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**The Bologna Reform in Ukraine:  
Learning Europeanisation in the Post-Soviet Context**

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**PhD**

**The University of Edinburgh**

**2016**

# Declaration

I, Iryna Kushnir, do hereby declare:

- (a) that the thesis has been composed by me, and
- (b) that the work is my own, and
- (c) that the work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Parts of this work have been used to develop the following publications:

Kushnir, I. (forthcoming). A multi-faceted European Higher Education Area: a bricolage of what is known. *In review – Journal of Further and Higher Education*.

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Iryna Kushnir

# Lay Summary

This thesis is about the process of the recent higher education reform in Ukraine, called Bologna. The name of this reform has become a buzzword not only in Ukraine but also in other countries in and around the European Union. Bologna is so much talked about in these countries because it is a very influential European project for the harmonisation of national higher education systems to ease academic and job mobility. For example, all countries that participate in the Bologna project have been working on the adoption of the same cycles of study process, such as Bachelor's, Master's, PhD.

This thesis examines key establishments in Ukraine that have been contributing to the development of Bologna in the country, such as universities, non-state organisations, to name a few. This thesis also studies the most important policies that these establishments have been developing in the framework of Bologna. The main aim of this study is to analyse how exactly the process of the Bologna reform has been unfolding in Ukraine, and to examine this reform as a case of wider processes of the development of European ideas in Ukraine, which is a representative of the former Soviet Union. This study is conducted through the analysis of interviews with representatives from those key establishments and the analysis of policy documents that they produce and use in their work.

The results of this research suggest that the Bologna reform in Ukraine has been primarily developing through the interaction between the pre-Bologna higher education legacies in higher education and new Bologna ideas. On the one hand, most of the key powerful establishments in the country, established before Bologna, have retained their prior influence and the old higher education policies. On the other hand, Bologna has also been partially changing some aspects of the old higher education policies and the established relations among the key establishments that deal with them. The changes have been taking place due to the involvement of civil sector organisations which became quite powerful in the course of this reform. The accumulation of more and more changes has led to the beginning of the change of how Ukrainian higher education is governed in general. It used to undergo a strict centralised control by the state prior to Bologna. However, during the reform, we can see the emergence of a more shared higher education policy-making among different types of establishments that deal with higher education in Ukraine. The Bologna reform in Ukraine can be seen as exemplary of how European ideas find their place in the post-Soviet context such as Ukraine.

# Abstract

This thesis explores the process of the Bologna reform in the Ukrainian higher education system. Bologna is one of the most well-known and influential European projects for cooperation in the field of higher education. It aims to create an internationally competitive European Higher Education Area (EHEA) through a range of such objectives as the adoption of a system of credits, cycles of study process, diploma supplement, quality assurance, qualifications frameworks, student-centred education, lifelong learning and the promotion of student and faculty mobility. Through an in-depth examination of higher education actors and policy instruments in the case of the implementation of Bologna in Ukraine, this thesis aims to a) analyse the process of the Bologna reform in Ukraine; and b) examine Bologna as a case of Europeanisation in the post-Soviet context.

The study is qualitative and applies two main methods: interviews with key policy actors and text analysis of selected policy documents. These data are analysed through the perspective of policy learning, with a particular reference to the concept of layering.

The findings suggest that the Bologna reform in Ukraine has been primarily developing as an interrelationship between policy continuity and change. On the one hand, the study found that most of the key powerful actors and networks in the country, established before the introduction of Bologna, have retained their prior influence. As a result, Bologna has – to a large extent – simply reproduced established relationships and pre-existing higher education policies. The Ministry of Education and Science has been the primary actor pushing for this kind of policy continuity. On the other hand, Bologna has also been partially changing some aspects of the old higher education instruments and the established relations among the actors. These changes have been taking place due to the involvement of civil sector organisations which increasingly became crucial as policy brokers in the process of this reform. The study suggests that the old practices and innovations in Bologna have been interacting in *layering* – a gradual messy and creative build-up of minor innovations by different higher education actors in Ukraine. The accumulation of these innovations led to more fundamental changes – the beginning of the emergence of a more shared higher education policy-making in the previously centrally governed Ukraine. These findings shed some light on the broader process of Europeanisation in the post-Soviet context. The Ukrainian case thus suggests that at least in the post-Soviet context, Europeanisation is the process in which change and the continuity are not mutually exclusive, but rather closely interconnected.

# Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my parents.

# Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisors, Dr. Sotiria Grek, Dr. Cathy Howieson and late Prof. David Raffe, for their careful guidance, precious advice, feedback and support throughout this research, which became my personal learning journey. I am also thankful to my interview participants for sharing their valuable expertise and insights. Special thanks should also go to the funding services of the University of Edinburgh for supporting this research financially.

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# List of Acronyms

BFUG – Bologna Follow-up Group

EACEA – Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency

ECTS – European credit transfer system

ENQA – European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

ERASMUS – European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students

EU – European Union

EHEA – European Higher Education Area

HERE – Higher Education Reform Expert

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

OECD – Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

PhD – Doctor of Philosophy

PISA – Programme for International Student Assessment

TEMPUS - Trans-European Mobility Scheme for University Studies

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

This thesis investigates the process of the Bologna reform in a national higher education system in the post-Soviet context. The Bologna Process (or Bologna) is a European intergovernmental policy initiative to build the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) through the development of compatible and comparable degrees. Through an in-depth investigation of the development of higher education actors and instruments in the case of the implementation of Bologna in Ukraine, this study aims to analyse the process of the Bologna reform in Ukraine, and examine Bologna as a case of Europeanisation in the post-Soviet context.

### 1.1. Background and relevance

Post-Soviet Europeanisation has gained increasing momentum after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991. Following the past and, at the same time, trying to break away from it, has been a central political contradiction that the newly independent post-Soviet states have been facing. There are 15 countries that comprise the post-Soviet region: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

Europeanisation is a characteristic feature of transition from the communist past in the post-Soviet space. This is despite the fact that the post-Soviet region includes many countries that do not belong to the European Union (EU) or even Europe as a geographical entity. Europe spreads out much further to the east from the border of the EU, encompassing some countries that do not belong to the EU, such as, for instance, Moldova, Ukraine, and a small western part of Russia (Walters, 2009). Some of these countries are not current, new or applicant states of the EU.

The notion of Europeanisation in the post-Soviet context is a debatable terrain. Zgaga (2009) states that Europeanisation happens mainly in the EU, whereas the process that characterises non-EU countries should be referred to as 'transition' (p.176). On the contrary, a group of scholars (Wolczuk, 2009; Börzel & Pamuk, 2011) argue that Europeanisation can take place in countries regardless of

their relationship with the EU, as long as they adopt some European values. Such a broad definition of Europeanisation is supported by Wolczuk (2004) too. Additionally, this scholar highlights the need to treat Europeanisation more as an area of inquiry rather than just a concept with a certain meaning.

The Bologna reform is, arguably, one of the expressions of Europeanisation in post-Soviet countries that belong to the EHEA. Bologna began in 1999 when higher education representatives from 29 European countries gathered in the Italian city of Bologna – hence the name, *the Bologna Process*. The participants of the meeting signed the “Bologna declaration” (1999) in which they proclaimed their intention to build the EHEA by harmonising higher education systems by 2010. The purpose was to facilitate academic and job mobility in the region. In the “Bologna declaration” (1999), they also called upon other nearby countries to join them in that initiative. Beside the overarching goal to create the EHEA, a number of concrete objectives, called *the action lines* (European Higher Education Area, 2014), were identified, such as the adoption of a common system of credits and cycles of study process, the development of an easily readable diploma supplement issued to graduates, the promotion of student and faculty mobility and the assurance of higher education quality.

Since then, international ministerial conferences have usually been held every two-three years to evaluate progress in the development of the Bologna action lines and to identify next steps (European Higher Education Area, 2014). Although these conferences are referred to as ‘ministerial,’ their participants are not just the ministers of education from the Bologna countries. A number of other stakeholders, such as, for example, the European Commission, have also given their support to the project (Terry, 2010). Besides the ministerial meetings, various workshops, conferences, meetings of international working groups, which contribute to the development of the action lines, have taken place in-between the ministerial conferences. Since its inception, Bologna has expanded the number of its objectives and clarified relevant meanings, as well as attracted new member states and new international stakeholders. Currently, 48 countries, mainly the EU states and a number of its nearby countries, are working to develop the EHEA (European Higher Education Area, 2014).

Vögtle and Martens (2014) claim that the Bologna Process ‘presents the largest ongoing reform initiative in higher education’ (p.246). The absence of reference to a geographical area in which this initiative is unfolding suggests that the authors consider Bologna to be the largest higher education initiative worldwide. Indeed, the Bologna Process has created the EHEA that encompasses a



vast geographical space (European Higher Education Area, 2014). The EHEA was created in 2010. It is being further actively developed till at least 2020 (“Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve communique,” 2009).

There is large body of literature about the Bologna Process. Much has been written about the convergence of higher education systems internationally through the Bologna Process (Fejes, 2006; Lažetić, 2010; Delfani, 2013). Another strand in the literature about the Bologna Process is written from a national perspective, evaluating the degree of the implementation of the action lines in certain countries (e.g., Pyykkö, 2008; Portela, Sá, Alexandre, & Cardoso, 2009; Esyutina, Fearon, & Leatherbarrow, 2013). Considerable attention has also been paid at the international ministerial meetings to the evaluation of the success of the implementation of the Bologna action lines in the participating states, and to the comparison of the results (European Higher Education Area, 2014). However, little attention has been paid to the actual process of a national higher education reform, particularly in the post-Soviet space, and the ways in which it can explain some aspects of the Europeanisation of the post-Soviet context.

## **1.2. Research aims**

This thesis demonstrates an in-depth examination of higher education actors and policy instruments in the case of the implementation of Bologna in Ukraine with the aim to analyse the process of the Bologna reform in Ukraine, and examine Bologna as a case of Europeanisation in the post-Soviet context. This aim can be synthesised in the following main research questions:

*How has the process of the Bologna reform unfolded in Ukraine?*

*What insights can the process of the Bologna reform in Ukraine give to our understanding of post-Soviet Europeanisation?*

## **1.3. Research setting**

The Ukrainian context was chosen for the following two main reasons. First, Ukraine in many respects is a representative country of the post-Soviet space, which makes a relatively distinct region in the EHEA (Zgaga, 2009). Post-Soviet countries share a common history and geopolitical position in the world, and thus, it is likely that there are some similar mechanisms in the development of the Bologna reforms.

Crucially, post-Soviet legacies and at the same time, the drive for change are manifested quite strongly in Ukraine. This makes Ukraine a good case for studying Europeanisation.

Ukraine, like other post-Soviet countries, obtained its independence fairly recently, in 1991, after the fall of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union was based on the ideas of Marxism-Leninism, which put centralisation, controlled productive force, censorship, compulsory patriotism, and isolation from the Western world at the core of the development of the centrally planned economy (Bridge, 2004). All areas of social life, including higher education in the Soviet countries, especially its uniform curricula, reflected the centralised political system. Higher education was used as a platform to 'instill into every student the Marxist-Leninist doctrine which [was] to become his deeply held conviction and guiding principle in life' (Zajda, 1980: p.98).

After the fall of the Soviet Union, all post-Soviet countries have been transforming 'from an empire to a nation, from a command economy to a market-based one, and from a communist to a democratic system' (Tsygankov, 2007: p.425, citing Bunce, 1995). However, the legacy of the Soviet influence is apparent in all areas of life in post-Soviet countries, according to Malle (2009). For example, the author states that the central governments in post-Soviet countries tend to ensure the preservation of the centralised top-down control of all policy fields. This is coupled by a persisting censorship of all areas of life and the exercise of political propaganda to ensure that the public agrees with governmental decisions. Malle (2009) further states that policy-making in general lacks transparency. For instance, key jobs and positions throughout post-Soviet countries are taken by people loyal to the government. All of this contributes to a lack of public trust in the state, a communication gap between the state officials and the public, and weak civil societies (Chudowsky & Kuzio, 2003; Kuzio, 2012). While the practices of the previous regime still persist at the governmental and individual levels, the general political discourse in post-Soviet countries has become more liberal (Fimyar, 2008). This residue of the previous regime in practice tends to be seen in the literature (Levada, 2008) as a barrier for Europeanisation.

Post-Soviet Ukraine is characterised by its strong contextual path-dependency and, at the same time, the drive for change. These tendencies have been obvious from the political events in Ukraine in recent years. At the beginning of independence, the political authorities declared that the development of Ukraine would follow a European direction and that Ukraine would join the EU (Browning & Christou, 2010; Wolczuk, 2009). Ukraine has been cooperating with the EU in

different policy areas but it has not yet applied for membership in the EU.

The issues around the European direction of the development of Ukraine have gained momentum in recent international political and media debates. The confrontation between the pro-European and pro-Russian supporters on the territory of Ukraine has been growing for long till it was expressed in the 'Orange revolution' in 2004 and the 'Euromaidan revolution' in 2013-2014. Both revolutions aimed to support the European direction of development in Ukraine. Specifically, the last revolution aimed to achieve closer trade connections between Ukraine and the EU, the overthrow of the pro-Russian political elites in the Ukrainian central bodies of governing, and the membership of Ukraine in the EU. The revolution was followed by the explicit involvement of Russia in the issues in Ukraine. The Crimea peninsula was annexed by Russia almost right before the war in the east of Ukraine started. So Ukraine is a case where the clash between the two big powers – the EU and Russia – is very strong. Other post-Soviet countries have not faced this many crises of such a wide scope. This might be a legitimate reason to see Ukraine as a somewhat extreme case of post-Soviet Europeanisation.

The selection of Ukraine as a case for this research was based not only on the fact that it is a post-Soviet country with a very strongly expressed tendency for adhering to the past conventions and a strong drive for change. Ukraine has been selected as a case also because of my familiarity with the context. Understanding the context under study by a researcher is extremely important (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Direct exposure to life in Ukraine for a number of years allowed me to familiarise myself closely with the general political landscape of the country, as well as with the specifics of its higher education. Moreover, personal experience of undergraduate higher education in Ukraine right after the introduction of Bologna has been an asset in this research. It gave me valuable background information about Bologna. I witnessed uncertainty and struggle of both instructors and students in putting Bologna into practice. The beginning of the reform was a popular topic for informal discussions. Such discussions were often associated with criticism because of the uncertainty about how to work according to Bologna, and the resulting consequences that students had to suffer. For instance, instructors were unsure how to count course credits and grade points in the new 100-point grading scale, and were more inclined to grade lower. Students also had problems with grade transfer and, moreover, the recognition of their studies, which were undertaken abroad, in Ukraine. This knowledge and experience prompted me to choose Ukraine as a case for this study.

## 1.4. Thesis structure

Following the introductory Chapter, this thesis is structured as follows: theoretical framework; literature review; methodology; two Chapters that present the findings of this study; discussion of the findings; and conclusion.

Chapter 2 reviews the theoretical literature about Europeanisation and argues the need for further analysis of post-Soviet Europeanisation. This Chapter also connects post-Soviet Europeanisation to the notion of policy learning, which is introduced as a theoretical perspective. The Chapter discusses the challenges around the definition of policy learning in relation to other policy processes such as transfer, translation and diffusion. Policy learning is framed as a decision-making process based on a messy combination of old knowledge (and experience), and new information in a policy setting. Further, the way the policy learning notion is applied to this research is analysed.

Chapter 3 reviews the literature about the Bologna Process to provide an account of the previous research on the topic, to demonstrate where in this literature my study is located, and to explain the gaps in this literature that my research aims to fill. Chapter 3 also discusses Bologna in different national contexts, including Ukraine.

In Chapter 4, the methodological considerations guiding this research are explained. The main methods of data collection include policy documentary research and interviews with multiple actors involved in the Bologna reform in Ukraine. A description of the thematic coding used to analyse the data is detailed too. Chapter 4 also discusses pilot study lessons, ethical considerations and the field challenges that steered the main data collection phase. The major limitations of this research are also outlined in this Chapter.

Chapter 5 is the first of the two Chapters that present the findings of this research. This Chapter starts with setting out the context of Ukraine in more detail to build a platform for understanding the development of the higher education actors in Ukraine and their relationships during the Bologna reform. The interplay of relevant aspects, which remained unchanged since before Bologna, with some innovations, are spelled out here.

Chapter 6 continues presenting the findings of this research. It explains how the development of the higher education instruments in Ukraine was triggered and guided by the Bologna action lines as well as by the work of the old national higher education conventions.

Chapter 7 analyses the research findings of this research in light of the policy learning theory and the literature about the Bologna Process and post-Soviet Europeanisation. The discussion in this Chapter provides a general account and response to the main research questions that this thesis investigates. This Chapter demonstrates what my research says about the Bologna reform in the Ukrainian higher education system, and what insight it gives to Europeanisation in the post-Soviet context.

The final Chapter provides a conclusion of the thesis and the exploration of further research potential of this study.

# Chapter 2

## Europeanisation as policy learning

### 2.1. Introduction

The topic of Europeanisation has been attracting the attention of many scholars (e.g., Cowles, Caporaso, & Risse-Kappen, 2001; Börzel & Pamuk, 2011; Radaelli & Dunlop, 2013). There are multiple definitions of Europeanisation in the literature (Börzel, 1999; Risse, Cowles and Caporaso, 2001). An attempt to integrate the ideas from some of such definitions is presented by Radaelli (2004). The author suggests that Europeanisation 'consists of processes of a) construction, b) diffusion and c) institutionalisation of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, 'ways of doing things' and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the EU [European Union] policy process and then incorporated in the logic of domestic (national and subnational) discourse, political structures and public policies' (p.3).

Radaelli's (2004) definition is an attempt to present a joint vision of what Europeanisation is about, but such a perspective is not all-encompassing and universal. For instance, the definition of this author implies that Europeanisation is largely a top-down process. There are other perspectives suggesting that Europeanisation can also be seen as a bottom-up process – such as when countries recognise their 'doing things' in a particular way as Europeanisation. Subsequently, these ideas are taken up by the EU governing bodies as an official discourse of Europeanisation (Lawn and Grek, 2012).

The multiplicity of definitions of Europeanisation that Radaelli (2004) has summarised, albeit partially, stems perhaps from the variety of competing theories that are used to analyse the process of constructing Europe as a single political union and policy space. Some of these theoretical perspectives stem from world system theory (Spring, 2008), institutionalism, neo-institutionalism (Perry & Tor, 2008), policy learning (Radaelli & Dunlop, 2013), to name a few. Europeanisation theory (Bentzen, 2009) per se relies on institutionalist views to explain the impact of the EU on its member states. Clearly, all analyses on the making of the EU have their strengths and weaknesses. There is no single 'correct' viewpoint according to which we can theorise the making of Europe.

This study is guided by policy learning theory, according to which

Europeanisation may be seen as a process of policy learning. Viewing Europeanisation as the process of policy actors' learning is compatible with my interpretivist-constructivist research stance. It dictates that social reality is a construct that constantly emerges from the way in which people interact and interpret new things based on their prior knowledge and experience (VanWynsberghe & Khan, 2007).

An analysis of public policy literature is provided below, as well as the policy literature specifically in the area of education. Relevant theoretical considerations and questions around the idea of *Europeanisation* in the EU and the post-Soviet space are explained in this Chapter. The discussion below also explains how policy learning is inherent in Europeanisation in the post-Soviet space, which is the area of attention in this thesis. The ways in which the process of learning, and thus Europeanisation, can be studied are analysed as well. These issues are critical for shaping the lens through which I look at the process of the Bologna reform in Ukraine as a case of post-Soviet Europeanisation.

## **2.2. Europeanisation in the EU and the post-Soviet space**

A great deal of literature has been written about Europeanisation in the EU member and applicant states (e.g., Radaelli & Dunlop, 2013), as well as beyond these countries, including the post-Soviet space (e.g., Börzel, 2010; Börzel & Pamuk, 2011). The post-Soviet space – most of which is located beyond the borders of the EU – is of interest in this thesis. Since Europeanisation processes in the two spaces are tightly interrelated (Delcour, 2011), it is important to look at the history of the development of Europeanisation in the EU to understand the post-Soviet region better.

Grek (2008) presents an overview of the development of Europeanisation in the EU, emphasizing a growing key role of education in this process. According to the author, the "Solemn Declaration on European Union" was signed in 1983 in Stuttgart by the heads of governments of the European Community. In this way, member states announced their intention to promote the development of a common European market and common European identity. A number of ad hoc actions took place after this. One of them is the creation of the Committee for a People's Europe, chaired by Pietro Adonnino. Another example is the emergence of such common symbols of Europe as the European flag, the cultural capitals of Europe, the

European Year of the Environment and others. These developments had more of a declarative nature, since there was no legal basis for specific policies at that time.

Furthermore, according to Grek (2008), the development of a single market in Europe was not the only goal. The aim of creating a common identity had been gaining momentum in light of the challenges of Americanisation and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Other literature about Europeanisation also puts forward the idea that the whole European project was facilitated by western European countries to counter both Americanisation and communism (Börzel, 2010; Delcour, 2011). The main aim of the leaders of these countries was to develop a strong ideological counterpart primarily to the Soviet ideology. This ideology weakened significantly with the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 but it did not disappear.

The necessity to reinforce the common identity of Europe led to signing the Treaty on European Union or the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 and enforcing it in 1993. Ironically, despite the fact that Maastricht had been eagerly anticipated, the enthusiasm around it decreased after it was signed, according to Grek (2008). The author suggests that the lack of support of integration could only have been overcome once a unifying myth was found. The idea of common economic policies seems not to have been sufficient to justify the European project. Instead, education started emerging as a more influential factor in Europeanisation in the region. The development of the idea of common identity and the creation of a 'European citizenship' became the unifying concept for the peoples of Europe.

According to Börzel (2010), since the European Council in Copenhagen in 1993, access to the EU was open to European countries that met certain criteria which revolve around the idea of common citizenship. In order to apply for the EU membership, countries should respect the rule of law and human rights, and should guarantee democracy through the work of stable institutions. Applicant countries should also be economically competitive and demonstrate a will to adhere to the aims of political, economic and monetary union. The EU, in its turn, should also be able to integrate new members (Börzel, 2010).

The EU has initiated a number of projects for the Europeanisation of the countries beyond its borders, too. Such projects could be seen as a way of demarcating the borders of the EU. These projects could also be viewed as a means to make Europeanisation within and beyond the borders of the EU distinct from each other. The European Neighbourhood Policy is a telling example of this. According to the official website of the European Commission, the European Neighbourhood Policy, developed in 2004, aims at avoiding 'the emergence of new



dividing lines between the enlarged EU and our [EU's] neighbors and instead strengthening the prosperity, stability and security of all. It is based on the values of democracy, rule of law and respect of human rights' (European Union External Action, 2015). Initially, the European Neighbourhood Policy was arranged for the neighboring post-Soviet countries (Kochenov, 2011). However, now the European Neighbourhood Policy is proposed to the 16 of EU's closest neighbors. Within the European Neighbourhood Policy 'the EU offers our [its] neighbors a privileged relationship, building upon a mutual commitment to common values [democracy emphasised the most].' Wolczuk (2009) adds that the European Neighbourhood Policy works through stimulating economic and political reforms in the EU's neighbourhood.

