FACULTY OF HEALTH AND MEDICAL SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN

PhD Student Evaluation

Evaluation of the PhD Training Programme at the Graduate School of Health and Medical Sciences

PhD Graduates January-December 2016

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Quality of Education and
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Introduction

All PhD students evaluate their PhD programme at the Graduate School of Health and Medical Sciences, University of Copenhagen. This report presents results provided by PhD students who submitted their PhD thesis between 1 January and 31 December 2016. Since 2011, this evaluation has targeted all PhD students in the final stages of their PhD programme at the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences. The yearly reports are published on the Graduate School's homepage:
http://healthsciences.ku.dk/phd/about-the-graduate-school/evaluation/

The objective of the evaluation is to provide the Head of the Graduate School and the heads of the graduate programmes with input regarding the PhD students' experiences to ensure that informed decisions can be made when adjustments and changes to the PhD programme are needed. The evaluation targets central elements of the PhD programme.

Respondents

From 1 January to 31 December 2016, 330 PhD students submitted their PhD thesis at the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences. All of these PhD students received the evaluation questionnaire shortly after.

Table 1: Respondents and response rate

Number of possible respondents	330
Partly completed questionnaires	8
Fully completed questionnaires	204
Respondents in total	212
Response rate	**64%**

We judge the response rate of 64% to be satisfactory for this type of evaluation. This response rate of 64% is somewhat lower than that of the previous two reports, which displayed response rates of 69% (in the report covering 2015) and 78% (in the report covering the second half of 2014).

Reading instructions

This is the ninth report presenting results submitted by PhD students evaluating their PhD programme and the fifth to present results divided by graduate programme. With 20 different graduate programmes to evaluate on the basis of approximately 70 questions, this report is inevitably extensive and contains voluminous tables and charts. Nonetheless, we have made it a priority to present most results divided by graduate programmes, in line with the objective of providing input to the heads of these programmes. To assist readers who are mainly interested in the Graduate School as a whole, 'total' bars are placed at the bottom of each chart.

In the period from January to December 2016, the 20 graduate programmes were:

Table 2: Respondents by graduate programme affiliation

Graduate programme Listed alphabetically	Respondents in this evaluation	Total population
Basic and Clinical Research in Musculoskeletal and Oral Sciences	2.4% (5)	3.3% (11)
Basic Metabolic Research	5.7% (12)	5.2% (17)
Biostatistics and Bioinformatics	1.9% (4)	1.5% (5)
Cardiovascular Research	8.5% (18)	10.0% (33)
Cellular and Genetic Medicine	1.9% (4)	3.0% (10)
Clinical Cancer Research	6.1% (13)	4.8% (16)
Clinical Research	21.2% (45)	18.2% (60)
Forensic Medicine and Anthropology	0.9% (2)	0.9% (3)
Herd- and Population Oriented Research (HERD)	1.4% (3)	1.2% (4)
Immunology and Infectious Diseases	6.1% (13)	7.3% (24)
In Vivo Pharmacology and Experimental Animals	2.8% (6)	2.4% (8)
Medical and Molecular Imaging	1.4% (3)	2.1% (7)
Medicine, Culture and Society	0.5% (1)	0.6% (2)
Molecular Bacteriology and Infection	2.4% (5)	2.1% (7)
Molecular Mechanisms of Disease	6.1% (13)	6.7% (22)
Neuroscience	3.8% (8)	5.5% (18)
Pharmaceutical Sciences	10.9% (23)	10.0% (33)
Psychiatry	3.3% (7)	3.3% (11)
Public Health and Epidemiology	10.4% (22)	9.1% (30)
Veterinary and Animal Sciences	1.4% (3)	1.8% (6)
Respondents without information on graduate programme[1]	0.9% (2)	0.9% (3)
Total	**100 % (212)**	**100 % (330)**

Presentation of results filtered by graduate programmes

Presenting results divided by graduate programmes means that some sub-populations are small. In order to protect the anonymity of the respondents, and in agreement with the Graduate School, results are not published if they are based on answers from a total population of less than five respondents, i.e. PhD students who received an invitation to complete the questionnaire but did not necessarily participate in the survey. Therefore, sets of results with fewer than five potential respondents are grouped together as "other graduate programmes". The group of "other graduate programmes" consists of the following graduate programmes: Forensic Medicine and Anthropology (n=3), Herd- and Population Oriented Research (HERD) (n=4), Medicine, Culture and Society (n=2) and respondents without information on graduate programme (n=3). The number of potential respondents from 'other graduate programmes' sums up to 12, making up 3.6 % of the total group of potential respondents.

As displayed in Table 2, the distribution of respondents across graduate programmes from the population of respondents equals that of the total population of potential respondents for this evaluation period.

[1] It is possible to submit a PhD thesis without prior enrolment to the Graduate School and without affiliation to a graduate programme. It is a requirement to hold qualifications that are comparable to the qualifications obtained through a PhD programme (so-called § 15 subsection 2). These respondents do not have a graduate programme.

In this report, data from closed-ended questions are presented as percentages to enable comparison between both graduate programmes and different evaluation periods. Please take note of the sample size when comparing data from this report as percentages calculated on small samples are more unstable, since it only takes a few respondents to shift the distribution substantively.[2]

Please note that the number of respondents can vary in the figures throughout the report, as the respondents can choose not to answer a question. The number of respondents is indicated by "n" in chart labels and at each bar in bar charts.

Evaluation method

The evaluation is designed as a survey with closed-ended questions supplemented by a number of open-ended questions to provide PhD students with the opportunity to elaborate on their answers.

Quality of Education and Management Information (part of Education and Student Services)[3] handles the continuous submission of invitations to complete the questionnaire along with the subsequent collection, analysis and dissemination of the results. The Graduate School defines the parameters used in the evaluation and the questionnaire is designed and revised as a joint effort of the Graduate School and Quality of Education and Management Information.

At the beginning of each month, the questionnaire is sent to all PhD students who have submitted their thesis the previous month. Quality of Education and Management Information receives the generated lists of respondents from the Graduate School along with relevant information (PhD students' private e-mail addresses, date of thesis submission and affiliations to departments and graduate programmes).

[2] Small sample sizes also affect the possibility of doing inferential statistical tests on data from graduate programmes with non-response errors.

[3] Quality of Education and Management Information at the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences assists in the development of quality assurance measures for the PhD programmes. These activities are carried out in connection with the on-going evaluation of the programmes, courses and major evaluations of PhD programmes.

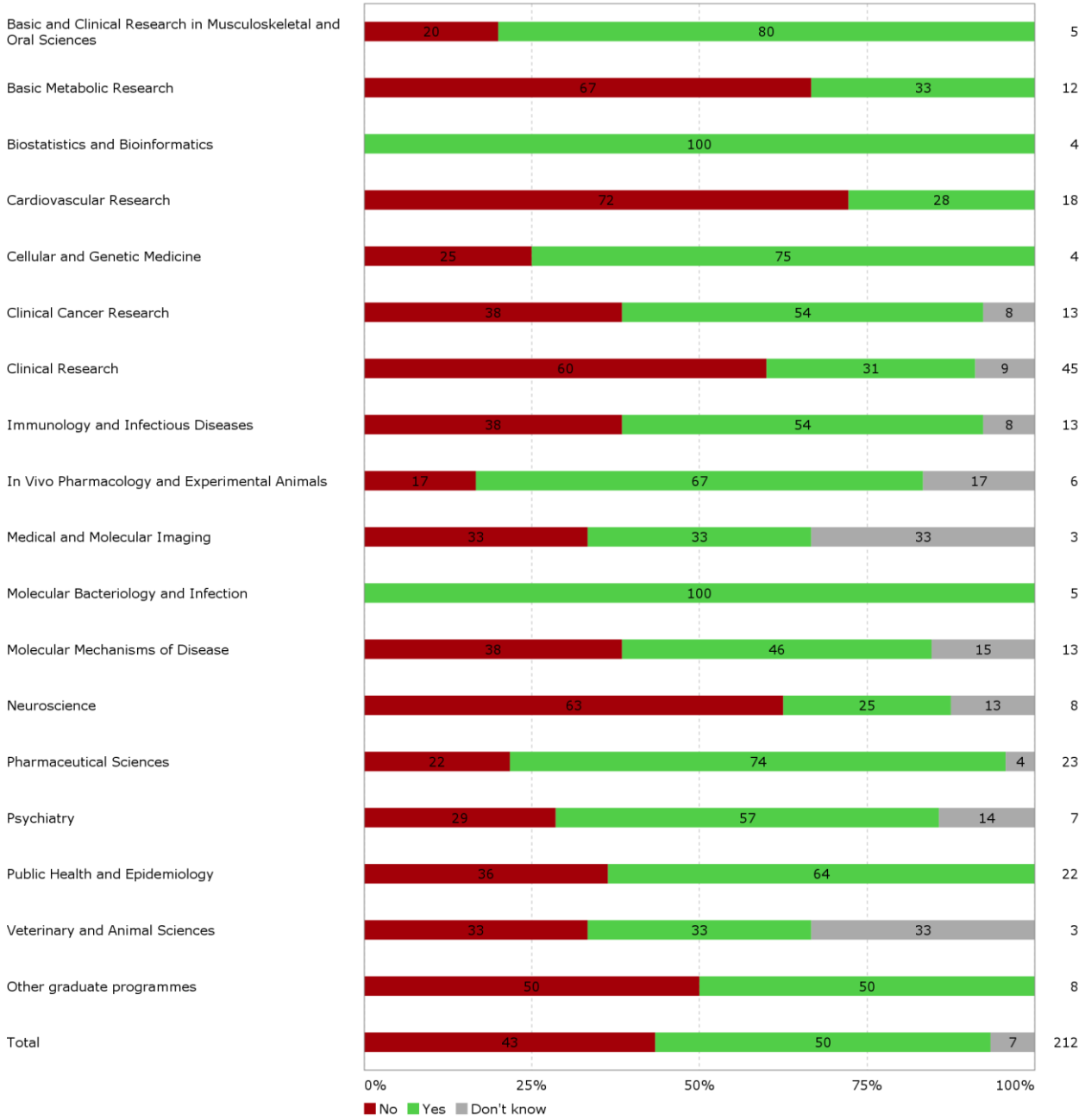
1. The PhD Project and enrolment

To enrol in the PhD programme, PhD applicants must have a project, supervisor(s) and funding. In this section, we examine the degree to which the PhD students' projects were defined in advance in a call for applications for PhD grants and to what extent the PhD students influenced the project description.

The PhD project and its description

Chart 1.1 (below) shows the degree to which the PhD projects were defined in advance in a call for applications. Overall, 50% of the respondents had their PhD project defined in advance, a result that is similar to the corresponding result of 47% in the previous report covering 2015.

Chart 1.1: Was your PhD project defined in advance in a call for applications for PhD grants? (n=212)



Please note: For some graduate programmes results are based on answers from less than five PhD respondents. Still, as the total group of potential respondents sums up to five or more PhD students the anonymity of the respondents is protected.

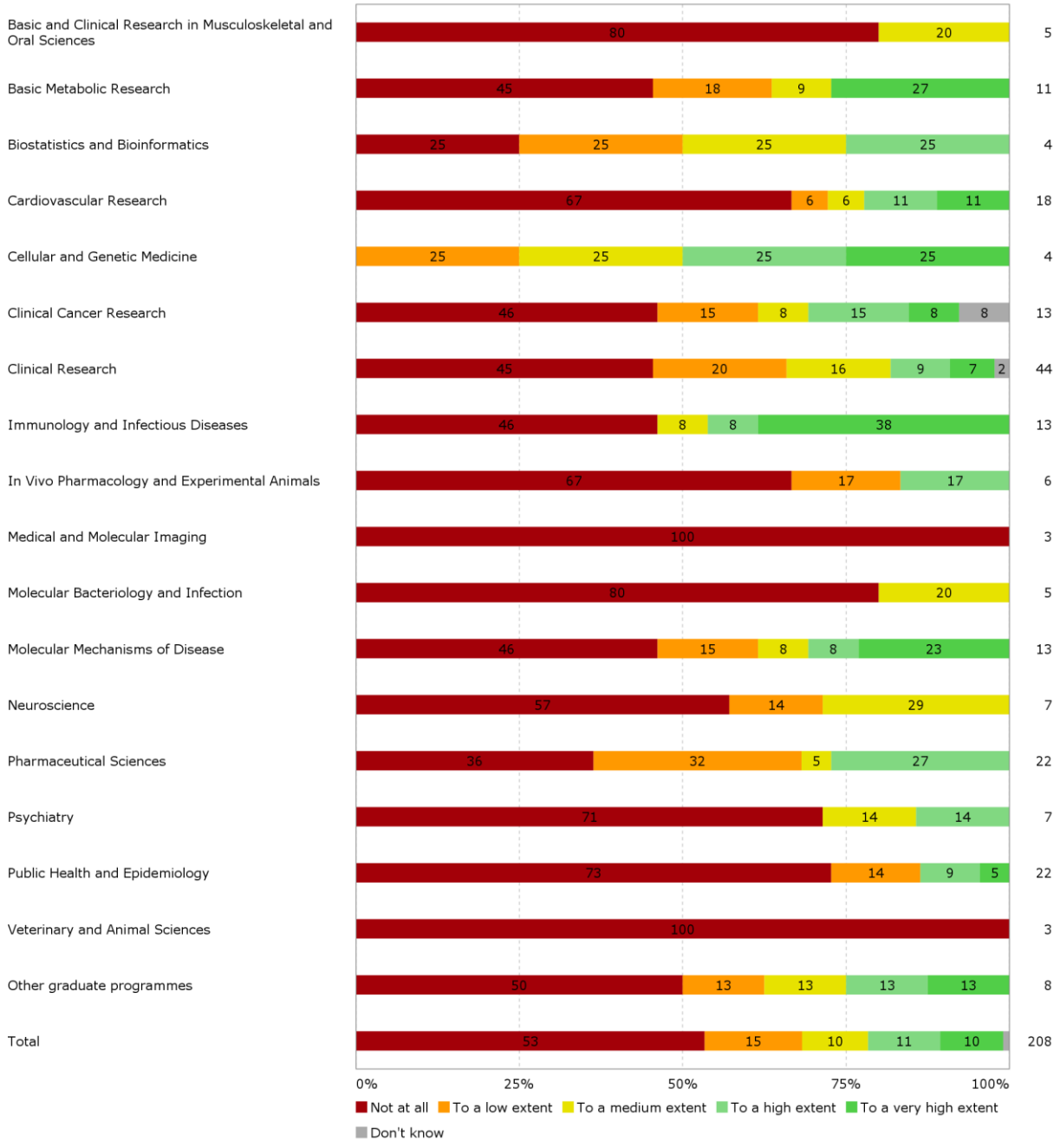
As chart 1.1 shows, variation among the graduate programmes is apparent with regard to the percentage of pre-defined projects, as was the case in the previous report. For two of the graduate programmes, Biostatistics and Bioinformatics, and Molecular Bacteriology and Infection, all respondents state that their project was defined in advance. Contrary to this, for Basic Metabolic Research and Cardiovascular Research, only 33% and 28%, respectively, of the projects were defined in advance.

A comparison of the results from the present and the previous report filtered by graduate programmes shows how the percentage of predefined projects has declined for some graduate programmes and increased for others. For Pharmaceutical Sciences, the percentage of predefined projects has decreased from 91% in the previous report to 74% in the present report. This decrease in the number of predefined projects at Pharmaceutical Sciences means that the results are now closer to those from the second half of 2014, when 69% of the projects were defined in advance. For Basic Metabolic Research and Cardiovascular Research, the number of predefined projects has likewise decreased: For Basic Metabolic Research, from 62% to 33% and for Cardiovascular Research, from 50% to 28%. Contrary to this, for Basic and Clinical Research in Musculoskeletal and Oral Sciences, the number of predefined projects has increased from 57% to 80%, whereas the number of predefined projects for Cellular and Genetic Medicine has increased from 43% to 75%.

As illustrated in chart 1.2 (next page), for 68% of the PhD students, the PhD project was not a continuation of undergraduate research activities ('not at all' or 'to a low extent') – a result which exactly mirrors that of the last report.

Of the total population of PhD students, 21% saw a direct connection ('to a high extent' or 'to a very high extent') between research initiated during their undergraduate study programmes and their PhD research project (same as last report).

Chart 1.2: To what extent was the PhD a continuation of research that you began during your undergraduate programme? (n=208)



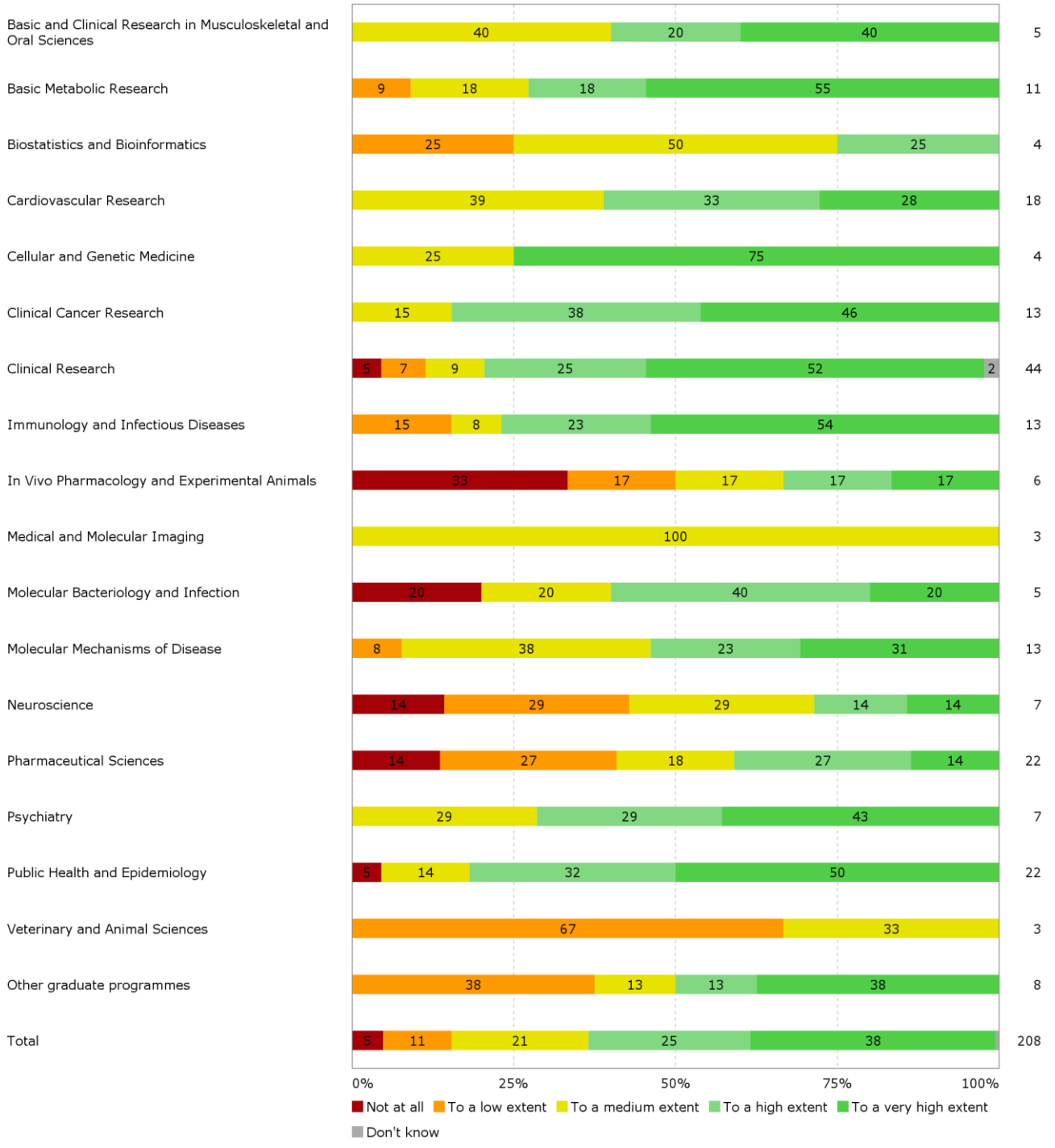
For some graduate programmes, the PhD project differs from the previously conducted undergraduate research to a higher extent than the above-mentioned overall result of 68% (where the PhD project is 'not at all' or 'to a low extent' a continuation of undergraduate research). For example, for Medical and Molecular Imaging, and Veterinary and Animal Sciences all respondents answer that the PhD project is 'not at all' a continuation of undergraduate research. For other graduate programmes, many PhD students tend to continue previously conducted undergraduate research in their PhD project. See, for instance, Cellular and Genetic Medicine, where 50% state that the PhD project continues undergraduate research 'to a high extent' or 'to a very high extent', whereas only 25% state that it 'to a low extent' continues undergraduate research.

When compared to the corresponding filtered results from the last report, some graduate programmes display an increase in the percentage of respondents whose projects represented a continuation of their undergraduate research activities ('to a high extent' or 'to a very high extent'). For example, as mentioned

above, 50% of the respondents from Cellular and Genetic Medicine continued previously conducted undergraduate research in this report, whereas no respondents continued undergraduate research in the previous report. For Immunology and Infectious Disease, 46% continued undergraduate research compared to a mere 6% in the previous report. Contrary to this, for Basic and Clinical Research in Musculoskeletal and Oral Sciences, no respondents continued undergraduate research in this report, whereas 28% did so in the previous report.

Chart 1.3 (next page) shows that 63% of the respondents stated that they greatly influenced the project description ('to a high extent' or 'to a very high extent'), a result highly similar to the corresponding result of 64% in the previous report. Twenty-one percent influenced the project description to a medium extent compared to 23% in the previous report, whereas 16% of the respondents rated their level of influence as low ('not at all' or 'to a low extent') compared to 13% in the previous report.

