

Saimaa University of Applied Sciences
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**Russia as Destination for International Mobility:
Attitudes of Finnish Students and Teaching Staff:
Cases Saimaa UAS, Karelia UAS, Kajaani UAS,
Lapland UAS**

Thesis 2015

Abstract

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Russia as Destination for International Mobility: Attitudes of Finnish Students and Teaching Staff: Cases Saimaa UAS, Karelia UAS, Kajaani UAS, Lapland UAS, 120 pages, 5 appendices

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The objective of the study was to find out the attitudes of Finnish students and teaching staff towards going on an international exchange to Russia. The idea was to determine if they generally perceive it positively or negatively. It was also important to examine obstacles preventing them from choosing Russia as an exchange destination country and to offer possible means to positively affect the opinions and increase outgoing student and teacher exchange to Russia. The work was commissioned by the BOSS – From Borders to Shared Space project.

The data for this study were collected both from primary and secondary sources. Primary research was conducted in a form of semi-structured interviews. Among secondary sources there were books, electronic publications and information from the Internet websites used. Empirical research was done through the survey. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods are applied for this study.

As a result of the thesis students' and teachers' perception of Russia as exchange destination country was identified. The obstacles hampering international mobility to Russia were determined and the extent of their importance evaluated. Based on theoretical knowledge acquired and the survey results, the investigation is concluded with suggestions on how to positively influence student and teacher attitude and with practical recommendations regarding improvement activities that can be done in universities of applied sciences.

Keywords: international mobility, student exchange, teacher exchange, university of applied sciences, higher education, BOSS, Russia

Table of contents

1	Introduction	5
1.1	Background and research justification	5
1.2	Research questions and objectives	7
1.3	Delimitations	8
1.4	Research methodology and implementation	8
1.5	Theoretical framework	9
1.6	Thesis structure	10
1.7	From Borders to Shared Space – BOSS project	11
2	Internationalisation of higher education	11
2.1	History background	11
2.2	International mobility in the Internationalisation strategy 2009-2015	13
2.2.1	General internationalisation goals	13
2.2.2	Russia competence in the internationalisation strategy	14
2.3	Student mobility	15
2.3.1	Motivational factors and benefits	15
2.3.2	Challenges	17
2.4	Teacher mobility	18
2.4.1	Motivational factors and benefits	19
2.4.2	Challenges and means of increase	20
2.5	The FIRST programme	20
2.5.1	How mobility to Russia can be promoted	23
2.6	Challenges in cooperation with Russia	24
3	Internationalisation of universities of applied sciences	24
3.1	Historical overview	24
3.2	Internationalisation strategy of Saimaa UAS	27
3.3	Internationalisation strategy of Kajaani UAS	32
3.4	Internationalisation strategy of Karelia UAS	35
3.5	Internationalisation strategy of Lapland UAS	37
4	Empirical Research	38
4.1	Research method	39
4.2	Structure of the questionnaires	41
5	Student survey analysis	43
5.1	“Background” category analysis	43
5.2	“Attitude measuring” category analysis	46
5.2.1	Motivational factors	47
5.2.2	Obstacles	47
5.3	“Changing the attitude” category analysis	52
5.4	Suggestions on improvement	53
6	Teacher survey analysis	56
6.1	“Background” category analysis	56
6.2	“Attitude measuring” category analysis	58
6.2.1	Motivational factors	59
6.2.2	Obstacles	60
6.3	“Changing the attitude” category analysis	64
6.4	Suggestions on improvement	65
7	Conclusion	68
	List of Figures	70
	List of Tables	71

List of References72

Appendices

Appendix 1	Interview questions
Appendix 2	Survey for students
Appendix 3	Survey for teaching staff
Appendix 4	Extract from results – student survey
Appendix 5	Extract from results – teacher survey

1 Introduction

1.1 Background and research justification

The research investigates Russia as exchange destination for Finnish students and teachers. It aims to figure out their attitudes about Russia as a country for student and teacher international mobility period as well as determine existing obstacles that prevent them from going to Russia for exchange. An important goal of the research is also to find the ways to increase the readiness of students and teachers to choose Russian higher education institutions (later called HEIs) as host universities abroad. The topic choice is based on the interest of the client – project “From Borders to Shared Space – BOSS” and on personal interest of the author.

The main objective of the BOSS project is looking for new contacts and operating models to establish collaboration in Finnish borders areas, thus bringing benefits and added value to parties. Seven universities of applied sciences throughout Finland take part in the BOSS project in order to develop education, create new contacts, enhance competence and improve services, establish cooperation between businesses and universities of applied sciences along the Finnish borders. (BOSS 2014.)

This thesis investigates four out of seven HEIs (Polytechnics) – Universities of Applied Sciences (later called UASs) participating in the project in the context of the opinion that has recently raised up. These four universities have special interest in Russian relations and cooperation, but there has been a tendency of unwillingness of Finnish students and staff members to travel to Russia for an exchange. The UASs’ international offices work with Russian partners and reach agreements of exchange, but there is often a shortage of students and teachers willing to accept the offer of going to Russia.

The phenomenon selection is justified by its high topicality and relevance to current educational situation and common possibly negative tendencies throughout UASs regarding international mobility in Russia. All universities, which are involved in this research, experience the tendency of decline of the

desire of Finnish students and teachers to go on international exchange to Russian HEIs.

The results obtained from the research will be directly used by the UASs under the BOSS project and will be implemented towards improving the current situation.

As the Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland states, internationalisation has been one of the key words in Finnish education policy along with quality, efficiency and equity. It has become one of the priorities of higher education in Finland as early as in the end of 1980s and has been a topic of lively discussions in Finland recently (Garam & Ketolainen 2009, p.18). Reports and surveys on participation of Finnish HEIs in international programs have been of a great demand, too (Ekberg 2009, p.8). The process of internationalisation comprises many activities; therefore, the strategic goals regarding international collaboration are put into action through various programmes and initiatives (Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland b). The Asia Action Programme, the promotion of sustainable development, the export of culture and developing collaboration with Russia and other neighboring countries are the important goals, while student and teacher international mobility are a significant part of internationalising higher education (Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland a, b).

International mobility still stays the most important indicator of internationality as well as plays an important role in the whole internationalisation strategy (Ekberg 2009, p.9). Going on international mobility brings numerous benefits to studying process and has positive impact on future employment of students. International mobility can serve as a tool for pursuing an international career, as a way of learning about a new culture, or improving language skills. It expands study opportunities, acts as a challenge of managing in a different environment or simply as an adventure. Moreover, according to the Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland, national strategies also accentuate international mobility and projects as highly significant activities.

According to Garam & Ketolainen (2009), the renaissance of mobility and cooperation with neighboring countries (other Nordic and Baltic countries) is awaited due to possible cost increase of mobility and unwillingness of students to travel by plane. Along with developing cooperation with other Nordic and Baltic neighbors, mobility to and from Russia is already becoming more and more significant. This is very much affected by an increase of business and other collaboration with Russia. (Garam & Ketolainen 2009, p.33.)

The literature review let the author conclude that international mobility to Russia among Finns is still not very common and needs to be investigated further. Therefore, the phenomenon is a subject worth examining at a closer look.

1.2 Research questions and objectives

The purpose of the study is to find out about the attitudes of Finnish students and teaching staff members towards international mobility (student/teacher exchange period) in Russia and in this regard provide Finnish UASs with the up-to-date information. In case the attitude is negative, the study will identify the reasons for that, determine under which conditions students and teachers would be willing to choose Russian institutions, and propose the means to positively affect the attitudes.

The main research question is formulated as follows:

- *How do Finnish students and staff of Universities of Applied Sciences perceive Russia as a destination for international mobility period? Do they see it positively? Why / Why not?*

The answer to the main research question is assumed to be possibly negative; therefore, the study has three sub-questions:

- What are the means of changing a possibly negative attitude toward a more positive one?
- What are the obstacles preventing Finnish students and teaching staff from choosing Russia as their exchange destination country?

- How could institutions increase the number of outgoing Finnish students and teachers to Russia?

1.3 Delimitations

Since the research is aimed at analyzing international cooperation with Russia, solely those universities having Russian partners as their key focus are encompassed. Thus, from seven universities the research is narrowed down to only four UASs from the BOSS network: Saimaa UAS, Kajaani UAS, Lapland UAS, and Karelia UAS. Only students of Bachelor degrees and only Finnish students and teachers are involved in the research. The faculties of the universities to be covered in this study are determined by the BOSS project; they are as follows:

Saimaa UAS: Business Administration; Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management; Hotel and Restaurant Business; Tourism; Health Care; Construction Engineering

Karelia UAS: Tourism

Kajaani UAS: Tourism

Lapland UAS: Business and Culture; Hospitality and Tourism; Social Services, Health and Sports; Industry and Natural Resources

1.4 Research methodology and implementation

Since the objective of the research is to find out about the attitudes of Finnish students and teachers to go on international mobility to Russia and the empirical part is based on a survey, the qualitative research method is selected for the study. The qualitative method is aimed at encompassing data and provides more emphasis on data description and subjective data interpretation. Using the qualitative research method gives a holistic perspective on the phenomenon and helps the author to deeper interpret the answers and to focus on understanding the research problem from respondents' point of view. Students and teachers are able to express their opinions fully with no reply restrictions, which normally exist when using the quantitative research method.

The quantitative research method uses mathematical and statistical analyzing tools, which in the case of this research would not provide deeper understanding of the research phenomenon. Nevertheless, it is also important in the study to find out the percentage of those, responding to mobility in Russia positively and negatively. Therefore, applying both the qualitative as well as quantitative research methods are quite justifiable, the qualitative method is the dominant one, though.

The empirical part of the research is based on the Webropol surveys. Two separate questionnaires of similar content, but adjusted to different interviewee categories will be created for students and teachers and will be sent to students of participating study programmes and teachers in all of the four Universities of Applied Sciences via email. The goal of the questionnaires is to get opinions and attitudes of Finnish students and teachers at first-hand considering going on international mobility to Russia, their motivation or reasons of unwillingness (in case it is so) as well as to figure out conditions under which they would be willing to go. The answers gathered from online questionnaires will be summarized and converted into separate extracts containing information from the survey. Practical suggestions and tips on increasing outgoing mobility to Russia will be made by the author, in case the improvement is needed.

1.5 Theoretical framework

Both primary and secondary data is used for the theoretical part of the research. In order to find out the strategies and principles of internationalisation of every UAS as well as to determine current situation among Finnish students and teachers concerning international mobility in Russian institutions, the author has found it necessary to interview the international relations coordinators, RDI managers, project managers, or BOSS project representatives in all of the four UASs, as the information given on universities' webpages was not always sufficient. Therefore, primary research is conducted in a form of semi-structured interviews (qualitative approach). The interviews are conducted during the thesis writing process face-to-face, via Skype, or e-mail.

Secondary data is gathered from several sources. The book “Across the Borders. Internationalisation of Finnish Higher Education” (2009) will be used as the main theoretical base for this study. The author will also use other publications of Centre for International Mobility (later called CIMO) regarding internationalisation strategies of Finnish higher education. The website and publications of the Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland, websites of UASs, and the website of the BOSS project are also used as additional information sources. The data concerns international activities and policies concerning internationalisation of higher education, the goals and regulatory measures in Finland as a whole and in every single university in particular. For acquiring statistical data, the author uses the Statistical Service of Educational Administration – Vipunen Opetushallinnon Tilastopalvelu.

1.6 Thesis structure

The thesis consists of the two main parts: theoretical and empirical.

In the theoretical part, the author describes internationalisation strategies of the higher education towards cooperation with Russia set by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland and particularly by CIMO. The general processes of internationalisation with Russia, causes, challenges and opportunities are described as well as particularly internationalisation of UASs. Some statistical data concerning outgoing exchange to Russia is also given and interpreted. The author also discusses the benefits of international mobility and outgoing exchange for students and teachers. The strategies of each university and tendencies among students and teaching staff concerning going to Russia are described in separate sub-chapters.

The empirical part is formed with summarized answers gathered from online Webropol questionnaires. Qualitative and quantitative methods are applied for this study, particularly to questionnaires; they will contain mostly closed-ended questions, although some open-ended questions will also be created. Based on the results of the survey the author will make suggestions on increasing the number of outgoing students and teachers to Russia.

The research is concluded with a summary of general findings and recommendations on increasing student and teacher mobility to Russia.

1.7 From Borders to Shared Space – BOSS project

The research is done under the the BOSS project, which is a client of this investigation. The purpose of the BOSS project is building an RDI partnership network between UASs and the business community in Finnish border areas. As a result of the project new operating models and contacts for cooperation between universities and companies over the borders are expected to be developed. The purpose is also to make those models prompt and being applied with ease not only during the project, but most importantly after its end. The BOSS network consists of seven UASs, which create cooperation networks in Finnish border areas (Baltic countries, Norway, Sweden, the Arctic border areas, the Karelia region and the St. Petersburg metropolitan area in Russia) depending on their geographical location and on special competences and strategies. The UASs participating in the project are Haaga-Helia UAS, Kajaani UAS, Karelia UAS, Lapland UAS, Oulu UAS, Saimaa UAS and Novia UAS. The project started in January 2014 and it is going to end on 31 December 2015. It is financed by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland. Financial aid provided by the state constitutes one million euros. Total value of the project is 1 666 667 euros. (BOSS 2014.)

2 Internationalisation of higher education

2.1 History background

The Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland started internationalising higher education as early as in 1987. While examining the subject in the Ministry, developing international mobility has been taken as a primary focus. Finland joined the Erasmus programme in the academic year 1992/93 when Finnish HEIs still did not experience mass student mobility – when it was not a developed trend yet. During the first years the Erasmus programme attracted lots of Finnish students and the number of outgoing exchanges was growing promptly. Taking part in other programs of higher education has become more

facilitated since 1995, when Finland joined the EU. The increase of international mobility required resources and services. Under the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, CIMO – Centre for International Mobility was established in 1991 in order to administer international mobility issues, various grants and exchange programmes. (Garam & Ketolainen 2009, pp.18-20.)

According to Garam & Ketolainen (2009), nationally, HEIs have been stimulated and even forced to develop international mobility. Even new positions for international affairs responsible staff were opened in universities. In some universities, the administration of international affairs was centralized. The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture has controlled international mobility development annually in the performance negotiations with HEIs. UASs were established in Finland with the purpose of eliminating higher vocational education institutes, which had very little international activities' indicators. Vocational education institutes were combined and temporary UASs were formed. UASs were supposed to develop international cooperation, and under this condition they started to be permanent HEIs. (Garam & Ketolainen 2009, pp.19-22.)

However, in the beginning of 2000s, the number of outgoing Erasmus students decreased and stabilized, and nowadays only about 50 per cent of outgoing Finnish students gain an advantage from the Erasmus programme. Other programmes like the Nordic Nordplus programme, numerous work placement programmes, the North-South-South programme (with developing countries), and the FIRST programme (with Russia) are becoming more and more significant. Nevertheless, Finland still stays among the top most active countries participating in the Erasmus programme in relation to student exchanges. (Garam & Ketolainen 2009, p.23.)

According to Garam & Ketolainen (2009), the first internationalisation strategy for Finnish higher education was issued in 2001 by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland. The latest internationalisation strategy of HEIs was released in 2009 for the six year period. Some crucial points of the Strategy for the Internationalisation of HEIs in Finland 2009-2015 are discussed in the next chapter.

2.2 International mobility in the Internationalisation strategy 2009-2015

Since the thesis investigates student and teaching exchanges, the internationalisation of Finnish HEIs is discussed from the perspective of international mobility as one of the means of stimulating and promoting internationalisation. The Strategy for developing Finnish-Russian collaboration is also discussed.

2.2.1 General internationalisation goals

Higher education has many ways of developing internationalisation, and the Internationalisation strategy is implemented through various activities and projects. Among the most important means of internationalising are student and teacher mobility. Particularly, mobility is supported both from and to Finland, the latter – in order to attract highly educated labor force and foreign investments. Finnish resources are limited; therefore a lot of necessary information comes from abroad. (Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland 2009.)

As the aim of the Internationalisation strategy for Higher education, the Ministry of Education and Culture names creating in Finland *“internationally strong and attractive higher education institution and research community that promotes society’s ability to function in an open international environment, supports the balanced development of a multicultural society and participates actively in solving global problems”*. (Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland 2009.)

The national strategy for the internationalisation of higher education was also introduced and placed in the Government Programme 2011-2015. The programme emphasizes the need for increasing the international mobility of students, teachers and researchers as well as strengthening competences, usage of incentives to stimulate the mobility and networking of researchers and teachers, also bringing up tolerance and respect to other cultures. (Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland 2009.)

However, internationalisation is still among the weak points of the Finnish higher education system, even though some progress has been achieved. Students, teachers and other personnel are still not offered truly international

and multicultural operating environments. Students are less interested in studying abroad. After 2000s teacher and research international mobility in universities have been also diminishing. Therefore, one of the goals set in the internationalisation strategy 2009-2015 is to increase international mobility. (Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland 2009.)

In Table 1 the target indicators of both long- and short-term international mobility for 2015 are stated:

Aim	incoming		outgoing	
Teacher and expert mobility in polytechnics	3000	47%	4000	62%
Teacher and researcher mobility in universities	4000	29%	4000	29%
Student and trainee mobility in polytechnics	8000	8%	8000	8%
Student and trainee mobility in universities	8000	6%	8000	6%

Table 1. Mobility goals for universities and UASs 2015. (Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland 2009)

2.2.2 Russia competence in the internationalisation strategy

The promotion of Russia competence is stated in the Government Programme and in the Strategy for the internationalisation of Finnish HEIs 2009-2015, too. Because of close geographical location of Finland and Russia, the role of the latter is increasing for Finland. Russia attracts as a growing market area and as a country of culture and science. Therefore, many universities and UASs have Russia relations and cooperation as one of the cornerstones of their international strategies. Finnish HEIs provide a good basis for Russia competence; some institutes (e.g. the Aleksanteri Institute) and universities (e.g. the Cross-Border University) have become centers of Russia research and expertise and important initiatives on the field of educational cooperation respectively. However, despite the fact that Finland aims at developing Finnish-Russian educational and research relations through many HEIs, the country still

makes insufficient investments in Russia cooperation and competence. (Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland 2009.)

As it has been already mentioned, HEIs have many ways of supporting internationalisation. The next few chapters reason student and teaching mobility as the most common means of developing internationalisation in Finnish HEIs: benefits of the mobility, its challenges and motivational factors for going abroad are discussed.

2.3 Student mobility

The international competence of students is measured by the mobility period spent in a foreign country and by course selection. Student mobility is at least a 3-month exchange or trainee period. During the past decade the number of outgoing Finnish exchange students has become four times higher, and the number of mobile students is increasing. (Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland 2009.) Comparing to other European countries, the number of Finnish students going on exchange is currently above the average (Garam & Ketolainen 2009, p.20).

According to the Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland (2009) studying and working abroad helps to improve language skills and strengthens the position in the labor market. It also teaches to understand and facilitates comprehension between different cultures and societies. International mobility being a part of internationalisation contributes to mental growth and to the understanding of global responsibility. For researchers it is a good opportunity to work with other specialists, experience other teaching and researching techniques and methodologies. (Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland 2009.)

2.3.1 Motivational factors and benefits

Among top three motivational factors for students when going abroad are getting to know another culture or country, learning a language or improving language skills, and gaining a new perspective on studies. Many students see the exchange period as a good opportunity for developing an international

career and also as a tool to increase their chances of getting a job in their home country. Students can strive to improve quality of education through student mobility and study something that they could not study at the home university. Some may have personal reasons to study in a particular country or there can be a strong wish to study in a well-known institution. Some students still see the exchange period as an obligatory part of a degree programme, others just need a change in life. (Centre for International Mobility, Swedish Council for Higher Education and Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education 2013.)

To examine the benefits of student mobility from the perspective of its advantages in working life, the author addressed to the Study on the Relevance of International Student Mobility to Work and Employment, published by CIMO in 2005. According to Irma Garam (2005), employers consider international mobility very useful when it comes to personal growth. Studying abroad teaches students to handle difficulties, helps to broaden the outlook and improve the feeling of proportion. At the top of the skills gained by students while being on an international exchange employers state generic skills (social or life skills), competences essential for international cooperation, i.e. language skills and being familiar with foreign cultures and customs. Employers consider that international exchange is a good chance for students to work in a different and multicultural environment. However, improvement of occupational skills and knowledge is noted much rarer, as employers do not believe that graduates who have done a mobility period abroad could have obtained such knowledge and competences that are not available for them in Finland. (Garam 2005.)

As Irma Garam (2005) states, about 50% of employers take international experience of an applicant into account when recruiting; many of them see international background of a candidate as an advantage, but for the employer majority it is still not a decisive factor. Moreover, most of the Finnish employers consider it more valuable for a candidate to have work experience in Finland than having international work experience. Employers' attitudes towards international background, however, depend on the position that a candidate applies for. Those companies or positions that involve operating internationally, carrying out negotiations with foreign partners or customers pay more attention

to the presence of international experience than those that do not. (Garam 2005.)

According to the results of the survey conducted by CIMO, Swedish Council for Higher Education and Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education (2013) there are several outcomes that students consider beneficial in student exchanges. Making new friends, better language skills and better understanding of cultural differences are on the top of the list. Students acknowledge improving their communicative, personal, self-assessment and problem-solving skills as well as becoming more independent. Some students consider developing new perspectives in their studies or/and courses and improved quality of education as beneficial results of their mobility period. Some assume that student mobility increases chances of getting a good job abroad or in the home country and improves sense of cooperation. (Centre for International Mobility, Swedish Council for Higher Education and Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education 2013.)

2.3.2 Challenges

There are several reasons preventing students from going on an international exchange. The most frequent reasons are financial concerns and family issues. Students consider living abroad costly and do not think that financial support can cover expenses fully. Students who have jobs in the home country do not want to quit and lose the earnings. Family reason appears to be mostly as a concern for students with families, who find it harder to participate in long-term exchanges. Those in a relationship are not willing to leave their partners either. For older students the image of heavy partying on student exchanges can be a repulsive factor. Many students may think that a mobility period will be useless, as they cannot find a suitable programme, particular courses or an appropriate institution. Some are worried about their duties during work placements and the practical arrangements related to international mobility. There are also opinions according to which an exchange period is not considered as proper studying, and this especially matters for those who are concerned with timely graduation and keeping up with their classmates. Many students just avoid bureaucracy connected to organizing an exchange period, planning studies in advance,

making applications and signing agreements. The unwillingness of leaving behind accommodation, which is difficult to get again when coming back, is also an important reason. Among other reasons there can be poor language skills, lack of motivation or courage, insufficient academic progress, health reasons, etc. (Garam 2012.)

2.4 Teacher mobility

Teachers usually go abroad for one week period to give lectures in a host university. UASs' teachers are usually involved in collaborative projects, conference trips and most frequently to teaching visits. But, teachers working in universities also participate in research and project collaboration. (Garam 2007.)

Comparing to other European countries, Finland is one of the leaders in teacher exchange through the Erasmus programme (Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland 2009). During the first decade of the 21st century, the number of teachers taking part in international mobility has increased by 40%. Even though the indicators of teaching mobility in European comparison are above the average, the teacher mobility has been more uncertain and complicated than student mobility, and it is still evaluated as scarce (6% of teachers of Finnish HEIs go on teacher exchange). (Garam & Ketolainen 2009, p. 22.)

The internationalisation strategy set by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland (2009) highlights the importance of teaching staff mobility in developing international higher education community. It states that staff mobility contributes to making the higher education system and research more international, aids to make exchange studies more popular among students and to create joint and double degrees and make study programmes more international. Teacher mobility also increases competence that is essential for working in a multinational higher education network, because it helps to learn to appreciate other cultures, mentalities, customs, religions and languages. Internationally experienced staff, using its connections can enhance the education and research quality; it also contributes to promoting of internationalisation among students. (Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland 2009.)

Teachers' mobility and visiting lecturers play an important role in staff training, as they help to export skills and competences, and to prepare joint projects (Garam 2012).

2.4.1 Motivational factors and benefits

According to the report on International teacher mobility published by CIMO (2007), the need for professional and personal development together with the promotion of internationalisation of the home institutions or departments motivates teachers to go abroad the most. Strengthening their own contacts and promoting student mobility appear to be important reasons as well. Another motivational factor is a chance to make home institutions and departments better known and valued. Some teachers would like to get experience in multicultural teaching environments, compare teaching methods and practices in the home institution at international level and find new teaching techniques and ideas. They might be also motivated to get familiar with a foreign country. (Garam 2007.)