Despite the claims that the European Neighbourhood Policy aims at preventing dividing lines between the EU and its neighbouring countries, this initiative could be also argued to be doing exactly the opposite. Nikolaidis (2005) states that 'the major aim of this initiative is to create a ring of friends around the borders of the new enlarged EU' (p.6). Similarly, Delcour (2011) argues that Europeanisation beyond the EU, primarily in the post-Soviet area, targets the creation of a so-called 'security complex' for the EU (p.37). These statements suggest that while the EU is fluid, at the same time there are borders that impose certain meaning onto the processes of Europeanisation within and beyond them.

Europeanisation in the post-Soviet region is a particularly interesting area of research. It recognises that Europeanisation takes place in the geopolitical context that spreads far beyond the current members and applicant states of the EU. Delcour (2011) calls attention to the importance of the post-Soviet space for the EU and asks an open question about whether the EU has been shaping the post-Soviet space or has been shaped by it, as suggested below.

Since the fall of the Soviet Union, post-Soviet countries have been subject to the influence of Russia. This country is referred to as 'a disruptive other' in the post-Soviet Europeanisation by Delcour (2011: p.51). Russia has been trying to re-establish its control in the region, despite its support, albeit discursive, of Europeanisation and European 'good governance' which presupposes respect, freedom and the fight against corruption (Rubenstein, 1994; Malle, 2009; D'Anieri, 2012; Spechler & Spechler, 2009). According to these authors, Russia has been attempting to re-assert its control in different areas of public policy such as, for instance, security, trade and law. Russia has been doing this through supporting the loyalty of the chief authorities in post-Soviet countries. Such people in power in the post-Soviet countries, who are loyal to Russia, sometimes operate as 'veto players'

in policy change in their countries (Börzel & Pamuk, 2011: p.6).

Europeanisation in different post-Soviet countries might be characterised by common tendencies, despite the fact that there is a certain regionalisation within this space. For instance, Tsygankov (2007) categorises post-Soviet countries into two broad groups. One group includes so-called 'viable states' – Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia. The other group includes Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. The viability of the state, according to the author, relates to three indicators: state unity/security, economic efficiency and political viability which is expressed in the transfer of power through elections. Haynes and Husan (2002) also distinguish two groups of countries within the post-Soviet region. However, these scholars base their classification on whether the countries belong to the EU. These authors distinguish the EU states (Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia) and other states that do not belong to the EU.

Europeanisation for Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia has been, apparently, associated with the accession to the EU and further integration in it (Tsygankov, 2007). Other post-Soviet states either do not aspire to become members of the EU or are just unable to become members of the EU (Wolczuk, 2004). Europeanisation in these countries happens with two main types of intentions. One of them is to modernise different areas of public policy by adopting 'good governance' (Börzel & Pamuk, 2011). Europeanisation empowers those who have liberal views and aspirations for change (Cowles, Caporaso, & Risse-Kappen, 2001). The other motivation for Europeanisation in the majority of post-Soviet states is the ability of those who have power to instrumentalise/appropriate the discourse about Europeanisation for achieving their own purposes. Börzel and Pamuk (2011) call this phenomenon 'the dark side of Europeanisation' because 'veto players' tend to use Europeanisation to disguise their main intention – to advance their own power (p.6). According to the scholars, 'veto players' tend to oppose Europeanisation in practice while, at the same time, promote it on a discursive plane.

According to Börzel and Pamuk (2011), Europeanisation in the post-Soviet space is guided by the 'EU push' and a 'domestic pull' (p.7). The 'EU push' is exercised by the European chief governing bodies (such as, for instance, the European Commission). They call upon countries, including the post-Soviet ones, to strive to develop 'good governance.' Further, according to the authors, a 'domestic pull,' on the other hand, is exercised by policy actors within the countries upon which the 'EU push' is exerted. These policy actors can include both 'veto players' and those who want real change. 'Veto players' in post-Soviet countries are mainly

corrupt elites whose main goal is to oppose the impact of the 'EU push' in practice. Those who want real change, on the other hand, tend to support such an influence.

It is now important to look more closely at actors that might be involved in the 'domestic pull'. The literature tends to present the work of those who want real change and those who want it only discursively as a confrontation (Börzel & Pamuk, 2011). Crucially, the support of the EU push is considered to be productive in terms of policy change; and this change is viewed as Europeanisation (Levada, 2008; Malle, 2009; Spechler & Spechler, 2009). 'Veto players' are positioned in the literature as those that do not 'pull.' Their work is seen as an obstacle to change. So the literature sees Europeanisation as hindered by 'veto players' whose ideology is shaped by the past legacies. This tendency is discussed in relation to a 'catastrophic character of the transition,' poor prospects to assimilate with 'the developed West' and 'no real success stories' of the transition in this region (Haynes and Husan, 2002: p.382).

The views about Europeanisation in the post-Soviet space discussed above are typical in the literature. Evidently, the development of post-Soviet countries is guided by two forces that are viewed as opposing. One of them is change which is usually examined as the impact of Europeanisation or as Europeanisation itself. The second one is the influence of past legacies which are usually seen as a barrier that restricts change, and hence Europeanisation. Thus, it is clear that the previous literature examines Europeanisation in the post-Soviet space as a process of change and, hence, as a completely separate tendency, if not the opposite of the process that primarily aims to perpetuate the old legacies.

On the contrary, this study suggests that the theory of policy learning can constructively challenge such a dichotomous view. Policy learning may be a more productive theoretical frame to examine Europeanisation as a phenomenon when the old and the new come together in the formation of policy agendas and practices. To echo Radaelli (2004) once more, policy learning is important particularly in the process of incorporating European level policies 'in the logic of domestic... discourse, political structures and public policies' (p.3). Thus, adaptation is seen here as an essential part of Europeanisation, rather than its obstacle.

### **2.3. The concept of policy learning**

A clear emphasis on policy learning in the policy literature emerged in the 1980s, stemming from 'a cognitive turn in policy analysis' (Borrás, 2011: p.726).

Around two decades ago, it was predicted that policy learning was 'on the verge of becoming a key element in contemporary theory ...of policy making' (Hall, 1993: p.276). Policy learning has gained momentum in the literature by drawing the attention of many scholars (e.g., March and Olsen, 1989; Freeman, 2007; Zarkin, 2008; Radaelli & Dunlop, 2013). However, there is still a terminological diversity among scholars who study similar policy processes, such as learning, transfer, translation, diffusion (Marsh & Sharman, 2009). There are, arguably, three main perspectives on the relationship between policy learning and other policy processes.

First, policy learning is seen as a *component* of some bigger process of policy change. In particular, learning along with borrowing are believed to constitute a two-fold nature of transfer, according to Steiner-Khamsi (2002). Similarly, learning is seen by Marsh and Sharman (2009) as one of four mechanisms of policy transfer and diffusion. The other three mechanisms, according to these scholars, are: competition, coercion and mimicry.

Second, policy learning is also approached as a process that has *equal* weight to other processes. Learning is, for example, positioned alongside diffusion, transfer and translation, and it is claimed to be interdependent with them (Stone, 2012). In addition, there have been recent attempts to integrate the notions of policy learning and transfer based on their similarities (Borrás, 2011).

Finally, policy learning is viewed as an *umbrella term* for all other policy processes. Specific examples of this idea are the claims that policy learning involves transfer (Grin & Loeber, 2007), and that learning is a source of diffusion (Heikkila & Gerlak, 2013). There are also general arguments such as the one by Zarkin (2008), who states that all policy-making processes are associated with policy learning.

There are, of course, some sceptics who are alert to the idea about the all-encompassing policy learning perspective – that everything in a policy context represents learning in some way. Thus, the identification of the limits of learning became a priority for some authors. They argue that mimicry and copying do not involve learning (May, 1992; Heikkila & Gerlak, 2013). However, absolute copying and mimicry is argued by other authors not to be plausible in practice at all because different contexts shape the implementation of the same policy differently (Steiner-Khamsi, 2004; Peck, 2011). The lack of evidence for identifying what cannot be regarded as learning supports the credibility of the perspective that learning is associated with many other policy processes, and that learning plays the central role in the policy context.

The specific meaning of the notion of policy learning has been under-elaborated in the existing literature. A common understanding regarding the meaning of policy learning is probably assumed to exist. This assumption might rest upon an everyday understanding of the word *learning*, which is associated with schooling or other training. So a learning process is commonly understood as the acquisition of knowledge and skills in some area. While it might be true and applicable to policy learning, such an understanding is superficial. Learning in the policy context is a much more nuanced phenomenon, and the importance of its definition should not be overlooked. The meaning of policy learning is key to understanding how it can be studied.

Borrás (2011) calls attention to the need to define policy learning, and presents an account of the cases when the term is explained in the literature. For example, policy learning is described as a 'tendency for some policy decisions to be made on the basis of knowledge and past experiences and knowledge-based judgments as to future expectations' (Borrás, 2011: p.727, citing Bennett and Howlett, 1992). In a second example, policy learning is a sequence of '...relatively enduring alternations of thought or behavioural intentions that result from experience and/or new information and that are concerned with the attainment or revision of policy objectives' (Borrás, 2011: p.727, citing Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, 1999).

These definitions demonstrate that the main idea of policy learning is updating policy ideas on the basis of the association of new information and pre-existing knowledge. The combination of both presupposes the preservation of something that existed before, and the introduction of innovations. It is important now to look in detail at what makes the so-called 'old' and 'new' in policy learning.

Such a dichotomy here – 'the old' and 'the new' – might seem to be simplistic at first glance. The reality, of course, is quite complex and these two categories are intertwined at various points of time to different degrees in different ways. For analytical purposes, however, it is important to make a distinction between the two in order to understand later how they might interact in policy learning.

### **2.3.1. Path-dependence and change**

Path-dependency (or policy continuity), and change (or innovation) tend to be addressed in a lot of policy literature as conflicting powers in policy development in general. This is similar to how post-Soviet Europeanisation is viewed – change hindered by the conventions established in the past.

*Path-dependency* is a dynamic process, the progress of which is primarily governed by its own history. It induces establishments to resist 'wholesale changes at any given moment' (Boas, 2007: p.35). Path-dependency is commonly explained with the help of an example of the QWERTY keyboard – the standard English language computer keyboard. This device is resistant to transformations largely because of the impossibility to incrementally rearrange the layout of keys (Koch, Eisend, & Petermann, 2009). For instance, changing the layout of the keys would mean swapping over the keys but still keeping the old keys in the keyboard. Despite the special rearrangement, the same keys remain because of the established alphabet, numbers and other conventional keys. Similarly to this, policy contexts are resistant to change because of certain pre-ordained structures. A determining role of the past in policy settings is advanced by a number of scholars. For instance, Hall (1993) claims that the policy context responds 'less directly to [current] social and economic conditions than it does to the consequences of past policies' (p.277). Likewise, Cairney (2011) states that a policy process is 'more about dealing with the legacies of past decisions than departing incrementally from them' (p.214). So path-dependence is not the absence of development, but rather it is the development that follows some pre-established norms.

While 'the old' is usually presented in the policy literature as path-dependence, 'the new' is mainly associated with policy *change*. It means the departure from the established arrangements. In general, policy literature sees change as something that would happen rapidly if it was not hindered by path-dependency. However, in most of the cases it is. The moments that do enable change are called 'tipping points' at which the decision to make policy innovation is made (Marsh & Sharman, 2009: p.269). Catalytic instances for policy change are also termed 'policy windows' or 'windows of opportunity' (Steiner-Khamsi, 2006: p.670). These moments play a primary role in policy learning in terms of making certain opportunities available and making them accepted in the policy context.

Path-dependence and change represent the nature of the old and the new that the concept *policy learning* draws upon. The common perspective that sees path-dependence and change as two opposing forces does not analyse how they link together in policy learning. This perspective is countered by only a few sources that attempt to bring path-dependence and policy change into a more sustained dialogue (e.g., Schickler, 2001; Thelen, 2003; Boas, 2007). The discussion below explains this perspective with an intention to further apply it to the analysis of the Bologna reform in Ukraine as a case of post-Soviet Europeanisation.

### 2.3.2. Layering

According to Thelen (2003), most of the literature that invokes the conflict between path-dependence and change is based on the punctuated equilibrium model, which emphasises brief moments of openness of policy establishments to the acknowledgement of new ideas. These moments are then followed by the adherence to the previous conventions. Thelen (2003) acknowledges that the punctuated equilibrium model was a crucial step towards the development of a vision that path-dependency and change are interlinked. This perspective, however, was advanced on the basis of the idea that path-dependency and change are two opposing forces. The author argues for the need to develop a new approach that would recognise punctuated equilibrium and at the same time the idea that path-dependency and change are not at conflict but rather that they conflate with each other in policy learning.

Schickler (2001), Thelen (2003) and Boas (2007) worked on the development of such an approach. They emphasise the need to find out what it is that involves both path dependence and change, and how exactly they can develop in a dialogue. For instance, Thelen (2003) discusses the case of the development of the British House of Lords. It has exhibited strong residual power over the years. However, this establishment is not the same now as it was a couple of decades ago. It was not changed in an instance, and neither has it completely followed 'the path.'

*Layering* is a process that incorporates both path-dependence and change (Thelen, 2003). The concept of *layering* suggests a gradual incremental renegotiation of some elements of a policy system while leaving some of them unchanged – so changes are accumulated on the basis of some of the conventions that were initially left unchanged (Thelen, 2003). Layering occurs when establishments are not willing or, more likely, are incapable of radical transformations or when they simply do not attempt to change completely (Boas, 2007).

The development of the United States Congress is presented as an example of layering by Schickler (2001). A radical transformation in it, according to the author, was impossible. New competing groups of policy actors could not manage to propel instant radical transformations by making certain old structures suit their interests. The innovations were accumulated gradually by the groups on the basis of the established conventions. The role of the United States Congress has been changing along its altering relationships with other bodies of state government. In general, the Congress has kept its main policy-making responsibilities. However, at the same time, it has been gradually losing some of its former power. One of the

reasons for this is because American presidency has been developing into a more dominant force.

There are many other similar examples in the policy learning literature that does not rely on the concept of *layering*. Instead, this literature discusses path-dependence and change as conflicting powers (e.g., Hall, 1993; Levada, 2008; Malle, 2009; Spechler & Spechler, 2009). Moreover, such a discussion is a typical way of analysing the Bologna reform in various contexts. The next Chapter will analyse in more detail how the residue of different higher education conventions in the Bologna-participating countries is often viewed as an obstacle towards reform. It will also be explained and exemplified how change in higher education tends to be treated as an achievement in eventually overcoming the barrier – the past. This literature does not recognise that path-dependence and change do connect in many cases of policy development through layering, and that they are both essential building components of the reform process. Changes might vary in their scope and speed of accumulation (Boas, 2007), and thus, learning about Bologna in different countries might be more or less transformative at a certain time.

### **2.3.3. Messiness and productive nature of collective learning**

Beside the issues around the relationship between path-dependence and change, some policy learning literature also discusses the messiness as well as productive and collective nature of policy learning. It is important to review this literature to suggest that layering, as a policy learning mechanism, may be a messy and, at the same time, productive process, as it is exercised by multiple policy actors.

Policy learning represents a combination of contributions from different policy actors – thus, one could gather that policy learning has a *collective* nature. Such *collective*, or in other terms – *shared*, *distributed* or *horizontal governing*, or *governance*, is now opposed to more traditional centralised legislative methods that are termed *the hard approach* (Delfani, 2013). The traditional hierarchical model of control in the states – on the national scale – has weakened substantially. A ‘more cooperative mode where state and non-state actors participate in mixed networks’ is at the heart of a contemporary fluid and shared governing (Enders, 2004: p.372).

According to Enders (2004), nation-states have experienced a shift in governing modes. Policy-makers learn jointly (and work) as so-called bricoleurs because they ‘piece together’ information from different sources to develop policies (Freeman, 2007). Besides policy-makers, the literature also recognises practitioners as active participants in policy learning, and contributors to the development of



policy ideas. For instance, the practice of policy might be often steered by what Cairney (2011) calls 'street-level bureaucracy' (p.214). It stands for a shift in policy-makers' ideas when exercised by practitioners. Such a conceptualisation of policy learning partially blurs the line between policy-makers and practitioners. So policy learning is not an abstraction that precedes the implementation of policy in practice – policy is something that is continuously shaped.

*Governance* is the concept that, arguably, also explains the management of different matters on the international scale. It is so because of the participation of country representatives and various stakeholders in the main international governing establishments, such as the European Commission. On the international scale, shared governing has its specifics. It is usually associated with the terms *soft power* or the *open method of coordination* (Young, 2010; Delfani, 2013). These terms mean a governing approach based on the identification, deliberation and dissemination of common objectives and best practices, as well as the absence of punishment for the failure to fulfil commitments. The open method of coordination tends to be used in governing different international matters such as education (Grek et al., 2011). Moreover, soft power at the international scale has partially reduced the power of the states in directing their domestic matters (Grek et al., 2011), but it is still too early to disregard the authority that the states have to steer the development of their domestic contexts, as well as to shape the international policy scale itself.

Policy learning is a *productive* process. More specifically, Freeman (2006) states that 'Policy does not exist somewhere else in the finished form, ready to be looked at and learned from, but it is finished or produced in the act of looking and learning. Learning is the output of a series of communications, not its input; in this sense it is generated rather than disseminated' (p.379). The author further argues that policy learning 'is not simply an interpretation act, a process of registering and taking account of the world; it is, in a fundamental way, about creating the world' (p.382). This means that meaning of policy may emerge through layering.

Since learning is more of a production and creation than reproduction, it is unlikely to always follow some pre-established order of states. There is, of course, some literature that does recognise such a pre-established order of stages. For example, Phillips and Ochs (2003) offer a model of international policy borrowing (or learning) in education with an explicit order of stages: cross-national attraction, decision-making, implementation and internalisation or indigenisation. Levin (2001) proposes a similar order of stages in policy learning – origins, adoption, implementation, outcomes. However, the idea that policy learning follows certain

stages and arrives to some ending point is not well supported in other more extensive literature (e.g., Bowe, Ball, & Gold, 1992).

Policy learning is very often a *messy* process too. There are claims that explicitly acknowledge the 'messiness of policy making' (Freeman, Griggs, & Boaz, 2011: p.130) and the 'bedlam' nature of policy learning (March & Olsen, 1989: p.12).

Policy learning is complex and organic. Policy design and policy implementation cannot be easily distinguished. Thus, learning in the policy context is unlikely to follow what Trowler (2001) calls 'a rational-purposeful model' (p.1). For one thing, the policy process and its effects in practice, in other words – on the ground, tend to differ from what is planned by policy initiators. This tendency is characterised as 'loose coupling' by Trowler (2001: p.3) because of an insecurely coupled relationship between the plan and how it is implemented.

Such loose ties between them are not caused simply by what happens on the ground. Policy initiators might also steer policy effects in a direction that was not initially chosen by them or their predecessors. It might be done with a specific purpose, or it might just happen in the swirl of multiple activities running at the same time (March & Olsen, 1989). Purposeful (intended) diversion away from the declared by concealing real political goals or changes under a different label in the first place is termed as 'window dressing' (March & Olsen, 1989). The difference between plans and how they are put into practice can also be generated by the specifics of policy initiators' learning. Decision-makers might 'ignore information they have, ask for more information, and then ignore the new information when it is available' (March & Olsen, 1989: p.11, citing Feldman & March, 1981).

The idea behind 'loose coupling' sometimes makes a platform for speculating about policy failure. For example, the discrepancy between policy goals and how the policy practice actually develops means poor implementation, according to Ali (2006). A similar idea can be traced in the claim that policy learning is a sequence of trials and errors (May, 1992; Sonnichsen, 2000; Freeman, 2007). This means that innovations happen through learning from the sequence of failures in matching policy goals. However, seeing the incompatibility between policy goals and reality as poor implementation, error or failure might be quite superficial. The productive and creative nature of policy learning by definition presupposes that policy plans are worked out and reworked on the go. Moreover, the chaotic nature of policy learning is reinforced by changing reasons for which different actors, including the initiators of the policy, get involved in learning. The original intentions of the actors alter over time because their wider preferences are

transformed in unstable environments (March & Olsen, 1989). So conceptualising policy development as striving to match original policy goals would not be productive. Doing so would counter the very nature of policy learning – its messy continuous formation.

Policy learning is messy largely because policy actors deal with uncertainty. Ambiguity is always the case in policy learning because actors find it difficult to evaluate potential outcomes of previously untried alternatives (Radaelli & Dunlop, 2013). Policy learning has been characterised as ‘collective puzzlement’ (Hall 1993: p.275). The degree of uncertainty defines how active policy actors are in their search for new knowledge. So the higher the uncertainty, the more active policy actors are in new information acquisition, and the less likely they are to wait for knowledge to be produced and passed to them by external sources (Zarkin, 2008). More specifically, a peak point of national internal puzzlement, which countries experience at a particular time, makes an important incentive for the national policy actors to engage in learning from the international environment (Steiner-Khamsi, 2006; Burch, 2007). The appearance of such an incentive is associated with the ‘tipping point’ for change (Marsh & Sharman, 2009: p.269), described earlier. The discussion of layering suggests that there might be multiple ‘tipping points’ in the process of policy learning.

The alternation of the reasons why different policy actors are involved in the continuous learning is also driven by changes in how free they are to make decisions. King (2010) argues that ‘freely-made choices create structures which, in turn, constrain agents’ decision-making’ (p.587, citing Giddens, 1984). Other scholars do not even recognise the case of purely voluntary and rational choices to learn even at the beginning of learning. Voluntary learning and coercion are imagined to be fluid endeavors, so the reasons for policy learning can never be either pure voluntary engagement or coercion (Chakroun, 2010; Bissell, Lee, & Freeman, 2011).

So policy learning should be viewed as a process that unfolds through the fluidity between path-dependency and innovations that shape each other in a way. Path-dependency and change become interlinked through messy, productive and collective layering.

## **2.4. Studying policy learning**

There is no single established guide for studying policy learning in general,

as well as specifically in post-Soviet higher education. A number of scholars state that most of the empirical research on policy learning remains focused on the implications of policy learning, rather than on considering its process (Hall, 1993; Raffe & Spours, 2007; Freeman, 2008; Borrás, 2011; Radaelli & Dunlop, 2013). This criticism could be partially counterpoised by a blurred boundary between a policy learning process and its implications or effects. However, at the same time, if such a rough distinction is made, the existing literature suggests mainly how to study the effects of policy learning at a particular point of time. A robust guide for looking at the dynamics of policy learning over time is missing.