Chart 1.3: To what extent did you influence the project description? (n=208)



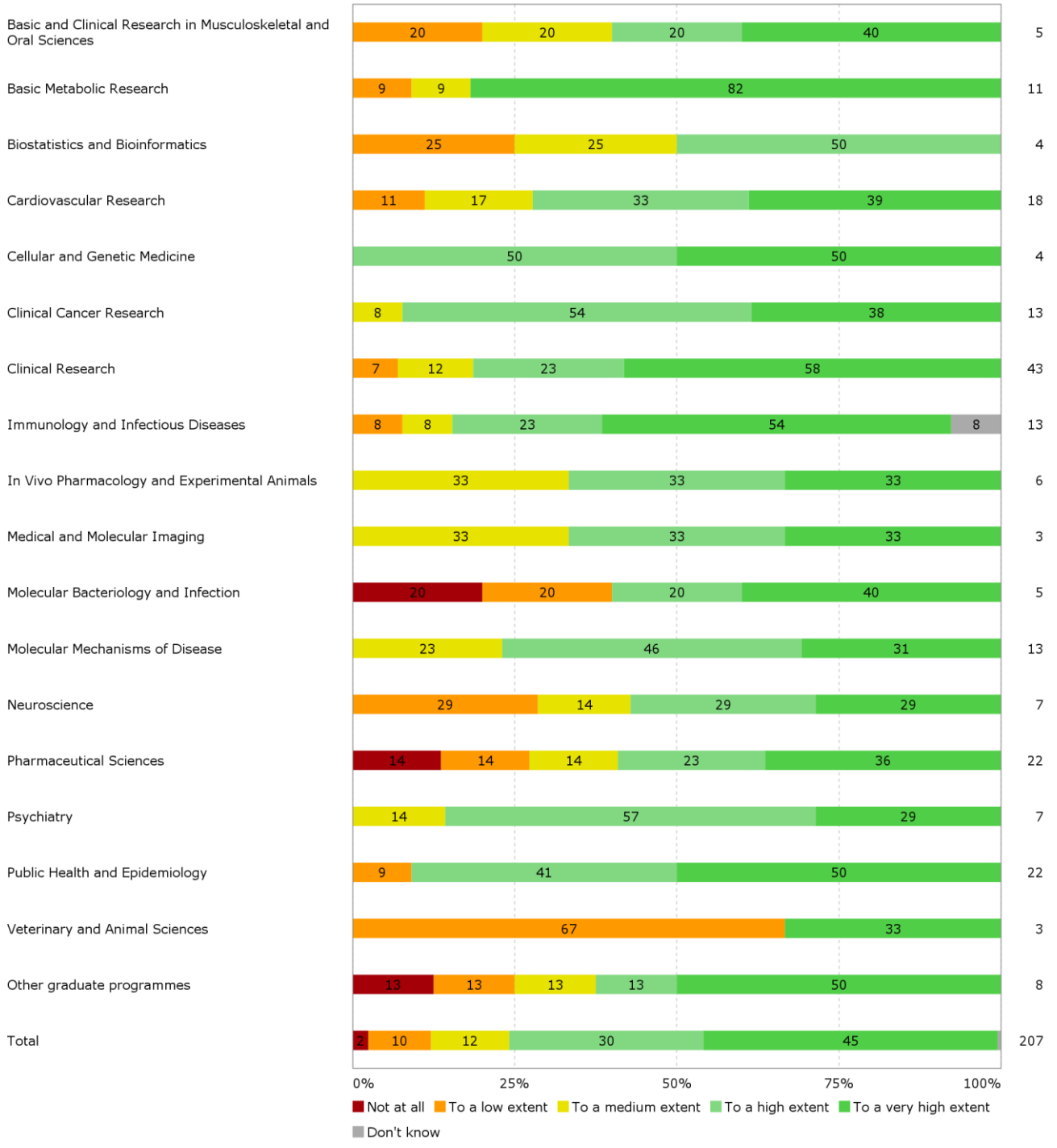
The level of influence on the project description varies greatly across graduate programmes. The highest level of influence is to be found for PhD students affiliated with Clinical Cancer Research and Public Health and Epidemiology. Here 84% and 82%, respectively, stated that they had influenced the project description 'to high extent' or 'to a very high extent'. At the other end of the spectrum, no PhD students affiliated with either Medical and Molecular Imaging or Veterinary and Animal Sciences stated that they had influenced the project description to a high or very high extent. For Biostatistics and Bioinformatics, and Neuroscience, only 25% and 28%, respectively, stated that they had influenced the project description to a high or very high extent.

Both increases and decreases in the level of influence on the project description are apparent when comparing results from the present and the previous report. For Neuroscience and Pharmaceutical Sciences, the level of influence has decreased; 43% and 41%, respectively, stated that they had influenced the project description 'to a low extent' or 'not at all', compared to equivalent percentages of 14% and 30%, respectively, in the previous report. At the other end of the scale, for Public Health and Epidemiology, 82% stated that they had great influence on the project description in the present report ('to a high extent' or 'to a very high extent'), whereas the equivalent percentage from the previous report was 63%.

As shown in chart 1.4 (next page), the majority of the PhD students (75%) discussed the project description with their principal supervisor to a high extent (‘to a high extent’ or ‘to a very high extent’), 12% discussed it ‘to a medium extent’, while 12% ticked ‘not at all’ or ‘to a low extent’. These results are highly similar to those from the previous report.

Again, variation can be found across graduate programmes. For the respondents from Veterinary and Animal Sciences, only 33% discussed the project description with their principal supervisor to a high extent. For Biostatistics and Bioinformatics, the equivalent result was 50%. As opposed to this, for several of the graduate programmes, no respondents ticked ‘not at all’ or ‘to a low extent’ with regard to the extent to which they discussed the project description with their principal supervisor (e.g. Cellular and Genetic Medicine, Clinical Cancer Research and Psychiatry).

Chart 1.4: To what extent did you discuss the project description with your principal supervisor? (n=207)



Comments regarding the PhD project

Only 13 respondents provided additional comments regarding this paragraph of the questionnaire centred on the project and its description. In keeping with this, the comments naturally only reflect the opinion of a small group of the respondents. One theme receives four comments, namely, how the majority of the PhD students were able to influence the project description, as exemplified by the following comments:

"I co-wrote the application for a grant for my PhD project."

"I wrote the project description in close collaboration with particularly my industrial supervisor."

2. Supervision

The quality of the supervision received by the individual PhD student is crucial for the successful completion of a PhD project. To target the quality of the supervision, respondents are asked about overall satisfaction with their supervision as well as detailed supervision aspects (time spent on guidance on scientific and popular communication, mediation of contacts, etc.). They are also asked about the number of supervisors and their satisfaction with primary and secondary supervisors.

Overall satisfaction with supervision

Chart 2.1 (below) illustrates the overall assessment of the supervision. In total, 74% of the respondents are 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their supervision, while 12% are 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied'. The corresponding percentages from the previous report are similarly 73% and 12%, respectively.

Chart 2.1: All in all, how satisfied were you with the supervision you received during your PhD? (n=207)

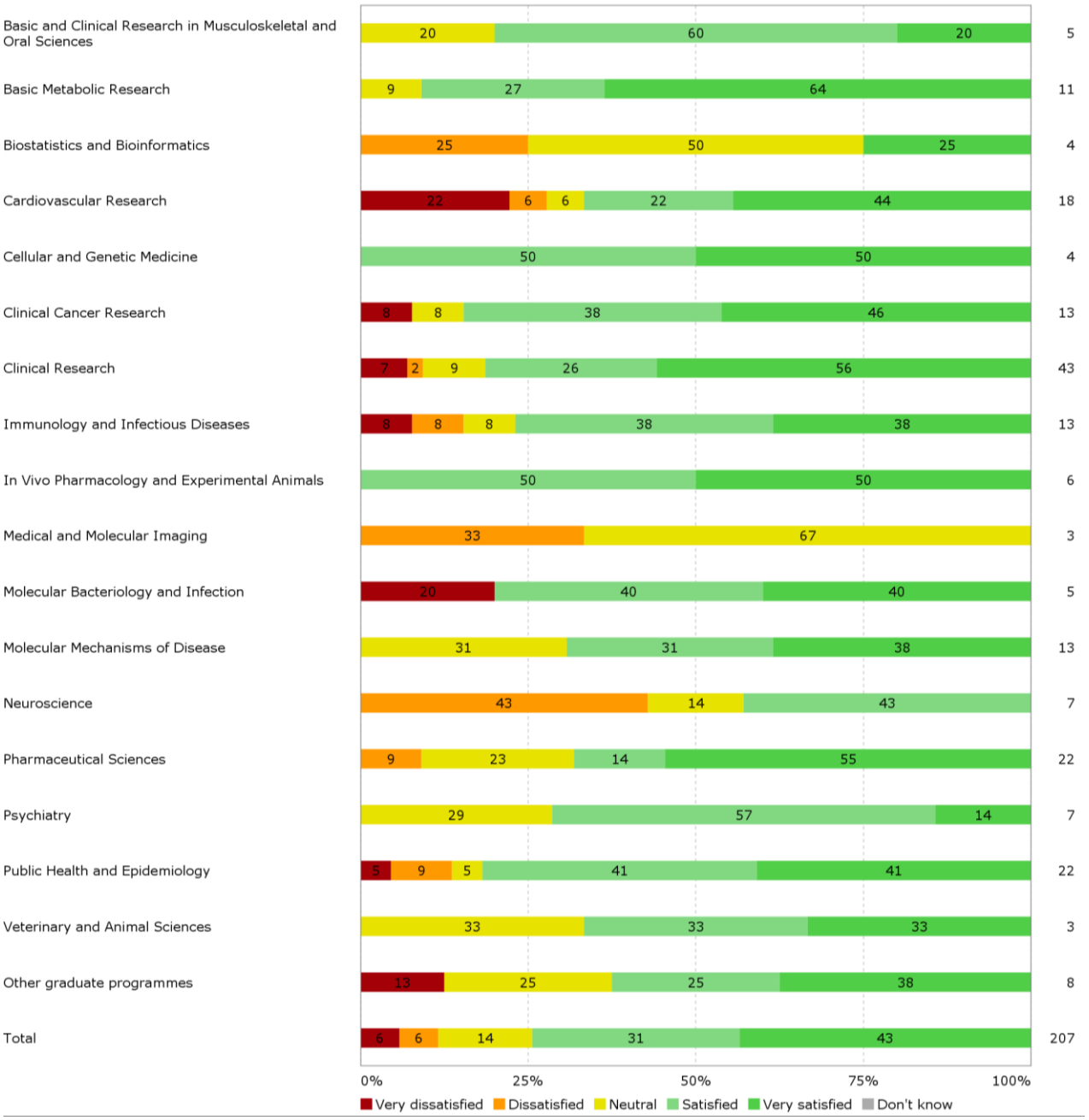


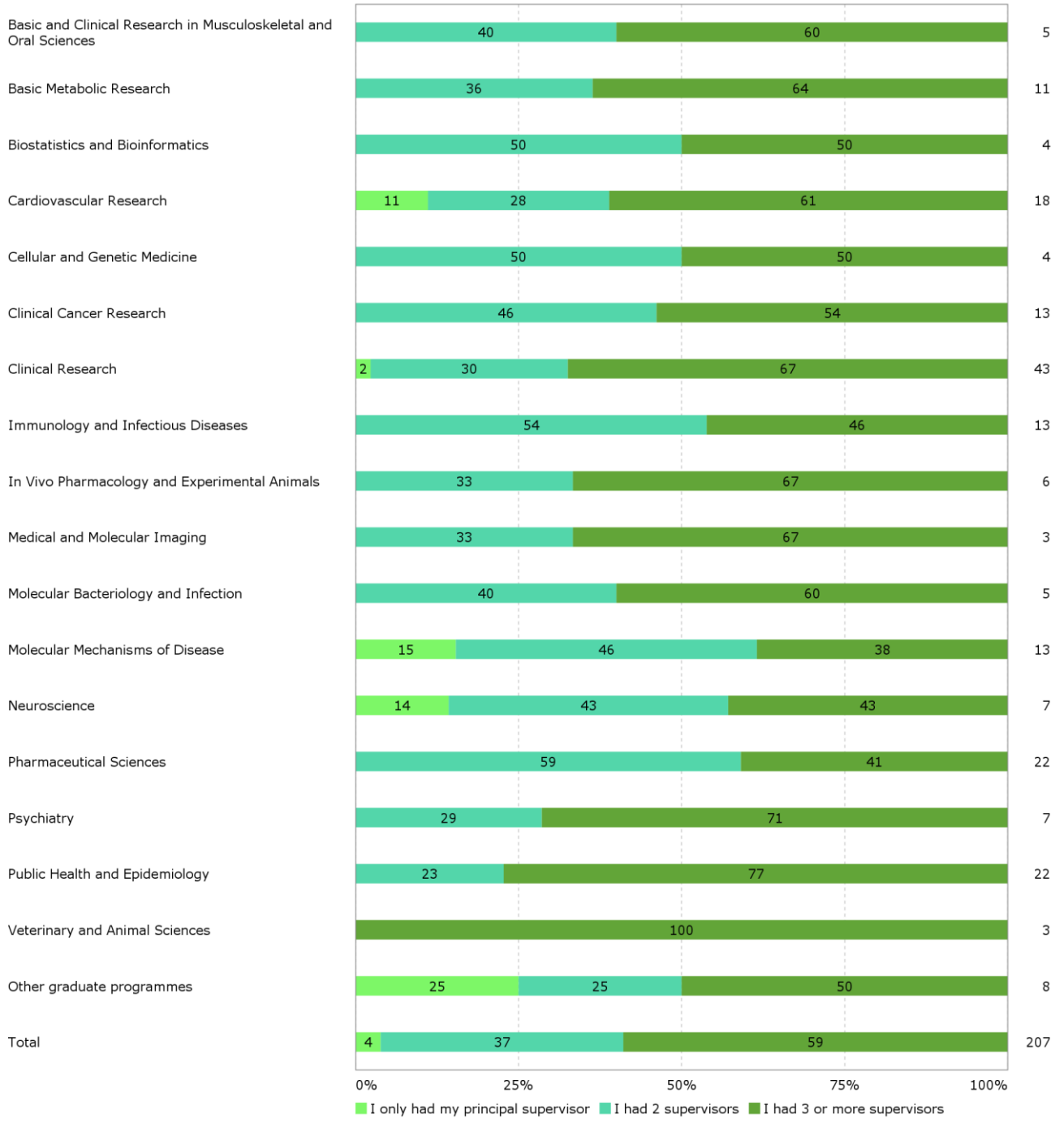
Chart 2.1 (previous page) also displays the variation across graduate programmes in how the PhD students rate their supervision. For several graduate programmes, no respondents are dissatisfied with their supervision and for two programmes, Cellular and Genetic Medicine, and In Vivo Pharmacology and Experimental Animals, all respondents are either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied'. The evaluation of supervision at Biostatistics and Bioinformatics, Neuroscience, and Medical and Molecular Imaging display a different, less positive result. For Biostatistics and Bioinformatics, and Neuroscience, 25% and 43%, respectively, are satisfied with their supervision and for Medical and Molecular Imaging, no respondents stated that they were satisfied.

In terms of changes in the overall evaluation of the received supervision, a positive shift can be observed for some programmes, e.g. Psychiatry. For Psychiatry, 71% of the respondents are satisfied ('satisfied' or 'very satisfied') with their supervision, whereas 29% are 'neutral' and no one is dissatisfied. The level of satisfaction with the supervision at Psychiatry has thus increased, given that 60% were satisfied and as many as 40% were dissatisfied in the previous report. For Cardiovascular Research, 28% are now dissatisfied with their supervision compared to 11% in the previous report.

Number of supervisors

As of January 2013, all PhD students are required to have more than one supervisor. For respondents from the group of PhD students that were enrolled prior to this time, the only requirement was to have a principal supervisor, though the PhD students were encouraged to also have a project supervisor and/or other co-supervisors. As shown in chart 2.2 (next page), most PhD students did in fact have one or more co-supervisors in addition to the principal supervisor. Across graduate programmes, more than half (59%) of the PhD students had three or more affiliated supervisors (including the principal supervisor), a percentage which mirrors that of the previous report. Thirty-seven percent had two supervisors and 4% had only their principal supervisor (9% in the previous report).

Chart 2.2: How many supervisors did you have, including your principal supervisor? (n=207)



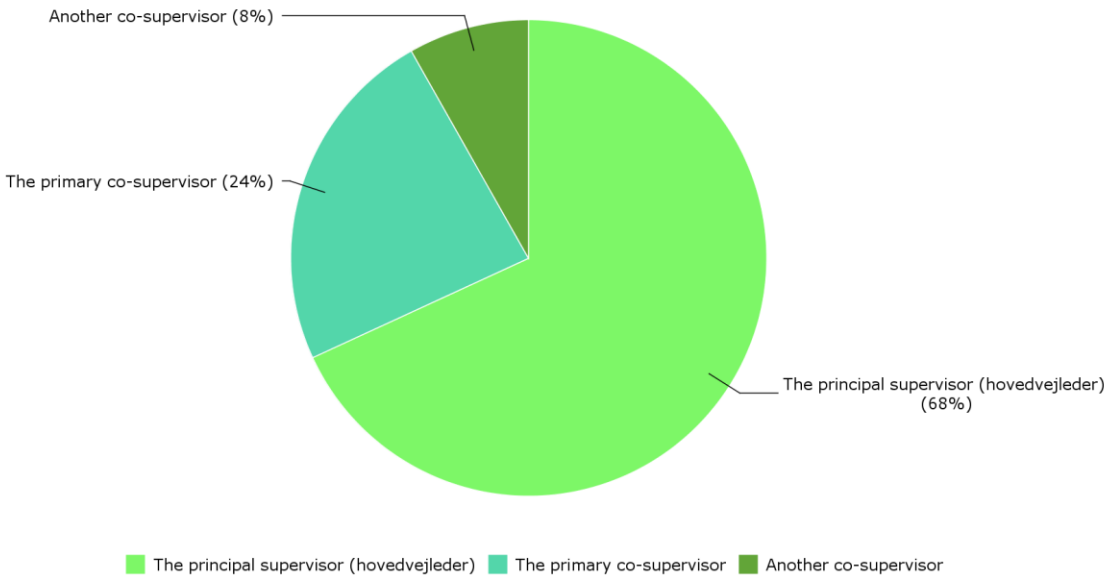
The supervisor who was perceived to be most important to the project

To each PhD student, a principal supervisor (in Danish: *Hovedvejleder*) is appointed. This person has the main responsibility for supervision relating to the PhD student's individual programme and project. The principal supervisor is an associate professor or full professor at a faculty department.

Even though the principal supervisor holds the "formal" title as the most important supervisor, the PhD student may perceive another supervisor to be of greater importance for the project. Chart 2.3 (next page) shows the distribution among the PhD students with regard to which type of supervisor they consider to be most important for the PhD project. For two thirds of the PhD students (68%), the principal supervisor is perceived to be most important. Among the remaining respondents, 24% consider the primary co-

supervisor to be most important, whereas 8% view 'Another co-supervisor' as most important. These percentages are similar to those in the previous report.

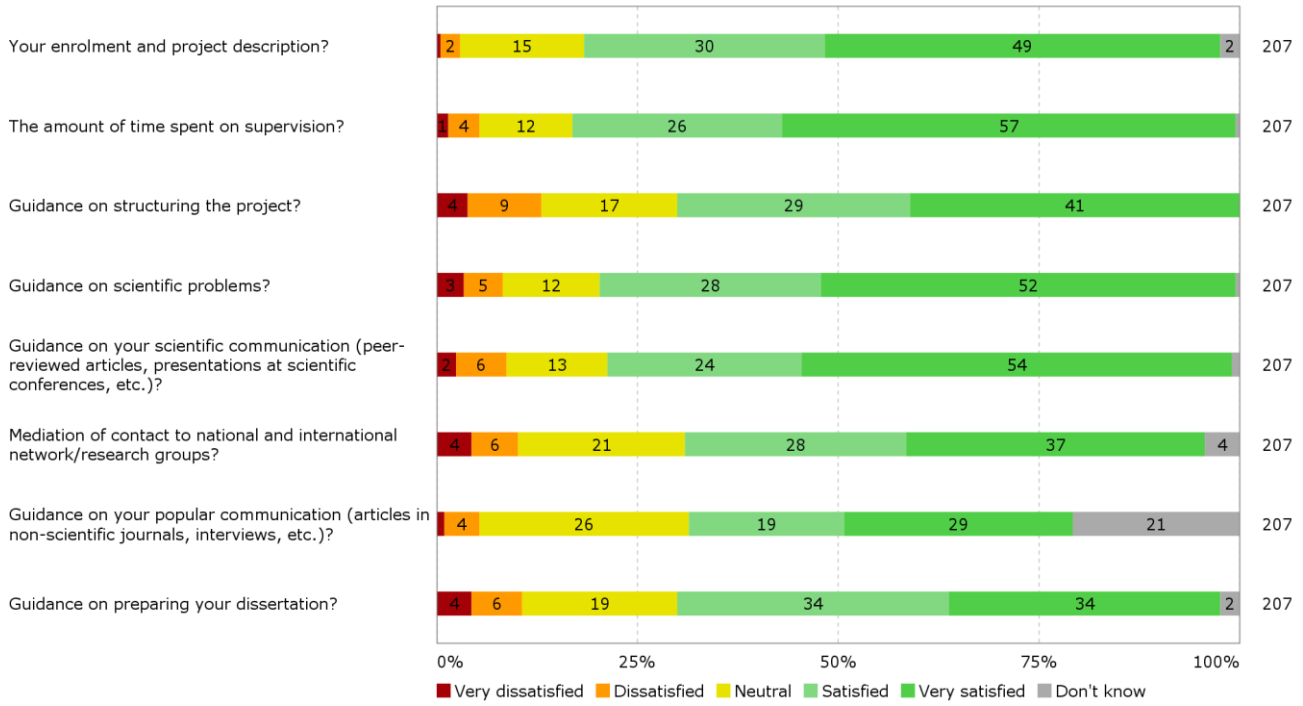
Chart 2.3: Who was the primary/most important supervisor for you during your PhD project? (Total results across graduate programmes) (n=207)



Detailed supervision aspects

As part of the evaluation, the PhD students are asked questions targeting eight different aspects of their supervision process related to the guidance and time spent with the PhD student by the supervisor considered to be the primary supervisor (see chart 2.4, next page). Ratings across graduate programmes are highly similar, and for this reason the results for these eight questions are not filtered. The satisfaction rates, i.e. the number of PhD students stating that they were satisfied ('satisfied' or 'very satisfied'), range from 58% to 83%.