There is a difference, however, between teachers, who have already had at least one teaching visit abroad and the ones, who have lack of international teaching experience and international collaboration. The more experienced teachers emphasize the need to contribute to the internationalisation of the home and host institution. Teachers with less international experience concentrate more on their own professional development when being abroad. (Garam 2007.)

As it is stated in the report, increased professional competence and confidence is the top benefit gained from a teaching period spent abroad. Enhanced contacts, stimulated student mobility, etc. – are also among the results of teacher exchange. There are also more personal benefits like obtaining an interesting experience or taking a break from daily monotonous duties. (Garam 2007.)

2.4.2 Challenges and means of increase

The biggest challenge of teacher mobility is its casual nature and transience: lecture visits are short and not very systematic; therefore they are hard to fit in the timetable and plans (Garam 2012).

According to Irma Garam (2007), teacher mobility still shows lack of strategic planning – the problem of time management and funding appear to be obstacles for teacher mobility. Garam (2007) also states that 90% of the UASs' teachers and over 80% of university teachers have a big workload, which prevents them from going abroad. They face difficulties with fitting mobility periods in the working curriculum. Another major barrier to teacher mobility abroad is a funding issue. The family reason and scarce language skills can hamper international mobility as well. (Garam 2007.)

According to the Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland (2009), the mobility of particularly UAS teachers can be increased by taking part in R&D cooperation projects and international teaching activities.

HEIs should also better plan teaching visits abroad and incorporate it into the planning of the whole work. Making it more regular, explaining the mobility goals and benefits would also contribute to teacher mobility increase. (Garam 2012.)

2.5 The FIRST programme

The FIRST (Finnish-Russian Student and Teacher Exchange) programme aims at stimulating and facilitating partnership and cooperation of HEIs between Finland and Northwestern regions in Russia. HEIs of both Finnish and Russian parties utilize the programme to endorse student and teacher mobility and promote joint intensive courses. Most of Finnish HEIs take part in the FIRST programme, which is an installed tool for developing collaboration with Russia in nearly all HEIs throughout Finland. About 50 institutions of the Northwestern region of Russia (e.g. in Kaliningrad, Arkhangelsk, Petrozavodsk, Syktyvkar, Murmansk, etc.) cooperate with Finnish HEIs. The biggest share of partner universities is in the Saint Petersburg metropolitan area, though. (CIMO 2013.)

According to Maija Airas-Hyödynmaa (2009), right after the Erasmus programme had become well-known, universities had acquired its fundamentals and mobility had become large-scale, CIMO started developing similar principles for cooperation with Russian HEIs. Closer cooperation has become possible when Russia joined the Bologna process. In 1999 CIMO launched the Finnish-Russian Student Exchange programme – this was the FIRST programme, funded by the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture. Since then, the programme has become an indispensable instrument of collaboration and funding for student mobility in HEIs between Finland and Russia. (Airas-Hyödynmaa 2009, pp.34-35.)

CIMO (2013) states that Russia is an important partner for very many Finnish HEIs, and Russian-Finnish cooperation is also emphasized in the Internationalisation strategy of Finnish higher education 2009-2015. In its operation CIMO also gives a priority to Russia competence, and Finland has urged developing of the higher education cooperation between the EU and Russia. (CIMO 2013.)

Initially, the programme provided support mainly to Russian students coming to Finland, but later grants and other financial support were also given to Finns (Airas-Hyödynmaa 2009, p.34).

The programme is mostly financed by the Finnish party, by the EU and Nordic educational programmes. HEIs also use their own resources to support mobility to Russia. (CIMO 2013.)

As it is stated by the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture (2009), the Ministry is going to increase the financing of the FIRST programme up to 500,000 euro per annum.

Intensive courses (usually one-week periods of study in Russia, where both Finnish and Russian students and teachers participate) held in Russia were introduced in 2006 in order to promote studying in Russia among Finns and maintain development of joint study programmes and degrees (Airas-Hyödynmaa 2009, p.36). The quantity of intensive courses has grown persistently, and for many Finns those intensive courses have become a mean

of their first entry to Russia (CIMO 2013). Teacher mobility has been also considered as an essential part of the FIRST programme (Airas-Hyödynmaa 2009, p.34).

Throughout the years of functioning of the FIRST programme, teacher and student mobility to and from Russia has grown significantly. Nowadays 300 Finnish and Russian students take advantage of the FIRST programme annually. In 2013, practical placements were appended to the programme. Indicators of teacher exchange have also increased and now more than 100 teachers every year go to Russia to lecture. The financial capacity of the programme has also grown significantly. By 2014 the budget, allotted to participating in the FIRST programme HEIs almost tripled since 2006 and amounted to 740 000 euros. (CIMO 2013.)

Throughout the years 2003-2011 student mobility to Russia has been steadily increasing and the share of mobility funded by the FIRST programme has been growing as well (see Figure 1).

Higher education student mobility from Finland to Russia, 2003–2011

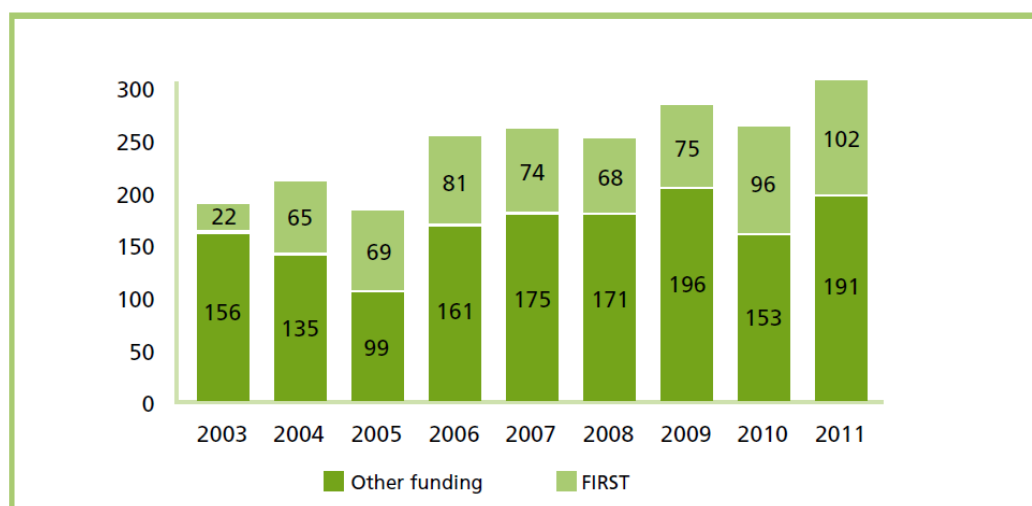


Figure 1. Student mobility to Russia 2003-2011. (CIMO 2013)

Even though cooperation with Russia has been set as a strategic goal for Finnish higher education, it is still not common among Finns to study in Russia. According to statistics, 474 Russian students arrived to study in Finland in 2012, while only 256 Finns chose Russia for international mobility, which is almost half less. (CIMO 2013.)

Finland is considered as one of the most successful countries in regard to internationality and indicators of international mobility, but it has been less successful with Russia, though. Therefore, the FIRST programme endeavors to reach a more stable and balanced movement of students and teachers between Finland and Russia as well as it aims at expansion of the FIRST programme beyond the Northwestern region and covering other areas in the Russian Federation. (CIMO 2013.)

2.5.1 How mobility to Russia can be promoted

The most important aspect is the language issue. The mobility of Finns to Russia becomes complicated primarily because of insufficient Russian language skills. Studies of both Russian and Finnish should be actively advertised and stimulated (if considering bilateral mobility), but providing lecturing also in English is equally critical for HEIs. A concern of recognition of studies taken abroad should be minimized. Especially taking into account significant differences in educational systems between Russia and Finland, studies abroad should be considered as a competent part of a student's degree in a home university, i.e. complementary and substitutive studies should be eliminated. Inducing and stimulating motivation is also very important – students should be informed better about the advantages of international experience – developing personal and other skills that have already been mentioned previously. The FIRST programme is becoming more and more popular, and the demand 2,5 times exceeds supply, i.e. the programme is still not adequately financed, thus there is a need in expanding exchange programmes in order to stimulate Finnish-Russian mobility. The promotion of intensive courses is extremely useful for enhancing conventional student mobility. For students unable (financial, family or other reasons) to participate in traditional student mobility, intensive courses are a perfect alternative and the easier way to internationalise. The scope of applicability of practical placements and grants currently provided to degree students going on practical training to Russia should be expanded, and the FIRST programme should be able to offer these opportunities to as many students as possible. (CIMO 2013.)

2.6 Challenges in cooperation with Russia

Even though there has been much concernment towards cooperation with Russia in regard of teaching and development of degree programmes, it is obvious that this cooperation with Northwestern Russia cannot use the same rules and regulations as the Erasmus partnership. It is still quite difficult to get Finns interested in studying in Russia; among the reasons that mobility to Russia is still tailor-made and cannot be considered as large-scale mobility, Maija Airas-Hyödynmaa (2009) names different education systems and degree structures, difficulty of recognition of studies, as well as insufficient funding. Partner HEIs offer poor support structures for cooperation, notably for student exchanges. Moreover, visa and insurance obligations make cooperation more demanding and challenging. But, perhaps, the main obstacle is lack of programmes in Russian HEIs taught in English. In addition, inadequate Russian language skills among Finns, prejudices may affect students' and teachers' decisions. Social, economic and political situation, security concerns can impede and make mobility to Russia more complicated, especially nowadays. (Airas-Hyödynmaa 2009, pp.36-38)

Maija Airas-Hyödynmaa (2009) assumes that joint bilateral investment in cooperation in the field of higher education is needed as the FIRST programme will develop and attract more and more students and teachers.

3 Internationalisation of universities of applied sciences

3.1 Historical overview

UASs have become followers of vocational institutes, where international activities were weak. During the 1990s UASs were founded in order to provide higher education that fulfills the requirements and demands of business and industry. The new form of providing higher education gave boost to enhanced international cooperation in UASs. The exchange programmes have become a conventional practice in all UASs throughout Finland. The outcomes of those programmes have also been positive for both incoming and outgoing mobility. (Varmola 2009, pp.84-85.)

Table 2 shows outgoing international mobility of students and trainees during the past two years. The indicators are quite high; we can see that the number of outgoing trainees increased by 20 trainees in 2014 compared to 2013, but the number of outgoing students decreased by 75 people in 2014.

	Outgoing trainees 2013	Outgoing students 2013	Outgoing trainees 2014	Outgoing students 2014
Arcada UAS	27	47	30	53
Centria UAS	35	63	32	45
Diaconia UAS	103	6	100	19
Haaga-Helia UAS	167	387	154	401
HUMAK UAS	20	32	18	37
Häme UAS	63	101	63	107
Jyväskylä UAS	110	160	108	179
Kajaani UAS	33	55	35	37
Karelia UAS	49	52	78	41
Kemi-Tornio UAS	27	19	No info	No info
Kymenlaakso UAS	65	82	87	75
Lahti UAS	75	239	59	185
Lapland UAS	No info	No info	107	86
Laurea UAS	118	162	105	167
Metropolia UAS	169	305	217	277
Mikkeli UAS	68	89	74	86
Novia UAS	53	48	83	63
Oulu UAS	63	123	54	133
Rovaniemi UAS	103	45	No info	No info
Saimaa UAS	145	92	143	98
Satakunta UAS	75	131	82	109
Savonia UAS	106	95	84	93
Seinäjoki UAS	75	97	62	89
Tampere UAS	115	218	120	250
Turku UAS	121	252	99	232
Vasaa UAS	39	90	50	53
Total	2024	2990	2044	2915

Table 2. Total UASs' student and trainee mobility 2013–2014. (Vipunen Opetushallinnon Tilastopalvelu)

Since the research investigates outgoing mobility to Russia, the author has gathered the indicators of international mobility of 2013 and 2014 throughout Finnish UASs (see Table 3). Against the background of total international mobility (Table 2), the numbers of outgoing students and trainees to Russia is low; trainee indicators are generally higher, though.

	Outgoing trainees 2013	Outgoing students 2013	Outgoing trainees 2014	Outgoing students 2014
Arcada UAS	1	0	1	0
Diaconia UAS	No info	No info	1	0
Haaga-Helia UAS	4	12	8	11
HUMAK UAS	0	0	0	0
Häme UAS	0	0	0	0
Jyväskylä UAS	12	5	11	4
Kajaani UAS	1	0	3	0
Karelia UAS	1	4	5	0
Kemi-Tornio UAS	0	0	No info	No info
Kymenlaakso UAS	0	6	0	5
Lahti UAS	0	3	0	1
Lapland UAS	No info	No info	5	1
Laurea UAS	2	6	5	6
Metropolia UAS	0	2	8	3
Mikkeli UAS	4	5	10	7
Novia UAS	No info	No info	1	0
Oulu UAS	0	0	0	1
Rovaniemi UAS	6	1	No info	No info
Saimaa UAS	67	8	49	8
Satakunta UAS	2	10	0	4
Savonia UAS	0	0	2	2
Seinäjoki UAS	0	0	1	1
Tampere UAS	4	1	6	0
Turku UAS	0	1	0	4
Vasaa UAS	2	0	1	0
Total	106	64	117	58

Table 3. UASs' student and trainee mobility to Russia 2013–2014. (Vipunen Opetushallinnon Tilastopalvelu)

“Higher education institutions define the focus areas of their international activities as a part of their overall strategies on the basis of the aims of the national strategy. They focus on the measures in the national strategy in line with their own profiles and define who they consider to be their most important strategic partners”. (Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland 2009.)

Taking into account the fact that UASs are eligible to choose their partners and define their operating strategies, the author has considered it necessary to find out about each strategy separately and particularly to put the emphasis on partnership with Russia. Six interviews have been conducted by the author; the information regarding internationality provided on universities' webpages has also been used.

In order to highlight which part Russia partnership takes of each university's strategy, the author has picked out the indicators of student and trainee mobility

to Russia during 2014 in those four universities participating in this research: Saimaa UAS, Lapland UAS, Karelia UAS, Kajaani UAS (see Figure 2).

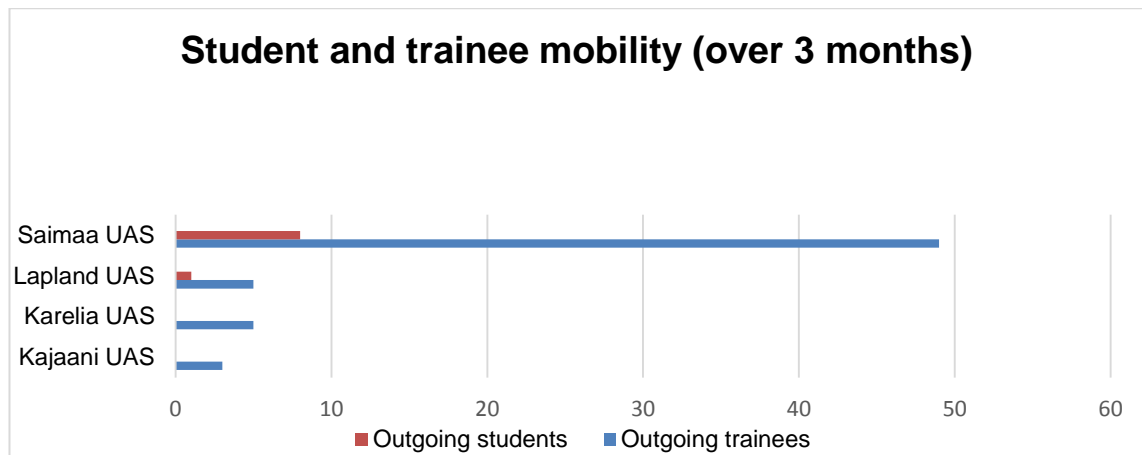


Figure 2. Student and trainee mobility to Russia 2014: Saimaa UAS, Lapland UAS, Karelia UAS, Kajaani UAS. (Vipunen Opetushallinnon Tilastopalvelu)

3.2 Internationalisation strategy of Saimaa UAS

The priorities of Saimaa UAS are determined by its strengths and interests of stakeholders such as “*user-oriented technologies and their commercial applications, management and entrepreneurship, health and social services and service processes*”. In internationalisation Saimaa UAS focuses on Russia, Germany among EU countries and on China in Asia. A very important part in Russia focus is enhancing business, industry, society, language and cultural competence. Considering the geographical location of Saimaa UAS, the strategic goal is to develop dynamic partnerships with selected Russian HEIs in the northwestern region of Russia as well as with business community and public administration of municipalities. In the near future Saimaa UAS is going to conclude cooperation agreements with Russian, German and Chinese partners. The overall goal is to build dynamic and systematic collaboration in various processes and operations. (Saimaa University of Applied Sciences 2015.)

According to Kirsi Viskari (2015), RDI manager of Saimaa UAS, Germany, United Kingdom and Russia are the three main countries of Saimaa UAS international focus.

Due to location of Saimaa UAS (both Lappeenranta and Imatra campuses), the Saint Petersburg metropolitan area becomes a region where Saimaa UAS has the majority of its partners. The university has “*special knowledge and competence in the Russian business, industry, society, the Russian language, culture and international networks*”. The university beneficially uses its location in the international degree programs and R&D projects. (Saimaa University of Applied Sciences 2015.) Saimaa UAS also follows the European Neighbourhood Policy* (ENP) (Viskari 2015).

Students and staff of Saimaa UAS actively participate in international mobility programs and cooperative R&D projects. (Saimaa University of Applied Sciences 2015.)

Kirsi Viskari (2015) assures that despite the fact that Saimaa UAS is quite small, it is one of the best universities in terms of number of outgoing students, and it even exceeds the indicators set by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland.

The Figures 3 and 4 show the number of students throughout UASs going on student exchange and traineeships to Russia. According to statistics of both 2013 and 2014 years, Saimaa UAS is an absolute leader in outgoing long-term (over 3 months) trainee exchange (67 trainees in 2013 and 49 trainees in 2014) to Russia, and it is the third in student exchange (8 students in 2013 and 2014).

*The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was developed in 2004, with the objective of avoiding the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and our neighbours and instead strengthening the prosperity, stability and security of all. It is based on the values of democracy, rule of law and respect of human rights (European Union External Action).

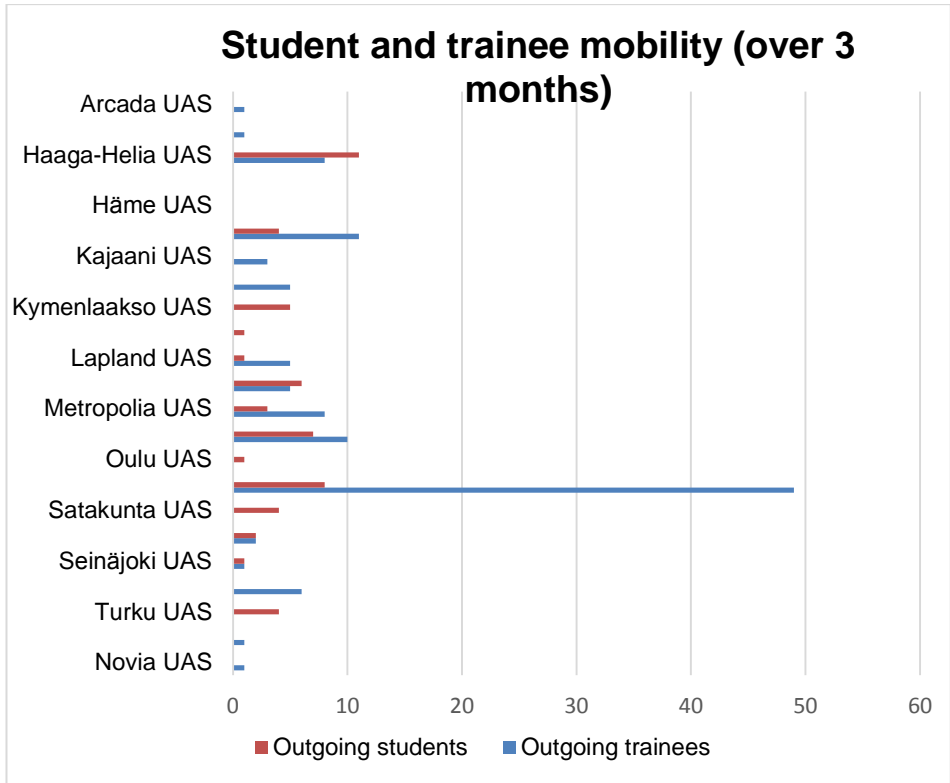


Figure 3. UASs' student and trainee mobility to Russia 2014. (Vipunen Opetushallinnon Tilastopalvelu)

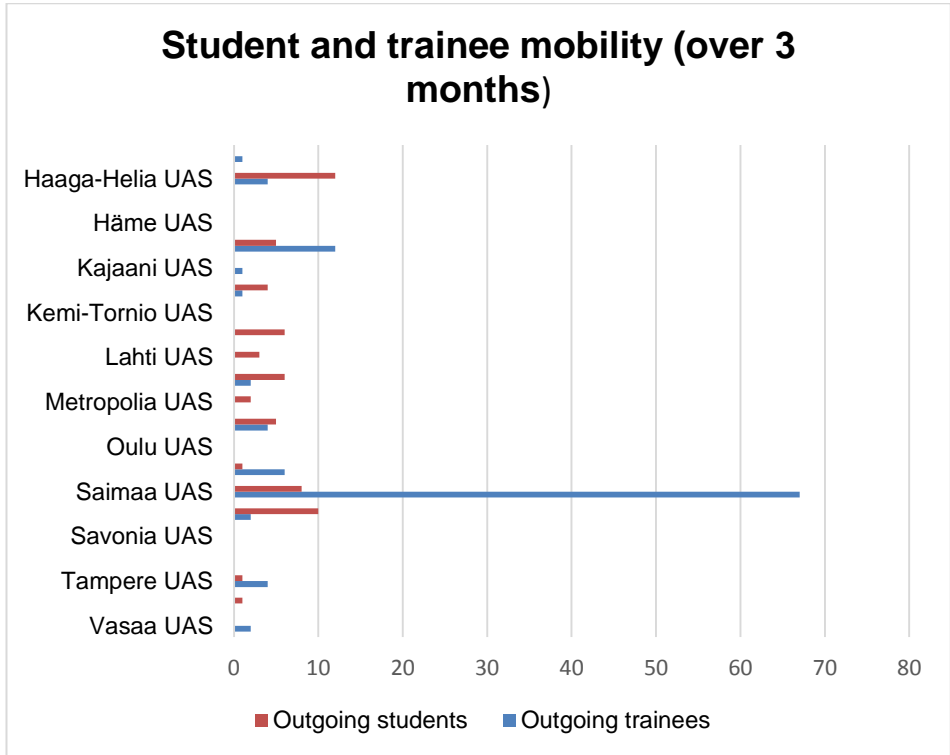


Figure 4. UASs' student and trainee mobility to Russia 2013. (Vipunen Opetushallinnon Tilastopalvelu)

Saimaa UAS is interested in enhancing both outgoing and incoming student, teacher and other staff mobility with partner universities and also in increasing the number of cooperative R&D projects. All students studying in English are obliged to go for a mobility period abroad once during their studies. The number of exchange students is fixed in agreements between cooperating HEIs. Besides target indicators set for mobility, there are also qualitative goals. For example, in case of teacher mobility, it improves professional competence, gives a chance to make new contacts and thus build new opportunities for future R&D projects. (Saimaa University of Applied Sciences 2015.)

Speaking about student international mobility in Russia, the RDI manager was asked about the current tendency among students when it comes to choose the country for the exchange period. According to Kirsi Viskari (2015), the number of students choosing Russia as a host country for international mobility has not dramatically decreased, but attitudes have lately changed most probably because of political and economic instability. It has now become more difficult to attract newcomers to go to Russia, than some time before. It has become more difficult especially with those, who have never been to Russia, and who have very limited knowledge about the destination. They tend to base their attitudes on prejudices, family opinions or even historical antipathy. Some just hesitate everything new. Another reason also comes from lack of cognition. Many people perceive a country, as one homogeneous area. This attitude may apply to any country, but this is of course a wrong way of thinking especially in case of Russia – a country with big ethnic and religious diversity. Literally, it means that students are physically afraid of going to Russia nowadays (even to Saint Petersburg area), because of the current war in Ukraine with direct involvement of Russia, perceiving that war is everywhere. On the other hand, it is also difficult to make people who are more aware about Russia afraid of going there even nowadays, i.e. students who have already been to Russia, who know more about political, economic, educational structures, who are familiar with the culture and mentality are not influenced much even by today's crisis. Therefore, it is more dependable on particular personality, on the individual's educational and family background. (Viskari 2015.)