Only a general suggestion about how to study policy learning is provided by Freeman (2008). The author emphasises that learning can be studied by observing the discussions at policy meetings, such as various workshops and conferences. The author distinguishes a number of phases (stages) of learning at meetings. Studying policy learning at meetings might be productive. However, the idea of stages of learning singled out in Freeman's (2008) study cannot be reconciled with the idea that policy learning is messy, as explained earlier. Therefore other ways of studying this process are needed.

A question-based framework, suggested by Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) and developed more in their further work (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000), could be used here. These scholars deal with the concept of *policy transfer*. They define it as 'a process in which knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions etc. in one time and/or place is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements and institutions in another time and/or place' (Dolowitz and Marsh, 1996: p.344). According to the authors, the process of policy transfer could be studied with a help of the following questions: *Why does transfer happen? Who is involved in it? What is transferred? From where? What degrees and constrains of transfer are there? How can policy transfer be demonstrated? How does transfer lead to policy failure?*

It is worth looking at the appraisal and criticism of this framework before I explain how it can be applied to the study of policy learning in Bologna. On one hand, the framework has been quite influential (Dussauge-Laguna, 2012), and its founders acknowledge that 'many authors have used our framework in their empirical research' (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2012: p.339). For instance, the framework has been used for the analysis of the Bologna reform in the Moldovan context (Cusnir, 2008). The questions *what, why, who, to what degree* were used for this purpose.

On the other hand, even though a number of researchers have relied on the framework, some of them are criticised for adopting a positivist stance, as argued by Benson and Jordan (2011). As a response to this, Dolowitz and Marsh (2012) postulate that the positivist approach should not be discredited, and that after all, their framework does not predetermine a positivist research paradigm if a researcher does not identify with it. Their framework is heuristic, and 'a heuristic does not reify a 'reality'; rather it offers a way of approaching a subject that can provide a basis for empirical investigation' (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2012: p.343). Moreover, the authors of the framework claim that their framework is not a theory because 'it stands or falls in relation to whether others find it useful for understanding/explaining aspects of the policy-making process' (p.339). A further critical point, which is not covered in the literature, is the potentially fragmented picture of the analysis of a policy process that the framework can yield. While its questions seem to provide a tool to organise information about a policy process, it might be impossible to discuss the issues associated with one question without touching on the issues associated with other questions. Unnecessary repetition might result, as in the study by Cusnir (2008). So when using this framework, more general questions can be identified that would incorporate others in a way.

The following statements show that more research that would use this framework is needed. The questions posed in it have been answered to varying degrees, 'leaving plenty of room for new research to bloom' (Benson & Jordan, 2011: p.373). So the framework is still useful because 'there is a lot left to understand about how, why, where and with what consequences' policies are developed (McCann & Ward, 2012: p.325). In addition to this, Gilbert (2008), who discusses the importance of theories and conceptual frameworks in general, states that different combinations of theories and concepts can inspire novel approaches to analysis.

This framework seems to be a promising tool for studying policy learning in the post-Soviet Bologna reform. Despite the fact that Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) use the term *policy transfer*, their framework can be applied to studying policy learning in higher education context. This applicability can be based on two main reasons. First, it was argued earlier that *policy learning* can be an umbrella term for other policy processes, including transfer. Second, the heuristic nature of the framework, mentioned above, allows to seek for new ways in which this framework can be used. Theoretical considerations about policy learning, coupled with the adapted question-based approach, could help to examine how the established conventions are combined with new information in the Bologna reform in Ukraine.

It was argued earlier that seeking answers to all the questions, which are

suggested by Dolowitz and Marsh (2000), could eventually provide a fragmented picture of policy learning. The task now is to choose what facets of policy learning would be the most productive for the investigation of how the process of the Bologna reform has taken place in Ukraine. Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) propose eight questions, but only a couple of them seem to dovetail well with the ideas around policy learning argued above. The questions ‘who is involved in transfer’ and ‘what is transferred’ are about the actors and the actual policy ideas/instruments. These two issues are the most concrete for the investigation, as acknowledged by the authors of the framework. They also seem to be more general than some of the others. This suggests that the process of policy learning in Bologna can be studied through looking at higher education policy actors in Ukraine and the instruments they have been developing.

#### **2.4.1. Actors**

Law and Glover (2000) suggest that early policy literature is mainly concerned with central state policy-making establishments as the only actors of policy learning. A more recent literature, however, points out that, beside state policy-making actors, other actors are also important – such as public agencies (Burch, 2007), interest groups (Heikkila & Gerlak, 2013) and higher education institutions (Healey, 2008). These non-state groups of actors are perhaps the ones that could represent the civil sector or civil society. Essentially, the civil society is a constellation of government independent individuals and organisations that manifest the will of citizens to the state (Linden, 2008), and open up a space for the negotiation of common interests (Stepanenko, 2006).

The importance of analysing multiple actors that are involved in policy learning was acknowledged by March and Olsen (1989). Cairney (2011) took this idea further by explaining that there are always multiple policy actors involved in policy learning, and no single actor can possess all knowledge about the policy. This suggests that the analysis of the development of as many actors as possible and the analysis of the relationships amongst them is beneficial for understanding the process of policy reforms. As argued earlier, post-Soviet contexts are characterised by the existence of two main groups of actors – ‘veto players’ who oppose change in practice, and those who advocate it. The focus on a range of policy actors might enable the identification of the actors in each group.

It is important to note that all of the authors who analyse policy actors and who are cited above use the term *actors* in the meaning of whole establishments, rather than individuals within them. I share this perspective too. I also recognise the

idea that certain individuals within policy actors may play some special roles in the policy learning process.

More recent policy literature has demonstrated an increasing interest in the role of individuals in shaping the process of policy learning. The terms *brokers* and *bridges* denote key individuals who act across nation states or particular establishments, and who can occupy both central and marginal positions there (Freeman, 2006; Steiner-Khamsi, 2006). The term *policy brokers* is also applied to the analysis of how certain people mediate and interpret the demands for data from international actors to the countries, such as in the case of the European Commission and the member states of the EU (Grek et al., 2011). The mobility of the individuals, who perform the roles of policy brokers, and their cross-membership at different establishments, complicates the trajectory of the flow of policy ideas.

All of these ideas about policy actors are crucial for the investigation of the development of higher education actors and their roles in the process of the Bologna reform in Ukraine. Different groups of state and non-state establishments partaking in the Bologna reform, the relations amongst them, and their brokering opportunities will be considered.

#### **2.4.2. Instruments**

The term *instruments* is used in the policy literature with three connotations. First, it denotes the ways in which policy learning happens (Hall, 1993). These are the means or mechanisms of how policy learning develops – such as learning from the past, from abroad, from the actual implementation of the policy.

The second meaning of the *instrument*, is a policy project associated with the implementation of different ideas for a certain broad goal (Grek, 2009). There are many examples of such initiatives that are referred to as *instruments*. For instance, the United Nations has been coordinating the project entitled *Education for All*. Its overarching goal is the achievement of the universal primary education. Another example is *the Programme for International Student Assessment*, commonly known as PISA. It has been coordinated by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to assess 15-year-old school pupils' performance in mathematics, science and reading. The main goal of this project is to obtain data about pupils' problem solving skills and to provide a platform for the improvement of education policies in the participatory countries. The project *the Bologna Process* which is the focus in this thesis could be also referred to as the instrument for building the European Higher Education Area, according to the second interpretation of the term *the policy instrument*.

The third meaning of the *instrument*, which is used much more frequently, is narrower. It is a policy idea – policy itself (e.g., May, 1992; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Radaelli and Dunlop, 2013). It is also explained as an endeavor associated not just with policy texts, but also with how they are negotiated and practiced (Fimyar, 2008).

I adopt the latter ‘policy ideas’ connotation of instruments for the study of the Bologna reform process in Ukraine. According to the logic of this definition of *the instrument*, the Bologna Process is the project which comprises a number of instruments – policy ideas. They are generally referred to as ‘action lines’ (European Higher Education Area, 2014), and they will be explained in the next Chapter. It is important to consider what policy actors learn about in the process of the Bologna reform, or in other words, which instruments they develop. Bologna instruments are viewed in this study as joint products of all the actors that participate in policy learning.

## 2.5. Conclusion

Europeanisation encompasses various processes of constructing, spreading and institutionalising certain procedures, norms and rules that are consolidated at the European level and integrated in the domestic domain. Europeanisation is most commonly associated with the development of the EU that has had its pre-history since before the Maastricht Treaty. However, Europeanisation beyond the EU, such as in the post-Soviet space, is also an evident phenomenon. The literature argues that Europeanisation processes in the two regions influence each other.

The difference between the ideas from the European level and the post-Soviet domestic context is significant. The literature about post-Soviet countries sees the development of these ideas as a struggle between Europeanisation and post-Soviet legacies. Europeanisation in this literature is defined as change; while the influence of the post-Soviet legacies is seen as an obstacle that hinders it. Based on the claim of Wolczuk (2004) that Europeanisation should be seen as an area of inquiry, I see post-Soviet Europeanisation as an under-researched area. Thus, I aim to explore post-Soviet Europeanisation through the perspective of policy learning, specifically through the idea of layering.

Layering does not presuppose mutual exclusion between path-dependence and change, but rather the fruitful mutual development of both. It implies a gradual change of certain policy aspects and the retaining of others. The development of the



links between path-dependence and change in layering is a highly messy process. Multiple actors participate in learning, and they create policy as they learn. There are no distinct stages of learning, and the line between policy-makers and practitioners is often blurred.

These theoretical considerations around policy learning guide this research into the Bologna reform in Ukraine which is seen as a case of post-Soviet Europeanisation. As such, the reform is viewed here as policy learning that has the characteristics outlined above (productive combination of path-dependence and change, messiness and collective nature). The decision to focus on the development of higher education actors and instruments in this investigation was inspired by the conceptual framework suggested by Dolowitz and Marsh (1996).

A methodological approach that stems from all of the theoretical considerations outlined above is discussed in the fourth Chapter, after explaining Bologna in more detail in Chapter 3 and identifying further gaps that my study aims to fill (specifically in the area of Bologna).

# Chapter 3

## The Bologna Process

### 3.1. Introduction

This Chapter reviews the literature which analyses the Bologna process. It also discusses the gaps in the literature that this study attempts to address. The Bologna-related literature is a growing field of inquiry that touches upon a number of issues. Notwithstanding this diversity, two major thematic foci can be singled out.

One of them is about the international domain. This type of research looks at the meaning of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), which is developed through Bologna, and the rationales behind instigating and promoting Bologna internationally, and investigates the international governing of Bologna and the stakeholders involved. Additionally, this research focuses on the issues around the convergence of higher education systems and regionalisation in the EHEA, as well as the effects of the EHEA beyond its borders.

The other research direction is focused on the Bologna reforms in national contexts. These are mostly implementation studies. Most of them are preoccupied with the identification of the achievements and challenges of national higher education Bologna reforms. Limited attention has been given to the analysis of the process of the Bologna reform, the area that is the main focus of this study. Bologna reforms in post-Soviet countries seem to be under-elaborated in the previous research in comparison to other countries in the EHEA.

These two bodies of literature are related because of the fluidity between the international and national domains. This literature is reviewed below in order to provide a background for the analysis of the reform process in the post-Soviet context such as Ukraine.

### 3.2. Bologna on the international scale

This section reviews the literature that focuses on the Bologna Process on the international scale. It first examines how the EHEA has been developing, what its meaning has been, and how Bologna became the biggest higher education initiative

in Europe. Then, international governing of the Bologna Process is discussed, and convergence and regionalisation issues in the EHEA are analysed.

### **3.2.1. The meaning of the EHEA**

The EHEA, since before the beginning of its formal creation, has been developing through the harmonisation of higher education systems with the help of a set of action lines; through the facilitation of its economic competitiveness in the world; and through the facilitation of a European identity in the growing European space.

The Bologna Conference of 1999 is a starting point for most literature sources that explain the beginning of the Bologna Process and the development of the EHEA (e.g., Keeling, 2006; Kehm, 2010; Teichler, 2012). Tomusk (2008) acknowledges this too and points out the importance of looking at the pre-history of the EHEA. The author argues that the pre-history of the EHEA is vital to understand the premise of the development of the EHEA. Scott (2012) seems to be the richest source about pre-EHEA developments. The author points out that “the Sorbonne declaration” is the ‘immediate prequel’ of the beginning of the construction of the EHEA in 1999 in Bologna. “The Sorbonne declaration” was signed by Italy, Germany, France and the United Kingdom in 1998 at an anniversary of the Sorbonne University. These countries called upon other European states to join them in building the EHEA.

Scott (2012) explains that some commonalities in higher education in western European countries had existed even before “the Sorbonne declaration.” Universities had a common ‘intellectual culture’ and the recognition of their ‘social mission’ (p.4). However, there were administrative and legal differences in the way they functioned. Thus, Scott (2012) states that ‘the “action lines” that have emerged from Bologna have always had to be negotiated within terms of a delicate balance between Europe-wide initiatives and the prerogatives of nation states’ (p.4). Specifically, there was an active development and enactment of joint academic mobility programmes even before a formal establishment of the European Union (EU) through the Maastricht Treaty in 1993 (Grek, 2008; Dunkel, 2009; Scott, 2012).

The programmes entitled *ERASMUS* and *TEMPUS* have also played a part in paving the way towards the agreement to build the EHEA. The *ERASMUS* Programme was established in 1987 with the aim of supporting student mobility. Almost a decade of success of this programme contributed to the formation of the basis for the EHEA (Powell & Finger, 2013). More specifically, the European credit transfer system – a Bologna action line nowadays – was introduced in the framework of the *ERASMUS* Programme as a means to support student mobility

through credit transfer (Weiss & Egea-Cortines, 2008). A decade later, it was taken up to be used in the Bologna Process as one of its action lines (“Bologna declaration,” 1999). A similar contribution was made by the work of the TEMPUS Programme that was established in 1990 by the European Commission. The programme aimed to promote and support the modernisation of higher education in Western and Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and the Mediterranean region, mainly through university cooperation projects and individual mobility grants (Keeling, 2006).

The idea of the diploma supplement – another current Bologna instrument – was made explicit a year before the first pre-Bologna international ministerial conference in Sorbonne. The diploma supplement was established by the Lisbon Recognition Convention in 1997 as a final transcript of grades and credits that students had to obtain after their studies. It became a Bologna action line from the onset of the Bologna Process with the aim to promote the mobility and employability of graduates (Voegtler, 2014).

All of these pre-Bologna developments created a foundation for the construction of the EHEA with easily readable and comparable degrees through a range of action lines – or, in other terms, instruments. The Bologna action lines have been negotiated at the international ministerial conferences that invite the delegations of the Bologna member- and aspirant-states. These conferences take place every two-three years.

The lists of the action lines presented by different scholars vary. This is not surprising because the action lines tend to be expanded and regrouped in all the international ministerial documents. The Bologna Process, and hence, the EHEA, are presented in some studies as a ‘moving target’ because each consequent ministerial conference tends to add new elements (Kehm, 2010; Teichler, 2012).

Here are the action lines that are analysed in the literature, and a brief explanation of how they are commonly defined:

- *the credit system* is a means for organising the measurement of students’ workload in credits, their accumulation and transfer;
- *the system of study cycles* are the levels of higher education, such as Bachelor’s, Master’s and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD);
- *the diploma supplement* is a document that contains all

the information about the qualification of the graduate and the establishment in which they were acquired;

- *the framework of qualifications* is a systematic way of describing the qualifications that correspond to each level of education – in the case of Bologna, only higher education levels are considered;

- *quality assurance* is a complex issue with multiple parameters that pertain to external and internal review of higher education institutions;

- *lifelong learning* is the initiative to promote a self-motivated continuous pursuit of formal and informal learning;

- *student-centred learning* is the mode of study process organisation in which students set the pace for the content of what is learnt and activities used for that.

- *mobility* is the movement of students and graduates to another institutions inside or outside their home country to study or work temporarily (European Higher Education Area, 2014).

A number of scholars suggest that Bologna is becoming the biggest and most influential higher education initiative in Europe (Davies, 2008; Reichert, 2010; Scott, 2012; Vögtle & Martens, 2014). They explain that Bologna encapsulates previous European higher education developments and further develops them through action lines. The Bologna Process seems to act like a snowball in the EHEA, attaching other initiatives to itself as it develops. This is implied by Dobbins and Knill (2009) who state that ‘...it is often difficult to disentangle Bologna from... related convergence-promoting factors... These include, to mention a few, cooperation with the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and World Bank’ (p.398).

It is worth reviewing briefly the link between the Bologna Process and the Lisbon Strategy. In brief, this Strategy is a plan for the development of the economy and an internationally competitive market in Europe (Huisman & Van Der Wende, 2004; Reichert, 2010; Capano & Piattoni, 2011). Some of the ideas of the Lisbon Strategy can be now traced in the objectives of the EHEA. Apart from the implementation of the action lines in the participating countries, the EHEA also aims to be a competitive knowledge economy in the world, and to facilitate a European identity and citizenship (Corbett, 2011).

The knowledge economy is the economy in which knowledge is the driver of economic growth (Brine, 2006). This idea was precisely an overarching aim of the

Lisbon Strategy: 'The [European] Union must become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion' (Brine, 2006: p.653, citing CEC, 2000: p.3).

The economisation of the EHEA that stems from the Lisbon Agenda is emphasised in other literature too. Specifically, the market became seen as one of key players that shape higher education internationally, along with governments and universities (Weiler, 2000). As a result, there is need for new highly skilled flexible European workers who can contribute to making Europe competitive and whom higher education has to prepare (Brine, 2006). The term *Europe* in the EHEA was initially associated with the EU. The EHEA itself at the beginning included only the countries of the EU. However, the EHEA became open to the involvement of states that were not members of the EU. Therefore, the term *European* in the EHEA is now associated with the whole area covered by the EHEA.

The emphasis on economic competitiveness of Europe that could be enhanced through the harmonisation of higher education systems was also related to another objective of the EHEA, which is the promotion of a European citizenship. The idea of academic and graduate mobility is seen by Papatsiba (2009) as key to the promotion of European citizenship and the competitiveness of the EHEA. Importantly, the discussions of the image of the student and the image of the citizen in the literature about Bologna coincide. Flexibility and mobility are now seen as essential characteristics of both the student and the citizen (Brine, 2006; Papatsiba, 2009). The relationship between the development of citizens' and students' identities is justified by Zgaga (2009) who claims that 'citizenship is a concept inherent to the idea of the university and the role of higher education' (p.177). The connection between the development of citizens' and students' identities is also implied by Papatsiba (2009) who claims that flexible and mobile citizens are formed through academic mobility programmes.

Such a combination of different higher education aims in the EHEA prompted Veiga (2012) to pose the following question: 'Could it be that the shift in policy discourse extended the scale of Bologna, thereby making it difficult to delineate clearly what in effect Bologna policy was(is) and what it was(is) not?' (p.389). The discussion above suggests that it is true. Hence, the Bologna reforms in the countries taking part in the EHEA make an interesting site for research.

The literature review above suggests that Bologna on the international scale, and thus, the EHEA, have been focused on the following: the harmonisation of

higher education systems through the evolving action lines; the facilitation of the economic competitiveness of the EHEA in the world; and the facilitation of a European identity in the growing European space. It is now important to analyse through what means such a focus of the EHEA has been established and maintained at the international scale.

### **3.2.2. 'Soft' power in the EHEA**

Joining the EHEA is a voluntary initiative for countries. It was mentioned in the previous section how more and more countries have been joining the EHEA in response to a call to do so at the Sorbonne Conference and a few other conferences that followed. Further conferences suggested more directions for the development of the EHEA. These conferences largely shaped the governing mode of the Bologna Process – the so-called open method of coordination, or 'soft' power in the EHEA (Fejes, 2006).

The soft power in the EHEA draws different actors together to work within it (Ravinet, 2008; LažEtić, 2010; Young, 2010; Delfani, 2013). On the international scale of the EHEA, the open method of coordination is based on voluntary participation. To encourage maintained commitment of Bologna countries and different stakeholders, benchmarking and stocktaking are used as incentives. Fejes (2006) argues that 'no longer is governing made through legislation. Instead, it is made through different techniques/tactics [the open method of coordination]' (p.224). This quote illustrates the distinction between the top-down and more shared horizontal governing, explained in the previous Chapter.

There are three main international governing actors in the EHEA. One of them is *the international Bologna Follow-up Group* that includes representatives of national Bologna Follow-up Groups (Voegtle, 2014). There are 48 national Bologna Follow-up Groups since it is the number of countries that are part of the EHEA. The international Bologna Follow-up Group supervises the progress of Bologna in the countries between the international ministerial conferences. It usually meets once every six months to set up working groups that deal specifically with certain action lines (European Higher Education Area, 2014).

The second international governing actor is *the Bologna Secretariat*, which is co-chaired by an EU country and a non-EU country. The Bologna Secretariat is responsible for cooperating with the international Bologna Follow-up Group in coordinating Bologna. Its remit also includes accepting and reviewing the implementation reports from the national Bologna Follow-up Groups before the

international ministerial conferences (Voegtle, 2014).

The third international governing actor is *the European Commission*. Voegtle (2014) equates its role in the Bologna Process to that of other international and non-governmental organisations that participate in Bologna. As such, the scholar does not consider the European Commission to be a governing actor for the Bologna Process. Many other authors do recognise the European Commission specifically as a governing actor in the EHEA. In particular, Dunkel (2009) and Telegina and Schwengel (2012) emphasise a growing role of the European Commission in Bologna. This involvement of the European Commission in the governing structures of the Bologna Process has facilitated the integration of 'the European higher education sector into the EU economic development strategy [the Lisbon Agenda explained earlier]' (Cemmel, 2007: p.251).

Apart from these three governing bodies, there is a number of international and non-governmental organisations that have been supporting the development of the EHEA since 2001. They currently include the Council of Europe, the European University Association, the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education, the European Students' Union, the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, the Education International and Pan-European Structure (Voegtle, 2014). Additionally, UNESCO European Centre for Higher Education is listed on the EHEA website (European Higher Education Area, 2014) as another international organisation in Bologna. All of these organisations are called Bologna *consultative members* on the EHEA website. They are also referred to as the Bologna international stakeholders by Terry (2010). These actors are responsible for taking stock of the implementation of the Bologna action lines in the countries and giving suggestions at the international ministerial conferences about further developments in the EHEA (Voegtle, 2014).

The emergence of governing bodies in Bologna, and an increasing involvement of different stakeholders, have been key in the development of 'soft' power on the international scale of the EHEA. This 'soft' power may be considered 'as powerful as direct control mechanisms' (Hudson, 2011: p.671). Nevertheless, some authors argue that the voluntary nature of Bologna places limits on how far the convergence of higher education system in the EHEA can go (Veiga, 2012).