Chart 2.4: How satisfied were you with your primary supervisor's efforts in relation to the following: (Total results across graduate programmes) (n=207)



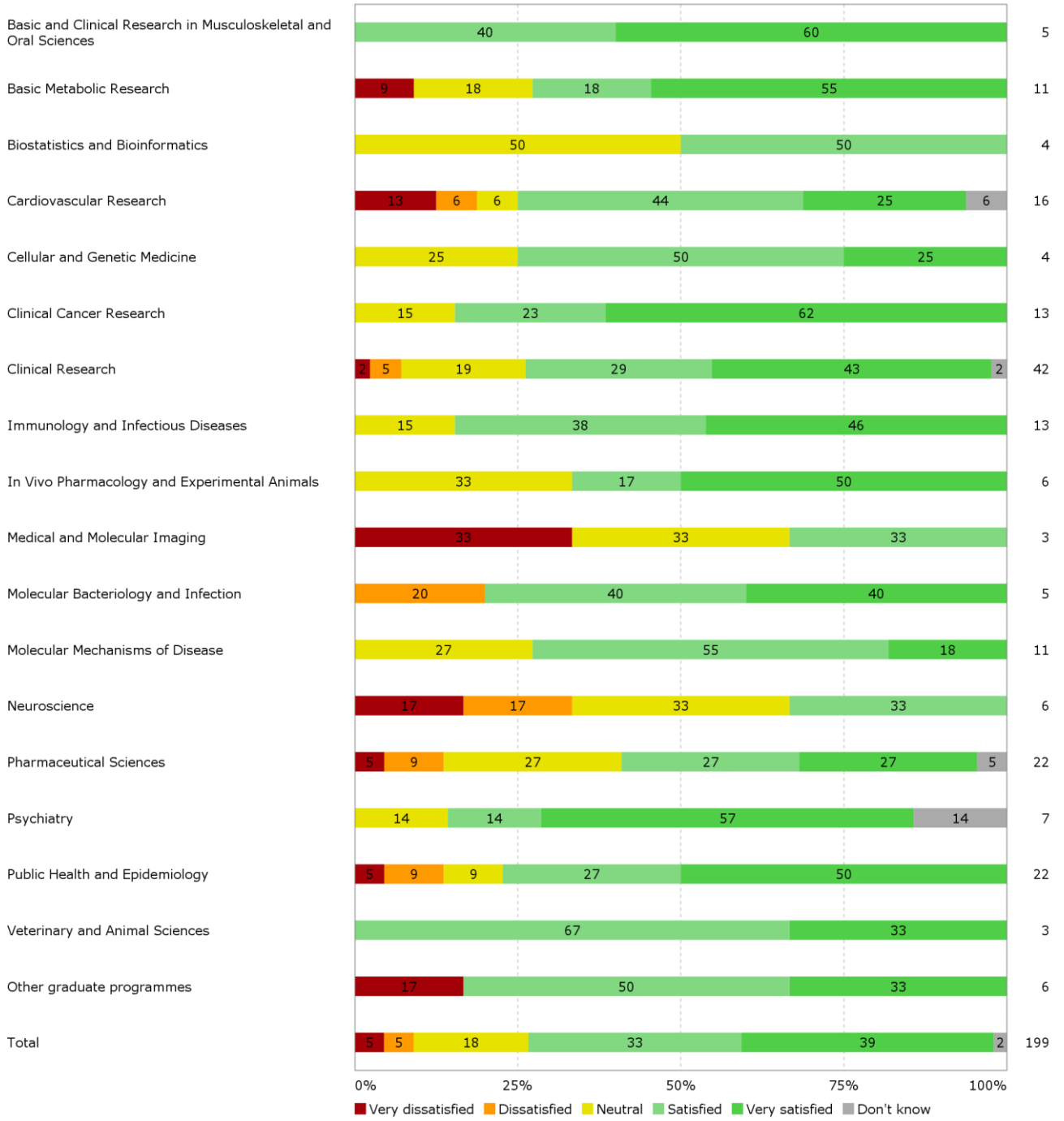
In this evaluation, as was also the case for the previous evaluation, the question targeting the primary supervisor's guidance on popular communication received the lowest rating, in that 58% state that they are satisfied. The level of satisfaction with guidance on popular communication has improved in comparison with the previous report, where 50% expressed satisfaction. A sizable share of the respondents (21%) has ticked 'don't know' for this question. Thus, to some respondents it may be unclear what 'guidance on popular communication' refers to.

At the other end of the scale, 83% were satisfied with the amount of time spent on supervision and 80% were satisfied with their primary supervisor's guidance on scientific problems. For most of these eight questions, no great development can be observed in the evaluation of the different supervision aspects when comparing these results to those from the prior report.

Satisfaction with co-supervisors

Since most PhD students had more than one supervisor, specific evaluation of the satisfaction with the co-supervision is important. As illustrated in chart 2.5 (next page), 72% of the PhD students were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their co-supervisor(s). This number has decreased from 80% in the last report. Following this minor trend, the number of dissatisfied ('dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied') respondents has increased from 7% to 10%.

Chart 2.5: All in all, how satisfied were you with your co-supervisor(s)? (n=199)

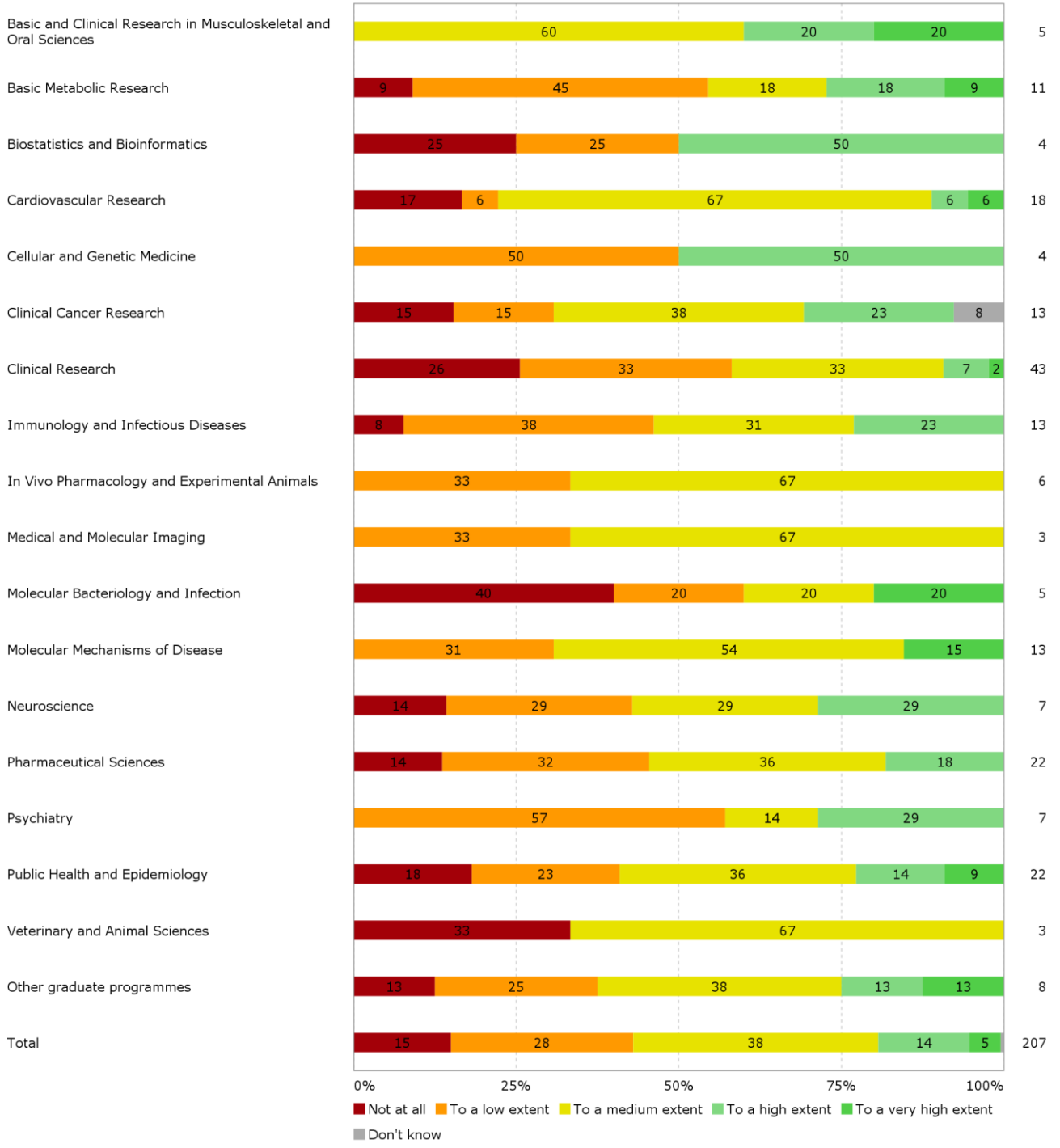


The regular assessments

Regular assessments are an important tool to evaluate the progress of each PhD project. In the course of the PhD programme, each PhD student, together with his/her supervisor, must carry out a number of these assessments. From January 2014, PhD students must complete a total of three regular assessments, which involve meetings with supervisors and project status reports (see http://healthsciences.ku.dk/phd/assessments/). Note that only some of the PhD students in this evaluation have followed this practice with three regular assessments. Others have followed the prior practice involving semi-annual assessments.

The assessed value of the regular assessments of the overall process as well as the progress made on the projects is shown in chart 2.6 (below). The rating for this question is relatively poor when compared to most other ratings in this evaluation since 74% of the total group of respondents provide a dissatisfied or medium rating of the regular assessments ('not at all' satisfactory, 'to a low extent' and 'to a medium extent'). In the previous report this percentage was likewise high at 78%.

Chart 2.6: To what extent were the regular assessments of the overall process as well as the progress made on your project of value? (n=207)



As shown in chart 2.6 (previous page), variances exist between the different graduate programmes with regard to satisfaction with the regular assessments. For Basic and Clinical Research in Musculoskeletal and Oral Sciences, no respondents are dissatisfied (though 60% provide the rating 'medium'). For Biostatistics and Bioinformatics, and Cellular and Genetic Medicine, 50% of the respondents are satisfied to a 'high' or 'very high' extent. For three programmes, In Vivo Pharmacology and Experimental Animals, Medical and Molecular Imaging, and Veterinary and Animal Sciences, no respondents state that they are satisfied with the regular assessments (though two thirds provide a 'medium' rating).

Comments: PhD supervision would be better if…

The PhD students are provided with the opportunity to add their input to the statement, "My supervision would have been better if…". Seventy-three respondents offered their input. These inputs cover many areas but the themes mentioned below received most comments.

Eleven PhD students suggest that the requirements for being a supervisor should be stricter and that supervisors should be better prepared to conduct supervision, e.g. in the form of more focus on pedagogical skills and greater awareness of and qualifications in project management. A few comments to exemplify this point:

> *"Supervisors could be trained in project management, leadership, and particularly resource management."*
>
> *"Generally (from what I hear among my peers), many supervisors have an extreme lack of (project) management skills and they are very poor "leaders". This was also reflected in my own supervision, which could have benefitted by being more organized."*
>
> (My supervision would have been better if…): *"My supervisor were given a leadership course on how to motivate students."*

In line with the request for supervisors to be more skilled with regard to project management, seven PhD students state that their supervision would have been better if they had received more guidance on how to structure the project and the PhD thesis.

> (My supervision would have been better if…): *"It had helped me to focus on fewer projects overall and fewer tasks at a time. I had been encouraged to write up papers earlier or just somehow write something at an earlier stage than just writing up the thesis."*
>
> (My supervision would have been better if…): *"[There had been] more project management, milestones, Stop-loss experiments and clear cut strategies on the progress of the project."*

Ten respondents commented on how more time set aside for supervision and/or the project by the supervisor(s) would have improved the supervision, a wish which was also mentioned in previous evaluations. The following comments illustrate the wish for more time being allocated to supervision:

> (My supervision would have been better if…): *"He would spend more time to read and discuss my ideas."*
>
> *"My main supervisor had more time allocated to supervision. Whether this is a personal choice or influenced by requirements is unknown."*

"My supervisor had more time to supervise. I think a Supervisor should only be allowed to have five phd students."

Finally, a few of the respondents commented on the value of the regular assessments. Eleven comments concern how the regular assessments were perceived to be irrelevant or unnecessary, mostly because the PhD student and the supervisors held frequent, often more informal meetings:

"My supervision was to the extent that I needed it, and the regular assessments did not make a difference in this regard."

"I had more benefit of the informal daily supervision than the scheduled formal ones. But I had the advantage of easy access and close collaboration with my supervisors."

3. PhD courses

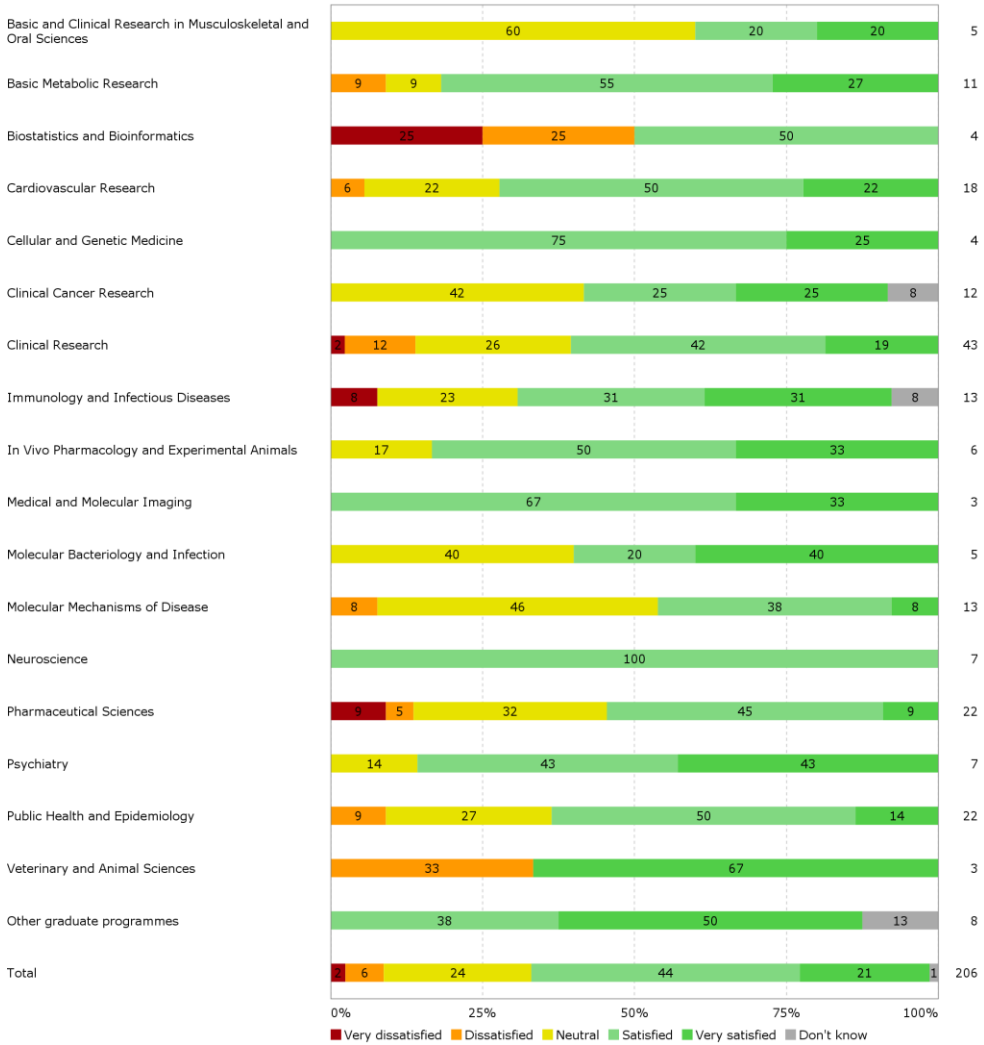
PhD students are required to participate in course activities granting approximately 30 ECTS points. The PhD student can choose to participate in a range of specialised (scientific) courses along with various generic courses such as statistics, data analysis, project management and academic writing. The Graduate School conducts a wide range of courses every year.[4] PhD students may also participate in other courses in Denmark or abroad if they can earn credits aligned with the PhD plan.

Satisfaction with generic and scientific courses

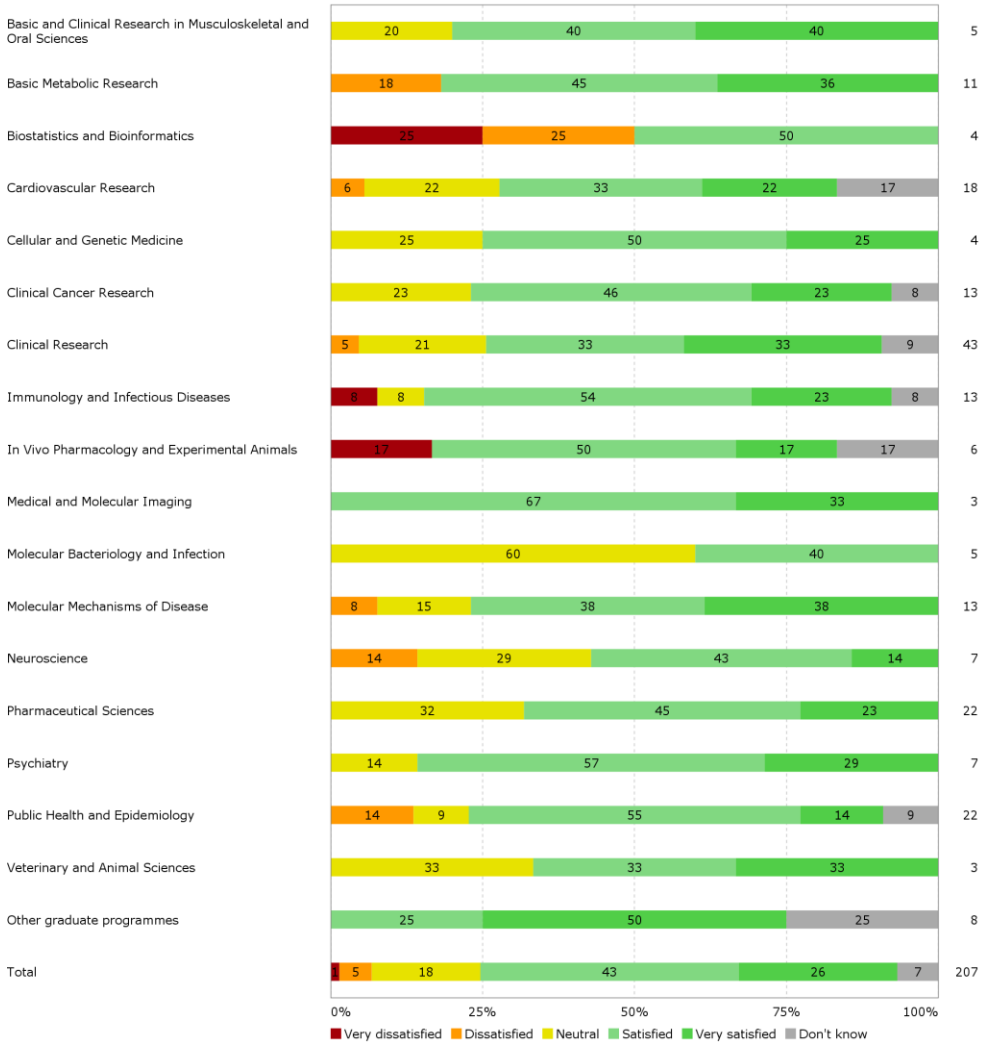
The overall rating of the courses offered by the Graduate School is illustrated in charts 3.1 and 3.2 (next page). Overall, for the generic courses, 65% of the respondents were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied'. The corresponding level of satisfaction with the scientific courses was 69%. These evaluation results represent a small decrease in the level of satisfaction in comparison to results from the previous report. Here 72% were satisfied with the generic courses while 73% where satisfied with the scientific courses. Only 8% were dissatisfied with the generic courses, though, while 6% were dissatisfied with the scientific courses ('dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied'). These results mirror those from the previous report. Thus, the slightly lower number of satisfied respondents is a result of more respondents providing the rating 'neutral' with regard to both the generic and scientific courses.