Kirsi Viskari (2015) discusses that when going on international mobility to Russian HEIs, Finnish students face some difficulties. The language problem appears being the most challenging both in everyday life and studying process. Lack of courses in English offered by Russian universities makes it more complicated to increase the number of students willing to study in Russian institutions. Even for everyday social life, it is essential for a foreigner to know at least some Russian to be able to communicate at a basic level. Thus, international mobility to Russia becomes more suitable and available for Finns with some language knowledge; but usually this knowledge is still not enough to be able to study in a HEI. The cultural aspect also becomes an important challenging issue. Quite significant cultural and mentality differences complicate communication and make habitual way of life change; in fine, it can lead a student to being unsatisfied with the period of stay abroad. Educational and accreditation differences as well as ways of teaching may also have an impact and create an obstacle. Finnish students are not used to lecturing in a form of continuous speech of a professor, which is common in Russian universities. Finnish education system is based on conversational learning and teaching methods, where lectures are organized as interactive discussions. (Viskari 2015.)

According to Kirsi Viskari (2015), there were degree programmes aimed at Finnish students in Saimaa UAS specializing in Russian business with a compulsory exchange period in Russia. They existed until 2008, but later were modified with the purpose of internationalisation. Internationalising the programme attracted many people from abroad and particularly Russian students. This led to the fact that the specialisation in Russia business had to be eliminated from the degree programme; otherwise, the essence of the programme would have been very paradoxical. (Viskari 2015.)

In order to attract Finnish students to Russia information sessions are organized, where students are told about international mobility opportunities, including also exchanges in Russian universities. Saimaa UAS also invites visiting lecturers mostly from Saint Petersburg, so that Finnish students can get acquainted with teaching techniques in Russian institutions, get some cultural ideas and obtain personal perceptions. Nevertheless, Kirsi Viskari (2015)

considers that the best influencing factor can be fellow students who have already studied in Russia or at least have been there. Students can share opinions and it is always more trustworthy than getting just general theoretical information. The other good way that may have an impact is communicating with Russian students coming to Finland. They can share useful educational information, give advice, and create a general image of Russians. Another important factor is also how Finns perceive Russian people. (Viskari 2015.)

Speaking about teacher international mobility, the attitude of Finnish lecturers towards teaching in Russia is generally positive, except only for those who originally have a skeptic view on everything new. Hesitation can also take place here. Among challenges that teachers face when lecturing in Russian universities the language obstacle comes first. The majority of students has quite a good level of English, but communication with Russian colleagues is still complicated. As it has already been mentioned before, teaching methods differ between the countries, so it might be challenging for the Finnish teachers to get the Russian students to participate in discussions. They might be simply unaccustomed to such learning techniques. (Viskari 2015.)

3.3 Internationalisation strategy of Kajaani UAS

As it is stated on the website of Kajaani UAS, Kajaani UAS's three main focus areas are activity tourism, games and vehicle information systems; those directions provide the university with "*international competence, visibility and impact*". There are five areas of competence, which form the organizational structure of Kajaani UAS: activity tourism, information systems, business and innovations, nursing and health care and mechanical and mining engineering; those dimensions are connected to the focus areas by competences. According to Kajaani UAS's website, the strategy of the university is adopted to regional strategies and needs of the Kainuu region. The national policy for the higher education is considered and implemented along with the promotion of own university position as a part of Finnish higher education community. (Kajaani University of Applied Sciences 2015.)

Mikko Keränen (2015), Development Manager in Activity Tourism of Kajaani UAS, assures that research and development in activity tourism focuses on five

core themes: smart tourism and sport services, cross-border tourism services, developing competitiveness of tourism and sport SMEs, physical activity and health enhancement, and developing operational environment of outdoor activities. According to information provided on the website of Kajaani UAS, under cross-border tourism services there are four projects aiming at developing cooperation with Russia.

In the framework of the RestoRus project a degree programme in tourism aimed for native Russian speakers has been launched in Kajaani UAS in order to increase the number of Russian tourists, which has significantly decreased during 2014. Among the aims of the project are attracting more Russian and Russian speaking incomers, strengthening their position in labor market, improving their education and competence, making tourism business more rival and better adopting the services for Russian tourists. Tandem studies are used with the purpose that Finnish and Russian students study together and assist each other in their studying. The White Road project has been launched with the purpose to develop cross-border tourism in the North of Finland and in the Karelian Republic. The goal of the project is to expand incoming tourism in Kainuu, Kuusamo and the Karelian Republic through producing new travel goods of high quality that meet the needs of contemporary Russian, Finnish or Central European customers, and most importantly are obtained with ease. The Russian Tourism Competence Needs in Future project aims at evaluating the competitive position of Russian tourism in Kainuu and collating it to other regions, making a “portrait” of Russian tourists and detection of opinions of tourism experts regarding the needs and competence on Russian tourism. (Kajaani University of Applied Sciences 2015.) From Borders to Shared Space – BOSS is the fourth project under cross-border tourism services. It has already been discussed in the introduction chapter.

Petri Muje (2015), Project Manager in Kajaani UAS, claims that the university is building up the internationalisation “horizontally” inside the so called “development areas”. The internationalisation strategy is not defined as such, but it is implemented through R&D activities, which include strengthening cooperation with strategic international partners, planning and developing new international projects, financing marketing and student and staff exchange

activities. The Kainuu region has a long border with Russia therefore, *“cooperation with Russians is a part of everyday life”* (Muje 2015). According to Petri Muje (2015), it is important that the university is able to provide students and local companies with the information on cooperation, business environment, etc. about Russia. Kajaani UAS has several strategic partner universities in Russia; students and staff exchange activities are actively maintained with them. Kajaani UAS has also been involved in several ENPI-projects* with Russian partners, including development of organizations, municipalities, regions, etc. (Muje 2015.)

As Petri Muje (2015) states that it is still quite common among Finnish students and staff members to choose Russia as exchange destination, but the willingness among students has not been high though, if compared to other destinations. As one of the main reasons of unwillingness, Petri Muje (2015) considers lack of Russian language skills. Besides daily language issues, Mikko Keränen (2015) also states safety reasons.

According to Petri Muje (2015), the situation with outgoing exchange to Russia has not dramatically deteriorated; there has been a slight change in attitudes though. Political and economic situation in Ukraine and Russia is currently under discussion, and it has a negative impact on people, especially on those, who have had prejudices and doubts about Russia before. The situation in Russia and Ukraine has been seen as a sort of threat for Finland both politically and economically, being expressed primarily in trade reduction, dramatic decrease in tourism and shopping activities. This creates uncertainty about the future and causes rumors. Petri Muje (2015) assumes that the main challenge for Kajaani UAS towards developing cooperation with Russia is to assure people under the existing political and economic climate that grass-root activities will go on and cooperation is essential.

* The Karelia ENPI CBC Programme is a cross-border cooperation programme implemented in the regions Kainuu, North Karelia and Oulu in Finland and in the republic of Karelia in Russia. The key objective of the programme is to increase wellbeing in the programme region with cross-border cooperation (Karelia ENPI CBC).

As Petri Muje (2015) states, Kajaani UAS tries to assure students and staff that everyday cooperation can be separated from the political environment and provides practical information about planned international activities. According to Mikko Keränen (2015), the promotion is mainly based on funding tools provided by international support training programs; outgoing students to Russia are financially supported with over 500 euros per month. Especially considering the amount of financial support, Kajaani UAS promotes Russia as a cheap place to stay due to current low value of ruble, and as a country with rich history and distinctive culture (Muje 2015).

According to Mikko Keränen (2015), the faculty of Tourism has several partner universities in Russia, mainly in Moscow, Saint Petersburg, and Petrozavodsk. 1-2 teachers from the faculty of Tourism go on exchange period to Russian HEIs every year. The university also regularly has visiting lecturers from Russia, which also serve as a promotional tool for Finnish students and staff members. However, the faculty experiences low number of outgoing students to Russia; trainee mobility is more popular among students. The university has several partner companies, and on average 2 students per year go on training period to Russia. The university has also cooperation agreements on entrance examinations with Russian partner HEIs (e.g. in Saint Petersburg), which facilitate the application procedure for Russian nationals. (Keränen 2015.)

General mobility figures to Russia are very small. The university normally sends 1 teacher and welcomes 1 visiting lecturer per year; students go to Russia very seldom – 1-2 people per year. Nevertheless, Russia is a very popular destination for 5-day study trips in Saint Petersburg. (Kaikkonen 2015.)

3.4 Internationalisation strategy of Karelia UAS

The website of Karelia UAS states that the university determines its strategic priorities aiming to get competence and expertise recognized at both national and international levels. Like the two universities discussed above, Karelia UAS focuses on areas depending on its own needs and strengths as well as demands of the region. The selection is connected to education, RDI and service activities, and it is also decided together with the main partners. Among

the focus areas of Karelia UAS are renewable energy, competence in aging, Russia-competence, precision engineering, multimedia services, and wood construction. Karelia UAS has partners nationally and internationally; they make a big contribution in performing and realizing these priorities. (Karelia University of Applied Sciences 2015.)

In order to acquire more detailed information on international cooperation and mobility to Russia, the author has interviewed Sanna Jeskanen, the International Relations Coordinator of Karelia UAS. According to Sanna Jeskanen (2015), enhancing teaching in English, activating student and teacher mobility, maintaining strategic partnerships with selected foreign partner universities, and increasing the number of students on double degrees are the priorities of the internationalisation strategy in the Karelia UAS. As Sanna Jeskanen (2015) states, Karelia UAS focuses on cooperation with Saint Petersburg and Petrozavodsk areas. *“Naturally it is important to know the culture and business life in neighboring areas”* (Jeskanen 2015). However, Sanna Jeskanen (2015) claims that even though the university focuses on cooperation with Russia it is not very common among students to choose Russia as an exchange destination country. *“Students rather choose countries, which are more different and also warmer as a climate”* (Jeskanen 2015).

In contrary to students, close geographical location of Russia can be a benefit for teachers who have a lack of time and difficulties with fitting teacher exchange into the curriculum. Some teachers might not be able to leave their families for a long time; therefore, mobility to a neighboring country can be a solution.

According to statistics provided by Sanna Jeskanen (2015), about 4 students per year and 6 teachers per year go on international mobility to partner Russian HEIs, and the number has not decreased lately; *“it seems that the political and economic situation does not influence the interest”* (Jeskanen 2015). Jeskanen (2015) considers that the language issue prevents Finnish students and teachers from choosing Russia as an exchange destination. International Relations Coordinator suggests Russian universities doing more marketing and providing more information about the exchange possibilities in English.

3.5 Internationalisation strategy of Lapland UAS

According to Veli Juola (2015), Director of Education Development of Lapland UAS, the university does not have a separate internationalisation strategy as such. In regard to internationality, Lapland UAS has areas of emphasis – Arctic cooperation and cross-border expertise. The university concentrates on partnership in the Arctic area and is looking for partners in the Barents region. Together with Oulu UAS, Lapland UAS is an active member of the University of the Arctic (UArctic)*. Members of the University of the Arctic are universities of northern parts of countries like Norway, Sweden, Russia, USA, Iceland, etc. The Headquarter of the University of The Arctic is in Rovaniemi – Lapland UAS is holding the secretariat of the University of the Arctic. (Juola 2015.)

The focus on cooperation with Russia is developed in the Barents region and through the University of the Arctic. Lapland UAS has partner agreements with Russian universities in Murmansk, Arkhangelsk, Syktyvkar and others. Mainly those are agreements with technical universities (in Murmansk), but there are also contacts to other areas, e.g. with the University of Syktyvkar on the forestry education. During the last two years there were not many cooperation activities going on with the University of Syktyvkar, though. All the three universities are members of the University of the Arctic. HEIs develop their cooperation through thematic groups, i.e. different departments (e.g. health care, technology, etc.) organize different types of cooperation activities by themselves. (Juola 2015.)

There are short teacher exchange visits and also student mobility to Russia, but in fact it is difficult to send people there, and the indicators of mobility to Russia are very low. Only about 1 or 2 students per year choose Russia as a country for international mobility, and 1 or 2 teachers per year visit Russia for lecturing. The number of 1-2 week teacher visits that do not include teaching in a host institution is higher, though – 4-5 teaching staff members per year. The main problem is the language obstacle. English is not so well spoken in Russian HEIs, especially by the older professors. (Juola 2015.)

*The University of the Arctic (UArctic) is a cooperative network of universities, colleges, research institutes and other organizations concerned with education and research in and about the North (UArctic 2015).

Likewise, Finnish students do not speak Russian, and this makes it impossible to not only study, but also to cope with daily issues outside the university. For teachers the language issue also becomes the cornerstone. Very few Finnish teachers are able to speak Russian so that their knowledge is enough to let them teach. Communicating with colleagues becomes also problematic, as English skills are inadequate among professors in Russian HEIs. (Juola 2015.)

The political development nowadays does not appear to be the main reason that prevents from going to Russia. It is obvious that it also affects the attitudes, but mainly people are monitoring and wondering what is going to happen in the near future. But, if looking back and abstract from today's reality, the language issue has always been the biggest barrier. Therefore, neither economic, financial nor any other concern is such an obstacle as a language impediment. (Juola 2015.)

There are different types of joint projects run by partner universities together, and there are visiting groups organized under those projects usually for a one-week period. Therefore, both Finnish and Russian students visit host institutions inside those groups on a short-term basis, but normal long-term student mobility is still baffling. (Juola 2015.)

According to Veli Juola (2015), there are no separate Russian mobility weeks or other activities promoting student exchange in Russia. The promotion is made together with other exchange programmes, and student support to go to Russia is done in the same way as introducing other destinations. In fact, there is no special treatment to any programme or place; students are equally aware and informed about all exchange opportunities. However, there are own university resources reserved to support mobility to Russia; students are provided with monthly allowance and coverage of travel expenses. (Juola 2015.)

4 Empirical Research

The practical part of the thesis is based on surveys that were conducted among students and teachers in Kajaani UAS, Karelia UAS, Saimaa UAS and Lapland UAS. This chapter discusses the research methods used, describes how the

questionnaires were created as well as analysis of the results is provided. The analysis describes the attitudes of Finnish students and teachers towards international mobility in Russia, the reasons preventing them from going there and the factors which would positively affect their motivation to study or teach in Russia. Finally, the chapter is concluded with the author's ideas and suggestions on how student and teacher mobility to Russia can be increased.

Since the inductive logic is applied for conducting this research, the received information and detailed knowledge acquired from the theoretical part and the results generated from the questionnaires create a general knowledge and define the answers to the research questions.

4.1 Research method

The author is using a survey method for acquiring empirical data. As it has been already mentioned earlier, the qualitative method is the dominating one throughout the research and particularly in conducting the surveys. Because, the emphasis is on data description and the information is received in form of words, the qualitative method is selected. The purpose is to evaluate the attitudes of students and teachers towards mobility in Russia and to understand the reasons that might prevent them from going there. Subjective data interpretation is involved when using qualitative approach, as the author has her own perception of the answers, and therefore, inevitably adds her vision of the phenomenon. However, quantitative method is also used, as the author considers it important to determine the ratio of students and teachers, who see mobility to Russia positively relatively to those who have negative attitudes. Therefore, mathematical and statistical analyzing tools are also applied. The data is represented in numerical form, using percentages and numbers. Furthermore, the author does not express any opinions when using the quantitative approach.

Surveys are suitable when it is needed to collect information from target audience at first hand. If there is a necessity to acquire information regarding people's feelings, beliefs, attitudes, values, motives, habits, prejudices, personal background, etc. surveys appear to be a very suitable tool. Surveys are also

helpful when it is needed to evaluate some activities, programmes, to work out a plan (e.g. improvement plan), etc. (Fink & Kosecoff 1985, pp.13-15.)

Based on these features, the author has found a survey as the ideally suitable tool for conducting empirical research.

When creating a survey there are some cornerstones that the author has paid attention to. According to Fink & Kosecoff (1985), it is very important to evaluate which questions are appropriate relatively to the survey method used. This means that if the potential information received from the questions can best be obtained from other sources or by using observations or other methods, these questions should not be asked and considered not applicable for the survey. That is, only questions which only respondents can say how they feel about something, how they perceive something, etc. should be asked.

The most important issue when conducting self-administered surveys is to make them maximally clear and understandable, so that supervision is not needed (Fink & Kosecoff 1985, p.16). Therefore, many questions in both surveys have question description under the question itself. The survey should be well-structured and contain general directions, i.e. if all questions are to be answered by every respondent (Fink & Kosecoff 1985, p.16). The surveys are divided into 3 question categories (discussed in the next chapter), which serve as a direction for the questionnaires. In addition, compulsory questions are marked with the asterisk sign for this purpose.

The response rate consideration is also crucial. As Fink & Kosecoff (1985) state, the response rate is a subjective matter when a survey is not done statistically, and it follows the principle "the higher the better". Even though the author is also using statistical analyzing tools, the emphasis is on data description and deeper understanding of attitudes and reasons. Therefore, there is no fixed response rate, assuming that the more answers it is received, the more believable the results can be considered.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to know the total number of students, participating: in Saimaa UAS 6 faculties are covered, which amounts to 1650 students, in Kajaani UAS and Karelia UAS solely the faculty of Tourism is encompassed,

which is 200 and 180 students respectively, and in Lapland UAS there are 5262 students in four participating faculties.

Finally, it is useful and beneficial to take care of the number of responses received. There are several means to provide a high response rate. Making a survey short and incentive usage can ensure it. (Fink & Kosecoff 1985, p.18.) The latter has been used by the author.

The questionnaires were created by the author and distributed to respondents in all of the four Universities of Applied Sciences. The surveys were open for responding during two-week period.

4.2 Structure of the questionnaires

The self-administered e-mail questionnaire method was selected for conducting the surveys. It appeared to be the most convenient way when it comes to interviewing large sample groups, and especially when respondents are in scattered places geographically, like in this case, all the four universities are located in different parts of Finland. This method also guarantees anonymity, which in this case is of high importance.

According to Linda B.Bourque & Eve P.Fielder (2003), self-administered surveys should be smaller in the number of questions than questionnaires conducted using other survey methods. Therefore, the author has structured the questionnaire very specifically and only included those questions that are of applicable relevance and that could provide the necessary information regarding the research phenomenon. Thus, the questionnaire for students consists of 16 questions; questionnaire for teaching staff includes 13 questions.

The questions are categorized into three sections: background questions, attitude (towards mobility in Russia) measuring questions, and changing the attitude towards Russia mobility.

Self-administered e-mail surveys should be made up of mostly closed-ended questions, as very few respondents are motivated to type answers by themselves (Bourque B. & Fielder P. 2003, p.20). Therefore, "background" section includes mostly simple selection questions e.g. about gender, UAS,

study programme, year of study, determining the desire of a student to go on international mobility and particularly to Russia; finding out if a student has ever been to Russia; one open-ended question is added in order to find out the reasons for the wish or unwillingness to study in Russia. In addition, with the purpose to avoid irrelevant data, the author has limited the number of open-ended questions to only one. Therefore, the question about the reasons is the only open-ended question in the whole survey. Moreover, together with the gender question it is voluntary. Background questions in teacher survey are similar except for the questions concerning a study programme and year of studies, which were left out. Totally, there are 8 questions in the “background” category in the survey for students and 6 questions in the questionnaire for teaching staff.

The “Attitude measuring” category consists of scale selection and multi selection questions. This part of the questionnaire is aimed at finding out about attitudes and opinions about Russia as an exchange destination country. The questions are formulated based on the theoretical part of the thesis – using the information gathered from the interviews as well as from secondary sources, regarding the benefits of mobility, motivational factors, and possible obstacles preventing Finns to go on international mobility to Russia. The options are already offered to respondents – again with the purpose to minimize open-ended questions and avoid obtaining irrelevant data. There is also a question which aims to learn the attitudes of Finns when it comes to mobility in Russia: they are offered a list of descriptive nouns and adjectives, among which they can choose the ones that suit their attitudes the most. Thus, it is easier to get the idea how Finns perceive Russia, and it also facilitates analysis of the results. Both student and teacher surveys have 3 questions in this category.

“Changing the attitude” section is created with the purpose to determine if students and teaching staff receive enough information about Russia, what information they would want to receive more, and which factors and activities organized by UASs would affect their motivation to study or teach in Russia. The answer options are also based on the theoretical findings and personal ideas of the author. This category is also formed with the scale selection and multi selection type of questions. There are 5 questions in the “attitude

changing” section in the student survey and 4 questions in the survey for teaching staff.

There was an incentive used to enhance the response rate among students. Several free lunches were raffled in a lottery; the incentive usage was sponsored by the UASs.

A separate form for providing contact information of respondents participating in the lottery was created. It was delivered separately being not connected with the answers, i.e. the questionnaires were anonymous.

5 Student survey analysis

5.1 “Background” category analysis

Totally 132 student opinions were received. Women were more active respondents – they formed 66% of the total number of the answers. Lapland UAS and Saimaa UAS were the most active participants – they made up 49% and 36% respectively. The majority of the answers were given by students of the faculties of Business Administration (29%), Health Care (20%), and Tourism (11%). The survey has shown that 1st and 2nd year students more actively participate in the surveys; this might be caused by students’ interest and plans to go abroad, while 3rd or 4th year students have already been on exchange or are not interested in it at all.

The biggest share of students (58%) is not planning to go on international mobility; 30% would like to go on exchange and the minority of respondents (12%) has already been studying abroad (see Table 4).

	Percent
Planning to go on exchange	30%
Not going	58%
Already been	12%

Table 4. The ratio of probability of doing student exchange.

Students who are planning to go or have already been on exchange mainly name European countries among their priorities. Among the most frequently named are the Netherlands, Germany and English speaking countries like United Kingdom and Ireland. Apart from European countries, there is a common tendency that Finns would like to go further away and therefore, choose more exotic and warm countries, like Asian, South American states, or even Australia and New Zealand. As Table 5 shows, only one respondent is about to do student exchange in Russia and one has already studied there. A big number of respondents form a separate category – they are planning to go on exchange, but are not sure about the destination, yet. This can be explained by the fact that most of respondents are 1st year students.

	Planning to go (N)	Have been (N)
Netherlands	6	1
Germany	6	
United Kingdom	6	1
Spain	4	1
Ireland	3	
Hungary	3	
Asian countries	3	
France	2	
Thailand	1	3
Iceland	1	1
Russia	1	1
Italy	1	1
Turkey	1	
Switzerland	1	
Denmark	1	
Australia	1	
New Zealand	1	
South America	1	
Portugal		2
Belgium		1

Sweden		1
Indonesia		1
Slovakia		1
No exact destination yet	6	

Table 5. Preferable exchange destinations among students.

Among those countries where students have been on exchange, Thailand and Portugal were named the most. This proves the fact that Finns tend to choose countries far away and with more different and warmer climate. European countries stay the most popular, though: Spain, Italy, Belgium, Sweden, England, the Netherlands are among preferable exchange destinations, while only one student has been on international mobility to Russia.

Surprisingly, most of the students are unwilling to go for studies abroad. They name various reasons for that. Table 6 illustrates the reasons of not doing student exchange in order of their frequency among student opinions:

	Respondents (N)
Graduating soon: no time for mobility anymore	14
Family issue: small children	13
No interest	11
Financial concerns: mobility is expensive	7
Unwillingness to quit a job	3
Inadequate English language skills	3
Mobility will slow the graduation down.	3
Unwillingness to leave behind accommodation	3
Mobility is too long.	2
Doing a practical training abroad is better.	2
Trusting Finnish education more	2
Other reasons	14

Table 6. Impediments for international mobility among students.

As it becomes clear from Table 6, very many students are graduating in the near future, and there is no chance for student mobility anymore. This appears to be the most important impediment among the response group. Family concerns are nearly of the same importance for students when considering student exchange. Most of the answers contain information on small children and/or unwillingness to leave a spouse. The results have shown that very many respondents do not feel the need to go abroad and are not interested in mobility. Besides, there is also a financial reason, as going abroad appears to be expensive for a lot of respondents. There are also other reasons named; they can be found in the results extract (see Appendix 4).