### **3.2.3. Convergence and regionalisation in the EHEA**

The process of higher education convergence in the EHEA countries is discussed in the literature in relation to: Europeanisation (e.g., Silova, 2002; Vukasovic, 2013), globalisation (Chakroun, 2010), Westernisation (Knight, 2004),



internationalisation (Levin, 2001), modernisation (Dobbins & Knill, 2009), transnationalisation (Knight, 2004), harmonisation (Vögtle & Martens, 2014) and Bolongisation (Dunkel, 2009). The choice of the terms to denote convergence might depend on the interpretative framework of the authors. Figure 1 below shows the vast territory of the EHEA where convergence might have been happening. Monaco and San Marino are the only two states in this space that have not yet obtained membership in the EHEA.

Figure 1: The countries of the EHEA



Source: (European Higher Education Area, 2014)

The question about whether Bologna leads to the convergence of higher education systems in the EHEA seems to be one of the most common areas of research inquiry. The body of literature that is preoccupied with answering this question overlaps a great deal with the literature that looks at the implementation of Bologna in national contexts. Conclusions about whether convergence takes place are drawn usually from the analysis of whether the Bologna reforms in the EHEA countries have driven much change.

### 3.2.3.1. *Convergence in discourse only*

Some scholars maintain that while the discourse about higher education in the EHEA countries has converged, Bologna has not significantly affected practice. In particular, Novoa (2007) argues that although education issues are discussed in a similar way in different countries, it is an illusion to believe that different contexts deal with the same issues in practice. Similarly, Patrício, Engelsen, Tseng and Cate (2008) state that cooperation in the EHEA tends to be limited to a performance on 'the level of policy statements, information exchange and discussion' (p.598). Further, Reichert (2010) argues that the 'presentation of national situations has, in some cases... glossed over some higher education institutions' awkward facts to avoid national loss of face' (p.102). These ideas challenge the narratives about convergence that are now taken for granted (Fejes, 2006). Specifically, there might be

more convergence at the discursive plane and very limited convergence in practice. Further, Grek (2008) who considers education policies in Europe in general (including the Bologna Process) also states that in spite of all the discussions about harmonisation of education systems in Europe, national education systems have not changed substantially. One of the reasons for such policy continuity is perhaps a lack of readiness of the countries to invest time and funds in significant changes (Reichert, 2010).

### 3.2.3.2. *Convergence in practice*

Another group of scholars argue that convergence in practice does take place. This idea is presented in association with the discussion of the fear that the states experience because of the disappearance of some national peculiarities (Field, 2003; Lynggaard, 2011). The discussion of the loss of national distinctiveness implies the adjustment of the countries to some common model. More specifically, Moutsios (2013) argues that university autonomy was a characteristic feature of Western European countries, and a feature of the European-ness of their higher education. In the Bologna context, though, the author argues that Western European universities are losing their distinctiveness because university autonomy is being adopted by the countries that are located beyond Europe. Thus, Western European universities, according to Moutsios (2013), are losing their distinctiveness, just like universities in other parts of Europe that used to have very limited autonomy. Thus, the Bologna Process is positioned in this literature as a threat to the distinctiveness of national higher education systems.

### 3.2.3.3. *Convergence in certain regions in the EHEA*

There is also literature that acknowledges harmonisation in practice and, at the same time, takes a more differentiated perspective on the analysis of convergence. Many scholars state that the differences in cultural, historical and economic contexts of the countries allow various degrees of changes (Heinze & Knill, 2008; Pyykkö, 2008; Vukasovic, 2013). This idea is taken further by Zgaga (2009) to suggest the existence of at least four broad regions in the EHEA: Western Europe, Central-Eastern Europe, the post-Soviet space, and the Western Balkans. The author analyses particular contextual features of the last three groups of countries, which he calls *transitional*. The existence of these four regions in the EHEA can be also inferred from other studies, as shown below.

*Western European* countries as a region in the EHEA lack attention in the literature. Different Western European countries are, of course, analysed in the literature, as I will show in the next section. However, their discussion as a region in

the EHEA is not common. Oh (2008) and Vukasovic (2013) represent those few studies that do discuss Western Europe as a region. Oh (2008) discusses differences in the gains from Bologna in different EHEA countries that belong to the EU. The study concludes that Western European countries benefit more from the international cooperation, since they use the Bologna Process as a tool to strengthen the already established higher education traditions. Other EU countries, however, need to go through a significant transition before they can start strengthening their higher education systems. There is an implicit assumption in this study that the Western European countries are the founders of the ideas of the Bologna action lines. Vukasovic (2013) implies a similar idea by mentioning that while some countries managed to 'upload' their preferences to the international Bologna governing bodies, others, that joined the Bologna Process later, have been managing only to 'download' ideas. The idea that Western European countries did not have to go through big reforms in their higher education systems might actually be the reason why they, as a region in the EHEA, are not paid a lot of attention in the literature.

*The Central-Eastern European region*, according to Zgaga (2009), includes the former socialist countries in Europe that did not belong to the Soviet Union. Studies about this region emphasise that Bologna has been a means to address socio-economic interests of these countries and pave their way to join the EU (Huisman & Van Der Wende, 2004; Zgaga, 2009). Moreover, the Bologna reform in Central-Eastern Europe is analysed in detail as an element of wider political and social changes (Kozma, Rebau, & Ohidy, 2014). This means that Bologna has been used in this region not only as a higher education reform, but also as a tool for political actors to implement their wider agendas of power dynamics and socio-economic development. The studies about Bologna in Central-Eastern Europe also dwell on the challenges that these countries have encountered in reforming their higher education systems (Dobbins & Knill, 2009; Zgaga, 2009; Kozma, Rebau, & Ohidy, 2014).

*The Western Balkans* tend to be discussed separately from Central-Eastern European countries in Bologna because of a difference in the general contexts of these regions. The Western Balkans, unlike the Central-European countries, have been recently involved in military conflicts. The resulting economic and social crises shaped the role of the Bologna Process as a peace builder in the Western Balkans (Zgaga, 2009). An example of the research into Bologna in this region is the project entitled 'The Knowledge Base for Higher Education and Research in the Western Balkans.' It aims 'to gather and systematise information and data on higher education and research in the Western Balkan countries... and to act as a resource

centre for researchers, policy-makers, as well as other stakeholders, such as higher education institutions, students, general public etc.' (The Knowledge Base, 2015).

Research of *post-Soviet countries* is also focused on the contextual problems. The post-Soviet region in the EHEA includes 11 out of the 15 post-Soviet countries enumerated earlier in the thesis. Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan are not part of the EHEA (European Higher Education Area, 2014). Those states that belong to the EHEA find Bologna 'doubly challenging for post-Soviet countries with their very different education tradition and politics, constitution and culture contexts' (Karakhanyan, Van Veen and Bergen, 2012: p.65). Unlike the case of Central-Eastern European countries, the main reason for the post-Soviet states to be participating in Bologna is not related to the aspirations to join the EU (Zgaga, 2009; Heyneman & Skinner, 2014). In particular, Zgaga (2009) argues that 'it was not the EU accession that encouraged them; it was rather strong "getting together" with (West) European higher education and an awareness that keeping outside this movement can't contribute to the progress of a national system' (p.90).

While these four regions in the EHEA look relatively distinct, the boundaries among them may not be that clear-cut. There are some studies that blur the boundaries of these regions. One example is the study about the Bologna Process in Turkey (YağCi, 2010). The difficulty of placing Turkey into one of the four earlier discussed regions in the EHEA shows that the suggested regionalisation is very tentative. Another example of blurred boundaries of the regions is the discussion of Ukraine both as a post-Soviet and Central-Eastern European country in the study by Kozma, Rebau and Ohidy (2014). This also implies somewhat unclear boundaries between the four regions in the EHEA.

The existence of these regions and challenges in clearly demarcating their borders are important in considering how we can extrapolate the findings from the Ukrainian case to other cases. On one hand, Zgaga (2009) suggests that some similar changes might have been happening in higher education systems in the three groups of transnational countries (Central-Eastern Europe, post-Soviet area and Western Balkans). Moreover, the blurred boundaries among the regions in the EHEA suggest that Bologna reforms in all of these regions, despite some differing tendencies, might share similarities. On the other hand, there are differences in higher education systems among these regions and even among the countries within each of these regions. So seeing Bologna reforms as similar everywhere in the EHEA could be a simplification. Ukraine will be viewed mainly as a post-Soviet country, given almost a 70 year long history of Ukraine as a part of the Soviet Union and the existence of its strong legacies in Ukraine nowadays.

### **3.3. The national context: the Bologna reforms**

The literature review about the regionalisation in the EHEA has already shed some light on Bologna in the national contexts. It is important to review now the literature specifically about Bologna reforms in different countries. This analysis aims to show that the major focus of the literature about Bologna in different countries has been on the evaluation of Bologna implementation implications.

The studies about Bologna in different national contexts can be roughly divided into two groups. One of them consists of a plethora of studies that evaluate the extent to which the action lines have been implemented in the countries. The second group looks at how the process of Bologna reform has proceeded. It is, however, a relatively small group of studies, and thus, the process of Bologna reform needs more analysis. Apart from this, previous research about Bologna in Ukraine deals with similar issues as the studies in other countries. Research in the Ukrainian context is discussed in the last sub-section to provide a more integrated picture of the specific context of this research.

#### ***3.3.1. Implementation implications***

The most 'populated' body of literature includes numerous small-scale single country and comparative studies. They look at the extent to which the action lines have been implemented in various Bologna countries. They tend to provide a brief chronology of important milestones in the national reforms as a background of the research. The main emphasis, however, is on the success and failures in the implementation of the action lines. The queries that guide these studies could be summarised in such questions: whether Bologna is a 'bridge or fortress' (King, undated: p.1), or whether it is a 'motor or stumbling block' (Teichler, 2012: p.3) for the development of higher education systems in the countries. Most of these studies tend to evaluate the implementation of one action line in a single country or in several countries. These studies conclude that there are more challenges, associated with some contextual features, rather than achievements in national Bologna reforms. I will review separately success stories and problems, although some studies address both of these issues, positioning them as constraints to each other. These studies tend to view changes in higher education systems as an achievement, and non-changes as a problem. It is important to review this body of literature to understand what tends to be seen as the effects of path-dependence.

### *3.3.1.1. Achievements*

The success of the Bologna reforms is demonstrated in the literature in terms of the following issues. Cocosatu (2012) explains that the introduction of the diploma supplement made the information about different types of higher education institutions in Romania explicit, and that this information enhances students' prospects for further studies or employment. The effects of the development of the diploma supplement in Russia are explored in another study (Esyutina, Fearon, & Leatherbarrow, 2013). They are regarded as generally positive as well. Apart from this, another study argues that programmes that changed their curricula to comply with the Bologna study cycles benefitted from an increased demand in Portugal (Portela, Sá, Alexandre, & Cardoso, 2009).

Some wider positive implications of Bologna are perceived to be the case in Poland, Italy, Spain and Armenia. Specifically, in Poland, Bologna has increased the autonomy of universities in their decision-making process. It has also opened them up to the market economy (Dakowska, 2015). In Italy and Spain, Bologna has increased higher education efficiency (Agasisti and Pérez-Esparrells, 2010). According to these authors, efficiency is the relation of the produced output to the amount of input, often measured as public funding investment. The study shows that Italian universities became more efficient than those in Spain. Higher education efficiency in Italy has been facilitated by structural reforms such as the cycles of studies. In Spain, efficiency has been facilitated by the introduction of new funding models for quality assurance in higher education. Furthermore, in Lithuania, Bologna was a tool to facilitate students' inward and outward mobility which, in turn, made Lithuanian higher education more international and enriching (Karveliėne, 2014). Lastly, Melikyan (2011) dwells on educational reforms in Armenia and emphasises that joining Bologna brought about the modernisation of the negative post-Soviet situation.

All of these effects in the implementation of Bologna tend to be associated with the Europeanisation in higher education in the Bologna countries. Although Europeanisation as such is not analysed in detail, it is explicitly presented as a positive development in the countries during Bologna reforms. A general explanation of how Europeanisation specifically in higher education can be understood is provided by Vukasovic (2013). The author argues that it is 'the institutionalisation of formal and informal rules developed in a process that involves a supranational or an international body, e.g., the EU, the Council of Europe... or the Bologna Follow-up Group' (p.312). Further discussion of Europeanisation in higher education provided by Vukasovic (2013) demonstrates

that Europeanisation may be shaped differently in national contexts. This suggests the idea concordant with what was argued in the previous Chapter – that Europeanisation should be treated as an area of inquiry. Moreover, the definition of Europeanisation in higher education by Vukasovic (2013) is in line with a more general definition of Europeanisation by Radaelli (2004), analysed in the previous Chapter.

### *3.3.1.2. Challenges*

The studies that discuss the problems in the implementation of Bologna are much more numerous. The problems are generally the same everywhere – they are associated with the context that constrains the reform. These studies look at Bologna from the path-dependency perspective.

The examples of the cases when the Bologna action lines have not been implemented ‘properly’ are the following. Pyykkö (2008) and Esyutina, Fearon and Leatherbarrow (2013), for instance, investigate the problems of fitting the Specialist’s degree, common in the post-Soviet area, into the Bologna three-cycle system. Both studies acknowledge that the difficulty lies in the fact that it is an additional degree which is higher than Bachelor’s and lower than Master’s. In Russia, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, for instance, it was treated as part of the first cycle in addition to the Bachelor’s degree (Pyykkö, 2008). Further, the challenges associated with the recognition of the information in the diploma supplement by employers in Russia is analysed by Esyutina, Fearon and Leatherbarrow (2013).

The challenges in the implementation of the European credit transfer system are studied too. Howieson and Raffe (2013), researching the Scottish context, identify institutional, epistemological and political barriers to credit transfer within the country. The implementation of the European credit transfer system in Spain faces similar challenges (Esteve-Faubel, Stephens, & Molina Valero, 2013).

There are also some common challenges in understanding the terms associated with the Bologna action lines in different countries. Domilescu (2011), for instance, concludes that the student-centred learning is still underdeveloped in practice in various Bologna countries primarily because many instructors themselves struggle to understand its essence and the reasons why they should practise student-centred learning in their classes.

The influence of context may be at the heart of the non-implementation of some action lines by certain countries. This can be traced in a study by Patrício et al. (2008). The challenges in adopting the two-cycle system in medical education has

resulted in the fact that, as of 2008, 19 out of 26 countries that were analysed chose not to implement the reform at all.

There is also a couple of studies that focus on a common problem of bureaucratic reforms – the lack of real substance. One study explores the results of the reform of the two-cycle study system, quality assurance, accreditation and mobility promoting measures in the Netherlands and in Flanders – a Dutch-speaking region of Belgium (Dittrich, Frederiks, & Luwel, 2004). The authors maintain that little has been changed in terms of the content of higher education in both regions, although some structural changes have taken place. For instance, some universities implemented the two-cycle study system by simply breaking their old single four or five year programmes into two. Another study points out a similar problem in the contexts of Romania and Austria (Wodak & Fairclough, 2010).

During the implementation of Bologna, some other processes might get associated with it. According to Reichert (2010), Bologna usually triggers criticism among the higher education communities in the EHEA countries for ‘wrong’ reasons. The author argues that the so-called ‘unintended effects’ of Bologna include the developments that go beyond the original reformers’ intentions. The ‘unintended effects’ can be also triggered by some higher education processes that happen at the same time as the Bologna reforms and become associated with them by the members of higher education communities. In particular, higher education quality assurance in the Bologna Process in Russia has gained the meaning of a ‘freedom for survival’ (Telegina & Schwengel, 2012: p.40). It means the reduction of state funds for higher education and a consequent necessity for universities to look for sources of funding independently. In Russia, quality assurance has been also analysed in terms of the chaos which originated with the practice of producing and selling fake diplomas. These developments have been impairing the quality of higher education in Russia in the context of Bologna (Aref'ev, 2009). Moreover, an unintended effect of Bologna can be also seen in a brain drain in less economically well-off countries (Dittrich, Frederiks, & Luwel, 2004). The authors argue that students tend to use academic mobility opportunities to leave economically weak countries and stay in more prosperous ones for work after their studies finish. This tendency is particularly strongly expressed in post-Soviet countries with many students leaving without plans to come back, except for maybe the Baltic states (Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia) (Heyneman & Skinner, 2014).

Clearly, these studies are focused on the effects of the reform process. They see contextual features as an obstacle for Bologna in various countries, including those in the post-Soviet region. Viewing the context as a barrier is typical in this



literature. My research does not evaluate path-dependency as an obstacle. It looks at it as a force which is as productive as innovative ideas in the reform process.

### **3.3.2. *The process of the reform***

This sub-section reviews the literature about Bologna in the national contexts and examines the process of the Bologna reform. It is a small body of literature to which my research aims to contribute. All of these studies look at slightly different issues related to the reform process.

Jakobi & Rusconi (2009) focus on how the lifelong learning initiative has been developed in a group of countries that signed “the Sorbonne declaration” in 1998 – the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and France. The study analyses state documents from these countries as well as empirical data about participation rates by age and year, taken from the databases of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, OECD, and Eurostat. These data allowed the authors to analyse chronologically the developments associated with lifelong learning in the four countries. Lifelong learning has been developed by different strategies in these countries. According to the authors, ‘either lifelong learning is inspired by a national emphasis on specific lifelong learning dimensions that preceded Bologna (as in the UK or France) or countries have only recently taken up some issues, such as recognition of prior learning (Germany)’ (p.62). The authors also suggest that the current general lack of attention to lifelong learning in comparison to other Bologna initiatives might change, once other initiatives on which lifelong learning rests are further implemented.

Two other studies look at the implementation of the action lines and are much bigger in their scope. They consider a range of action lines and also analyse the organisation of higher education at higher education institutions in general.

One of them is a study that discusses policy change under Bologna in the national context of Moldova (Cusnir, 2008). By analysing national policy documents and interviews with key higher education actors in Moldova, this research explores the development of three Bologna action lines: the credit system, the study cycles and the diploma supplement. This study also investigates the reason Moldova joined the Bologna Process; the degree of the transfer of the ideas from the international scale to the national scale; and the actors that participate in the policy transfer process. The author adopts Dolowitz and Marsh’s (2000) conceptual framework to look at the chronology of the steps that were taken in Moldova to transfer the Bologna action lines and to consider the obstacles encountered on the

way. Cusnir (2008) describes the actors that participate in the Bologna reform in Moldova, but does not analyse their development and the dynamics of their relationships. However, the author analyses growing connections among Moldovan and foreign higher education institutions. It is argued that the Bologna ideas are transferred to national policy-makers mainly by the internationally active Moldovan universities. They establish cooperation with foreign universities with the help of the TEMPUS programme.

Another study compares reforms in Germany, Holland, France and England (Witte, 2006). This research focuses on the ways in which the national degree structures were adapted in the Bologna context. This is examined through analysis of quantitative data from OECD, policy documents and interviews with key higher education actors in the four countries. The study looks at the actors and the development of higher education services at institutions in each country. Similarly to the above study by Cusnir (2008), the author examines 'actors and their capabilities' more to map the power relations than to show their dynamics in Bologna. Where the author sees development is in the work of higher education institutions. The implementation of the Bologna action lines has been changing such issues as curricula, access to higher education, and transition to employment. The Bologna reform has been associated with a continuous policy formulation, with a relative convergence across all four countries in their national institutional contexts and national educational discourses.

There are also two less extensive studies about the Bologna reform process. One of them investigates how the models of higher education governing developed in Bologna in the context of other political innovations (Dobbins and Khachatryan, 2015). The authors analyse national policy acts in Georgia and Armenia and demonstrate the development of a discourse about co-governance of higher education by national policy-makers and universities in both countries. However, they show that in practice the national policy-makers in both countries have been implementing Bologna only to the extent that it did not undermine the amount of control they had over higher education.

The focus of Ravinet's work (2008) is on how Bologna, which is an originally voluntary initiative, gradually becomes binding for all EHEA states. The author bases this discussion on the theoretical consideration about the constraining effects of free choice. The scholar uses literature review, international document analysis, the analysis of interviews with national policy-makers in several Bologna countries, and interviews with the representatives of some international actors such as the European Commission. By analysing discourse in these sources, the author shows

how the stocktaking mechanisms in Bologna have been, to an extent, unavoidable for the countries that have originally declared their voluntary commitment to the implementation of the action lines.

The process of the Bologna reform seems to be viewed as the implementation of change which does not go smoothly because of past conventions. The idea that the past might be a moulder of the reforms rather than a barrier is a gap in research into the process of the Bologna reform in different national contexts. This is the idea that the concept of *layering*, introduced in the previous Chapter, suggests. This area seems not to have been explored in research about Bologna. Moreover, post-Soviet countries have been under-represented in this body of research. My study aims to investigate the issues which have not been addressed considerably in the literature. My study will analyse the process of the higher education reform in a post-Soviet country – Ukraine – in the context of Bologna.

### **3.3.3. Bologna in Ukraine**

This part of the Chapter focuses on Ukraine and provides an account of previous relevant research in the country. Studies about the Bologna Process in Ukraine are limited. The literature reviewed in this sub-section includes small-scale studies published in international and Ukrainian peer-reviewed journals as well as a chapter in an edited book. The literature review below also includes two more extensive studies and a few Ukrainian PhD theses. Most of these studies, as in other national contexts, are focused on the evaluation of achievements and challenges in the implementation of Bologna, while only few give more emphasis to the process of the reform.

The Bologna Process is presented in this literature as having had positive implications as well as challenges during implementation in Ukraine. There is some literature that looks at Bologna from a normative perspective – perceived advantages that Bologna has brought about in Ukraine. First and foremost, a number of authors support the idea that it has helped to improve the quality of the national higher education system (Holovaty, 2004; Nykon, 2005; Kozak, 2007). This has been achieved by changing the traditional didactic education into a more student-oriented one (Suharnikov, 2012; Yatseiko, 2009), and by opening up the borders of Ukraine for academic mobility. Goodman (2010) argues that the reforms have made academic mobility possible, although still limited. It has given students an incentive to pay more attention to learning English because it was necessary, for instance, for study abroad programmes such as TEMPUS and ERASMUS Mundus. Apart from this, Bologna helps to enlarge the number of Ukrainian universities

represented in the international rankings of higher education institutions (Pavko, 2011), and to increase the competitiveness of Ukrainian graduates abroad (Holovaty, 2004).

More widely, other studies have suggested that the Bologna Process has made the higher education system in Ukraine more modern and democratic because of the emphasis on the student-centred approach (Yatseiko, 2009). All of these changes have been linked to broader Europeanisation processes in the country because Bologna is positioned in Ukraine as a European issue and as a step towards joining the EU (Andreichuk, 2007; Pshenychna, 2009; Yatseiko, 2009).