[4] See the course catalogue here: https://phdcourses.ku.dk/

Chart 3.1: How satisfied were you with the generic PhD courses offered? (n=206)



3.2: How satisfied were you with the scientific PhD courses offered? (n=207)



Comments regarding PhD courses

Forty-three comments were added about the PhD courses. A wide range of subjects are mentioned, and the themes mentioned are not as consistent as in previous evaluations. Still, two themes are mentioned the most. The first is praise for either PhD courses offered by the Graduate School of Health and Medical Sciences in general or for specific courses (commented on by nine respondents in total). These comments represent this positive view on the PhD courses:

> *"I think there was a very broad selection of topics and really valuated every course I participated in. The specialized courses were amazing, especially due to the many high-profile collaborators and external professors teaching."*
>
> *"The courses were generally at a high level and I found most of them to be very inspiring."*

The other most commented theme is quite contrary to the praise given and concerns the need for courses deemed more relevant and/or the fact that some PhD students end up taking courses abroad due to a lack of courses they find relevant. This theme is mentioned by 13 respondents. Please note that some of the PhD students who ended up taking courses abroad do not necessarily see this as a problem but consider it necessary because of their highly specialised field. The following comments reflect how some respondents experienced difficulties finding relevant courses at HEALTH:

> *"Many were too generic, others were not specialized enough compared to my research."*
>
> *"The list of courses related to advanced bioinformatics were non-existent. The course catalogue was very limited."*
>
> *"Only few courses were relevant for me."*

In the previous report, the most commented theme concerned problems with the statistical courses. In the previous evaluation (from 2015), these were assessed as being too poor and having too few seats. In the current evaluation, only three PhD students comment on problems with the statistical courses.

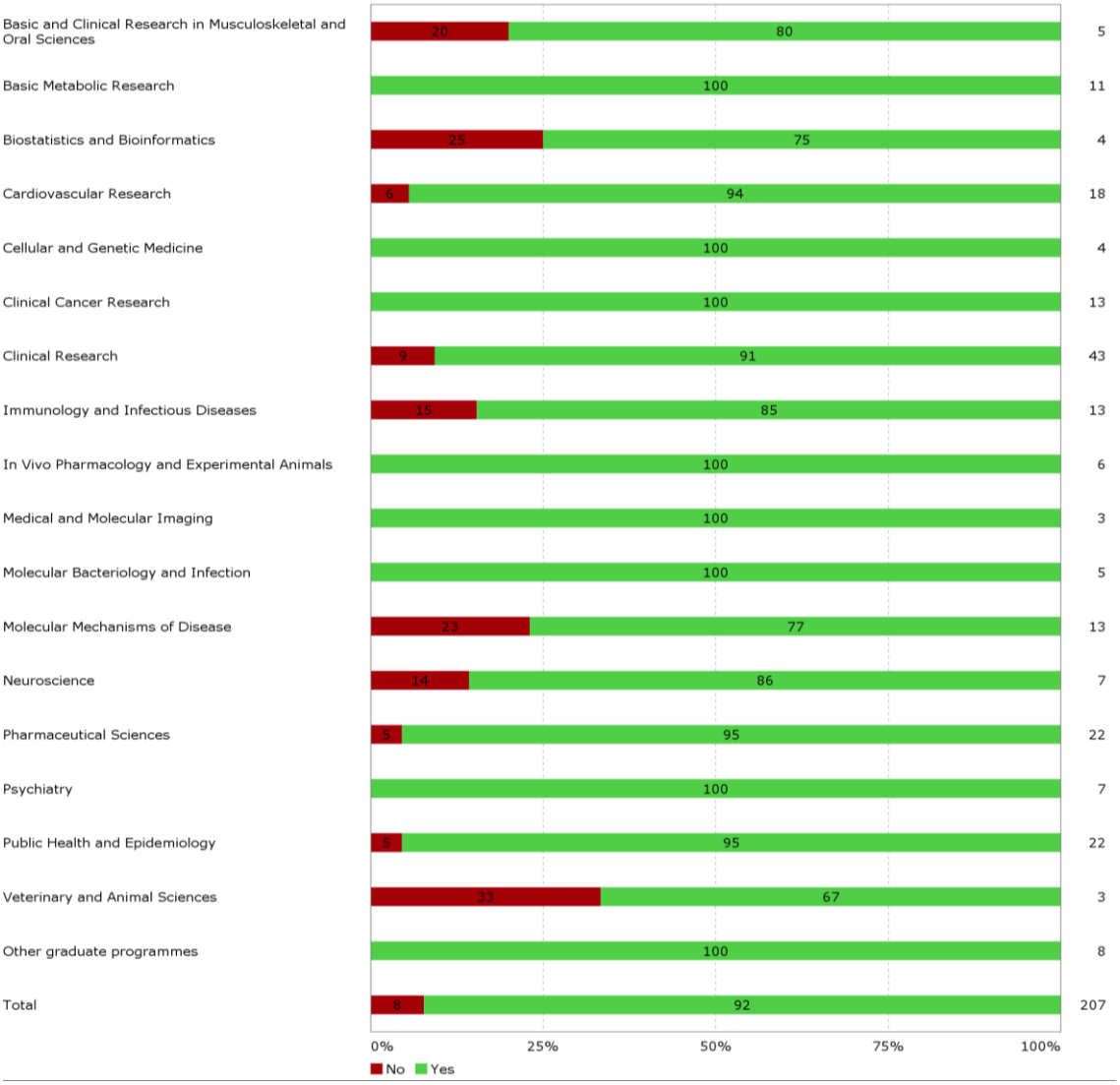
4. Participation in other scientific environments

All PhD students from the Graduate School must spend part of their programme in another scientific environment (than the one in which they are enrolled). The duration of this stay must be at least one month in total (longer stays are preferred because they give the PhD students the time and opportunity to develop networks).[5] This is a requirement in accordance with the PhD Order.

Participation in and duration of stays in other scientific environments

In this section, "stay in another scientific environment" is defined as a period of at least one week's duration, meaning that conferences, short courses and the like do not typically count as such stays. Ninety-two percent of the respondents state that they have stayed in another scientific environment for one week or more (chart 4.1, below). This represents yet another increase in the percentage of PhD students who have stayed in other scientific environments when comparing results from the last four reports – 58% in 2013; 65% and 66% in the first and second halves of 2014, respectively; and 77% in 2015. In the current evaluation, only 8% of the respondents have not stayed in another scientific environment.

Chart 4.1: As part of your PhD, did you stay in another scientific environment (in Denmark or abroad) for one week or more? (n=207)



[5] See the Graduate School website for more information: http://healthsciences.ku.dk/phd/studyabroad/

The PhD students were asked to specify the duration of their stay in another scientific environment (chart 4.2, below) and whether they went abroad as part of their stay (chart 4.3, next page). As depicted in chart 4.2, 30% of the respondents who stayed in another scientific environment spent less than one month there. Fifty-one percent stayed 1-6 months and 19% stayed more than six months in another scientific environment. These percentages equal results from the previous report.

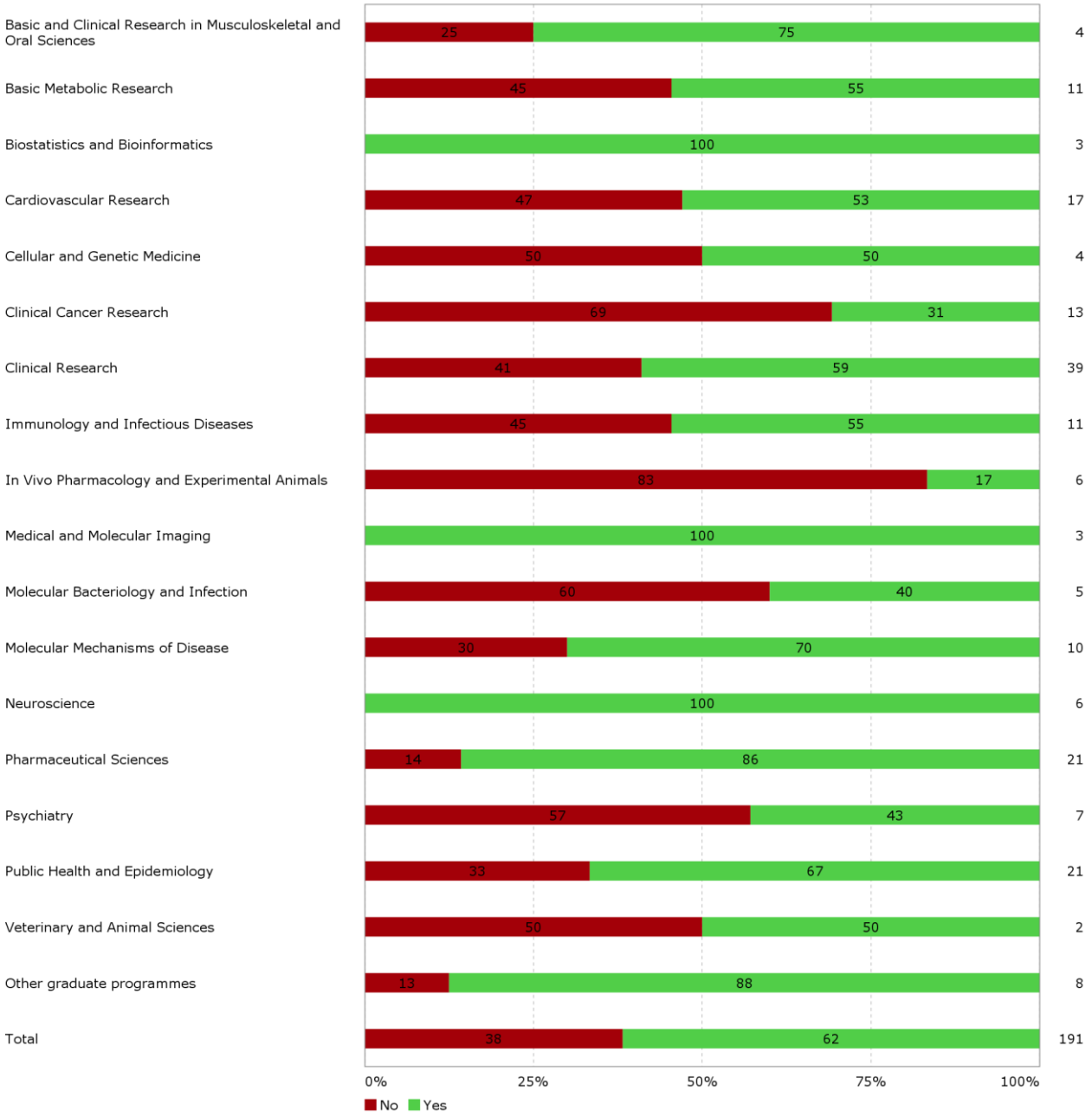
Chart 4.2: How long was your total stay in another scientific environment? (n=187)

Once again, great variation can be detected between graduate programmes, here in relation to how long the respondents stayed in another scientific environment. As an example, 50% of PhD students from In Vivo Pharmacology and Experimental Animals stayed more than six months in another scientific environment,

whereas none of the respondents stayed in another scientific environment less than one month. Contrasting examples where a large share of the respondents did not stay as long in another scientific environment are Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Medical and Molecular Imaging, and Cardiovascular research.

As illustrated in chart 4.3 (below), 62% of the respondents went abroad as a part of their stay in another scientific environment, representing a small decrease from 64% in the last report and 72% in the report covering the second half of 2014. For some graduate programmes, a great share of the respondents went abroad, though – for three programmes, all respondents who stayed in another scientific environment went abroad, namely, Biostatistics and Bioinformatics, Medical and Molecular Imaging, and Neuroscience. In comparison, only 17% of the respondents from In Vivo Pharmacology and Experimental Animals went abroad.

Chart 4.3: Did you go abroad as part of your stay in another scientific environment? (n=191)



The respondents who stated that they had gone abroad were asked about receiving financial support from the Graduate School in connection with their stay. Results are shown in chart 4.4 (below). On average, 61% of the respondents received financial support from the Graduate School compared to 54% in the previous report and 44% in the report from the first half of 2014. Large variations can be observed between the graduate programmes with regard to financial support. For some programmes, all PhD students received financial support (Biostatistics and Bioinformatics, Cellular and Genetic Medicine, In Vivo Pharmacology and Experimental Animals, and Molecular Bacteriology and Infection). In comparison, only 30% of the PhD students from the largest graduate programme, Clinical Research, received financial support.

Chart 4.4: Did you receive financial support from the Graduate School in relation to your stay abroad? (n=118)

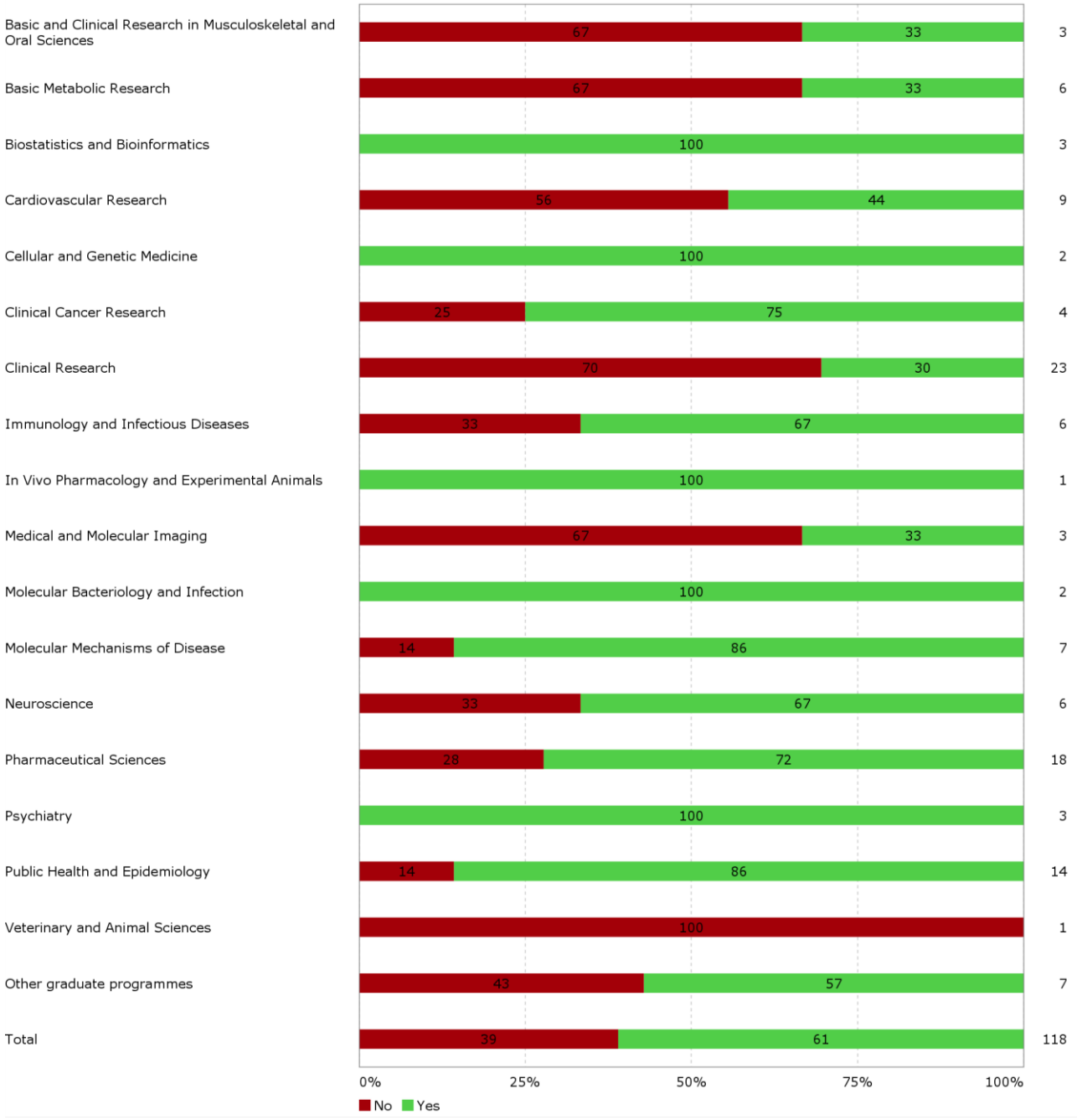
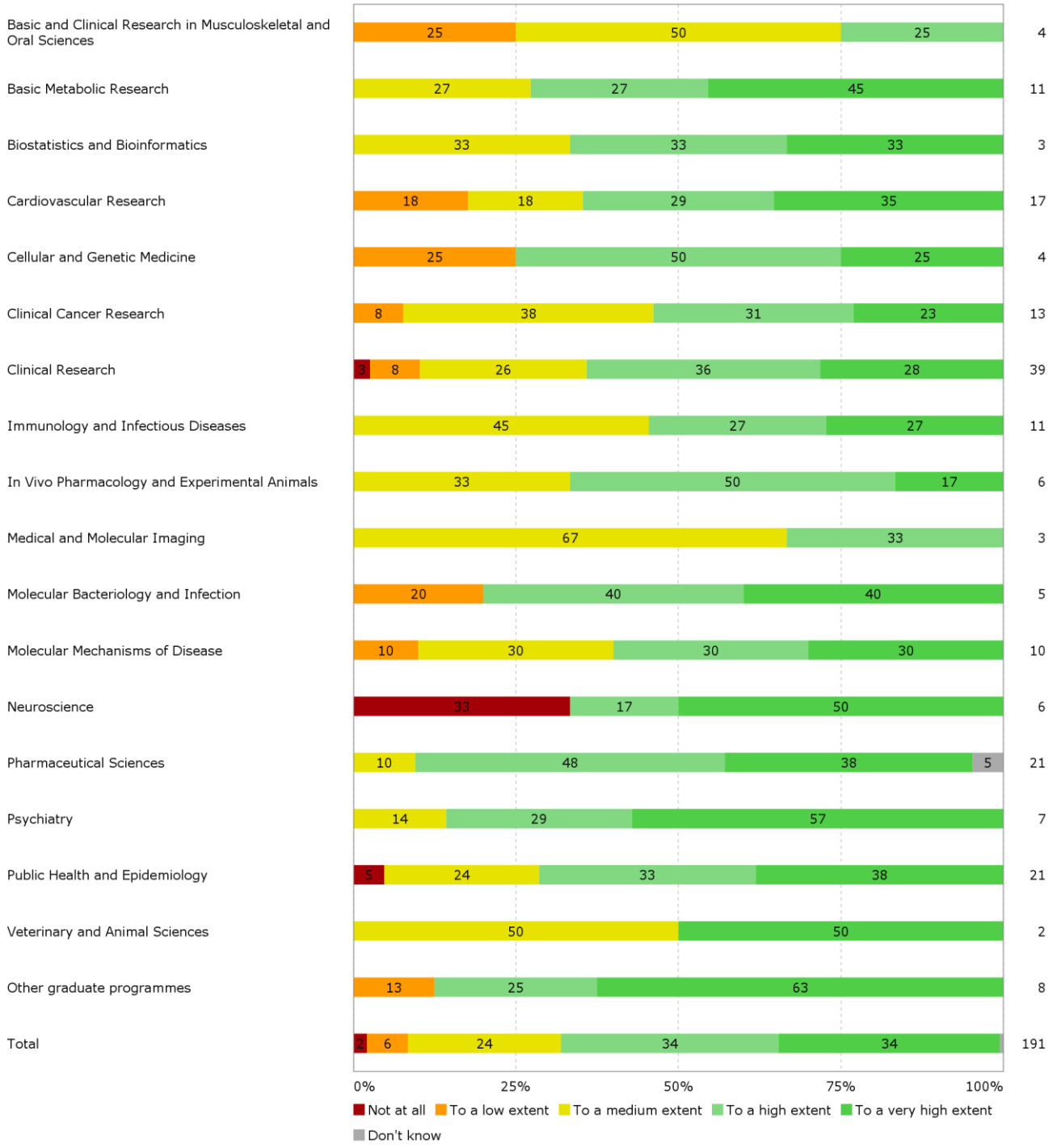


Chart 4.5 (below) displays whether the respondents judge that their stay in another scientific environment has positively influenced their scientific networks. Sixty-eight percent of the respondents assessed that their scientific network has been positively influenced by their stay in another scientific environment ('to a high extent' or 'to a very high extent'), a result highly similar to the corresponding result from the previous report.