Based on the answers received, only 26% of respondents perceive Russia as a country for student exchange positively, 21% of students have neutral attitudes and doubts, while 53% have negative perception (see Table 7).

	N	Percent
Definitely Yes	11	8.33%
Most likely Yes	23	17.42%
I don't know	28	21.21%
Most likely No	39	29.55%
Definitely No	31	23.48%

Table 7. The ratio of probability of doing student exchange in Russia.

5.2 “Attitude measuring” category analysis

This subchapter discusses the questions concerning doing international mobility in Russia. The students’ perception of Russia is described; main motivational factors and obstacles are revealed. The author will only speak about the most important factors influencing students’ attitudes and decisions; the full version of answers is attached as appendix 4. The author also adds direct citations of students’ sayings to clarify the attitudes as accurately as possible.

5.2.1 Motivational factors

Figure 5 illustrates the main factors, motivating students to go on mobility to Russia. The results come from the open-ended question, which was voluntary, therefore 107 out of 132 responses are taken as total.

Learning about culture is the main motivator among those willing to study in Russia. Respondents consider a country and its culture very interesting and attractive. Learning the Russian language is nearly of the same importance. 10% of students are interested to learn or are already learning Russian and consider it as a very useful language in Finland. Finally, visiting new places and admiring beautiful Russian cities and nature are considered important motivators as well.

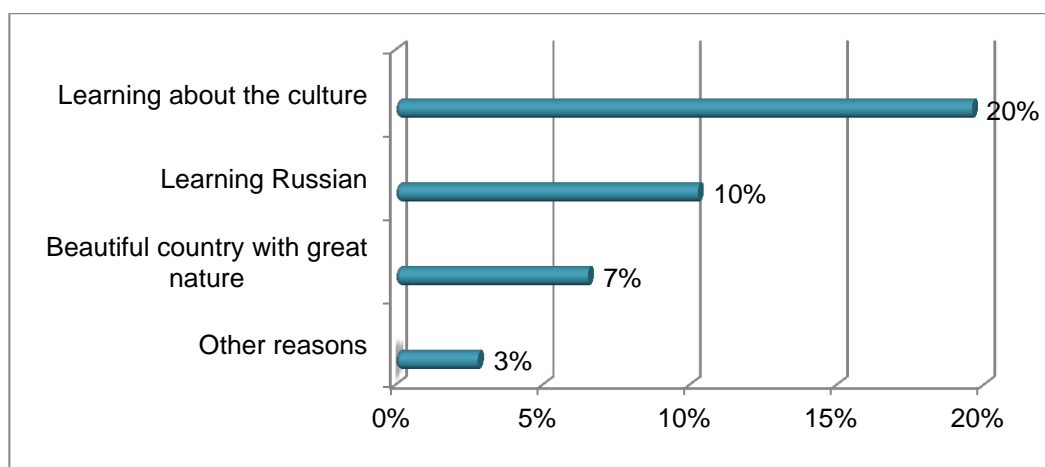


Figure 5. Motivational factors for student mobility to Russia.

5.2.2 Obstacles

However, the biggest share of answers for the open-ended question is negative. Students state a lot of obstacles hampering their mobility to Russia. The author has gathered the most important impediments and structured them in the table 8. The obstacles are listed in order of their importance:

	Number	Percent
Language barrier	29	27%
Political situation in Russia	21	20%
Unsafe and unsecure place	13	12%

Not interested in country and its culture	10	9%
Too close geographically. Prefer to go more far away	6	6%
Bad opinions and experiences of friends	4	4%
Corruption and discrimination	4	4%
Too different culture	4	4%
No trust in police and militias	3	3%
Other reasons	13	12%

Table 8. Obstacles for student mobility in Russia.

Lack of Russian language skills among Finnish students is the biggest obstacle for doing international mobility in Russia: *“Language is the main reason. I prefer places where people speak language that I already know a bit”; “I don’t know Russian, and the language barrier would probably be too high for me”; “Russian is so hard language”*. Finns do not feel able to cope with even daily issues when being in Russia. Along with that, most of Russians do not speak English, which makes mobility not only challenging, but almost impossible for foreigners.

Political and economic instability is also on the top of the list of impediments. Especially the political situation nowadays and Ukrainian crisis contribute to creating a negative image of the country. Russian politics is judged and blamed by most of the respondents: *“I see Russia a little bit scary because of the crisis in Ukraine, corruption”; “I’ll blame the Russian politics and how they treat other countries like they are just their playground. Russian is a big no”; “Russia is sadly famous for its dangerous politics... The state of human rights and freedom of speech in Russia is so low at the moment, that I feel no desire to visit Russia before things there change for the better”; “The things I hear on the news about Russia give me a negative image of the country and its politics”; “Current political situation in Russia is worrying. Russian government made anti-Finland propaganda”*.

The third most important obstacle is a safety concern. Russia is also considered unsecure and even a scary country: *“I don’t think Russia is a safe place to go. You can’t really trust even to militias. There is corruption and discrimination”; “I see Russia as not a very safe place to explore on your own as a female”; “The*

country isn't interesting to me. There are countries that have more interesting culture and that are safer than Russia".

Many students said they are simply not interested in the country and its culture. They are more interested in other countries and places to go to and preferably more far geographically. The rest of the reasons were named rarer.

However, bad opinions and experiences of friends or fellow students also negatively affect students' attitudes and decisions. Students also think that Russian culture is very different, which can cause misunderstandings and cultural clashes. More detailed opinions can be found in the appendix 4.

When examining the simple selection question, where students were given several statements describing Russia and mobility there, the author has picked out the statements that have the biggest gap between being true or false according to student opinions, i.e. the majority of respondents' opinions coincide about a particular statement.

Based on Table 9, it is possible to make a parallel with the answers given to the open-ended question. The statements, in which the majority of student opinions coincide, appear either as motivational factors or obstacles for mobility in the open-ended question. That is, learning and experiencing about Russian culture and studying the Russian language are the motives that 80% and 89% of respondents respectively agree on.

The same can be seen regarding the obstacles. The language barrier, political situation together with Ukrainian issue and seeing Russia as unsafe place are the top impediments.

	True	False
Studying in Russia could be interesting.	80%	20%
My Russian is not good enough to go to Russia.	80%	20%
Russia is unsafe.	69%	31%

Current social, political and economic instability in Russia scares me and prevents from going.	71%	30%
I would like to learn about Russian culture.	80%	20%
I could learn Russian while being in Russia.	90%	11%
Rumors about Russian-Ukrainian situation negatively affect my attitude.	73%	27%
Russia is somewhat different. This motivates me to go.	61%	39%

Table 9. Survey statements on mobility in Russia.

There are also other statements that were offered to students, which also reveal their attitudes, but the difference in opinions is more significant. Therefore, the author is considering those factors as important, but not decisive and for that reasons is not presenting them here; the full results are stated in appendix 4.

Observing Figure 6 and analyzing the results received from the multi selection question, most frequent association among students is that going to Russia is interesting (61%). 58% of respondents consider Russia unsafe; and 46% – a difficult destination. The latter might imply numerous bureaucratic arrangements connected to mobility in general and especially to Russia. This impediment was named by respondents in the open-ended question, but was not deeply analyzed as it is quite a rare reason. Insurance and visa requirements might be implicated here as well, different currency, laws and other practices.

38% consider Russia as a good way for learning and maybe even experiencing challenges. 36% of respondents are of the opinion that Russia is frightening and 35% – it is old-fashioned and of low quality.

It is interesting to note that along with the fact that most of prevailing associations are negative, the majority of respondents consider Russia as an interesting destination for exchange and a chance to learn for life. It is also a good opportunity of planning international career and/or obtaining experience in Russia, which Finnish employers see as a great advantage (see Figure 6).

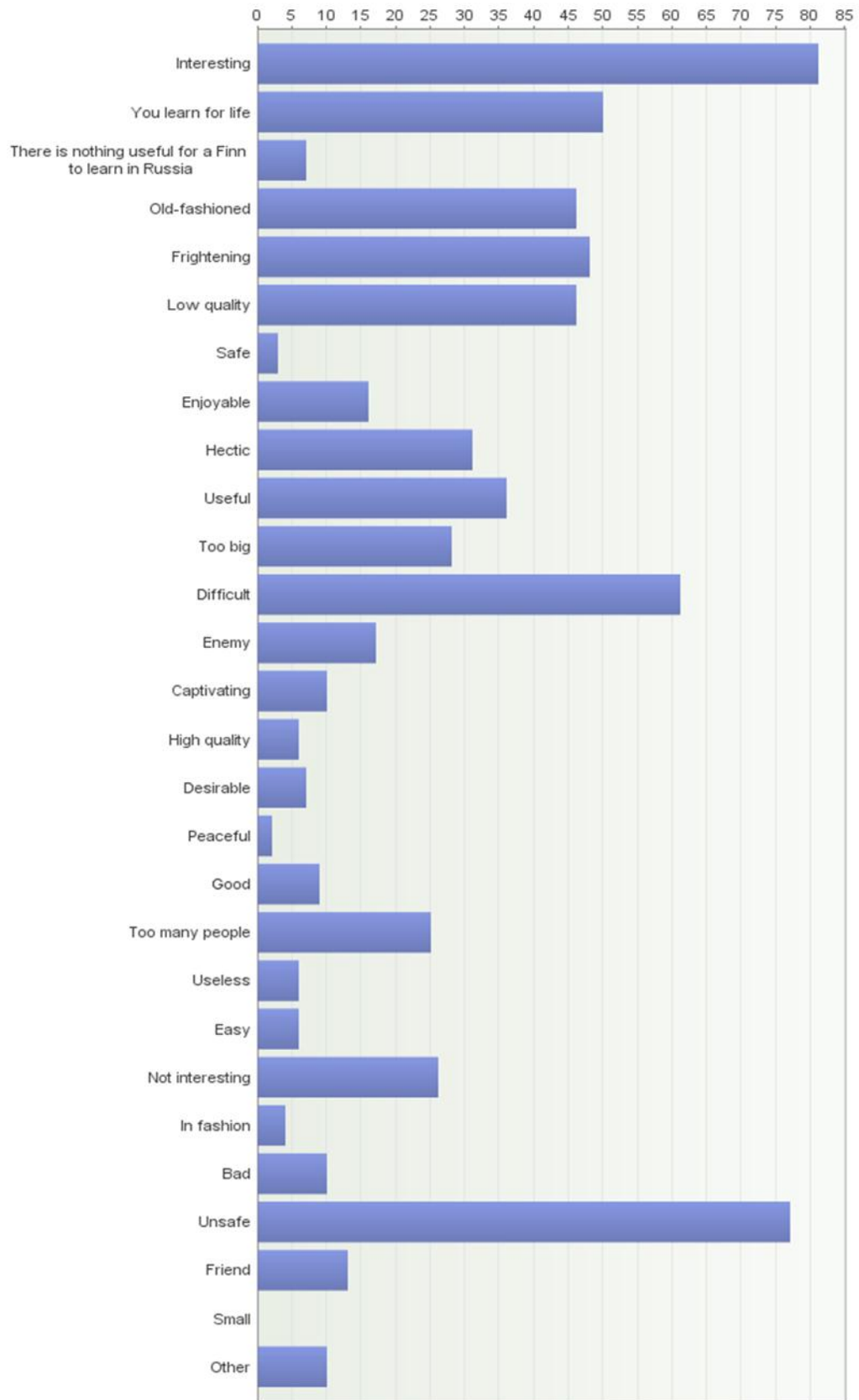


Figure 6. Students' associations with Russia.

5.3 “Changing the attitude” category analysis

The analysis of the next few questions is aimed to find out how mobility to Russia can be improved, which activities should be done more, and which factors influence students’ motivation and decision making.

56% of respondents think they do not receive enough information about Russia, while 44% consider they are informed enough.

Figure 7 shows what information students would like to receive more about Russia. The most needed one is on how to live and study in Russia (73%), 62% of respondents would be interested to know more about Russian culture and are also willing to study the Russian language. Since, there is usually not enough courses offered in Russian HEIs in English, 60% state that Russian universities should do more marketing and announce more courses held in English as well as provide information about available universities. In the open-text field answers it was mentioned that information about financial support provided when going to Russia should be announced and promoted more.

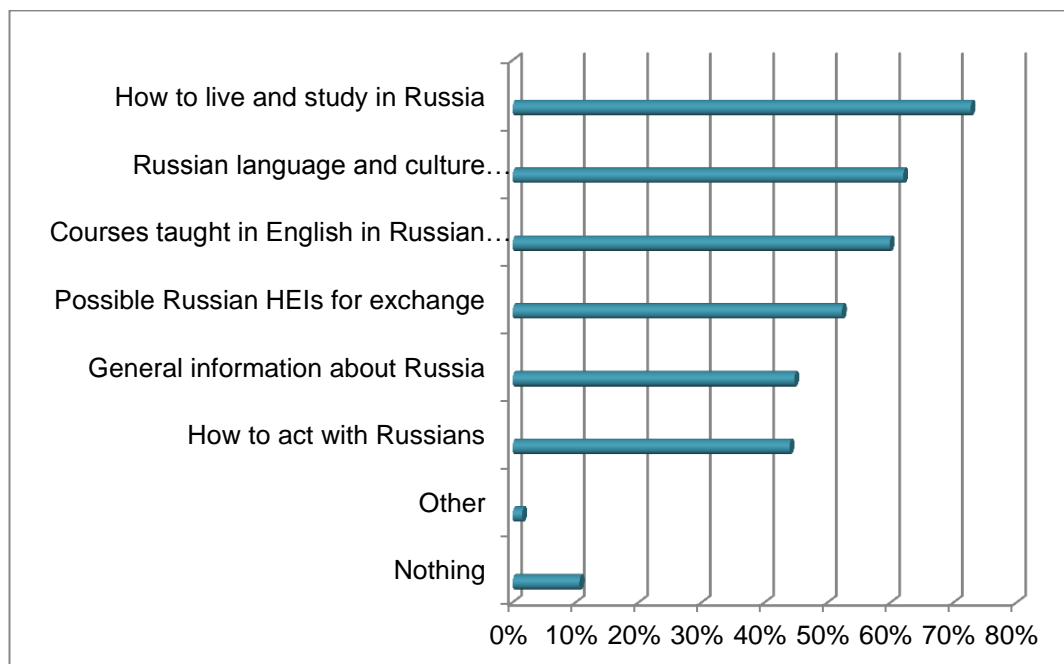


Figure 7. Desired information about Russia among students.

As shown in Table 10, the political situation and Russian-Ukrainian conflict have the most negative impact on students (77% and 76% of students respectively).

The rest of the factors do not show so dramatic indicators. However, there are activities that can promote and contribute to the increase of the mobility to Russia. 77% of students consider that positive experience of fellow students or any other people who have been to Russia can positively affect their attitude. Communicating with Russian students in Finland or making friends with them can also make a positive impact, as Finnish students can obtain personal perception of Russians and find out about studying environment and teaching methods used in Russia. 72% of respondents state that the culture and history of the country attract them, and the same figure applies to organizing trips to Russia. Visiting lecturers from Russian HEIs and organizing Russian language studies can also help to improve the situation.

	Positive	Negative	Doesn't matter
Russian visiting lecturers (exchange teachers)	82	3	47
Trips to Russia	95	8	29
Communicating with Russian exchange and degree students in Finland	97	8	27
Social Media	36	46	50
Political situation	8	102	22
Economical situation	16	84	32
Russian language studies organized in the UAS	69	11	52
International office's advertisements	47	9	76
Positive experience of fellow students/other people who have been to Russia	102	4	26
Russia is a country with rich history and distinctive culture.	95	5	32
Russian-Ukrainian issue	4	100	28
Visa and insurance requirements	9	70	53
Different currency	4	34	94
Total	664	484	568

Table 10. Factors affecting student attitude.

5.4 Suggestions on improvement

In this sub-chapter, the author will make suggestions on how to increase student mobility to Russia among Finnish students. The author is summarizing the answers received from the questionnaire as well as tells her own thoughts about the subject.

Firstly, the information illustrated in Figure 7 should be provided to students more intensely. Secondly, there are activities that could be done in order to increase the number of outgoing students to Russia. They are summarized in Figure 8:

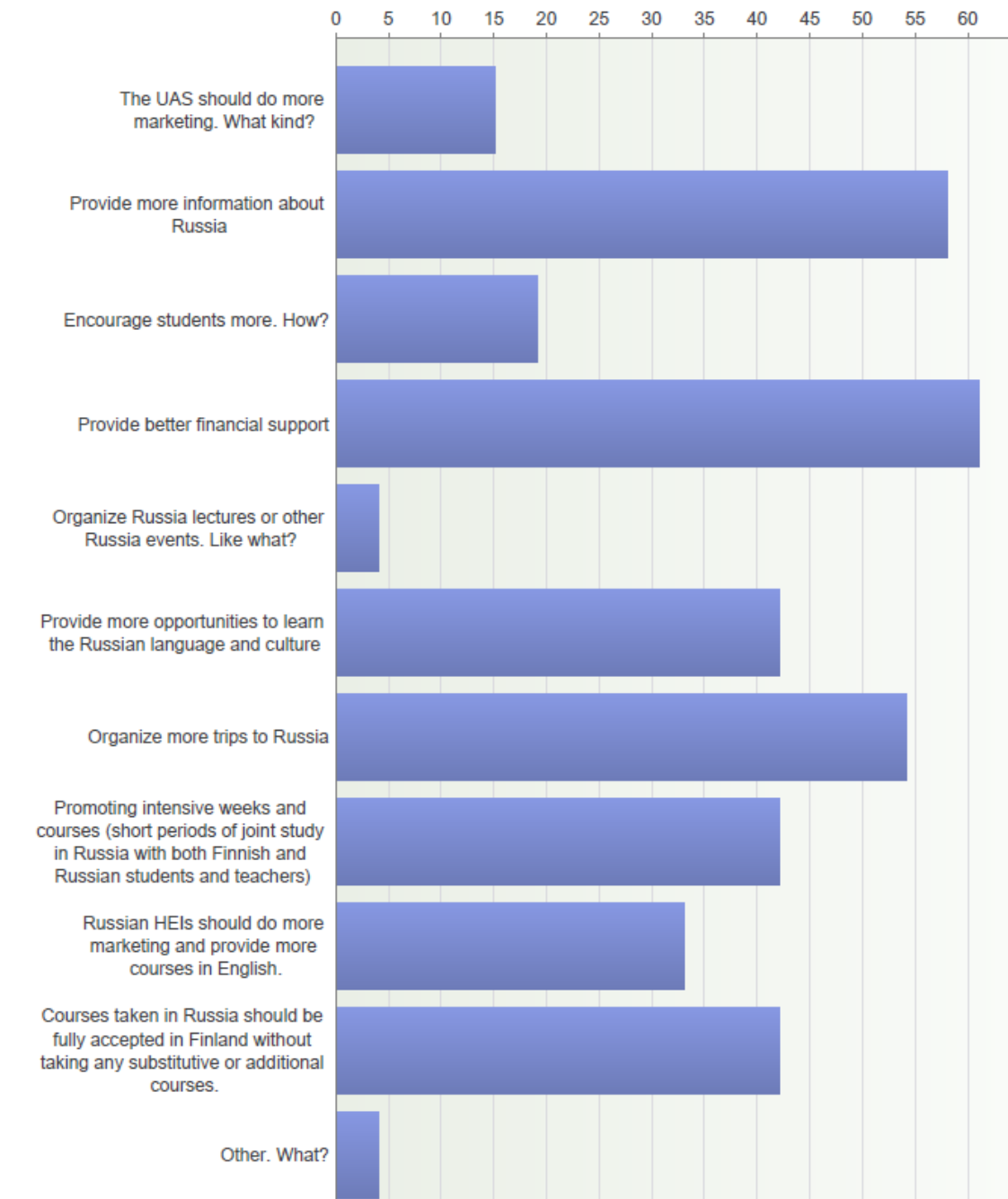


Figure 8. Activities for increasing student mobility to Russia.

- Financial support appears to be the most important for students. They wish to be supported financially better and be provided with information on support more intensely.
- Providing general information about Russia takes the second place.
- Students are also of the opinion that organized trips to Russia can turn the situation into a positive direction; there should be better timing for the trips, though.

- Students would like that both UASs and Russian HEIs do more marketing as there is far more marketing done for European exchange. Most importantly, students lack information about possibilities of studies in Russia, i.e. information about schools, courses available in English, teaching techniques used, etc.
- The universities should point out reasons and advantages of doing exchange in Russia.
- Also better practical support from teachers should be provided; it would be better if one teacher could help a student through the whole process of preparations instead of making a student moving between 3-5 teachers.
- Studies of the Russian language and culture must be necessarily organized. As it was discussed earlier, the language barrier is the main obstacle for students. Lectures and courses on Russian relations should be organized and promoted among students.

Along with the language impediment, the political situation takes a prominent place in the list. It is obvious that a university is unable to influence the mobility from that point of view, but from the educational perspective, **organizing Russia information sessions** for students can contribute to improving mobility quite significantly. When working on the theoretical part and interviewing university representatives, the author has found out that there are no separate information sessions held promoting student exchange in Russia in any of the four UASs. Mobility to Russia is promoted together with other exchange possibilities and students are equally aware of all of them. Taking into account the theoretical knowledge and the results of the student survey the author is of the opinion that mobility to Russia cannot follow the same principles as European student exchange. The same principle applies to mobility promotion. Along with the major reasons (language, political, safety reason), there are obstacles that are not decisive, but still may affect student decisions negatively, e.g. the fact that Russia is a non-European country entails visa and insurance obligations, as well as different currency might also complicate mobility. Thus, it becomes clear that advertising Russia mobility in the same way and together with other exchange programmes is not enough. Therefore, the author suggests

holding separate lectures for Russia mobility promotion, where students will be informed about possibilities for studies, studying environment and learning methods used in Russian HEIs. Possible summer job openings can be announced as well. These sessions would be aimed at pointing at advantages and positive sides of doing student exchange in Russia and convincing students that visa and other practical arrangements cannot be real obstacles. It should be also emphasized that Finnish employers see experience in Russia as a highly positive supplement when recruiting. In addition, students mention that they would want to learn about the experiences of other students who have done student exchange in Russia. Therefore, these lectures could be structured in a way that firstly, students get theoretical information from a responsible teacher and later one or two students, who did their exchange in Russia, tell others about their experiences. The author considers that it is the most trustworthy activity for students that can be arranged.

- Various joint Finnish-Russian events, like traditional cuisine events or games can be organized in order to make people communicate in informal atmosphere.
- Visiting lecturers can also positively affect students' perception. They can get to know Russian teachers better, and familiarize themselves with teaching methods used. Therefore, the teacher mobility from Russia should be maintained and even increased.
- It is also possible to launch joint courses, where Finns and Russians are supposed to work together in pairs or groups. Tandem Finnish-Russian studies, where native speakers teach their own language must be promoted and encouraged.

6 Teacher survey analysis

6.1 "Background" category analysis

34 teachers have responded to the questionnaire. As well as in the student survey, women were more active participants among teachers and formed 56% of the results. Teaching staff from Lapland UAS and Saimaa UAS gave most of the answers which amount to 53% and 32% respectively.

The majority of respondents (53%) have already been on teacher exchange abroad. Unlike students, where “not going” option was chosen by the biggest share of students, only 12% of teachers are not going to do their teacher exchange. 35% of teachers will do teacher exchange (see Table 11).

	Percent
Planning to go on exchange	35%
Not going	12%
Already been	53%

Table 11. The ratio of probability of doing teacher exchange.

Since a big share of respondents has already been on teacher exchange, the figures of those who are planning to do teacher exchange are not numerous. Nevertheless, among the destination countries Germany was mentioned more often while only one respondent is going on mobility to Russia. 3 teachers will do their exchange, but do not have a destination, yet. It is interesting to note that unlike student indicators, 9 teachers have done their exchange in Russia – in Saint Petersburg, Murmansk, Arkhangelsk. Thus, Russia appears to be a popular exchange destination among teachers (see Table 12).