Most of the challenges in the implementation of the Bologna action lines tend to be associated in the literature with the restraining effect of the context. However, there is a small group of studies that associate the problem with the actual change that Bologna itself brought. In particular, Ukrainian higher education has become a commodity (Makogon & Orekhova, 2007). The economisation of higher education is portrayed negatively by these authors because they believe that higher education, when marketised, loses the meaning of educating the nation. Furthermore, there are a couple of studies that speculate about the 'loss of tradition' in higher education in result of the Bologna reform (Telpukhovska, 2006; Shaw, 2013). Similar arguments are put forward in two comparative studies that analyse Ukraine and Russia in Bologna. They found that many politicians, academics, students and parents in the two countries believe that Bologna has had negative effects on the Soviet higher education system. That system used to be commonly considered to be the best in the world (Luchinskaya & Ovchynnikova, 2011; Soltys, 2015).

Most of other research focuses on the continuity of the established policies as the most significant obstacle in the recent higher education reform. Because of this, Goodman (2010) argues that reform tends to be more bureaucratic than substantive. Specifically, a merely technical implementation of the new credit system has been highlighted by Luchinskaya and Ovchynnikova (2011). The authors argue that the idea of the credit system was incorporated into education policies, while the meaning of credits as a measurement of workload was not really explained.

There are other examples of how past conventions have led to the problems in the work of the Bologna action lines in practice. Lunyachek (2015) believes that the progress in the development of lifelong learning is impaired by the outdated content of Master's programmes and the continuing lack of internship opportunities. Moreover, the established ways of work of the academic staff in Ukraine hinder the modernisation of higher education that Bologna could propel.

Instructors, for instance, could do more research, but their salaries are still based on their teaching workload. Moreover, although instructors are now expected to do more research, their research often lacks in quality because of insufficient prior relevant training (Shaw, Chapman, & Romyantseva, 2012).

More generally, the success of the Bologna Process in Ukraine is claimed to be hindered by: a strict centralisation of higher education (Andreichuk, 2007); scarce resources; brain drain that results from students' outward mobility and their unwillingness to return to a weak socio-economic situation in Ukraine; overall substantial difference between the inherited Soviet model of education in Ukraine and the Bologna action lines (Telpukhovska, 2006; Kovtun & Stick, 2009; Pshenychna, 2009; Shaw, 2013). The centralised control is also mentioned to be a problem in a comparative study that includes Ukraine. Soltys (2015) looks at Ukraine, and the countries in the post-Soviet Central Asia and the Trans-Caucasia. The author concludes that Ukraine might be the least authoritarian among all post-Soviet countries, but the implementation of Bologna in all the countries in the whole region has suffered from a centralised control over higher education in the same way.

Filiatreau (2011) explores Ukrainian higher education policies in state documents during 2005-2009 to examine whether quality assurance in the Bologna Process has resulted in more transparency within higher education institutions. The argument is that it has not, but more transparency could be achieved if the central government allowed the development of a more shared approach to managing higher education in the country.

Kovacs (2014) analyses Ukrainian national implementation reports, a limited number of state documents, and international ministerial communiques to trace the chronology of the developments in the Ukrainian higher education system after each international ministerial conference. The chronology of the development of each Bologna action line after the "Bologna declaration" (1999) is also researched in two more extensive studies. They analyse state policy documents, surveys and interviews conducted with higher education representatives.

Luhovy and Kalashnikova (2014) discuss the legal basis of the reforms, while Finikov (2012) compares the achievements of the Bologna reforms in Ukraine with similar achievements in other European countries. These two studies also position the continuity of the context as an obstacle in the process of the Bologna reform. However, they do not discuss the evolution of higher education policies before Bologna in detail.

An article by Shestavina (2004) looks at the process of Bologna in a broader context of the European Neighborhood Policy. This policy is an economic initiative of the EU in which Ukraine is involved. The author analyses European and Ukrainian state documents associated with this policy to explore whether and, if so, how the European Neighborhood Policy has been facilitating the implementation of the Bologna action lines. The author concludes that it has aided academic mobility opportunities through allocating some EU funds for mobility programmes such as ERASMUS Mundus, Jean Monnet Project and some others.

All the studies reviewed in this sub-section seem to echo the foci of the literature about the Bologna Process in other national contexts. They position path-dependence as an obstacle for the reforms, rather than a force that gradually shapes higher education together with some innovative ideas. While the action lines have been researched, the focus has been mainly on the chronology of their development in the relevant state documents. In addition, most of the studies rested on document analysis, while interviews as a method for data collection was used only in few studies (Finikov, 2012; Luhovy & Kalashnikova, 2014; Kovacs, 2014).

In contrast, my research looks historically at the development of higher education polices in Ukraine before the introduction of Bologna, in order to understand better the specifics of their role in it. In addition, this is not an implementation study that focuses just on the implications of various action lines. Crucially, this study examines the role of higher education actors in shaping the Bologna instruments. This focus has been missing from research to date.

### **3.4. Conclusion**

This Chapter has mapped the landscape of previous research into the Bologna Process on the international and national scales. It has also pointed out a few major gaps in that research. One of them is the interconnected development of higher education actors and instruments from the perspective of the idea of *layering* that brings path-dependence and change in a dialogue. The research about Bologna in the national contexts focuses mainly on a more normative, evaluative side of the debate. Research on Bologna specifically in Ukraine also looks primarily at positive and negative effects of the reform on the country's higher education. Moreover, these studies have mainly investigated the change of higher education policies, overlooking the exploration of the change in the system of higher education actors and their roles in the countries. The studies seem not to have placed enough emphasis on the process of the development of higher education actors and their

relationships in Bologna. Neither have they looked in detail into the contribution of these actors to the development of the Bologna instruments.

The literature review above also shows that Ukraine and other post-Soviet countries have encountered more problems than successes in adjusting their higher education conventions to the Bologna action lines. There have been difficulties 'fitting' Bologna ideas into the established conventions, such as in the case of the cycles of studies. There have been also challenges with interpreting some action lines, such as the student-centred learning or quality assurance. Thus, some action lines have been implemented by governments in ways which may seem as unfavourable to higher education institutions. In particular, although there has been a discussion about university autonomy, in practice no major change has taken place. Similarly, state funding cuts for higher education institutions became associated with the discourse of university autonomy. On the other hand, Bologna has internationalised higher education in post-Soviet countries. The introduction of the diploma supplement and the development of cooperation with foreign institutions in academic mobility has assisted in this respect. The Bologna developments have been acknowledged in the literature to be a case of Europeanisation.

Apart from these gaps in the research on Bologna, it is important to remember the earlier discussion of post-Soviet Europeanisation. Chapter 2 pointed out another type of gap that my research is addressing. The post-Soviet context is in the foreground in this research because Europeanisation there needs further investigation.

The discussion of the process of Bologna reform in the literature analysed above is in line with how post-Soviet Europeanisation is commonly viewed. The Bologna reform in the post-Soviet context, just like Europeanisation there, tends to be seen as the implementation of change which is hindered by some past conventions. In contrast, my study about Bologna in Ukraine rests on the idea of *layering* that brings path-dependence and change into a dialogue. These considerations were taken into account when designing the empirical part of this research, which is explained in the next Chapter.

# Chapter 4

## Research design

### 4.1. Introduction

This Chapter explains how I researched the process of the Bologna reform in Ukraine. To begin, the characteristics of the case of Ukraine are discussed first, which is then followed by an explanation of the choice of methods for data collection and analysis.

I present the main two data collection methods which were conducting semi-structured interviews with key higher education actors and collecting policy documents related to the Bologna reform. I will explain the details of arranging interviews over the phone, e-mail, post, or in person – with national policy-makers, representatives of non-state organisations that deal with higher education, and staff and instructors at two higher education institutions. Challenges around arranging these interviews will be discussed too. Additionally, I explain my search for different types of policy documents, which were produced by these groups of actors. The application of thematic coding and analysis to these two sources of data is also discussed. The Chapter closes with an outline of ethical considerations in this research and limitations of this study.

### 4.2. Type of case study

A case in research is a bounded system or unit for analysis, the data for which can be collected with a help of any method (Brown, 2008, citing Merriam, 1998). The introductory Chapter explained the reasons for choosing the Ukrainian higher education system to investigate the Bologna reform process in a national context. The previous Chapter provided a review of the literature on the prior research into Bologna in this country. It is worth discussing now what type of case study the Ukrainian context represents.

There are different classifications of case studies. The most commonly used one in education policy research is the classification based on the extent of generalisations that could be drawn from cases (Qi, 2009). The first type of case study, according to this classification, is the intrinsic study. It aims to examine the case for its own sake. The second type is the instrumental case study, the purpose of



which is to provide a basis for understanding some wider phenomena. The third type is the collective study of multiple cases, with the aim to provide a full account of all the issues that are explored.

While the Bologna reform in Ukraine is of an interest itself for this particular context, this study is also important for understanding wider issues around post-Soviet Europeanisation. Based on this reasoning, the Bologna reform in the Ukrainian higher education system can be treated as an instrumental case study.

Case study research has been criticised by some scholars for offering little space for generalising (Qi, 2009). Nevertheless, some scholars have actually argued that the 'populations to which we wish to generalise are often populations of cases that *may* occur in the future or even populations of cases that *could* occur' (Hammersley, 1996: p.171). The case of Ukraine will be used to suggest possible similar tendencies in the development of Europeanisation in the post-Soviet context.

### **4.3. Personal reflection**

Rubin and Rubin (2012) argue that researchers' prior experience and background mediates how they approach research and what results they obtain. In addition to this, current conditions of the researcher are, arguably, also important moulders of choosing how to approach research. My background and current situation define my partially insider and partially outsider position in relation to Bologna in Ukraine.

My background, especially educational and cultural origin, has shaped the interest in the chosen topic for this research and approaches used to investigate it. Life experience in Ukraine for around a couple of decades became a basis for my awareness of the historical, political and higher educational contexts of the country. Moreover, I was born and raised in western part of Ukraine. This region is commonly seen in Ukraine as a cradle of pro-European views, as also recognised in the literature (Janmaat, 2008). My western Ukrainian origin was perhaps a factor that sparked the interest in Europeanisation issues. Apart from this, personal experience of undergraduate higher education in Ukraine right after the introduction of Bologna, and problems I experienced in getting my study abroad experience recognised at the Ukrainian university narrowed down my interest in the topic specifically to the area of Bologna.

This familiarity with the Ukrainian higher education context after the

Bologna Process was introduced contributed to my partially insider position in terms of the research context. While my background is an asset in this research, it is important also to discuss possible biases it might yield. Having been aware of my background, I tried to identify the assumptions that could potentially yield a biased approach to research. These were the unquestioned idea of a benevolent nature of Europeanisation, and a strong opinion as to how pro-Russian politicians in the central cluster of governing bodies had been hindering Europeanisation. To avoid such biases, I opted for staying away from evaluations in order not to fall into the trap of thinking in the good-bad duality. This helpful effort to keep an open mind, however, did not make me objective in this research. My interpretivist ontology dictates that subjectivism is unavoidable because the knowledge is not out there. It is rather constructed through interpretation.

Besides being partially an insider of the Ukrainian context, I also acknowledge my significant outsider position to the establishments in Ukraine with which I dealt during data collection, and which will be discussed below. I have been an outsider because I do not belong to the work community of those establishments. Therefore, I have viewed myself as an active learner in the process of the research, despite the background knowledge of the context I had. More crucially, I have been an outsider to the overall Ukrainian context in a way too, since I have been doing most of the work for this research at an institution in the United Kingdom. Only the empirical part of this research – a relatively short period of four months – was conducted in Ukraine. I was exposed to the research culture and the international environment of the institution in the United Kingdom. I was also away from the censored environment of Ukraine, explained in more detail below. Such conditions of conducting this research were favouring to open up the discussion of the chosen topic beyond the boundaries in which most of the research conducted in Ukraine has been.

#### **4.4. Research questions**

It is worth repeating here the main research questions. It is also important to introduce the specific questions that this study asks. They have been triggered by: theoretical considerations about how to research a reform process, and the gaps in the literature about post-Soviet Europeanisation and Bologna, presented in earlier Chapters.

***Main research question 1:***

How has the process of the Bologna reform unfolded in Ukraine?

*Subsidiary research questions:*

1. How have the Ukrainian higher education actors and relations amongst them developed during the Bologna Process?
2. What Bologna instruments have these higher education actors developed in Ukraine?

**Main research question 2:**

What insights can the process of the Bologna reform in Ukraine give to our understanding of post-Soviet Europeanisation?

## **4.5. Data collection**

The answers to the research questions were sought during the process of collecting and analysing data in the Ukrainian context. Data collection lasted four months in Ukraine. This time included a one-month pilot study in May 2013, and a three-month main data collection phase in October-December 2013. The pilot study was a useful exercise to 'tune' research techniques before embarking on the main data collection. However, I do not see this tuning process as a cause for some substantial differences in the quality of the results that were received during both the pilot study and main data collection stage. Therefore, the pilot study data were treated as part of the overall data.

Qualitative methods were chosen as the most suitable way of finding rich evidence for analysis. Arranging semi-structured interviews with higher education actors and searching for policy documents related to the Bologna policies were the two main methods to collect data. In addition, I used online searches to find information regarding the involvement of different actors in the higher education reform in Ukraine. I also used literature about the pre-Bologna system of higher education actors and policies in Ukraine as a source of data in the next two chapters (e.g, Kremen, Nikolajenko, Stepko, & European Centre for Higher Education (UNESCO), 2006). It was vital to look at the developments before Bologna was introduced to understand policy continuity during the reform process as well as what changes the Bologna Process has brought. These data pertain to the time span

that encompasses higher education developments in Ukraine right after its independence in August 1991 up until the issue of the new Law regarding higher education in April 2014. The developments after the beginning of the Bologna pilot project in Ukraine in 2004 were looked at in more detail.

Data collection was generally a positive experience despite the challenges I faced and anxieties they triggered. The beginning of October 2013 was a fortunate time to start field work. It enabled me to conduct most of the planned interviews by the end of November – the point at which the country broke into mass protests and strikes that led to a revolution. Many people disagreed with the decision of the-then president and his team in the central governing bodies not to establish the Free Trade Association with the European Union (EU). The protests throughout the country grew stronger after the violence of the police against protesters who stayed overnight at the main square in the capital. The protesters then started demanding the impeachment of the President and the dismissal of the Government, because they assumed that these authorities managed the violence on the main square that night and afterwards. This situation complicated the process of organising the last interviews.

When instability in Ukraine began to escalate, just a few members of higher education institutions and representatives from civil organisations were still to be interviewed. While no significant problems arose with the civil sector representatives, it was particularly difficult to find someone willing to be interviewed at the university. The anxiety about confidentiality, which existed before the political instability broke out, intensified afterwards. As mentioned earlier, the main issue that led to the turmoil was the choice of the-then political majority not to sign the Free Trade Association with the EU. This Association, if signed, was generally recognised to be the most significant step towards Ukraine eventually joining the EU. Apparently, the prospect of discussing Bologna, which is a European issue, was met by the institutional members with caution in that situation. The Bologna Process had been developing in the country for a long time, including the period dominated by the political majority that refused to sign the Free Trade Association. However, representatives of the institutions apparently became cautious to voice opinions on any European issues, given the persecution and imprisonment of street protestors who supported the Free Trade Association. However, eventually the last two representatives of higher education institutions were recruited. Interestingly, these individuals were not just instructors – they were also holding the posts of academic managers. They noted that they were fine discussing the Bologna Process because it was not about choosing between the EU and Russia in wider international relations, since Russia was also in Bologna. Such a

choice, however, was inherent in the case of the Free Trade Association. Signing this Association presupposed that Ukraine would turn away from a tight trade cooperation with Russia, which has existed since Soviet times.

I managed to finish conducting interviews within the first few days of the growing instability in the country. Data collection was finished before the street demonstrations grew into a country-wide revolution. The revolution further brought a change of Government, as the President fled the country; the southern-eastern region of Ukraine – the Crimea – was annexed by Russia; the change of Parliament took place; and a war started in eastern Ukraine.

The change of the main authorities in all central governing bodies was followed by passing the new Law regarding Higher Education in April in 2014. Despite the fact that I had finished data collection before the Law was issued, I made the decision to include the Law in the analysis because it was one of the most important milestones in the Bologna reform in Ukraine.

#### **4.5.1. Arranging interviews**

##### **4.4.1.1. Sampling**

The choice of the interviewees began with exploring links between the international Bologna governing structures and consultative members, and their partner establishments in Ukraine. It was explained in the previous Chapter that the international Bologna governing structures include the Bologna Secretariat, the Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG) and the European Commission. Apart from this, a number of consultative members support Bologna internationally too. Online search, primarily the website of the European Higher Education Area (European Higher Education Area, 2014), allowed the identification of connections among these Bologna international actors and Ukrainian establishments. Table 1 reflects the results of that search:

Table 1: Affiliation of Ukrainian establishments with the Bologna governing structures and consultative members

<i>Bologna members and consultative members</i>	<i>Establishments in Ukraine</i>
International BFUG	BFUG in Ukraine
European Commission	National TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office
Council of Europe	Council of Europe office in Ukraine
European Association of Institutions in Higher Education	Kyiv University of Law in the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Association of Law Schools, International

	Association of Trade and Economic Education
European Students' Union	Ukrainian Association of Students' Self-Government
Education International	Trade Union of Education and Science Workers of Ukraine, Free Trade Union of Education and Science of Ukraine
UNESCO European Centre for Higher Education	UNESCO Department at a university
European University Association	30 higher education institutions in Ukraine (including the two eventually chosen for research)
Pan-European Structure	-
European Association of Quality Assurance in Higher Education	-

Besides the Ukrainian actors that are presented in the Table above, the literature, online search, and actual interviews revealed a number of other actors in Ukraine that also seemed to deal with Bologna. I assumed that all the higher education actors belonged to one of the three groups of higher education actors identified in the relevant literature (Kremen et al., 2006) – higher education institutions, main governing bodies, and civil organisations. Different types of samples were chosen for interviews with these clusters of actors because of the difference in their populations and in the degree of access availability.

I recruited 43 interviewees – academic managers and instructors from different study areas at two universities; representatives from various organisations involved in some way in the Bologna Process in Ukraine; and representatives from the central governing bodies in Ukraine (see Appendix 1 for the list of interviewees).

According to Blaikie (2000) and Merriam (2009), there is no rule for determining the ratio between a population and a sample. So the number of 43 interviewees out of hundreds of thousands of those who represent the higher education sector in Ukraine should not be viewed as the most significant problem of this research sample. Rather, the choice of these 43 individuals should be questioned. According to Rubin and Rubin (2012), the choice of interviewees should be guided by the goal to find those who are willing to talk and represent a range of points of view. Directed by this goal, I interviewed individuals representing different types of actors, reaching them over the phone, e-mail, post, or arranging face-to-face meetings.

## Interviewees at higher education institutions

The sample of interviewees at higher education institutions was partially judgmental and partially accidental/convenient. This is the type of sample which, according to Blaikie (2000), is chosen when access to potential study participants is limited and when the researcher relies on contacts that have been previously established and/or contacts that happen to be established during the research process.

The sample of institutions was selected in three steps. First, I focused only on the institutions that participated in the 2004-2008 Bologna pilot project in Ukraine, organised by the Ministry of Education and Science (“Ministerial decree №48,” 2004). This pilot project presupposed mainly the introduction of the credit system at a selected number of universities, along with some other minor policy innovations. Since the universities that participated in the Ministerial pilot project had dealt longest with the reform, I expected them to have richer Bologna experience in comparison to those that started implementing the reform after the pilot in 2009. Additionally, the focus on this cluster of institutions was a productive way of significantly narrowing the overall number of 850 higher education institutions that existed in Ukraine when I was designing my research (“Ministry of Education and Science,” 2012).

Second, according to “Ministerial decree №48” (2004), the 59 institutions for the Bologna pilot project included two groups. One of them comprised seven regional basic institutions. The other group included 52 institutions that were unevenly divided into groups to be subordinated to each of the regional basic institutions. My initial plan was to work with two regional basic and two subordinate institutions to see how policy learning evolved between these types of institutions. However, my pilot study, which was essentially about conducting interviews at a subordinate institution, suggested that there was no specific policy learning arranged between that subordinate institution and its regional basic institution. According to the interviewees, the learning in the form of occasional conferences and seminars was more of an exception than a rule. Moreover, when such learning did happen, it seemed to be related to the events that took place in cooperation with the civil sector. So it was not really learning between the two types of institutions per se.

My pilot study suggested that the intention to work with four institutions was not feasible time-wise. Thus, I decided to work with two institutions. I chose two subordinate institutions – institutions A and B in Appendix 1. My selection was guided by the consideration of contacts I already had, which could ease my access

to interviewees. I also considered the location of these institutions in different parts of Ukraine – western and eastern – in order to catch cross-regional differences, if any, in their work in the context of the reform.

The third step in selecting the interviewee sample was choosing accidental/convenient sample of 12 academic managers and instructors at each institution, aiming for a diversity of subject areas of instructors. Academic managers are individuals who, besides teaching, have administrative responsibilities. They can be heads of departments, deans of schools, pro-rectors or rectors. I started my interviews during the pilot study with the intention to control the subject area of respondents by focusing on three specific schools within each institution, which would be focused on international, national and neutral study areas. This plan did not work because I could not access enough interviewees at each school. Hence, I made a decision to turn that problem into an opportunity and shift the focus from three subject areas to diverse subject areas to get different perspectives. The sample of 12 academic managers and instructors at each institution was mainly chosen from the websites of these institutions.

The process of recruiting my sample at these universities was full of unexpected challenges. First, my initial intention to interview students was abandoned after two attempts to talk with them during the pilot study at institution A. Students' answers were too vague and terse to contribute to this research other than suggesting students' general ignorance about Bologna. They knew only that the Bologna Process was a big European reform idea into which the Ukrainian higher education was involved; and that Bologna presupposed changes in the higher education system. They were unable to specify those changes. They only mentioned issues in counting grades in the new grading scale that was introduced by Bologna. This limited awareness of students is plausible because, unlike the older interviewees, students did not know what used to be in higher education in Ukraine prior to Bologna. So the issues that reflected change in higher education tended to be beyond students' understanding. I did not transcribe and code students' answers I received, but I remained mindful of the students' ignorance in data analysis.

After these two interviews with students, I conducted 12 interviews with instructors and academic managers, and these interviews were analysed in further detail. Ultimately, the pilot study was extremely helpful in refining the sample from institutions. I did not interview students in general; however, one of the representatives of the civil sectors organisations that I will discuss later was a student.