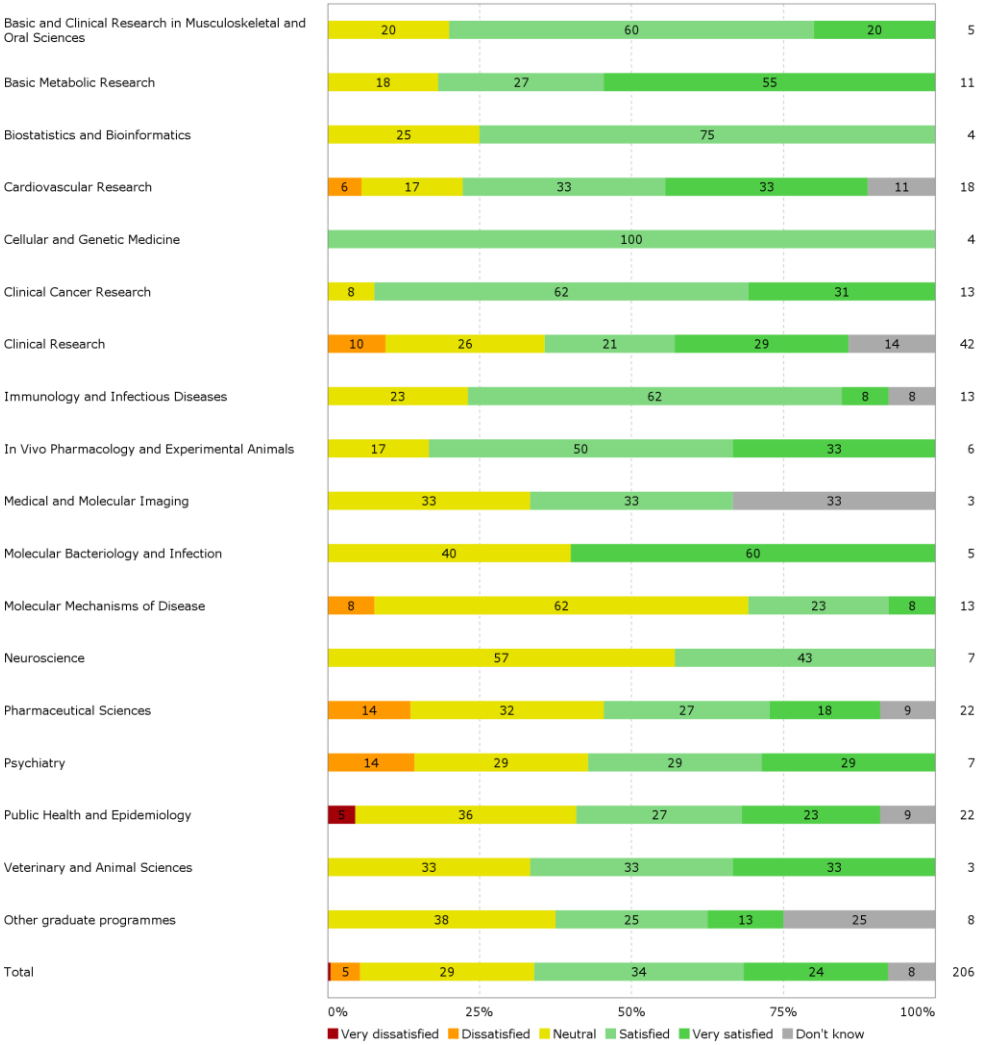
Chart 4.5: Was your scientific network positively influenced by your stay in another scientific environment? (n=191)



As a final question concerning stays in other scientific environments, the PhD students were asked to rate their satisfaction with the potential for international contacts and national contacts (beyond the University of Copenhagen). This question was presented to the entire population (charts 4.6 and 4.7, next page).Overall, 5% were ‘dissatisfied’ or 'very dissatisfied' with both the potential for international and national contacts. Sixty-five percent and 58%, respectively, were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the potential for international and national contacts. In the previous report the corresponding percentages concerning both dissatisfaction and satisfaction were highly similar.

Chart 4.6: How satisfied were you with the potential for international contacts during your PhD programme? (n=207

Chart 4.7: How satisfied were you with the potential for national contacts (beyond the University of Copenhagen) during your PhD programme? (n=206)



Comments regarding lack of stay in other scientific environments

The following comments that specifically target lack of stays in other scientific environments stem from two different possibilities for the PhD students to make additional comments ("Why did you choose not to stay in another scientific environment as part of your PhD?" and "Why did you choose not to go abroad as part of your PhD?"). In total, 68 comments were made, 56 concerning why respondents chose not to go abroad.

The comments indicate three main reasons as to why some of the PhD students did not stay in another scientific environment despite the formal requirements to do so or why they chose to only conduct short stays (e.g. less than one week): 1) for family/personal reasons and/or 2) it was not deemed necessary/possible/relevant for their project and/or 3) it was difficult to schedule due to time restraints or restraints caused by clinical research. These three themes were also the main themes in the previous report. The following comments exemplify these themes:

> *"Having two smaller children made it difficult to be away too often and for more than one week at a time, which made a national stay more achievable. But the stays still contributed with relevant knowledge and possibility of exchanging ideas, so I do not think that this was inferior to a stay abroad."*

> *"As part of my project I had/wanted to stay 6 months in the lab of my co-supervisor in order to learn and use methods that they were experts in. It takes a lot of time in a new lab before actual data can be produced so I did not want to also go abroad."*

> *"No relevant option and time was short. Also private reasons."*

As was the case in the previous report, some PhD students stated that they had had a fair amount of contact with research groups from other scientific environments even though they did not stay in another scientific environment.

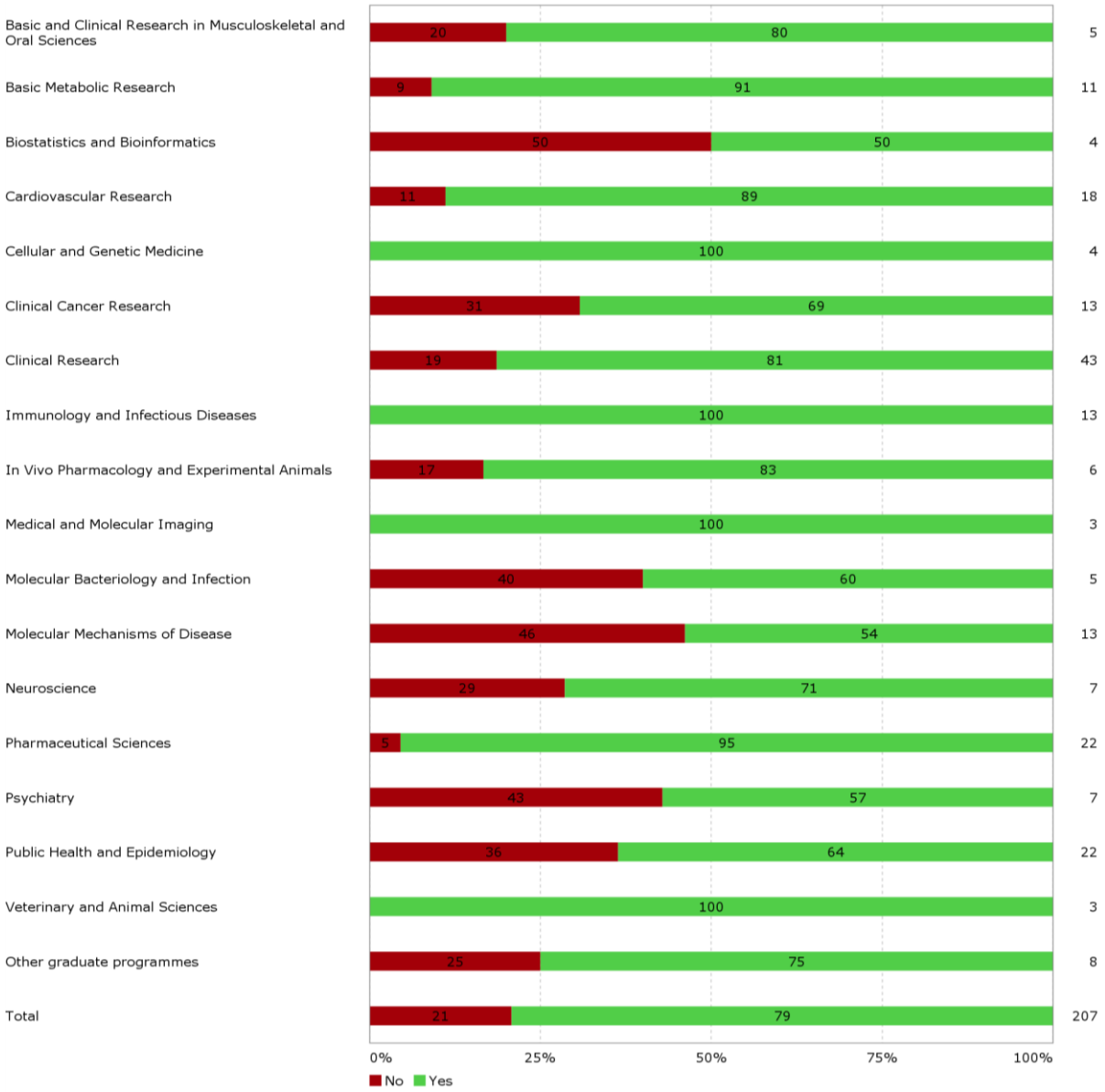
5. Teaching, conducted supervision and dissemination

As part of the PhD programme, the PhD students must focus on expanding their competencies with regard to oral and written dissemination of knowledge. Examples of dissemination activities are publishing research results in scientific journals and/or presentations/posters at conferences or symposia. Furthermore, PhD students are either required or recommended to accept teaching activities and/or conduct supervision as part of their programme, depending on the terms of their employment.[6]

Teaching and supervision activities

As part of the evaluation, respondents state whether they have engaged in teaching activities or conducted supervision during their PhD studies (chart 5.1, below). In total, 79% have engaged in teaching activities or conducted supervision, a result similar to the previous report (83%).

Chart 5.1: Did you teach or conduct supervision during your PhD programme? (n=207)

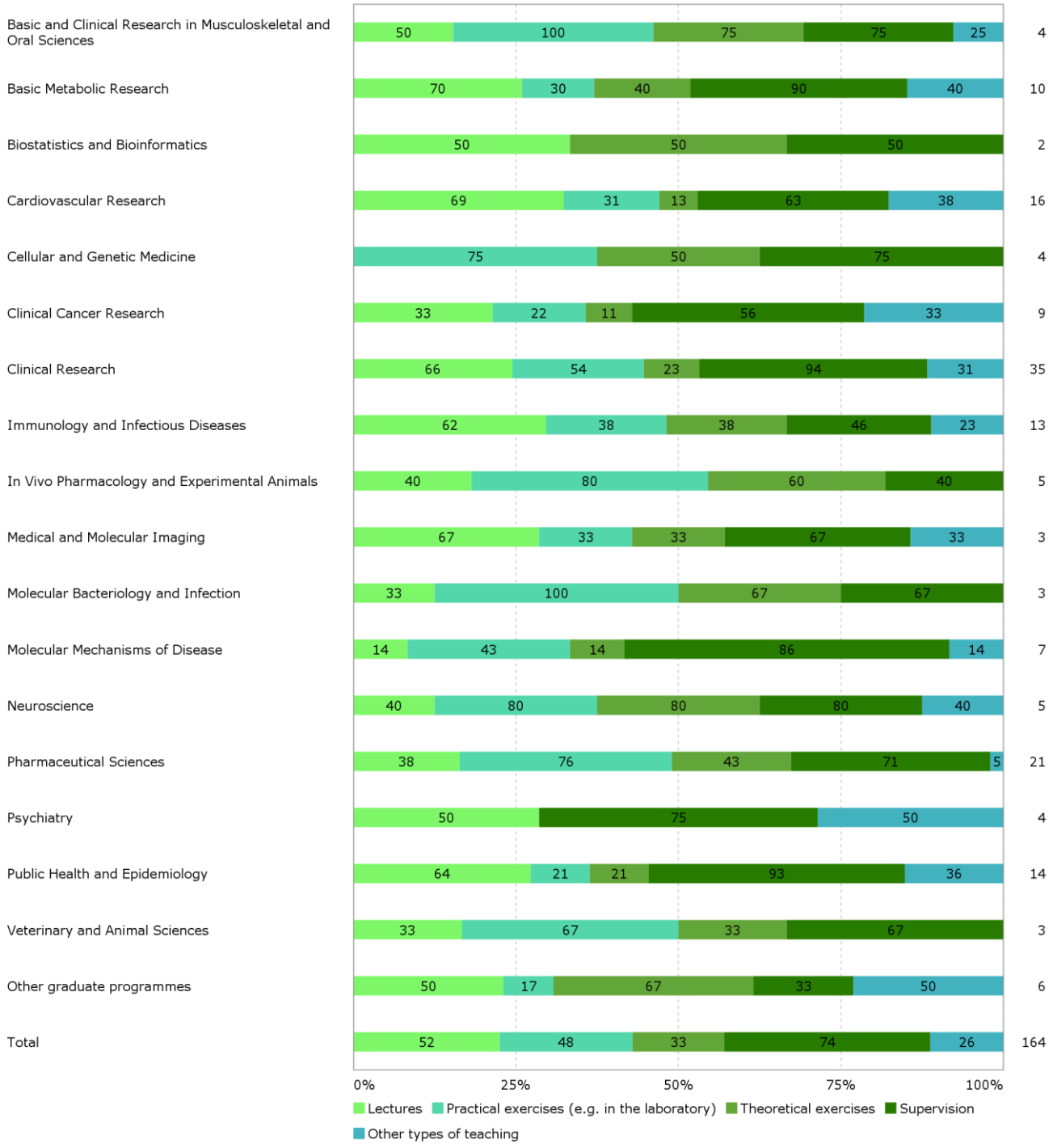


[6] Description of the teaching requirement for PhD students at the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences: http://healthsciences.ku.dk/phd/guidelines/

When examining the results filtered by graduate programmes, variations can be found (chart 5.1, previous page). For some graduate programmes, e.g. Psychiatry and Molecular Bacteriology and Infection, 40-50% of the respondents have not engaged in teaching activities or conducted supervision. For these two programmes, all respondents stated that they have taught or conducted supervision in the previous report. For other programmes, all or nearly all respondents have taught or conducted supervision, e.g. Immunology and Infectious Disease, Medical and Molecular Imaging, and Pharmaceutical Sciences. For Immunology and Infectious Disease, this entails an increase from the 71% who stated in the previous report that they had taught or conducted supervision.

The PhD students who have taught were asked what types of teaching they had carried out. Chart 5.2 (next page) illustrates the results and displays how supervision (74%), lectures (52%) and practical exercises (48%) represent the most frequent forms of teaching. These activities were also the most frequent types of teaching and/or supervision in the previous report.

Chart 5.2: What types of teaching and/or supervision did you carry out? (n=175)*



**Please note that the respondents can tick more than one form of teaching. Therefore, the stacks do not amount to 100%.*

The PhD students who have taught or conducted supervision also estimated how much time they had spent on these activities. The results are shown in chart 5.3 (next page). A majority of 74% estimated that they had spent up to 10% of their time teaching or conducting supervision, a result similar to the 72% in the previous report. Thirty-four percent estimated that they had spent 11-20% of their time teaching or conducting supervision, an increase from 24% in the last report and 15% in the report covering the second half of 2014. The results thus indicate a continuous tendency towards more respondents spending more of their allotted time conducting supervision and/or teaching.

Chart 5.3: How much of your PhD programme did you spend on teaching and supervision activities (please estimate)? (n=165)

In the final part of this section focusing on teaching and supervision activities, the respondents who stated that they had engaged in these activities were asked to assess the following four aspects:

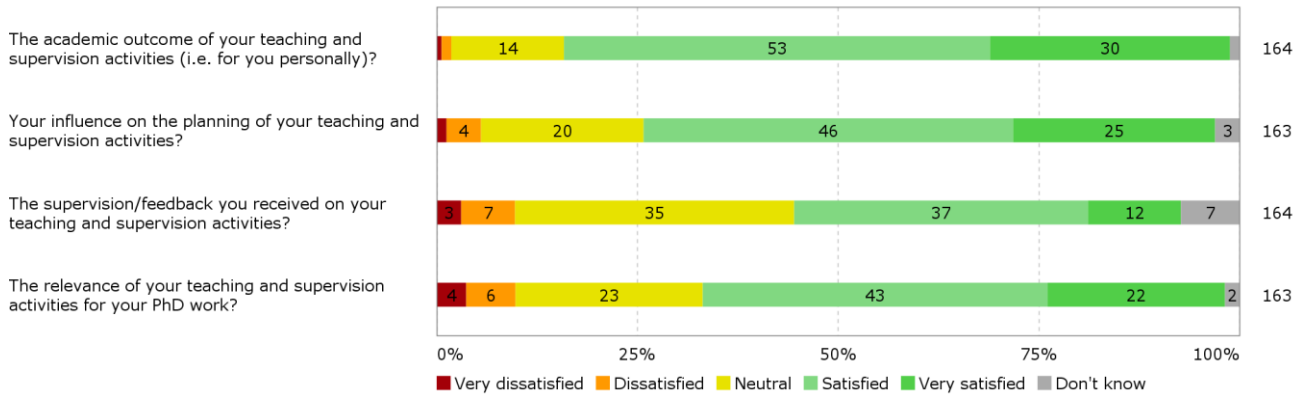
1. The PhD student's influence on planning the teaching and supervision activities
2. The academic outcome of the teaching and supervision activities
3. The supervision/feedback the PhD student received on the teaching activities
4. The relevance of the teaching and supervision activities to the PhD student's research project

The results are shown in chart 5.4 (below). Only very slight differences can be found when comparing results filtered by graduate programmes and the results are therefore not presented as filtered.

Overall, between 49% and 83% of the respondents are satisfied ('satisfied' or 'very satisfied') with their outcome of the various aspects of the teaching/supervision activities. The number of dissatisfied respondents ('dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied') is quite low, ranging between 3% and 10%.

The question regarding supervision/feedback on teaching and supervision activities received the lowest rating; 49% were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied', a result similar to that of the previous report (47%).

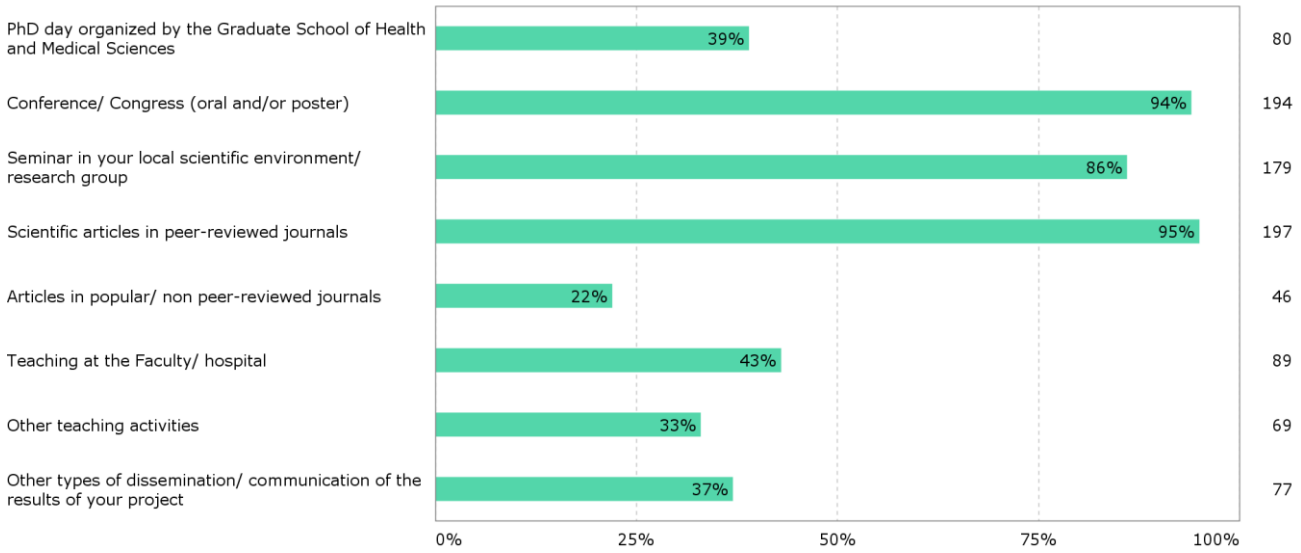
Chart 5.4: Satisfaction with… (Total results across graduate programmes)? (n=163-164)



Dissemination activities

Respondents are also asked where and how they have communicated the results of their project with answers depicted in chart 5.5 (next page). As the PhD students' ratings are highly similar across the graduate programmes, the results are not filtered. The respondents have communicated their results in very different ways. 'Scientific articles in peer-reviewed journals' (95%), 'conference/congress (oral and/or poster)' (94%) and 'seminar in your local scientific environment/research group' (86%) are the most common forms of communication, as was also the case in the previous report.

Chart 5.5: Where and how have you communicated the results of your project? (Total results across graduate programmes) (n=207)*



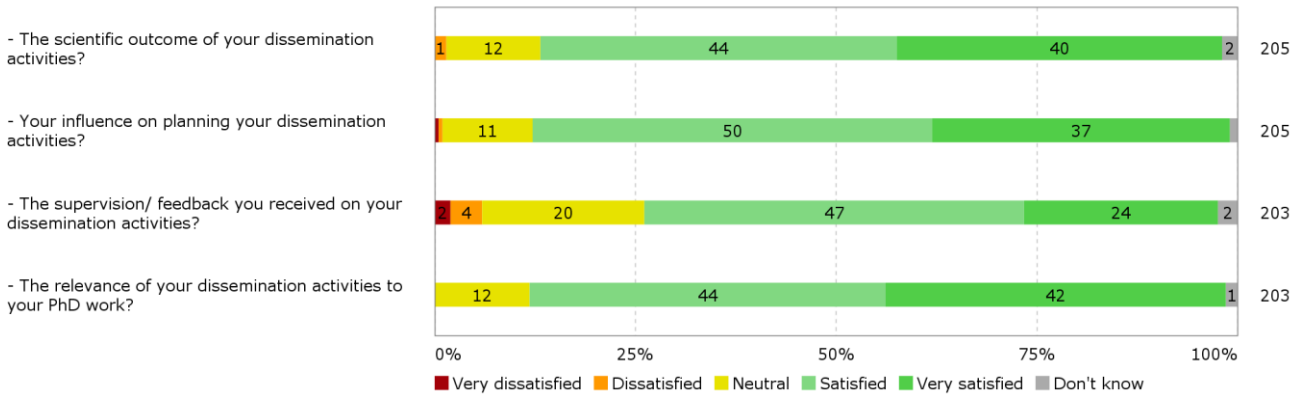
**Please note that the respondents can tick more than one form of dissimination activity.*

The respondents are asked to elaborate on their assessment of their dissemination activities with regard to the following aspects:

1. The scientific outcome of the dissemination activities for the PhD student
2. The PhD student's influence on the planning of the dissemination activities
3. The supervision/feedback the PhD student received on the dissemination activities
4. The relevance of the dissemination activities to the PhD student's research project

The results are shown in chart 5.6 (below). Yet again, the results are not filtered as the PhD students' assessments across the graduate programmes are so similar. The PhD students are generally satisfied ('satisfied' or 'highly satisfied') with their dissemination activities. For three of the four targeted aspects, satisfaction rates range between 84% and 87%. The question on received supervision/feedback on their dissemination activities sets itself apart with a somewhat lower satisfaction rate of 71%, corresponding to 73% in the last report, where this question likewise received the lowest rating.