	Planning to go (N)	Have been (N)
Germany	2	1
United Kingdom	1	1
Spain	1	
China		2
France		1
Czech Republic		1
Russia	1	9
Latvia		1
Norway	1	
Denmark	1	
Tanzania	1	
Portugal		1
Belgium		1

Austria		2
Estonia	1	1
Many destinations		1
No exact destination yet	3	

Table 12. Preferable exchange destinations among teachers.

The minority of teachers has answered that they are not going on international mobility. Among the reasons named are:

- Lack of time – 3%
- Enough work in the home university – 3%
- No interest – 6%
- Work agreement is hourly based (not allowed) – 3%

As Table 13 illustrates, 62% would go on teacher exchange to Russia, which is a much bigger share compared to the student survey. 14% of teachers are not sure or have neutral attitudes and 24% perceive it negatively.

	N	Percent
Definitely Yes	8	23.53%
Most likely Yes	13	38.24%
I don't know	5	14.71%
Most likely No	6	17.65%
Definitely No	2	5.88%

Table 13. The ratio of probability of doing teacher exchange in Russia.

6.2 “Attitude measuring” category analysis

In this chapter the author will discuss motives and obstacles influencing mobility to Russia stated by the teachers. Their perception of Russia is described; factors impacting teachers’ decisions related to mobility in Russia are revealed. The author also quotes some teachers’ statements in order to explain the opinions as precisely as possible.

6.2.1 Motivational factors

29 teachers have given their opinions on why they would and would not do teacher exchange in Russia. The question is voluntary, therefore 29 out of 34 responses are taken as total. Among the main motivational factors are:

- Sharing experiences with colleagues and seeing different ways to study and teach – 10%

“St.Petersburg is culturally interesting and there are many places I haven’t seen. I’d like to get to know colleagues of my own subject from there”

- Interesting to know culture and language – 21%

“It is very interesting to get to know Russian culture, language and education: change knowledge and experiences. St.Petersburg is very beautiful and people are kind and helping”

- Important partner to cooperate – 10%
- Build new networks – 7%
- Good opportunities – 3%
- Never been – 3 %
- Life enrichment – 3%

“Teachers are still respected in Russia. Well-mannered, clever and motivated students”

Looking at the results of the multiselection question, the wish to promote a home institution internationally occupies the first place among motives. This proves the hypothesis stated in the theoretical part about the correlation of the level of international experience of a teacher and his/her primary motivators for doing teacher exchange. Most of respondents have already had experience abroad, therefore promotion of home institution or unit, but not personal motives becomes a priority. Learning about Russian culture is nearly of the same importance. The need for personal and professional development stimulate teachers nearly equally and they are also among the most important factors when it comes to mobility in Russia. In addition the country is considered different and therefore, attracts as an interesting exchange destination (see Table 14). There are also other motivators – they can be found in appendix 5.

	Percent
Promotion of internationalization of the home institution/department	47%
Getting to know Russia and its culture	41%
Need for personal development	38%
Russia is somewhat different. It could be interesting to teach there.	35%
Need for professional development	35%

Table 14. Teachers' motivators for mobility in Russia.

6.2.2 Obstacles

There are also obstacles mentioned by the teachers. The share of negative attitudes is, however, less than in the students' answers. Factors preventing teachers from going are:

- Been to Russia too many times – 14%

"I have been there three times more than in other countries. It is time to change the direction"

- Political situation – 10%

"I don't like Putin and Russian policy"

"The situation in Russia is not stable. I do not want to take the risk that something happens"

- Russia is an exchange destination like any other – 3%
- Previous not good experience – 3%
- Feeling insecure place – 3%

"Don't know much about the Russian culture and way of life. I don't wish to be impolite, but my perception of Russia is that is an unstable society, I would not feel safe at all times"

- Poor English language skills – 3%

"I speak English so weak that I don't want to go to Russia on exchange"

When teachers were asked to rate to what extent the reasons offered might prevent them from going to Russia, it appeared to be that the main obstacles are connected to educational issues, e.g. 73% consider communication with Russian colleagues complicated, as English skills are poor in Russia, 59% are

concerned with problematic lecturing, as teaching methods used in Russian and Finnish HEIs differ significantly. 56% percent of the respondents think that differences in educational systems and degree structures might affect their decisions negatively. There are also obstacles connected to some prejudices about Russia and especially regarding the Ukrainian issue nowadays (62%). The lack of Russian language skills prevents 73% of the teachers. Safety concern is the most important for 15% of respondents, and totally 65% are negatively influenced by this factor. Political instability is an impediment for 59% of teachers (see Table 15). The same way, the author has picked out the most important influential factors. The full version can be seen in appendix 5.

	Somewhat matters	Matters a lot	It is the most important	Total
Communication with Russian teachers in HEIs is complicated due to inadequate English skills of Russian colleagues.	41%	26%	6%	73%
Teaching methods differ. Russian students are unaccustomed to interactive way of teaching. This complicates lecturing.	44%	15%	0%	59%
Lack of Russian language skills	32%	26%	15%	73%
Differences in education systems and degree structures	41%	9%	6%	56%
Current social, political and economic instability	26%	18%	15%	59%
Safety reason	29%	21%	15%	65%
Prejudices, negative rumors	38%	15%	9%	62%

Table 15. Main impediments for teacher mobility in Russia.

The same way as students, teachers were asked to select their associations when it comes to Russia.

As Figure 9 shows, teachers' and students' opinion coincide that Russia is an interesting destination for exchange (65%). The same share of 35% corresponds to the opinion that Russia is unsafe, different from others and useful as exchange destination. However, it is also described as difficult and old-fashioned (30%).

12% of teachers, who have given open-text field answers, are of the opinion that Russia is hospitable, the Ukrainian conflict, however, "*makes things difficult*".

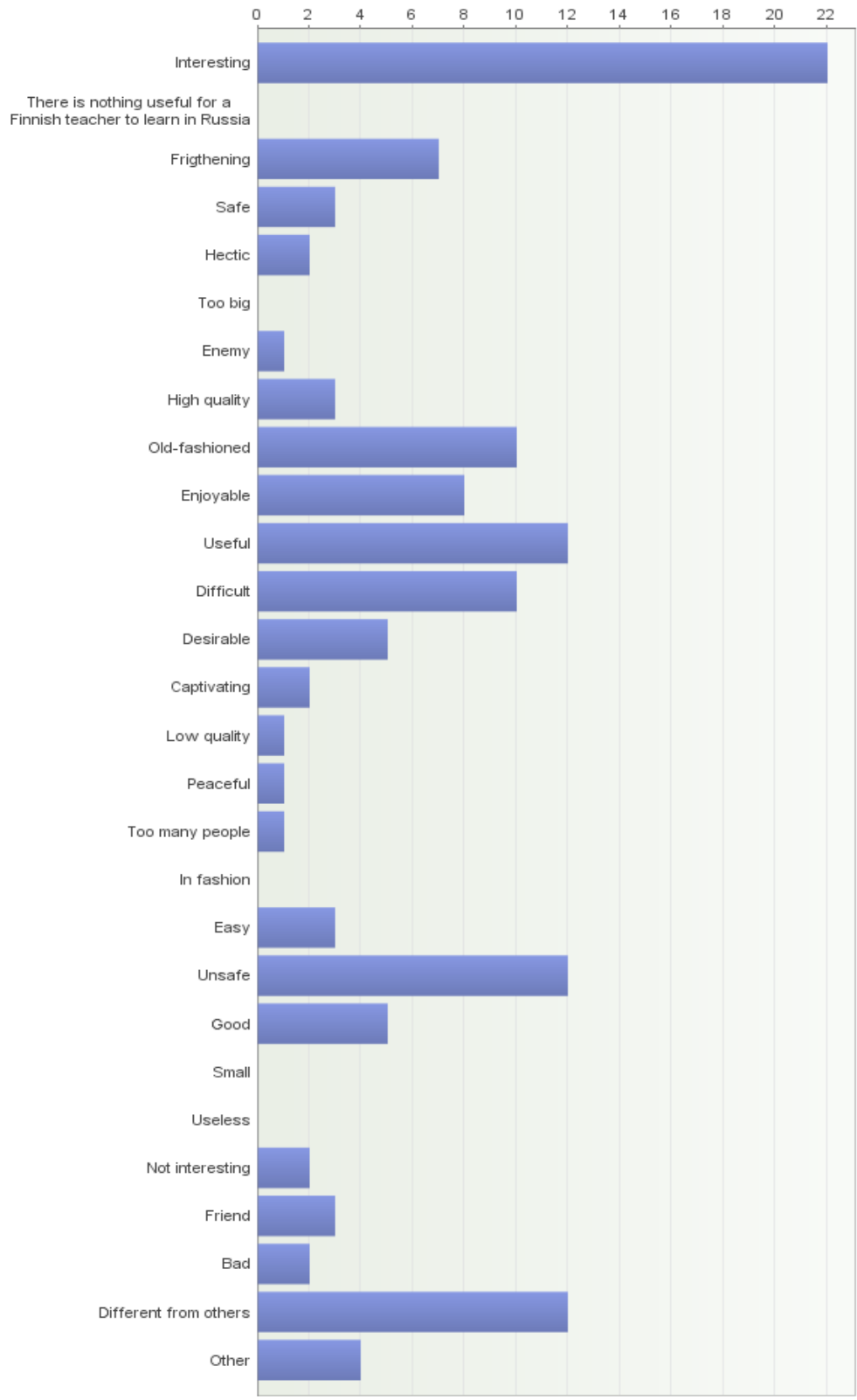


Figure 9. Teachers' associations with Russia.

6.3 “Changing the attitude” category analysis

Unlike students, teachers think they are well-informed (76%) and only 24% of respondents consider they lack information about Russia.

However, they would wish to acquire more information. Figure 10 illustrates what information should be distributed among teaching staff more:

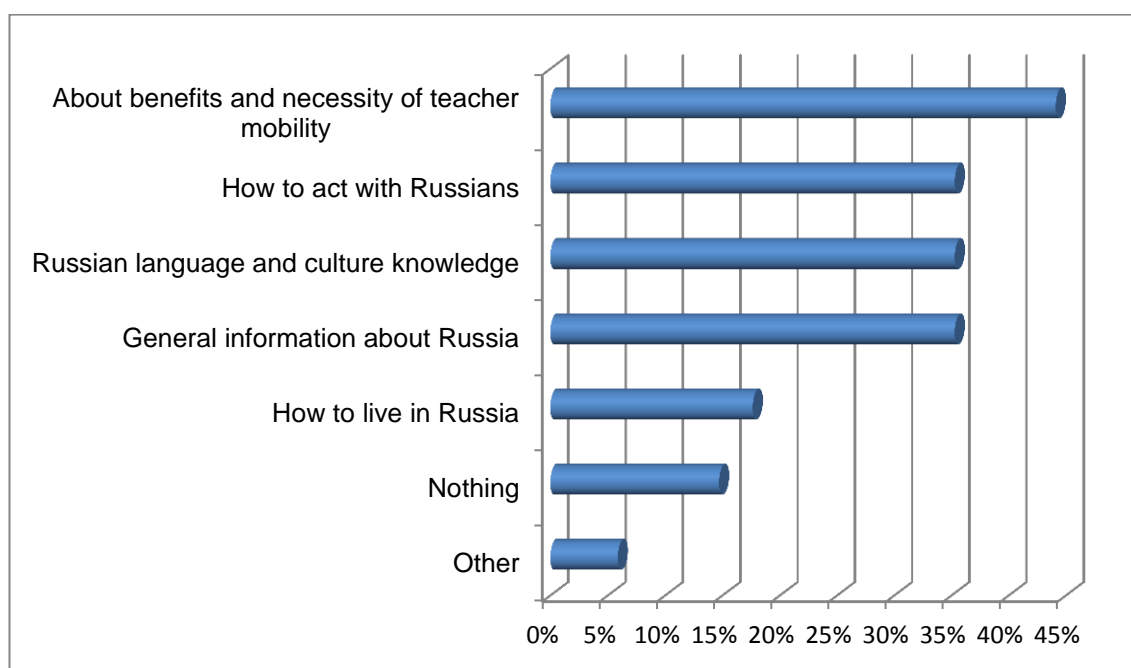


Figure 10. Desired information about Russia among teachers.

As it becomes clear from the graph, the most desired information is about the needs and necessity of teacher mobility (44%). This allows speaking about the lack of information sessions organized for teachers when it comes to teacher mobility. This, apparently, concerns not only Russia exchange, but any other mobility programme and destination. Based on the answers received, the author is of the opinion that most of the teachers go on mobility because it is a part of their job, but not being much motivated personally. 35% of teachers would wish general information about Russia, ways of acting with Russian people, Russian language and culture knowledge to be promoted more. 18% of respondents lack information on how to live in Russia; there is also a suggestion to make people familiar with human rights and provide more social awareness.

Table 16 visualizes the factors that influence teachers' attitudes and decisions the most. Positive experiences of colleagues make the greatest positive impact

on further teacher mobility to Russia (88%). 85% of respondents are motivated by learning about Russian culture and history, as well as by the fact that Russia is a neighboring country. Unlike students, who see it mainly as a disadvantage for student exchange, for teachers it appears to be almost an absolutely positive factor. This is most likely connected to lack of time, tight working schedule, problems with fitting mobility into normal curriculum, family reasons, etc.

Language seems to be an impediment as English is poorly spoken in Russian HEIs, especially by older colleagues, which makes teaching mobility more challenging. If teaching and communication in English are easy, this would increase the number of outgoing teachers to Russia (62%). Russian exchange teaching should be maintained (71%). However, the political situation nowadays prevents it quite significantly (70% of respondents on average).

	Positive	Negative	Total
Teaching and communicating in English is easy in Russian HEIs.	62%	15%	77%
Positive experience of colleagues, who have been to Russia	88%	6%	94%
Russia is a country with rich history and distinctive culture.	85%	0%	85%
Russia is close geographically.	85%	6%	91%
Russian visiting lecturers	71%	3%	74%
Political situation	6%	62%	68%
Russian-Ukrainian issue	6%	68%	74%

Table 16. Factors affecting teacher attitude.

6.4 Suggestions on improvement

Summarizing the author's own ideas in the survey, the author will make suggestions on how to promote and enhance outgoing teaching exchange to Russia.

Along with providing more information, summarized in the previous chapter, the following activities can be done (see Figure 11):

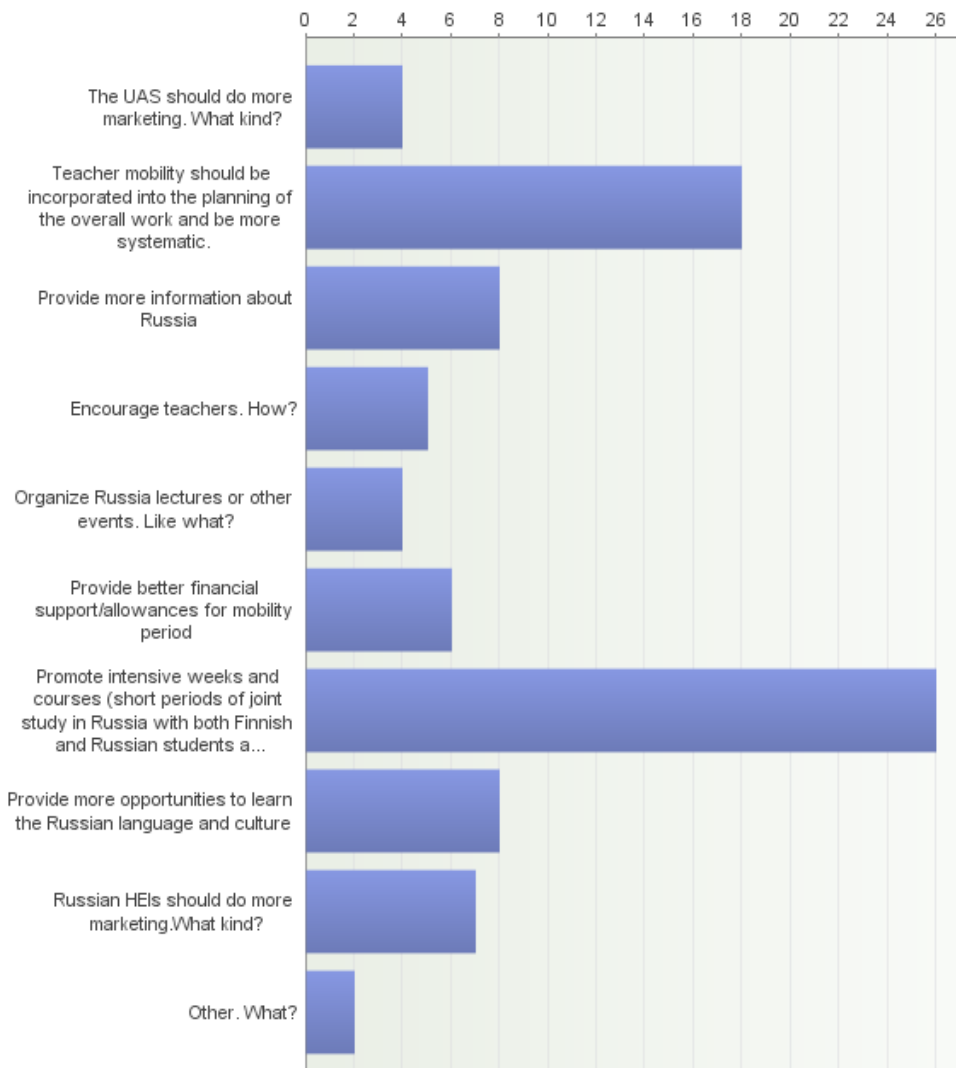


Figure 11. Activities for increasing teacher mobility to Russia.

- 76% of respondents consider that intensive courses in Russia should be promoted more actively.
- The problem of incorporating teacher mobility into working schedule has been already discussed repeatedly in the theoretical part and when analyzing survey results. This has found its acknowledgment – 53% of teachers wish that mobility becomes more systematic, which will afford to plan mobility easier in advance.
- 24% of teachers would wish to study the Russian language and culture before going on mobility there. Therefore, voluntary courses for studying the Russian language and culture could be organized for the teaching staff.

- The same share of respondents (24%) thinks they lack general information about Russia. In order to make teachers well-informed, the same way as for students, Russia information sessions should be held for teachers. General information should be also provided on Russian courses for those willing to participate in them.
- The last, but far not the least, marketing activities should be improved. Even though, according to the results of both surveys, the teaching exchange to Russia seems more positive than student exchange, marketing should be increased and Russia exchange should be promoted separately from other exchange possibilities. The author suggests organizing information sessions for teachers planning a mobility period to Russia. The structure is similar as it was offered in case of student exchange. General information about exchange and research opportunities in Russia can be provided first, the information about the necessity of teacher mobility as such, and then colleagues, who have been to Russia, should tell about their experiences there. It could be also effective if they could later support novices with practical arrangements and advice. That is peer marketing should be done.
- The increased number of Russian exchange teachers can stimulate teacher mobility to Russia among Finns. It is important that visiting lecturers are of the same field as future Finnish outgoing teaching staff is. Tandem teaching method can be tried out in the lectures in Finland so that both parties could become familiar with each other's teaching methods as well as get to know each other personally. The author considers that the more teachers interact with each other the more comfortable they become together, which can highly positively affect future Finnish teacher mobility. It would be also helpful if the Russian party could specify which courses they want to be taught there, in Russia.
- Teachers might also be motivated if they are going as pioneers, whose experience will be important when coming back.

- Teaching staff can participate in Russia events organized for students, thus they will get more general information and perception about Russia, which may interest them.

7 Conclusion

International mobility is one of the most important tools for internationalising higher education. Particularly, student and teacher mobility to Russia was examined in this research. The investigation has determined the perception of Russia as exchange destination among students and teachers, obstacles that arise for them, and has suggested the ways to increase the mobility and positively influence the attitudes. The study has shown that mobility to Russia as well as promotion of student and teacher exchange cannot follow the same principles as European or other types of mobility. The author comes to a conclusion that Russia mobility and its promotion should stay apart from others for several reasons:

- Russia is a non-European country (visa and other arrangements)
- Education and accreditation system is different
- Teaching and learning methods differ
- Political situation is tense nowadays
- Laws and other practices differ from European ones
- The Russian language is difficult
- English is not well-spoken in Russia

All these factors might repel people, especially students from going there, and therefore, UASs should pay special attention to Russia exchange promotion. This can especially be repulsive for unaware people and those who have never been to Russia. According to the questionnaire results, the majority of students (58%) have not been to Russia, while among teachers there are only 6% of those (see Table 17).

	Been to Russia	Have not been to Russia
Students	42%	58%
Teachers	94%	6%

Table 17. The ratio of Russia visits.

The author considers that the indicator of visiting Russia correlates with the number of negative opinions and refusals to study or teach in Russia. There were far less negative recalls and comments from teachers, as nearly all of them were already teaching or at least had been to Russia. Therefore, the author concludes that unawareness may be a factor negatively affecting people’s decisions. Those people base their opinions and attitudes on social media, rumors, prejudices etc. without having any personal experience.

As the author has mentioned in the suggestions, separate information sessions should be organized for students and teachers, where the emphasis would be put on positive sides of doing mobility in Russia. The same factors might have different impact on students and teachers, e.g. the fact that Russia is geographically close might be an advantage for most of the teachers, but for students it usually appears to be a drawback. That is, the positive sides must be pointed out for each target group separately. However, despite all the obstacles named and mostly negative attitudes received, both students and teachers find Russia interesting (this is the highest indicator among all descriptive adjectives). Therefore, there definitely is a starting point for improvement, which needs to be developed in those information sessions with more detailed advantage oriented information.

The study can be a reference for a further investigation of the phenomenon with more specifically formulated research questions and more universities involved in the research. Interviewing more respondents in bigger number of UASs can give new ideas and a wider perspective on the mobility increase to Russia.

List of Figures

- Figure 1. Student mobility to Russia 2003-2011. (CIMO 2013), p. 22
- Figure 2. Student and trainee mobility to Russia 2014: Saimaa UAS, Lapland UAS, Karelia UAS, Kajaani UAS. (Vipunen Opetushallinnon Tilastopalvelu), p. 27
- Figure 3. UASs' student and trainee mobility to Russia 2014. (Vipunen Opetushallinnon Tilastopalvelu), p. 29
- Figure 4. UASs' student and trainee mobility to Russia 2013. (Vipunen Opetushallinnon Tilastopalvelu), p. 29
- Figure 5. Motivational factors for student mobility to Russia, p.47
- Figure 6. Students' associations with Russia, p.51
- Figure 7. Desired information about Russia among students, p.52
- Figure 8. Activities for increasing student mobility to Russia, p.54
- Figure 9. Teachers' associations with Russia, p.63
- Figure 10. Desired information about Russia among teachers, p.64
- Figure 11. Activities for increasing teacher mobility to Russia, p.66

List of Tables

Table 1. Mobility goals for universities and UASs 2015. (Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland), p.14

Table 2. Total UASs' student and trainee mobility 2013–2014. (Vipunen Opetushallinnon Tilastopalvelu), p. 25

Table 3. UASs' student and trainee mobility to Russia 2013–2014. (Vipunen Opetushallinnon Tilastopalvelu), p. 26

Table 4. The ratio of probability of doing student exchange, p.43

Table 5. Preferable exchange destinations among students, p.44

Table 6. Impediments for international mobility among students, p.45

Table 7. The ratio of probability of doing student exchange in Russia, p. 46

Table 8. Obstacles for student mobility in Russia, p.47

Table 9. Survey statements on mobility in Russia, p.49

Table 10. Factors affecting student attitude, p.53

Table 11. The ratio of probability of doing teacher exchange, p.57

Table 12. Preferable exchange destinations among teachers, p.57

Table 13. The ratio of probability of doing teacher exchange in Russia, p.58

Table 14. Teachers' motivators for mobility in Russia, p.60

Table 15. Main impediments for teacher mobility in Russia, p.61

Table 16. Factors affecting teacher attitude, p.65

Table 17. The ratio of Russia visits, p.69

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Interview questions.

1. What are the main internationalisation strategies and internationality goals of the UAS?
2. Is there focus on cooperation with Russia? If yes, how important is it?
3. How does the university develop this cooperation?
4. What is the current tendency among students and teaching staff – How do they perceive Russia as exchange destination?
5. Is it common that students and teachers choose Russian universities for exchange?
6. How does the UAS encourage going on international mobility to Russia?
7. What might be the reasons of unwillingness to go to Russia?
8. What challenges do students and teachers face when going to Russia?