Another challenge in recruiting my sample at universities was related to the specifics of arranging phone interviews. Numerous calls were needed to finally set the date and time for interviews. In most cases, everything happened as planned. However, there were also rare cases of setting an interview time and not being able to reach that participant afterwards. One more example was the immediate agreement of a couple of interviewees to answer my questions right when I called the first time to set up the interview. Such a situation required me to immediately prepare for the interview.

#### Interviewees at central governing bodies (and their consultative actors)

Apart from interviewees from higher education institutions, I was targeting representatives from the main governing bodies – mainly the Ministry of Education and Science, and the Bologna Follow-up Group. I assumed – quite rightly, as it turned out later – that the Bologna Follow-up Group would be related with the Ministry, and thus, with the central governing bodies. However, it will be explained in Chapter 5 that the Bologna Follow-up Group is only associated with the central governing bodies, but it does not really belong to them technically. It is supposed to be one of the consultative bodies of the Ministry, which form a relatively distinct cluster of actors, according to my research findings. In this Chapter, I will discuss the main governing bodies in conjunction with their consultative actors. I will do so because at the time of research design and data collection, my assumption was that those were one cluster of actors. This assumption was challenged, albeit just partially, by the findings in Chapter 5.

I recruited a snowball sample of seven representatives in total from the Ministry, the Bologna Follow-up Group, including a couple of individuals who had worked for these bodies in the past.

Recruiting these interviewees was a great challenge overall. Rubin and Rubin (2012) suggest that policy-makers' lack of time and their suspicion that the researcher might be a journalist are considerable reasons for hindering the emergence of a trustworthy relationship between the researcher and policy-makers. However, this was not the only problem. A prior issue was getting initial access to national policy-makers. Initiating conversations via e-mail was not successful. Also, contacting them over the telephone did not work because of their frequent and long business trips, occasional work out of office, and/or because their secretaries refused to forward my calls to them. The situation seemed hopeless before an interview with an ex-member of a working group of the Parliamentary Committee of Education and Science Matters. This individual happened to have some contacts at the Ministry, and assisted me in contacting a worker at the Ministry. Luckily, this

Ministerial official helped me to reach a few other people at the Ministry. The interviewees who were *ex*-members of the establishments, finished their work there around two-three years ago and preferred not to explain the reasons for the change of their career path. During interviews, I learned that some respondents were also members of other consultative actors that were created by the central governing bodies to assist them with Bologna policy-making. I did not talk to other individuals that represented these establishments because it was impossible to get access to them.

#### Interviewees at civil organisations

Apart from the representatives from higher education institutions and members of the central governing bodies (and their consultative actors), interviewees included people from Ukrainian non-state organisations who deal with Bologna. Some of these organisations happened to be affiliated with the Bologna members and international consultative members that were presented earlier in Table 1. Some of them also turned out to be offices of foreign organisations in Ukraine that support Ukrainian higher education. These organisations support higher education mainly through providing academic mobility grants, but do not explicitly state they deal with Bologna.

The online search and interviews suggested that many of these non-state organisations had not worked with higher education as their primary issue before Bologna. They started some related work after the Bologna pilot project was introduced by the Ukrainian Ministry in 2004. These organisations include, for instance, the National TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office, Fund *Vidrodzhennya*, Fund *Democratychni Initsiatyvy*, the Organisation entitled *Institute of Leadership, Innovation and Development*, the *System Capital Management* Group, a UNESCO department, the All-Ukrainian Academic Union, etc. Apart from these organisations, there was one more establishment found, which emerged specifically with the aim to support the development of the Bologna Process in Ukraine. It is the non-state national organisation called the National Bologna Centre.

Due to the great number of civil organisations, it was practically impossible to interview even one representative from all of these organisations. Based on information on their websites, most of these representatives were chosen considering how active they seemed to be in Bologna. Thus, I targeted the most involved actors, and approached their representatives over the phone or e-mail. Arranging interviews with the civil organisations was easier in comparison to the other clusters of actors. The individuals from the civil organisations were generally interested and eager to respond to questions. Also, representatives from these

organisations treated interview time arrangements more seriously than interviewees from other clusters.

#### 4.5.1.2. Conducting semi-structured interviews

The semi-structured interview seemed to be the most suitable type of interview for this study. I was looking for specific issues associated with the Bologna reform – namely, the development of higher education actors and policy instruments. I also wanted to allow for some follow-up discussion in order to be open to new ideas. Such a motivation is at the heart of opting for semi-structured interviews (Denscombe, 2010).

The 43 semi-structured interviewees included: 13 face-to-face conversations; 22 over the telephone conversations; and eight written answers to my questions (see Table 2 below). The timing of the face-to-face and phone interviews tended to range between 15 to 90 minutes. All of the interviews were voice recorded. The eight respondents that answered in writing via e-mail or a letter chose to do so in order to see interview questions ahead of time and to avoid the anxiety of being voice recorded. The quality of the data obtained from the different types of interviews will be addressed in the data analysis section of this Chapter.

Table 2: Interviewees and interview modes

<i>Interviewees</i>		<i>Approached</i>	<i>Interviewed</i>				<i>Total</i>
			<i>Face-to-face</i>	<i>Phone</i>	<i>E-mail</i>	<i>Letter</i>	
Central governing bodies (and their consultative actors)	Ex-member of a working group in the Parliament and ex-BFUG member (now an academic manager at an institution)	12	1				7
	Ministerial officials			2		1	
	Ministerial official, current BFUG member and ex-member of the Scientific Advisory Centre			1			
	Ex-Ministerial officials and ex-BFUG members (now representatives of universities)			1	1		
Civil org.	Higher Education Reform Experts' Team	7		3			12

	TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office	9		1			
	UNESCO Department				1		
	Ukrainian Association of Students' Self-Government			1			
	Trade Union of Education and Science Workers				1		
	Fund <i>Vidrodzhennya</i>			1			
	Fund <i>Demokratyshni Initsiatyvy</i>			1			
	Ukrainian partner of the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education			1			
	National Bologna Centre					2	
Universities	University in the west of Ukraine	15	12				12
	University in the east of Ukraine	17		10	2		12
							43

I provided the interviewees with the information about the study, as discussed later in more detail in the section about ethical considerations. Afterwards, the interviews proceeded by relying on three types of questions. Most of the interviews, including those conducted via e-mail, incorporated pre-prepared questions to guide the conversation, follow-up questions for the received answers to find out more information, and probe questions to clarify answers, as suggested by Rubin and Rubin (2012). The scholars emphasise that pre-prepared questions might change slightly in the course of a study because a researcher may find out unexpected information, which may influence the course of the study. One of the lessons I drew from my pilot study was the necessity to make some changes to the questions. I had to reduce the number of questions and restructure the order slightly. I also realised that it was important to have a short list of core questions for people who tend to give extended answers to each question. I also had to ensure to have a number of additional questions and potential follow-up questions to obtain more information from interviewees who might be laconic in their answers. This latter consideration was particularly helpful during interviews with the Ministerial representatives who tended to be quite brief with their answers.

The wording of the interview questions was given much attention when designing the questionnaire. Different types of questions and their wording yields

different information in answers (Merriam, 2009; Denscombe, 2010). Merriam (2009) suggests avoiding multiple questions in a row, leading questions, 'yes-or-no' and 'why' questions in order not to deter a conversation. I did not ask the first three types of questions, but I still used the 'why' questions because I believed they were a good way to avoid leading answers (see Appendix 2 for the interview questions).

The interview process depended not just upon the questions that were asked but also on the relationship dynamics between respondents and me. According to Rubin and Rubin (2012), interviewees should be approached as partners and agents in constructing meanings rather than the deliverers of the objective knowledge a researcher is trying to possess.

Further, it is necessary to acknowledge that there were different groups of interviewees. They could be distinguished on the basis of three criteria. First, there were different groups of respondents based on the difference in the way interviews were conducted. There were face-to-face interviews, which obviously involved more interaction that helped to build rapport faster. There were also phone interviews that did not have as much interaction. In addition, as previously mentioned, some interviewees chose to e-mail or post their answers. A face-to-face or phone conversation preceded this, except one case with a Ministerial official. I sent a written request to this person to answer my questions and received written responses. Second, interviewees could be distinguished on the basis of the time when they preferred to familiarise themselves with interview questions. As I mentioned earlier, most of the respondents asked to see questions ahead of time. Some respondents chose to be interviewed right when I called to introduce myself, my research, and asked them to participate in an interview. Third, all interviewees could be divided into clusters according to the type of work they do in Bologna – central governing bodies (and their consultative actors), civil organisations, and higher education institutions.

Interviewees who represent only higher education institutions seem to have perceived me as someone who knows about Bologna more than they do. It was obvious from frequent expressions like 'I am not sure if this is correct' (i.15,17,23), 'you know better' (i.13), and so on. Instructors and staff members interviewed were cautious while expressing their ideas. They mentioned frequently that 'the top' in the higher education policy-making in Ukraine should not be criticised.

Interviewees that were affiliated with the central governing bodies (and consultative actors) seemed to position only themselves as the experts in the Bologna questions. This was noticed in many issues, particularly, in their reaction to

the question about how they would define the meaning of the Bologna Process in Ukraine. They explained their uneasiness about that question by saying that they knew what Bologna was in Ukraine because they have worked with it for a long time. They said they would prefer 'not to be tested' on how well they understand Bologna. These interviewees expected me to be familiar with the issues they were discussing. My background knowledge of the names, dates and events involved in the Bologna Process in Ukraine was handy during interviews. This group of participants seemed to be the most concerned about the fact that I was using a voice-recorder. They were also the most reluctant to express their own opinions. They frequently mentioned that all information about Bologna in Ukraine could be found in the national Bologna implementation reports and state documents. However, they did eventually become engaged in a productive dialogue with me.

Representatives from the civil organisations freely expressed their different opinions, supporting them with concrete examples. They seemed to position both themselves and me as experts in higher education questions in Ukraine. These interviewees engaged in a conversation with me on equal terms. Some of them also expressed a great interest in the future findings of my study, unlike the other types of interviewees.

#### ***4.5.2. Policy document search***

The second method of data collection was policy document search. I collected 88 policy documents or, in other words, policy texts (see Appendix 3 for the list of all documents). Sampling of policy documents was less complex because their population is smaller than the populations of different establishments and individuals within them, involved in the Bologna reform.

I intended to focus on the documents that were produced mainly by the types of actors I focused on when recruiting interviewees. First, I looked for Bologna related policy documents at higher education institutions. Only seven Bologna related policy documents at two universities (A and B), where interviews took place, were collected. Documents dated up to 2007 were found as part of hard-copy manuals on Bologna, shelved in the libraries at these universities. One more document that was issued afterwards was found on the website of one of these universities. Accessibility was the main criterion for the selection of documents at universities, and thus, the sample of these documents can be regarded as convenient. The comparison of those documents and relevant national documents revealed that documents from the universities replicated national policy texts to a great extent. This similarity was noticed even in frequent instances of the same wording.

Therefore, perhaps, some other documents from the universities that were not collected also resemble national documents.

Besides the policy texts from the universities, two types of Ukrainian state documents were collected. One of them comprises four Ukrainian Bologna implementation reports that were found on the EHEA website (European Higher Education Area, 2014). The other type includes 62 legislative and executive documents found on the website of the Ministry of Education and Science, the Supreme Council website, and through a few other online and hard copy sources. In particular, the following documents were collected: resolutions and regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers, which is the Ukrainian Government; decrees and letters of the Ministry of Education and Science; a joint decree of this Ministry and the Ministry of Social Policy; several laws related to higher education; drafts of the most recent law regarding higher education and its adopted version ("Law about Higher Education," 2014); and one presidential order.

The relationship among these documents stems from the relationships among the central governing bodies, explained in the next Chapter. Based on the configuration of different branches of state power in Ukraine, spelled out in the "Constitution of Ukraine" (1996), a higher education policy idea is supposed to be developed in the following way. Draft laws make a basis for laws that are eventually passed. The ideas in these laws are supposed to be further addressed by governmental resolutions and/or presidential orders. These, in turn, are to be further executed in Ministerial decrees. The Ministry of Education and Science can also supplement some of its decrees by letters to higher education institutions. They are meant to provide explanations of the information placed in decrees.

Finally, in addition to the university and national documents, all international Bologna declarations and communiques (nine) up to 2012 and a few other international documents were collected from the EHEA website (European Higher Education Area, 2014). These documents were created at the international Bologna conferences, and thus, were important to consider. Based on the interviews with the Ministerial officials, the new ideas in their decrees were yielded by the international declarations and communiques. In addition, I collected four international Bologna reports and two documents that provided guidelines for the Bologna instruments. These additional documents addressed the issues discussed in the communiques in more detail. These documents were also found on the EHEA website (European Higher Education Area, 2014).

These international Bologna documents were also claimed by the civil

organisations to direct their work. The civil sector representatives stated that they do not generally issue any documents, except for publicly inaccessible plans of their work. An exception here was the National TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office, which did have four documents available on its website.

## **4.6. Data analysis**

The information about higher education development in Ukraine from 1991 to the beginning of Bologna in Ukraine was obtained from the literature about Ukrainian policy-making in general (e.g., Chudowsky & Kuzio, 2003; Kuzio, 2012) and specifically in higher education (e.g., Kremen et al., 2006; Fimyar, 2008), as well as from policy documents and interviews. These data were analysed more for context. The developments after Bologna started were analysed in much more detail.

While data analysis might seem to be the stage following data collection, Gibbs (2007) argues that a separation between these two stages is very rough, as there is no particular moment when data analysis begins. For instance, it may even coincide with the start of data collection. In my case, I did engage in data analysis while I was collecting data. I was also analysing issues that emerged from the process of data collection.

Although in practice analysis was present during the data collection, a formal stage of analysis was marked by using thematic analysis method, which I explain in this section. It is also vital to address some more general issues associated with data analysis, such as the validity of the evidence obtained, and the possibility of using the same approach to the analysis of data from interviews and documents.

### **4.6.1. Validity of evidence**

The analysis of interviews and policy texts are popular methods in qualitative research, but it is still worth looking critically at the nature of evidence these two sources of information yield. The main question here is associated with the validity of evidence that can be retrieved from each of them.

One might think that interviews are more subjective in comparison to policy texts. My interpretivist-constructivist ontology dictates that subjectivism in research is unavoidable because the knowledge is constructed through interpretation. This pertains to all sorts of interactions this research has involved. The subjectivity of interviews makes the advantage of interviews in research. It is actually the reason to



use interviews as a method for this research. The interviews gave an opportunity to find out issues about the reform that went beyond the information in policy texts. For instance, one such issue is related to the actual practice of the Bologna instruments at universities. Apart from this, as noted, most of the interviewees did not familiarise themselves with the questions ahead of time, others chose to answer the questions via e-mail or an official letter. No significant differences in the quality of answers obtained from the spontaneous and prepared interviews were noticed. The difference was only that the spontaneous interviews tended to be less precise about the facts such as dates and names. This was not a problem because exact facts could be usually easily found in the policy documents.

All policy texts presented official information. They were meant to be followed in some way in practice at higher education institutions. However, I approach policy texts as a source of possible ambiguous information. By ambiguous I mean the information that gives space for treating it as a means both to represent and construct reality. For instance, the introduction of certain Bologna instruments might have been presented in policy documents by the central governing bodies only from the perspective that they wished others to have.

#### ***4.6.2. Choosing an analytical approach***

Interview and policy document analysis is approached from a variety of perspectives in the policy literature: thematic analysis (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012), discourse analysis (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002), critical discourse analysis (Wodak & Fairclough, 2010), narrative policy analysis (Roe, 1989), and even statistical analysis (Lafitte, 1952).

Whether or not interview and policy document analysis can be approached in the same way is a debatable question. Gomm (2008) and Merriam (2009) claim that these two sources differ in how and why the original data were produced. Interview responses are a result of interviewer's facilitation; and policy documents are produced with a certain level of rehearsal for some specific audience. While this is obvious, these same scholars eventually also acknowledge that interview and policy document analysis can be approached in a similar way (Gomm, 2008; Merriam, 2009).

I acknowledge that interviews and policy texts differ in certain aspects but I agree with the earlier statement that the analysis of these two sources of data can be done in a similar way. I view interview records and policy documents as texts. This position can be supported by Phillips, Lawrence and Hardy (2004). They maintain that both written and spoken sources are texts. Moreover, interviews can be actually

seen as written texts because all voice-reordered interviews were transcribed. Edited transcript type, which presupposes correcting misspoken errors by the researcher, was used because it helped 'make sense of the spoken word when put down in writing' (Ritchie, 1995: p.44). The process of transcribing is called *translation* by Freeman (2009). It is so because some patterns characteristic to speech can be changed in the process of their transformation into written texts.

Another sort of translation – language translation – was involved in transcribing. Most of interviews were conducted in Ukrainian, and only two were in Russian. The ultimate language for analysis was English. Therefore, recorded interviews were translated into English during manual transcribing before they were coded. One might argue that ultimate data content might change after omitting the peculiarities of the original language and letting the translation acquire new language peculiarities. However, data analysis in this research was not focused on textual characteristics such as grammar, semantics and stylistics. It is still possible to catch the themes in the translation in the edited transcript type that could be found in the original language.

#### **4.6.3. Thematic analysis**

I was interested in specific areas of the reform process – the development of the actors and instruments. Hence, thematic analysis of my data was decided to be the most suitable type of analysis. There are no restrictions as to what thematic analysis can be used for. Thus, both interview transcripts and policy documents were thematically coded and analysed.

Thematic analysis is both criticised and justified in the literature about qualitative methods. On one hand, this process is criticised for potentially overlooking relationships among the themes (Chase, 2008). Apart from this, Gomm (2008) expresses a concern about the possibility of reaching similar findings by different researchers who use thematic analysis on the same issue. This warning can be rebutted in this research by my interpretivist approach. On the other hand, themes as units of analysis are useful for interpretation (Merriam, 2009), for uncovering meanings (Rubin & Rubin, 2012) and even for theory generation (Blaikie, 2000).

Thematic coding in this research resembled the procedure described in the literature. Rubin and Rubin (2012) suggest reading through transcripts to identify broad codes first, then rereading the transcripts to specify the codes. This could be associated with what is called *open coding* – first of the two stages of coding (Blaikie, 2000; Merriam, 2009). It means breaking down the data into categories and sub-

categories while being open to different insights. According to Rubin and Rubin (2012), anything can be coded – ideas, concepts, dates, names, etc. The second stage of coding is called *axial* or *analytical coding* (Blaikie, 2000; Merriam, 2009). It is conducted by reading through the codes to reveal relationships between categories and sub-categories that depend on a variety of issues such as context, interview conditions, etc. (Blaikie, 2000; Merriam, 2009).

In practice, the procedure was more complicated because of the necessity to reread interview transcripts and documents multiple times to do coding, and because of the necessity to deal with Ukrainian-English translation when coding. Multiple re-readings were necessary to ensure that the structure of codes allowed to preserve the distinction between the two sources of data – interviews and documents. It was also important to ensure that codes made it easy to identify from what group of interviewees or type of policy document data originated.

I ended up making two files of codes. One file included policy document codes. Each code ended with brackets in which the following information was provided: a sequence number of a policy document assigned by me, and a letter denoting the type of document. For instance, the letter ‘a’ meant a governmental resolution, and the letter ‘b’ meant a decree of the Ministry of Education and Science. Usually, codes represented ideas mentioned in more than one document. This was reflected in the list of numbers and letters in brackets. The other file included interview codes. Interviewee sequence number assigned by me was indicated in brackets. Similarly to the situation with policy documents, certain ideas came out from many interviews. This was reflected in a list of the numbers of interviewees in brackets.

The necessity to reread data multiple times made manual coding the most logical type of coding. In addition, I was not interested in the number of times a certain idea was mentioned in data sources that could have been counted by such software as *NVivo*. It was the strength and relevance of ideas to my focus that mattered the most. This brings me to an important question raised by Gomm (2008). The author asks what difference there is between the code and the theme, and what counts as evidence of a theme.

There is no consensus in the theoretical literature on thematic analysis about the relationship between the code and the theme. My position aligns with Rubin and Rubin (2012) who suggest that codes are brief and concrete categories from which broader themes can be inferred. My main two categories were Bologna actors and Bologna policy instruments. The categories were based on the adapted

framework of Dolowitz and Marsh (2000), which was explained in Chapter 2. The sub-codes were different actors and instruments, respectively. Each sub-code was followed by a list of sub-sub-codes to denote the issues that arose around the sub-codes. For instance, 'challenges around academic mobility that were not solved by the new credit system' was a sub-sub-code for the 'credit system' which was a sub-code for the code entitled 'higher education instruments.'

The presentation of the findings of this research in the next two Chapters follows the logic of the coding process. However, given an excessive amount of the sub-codes (different actors and instruments), only exemplary cases of them will be discussed. Further on, three main themes were inferred from these codes. These three main ideas are explained in the discussion Chapter as the pillars of the main argument of this thesis.

## **4.7. Ethical considerations**

Each interview is supposed to be preceded by the informed consent of the interviewee to participate in a study (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Although Rubin and Rubin (2012) claim that an informed consent with the statement of confidentiality can facilitate interview relationships, the opposite proved to be the case in the Ukrainian context. I had to abandon using formal written information sheets and consent forms at the beginning of my pilot study because they obviously jeopardised the relationships with potential interviewees. With the first three representatives from institution A, I tried using information sheets and consent forms, which were designed on a single page. Two of them offered to proceed right away with the interview without signing the consent form. Another interviewee refused to fill in a consent form and to be interviewed.

This may be associated with interviewees' anxiety about confidentiality of their responses. It was not reduced but rather increased by the prospect of filling out a consent form even though it included a statement of anonymity. This anxiety could be related to Fimyar's (2008) claim about the existence of a veiled tactics of surveillance and censorship in Ukraine which dictates the idea that national level policy-makers' decisions should not be criticised and opposed. Although the interviews did not necessarily involve criticising national policy-makers, the respondents felt anxious putting their name and signature on the consent form.

I made the decision not to ask interviewees to sign informed consent forms. Interviewees were given all the information about this research in an informal way

either on the phone or via e-mail before the interview. Informed consent to participate in the interview, the results of which would stay anonymous with the opportunity to withdraw at any stage, was obtained also either over the phone or e-mail without any forms. The absence of official forms lowered the likelihood of tension in the interview relationships.

This anxiety was reduced but it did not vanish completely. Participants frequently asked me why I chose them in particular, even after I provided information about my research and explained why I targeted certain higher education actors. The explanation of my sampling procedure was usually enough to clarify uncertainty. However, there were a couple of cases when instructors refused to participate in interviews explaining that they 'do not have a right' to answer interview questions. They recommended that I turned to their 'bosses' – academic managers.