Chart 5.6: Satisfaction with… (Total results across graduate programmes) (n=203-205)



Comments regarding teaching and dissemination activities

Only 10 comments were added concerning the teaching and supervision activities conducted, and as these comments are extremely diverse no highlighted themes can be presented in this section.

6. Graduate programmes

Among others objectives, the graduate programmes are meant to organise activities that can help PhD students strengthen their networks. Several of the graduate programmes are cross-institutional and have formed alliances and networks with other similar programmes in Denmark and abroad. Another objective of the graduate programmes is to offer specific courses that are primarily relevant to the PhD students affiliated with the individual programme.

Satisfaction with the activities of the graduate programme

The respondents were asked to assess their satisfaction with the activities of their graduate programme with regard to the following four aspects:

1. Courses offered
2. Seminars and annual meetings
3. Scientific networking
4. Overall satisfaction

The results are shown in charts 6.1 to 6.4 (see the following pages).

When examining the overall rating of the four aspects regarding the graduate programmes, satisfaction rates range between 40% and 59%, i.e. the percentage of PhD students stating that they are satisfied ('satisfied' or 'very satisfied') (average satisfaction level: 49.5%). In the previous evaluation, between 30% and 49% stated that they were satisfied with the aspects put to question (average satisfaction level: 41.5%). Thus, ratings of aspects regarding the graduate programmes have improved. The percentages of dissatisfied respondents (who answered 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied') are small, ranging from 6% to 8% (average dissatisfaction level: 6.75%). In the previous report, the number of dissatisfied PhD students was likewise limited, but a small improvement is apparent. In the last report, the percentages of dissatisfied respondents ranged between 7% and 14% (average dissatisfaction level: 10.25%). A rather large group of PhD students, ranging between 28% and 35%, state that they are 'neutral', i.e. neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. This is highly similar to the results from the previous report.

The question targeting the activities of the graduate programme in terms of scientific networking displays the greatest improvement in the provided ratings. In the current report, 40% are satisfied ('satisfied' or 'very satisfied'), while 8% are dissatisfied ('dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied'). In the previous report, 30% were satisfied whereas 14% were dissatisfied. When comparing results from the present and previous reports with regard to the question targeting the courses, the number of satisfied respondents ('satisfied' or 'very satisfied') has increased slightly. In the present report 57% are satisfied, compared to 49% in the previous report. This means that satisfaction with courses offered by the graduate programmes is now equal to that of the report covering the second half of 2014, where 57% of the respondents likewise claimed that they were satisfied with the courses offered.

It is worth noting that a relatively high number of respondents (between 7% and 18%) answered 'don't know' with regard to how satisfied they were with the different graduate programme-related activities. Likely explanations for this are either that the respondents had not identified specific courses and/or activities as "graduate programme activities" or had not participated in graduate programme activities. Still, fewer respondents answer 'don't know' in comparison to results from the previous report, which indicates that this group of PhD graduates have become slightly more aware of graduate programme activities.

Chart 6.1: How satisfied were you with the activities of the Graduate Programme in terms of: Courses (n=204)

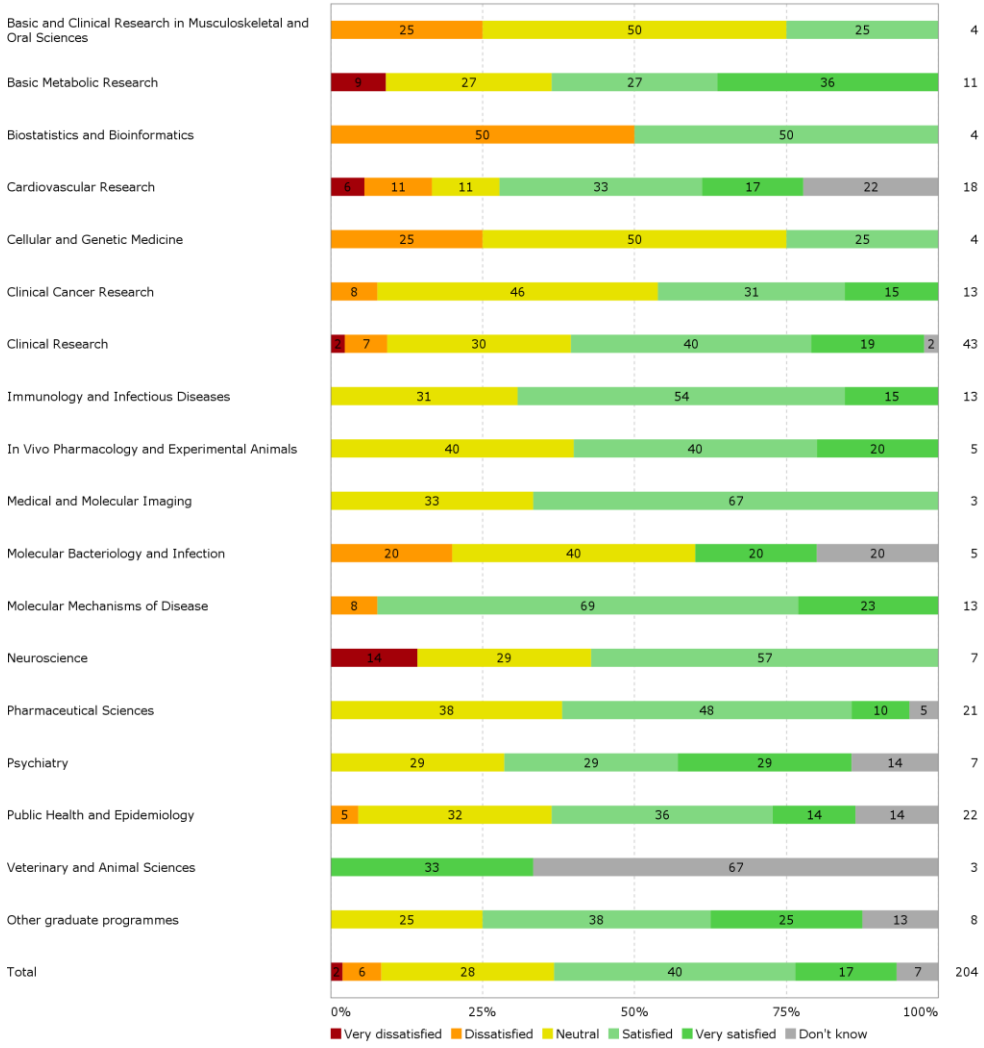


Chart 6.2: How satisfied were you with the activities of the Graduate Programme in terms of: Seminars and annual meetings organized by the graduate programme (n=205)

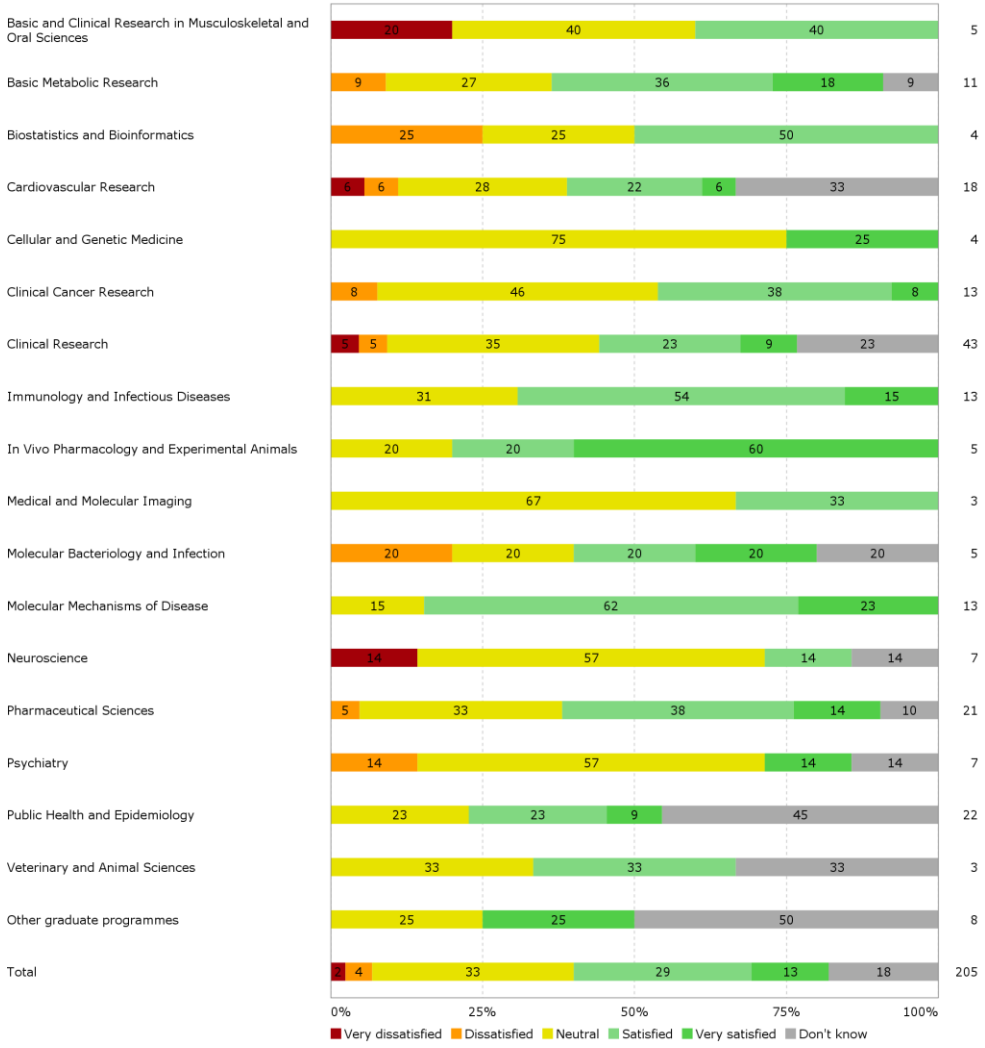


Chart 6.3: How satisfied were you with the activities of the Graduate Programme in terms of: Scientific networking (n=203)

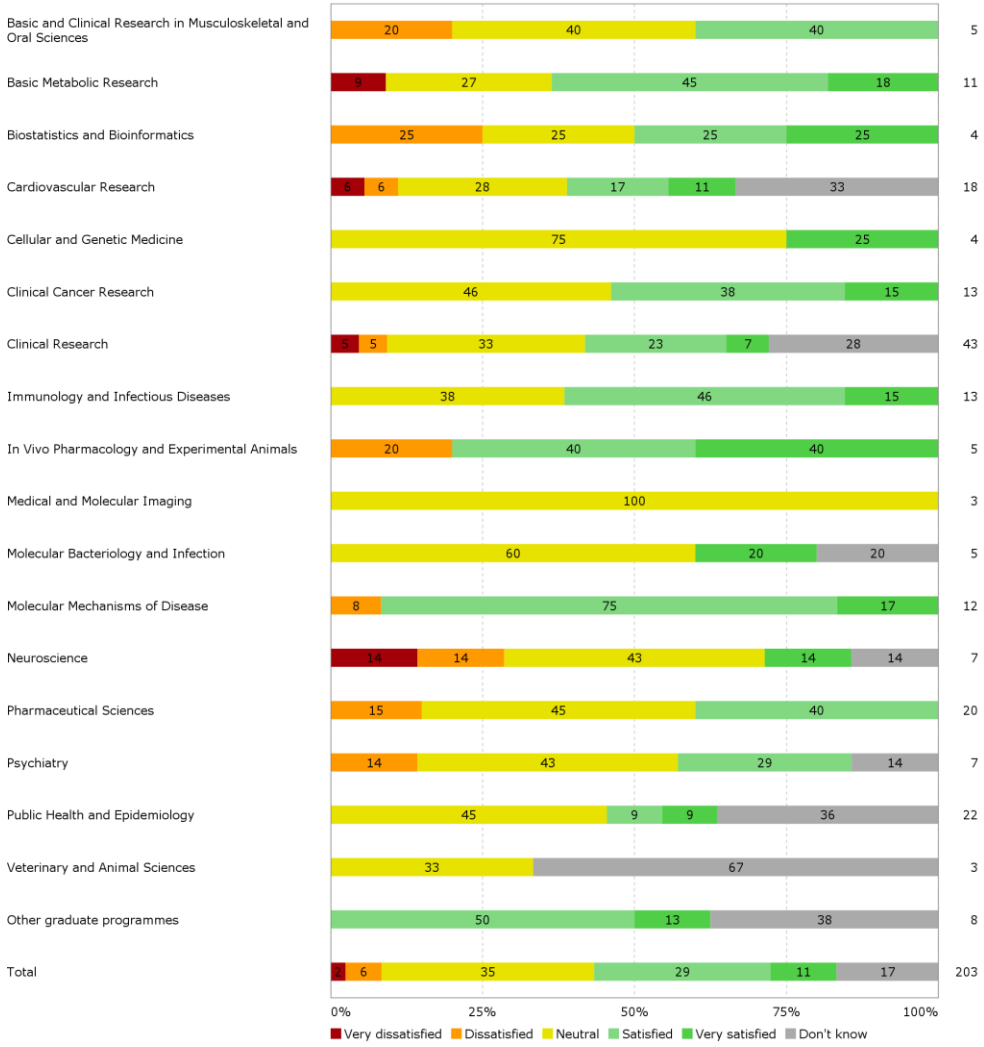
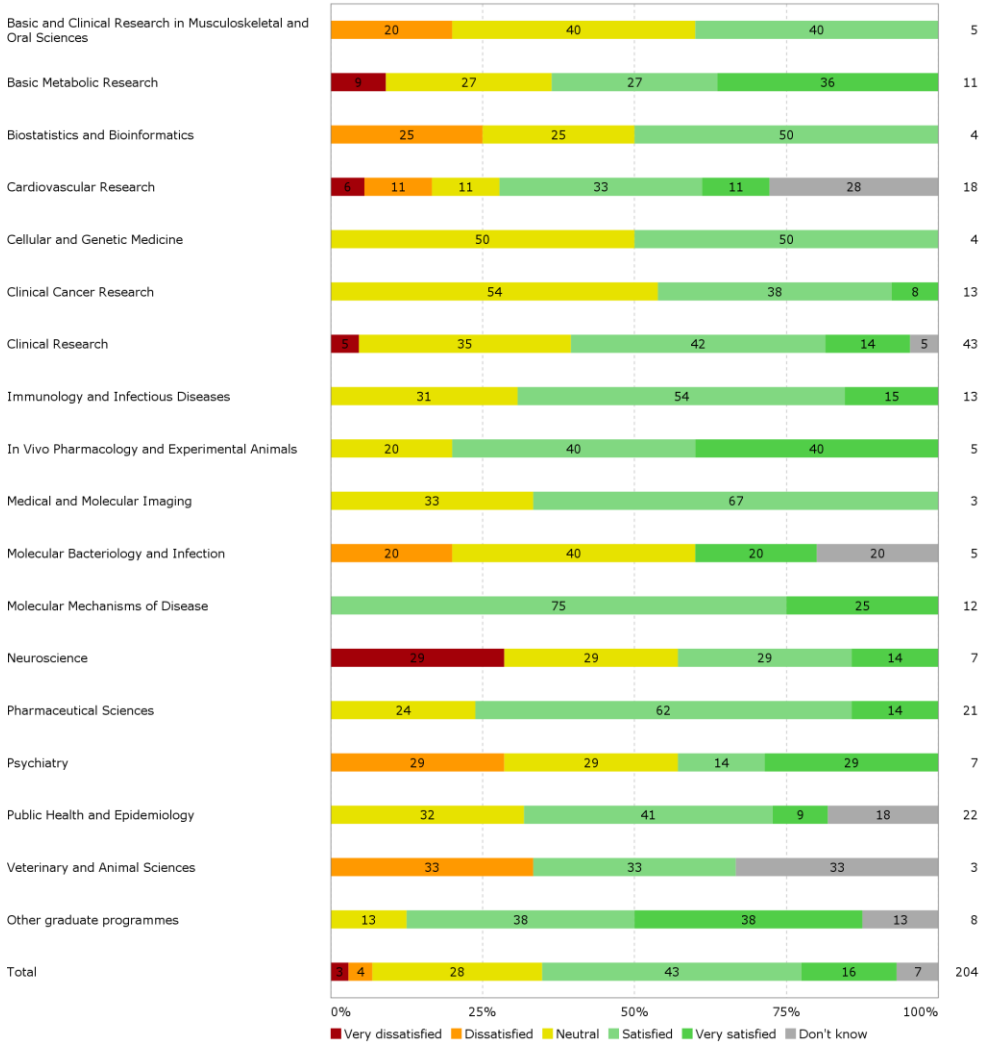


Chart 6.4: How satisfied were you with the activities of the Graduate Programme in terms of: Overall satisfaction with the Graduate Programme (n=204)



Importance of affiliation with a graduate programme

In the second part of the questionnaire centred on the evaluation of the graduate programme, the PhD students were asked to assess the importance of their affiliation with a graduate programme with questions targeting the following two aspects: their PhD project and their future career. Results are shown in charts 6.5 and 6.6 (next page).

A third (33%) of the respondents perceive the graduate programmes to be of limited importance (‘very unimportant’ or ‘unimportant’) and did not find the graduate programme useful in relation to their project or their future career. In the previous report, the corresponding percentages were 42% and 36%, respectively, meaning that the percentage of respondents who found the graduate programmes to be of little or no importance has decreased by nine percentage points with regard to usefulness in relation to their project and three percentage points with regard to usefulness in relation to their future career. Thirty-one percent experienced the graduate programmes to be useful in relation to their project ('important' or very important') and 25% found them to be useful in relation to their future career, an improvement from 21% for both aspects in the previous report. For these questions, a large number of respondents gave the answer ‘neutral’: 34% and 38%, respectively.

Variation can be found across graduate programmes in relation to the perceived importance of affiliation with a graduate programme. For example, for Molecular Mechanisms of Disease, few or no respondents perceived the affiliation with their graduate programme to be unimportant (8% in relation to their project and no one in relation to their future career). This programme also received the most positive rating in the previous report. In contrast, none of the respondents affiliated with Veterinary and Animal Sciences perceived the graduate programme to be useful in relation to their project or their career, while approximately half of the respondents from Cardiovascular Research did not find the graduate programme affiliation useful in relation to their project (56%) or to their future career (50%).

Chart 6.5: Did you find it useful to be affiliated with a Graduate Programme: In relation to your project (n=204)

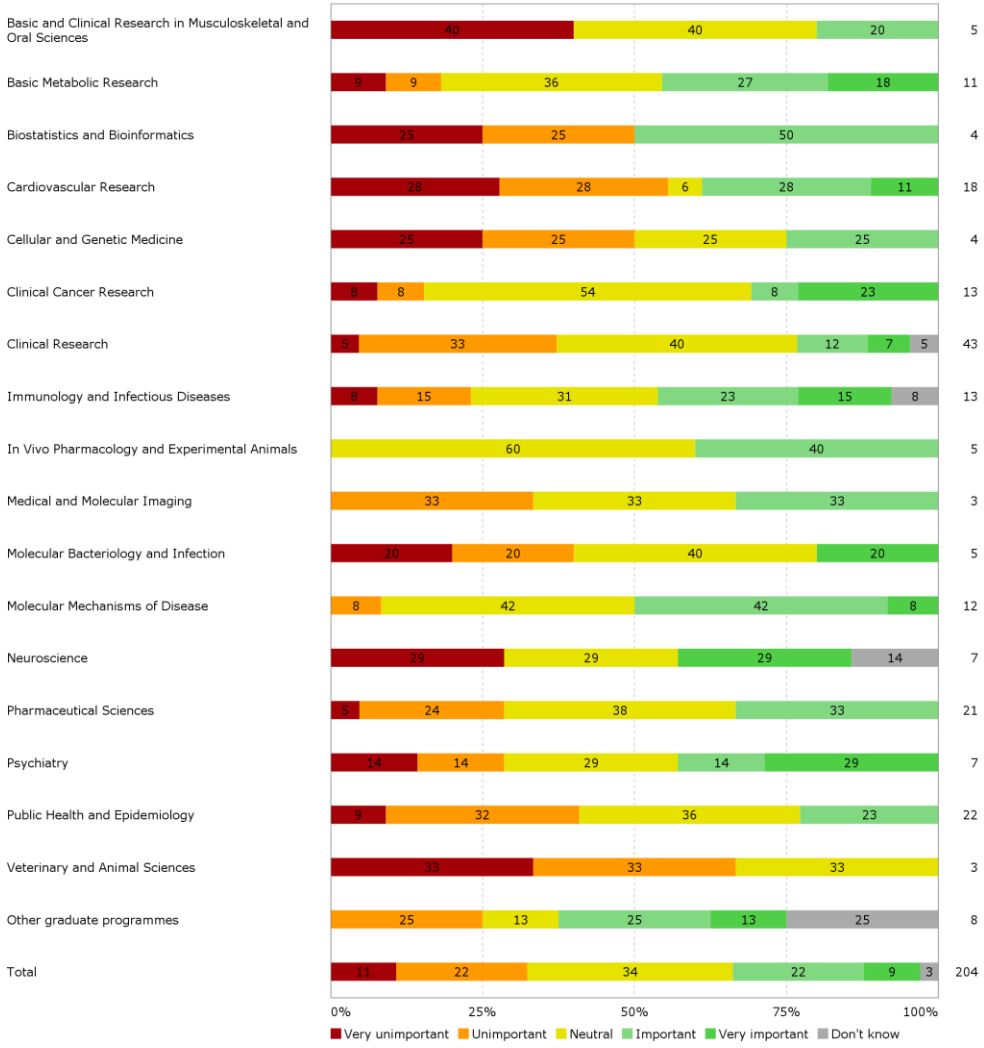
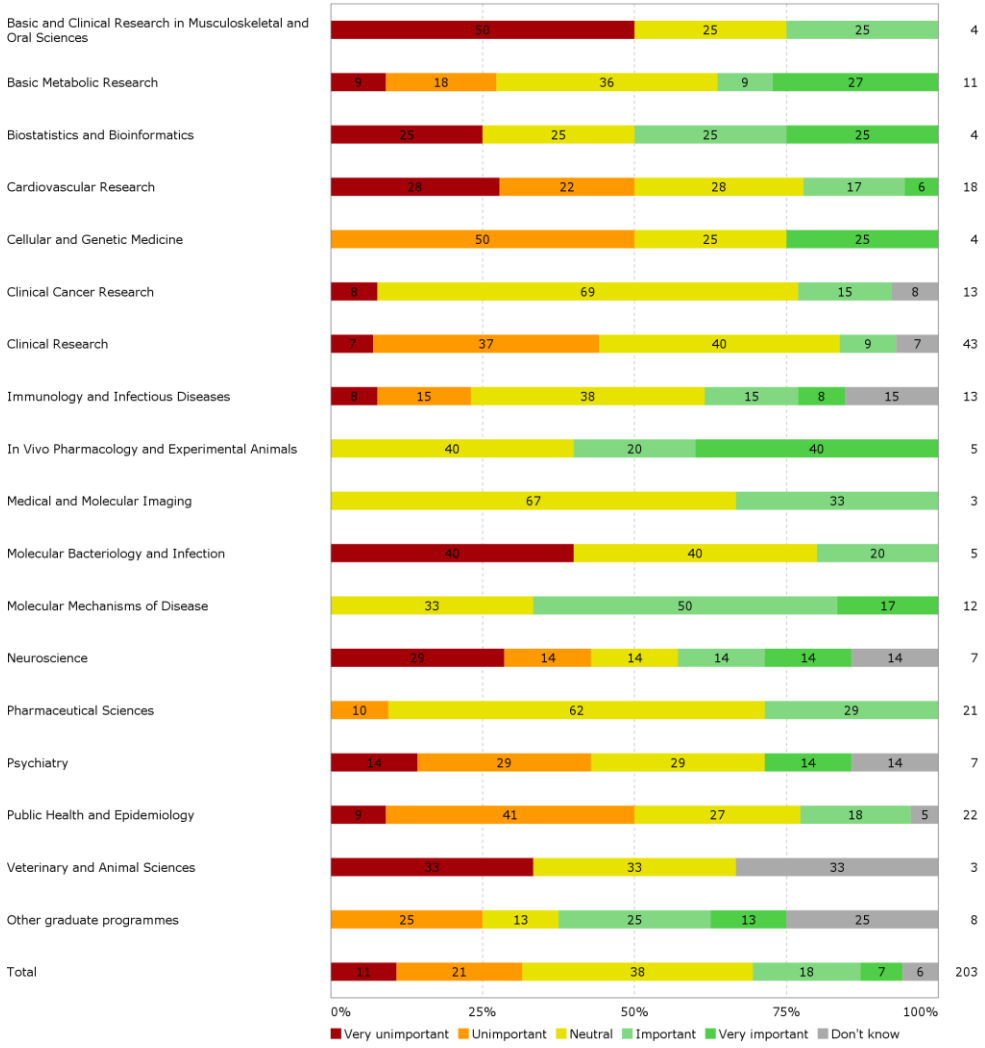