Appendix 2. Survey for students.

Russia as exchange destination. Student attitude.

Dear fellow students!

I am Arina from Saimaa UAS (Faculty of Business Administration).

I am conducting a survey for my Bachelor thesis and I would REALLY appreciate if you help me!

For my research I need some opinions from Finnish students and - to know how you feel about going to Russia for a student exchange.

The questionnaire is aimed ONLY for Finnish students! It will take just 10 minutes of your time to complete it. There are several questions, not difficult ones, you just need to tick the boxes according to your feelings. Your answer is anonymous and nobody will ever know, how you answered. 🤔

The results will be published in the thesis.

In reward for participating in this survey several **FREE LUNCHes** will be provided. Winners will be raffled in a lottery! 😊👍

Thank you so much

1. Select gender

male female

2. Where do you study? *

Kajaani UAS

Karelia UAS

Lapland UAS

Saimaa UAS

3. What is your study programme? *

Business Administration

Health Care

Hotel and Restaurant Business

Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management

Tourism

- Construction Engineering
- Industry and Natural Resources
- Business and Culture
- Hospitality and Tourism
- Social services, Health and Sports

4. Which year of studies are you in? *

- 1st year
- 2nd year
- 3rd year
- 4th year

5. Are you planning to go for student exchange abroad? *

Yes. Where?

No. Why?

I have already been. Where?

6. Would you like to go to Russia for student exchange? *

- Definitely Yes
- Most likely Yes
- I don't know
- Most likely No
- Definitely No

7. Why do you want or do not want to go to Russia on exchange?

8. Have you been to Russia? *

Yes. How many times?

No

9. Are the statements below, in your opinion, true or false? *

*HEI - Higher Education Institution

	True	False
Studying in Russia could be interesting.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My Russian is not good enough to go to Russia.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Going to Russia would delay my graduation because the courses are not acceptable in my Finnish HEI.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Studying in Russia is too dull or difficult.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Russian teachers are good teachers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Russia is unsafe.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The support of international students is poor in Russian universities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Current social, political and economic instability in Russia scares me and prevents from going.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are a lot of courses in English in Russian HEIs, that I could take.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Russian courses are not valid in Finland.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Russia is somewhat different. I hesitate everything new.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visa and insurance issues make going to Russia more demanding and problematic for me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like to learn about Russian culture.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I could not find suitable courses/programme/HEI.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My family has antipathy to Russia due to historical relations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Different currency complicates my mobility to Russia.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Russia is geographically too close, and the climate is pretty much the same. I would like to go to a more different place.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Russian teachers are bad teachers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I could learn Russian while being in Russia.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Culture and mentality is very different in Russia. I am worrying to have misunderstandings.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I don't like Russians.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rumors about Russian-Ukrainian situation negatively affect my attitude.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Russia is a cheap place to stay, this attracts me.

Russia is somewhat different. This motivates me to go.

10. Russia as exchange country in your opinion is: *

Select associations with Russia that come to your mind.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interesting | <input type="checkbox"/> You learn for life |
| <input type="checkbox"/> There is nothing useful for a Finn to learn in Russia | <input type="checkbox"/> Old-fashioned |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frightening | <input type="checkbox"/> Low quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Safe | <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoyable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hectic | <input type="checkbox"/> Useful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Too big | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficult |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enemy | <input type="checkbox"/> Captivating |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Desirable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peaceful | <input type="checkbox"/> Good |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Too many people | <input type="checkbox"/> Useless |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Easy | <input type="checkbox"/> Not interesting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> In fashion | <input type="checkbox"/> Bad |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unsafe | <input type="checkbox"/> Friend |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Small | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
-

11. If you went for exchange to Russia, which place would you prefer?

- | | Yes | No |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| A large city like St. Petersburg or Moscow | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| A provincial capital of 300 000 inhabitants like Petrozavodsk or Murmansk | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| A city far away on Ural, in Siberia or on the Pacific coast | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

12. Do you think you receive enough information about Russia? *

- Yes No

13. What information should the university provide more, in your opinion? *

- How to live and study in Russia

- How to act with Russians
- Russian language and culture knowledge
- Possible Russian HEIs for exchange
- Courses taught in English in Russian HEIs
- General information about Russia
- Other. What?
- _____
- Nothing

14. How do the following facts and activities affect your motivation to go to Russia for exchange? *

	Positive	Negative	Doesn't matter
Russian visiting lecturers (exchange teachers)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trips to Russia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communicating with Russian exchange and degree students in Finland	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social Media	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Political situation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Economical situation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Russian language studies organized in the UAS	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
International office's advertisements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Positive experience of fellow students/other people who have been to Russia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Russia is a country with rich history and distinctive culture.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Russian-Ukrainian issue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visa and insurance requirements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Different currency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. If you had a task to increase the number of students going to Russia, which activities would you do? *

Select 2 activities that would increase your motivation as a student to go to Russia the

most.

- The UAS should do more marketing. What kind?

- Provide more information about Russia
- Encourage students more. How?

- Provide better financial support
- Organize Russia lectures or other Russia events. Like what?

- Provide more opportunities to learn the Russian language and culture
- Organize more trips to Russia
- Promoting intensive weeks and courses (short periods of joint study in Russia with both Finnish and Russian students and teachers)
- Russian HEIs should do more marketing and provide more courses in English.
- Courses taken in Russia should be fully accepted in Finland without taking any substitutive or additional courses.
- Other. What?

16. Would you go to Russia IF:

- | | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
| you could participate in many courses taught in English, which you need to take anyway in order to graduate AND you would have intensive studies in Russian giving you a working knowledge of Russian? | ○ | ○ |
| courses taught in English would be acceptable only as your voluntary courses in Finland, BUT you would receive a working knowledge of Russian while your stay in Russia? | ○ | ○ |

For lottery participants!

The questionnaire is totally anonymous, but if you wish to win a **FREE LUNCH**, we need to know your name and email! 😊

Contact information is delivered separately and has NO connection with your answers!

Please, give your name and email:

Name _____

Email _____

Appendix 3. Survey for teaching staff.

Russia as exchange destination. Attitude of teaching staff.

Dear Respondents,

I am Arina from Saimaa UAS. I am Bachelor undergraduate student at the faculty of Business Administration and I am doing my final thesis. For my research I need some opinions from Finnish teachers - to know how you feel about going to Russia for a teacher exchange.

The aim of the research is to find out attitudes of Finnish students and teachers about Russia as a country for student and teacher exchange and suggest the means of improvement of cooperation with Russian higher education institutions (later called HEIs).

This questionnaire will take about 10 minutes of your time and it is anonymous. The results will be published in the thesis.

I would very much appreciate your participation! 😊

1. Select gender

male female

2. You are a teacher in *

Kajaani UAS

Karelia UAS

Lapland UAS

Saimaa UAS

3. Are you planning to go for teacher exchange? *

Yes. Where?

No. Why?

I have already been. Where?

4. Would you like to go to Russia for teacher exchange? *

- Definitely Yes
- Most likely Yes
- I don't know
- Most likely No
- Definitely No

5. Why do you want or do not want to go to Russia on exchange?

6. Have you been to Russia? *

Yes. How many times?

No.

7. Which factors would motivate you to do teacher exchange in Russia? *

Select the factors that motivate you the most.

- Need for professional development.
- Need for personal development.
- Promotion of internationalization of the home institution/department.
- Strengthening my own contacts.
- Strengthening and promoting student mobility generally and particularly to Russia.
- Russia is somewhat different. It could be interesting to teach there.
- I could get some knowledge of the Russian language.
- It is a good opportunity to make the home institution and department better known and appreciated.
- I would like to gain experience in multicultural teaching environment.
- I would like to compare practices in my own unit internationally.
- I am striving to find new ideas for teaching content and methods.
- I would like to get to know Russia and its culture.
- It will improve my English language skills.
- Other. Please, specify.

8. Russia as exchange country in your opinion is: *

Select associations connected to Russia that come to your mind.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interesting | <input type="checkbox"/> There is nothing useful for a Finnish teacher to learn in Russia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frigthening | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hectic | <input type="checkbox"/> Too big |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enemy | <input type="checkbox"/> High quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Old-fashioned | <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoyable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Useful | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficult |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Desirable | <input type="checkbox"/> Captivating |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Peaceful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Too many people | <input type="checkbox"/> In fashion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Easy | <input type="checkbox"/> Unsafe |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good | <input type="checkbox"/> Small |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Useless | <input type="checkbox"/> Not interesting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friend | <input type="checkbox"/> Bad |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Different from others | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
-

9. Rate on the scale possible factors that might prevent from going for teacher exchange to Russia. *

Assess, to what extent the influence of these obstacles is applicable to you assuming that you are planning to go for teacher exchange to Russia.

- | | Doesn't matter at all | Somewhat matters | Matters a lot | It is the most important for me |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Language obstacle: communication with Russian teachers in HEIs is complicated due to inadequate English skills | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

of Russian colleagues.

Teaching methods differ.

Russian students are unaccustomed to interactive way of teaching based on discussions. This complicates lecturing.

I have lack of Russian language skills.

Differences in education systems and degree structures.

Current social, political and economic instability make me feel scared and prevents from going.

I will feel unsafe in Russia, especially considering current war in Ukraine.

Culture and mentality are very different in Russia. I am afraid of misunderstandings.

Visa and insurance issues make mobility to Russia more demanding and problematic for me.

Different currency in Russia makes mobility more complicated for me.

I have prejudices about Russia and there have been lots of negative rumors lately considering the situation in Ukraine.

My family has antipathy to Russia due to historical relations.

I have negative perception of Russians.

Russia is somewhat different. I hesitate everything new.

10. Do you think you receive enough information about Russia? *

Yes No

11. What information should the university provide more, in your opinion? *

- How to live in Russia
- How to act with Russians
- Russian language and culture knowledge
- General information about Russia
- About benefits and necessity of teacher mobility

Other. What?

Nothing

12. How do the following facts and activities affect your motivation to go to Russia for exchange? *

	Positive	Negative	Doesn't matter
Teaching and communicating in English is easy in Russian HEIs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Positive experience of your colleagues, who have been to Russia.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Russia is relatively cheap place to stay, especially due to currently low value of ruble.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Russia is a country with rich history and distinctive culture.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Russia is close geographically.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Russian visiting lecturers (exchange teachers)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social Media	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Political situation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Economical situation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Knowledge of the Russian language and culture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Russian-Ukrainian issue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visa and insurance requirements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Different currency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. If you had a task to increase the number of teachers going to Russia, which activities would you do? *

Select 2 activities that would increase your motivation as a teacher to go to Russia the most.

- The UAS should do more marketing. What kind?

- Teacher mobility should be incorporated into the planning of the overall work and be more systematic.
- Provide more information about Russia
- Encourage teachers. How?

- Organize Russia lectures or other events. Like what?

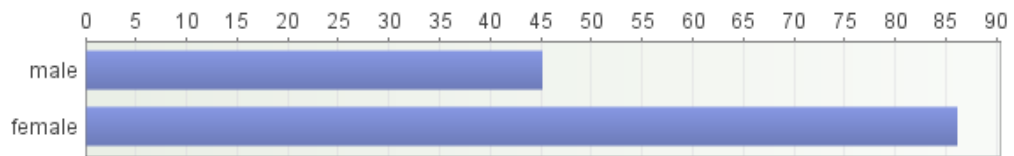
- Provide better financial support/allowances for mobility period
- Promote intensive weeks and courses (short periods of joint study in Russia with both Finnish and Russian students and teachers)
- Provide more opportunities to learn the Russian language and culture
- Russian HEIs should do more marketing. What kind?

- Other. What?

Appendix 4. Extract from results – student survey.

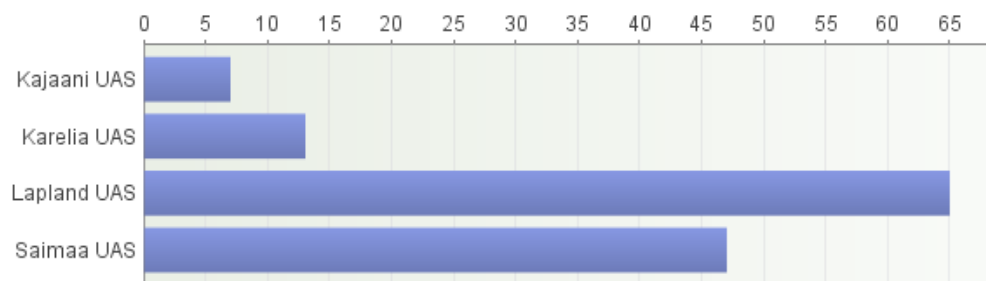
1. Select gender

Number of respondents: 131



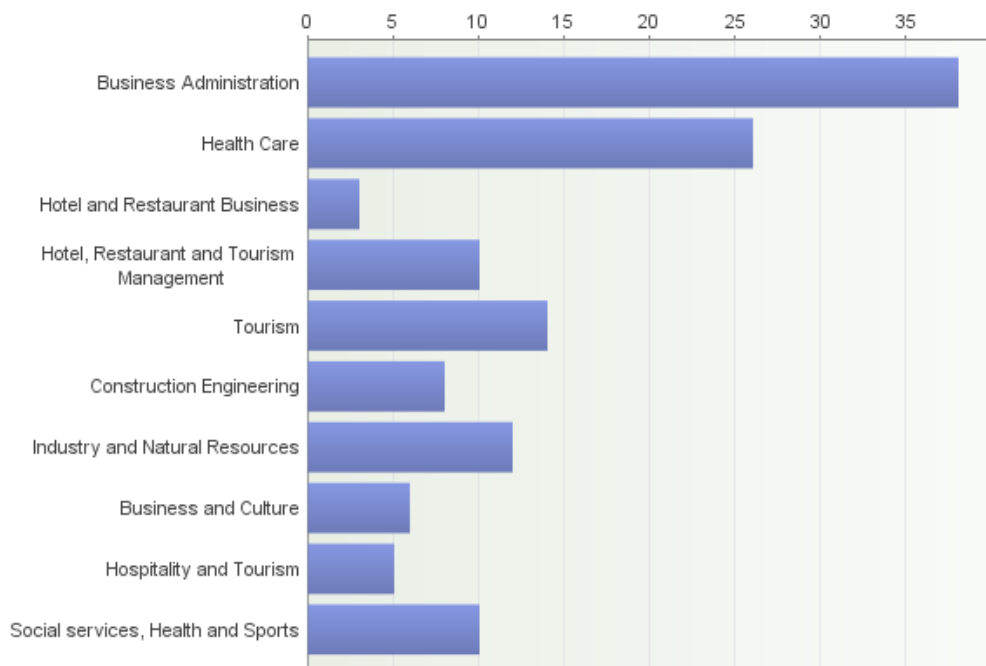
2. Where do you study?

Number of respondents: 132



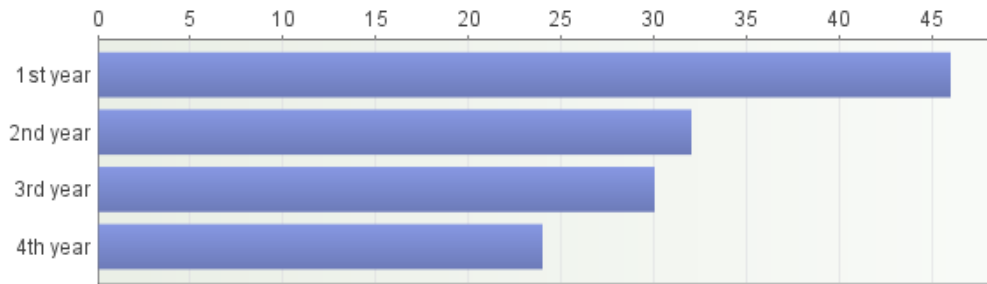
3. What is your study programme?

Number of respondents: 132



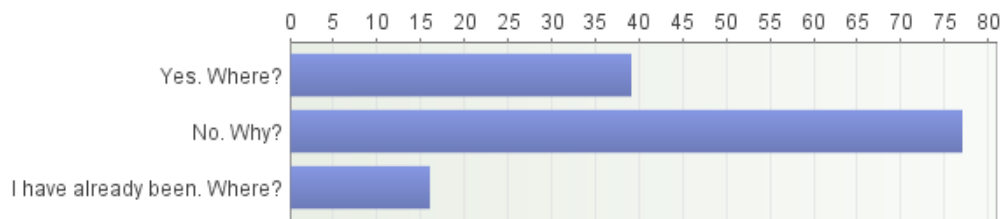
4. Which year of studies are you in?

Number of respondents: 132



5. Are you planning to go for student exchange abroad?

Number of respondents: 132



Open text answers: Yes. Where?

- Turkey
- The Netherlands
- Ireland maybe
- Paris
- Switzerland
- Iceland
- Germany
- dont know yet
- maybe
- Netherlands
- the netherlands
- Europe
- In Never-Never Land
- I dont know where yet
- France or Germany
- United Kingdom
- Australia/ England
- England denmark
- dont know
- Thailand
- 5
- Russia
- Asia / South America
- Hungary
- Somewhere in Europe, propably Spain, Germany, Netherlands or Italy
- The Netrehlands
- germany
- Germany or Spain

- asia
- UK or Germany
- Southern Europe
- Spain, New Zealand or Ireland
- Somewhere far
- Spain (for my practical training)
- Budapest/Netherlands
- Not sure yet, maybe Asia, or an English speaking country like England or Ireland.
- don't know yet
- Manchester, UK
- Hungary

Open text answers: No. Why?

- I don't feel the need to do that
- I don't want to go abroad for so long time.
- dont have the courage to
- I have a little girl so that's not gonna happen
- i am not intrested in going abroad for student exchange.
- I'm not sure yet, will i go abroad.
- my time is limited because of work
- family, small children
- My age, family and works
- I'm working full time.
- Family reasons
- I'm graduating this spring, it's too late now
- No time and no money
- I moved from Helsinki to Rovaniemi so I thought there was enough exchange for me
- Not interested
- I don't care
- I'm graduating within a few months.
- I'm finishing my studies and didn't have chance to go abroad.
- I do not have time
- I'm almost finished with my studies
- i don't like to
- Want to graduate fast.
- Takes too long to be there
- -
- I'm graduating already
- I want to graduate as fast as I can and exchange might slow it down.
- It is too expensive for me right now
- No change
- Health and age
- I havent enought money
- Dont have any intrest going abroad.
- i'm graduating next autumn
- Family ties
- There is no studies for me available
- I am realistic and going to work in Finland.

- Not good in english
- Financial reasons and family reasons
- Wife and kids don't allow.
- It's too late, because I'm graduating soon.
- graduate soon
- I don't have good language skills.
- I'm going to graduate this spring so I don't have time. If I'm going to educate myself more then I think I will go.
- I have 6 month year little boy.
- my languageskills are so bad
- I'm not definitely sure yet but right now I think that it is a good idea for me to study just in Finland.
- I already am abroad here in Finland
- Not that interested about it. And it's way too difficult and full of work you have to do beforehand.
- Money, family
- I've already been in high school in us.
- It will delay my graduation time
- I am graduating and have done all my practices
- Maybe.
- It's not possible right now, although i'm interested in it
- I will do my work practice abroad
- Not enough money
- My studies are nearly completed.
- I have trvelled a lot already, so i am not interested to go abroad right now. I Alpo two little kids.
- I don't have enough time or energy to do so
- I have a 3year old daughter
- I rather go to work abroad as an intership.
- I just moved to my own place, plus got a kitten. so it would be very inpractical to leave.
- because my life situation wasn't good for exchange
- I'm not sure if I want to go.
- I don't know where would I go and I don't want to go
- Too late.
- No interest and I would lose my flat.
- No money for student exchange
- I'm studying two degrees at once, no time.
- too expensive, family
- work and family gives limits what can and can not to do
- I want to earn money, I have waited for too long
- Personal obstacle
- I like to travel and work abroad. But i trust more on Finnish education :D
- I want graduate asap
- I will not continue my studies in UAS
- I have a family so I can't go now

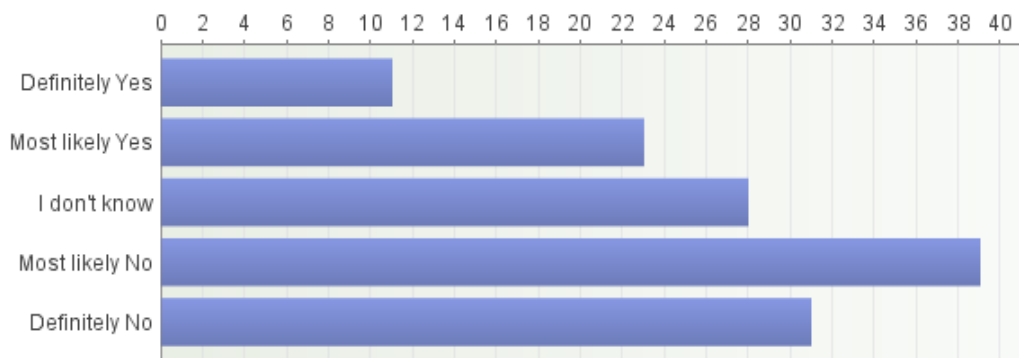
Open text answers: I have already been. Where?

- Portugal
- Spain

- Slovakia
- Phuket, Thailand
- Thailand
- Italy
- Belgium
- portugal
- russia
- Sweden
- in england
- Middle Europe
- Iceland
- thailand
- Indonesia
- The Netherlands

6. Would you like to go to Russia for student exchange?

Number of respondents: 132



7. Why do you want or do not want to go to Russia on exchange?

Number of respondents: 107

- It doesn't seem like a great place for an exchange, i haven't heard anything good experiences or anything that would make me want to go there
- Well I haven't exactly thought about to go to Russia for student exchange, but it could be possible, I mean, why not :)
- I don't want to go on exchange at all, and I don't want to visit Russia. I have other countries where I would like to go some day.
- Opinion based on the websites of the Russian UAS' aren't too good. Also I've been talking to my friend who lived in Russia for a year and he didn't give me too good word about the country itself.
- I'm not interested in Russia and the culture of the country. I also can't speak the language. I'm little bit scared too.
- a bit hard to explain. i'll blame the russian politics and how they treat other countries like they are just their playground. russian is a big no.
- I'm just not that into Russia, and as a person from outside of EU, I have to pay a quite high price for Russian Visa.
- not sure about is there any proper place to stay and also the language barrier is kinda high since Russian is hard and people there are kinda

- bad(?) with english too
- Unfortunately not interesting universities or studies offered.
 - Because the current situation. In Russia is quite different practices, for example laws. Russia is also quite corrupt.
 - I am also into tourism management since I work as a guide, so there are plenty of things that interest me in Russia. For example in Finland hunting trips are very limited and the paperwork for going to hunt in Russia is awfull if you bring your own weapons or want to bring home trophies. So I'd like to find alternatives and ways to go around all those nasty regulations...
 - Putin
 - Language is the main reason. I prefer places, where people speak language that I already know a bit.
 - i just like Russian culture and especial St. Peterburg would be super nice place for exchange.
 - I don't want to go there for an exchange because I have no interest and it isn't the most attractive or comfortable place to go. There's also a high language barrier.
 - cultural experience
 - Language is difficult and nowadays the world situation is quite troubled. In the other hand I like russian culture and I have painted few icon for myself.
 - I'm working full time so it is impossible for me to take time off for an exchange.
 - Language
 - Russia is very interesting country with its culture, great nature and friendly people. I would like to learn fluent Russian. It is also near, which is an advantage.
 - It's too close. I would prefer other countries like Scotland. ("Russia is geographically too close, and the climate is pretty much the same. I would like to go to a more different place.")
 - Because its my homecountry and I miss it
 - I think the difference of culture would be interesting to experience, also learn the basics of the language and see how well the HEI works in Russia.If I would not manage there with english I think the exchange period would be pretty challenging.
 - If I would like to go to exchange I would consider Russia because of there is the Siberia.
 - Winter.
 - I can't speak russian
 - Political situation, not very safety place and i prefer more warmer places.
 - Putin is a scary guy!
 - I don't speak the language, and the things I hear on the news about Russia give me a negative image of the country and its politics. In addition, a majority of the Russians I have met at the university seem to prefer to only speak Russian instead of English and it is very hard to make friends with them (with a few exceptions).
 - If I would go to student exchange, I would love to go to Russia. I love the country and its culture. I did my basic placement in St. Petersburg and enjoyed it a lot.
 - I'd be happy to study more Russian language and learn the country.