I had to treat the confidentiality of the data with particular caution because of the anxiety of interviewees. Confidentiality was ensured by keeping names and posts of all the interviewees anonymous. Apart from this, a possibility of indirect ways of identifying respondents from the presentation of findings in the thesis is prevented by not revealing the names of the higher education institutions at which interviews took place. I do refer to the names of other establishments; however, I do not specify the roles of interviewees there. Keeping higher education institutions anonymous allows for the protection of the individuals' identity. Particularly important here are the cases of individuals who have cross-membership at higher education institutions and the establishments at other clusters. Moreover, I have been the only person who has had access to the raw data.

The results of this research have been used in this thesis and related publications. However, I decided to retain the data after the completion of this study in case they are needed for further research. Interviewees' permission will be obtained to use these data again.

## **4.8. Limitations**

The discussion of the research methods above has pointed to certain weaknesses of the design of this study. Research limitations are methodological difficulties that may affect the accuracy and generalisability of research findings. The weaknesses of the design of this research are mainly related to the sampling procedures.

One major weakness of this research is in the generalisability of its sample of higher education institutions. The two universities chosen for this study are taken as a basis for speculating about the Bologna reform of the higher education in Ukraine overall. Moreover, only a limited number of documents was found at these two universities. It is also important to remember that Bologna was introduced at these institutions far earlier than in many others. The institutions that did not participate in the Bologna pilot vary in the time they started the reform, their type, and source of funding. Hence, they might have their own peculiarities in dealing with Bologna. Moreover, there might be differences in how all 59 institutions that participated in the Bologna pilot have been dealing with the reform later on. All of this might question the generalisability of findings from the two universities. It can be questioned, though, only to an extent. Taking into account the high degree of centralisation in the higher education sector in Ukraine, it can be suggested that there must be some similarity between the ways in which the reform proceeded at the two institutions chosen for this study and all other institutions. Apart from this, this research only technically involved just two universities. In fact, 14 higher education institutions in total were represented in this study because some interviewees from other establishments, especially, from the civil sector, were also members of different higher education institutions.

The sample of the central governing bodies might also have weaknesses. Since most of the interviewees were put in contact with me through someone else, I could have received answers from the people who belong to one circle of acquaintances and who share common interests. Moreover, since it was impossible to gain access to many members of the Ministerial consultative bodies, I could base my conclusions about their work and relationships with the Ministry only on what other interviewees said about these establishments.

## **4.9. Conclusion**

This Chapter has presented methodological considerations associated with designing this research. I have characterised the case of Ukraine as instrumental because, beside the contribution it makes to how we see the Bologna reform in Ukraine itself, this case study is important for understanding wider Europeanisation issues.

I have also explained the main data collection methods – conducting interviews and identifying policy texts – and how I applied thematic analysis to these two types of data. This rough distinction between the two types of methods

was made for the sake of providing detailed accounts of data collection and analysis procedures. However, these procedures were intertwined to a great extent in practice. I have discussed data collection and analysis methods in light of the lessons learnt during the pilot study, and the challenges I faced during the main phase of data collection. I have also outlined limitations of this study. They pertain to the interviewee samples, primarily with regard to higher education institutions and representatives from the central governing bodies.

The discussion of the research methodology above as well as the introductory Chapter was accompanied by some basic information about the context of Ukraine. We already know that Ukraine obtained its independence in 1991, and that it has been going through a multifaceted transition afterwards. This transition has been characterised by a strong contextual contingency (such as centralisation and censorship in different areas of public administration) and a drive for change. We also know about the most vivid expressions of the existence of both the contingency and the drive for change – the revolutions of 2004, 2013-2014 and the current war in the east of Ukraine. It is now timely to move on to a more detailed account of the general political landscape of Ukraine and the analysis of the Bologna reform in Ukraine.

# Chapter 5

## Major actors in the Bologna reform in Ukraine

### 5.1. Introduction

One of the main aims of this Chapter is to advance our knowledge about the broader political landscape of Ukraine and major actors in it. Relevant literature is reviewed in order to add more details to the brief overview of the Ukrainian setting that was provided earlier in the thesis. Another major aim here is to present findings about the changing relationships among higher education actors in Ukraine as well as the roles they play in the Bologna Process.

The development of Ukraine since its independence has been happening in the context of cooperation both with Russia and the European Union (EU). The cooperation with the EU seems to be more prevalent at the discursive plane, whereas close ties with Russia, established back in the Soviet times, have been working more in practice.

Empirical findings demonstrate that this broader political tendency of preserving the old established practices while introducing some selective modernisation is also reflected in higher education. The old clusters of higher education actors, and the pre-Bologna relationships amongst most of them have been reproduced during the Bologna reform. At the same time, such a reproduction of the old during the reform was only partial. The Bologna Process has also been changing the Ukrainian higher education system by altering the relationships among some actors to an extent.

### 5.2. Political context

This section reviews literature about the Ukrainian general political context and its major actors. It is demonstrated here that the Ukrainian context has been characterised by the appearance of the Europeanisation discourse along with the existence of the previously established ideology, practices of centralisation and censorship, as well as cooperation with Russia.



Since the time when Ukraine got its independence, there were all together five Presidents in Ukraine: Mr. Kravchuk, Mr. Kuchma, Mr. Yushchenko, Mr. Yanukovych, and Mr. Poroshenko. The first and third Presidents – Mr. Kravchuk and Mr. Yushchenko – were relatively democratic and interested in strengthening the independent position of Ukraine in international relations (Fimyar, 2008; Kuzio, 2012). The current President, Mr. Poroshenko, could perhaps fall in the same category. He appears to promote similar values as those two Presidents and to set himself in opposition to Mr. Kuchma and Mr. Yanukovych. These latter Presidents, on the contrary, are seen as helping to maintain a pro-Russian and authoritarian regime (Fimyar, 2008; D'Anieri, 2012).

In addition to the figure of the President, state power in Ukraine is represented by three branches of power:

- the legislative branch (the Parliament called the Supreme Council);
- the executive branch (the Government – the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine – formed by the President and chaired by Prime Minister);
- the juridical branch (the Supreme Court of Ukraine).

Ukraine has been a parliamentary-presidential republic since independence. It was the presidential-parliamentary republic only during 2010-2014. The latter one grants more power to the President, including the right to appoint governmental officials (Kuzio, 2012).

Both forms of governing presuppose democracy. Despite this, there has been a huge communication gap between the central bodies of governing and the public. In particular, Chudowsky and Kuzio (2003) point out a gap between the state and the rest of the Ukrainian society, which is expressed in 'total submergence' of the public to the state (p.276). Such a situation is a logical consequence of the 'communist legacy of terror' which is associated with the passivity of the civil society and low trust in the state (Chudowsky and Kuzio, 2003). Moreover, Fimyar (2010) makes a claim about 'the (un)importance of public opinion' in policy-making (p.158).

The parliamentary-presidential type of governing has prevailed in Ukraine, presupposing a greater power of the Parliament in relation to the President. In practice, however, Ukraine has been characterised during the time of both types of republics by a strong gravitation of power towards the President and a circle of his loyal individuals in the Parliament and the Government (Protsyk, 2003; Wolczuk, 2009). There are claims that the Ukrainian President, the Government and the

majority of the Parliament are usually a group of upholders of the same beliefs and ideology (Kuzio, 2012).

This ideology seems to be associated with promoting nation-building through the search of affiliations. It was perhaps an unavoidable tendency because of the long history of being part of the empire – the Soviet Union. Nation-building in Ukraine has been characterised by two seemingly contradicting tendencies.

One of them has been the discourse about Europeanisation and the need to overcome the Soviet past (Fimyar, 2008). Perhaps one of the biggest climaxes in the development of this discourse was declaring in 1994 the state goal to obtain membership in the European Union (EU). According to Wolczuk (2004), Ukraine was the first post-Soviet state, which had been in the Soviet Union since its inception, to express the intention to join the EU in 1990s.

Since then, Ukraine became involved in a number of Ukraine-EU cooperation agreements. The most significant of them, according to the literature, are the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (1994) and the European Neighbourhood Policy (2005). They provided Ukraine with an opportunity for 'privileged relationships [with the EU], building upon a mutual commitment to common values' (Kochenov, 2011: p.584). Nevertheless, Janmaat (2008) states that 'Various scandals and violations of human rights... led to severing of ties with the West, leaving the regime with no other option but to strengthen its relations with Russia in order to avoid international isolation' (p.19). Those scandals and violations might indeed, hypothetically, been deliberate by the state authorities to create the boundary between Ukrainian and Western cooperation for a long time to ensure Ukraine's partnership with Russia and to ensure that Ukraine did not depart too much from the established practices of policy-making.

The motivations behind the declarations of the Ukrainian higher authorities about the goal of Ukraine to join the EU were probably not strong. A couple of authors emphasise that Ukraine does not want membership in the EU (Protsyk, 2003; Browning and Christou, 2010). In practice, European integration goals are 'a rather hollow-sounding policy, driven by a non-commitment president, and heavily based on a strategy of negotiating with Brussels rather than implementing far-reaching domestic reform' (Wolczuk, 2009: p.194).

These issues are related to the fact that Ukraine has been cooperating closely with Russia, besides the discourse of the need to confront the Soviet legacies by Europeanisation. The cooperation of Ukrainian authorities with Russia seems to be a

key factor that contributed to maintaining centralisation and censorship in policy-making (Janmaat, 2008). Kuzio (2012) argues that the preservation of cooperation with Russia or dependency on it is associated with the reluctance of Ukrainian state authorities to depart from the Soviet past in wider sense. So, the cooperation with Russia discussed below is, in a sense, a representation of the preservation of the Soviet legacies.

Evidently, Ukraine has been oriented towards both the EU and Russia in foreign policy-making. The expression 'muddling through' is used by D'Anieri (2012: p.452) and Kuzio (2012: p.430) to denote Ukraine's progress in its foreign policy in the context of such policy-making tactics. Wolczuk (2004) dwells on Ukraine's 'contradictory stance' because of its wedged position between the EU and Russia (p.5). The main features of the internal and external politics of Ukraine are claimed to be weakness, inertia and stagnation (Tsygankov, 2007; Kuzio, 2012).

The orientation in the direction of both the EU and Russia has been the case not only in the choices of central governing bodies in leading internal and external politics of Ukraine. A similar division is prone to the general preferences of the population in Ukraine. The Orange Revolution debates and all following elaborations on Ukrainian politics tend to be closely associated with the discussion of domestic cleavages of the country. Janmaat (2008) claims that there are regional differences in Ukraine – its western part expresses more nation-building and pro-EU aspirations whilst the East is generally pro-Russian and nostalgic about the Soviet past. Eastern Ukrainian aspirations are more discussed in the literature, perhaps implying that the correlation of the pro-Russian-ness with anti-nationalism and anti-European-ness is an interesting phenomenon. For instance, Kuzio (2011) mentions 'Soviet identity' of eastern Ukraine (p.223). Additionally, the author claims that 'The extensive use of East versus West strategies since 2004 has encouraged negative voting; that is, citizens who vote *against* rather than in support of a candidate or party/bloc' (p.227). In other words, the east-west divide discourse produced by state officials was a strategy to spice up possibly conflicting identities and appropriate them in the voting process. This suggests that the discourse of the east-west divide might be stronger than what happens in practice or at least looks differently in practice. The recent events in Ukraine demonstrated that it is mainly a small most Eastern part of Ukraine that could be seen as having the views that are radically different from those in the rest of the country.

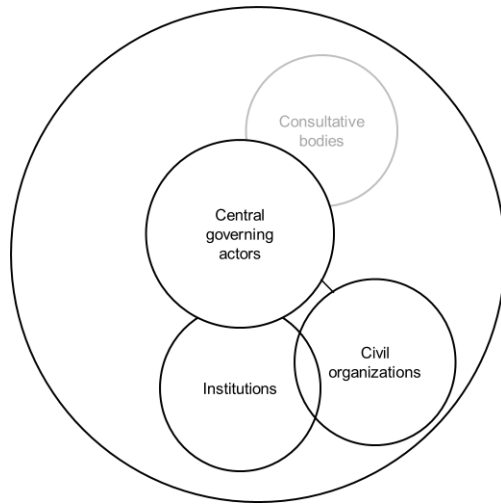
Taking the above into consideration, the overall Ukrainian political landscape after the country became independent has been characterised by the preservation of the old tendencies, such as, for instance, gravitation towards

supporting connections with Russia, and the introduction of new ones, such as supporting the idea of joining the EU. Both the expressions of the old and the new tendencies have been guided and shaped by each other, or – more precisely – the interrelationship between each other. Such a picture suggests that the developments in specific policy areas of Ukraine, such as in higher education, might follow a similar pattern. However, what exactly is seen as the old and the new might differ.

This Chapter, relying on the empirical findings of this research, further demonstrates that in Bologna the old clusters of higher education actors, and the pre-Bologna relationships amongst most of them have been partially *reproduced* during the Bologna reform. In particular, the cluster of the central policy-making bodies was the most influential in higher education policy-making before Bologna. It continues to exert great control over higher education institutions, and it has remained key in directing the development of the Bologna policy instruments. In addition, there still exists a cooperation gap between the central governing bodies and the majority of civil sector organisations. At the same time, this Chapter shows that such a reproduction of the pre-Bologna actors and their relationships during the reform has been only partial. As we will see, the Bologna Process has also been *changing* the Ukrainian higher education system by altering the relationships among some actors to an extent. Specifically, the Bologna reform has been shifting power relations within the central bodies of policy-making, allowing the Ministry of Education and Science to become the most influential amongst them. The Bologna Process has been facilitating the emergence of new consultative bodies for the central policy-making actors. Bologna has also been promoting the enlargement of and cooperation within the civil sector, between the civil sector and higher education institutions, and among Ukrainian and foreign higher education institutions. It has been also promoting active cooperation between at least one civil sector organisation and the Ministry.

It was mentioned in Chapter 4 that the system of higher education actors in Ukraine before and during Bologna was seen as consisting of three groups of actors: the central policy-making bodies, non-governmental organisations, and higher education institutions (Kremen, Nikolajenko, Stepko, & European Centre for Higher Education (UNESCO), 2006). My research has confirmed the existence of these groups of actors in Bologna. Additionally, this study has identified another group – consultative bodies of the central policy-making actors (see Figure 2 below). The division of the higher education actors into four clusters is used in this Chapter to present the findings of this research. This division is instrumental. The boundaries of these clusters are not well-defined in reality due to frequent cases of mobility and cross-membership of individuals among different actors and clusters of actors.

Figure 2: Clusters of the Bologna actors in Ukraine



### 5.3. The central governing bodies

After Ukraine obtained its independence in 1991 following the collapse of the Soviet Union, it experienced difficulties in moving away from the centralised control in higher education, like in all other aspects of public administration (Jones, 2000). The overview of the political system of Ukraine above provided some information about who belonged to the central governing bodies in Ukraine in general. At the outset of the Ukrainian independence, the central policy-making bodies specifically in higher education also included the President, the Parliament, and the Government. It is also worth mentioning that the Government consists of different ministries. The Ministry of Education and Science and a few other ministries cooperated among one another in governing higher education in certain areas (Kremen et al., 2006; Andreichuk, 2007; Pshenychna, 2009).

The roles of these actors in higher education were associated with their general responsibilities in relation to the three branches of state power: legislative, executive and juridical. According to the “Constitution of Ukraine” (1996), the Government executed legislation, enacted by the Parliament under the supervision of the President. The Ministry of Education and Science was primarily responsible for day to day matters of higher education and functioned as the point of contact between the central governing bodies and higher education institutions (Kremen et

al., 2006).

The findings of this research show that all of these actors in the central governing bodies have remained formally involved in the higher education matters in Ukraine throughout the Bologna Process. The findings also show that the Ministry of Education and Science has been gaining more power in directing the development of higher education in the course of implementing the Bologna action lines. At the same time, the Ministry has been gradually allowing itself a small degree of cooperation with other clusters of actors. The main roles of all of the central governing actors in Bologna, found out during this research, are summarised in Table 3. The role of the Ministry of Education and Science is discussed in greater detail below.

Table 3: Central governing bodies and their roles in the Bologna Process

<i>Actor</i>	<i>Main role in Bologna</i>
President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following the Congress of Education Policy-makers, organised by the Ministry of Education and Science, the President confirmed the National Doctrine of Education Development (“Presidential order №347,” 2002). The aim to integrate into ‘the European education space’ was outlined in this Doctrine.</li> </ul>
Parliament	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Parliamentary Committee of Education and Science Matters participated in the production of four out of seven drafts of the new law regarding higher education to legalise some Bologna principles (№9655-1, 2011; №9655-2, 2012; №1187-1, 2013 and №1187-2, 2013).</li> <li>The same Committee initiated one Bologna related correction in the old “Law about Higher Education” before the passing of the new Law in 2014. The correction was related to expanding the scope of students’ self-government. Students were granted the right to participate in the confirmation of the membership of the Scientific Councils at institutions (“Law about Higher Education,” 2002, correction №9, 2010).</li> </ul>
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following the commencement of the Bologna pilot, the Prime Minister initiated the creation of the Interdepartmental Commission for the Support of the Bologna Process in 2004 (“Governmental resolution №1131,” 2004). In 2006, the Prime Minister also initiated changes in membership at the Interdepartmental Commission – it previously included only representatives from different Ministries (“Governmental resolution №82,” 2006). This Commission was cancelled in 2013 (“Governmental resolution №180,” 2013).</li> <li>The Prime Minister initiated the creation of a working group to</li> </ul>

	develop the national qualifications framework – a Bologna instrument (e.g., “Governmental resolution №1225,” 2010).
Ministry of Education and Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Minister and three other Ministerial representatives attended the Bologna international conference in 2003 as observers. Afterwards, the Minister initiated the Bologna pilot project which lasted from 2004 to 2008 (“Ministerial decree №48,” 2004).</li> <li>• The Ministry signed the official membership of Ukraine in the Bologna Process in 2005 (“Bergen communique,” 2005).</li> <li>• The Minister initiated the implementation of most of the Bologna instruments.</li> <li>• The Ministry initiated and controlled the production of drafts for the new Law regarding higher education.</li> </ul>
Other ministries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several ministries were responsible for specialised institutions (e.g., the governing of medical institutions by the Ministry of Health Care) and cooperated with the Ministry of Education and Science during the Bologna Process.</li> <li>• Other ministries (e.g., External Affairs, Economics, Finance, Justice, Culture and Tourism, Agrarian Politics, Internal Affairs, and Health Care) were formally included in the membership of the Interdepartmental Commission mentioned above. However, the findings of this research suggest that this Commission was a non-functioning actor.</li> <li>• The ministries of Justice, Internal Affairs, and Economics participated in agreements for international cooperation in higher education and diploma recognition (“Law about International Agreements,” 2004).</li> </ul>

### **5.3.1. The Ministry of Education and Science**

The Ministry of Education and Science did most out of all central actors to introduce and further support Bologna in Ukraine. It organised the All-Ukrainian Congress of Education Policy-makers and Academic Managers of Higher Education Institutions in 2001 (Kremen et al., 2006). During the Congress, consensus was reached about the plan for Ukraine to join the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and Europeanise Ukrainian higher education. The National Doctrine of Education Development, adopted at the Congress, was later confirmed by the President (“Presidential order №347,” 2002). The aim to integrate into ‘the European education space’ was outlined in this Doctrine.

Further, the-then Minister of Education and Science with three other ministerial officials attended the international EHEA ministerial conference in 2003 as observers (“Berlin conference,” 2003). None of these individuals were available

for interviews during data collection, so the logic behind their subsequent actions can be only inferred. Nevertheless, the representatives of the Ministry who were interviewed suggested that:

*It was important to show the world that we wanted to keep up the pace with other countries and implement Bologna. The best way to show that was to start implementing it. We tried it through the pilot project. It went well, and we joined the Bologna Process in 2005 (i.32).*

The Ministry initiated the Bologna pilot project in Ukraine at 59 universities in 2004 ("Ministerial decree №48," 2004). This was done to meet the eligibility criteria for the EHEA membership application. It was stated in the communique of the Berlin conference that 'countries party to the European Cultural Convention shall be eligible for membership of the EHEA provided that they at the same time declare their willingness to pursue and implement the objectives of the Bologna Process in their own systems of higher education' ("Berlin communique," 2003: p.8). Ukraine had already ratified the European Cultural Convention back in 1994. This event was positioned as a step to demonstrate Ukraine's willingness to join the European Union (EU) ("Parliamentary resolution №27," 1994). However, the ratification of the European Cultural Convention generally means agreement to adhere to the European values of democracy and the rule of law. Besides, in order to fully qualify for the EHEA membership application, it was also necessary to declare the willingness of Ukraine to pursue the Bologna principles. The Bologna pilot project that the Ministry arranged was apparently the way in which the Ministry demonstrated such willingness.

The pilot project presupposed the introduction of a number of initiatives quite quickly. They included: the implementation of the credit-module system; the creation of the recommendations for the improvement of the cycles of the study process; the development of higher education standards; the development of the diploma supplement, and some others. These examples will be discussed in detail later. However, what is important here is that the overarching aim of all of them was the Europeanisation of higher education. According to the pilot project timeline, all the tasks should have been fulfilled within one year – by the end of 2004. It marked the end of the first phase of the pilot project. The second phase of the pilot was supposed to last till 2008 and to be dedicated to making corrections and improvements in the initiatives ("Ministerial decree №48," 2004 and "Ministerial decree №49," 2004). The pilot project, primarily its first phase, was characterised by active document production by the Ministry:

*...a pile of state documents appeared – mainly decrees of the Minister, but also some*



*resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers... This phase lasted up to, I think, 2005-2006. There are a lot of such documents (i.29, current academic manager at a university, ex-member of the Parliamentary Committee of Education and Science Matters).*

One of the documents that the Ministry produced was a “National Bologna Implementation report” (2004). The Ministry submitted it to the Bologna Secretariat, most likely along with the application for the membership of Ukraine in the EHEA. Ukraine officially joined the Bologna Process at the EHEA international conference in 2005 in Bergen (“Bergen communique,” 2005). This is the justification for joining Bologna by Ukraine, provided by an ex-worker of the Ministry:

*The Bologna principles have been important for us. The Bologna Process has been targeting the achievement of transparency in educational systems of different countries and comparability of their degrees and qualifications. It presupposes the modernisation of our old higher education system and a necessary step towards Europeanisation... of the Ukrainian society... Ukraine chose the European direction of development long time ago (i.33, current academic manager at a university, ex-representative of the Ministry).*

This is a vivid example of how Europeanisation discourse has been used by the Ministry to justify its work towards Bologna, and how Bologna is positioned by the Ministry as part of Ukrainian movement towards eventually joining the EU. The analysis below will demonstrate that in practice Europeanisation for the Ministry did not mean moving away from the established conventions in higher education.