Chart 6.6: Did you find it useful to be affiliated with a Graduate Programme: In relation to your future career (n=203)



Comments regarding the graduate programmes

Of the total of 212 respondents, 21 commented on their graduate programme. Of these comments, seven concern how the image and role of the graduate programme is not clear and/or evident to the respondents, which was also a central theme in the previous report. These comments exemplify the theme:

"I have not had any practical interaction with my graduate programme – it is difficult for me to separate it from the rest of the UCPH-administration." [translated from Danish]

"I have not discovered what the graduate programme is."

Another frequently mentioned theme was that the respondents perceived the graduate programme to be of limited relevance to them and their specific project. Ten comments were made concerning this, exemplified by the following:

"None of the programmes organized by the graduate programme held any interest as I recall."

"The graduate programme was too general to offer any useful platform for networking."

Finally, a third theme is that some respondents, five to be precise, did in fact experience the graduate programme to be beneficial – at least potentially, as pointed out by a few respondents:

"I was affiliated with a graduate programme (HERD) with great unity amongst the PhD students and where we (the PhD students ourselves) arranged really interesting summer schools."

" I fell in between two different programmes, and none of them were specific enough for my purpose. But apart from that, everything was fine. After all, I had many opportunities to go abroad for courses, conferences, meetings etc. which gave me what I needed."

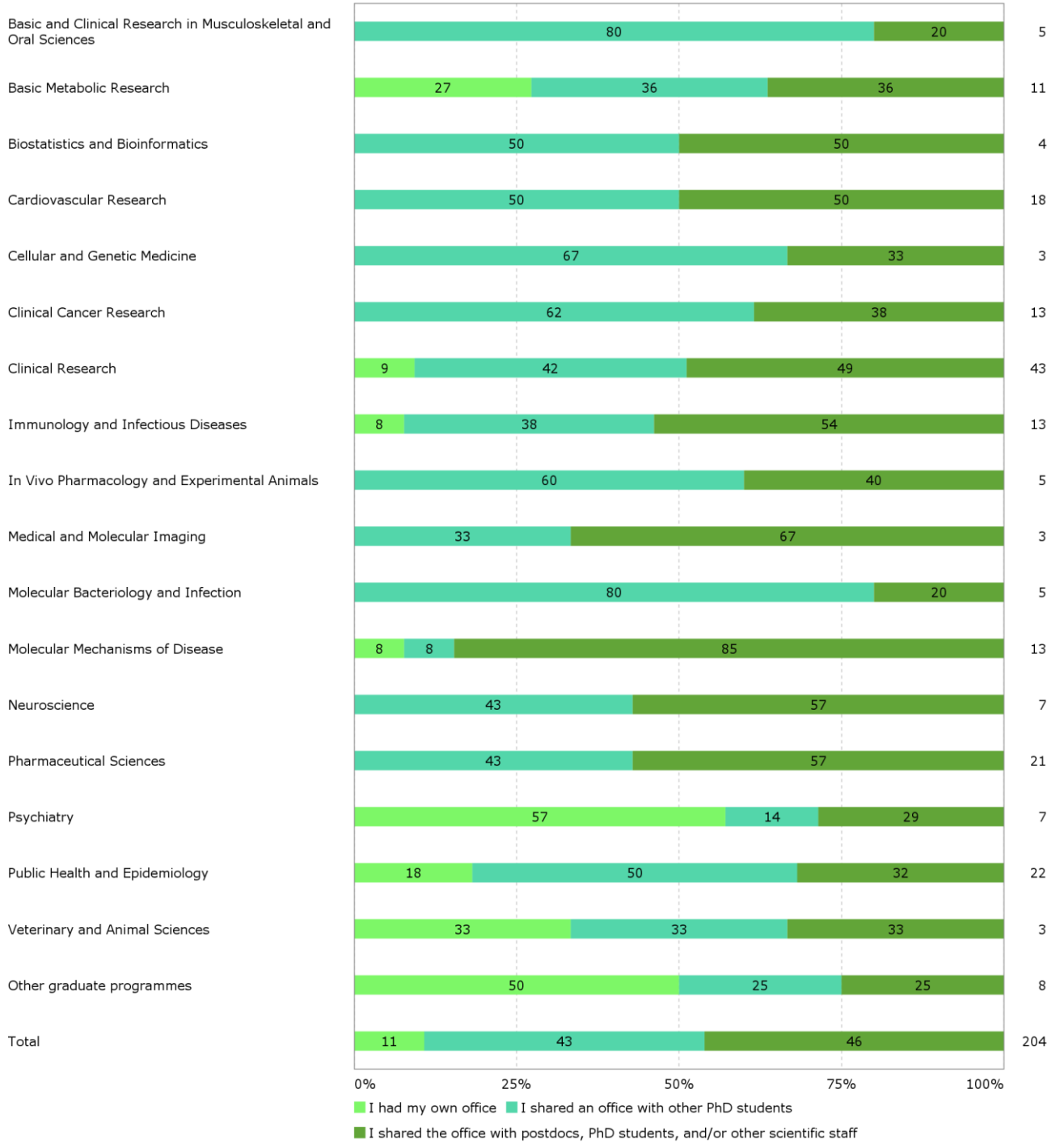
7. The workplace and assistance provided (technical, financial etc.)

This section focuses on the PhD students' daily research environments and on the study environments that the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences seeks to maintain via the departments.

The PhD students' scientific workplaces

As illustrated in chart 7.1 (below), nine out of ten PhD students 89%) shared an office with other PhD students or other scientific staff (92% in the last report). The remaining 11% had their own office.

Chart 7.1: Describe your office (n=204)

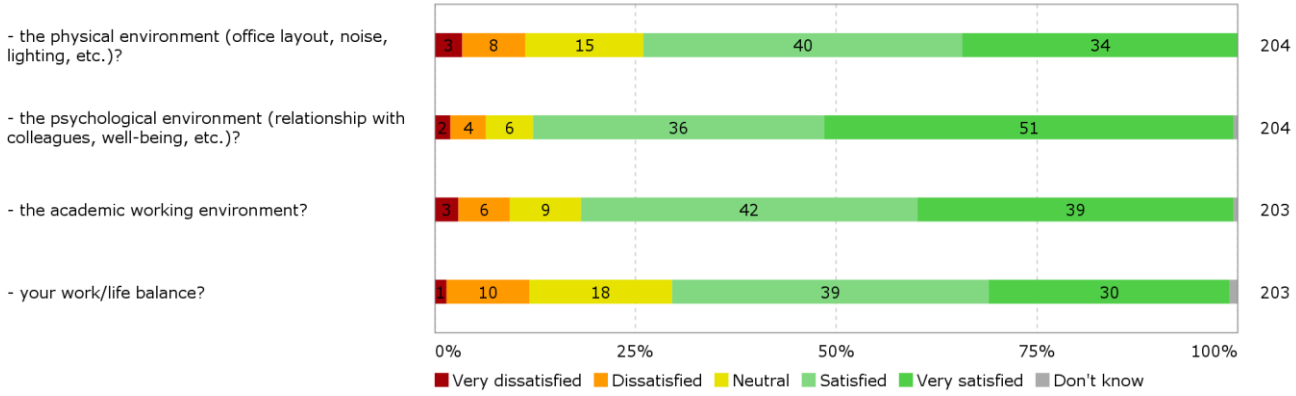


Satisfaction with the physical, psychological and academic environment and work/life balance

Chart 7.2 (below) displays the assessment of the physical working environment (office layout, noise, lighting etc.), the psychological working environment (relationship with colleagues, well-being etc.), the academic working environment and the work/life balance. As differences in ratings across graduate programmes are relatively small for these questions, these results are not filtered.

Of the total group of respondents, 74% expressed satisfaction (being 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied') with the physical environment, a small improvement from 69% in the previous report. For the question targeting the psychological environment of the workplace, the equivalent satisfaction rate was 87%, again displaying a small improvement of three percentage points in comparison to results from the previous report. Relatively few were dissatisfied ('dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied'); 11% were dissatisfied with the physical environment and 6% were dissatisfied with the psychological environment, results similar to the corresponding results from the previous report. In assessing their academic working environment, 81% found it satisfactory (they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied', compared to 78% in the last report). The last question targeting work/life likewise received a quite positive rating, albeit slightly less so than the other three questions. In total, 69% of the respondents were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied'. In the previous report, 62% of the respondents were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied', representing an improvement of seven percentage points.

Chart 7.2: How satisfied were you with… (Total results across graduate programmes) (n=203-204)



Framework for the PhD programme

The objective of the PhD programme is for the PhD student to conduct a research project under supervision while participating in courses and dissemination activities. In this respect, the framework for the PhD programme, e.g. access to resources and finances along with administrative support, can have considerable importance for the PhD students' perception of their studies and their ability to focus on their research project.

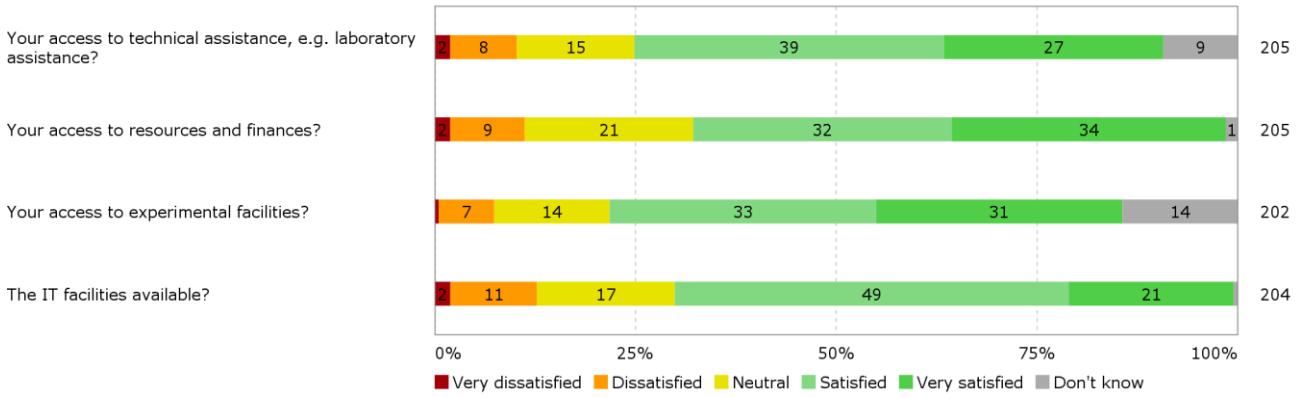
Physical environment and technical assistance

The respondents' rating of the physical environment is explored in further detail by asking how the PhD students would rate their satisfaction with the following four aspects of the physical working environment:

1. Technical assistance, e.g. laboratory assistance
2. Access to resources and finances
3. Access to experimental facilities
4. Available IT facilities

The results are shown in chart 7.3 (below). As the results are highly similar across graduate programmes, they have not been filtered. The percentages of satisfied respondents ('satisfied' or 'very satisfied') for these four aspects of the physical working environment are similar and range between 64% and 70%. The percentages of respondents who are dissatisfied ('dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied') are fairly low, ranging between 7% and 13%. These results are highly similar to the corresponding results in the previous report.

Chart 7.3: How satisfied were you with… (Total results across graduate programmes) (n=202-205)



Comments regarding the workplace and assistance provided

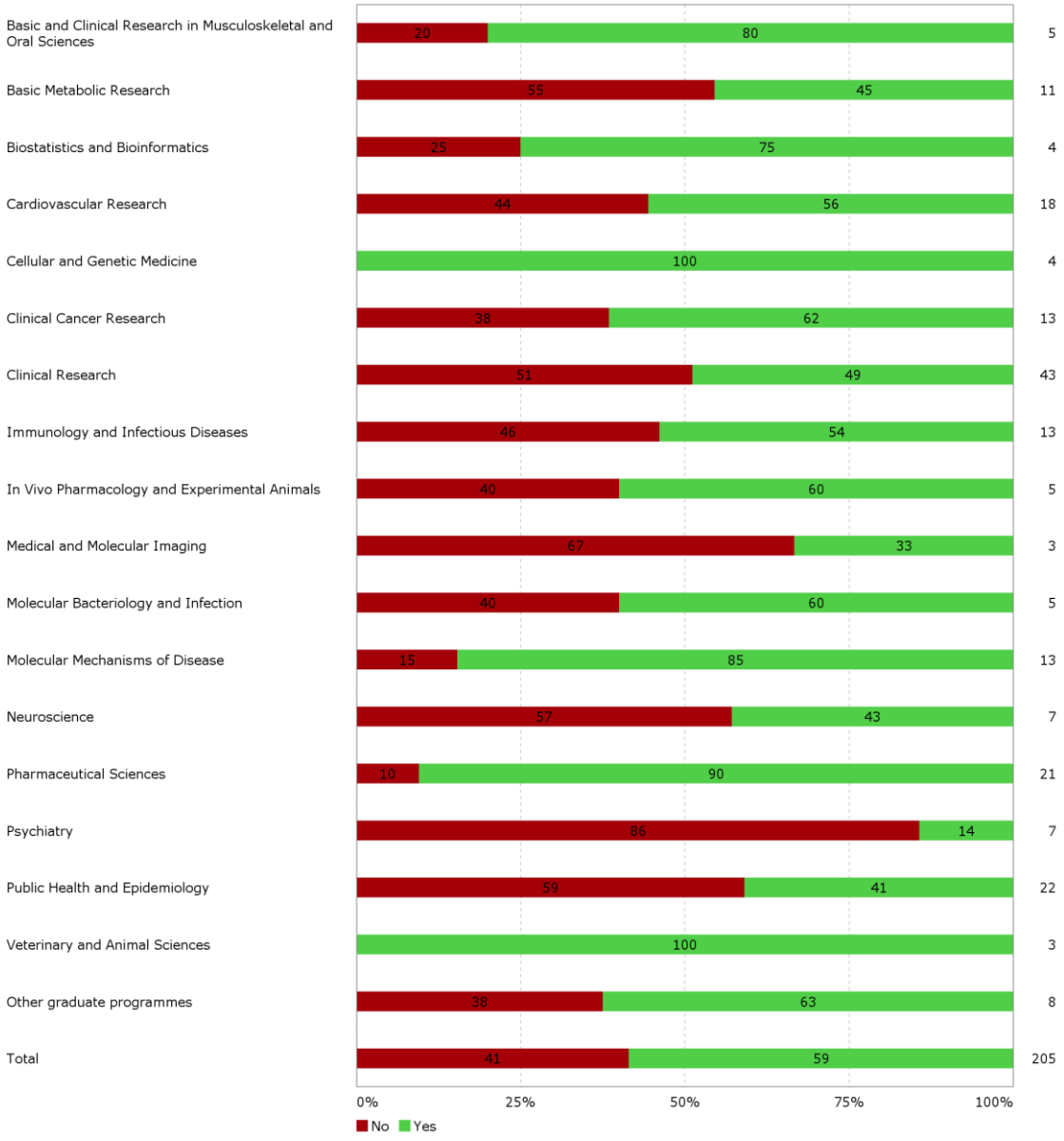
In the qualitative comments, only very few comments were made elaborating on the assessments of the psychological, academic or physical working environment, and no general theme is clear. This may reflect that the PhD students are, all in all, relatively satisfied with the working environment.

8. Contact with the department and the Graduate School administration

In the final part of the questionnaire, the PhD students were asked to assess their contact with the faculty department with which they were affiliated.[7] Initially, the respondents were asked whether they had been in contact with their department/department administration during the course of their PhD. In total, 59% had been in contact with the department (chart 8.1, below). This percentage was 65 in the previous report and 73 in the report covering the second half of 2014, which equals a total decline of 14 percentage points over this period.

Results vary across graduate programmes. All respondents from Cellular and Genetic Medicine, and Veterinary and Animal Sciences and 90% of respondents from Pharmaceutical Sciences had been in contact with the department/department administration. In contrast, 14% of respondents from Psychiatry had been in contact with the department/department administration.

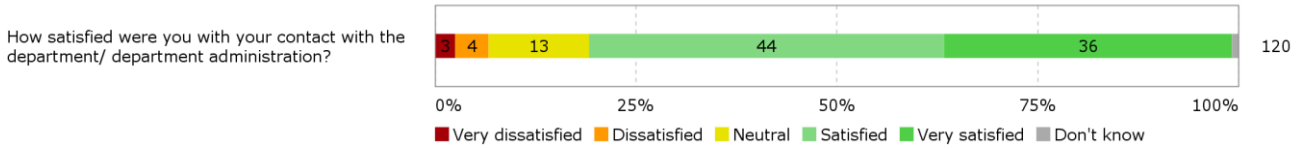
Chart 8.1: Have you had contact with the department/department administration? (Total results across graduate programmes) (n=205)



[7] See a list of all departments here: http://healthsciences.ku.dk/research/departments/

The PhD students who had been in contact with the department were asked to assess their satisfaction with this contact. The results are illustrated in chart 8.2 (below). As only very small differences have been found between the different graduate programmes, only the accumulated results are displayed. The majority of the respondents are satisfied with their contact with the department/department administration: 80% were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied'. Seven percent were dissatisfied ('dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied'). In the previous report, the percentage of satisfied respondents was 73% while the percentage of dissatisfied respondents was 11%. This increase with regard to the level of satisfaction in this report mirrors the results from the report covering the second half of 2014, in which 81% were satisfied and only 4% dissatisfied.

Chart 8.2: How satisfied were you with your contact with the department/department administration? (Total results across graduate programmes) (n=120)

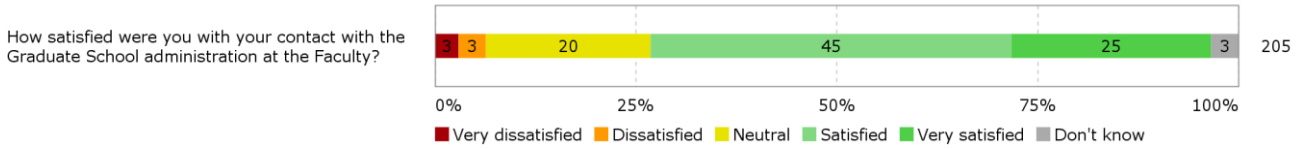


Contact with the Graduate School administration at the Faculty

The Graduate School administration handles many of the administrative procedures concerning the PhD programmes, including enrolment, course administration and the awarding of the PhD degree. For this reason, almost all PhD students have been in contact with the administration several times throughout the course of their PhD programme, personally and/or by e-mail and telephone. Thus, all respondents were asked to rate how satisfied they were with their contact with the Graduate School administration.