- Russian is very interesting country. and St. Petersburg is very beautiful town.
- Interesting culture, Russian is useful language on Finland.
- I don't like to travel.
- Feeling insecure place
- Language is difficult, culture is too different...
- The country isn't interesting to me, there are countries that have more interesting culture and that are safer than Russia. Russia is a great country for sure, but just not where I want to go :)
- From health care point of view Russia is generally not developed enough for exchange.
- I would like to learn to speak Russian. Russian culture is interesting.
- I think the level of health care and nursing are worse than in Finland, so it would be hard to develop my nursing skills.
- It would be interesting to see a different culture and experience Russia in my own eyes, it could help to understand the relationship between Finland and Russia if I have been there myself.
- I hate Russian so I never want to go.
- Russia is sadly famous for its dangerous politics....The state of human rights and freedom of speech in Russia is so low at the moment, that I feel no desire to visit Russia before things there change for the better.
- Not so good experiences about Russian construction
- I don't know the language.
- My health and age (over 50) - I need special care
- I want to see new places and especially St. Petersburg and Moscow
- Russia is a very interesting country and I would like to learn the language. I have studied Russian for one year but I had to quit the studies due to lack of time.. I wish that in Lapland UAS there would be more possibilities to study Russian and not only iLinc lessons!
- Because of language, it's too difficult
- Because of the situation in the country.
- Because of the situation in Ukraine.
- With the same reason that I wouldn't want to go to Latvia. It wouldn't be good for my CV.
- Russian politics and media are both weird and dangerous.
- It's a beautiful country, people are awesome!
- Russia doesn't seem like an interesting location for exchange.
- I have no skills in the Russian language and the current political situation in Russia is worrying. Russian government-made anti-Finland propaganda.
- I don't know
- Russian is so hard language.
- I have visited there several times
- I don't know the language that well and there are many other countries on my list before I would consider Russia. But I think that is because I have never been there and I don't know the country very well. Maybe the country has a bit negative image.
- I don't like the country because of Putin
- Ja izytsaju ruski jizik
- Russia is interesting country and I'm going there to travel in the summer. I want to break some prejudices!
- I would go to Spain or Austria. I couldn't speak any Russian language.

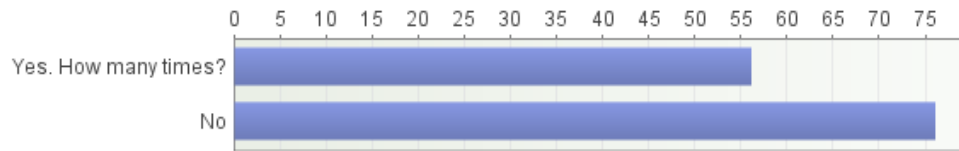
- Russian country is so different and even scary place.
- I don't think that I'm so interested in Russian culture. I'd like to be able to know a little more Russian language before I could consider this option.
- Curious about the challenges
- I don't like the country's politics or the way they think about on some things. Also I have had maybe bad luck or something because almost all my experiences with russians are negative. They haven't given me good image about themselves and therefore about their country and how people are in russia. It's quite much about that bad picture I have got. And of course a little about that normal "finns vs russians"
- Doesn't interest me as a country. If i would go to exchange I would choose more exotic country such as Thailand etc.. I don't know the language at all and I don't want to learn it. Last reason is that Russia is politically and economically unstable country in my opinion.
- I don't know the language and for some reason it is not the place i would go for longer time than for vacation.
- Because i don't speak any words russian.
- I see Russia as not a very safe place to explore on your own as a female, and I love walking in the city and parks in the evenings. Also the language is too difficult for me. Also, I have heard that the studying is lazy there and there aren't a lot of lectures, and I worry about my credits.
- I can't speak russia and I think russians can't mostly speak english. I think in Russia there is no such freedom in speech as in Finland, which could be scary.
- doing business in Russia is quite risky
- To learn language and see different culture
- It doesn't interest me
- For me, Russia seems to be a "rough" place to be. Unfortunately I don't feel it as an attractive option to go for an exchange. Also the feedback from my friends who have visited Russia hasn't always been so positive. I would also like to go a bit further away than to the neighbour country of Finland.
- Russia is an interesting alternative to go on exchange.
- Russia is different culture and therefore would be interesting to experience. In the same time however various political reasons are matters, because of which I rather not to go there.
- I have to admit that i am a little suspicious. Although if i would be younger i would probably go. I have couple friends from Russia and i like them a lot. I am not suspicious against people, only the system, accommodation and so on in whole....even i never visited there! I once visited in Estland when it was still part of Russia, many years ago.
- Russia is big country and i believe there is very much to see and learn. Also where I live, there is much of russian clients in health services. It would be helpful to learn more about their culture and language.
- To know the culture better and improve my language skills.
- Lack of my Russian language skills. Also think that Russia is a bit unpleasant, unsafe and unclean place.
- I don't like their culture or language
- I see Russia a little bit scary place because of the crisis in Ukraine, corruption. I feel you can't trust the police in Russia.

- If I was going to go for an exchange, I would like to go a lot further to a warmer and exotic country. Russia is too near and too familiar and besides I don't feel like I speak Russian enough to cope in there.
- I don't know the language
- I'm more interested going to UK or Germany, because it's easier to communicate with local people and participate in patients treatment.
- I just don't care for the country. They are very narrow minded.
- I have children. And their school is quite impossible to arrange there.
- I don't know language or customs and I fear to say I'm from Finland
- I'm worried about the cultural differences.
- Corrupted development country with a lot of violence. Policemen robbed my friends in the middle of day in Petersburg!
- I've been several times to Russia and I live very close to the border. I would like to get to know Russians a little better.
- Friend of mine was planning to her practical training in Russia, but had to cancel it due to weird bureaucratic demands (she would have needed to contact some school there, who were in no connection whatsoever to the working place, she would've done her practical training in, etc...). There is enough (too much, actually) bureaucracy in Finland and in my own UAS already, going to Russia would seem like too much trouble. Also I don't know Russian, and the language barrier would probably be too high for me.
- I like Russians as a people, but obviously Russia's politics are off-turning for me. It would definitely be a big question for me whether I want to support the tourism of a country with such politics. But as I stated before, I think that most Russians are polite, friendly and have a good sense of humour! :)
- I don't speak the language
- Not feeling that Russian people are my cup of tea when start business.
- Russia is the largest country in the world...
- I would like to learn more about the culture and especially the language. The safety concerns me the most.
- Historical reasons.
- I don't want to go for exchange to Russia as I yet can't really speak Russian and I don't have very good picture of how things work there. Some people have also told about their experiences in Russia and it didn't sound too good. I'd rather go to a country where I can speak the language and I know the studying environment will be similar to Finland.
- At the moment the political situation in the country doesn't seem stable enough. If the atmosphere and behaviour in the country will change towards actual democracy and way where others are respected, I might think of exchange in Russia. Unfortunately I don't see it happening in next 3 years so in my case the answer is going to stay as no.
- If I would go to exchange. I would consider Russia because it is close to Finland and it is very interesting country. On the other hand if I would go to exchange, I would like to go as far as possible.
- I don't speak Russian.
- I don't think Russia is a safe place to go. You can't really trust even to militias, there is corruption and discrimination.
- I don't speak Russian and have no interest to learn it. Russia seems a bit

- unsafe to me.
- I have never beeb there.

8. Have you been to Russia?

Number of respondents: 132



Open text answers: Yes. How many times?

- 2
- more than 10
- 1
- 1
- 10
- Once
- Once
- 1
- 19 years :)
- Once upon a Time
- ~30
- 3
- More than 10 times.
- Two times - one-week trips
- 10-15
- about 5 times
- 1
- 5
- 1
- 2
- once
- 7
- Once
- 1
- 2 times in Norilsk
- Once, in 2010.
- 2
- 5
- 1
- Many times, even lived there for a year
- 1
- 5
- 1
- 4
- 1
- several. maybe ten times

- 30
- Homecountry
- 2
- once
- 5
- Once
- 2
- 1
- 3
- 1
- 1
- 2
- about 10-15 times
- 1
- More than 10 times.
- 147
- Twice
- 1 in 1993
- 10
- 3

9. Are the statements below, in your opinion, true or false?

Number of respondents: 132

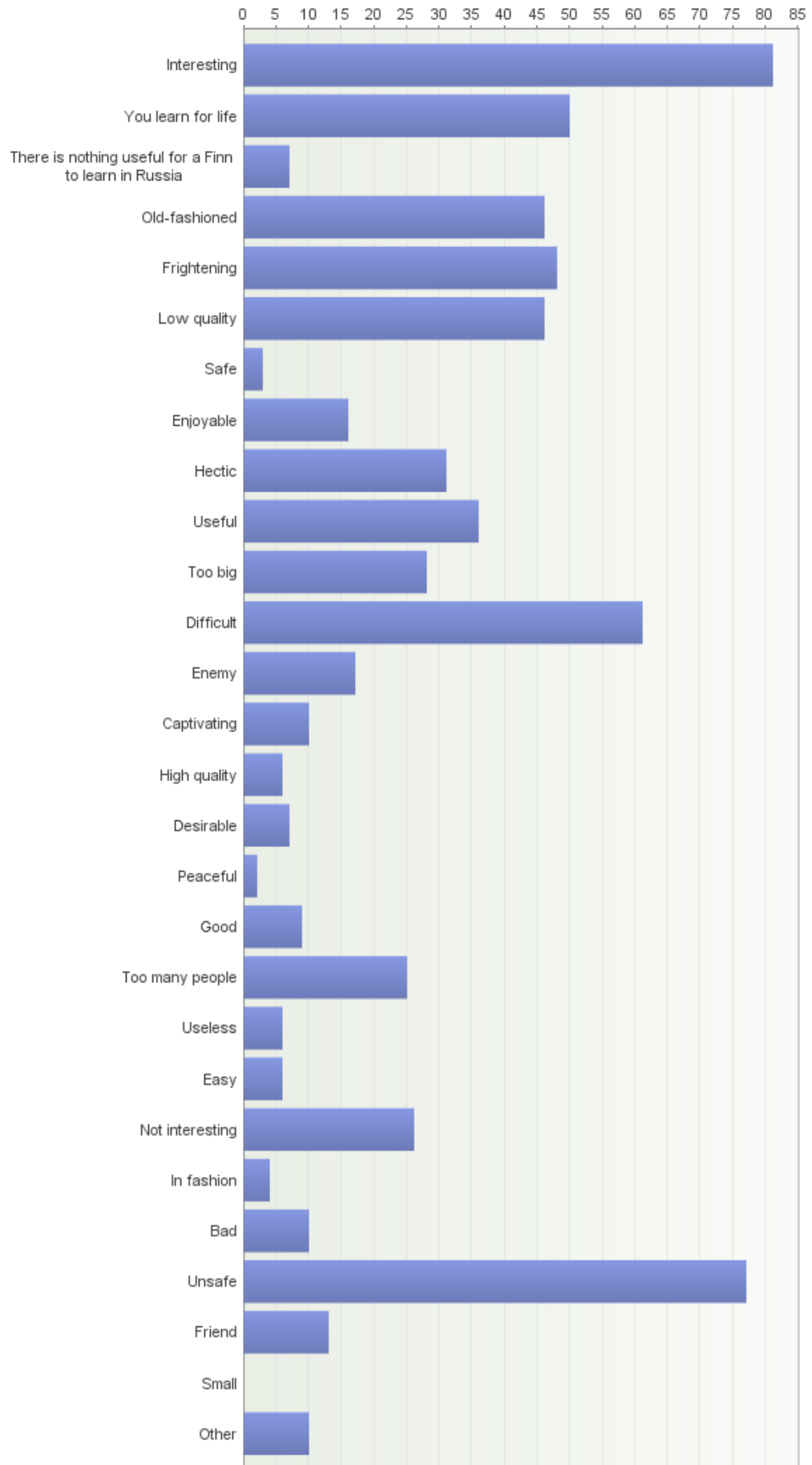
	True	False	Total
Studying in Russia could be interesting.	106	26	132
My Russian is not good enough to go to Russia.	106	26	132
Going to Russia would delay my graduation because the courses are not acceptable in my Finnish HEI.	56	76	132
Studying in Russia is too dull or difficult.	59	73	132
Russian teachers are good teachers.	88	44	132

Russia is unsafe.	91	41	132
The support of international students is poor in Russian universities.	55	77	132
Current social, political and economic instability in Russia scares me and prevents from going.	93	39	132
There are a lot of courses in English in Russian HEIs, that I could take.	72	60	132
Russian courses are not valid in Finland.	30	102	132
Russia is somewhat different. I hesitate everything new.	24	108	132
Visa and insurance issues make going to Russia more demanding and problematic for me.	77	55	132
I would like to learn about Russian culture.	106	26	132
I could not find suitable courses/programme/HEI.	42	90	132
My family has antipathy to Russia due to historical relations.	43	89	132
Different currency complicates my mobility to Russia.	44	88	132
Russia is geographically too close, and the climate is pretty much the same. I would like to go to a more different place.	67	65	132
Russian teachers are bad teachers.	20	112	132

I could learn Russian while being in Russia.	118	14	132
Culture and mentality is very different in Russia. I am worrying to have misunderstandings.	71	61	132
I don't like Russians.	30	102	132
Rumors about Russian-Ukrainian situation negatively affect my attitude.	96	36	132
Russia is a cheap place to stay, this attracts me.	74	58	132
Russia is somewhat different. This motivates me to go.	80	52	132
Total	1648	1520	3168

10. Russia as exchange country in your opinion is:

Number of respondents: 132



Open text answers: Other

- Opportunity if planning international career
- non-democratic
- Health care isn't easy for me
- employers see experience at Russia as a highly positive trait
- Family and friends are important
- Unstable
- mixed feelings, intolerant, against my values
- Putin
- scary
- disorganized

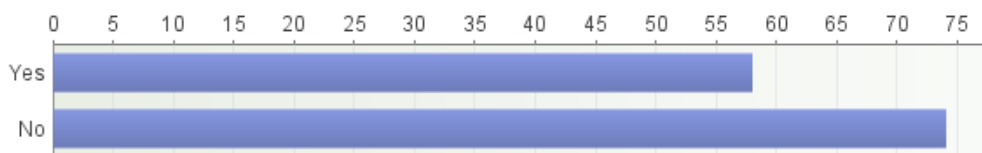
11. If you went for exchange to Russia, which place would you prefer?

Number of respondents: 131

	Yes	No	Total
A large city like St. Petersburg or Moscow	102	24	126
A provincial capital of 300 000 inhabitants like Petrozavodsk or Murmansk	65	53	118
A city far away on Ural, in Siberia or on the Pacific coast	44	72	116
Total	211	149	360

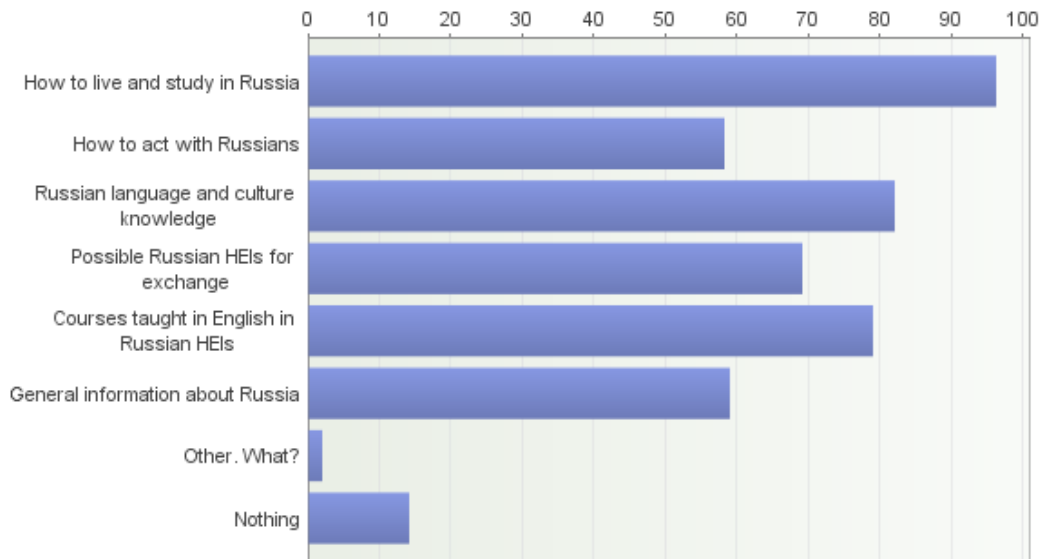
12. Do you think you receive enough information about Russia?

Number of respondents: 132



13. What information should the university provide more, in your opinion?

Number of respondents: 132



Open text answers: Other. What?

- What people really think there and not the opinions of Putin and the rest similar
- Financial support for exchange student

14. How do the following facts and activities affect your motivation to go to Russia for exchange?

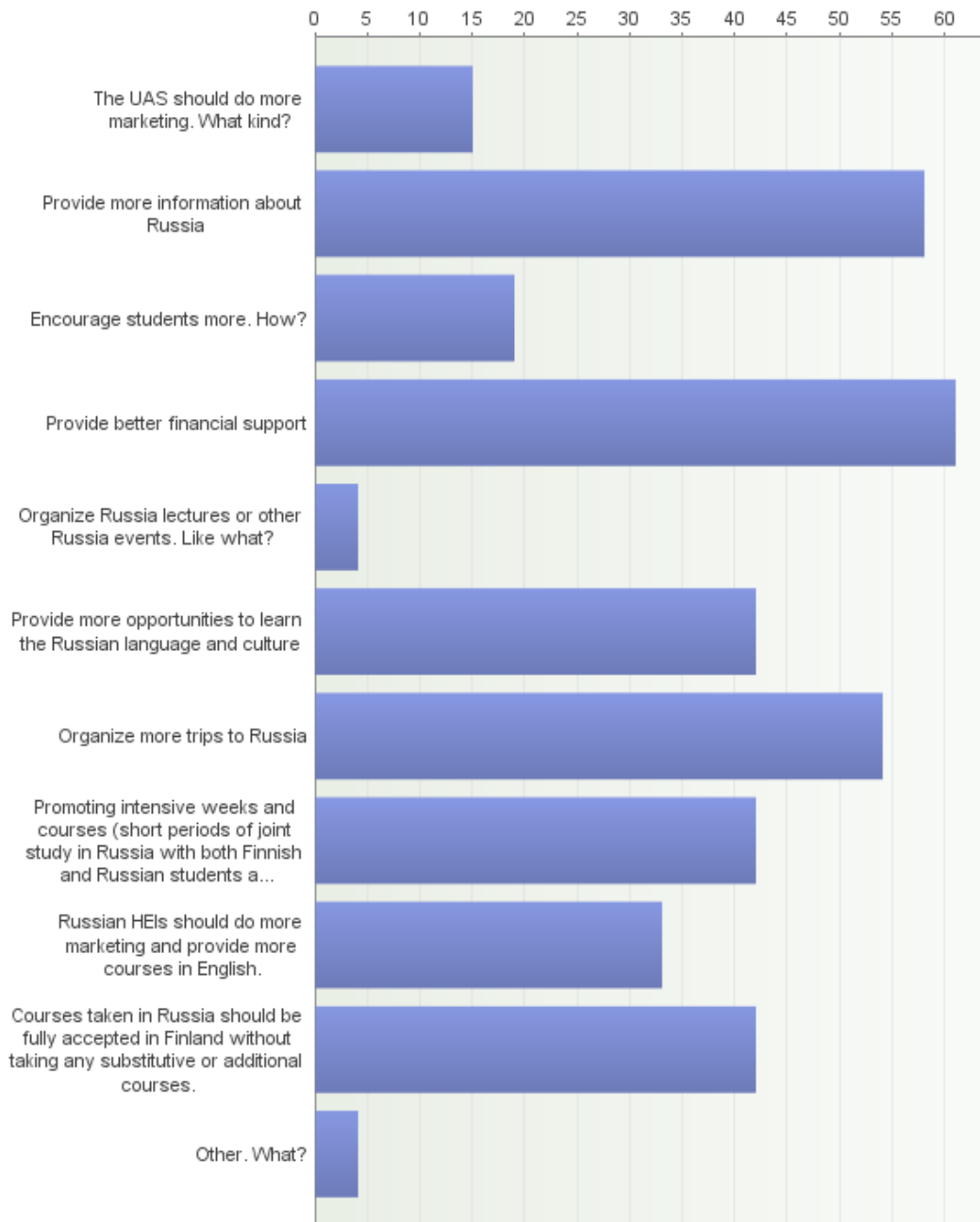
Number of respondents: 132

	Positive	Negative	Doesn't matter	Total
Russian visiting lecturers (exchange teachers)	82	3	47	132
Trips to Russia	95	8	29	132
Communicating with Russian exchange and degree students in Finland	97	8	27	132
Social Media	36	46	50	132
Political situation	8	102	22	132
Economical situation	16	84	32	132

Russian language studies organized in the UAS	69	11	52	132
International office's advertisements	47	9	76	132
Positive experience of fellow students/other people who have been to Russia	102	4	26	132
Russia is a country with rich history and distinctive culture.	95	5	32	132
Russian-Ukrainian issue	4	100	28	132
Visa and insurance requirements	9	70	53	132
Different currency	4	34	94	132
Total	664	484	568	1716

15. If you had a task to increase the number of students going to Russia, which activities would you do?

Number of respondents: 132



Open text answers: The UAS should do more marketing. What kind?

- Any kind, there is far more marketing done for european exchange
- normal marketing
- social media
- information of studying in Russia
- News flashes
- Marketing the universities to go
- More basic information
- Telling about the possibilities
- Tell more information about exchange for Russia
- more information
- How and where to go to exchange

- any kind
- Show positive things from Russia
- possible summerjob openings
- Tell about the schools in Russia (where?) and how is it to study there (maybe info from people who have done an exchange there).

Open text answers: Encourage students more. How?

- Even if it's near Finland, it is worth to see.
- Financial support, pointing out reasons why to go
- they should make it easier to go
- By telling positive experiences of other exchange students who have been in Russia
- try to change thinking that russia
- Show some positive things about studying in Russia
- Lectures, courses on Russian relations
- Supporting going abroad with prepping and giving information
- help economical
- More positive things than now.
- Arranging more Russian language teaching with a lot better teachers.
- Tell more about doing to exchange
- 1
- ?
- Show a brighter side of Russia.
- By giving more information
- would like to hear more experiences from russia
- students should tell how it was to be there
- Sharing experiences

Open text answers: Organize Russia lectures or other Russia events. Like what?

- food and games, talking with other nice students, the Russian students here are quite crumpy
- i dont know
- Visiting lecturers would be good idea
- 1

Open text answers: Other. What?

- boy & girl letter exchange
- i dont know
- Make the practical matters of going to Russia easier for the students. One teacher could help you through the whole process, instead of you having to bounce between 3-5 teachers.
- better timing to the trips to russian

16. Would you go to Russia IF:

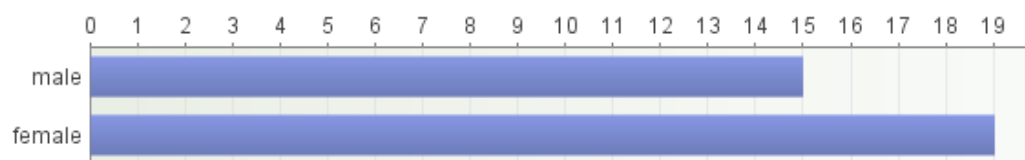
Number of respondents: 131

	Yes	No	Total
you could participate in many courses taught in English, which you need to take anyway in order to graduate AND you would have intensive studies in Russian giving you a working knowledge of Russian?	94	36	130
courses taught in English would be acceptable only as your voluntary courses in Finland, BUT you would receive a working knowledge of Russian while your stay in Russia?	67	61	128
Total	161	97	258

Appendix 5. Extract from results – teacher survey.

