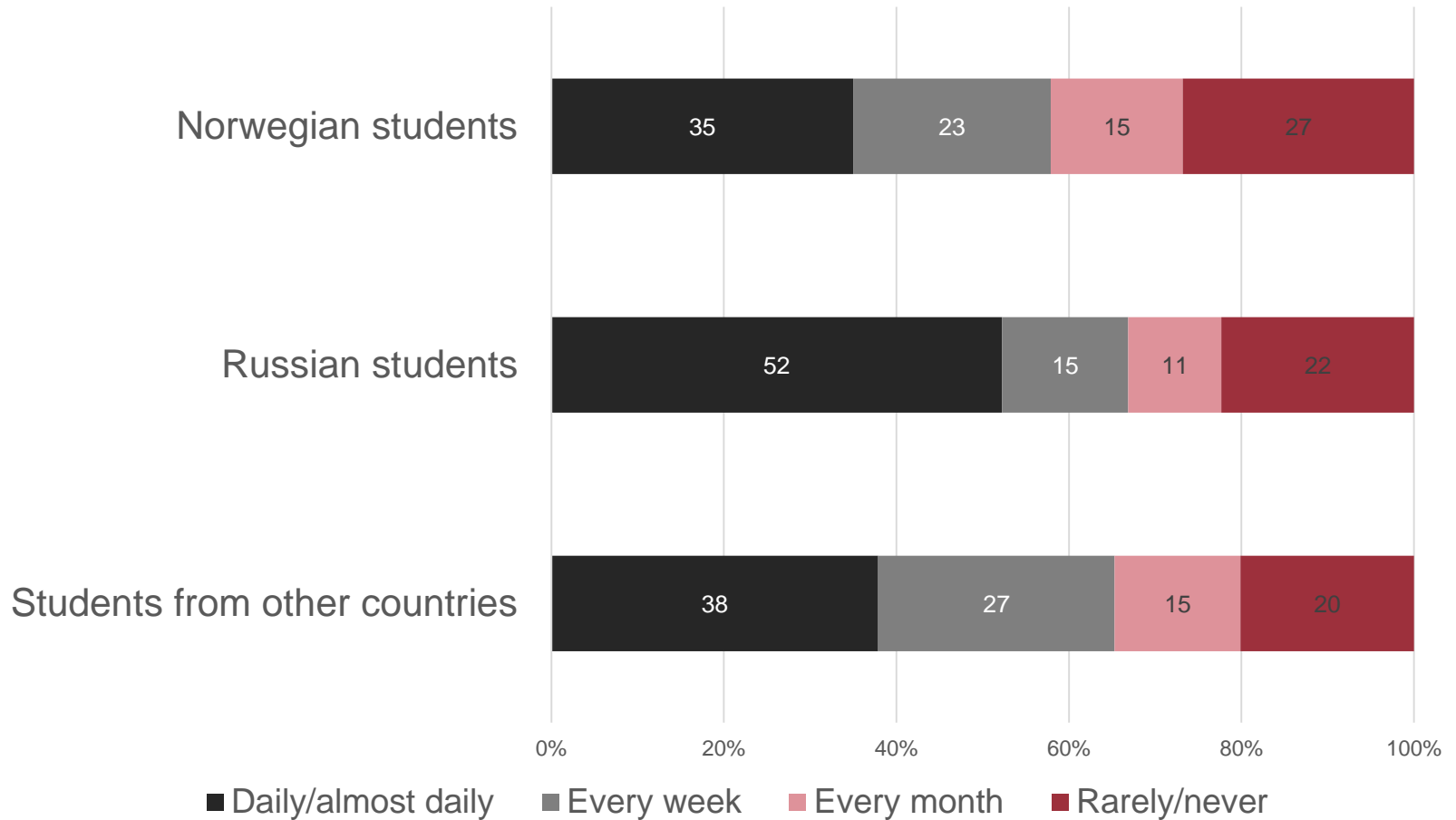


Challenges, Russian and other int. students compared

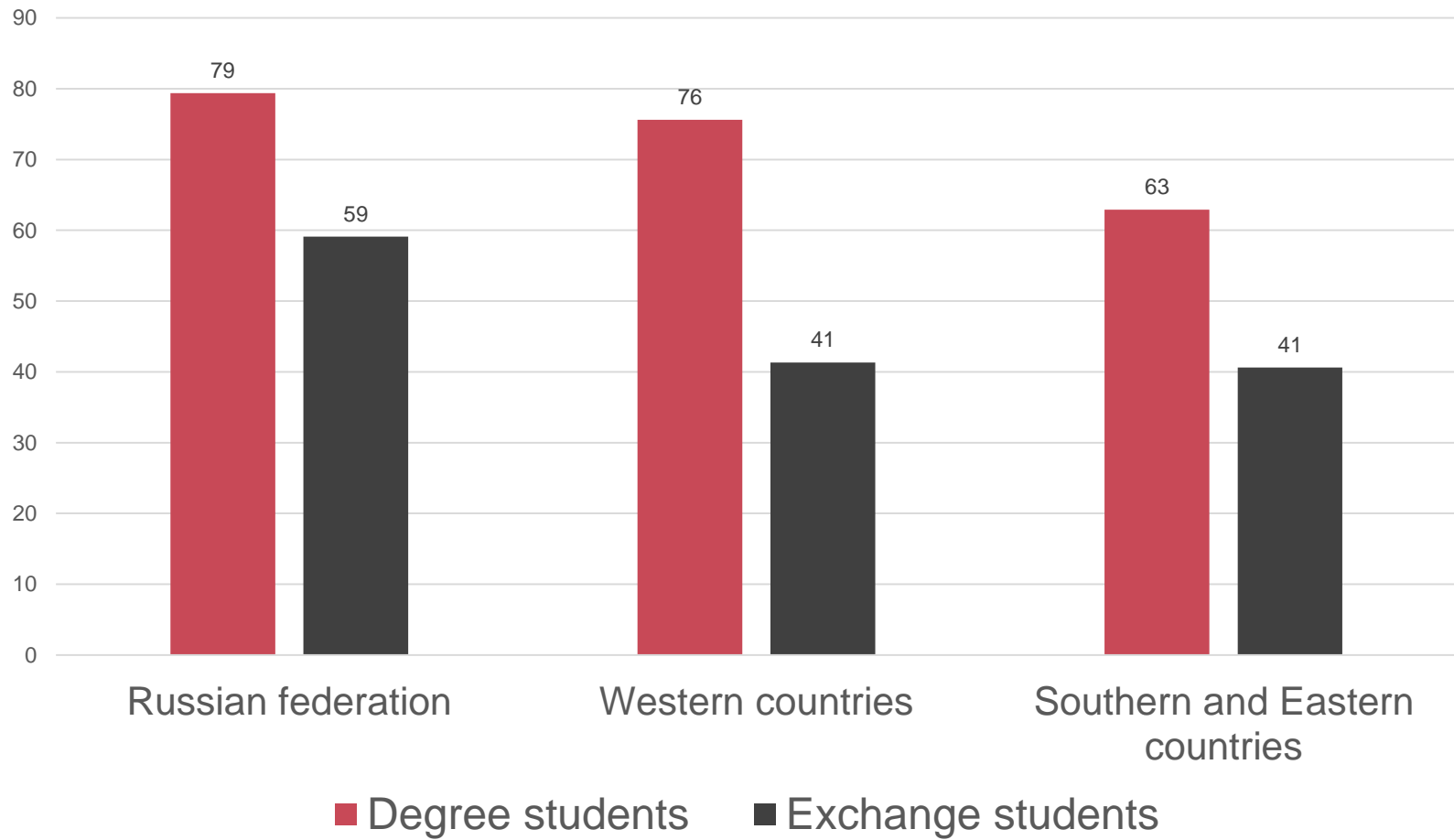
Proportions finding this more difficult than expected



Contact with other students in university/college



Proportions considering to stay in Norway



Sum up

- Absence of tuition fees, career possibilities in Norway and exchange agreements are among the most important reasons for studying in Norway
- Russian students are generally quite satisfied with teaching, feedback and study environment
- Dealing with the cost of living and getting to know Norwegians are more challenging than expected
- A high proportion of the students are considering to stay in Norway
- Russian students seem to manage quite well, compared to other international students

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