The respondents' rating of their satisfaction with the quality of their contact with the Graduate School administration is illustrated in chart 8.3 (below). Seventy percent of the current population of PhD students stated that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their contact with the Graduate School administration, a result which exactly corresponds to the result from the previous report but which represents a decrease from the rating of 77% in the report covering the second half of 2014. Only 6% of the current group of respondents are dissatisfied (8% in the last report and 6% in the report from the second half of 2014).

Chart 8.3: How satisfied were you with your contact with the Graduate School administration at the Faculty? (Total results across graduate programmes) (n=205)



Comments regarding the administrative support

Seventeen comments were made regarding the administrative support. Half of these expressed dissatisfaction with either the Graduate School or the department administration. These ten PhD students elaborate on how they experienced the administration as being disorganised and rigid. Some are only mildly dissatisfied, though, and are mainly critical of the processing time and the high level of bureaucracy. The following comments exemplify the more or less negative statements:

> *"Sometimes you had to call many different people for little standard issues, and nobody knew who were responsible. You often ended up being referred back to the first person you spoke to, though that person had said they were not in charge/responsible for that/did not know. Also, I've tried a few*

times to send in forms and receive an auto-confirmation, but nobody reacted, and when I contacted the administration, I was told to send everything again because they had not received it/could not find it... I think that is not good enough. And a few times I had to take contact again, because I still did not receive any answer..."

"The information level on the Grad school webpage is very low, and the employees are not briefed uniformly on rules and regulations."

"No errors have been made but the processing time could be improved. Furthermore, it is hard to figure out who to contact directly if you need answer on a specific question quickly."

Contrary to this, five respondents comment on the usefulness and helpfulness of the administration, as these examples illustrate:

"Employees at the PhD office have always been very helpful during the course of my PhD. Thanks a lot!" [translated from Danish]

"My experience with the admin has been good, however getting a refund for a course taken outside the PhD programme was a farce."

9. Summary and recommendations

1. The PhD project and enrolment

- Of the current population of PhD students, 50% were enrolled to complete a project defined in advance in a call for applications for PhD grants, whereas 43% of the projects were not defined in advance. These percentages are similar to those of the previous evaluation. The percentage of pre-defined projects varies for the different graduate programmes.

- As in the last report, for 68% of the respondents the PhD project entailed a break with undergraduate research activities, while 21% continued research they had initiated during their undergraduate study programmes.

- When asked about influence on the project description, 63% experienced having influenced the project description to a high or very high extent. Twenty-one percent rated their level of influence as 'medium' and 16% did not influence the project description. Results are highly similar to the equivalent results from the last report. The level of influence varies greatly across graduate programmes.

- Three quarters of the PhD students (75%) discussed the project description with their faculty supervisor to a high or very high extent, 12% discussed it to a medium extent, while 12% ticked 'not at all' or 'to a low extent'. Again, results are similar to the last report.

2. Supervision

- The majority of the respondents (74%) were satisfied with the supervision they received while 12% were dissatisfied with their supervision; these results mirror those from the last evaluation.

- Comment on supervision satisfaction: As supervision is a key factor for successful PhD studies it is highly positive that the overall level of satisfaction with supervision at the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences is relatively high. Still, for some graduate programmes, as many as 43% of the respondents are dissatisfied with their supervision. This demands attention. Analysis of the qualitative comments can provide further insight into the reasons for the dissatisfaction experienced amongst the PhD students, albeit these represent an overall minority. The following challenging aspects represent the most frequently mentioned themes in the qualitative comments:
  - *Supervisors should be better prepared to task of supervising:* It is suggested that the requirements for being a supervisor should be stricter and that supervisors should be better prepared to conduct supervision, e.g. in the form of more focus on pedagogical skills and greater awareness and qualifications with regard to project management.
  - *More guidance on how to structure the project and the PhD thesis:* Along the lines of the above, some PhD students request more support in structuring both their work and the PhD thesis.
  - *More time should be allocated to supervision:* Some supervisor(s) do not have the time necessary to conduct supervision (or choose not to allocate more time to the task).

- 59% of the PhD students had three or more supervisors connected to their project (including their principal supervisor), 31% had two supervisors and a mere 4% had only their principal supervisor

(9% in the previous report).

- For two thirds of the PhD students (68%), the principal supervisor is perceived to be the primary/most important supervisor, while 24% consider the primary co-supervisor to be most important and 8% view 'Another co-supervisor' as most important. These percentages are similar to those in the previous report.

- 72% of the PhD students were satisfied with their co-supervisor(s). This represents a decrease of eight percentage points from 80% in the last report. Following this minor trend, the number of dissatisfied respondents has increased from 7% to 10%.

- Overall, the assessed value of the regular assessments is deemed to be rather low since 74% of the total group of respondents provide a dissatisfied or medium rating. In the previous report this number was likewise high at 78%. The satisfaction rates vary across graduate programmes, though.

3. PhD courses

- 65% of the respondents were satisfied with the generic courses, whereas 69% were satisfied with the scientific courses. These evaluation results represent a small decrease in the level of satisfaction in comparison with the results from the previous report. Here, 72% were satisfied with the generic courses while 73% were satisfied with the scientific courses. Percentages of dissatisfied respondents mirror those from the previous report, though. Thus, the decrease in the number of satisfied respondents is due to more respondents now stating that they are 'neutral'.

- The comments regarding the PhD courses display great variety, though with two widely mentioned themes: 1) Praise for either PhD courses at the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences in general or for specific courses, and 2) the need for courses deemed more relevant and/or the fact that some PhD students end up taking courses abroad due to a lack of courses they find relevant. In the previous report, the most commented theme concerned problems with the statistical courses, which were assessed as being poor and having too few seats. In the current evaluation, only three PhD students comment on problems with the statistical courses.

4. Participation in other scientific environments

- 92% of the respondents have stayed in another scientific environment for one week or more. This represents yet another increase in the percentage of PhD students who have stayed in other scientific environments when comparing results from the last four reports – 58% in 2013; 65% and 66%, respectively, in 2014; and 77% in 2015.

- 30% of the respondents who stayed in another scientific environment spent less than one month there, 51% stayed 1-6 months and 19% stayed longer than six months. These percentages equal results from the previous report.

- 62% of the respondents who stayed in another scientific environment went abroad as part of their stay, a small decrease from 64% in the last report and 72% in the report covering the second half

of 2014. For some graduate programmes, a large share of the respondents went abroad, for some even all respondents; for other programmes, only few went abroad.

- On average, 61% of the respondents received financial support from the Graduate School to spend time in another scientific environment compared to 54% in the previous report and 44% in the report from the first half of 2014. Large variations can be observed between the graduate programmes with regard to financial support.

  Comment on not participating in another scientific environment: In the qualitative comments, the PhD students pointed to three main reasons as to why they had not spent time in another scientific environment:
  - *Personal reasons (mostly family considerations)*
  - *It was not necessary/relevant for their project*
  - *It was too difficult to schedule (time and/or clinical research restraints)*

5. Teaching and dissemination

- In total, 79% of the PhD students have engaged in teaching activities or conducted supervision, a result similar to the previous report (83%).

- When specifying the type of teaching activities, the most frequent activities are: supervision (74% of the respondents), lectures (52%) and practical exercises (48%).

- A majority of 74% estimated that they had spent up to 10% of their time teaching or conducting supervision, a result similar to the 72% in the previous report, while 34% estimated that they had spent 11-20% of their time teaching or conducting supervision, an increase from 24% in the last report and 15% in the report covering the second half of 2014. The results thus indicate a continuous tendency towards more respondents spending more of their allotted time conducting supervision and/or teaching.

- Overall, between 49% and 83% of the respondents are satisfied with their outcome of the four targeted aspects of the teaching/supervision activities (influence on planning these activities, the academic outcome, the supervision/feedback received and the relevance to the PhD student's work). The number of dissatisfied respondents ('dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied') is quite low, ranging between 3% and 10%. The question regarding supervision/feedback on teaching and supervision activities received the lowest rating, with 49% stating that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied', a result similar to that of the previous report (47%).

- The respondents have communicated their results in very different ways. 'Scientific articles in peer-reviewed journals' (95%), 'conference/congress (oral and/or poster)' (94%) and 'seminar in your local scientific environment/research group' (86%) are the most common forms of communication, as was also the case in the previous report.

- The PhD students are generally satisfied with their dissemination activities. For three of the four targeted aspects (scientific outcome, influence on planning and relevance for the PhD work), satis-

faction rates range between 84% and 87%. The question on received supervision/feedback on dissemination activities sets itself apart with a somewhat lower satisfaction rate of 71%, corresponding to the 73% in the last report, where this question likewise received the lowest rating.

6. Graduate Programmes

- The following four aspects of activities offered by the graduate programme were assessed: 1) courses, 2) seminars and annual meetings, 3) scientific networking and 4) overall satisfaction. When examining the overall rating of the four aspects regarding the graduate programmes, satisfaction rates range between 40% and 59%, i.e. the percentage of PhD students stating that they are satisfied (average satisfaction level: 49.5%). In the previous evaluation, between 30% and 49% stated that they were satisfied with the aspects in question (average satisfaction level: 41.5%). Thus, ratings of aspects of the graduate programmes have improved.

- A third (33%) of the respondents perceive the graduate programmes to be of limited importance and did not find them particularly useful in relation to either their project or their future career. In the previous report the corresponding percentages were 42% and 36%, respectively, meaning that the percentage of respondents who found the graduate programmes to be of little or no importance has decreased by nine percentage points with regard to usefulness in relation to their project and three percentage points with regard to usefulness in relation to their future career.

  Comment on the relatively poor graduate programme assessment: Though ratings related to the graduate programmes have improved a little, aspects related to the graduate programmes still received ratings lower than other aspects targeted in the evaluation (e.g. supervision). As was also the case in the previous report, some of the qualitative comments concern how the image and role of the graduate programme is not clear and/or evident to the respondents. To further improve the relevance of the graduate programme structure and activities, the initiated efforts to increase the visibility of the graduate programmes and to develop them into professional platforms that can help PhD students identify relevant professional networks, courses and activities should be continued. According to the evaluation results, some programmes apparently have greater success in fulfilling their purpose of supporting both the current project-related work and future career activities. Thus, increased knowledge sharing across graduate programmes could be beneficial.

7. Workplace and provided assistance (technical, financial etc.)

- Nine out of ten PhD students shared an office with one or more PhD students or other scientific staff (89%).

- Of the total group of respondents, 74% were satisfied the physical environment, a small improvement from 69% in the previous report. For the question targeting the psychological environment of the workplace, the equivalent satisfaction rate was 87%, again displaying a small improvement of three percentage points in comparison to results from the previous report.

- The assessment of the physical working environment was explored in further detail and the respondents were asked to rate: 1) technical assistance, e.g. laboratory assistance, 2) access to resources and finances, 3) access to experimental facilities and 4) available IT facilities. The results

from these elaborating questions reflect the overall degree of satisfaction with the physical working environment and range between 64% and 70%, similar to the last report.

8. Contact with the department and the Graduate School administration

- The majority (80%) of the respondents were satisfied with their contact with the department/department administration, whereas 7% were dissatisfied. In the previous report, the percentage of satisfied respondents was 73%, with 11% dissatisfied respondents. This increase in the level of satisfaction in this report mirrors the results from the report covering the second half of 2014, in which 81% were satisfied and only 4% dissatisfied.

- 70% of the current population of PhD students were satisfied with their contact with the Graduate School administration at the faculty, the same as in the last report. Only 6% are dissatisfied.

- They were few elaborative comments on contact. Some express dissatisfaction with either the Graduate School or the department administration and concern how the administration is experienced as being disorganised and rigid. Some are only mildly dissatisfied, though, and are mainly critical of the processing time and the high level of bureaucracy. Others comment on the usefulness and helpfulness of the administration.

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Questionnaire

Welcome to the final evaluation of the PhD programme at the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences

The purpose of this survey is to evaluate the quality of your PhD programme.

We hope that you will help us by answering the questionnaire. This will provide us with information that can be used to improve various aspects of the PhD programme. The questionnaire takes approximately 20 minutes to complete.

Your responses will be treated confidentially by the Evaluation Unit who will only send aggregated data to the Graduate School. Your supervisors will not get access to your responses.

Please answer the questions based on the entire period you have been a PhD student. The questionnaire is in English but you are welcome to answer in either Danish or in English.

If you have any questions about the survey please contact the Evaluation Unit: 35 32 11 91.

Thank you for your help.

Best regards

Jørn Wulff Helge, professor
Head of Graduate School of Health and Medical Sciences

1. The PhD project

Was your PhD project defined in advance in a call for applications for PhD grants?

(1) ❑ Yes
(2) ❑ No
(99) ❑ Don't know

Initiating your PhD project:

	Not at all	To a low extent	To a medium extent	To a high extent	To a very high extent	Don't know
To what extent was your PhD project a continuation of research that you began during your undergraduate programme?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑
To what extent did you influence the project description?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑
To what extent did you discuss the project description with your faculty supervisor?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑

Additional comments:

_____

_____

2. SUPERVISION

All in all, how satisfied were you with the supervision you received during your PhD?

(1) ❑ Very dissatisfied
(2) ❑ Dissatisfied
(3) ❑ Neutral
(4) ❑ Satisfied
(5) ❑ Very satisfied
(99) ❑ Don't know

Who was the most important supervisor for you during your PhD project?

(1) ❑ The principal supervisor (hovedvejleder)
(2) ❑ The primary co-supervisor
(3) ❑ Another co-supervisor

How satisfied were you with your <u>most important supervisor's</u> efforts in relation to the following:

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Don't know
Your enrolment and project description?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑
The amount of time spent on supervision?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑
Guidance on structuring the project?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑
Guidance on scientific problems?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑
Guidance on your scientific communication (peer-reviewed articles, presentations at scientific conferences, etc.)?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑
Guidance on your popular communication (articles in non-scientific journals, interviews, etc.)?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑
Mediation of contact to national and international network/research groups?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑
Guidance on preparing your dissertation?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑

How many supervisors did you have, including your principal supervisor?

(1) ❑ I only had my principal supervisor
(2) ❑ I had 2 supervisors
(3) ❑ I had 3 or more supervisors

All in all, how satisfied were you with your co-supervisor(s)?

(1) ❑ 1. Very dissatisfied
(2) ❑ 2. Dissatisfied
(3) ❑ 3. Neutral
(4) ❑ 4. Satisfied
(5) ❑ 5. Very satisfied
(99) ❑ 6. Don't know

To what extent were the regular assessments of the overall process as well as the progress made on your project of value?

(1) ❑ Not at all
(2) ❑ To a low extent
(3) ❑ To a medium extent
(4) ❑ To a high extent
(5) ❑ To a very high extent
(99) ❑ Don't know

My supervision would have been better if... (Please list suggestions for improving supervision for the benefit of future students)

_____
_____

3. COURSES

This section is about the PhD courses offered during your programme.

Generic PhD courses: Courses in various techniques such as statistics, information retrieval, data analysis, project management, etc.

Scientific PhD courses: Courses within the various scientific disciplines.

Generic courses as a whole:

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Don't know
How satisfied were you with the generic PhD courses offered?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(0) ❑

Scientific courses as a whole:

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Don't know
How satisfied were you with the scientific PhD courses offered?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(0) ❑

Additional comments about the PhD courses offered during your PhD programme:

_____

_____

4. CHANGE OF SCIENTIFIC ENVIRONMENT AND INTERNATIONALIZATION

The questions in this section relate to contact with and/or stays in other scientific environments or research groups with a length of at least one week. Conferences, courses, etc. are therefore not part of these questions.

As part of your PhD, did you stay in another scientific environment (in Denmark or abroad) for one week or more?

(1) ❑ Yes

(2) ❑ No

Why did you choose not to stay in another scientific environment as part of your PhD?

_____

_____

How long was your total stay in another scientific environment?

(1) ❑ 1-2 weeks
(2) ❑ 3-4 weeks
(3) ❑ 1-2 months
(4) ❑ 3-6 months
(5) ❑ More than 6 months

Did you go abroad as part of your stay in another scientific environment?

(1) ❑ Yes
(2) ❑ No

Why did you choose not to go abroad as part of your PhD?

_____
_____

Did you receive financial support from the Graduate School in relation to your stay abroad?

(1) ❑ Yes
(2) ❑ No

Was your scientific network positively influenced by your stay in another scientific environment?

(1) ❑ Not at all
(2) ❑ To a low extent
(3) ❑ To a medium extent
(4) ❑ To a high extent
(5) ❑ To a very high extent
(99) ❑ Don't know

Scientific network:

	Very dissatisfied	**Dissatisfied**	**Neutral**	**Satisfied**	**Very satisfied**	**Don't know**
How satisfied were you with the potential for international contacts during your PhD programme?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑
How satisfied were you with the potential for national contacts (beyond the University of Copenhagen) during your PhD programme?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑

Additional comments:

_____
_____

5. TEACHING, SUPERVISION AND DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

Did you teach or conduct supervision during your PhD programme?

(1) ❑ Yes
(2) ❑ No

What types of teaching and/or supervision did you carry out?

(1) ❑ Lectures
(2) ❑ Practical exercises (e.g. in the laboratory)
(3) ❑ Theoretical exercises
(4) ❑ Supervision
(5) ❑ Other types of teaching

How much of your PhD programme did you spend on teaching and supervision activities (please estimate)?

(1) ❑ 1-5 %
(2) ❑ 6-10 %
(3) ❑ 11-20 %
(4) ❑ 21-50 %
(5) ❑ More than 50 %

How satisfied were you with:

	Very dissatisfied	**Dissatisfied**	**Neutral**	**Satisfied**	**Very satisfied**	**Don't know**
The academic outcome of your teaching and supervision activities (i.e. for you personally)?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑
Your influence on the planning of your teaching and supervision activities?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑
The supervision/feedback you received on your teaching and supervision activities?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑
The relevance of your teaching and supervision activities for your PhD work?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑

Dissemination (formidling); scientific and popular communication

Where and how have you communicated the results of your project?

(1) ❑ PhD day organized by the Graduate School of Health and Medical Sciences
(2) ❑ Conference/ Congress (oral and/or poster)
(3) ❑ Seminar in your local scientific environment/ research group
(4) ❑ Scientific articles in peer-reviewed journals
(5) ❑ Articles in popular/ non peer-reviewed journals
(6) ❑ Teaching at the Faculty/ hospital
(7) ❑ Other teaching activities
(8) ❑ Other types of dissemination/ communication of the results of your project

How satisfied were you with:

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Don't know
The scientific outcome of your dissemination activities?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑
Your influence on planning your dissemination activities?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑
The supervision/ feedback you received on your dissemination activities?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑
The relevance of your dissemination activities to your PhD work?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑

Additional comments regarding teaching and dissemination activities:

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6. GRADUATE PROGRAMMES

During your PhD you have been affiliated with a Graduate Programme (Forskeruddannelsesprogram). The purpose of the Graduate Programmes is to provide a scientific and organizational framework for the PhD programme. The programmes offer PhD courses, seminars, and other scientific activities for PhD students.

How satisfied were you with the activities of the Graduate Programme in terms of:

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Don't know
Courses offered by the Graduate Programme?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑
Seminars and annual meetings organized by the Graduate Programme?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑
Scientific networking?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑
Overall satisfaction with the Graduate Programme?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑

Did you find it useful to be affiliated with a Graduate Programme?

	Very unimportant	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Very important	Don't know
In relation to your project?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑
In relation to your future career?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑

Additional comments regarding Graduate Programmes:

_____

_____

7. WORKPLACE, ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT ETC.

Describe your office (tick one box):

(1) ❑ I had my own office

(2) ❑ I shared an office with other PhD students

(3) ❑ I shared the office with postdocs, PhD students, and/or other scientific staff

Your experience of the working environment:

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Don't know
How satisfied were you with the physical environment (office layout, noise, lighting, etc.)?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(0) ❑
How satisfied were you with the psychological environment (relationship with colleagues, well-being, etc.)?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(0) ❑
How satisfied were you with the academic working environment?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(0) ❑
How satisfied were you with your work/life balance?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(0) ❑

How satisfied were you with:

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Don't know
Your access to technical assistance, e.g. laboratory assistance?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑
Your access to resources and finances?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑
Your access to experimental facilities?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑
The IT facilities available?	(1) ❑	(2) ❑	(3) ❑	(4) ❑	(5) ❑	(99) ❑

As a PhD student you have been affiliated with a department (institut) at the faculty. Have you had contact with the department/department administration?

(1) ❑ Yes

(2) ❑ No

How satisfied were you with your contact with the department/ department administration?

(1) ❑ Very dissatisfied
(2) ❑ Dissatisfied
(3) ❑ Neutral
(4) ❑ Satisfied
(5) ❑ Very satisfied
(99) ❑ Don't know

The PhD administrators at the Graduate School handle casework relating to all PhD students (admission, salary, PhD courses, leave of absence, the PhD plan, etc.)

How satisfied were you with your contact with the Graduate School administration at the Faculty?

(1) ❑ Very dissatisfied
(2) ❑ Dissatisfied
(3) ❑ Neutral
(4) ❑ Satisfied
(5) ❑ Very satisfied
(99) ❑ Don't know

Additional comments regarding your workplace and the administrative support:

_____
_____

8. GENERAL COMMENTS

If you have further comments regarding your PhD Programme, including suggestions for improvement, please let us know:

_____
_____

If you have any comments or suggestions regarding this questionnaire, please let us know:

_____
_____

This questionnaire has been sent to an e-mail address you have used during your PhD. In the future, we would like to have the possibility to send you messages regarding alumni information or inquiries. If you would like to receive such messages from us, please write an e-mail address which we can use to contact you:

_____

Thank you for your participation!

Please click "Finish" to register your answers and submit the questionnaire.