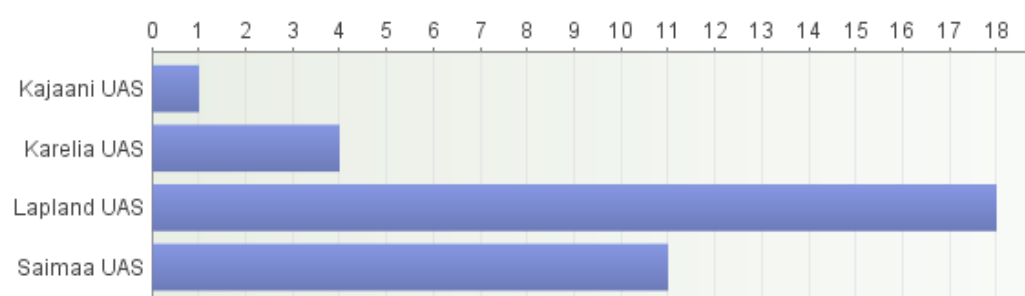
1. Select gender

Number of respondents: 34



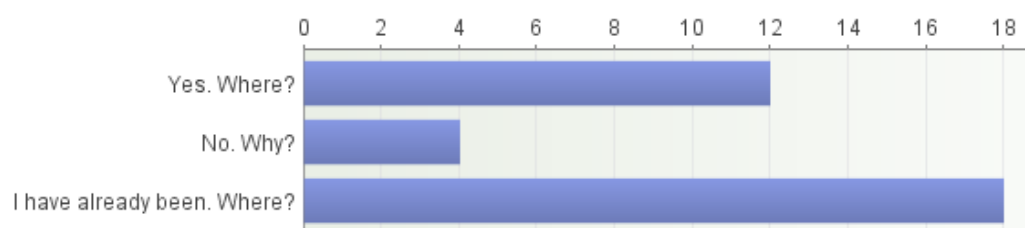
2. You are a teacher in

Number of respondents: 34



3. Are you planning to go for teacher exchange?

Number of respondents: 34



Open text answers: Yes. Where?

- Russia
- Do not know yet
- Barcelona, Tallinn
- Germany
- Denmark
- Tanzania
- Norway
- don't know. anywhere!
- Germany
- Europe
- Kingston Un /UK
- Don't know yet
-

Open text answers: No. Why?

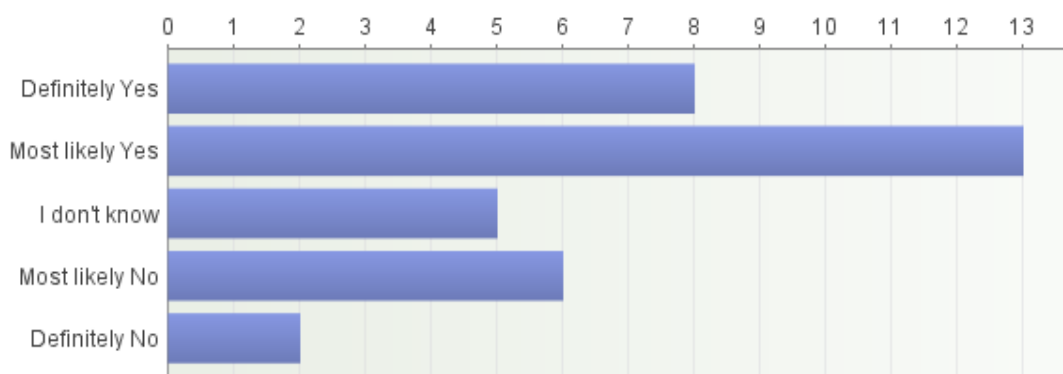
- I have not time enough
- Not interested to go exchange, enough work to here
- I am not allowed because my work agreement is hourly based.
- I don't like to go to teacher exchange
-

Open text answers: I have already been. Where?

- Latvia
- in St Petersburg
- St.Peterburgs Univ. of Economics and services (Social work)
- Murmansk
- China
- many countries
- UK, Germany, Estonia
- St. Petersburg
- St Peter
- Russia, Murmansk
- Murmansk, St. perersburg
- Belgium
- China, Portugal, Russia - Archangelsk, Murmansk
- Czech
- St.Peterburg
- France, Austria
- Austria
- Arkhangelsk
-

4. Would you like to go to Russia for teacher exchange?

Number of respondents: 34



5. Why do you want or do not want to go to Russia on exchange?

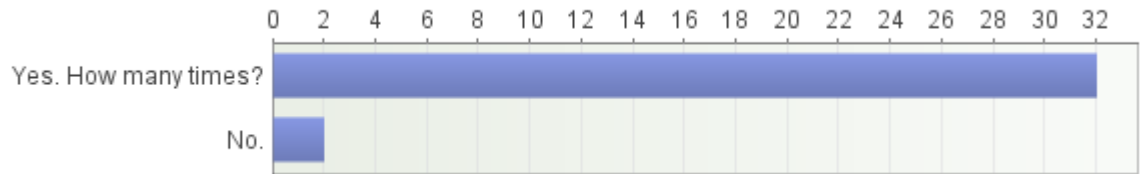
Number of respondents: 29

- It's nice to discuss with colleagues and to see different ways to study and teach
- It is very interesting to get to know russian culture, language and education: change knowledge and experiences. St Petersburg is very beautiful and people are kind and helping.
- It is destination just like any other

- I've been to Russia quite many times. Russia is as interesting as any country to have an exchange.
- I don't like Putin's and Russian policy.
- The culture and society is maybe too different. Still, it is important country for us to cooperate.
- The situation in Russia is not stable. I do not want to take the risk that something happens.
- Good opportunities and important partner
- I have been there three times more than in other countries. It is time to change the direction.
- Because of our co-operation universities
- Russian attitude towards EU citizens.
- E.g. to learn the culture, to build new networks, to get familiar with the Russian (or parts of it) heritage.
- For the overall political situation it is not ethically or morally good to go there. For my sexual orientation I feel been already accused and in fear of being in jail in Russia. All people are equal, not there.
- I have never been to Russia for teacher exchange.
- I have been there once. The circumstances near Kantalahti were not very good.
- I have been there many times. Participated in project work in Murmansk (three times) and had an intensive course and teaching experience in St.Petersburg
- I have been so many times there and I do know their cultural and also nursing culture
- For some strange reason I seem to like Russia... but as I stated above... I can go anywhere,
- Don't know much about the Russian culture and way of life. I don't wish to be impolite, but my perception of Russia is that is an unstable society, I would not feel safe at all times.
- I speak English so weak that I don't want to go to Russia on exchange.
- During the exchanges I feel that I have learned something new about the people, their culture and their ways of communicating. This kind of learning is important since we have Russian students in our international programmes and it is good to understand their backgrounds and culture.
- Why not? Exchange periods enriches one's life
- St. Petersburg is culturally interesting and there are many places I haven't seen. I'd like to get to know colleagues of my own subject from there.
- Yes: I'm a Russian teacher
- Interested audience
- Non Russian experience
- Teachers are still respected in Russia. Well-mannered, clever and motivated students.
- I want to create better contacts to our neighbor land.
- I have already been there. But why not again

6. Have you been to Russia?

Number of respondents: 34

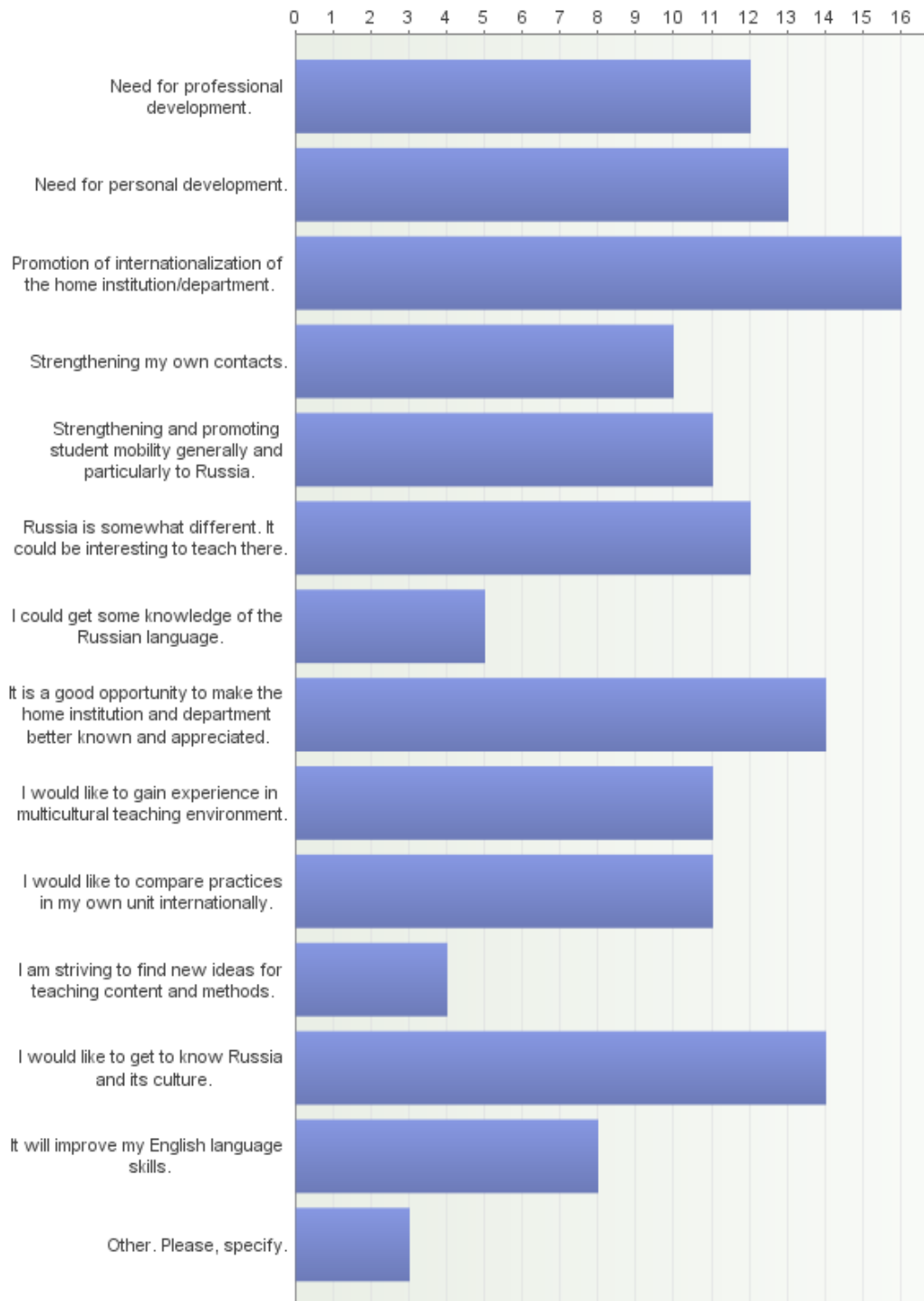


Open text answers: Yes. How many times?

- once
- 25
- once
- 5
- 4+ SovjetUnion n times
- 10
- about 20 to 25 times
- 6
- about 50
- more than 20 times
- 103
- once
- 1
- 1
- 1
- 1
- nine times
- 2
- about 70
- 5
- 3
- Tree times
- two times
- >10
- perhaps 10
- several since 1970's
- 15+
- 4
- Dozens of times
- Tens of times
- 20
- several times

7. Which factors would motivate you to do teacher exchange in Russia?

Number of respondents: 34

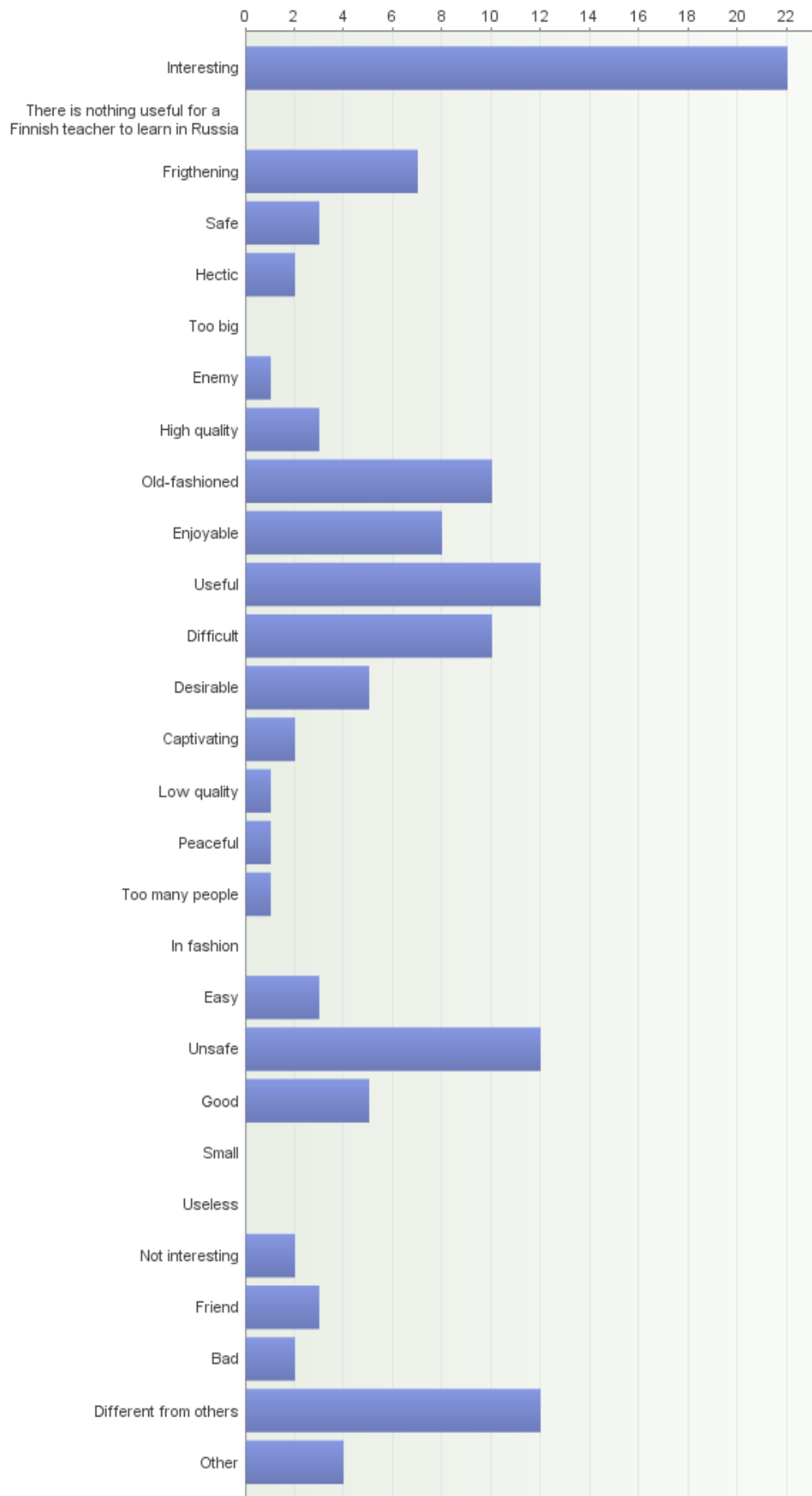


Open text answers: Other. Please, specify.

- part of job
- Change in Russia's human right situation
- Professional interests

8. Russia as exchange country in your opinion is:

Number of respondents: 34



Open text answers: Other

- Hospitable
- The Ukraina situation makes thins difficult
- Staff and students are welcoming and interested in discussing issues, which is totally different from Finnish students and staff when we have exchange teachers visiting our university
- Hectic and Too many people would apply to Moscow and St.Pb., but not for Murmansk or other smaller towns

9. Rate on the scale possible factors that might prevent from going for teacher exchange to Russia.

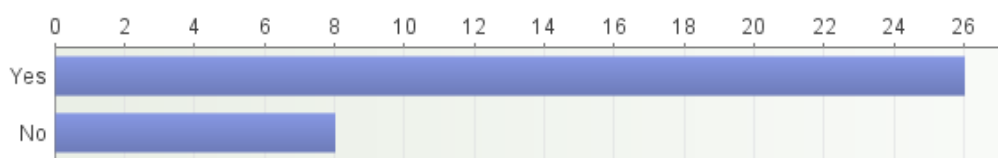
Number of respondents: 34

	Doesn't matter at all	Somewhat matters	Matters a lot	It is the most important for me	Total
Language obstacle: communication with Russian teachers in HEIs is complicated due to inadequate English skills of Russian colleagues.	9	14	9	2	34
Teaching methods differ. Russian students are unaccustomed to interactive way of teaching based on discussions. This complicates lecturing.	14	15	5	0	34
I have lack of Russian language skills.	9	11	9	5	34
Differences in education systems and degree structures.	15	14	3	2	34
Current social, political and economic instability make me feel scared and prevents from going.	14	9	6	5	34
I will feel unsafe in Russia, especially considering current war in Ukraine.	12	10	7	5	34
Culture and mentality are very different in Russia. I am afraid of misunderstandings.	20	9	5	0	34
Visa and insurance issues make mobility to Russia more demanding and problematic for me.	18	11	4	1	34
Different currency in Russia makes mobility more complicated for me.	24	9	1	0	34
I have prejudices about Russia and there have been lots of negative rumors lately considering the situation in Ukraine.	13	13	5	3	34

My family has antipathy to Russia due to historical relations.	26	5	2	1	34
I have negative perception of Russians.	25	6	3	0	34
Russia is somewhat different. I hesitate everything new.	29	4	1	0	34
Total	228	130	60	24	442

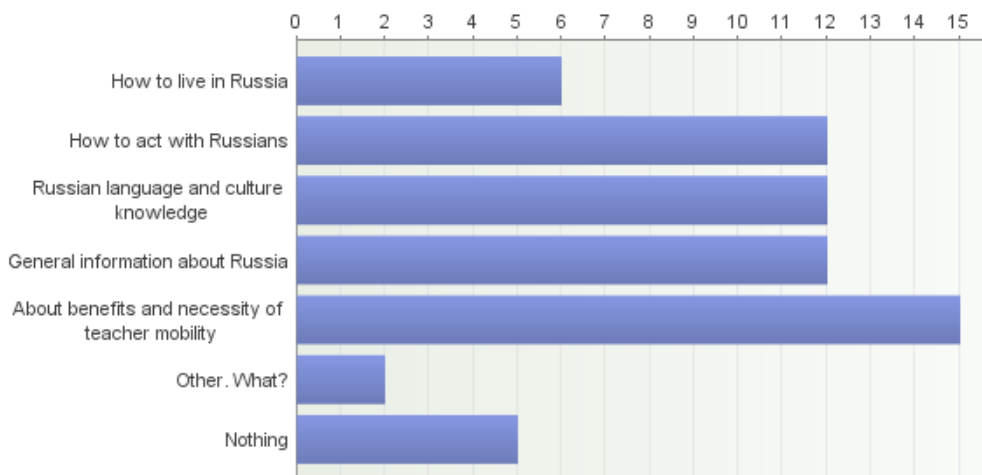
10. Do you think you receive enough information about Russia?

Number of respondents: 34



11. What information should the university provide more, in your opinion?

Number of respondents: 34



Open text answers: Other. What?

- Social awareness, Human rights
- Bdbd

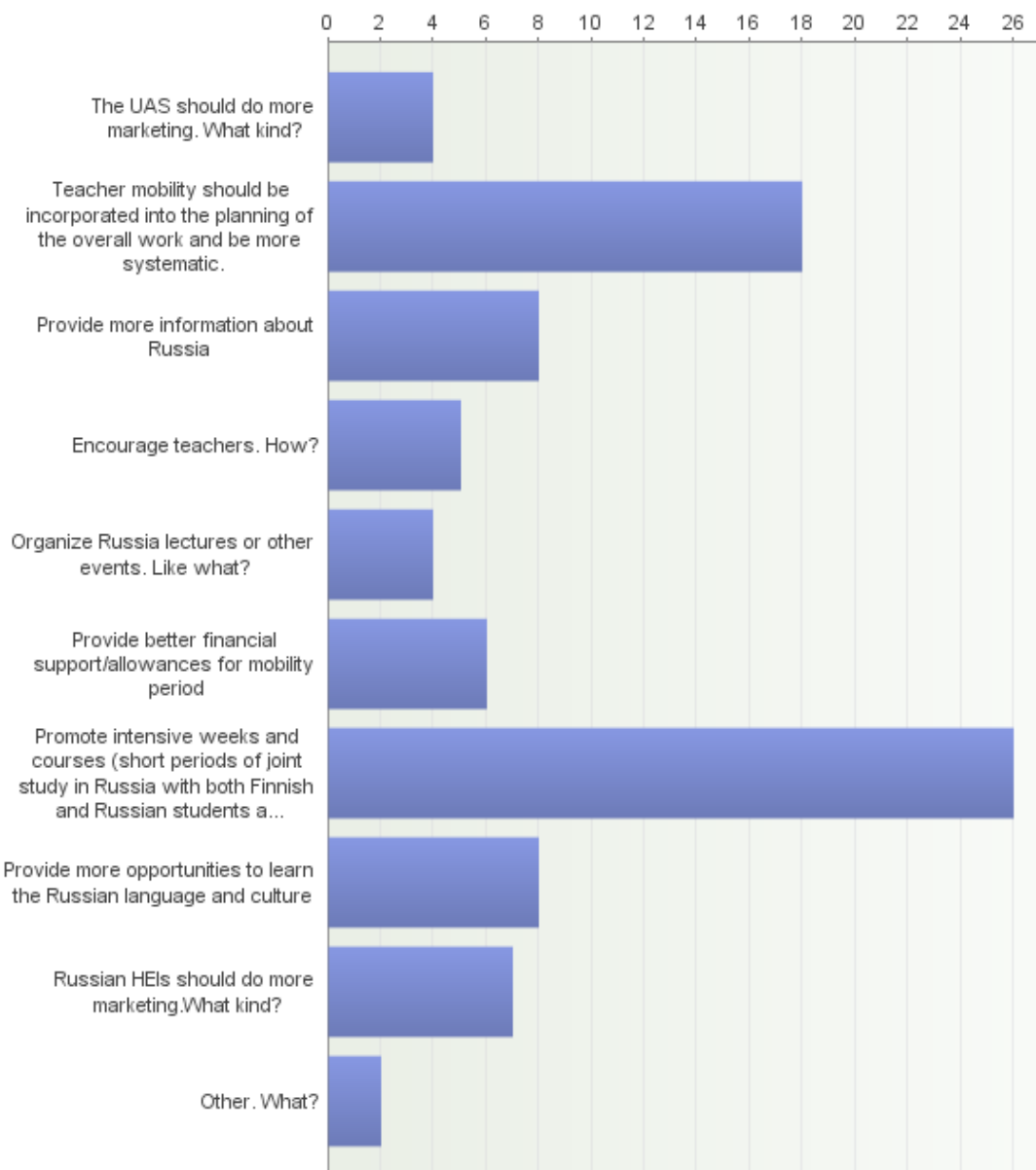
12. How do the following facts and activities affect your motivation to go to Russia for exchange?

Number of respondents: 34

	Positive	Negative	Doesn't matter	Total
Teaching and communicating in English is easy in Russian HEIs.	21	5	8	34
Positive experience of your colleagues, who have been to Russia.	30	2	2	34
Russia is relatively cheap place to stay, especially due to currently low value of ruble.	19	2	13	34
Russia is a country with rich history and distinctive culture.	29	0	5	34
Russia is close geographically.	29	2	3	34
Russian visiting lecturers (exchange teachers)	24	1	9	34
Social Media	7	7	20	34
Political situation	2	21	11	34
Economical situation	5	8	21	34
Knowledge of the Russian language and culture	18	9	7	34
Russian-Ukrainian issue	2	23	9	34
Visa and insurance requirements	0	12	22	34
Different currency	0	4	30	34
Total	186	96	160	442

13. If you had a task to increase the number of teachers going to Russia, which activities would you do?

Number of respondents: 34



Open text answers: The UAS should do more marketing. What kind?

- On the spot by exchange students and teachers
- peer marketing, tandem teaching
- towards teachers
- f

Open text answers: Encourage teachers. How?

- Sisu
- To act as a pioneer
- more information
- support from experienced colleagues
- more info on opportunities

Open text answers: Organize Russia lectures or other events. Like what?

- -
- Student events

- guest lecturers of own field
- film screenings

Open text answers: Russian HEIs should do more marketing. What kind?

- Research opportunities
- -
- To visit here in Lapland UAS
- to what courses they would like to have visiting teachers
- face-to-face
- specify their curriculum and projects
- sv

Open text answers: Other. What?

- Russian political situation needs to move to more positive attitude.
- Human right situation