There are currently 20 units within the Ministry of Education and Science. Since this Ministry is responsible for all levels of education, not all of these units deal with higher education. The Minister and the Department of Higher Education seem to have been key in Bologna. There have been five Ministers since Bologna was initiated – Vasyl Kremen, Stanislav Nikolayenko, Ivan Vakarchuk, Dmytro Tabachnyk, and Serhiy Kvit. Besides, judging from the description of the roles of other Ministerial units on the Ministerial website (“Ministry of Education and Science,” 2012), some work related to higher education might have also been contributed by the Department of Vocational Education, the Department of Scientific-technical Development, the Department of Innovative Activities and Transfer of Methods, the Office of Licensing and Accreditation, and the Office of International Relations.

The Minister and the Department of Higher Education, that seem to have been the most central in the work of the Ministry on Bologna, demonstrated little consideration of the opinions of other actors in the development of Bologna. While little consideration has been made, the Minister and the Department of Higher Education (usually jointly referred to as *the Ministry* throughout this thesis) did

engage in some sort of cooperation with other actors in the Bologna Process. The first case of it was the All-Ukrainian Congress of Education Policy-makers and Academic Managers of Higher Education Institutions, where it was agreed that the Bologna Process should be introduced in Ukraine.

In another example of cooperation of the Ministry with other actors beyond the central governing bodies, Ukraine was jointly represented at the EHEA international conferences by Ministerial officials and the respective representatives from Ukrainian institutions and civil organisations. The information on the exact representation of the Ukrainian delegation at the EHEA conferences is not available on the websites of these conferences. Neither could any of my respondents provide a full account of this matter. The findings, however, suggest that the representatives of some Ukrainian establishments, which do not belong to the central governing bodies, attend these conferences alongside Ministerial officials. In particular, a representative of a students' organisation participated in a conference alongside Ministerial officials. This individual mentioned the contribution of the students' organisation to the Bologna communiqués. This suggests that the students' organisation in Ukraine and the Ministry were part of the Ukrainian delegation at the conferences.

*We are members of the European Students' Union, so we participate in the creation of all the declarations and communiqués that are approved by ministers at the conferences... We want to use the principles of Bologna to help push reforms in the national system of higher education. However, we cannot say that our actions have been mega-effective because of the active resistance of the Ministry to cooperate. We cooperated with the Ministry in traveling to a conference. That was it more or less (i.37, representative of the Ukrainian Association of Students' Self-Government).*

One more example of how the Ministry cooperates with other actors in Bologna is through the participation in working groups. Their purpose is to develop Bologna instruments (e.g., "Governmental resolution №1225," 2010). In the next Chapter, I will discuss in more detail how the Ministry uses these working groups to push its ideas regarding the implementation of the Bologna action lines.

Finally, the Ministry also cooperated with other clusters of actors to produce a draft Law regarding higher education. The Ministry initiated the creation of the first draft ("Draft law №7486-1," 2010), which was meant to be adopted as a new Law about Higher Education in substitution for the old Law (2002). It was necessary to legalise the innovations, for instance, the credit system, that had already been implemented by the Ministry through its decrees. The new Law was also necessary to introduce some innovations related to, for example, state funding of higher

education. The first Ministerial draft, however, faced strong opposition from institutions, non-state organisations, and the-then political opposition which was a minority in Parliament. They opposed state funding cuts for higher education institutions (Smyrnov, 2013).

Consequently, five more drafts were produced separately by the Ministry, the political opposition in Parliament, and a deputy from the majority in Parliament (see Table 4 below). The analysis of these drafts demonstrates that all of them came to similar conclusions about many Bologna instruments that had already been introduced by the Ministry in its decrees during and after the Bologna pilot. These drafts differed, however, in their perspective on how to fund higher education institutions. The drafts were produced one after another, creating a scene of battle between the two suggestions. One of the suggestions was to either keep the old arrangements of funding institutions from the state budget, or to slightly reduce the amount of funding. The other suggestion – from the Ministry and a deputy from the majority party in Parliament – was to significantly reduce state funding for institutions. It was suggested in order to promote institutional autonomy in looking for the sources of funding. There was no consensus between the majority in Parliament, which was also supported by the Government and the Ministry, and the minority in Parliament. The anxiety from institutions surrounding the prospect of funding cuts triggered public resistance which took the form of public street demonstrations and written petitions to the Ministry to denounce the drafts that could lead to the reduction of funding (Smyrnov, 2013).

Table 4: List of draft Laws

<i>Draft Law (№)</i>	<i>Date of registration at the Parliament</i>	<i>Main initiators</i>
7486-1	22.12.2010	The Ministry
9655	28.12.2011	The Ministry
9655-1	30.12.2011	Political opposition in the Parliament
9655-2	06.01.2012	Deputy, who is a supporter of the majority in the Parliament
1187	28.12.2012	The Ministry
1187-1	11.01.2013	Political opposition in the Parliament
1187-2	21.01.2013	Cross-cluster group

These disagreements finally motivated the Ministry to create a diverse group consisting of representatives from different clusters of actors to reach a common consensus. A resulting draft (№1187-2, 2013) was eventually passed as the new Law

in 2014. The exact ways in which the Law positions the Bologna instruments will be explained in the next Chapter.

These findings demonstrate that centralisation in most of the work carried out by the central cluster continued, while some other aspects of its work underwent changes in the Bologna context. These central actors, having existed before Bologna, continue to play a crucial role in steering higher education developments in Ukraine. However, the relationships existing within the central governing bodies have continued to evolve following the increase of the directive power of the Ministry. At the same time, the Ministry has been gradually allowing itself a small degree of cooperation with other clusters of actors.

## 5.4. Consultative actors

After discussing the central governing bodies in Bologna and analysing the role of the Ministry, I move on to the analysis of the cluster of consultative actors. As their name suggests, these actors are supposed to advise the central governing bodies in education policy-making. A limited number of studies mentioned some of the actors that could be seen to belong to this cluster (e.g., Kremen et al., 2006; Luhovy, 2014). However, these studies do not distinguish these actors as a relatively distinct cluster either before or during Bologna. My study suggests that these establishments existed before Bologna as a relatively distinct cluster and changed by incorporating more actors during the recent higher education reform.

Consultative bodies existed within and beyond the Ministry before Bologna. There used to be, for instance, the Higher Attestation Commission, which held the status of a consultative body of the Ministry *within* it. It was later substituted by the Attestation Collegium (Luhovy, 2014). Subsequently, this establishment and some others were replaced by the Independent Quality Assurance Agency ("Law about Higher Education," 2014). An external body – the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences – was created in 1992 by the-then President of Ukraine to conduct research in the area of pedagogy, and to advise the Ministry in certain matters related to pedagogy (Kremen et al., 2006).

There is no evidence about how much the advice from the consultative bodies (such as the Academy and the Higher Attestation Commission) has been considered in policy-making by the Ministry or other central governing bodies. The only representative of the Academy who first agreed to be interviewed could not be reached again to participate in the interview. However, the analysis of the

membership of the Academy revealed some connections between the Ministry and the Academy. In particular, cross-membership of certain individuals existed – the current president of the Academy was also the ex-Minister of Education and Science. As such, while the Academy is not formally affiliated with the Ministry (Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, 2015), the advice that the Academy provides may not be completely independent of the views of the Ministry. The advice of the internal consultative bodies in the Ministry has been perhaps considered by the Minister when compiling decrees, since the Minister does not have strong expertise in all the areas of education, and since the internal consultative bodies have been actually the units of the Ministry itself.

When Bologna began, the Ministry started establishing consultative bodies that would advise the Ministry specifically in issues related to Bologna. This signifies that the practice of the Ministry to create consultants for itself was preserved. The practice of the Ministry of ‘having its people’ in the consultative bodies remained too. Thus, centralisation in higher education persisted – consultancy for the central governing bodies could be provided only by those actors that were created by the central actors for this purpose. Moreover, the creation of at least some of the new establishments aimed to only imitate the consultancy process, while in practice, they were non-functioning. There is no evidence to suggest a similar tendency before the Bologna Process.

It will be shown in the rest of this section that the Bologna Process generated the creation of a range of new consultative members, as found out during this research. In Table 5 below, I provide an illustrative view of the range of consultative bodies. A more detailed analysis of two most significant examples will follow. These examples will demonstrate how centralisation in the system of the higher education actors is preserved in Bologna, and how the appearance of consultancy may sometimes be given by the creation of some actors, such as the national Bologna Follow-up Group.

Table 5: Consultative bodies of the central governing cluster and their roles in Bologna

<i>Actor</i>	<i>Role</i>
The National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was established in 1992 by the President to conduct research in the area of pedagogy (Kremen et al., 2006).</li> <li>• The Academy has been cooperating with the Ministry in developing curricula before Bologna. During Bologna, the Academy was involved in the creation of a draft Law regarding the after-diploma education, which is linked to the Bologna</li> </ul>

	lifelong learning instrument (“Programme of joint activities,” 2011). The Academy was also involved in the development of two Bologna instruments: the national qualifications frameworks and the diploma supplement (i.28).
The Bologna Follow-up Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It appears to be a non-functioning actor.</li> </ul>
The Ukrainian Centre of Quality Assurance Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was established in 2005 in response to the Doctrine of Education Development (Ukrainian Centre of Quality Assurance Assessment, 2007).</li> <li>• It has been responsible for developing students’ assessment in different subject areas (“Ministerial decree №948,” 2007).</li> </ul>
The Institute of Innovative Technologies and Content of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was established in 2006 (“Governmental ordinance №108,” 2006) in place of the Scientific Advisory Centre of Higher Education to coordinate the development of three Bologna instruments (“Ministerial decree №49,” 2004).</li> <li>• The Institute is responsible for defining innovative student-centred methods of teaching. They are associated with a Bologna instrument, namely the student-centred education (“Governmental ordinance №108,” 2006).</li> </ul>
The Student Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was created by the Ministry in 2013 to encourage formal student involvement in the development of the state higher education policies (“Ministerial decree №1260,” 2013).</li> <li>• A limited influence of this actor on the decisions of the Ministry is suggested by interviewees from the civil sector (e.g., i.37).</li> </ul>
The ENIC (European Network of Information Centres) National Information Centre of Academic Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was created in 2011 ‘to ensure free access of citizens, interested actors and states... to the information about the peculiarities of the integration of the national system of education into the European education space’ (“Governmental regulation №924,” 2011).</li> <li>• It is owned by the Ministry (ENIC Ukraine, 2011) and appears to be a non-functioning actor.</li> </ul>
The National Quality Assurance Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was established in 2014 under the new Law about Higher Education (2014) to function independently from the Ministry but to cooperate with it in quality assurance, for instance, in the areas of licensing of institutions and accreditation of study programmes. Key decisions are to be made by the Agency, and the bureaucracy to follow up on these decisions is to be conducted by the Ministry.</li> </ul>

#### **5.4.1. The Scientific Advisory Centre of Higher Education**

The discussion of the Scientific Advisory Centre of Higher Education aims to illustrate how the new consultative bodies were established and developed in Bologna, and how the Ministry has been controlling the consultancy it receives. The Scientific Advisory Centre of Higher Education was changed significantly by the central governing bodies during the course of Bologna.

This actor was established as a consultant for the Ministry at the start of the Bologna pilot. The Scientific Advisory Centre was intended to provide advice to the Ministry in developing at least three Bologna instruments – the credit-module system, the diploma supplement, and quality assurance policy ideas (“Ministerial decree №49,” 2004). The development of these instruments was part of the pilot project. The Scientific Advisory Centre was to assist the Ministry in making executive documents; supporting the pilot; developing higher education standards in the Bologna context; conducting the analysis of foreign experience in using credits; preparing information for institutions about using credits; and organising conferences and seminars about the implementation of the credit-module system for the institutions. The deadline for most of these tasks was 2005. How effective the cooperation of the Scientific Advisory Centre in Higher Education with the Ministry was, and whether all the deadlines were met, remains an open question.

The Scientific Advisory Centre failed to create, for instance, a template of the Bologna diploma supplement, until the Ministry became involved in its creation. According to “Ministerial decree №49” (2004), the Scientific Advisory Centre was tasked to create a template of the diploma supplement ‘corresponding to the European template’ in 2004. This task was probably not fulfilled since a very similar task was delegated to it just a few years later. The Minister delegated this task again to the Scientific Advisory Centre (“Ministerial decree №612,” 2007). This establishment failed to do what was requested again, and then the task was set for the third time (“Ministerial decree №275,” 2010). This time, however, the task was delegated to a working group that involved representatives from different actors, including the Ministry itself.

The consequent failures of the Scientific Advisory Centre to cope with the tasks might be related to the centralisation of higher education. It is unlikely, perhaps, to have been related to the level of competency of its workers, since many of them were related with the Ministry:

*We have assistants at the Institute of Innovative Technologies. It used to be called the Advisory Centre earlier. We renamed it to put more emphasis on the idea of innovations*

*and to widen its scope of work... This establishment is not part of the Ministry, but it is not completely separated from us. It is related. It helps. It was particularly helpful at the beginning of the Bologna Process... We have some reliable colleagues working there. Some of them are our ex-workers from the Ministry or our current workers... I myself was part of the Advisory Centre for a while, but I have other responsibilities now, so I am not there anymore... They [the representatives of the Scientific Advisory Centre] struggled a bit, like everyone else in the country because the Bologna Process was something completely new for us (i.32, Ministerial representative).*

The reason behind this failure is not particularly clear. Most of the representatives of the Scientific Advisory Centre were either Ministerial representatives as well, or people closely affiliated with the Ministry. The failure of the Scientific Advisory Centre to do what it was supposed to might have been actually expected and/or encouraged by the Ministry. Discouraging a more horizontal mode of decision-making was perhaps a strategic move, as was the establishment of the Scientific Advisory Centre itself. Delegating tasks to this new establishment was a way to postpone dealing with them until later. So in practice, policy implementation itself was suspended, whilst the process only appeared to be underway with the apparent instigation of the Scientific Advisory Centre.

As discussed in the quotation above, the Institute of Innovative Technologies and Content of Education was created by Governmental ordinance №108 (2006) to replace the Scientific Advisory Centre of Higher Education. The Institute, according to its website, is subordinated to the Ministry and has a variety of tasks (Institute of Innovative Technologies and Content of Education, 2013). One of them is the continual provision of consultancy to the Ministry. In addition, the Institute is required to run conferences, seminars, and organise exhibitions on different topics for higher education institutions. The quality of the consultancy that this establishment provides to the Ministry seems not to have increased significantly. However, the Ministry has allowed a degree of influence of this establishment on other actors after it was renamed and slightly reformed. The information on the website of the Institute of Innovative Technologies and Content of Education demonstrates that it does organise various learning events, such as conferences and workshops, for institutions occasionally. These events mainly pertain to the topics of the innovative teaching methods, which is part of a Bologna instrument – the student-centred education.

#### **5.4.2. The Bologna Follow-up Group**

The findings above have shown how new consultative bodies have been created in the course of Bologna by the Ministry, and how they have been



contributing to the preservation of the power of the central cluster. The findings pertaining to the Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG) show a similar tendency. In addition, they illustrate how consultancy may be sometimes only imitated by the work of some new consultative actors.

The BFUG in Ukraine is a member of the international BFUG, which is the main follow-up structure in the Bologna Process. The international BFUG oversees the progress of Bologna between the ministerial conferences and usually meets once every six months to set up working groups to develop certain initiatives (European Higher Education Area, 2014). The Ukrainian BFUG is technically a part of the following five international BFUG working groups: the Ad-Hoc Working Group on the Revision of the ECTS Users' Guide, the Ad-Hoc Working Group on the Third Cycle, the Working Group on Reporting on the Bologna Process Implementation, the Working Group on Social Dimension and Lifelong Learning, and the Working Group on Structural Reforms (European Higher Education Area, 2014).

Considering this, the BFUG in Ukraine was poised to play an important role in guiding Bologna in the country, as well as to contribute to the development of Bologna on the international scale. However, and despite the fact that the BFUG was presented in all national Bologna implementation reports (2004, 2006, 2007, 2009) as the central actor in guiding the reform, the findings of this research suggest that the BFUG is an inactive actor in Ukraine. It was perhaps created and used by the Ministry solely for bureaucratic reasons to meet the requirements of the Bologna international governing bodies.

The number of the representatives of the Ukrainian BFUG and their respective responsibilities are unclear. The list of representatives provided on the EHEA website is outdated. Most of the individuals, when contacted while arranging interviews, stated that they were no longer in the BFUG. An updated list of the BFUG representatives in Ukraine from the Bologna Secretariat could not be provided for me on my request. They replied to my e-mail stating that they had not received any information from Ukraine about the change of members.

In the course of my data collection, I found one individual who acknowledged that he was a current BFUG member, and three individuals who stated they were part of the BFUG in the past. Three out of the four individuals have at some point been Ministerial representatives while the remaining one used to be a member at a Parliamentary working group. As such, the sample of the BFUG members seem to have connections with the central governing bodies. Moreover, none of the current or ex-BFUG members who were interviewed were willing to

discuss their BFUG memberships unlike their roles at other establishments. Additionally, none of the BFUG members who were interviewed could provide exact information about how many members existed in this group, how they were recruited, and what their specific responsibilities were. For example, an ex-member of the BFUG states that:

*...the group includes...from 20 to 25 people. We did not have separate BFUG meetings. We met peer BFUG-members at the meetings dedicated to something else (i.29).*

The interviewees were not eager to discuss the BFUG and their roles in it. Moreover, the questions regarding the details of the establishment of the BFUG were usually answered by directing me to the national Bologna implementation reports. These reports were supposed to have this information, but they did not. However, I found three Governmental resolutions that could have been related to the creation of the BFUG ("Governmental resolution №1131," 2004; "Governmental resolution №82," 2006; and "Governmental resolution №180," 2013).

The confusion and uncertainty about the BFUG might be related to the terminology used. It was mentioned earlier that the Prime Minister initiated in 2004 the creation of *the Interdepartmental Commission for the Support of the Bologna Process* ("Governmental resolution №1131," 2004). This is a word-by-word translation of the name of this establishment in Ukrainian. It could have been the name of the BFUG in the Ukrainian language, while the name *the Bologna Follow-up Group* is used in all the national implementation reports, which are in English. There were no other actors created at the outset of the Bologna pilot project with the names resembling the name *the BFUG*. So there was a chance that the Interdepartmental Commission for the Support of the Bologna Process was translated as the BFUG in the national Bologna implementation reports that were in English.

The Interdepartmental Commission for the Support of the Bologna Process was supposed to be chaired by the Minister of Education and Science, and to involve representatives of different ministries, a university rector and a director of the civil organisation called the Trade Union of Education and Science Workers ("Governmental resolution №1131," 2004). The phrase 'agreement needs to be obtained' is placed in brackets by the name of the civil organisation in the resolution. This suggests that the resolution only started the process of the creation of the Commission, since its membership was not confirmed. No subsequent documentation about the work of this Commission and the cooperation amongst its assigned members was found. Only references to the Ukrainian BFUG in the national implementation reports (2004, 2006, 2007, 2009) were found. The director of

the civil organisation and the university rector, who were supposed to be part of this Commission, could not be interviewed to investigate if they have been ever involved in the work of the Commission. Nevertheless, the Prime Minister issued another resolution to change the membership of the Commission in 2006 to include only representatives from different ministries (“Governmental resolution №82,” 2006). Likewise, no further documentation with the plans or reports of the work of the Commission were found. The Commission was cancelled by the Prime Minister in 2013 without specifying the reasons (“Governmental resolution №180,” 2013).

The idea that the two names – the Commission and the BFUG – referred to the same establishment was implied by a Ministerial representative (i.32). The interviewee seemed to agree with the idea that it was the same body, but this interviewee seemed either not to know or unable to recall the details. However, the cancellation of the BFUG was not confirmed by the interviewee:

*There are lots of administrative units created, reorganised and cancelled all the time. The Interdepartmental Commission was related with the BFUG. If it was cancelled at some point, it means there was a reason for it, but we still have the BFUG. I am a member. We control matters. We would not leave the country without the BFUG... We send our representatives to the international BFUG meetings (i.32, representative of the Ministry and the BFUG).*

This vague information in the quote leaves the question about the relationship between the Interdepartmental Commission and the BFUG unclear. The Commission was either another non-functioning actor, or, more likely, it was the actual BFUG, whose responsibilities were performed by the Ministry. The BFUG, no matter how it was created, might have been established to demonstrate compliance of Ukraine to the international community on its adherence to the international agreement to have a structure that would be a member of the international BFUG. If the BFUG was indeed cancelled, it would suggest that the central governing bodies in Ukraine chose to acknowledge the central role of the Ministry (rather than the BFUG in Ukraine) to the international community.

The lack of attention surrounding the BFUG in Ukraine suggests that the BFUG is not a crucial establishment for the central cluster of actors in Ukraine. The responsibilities of the BFUG were seemingly never defined because the tasks, which it was supposed to carry out, have been fulfilled by the Ministry. This discussion of the BFUG as well as of the Institute of Innovative Technologies and Content of Education has demonstrated how centralisation in the system of the higher education actors in Bologna has been preserved by the central governing bodies.

## 5.5. The civil sector

Similar to the previous groups of actors, the civil sector – non-governmental organisations – existed before the Bologna Process. However, unlike the consultative bodies of the central actors, the civil organisations are recognised in the literature as a cluster. The literature about Ukrainian policy-making states that such organisations were not active. This literature also states that a cooperation gap used to exist between the central bodies of policy-making and civil organisations (Protsyk, 2003).

The members of the non-governmental organisations referred to themselves as the ‘civil sector’ in the interviews conducted in this research. Such a name stems from the idea that these actors are organised due to their own efforts with no assistance from the central governing bodies. This research suggests that the civil sector is the most populated cluster in Bologna ahead of the higher education institutions. The civil sector involves the greatest number of actors in the Bologna reform as compared to the other clusters. My research demonstrates that differences exist between the roles played by the actors within the civil sector cluster in Bologna. Thus, they could be categorised into three groups (see Table 6).

Table 6: Civil sector actors and their roles in the Bologna Process

<i>Group</i>	<i>Examples of actors</i>	<i>Roles</i>
1	Fund <i>Vidrodzhennya</i> , Fund <i>Democratychni Initsiatyvy</i> , the Ukrainian Association of Students’ Self-Government, the Trade Union of Education and Science Workers of Ukraine, the Centre of International Projects <i>Euro Education</i> , Organisation <i>Institute of Leadership, Innovation and Development</i> , the <i>System Capital Management Group</i> , the <i>Rector’s Council</i> , the <i>Confederation of Employers</i> , UNESCO departments, <i>All-Ukrainian Academic Union</i> , <i>International Association of Trade and Economic Education</i> , etc.	This group contains establishments which have a wide scope of interests, including higher education. They, at some point, started learning about Bologna and contributing to its development. For example, Fund <i>Democratychni Initsiatyvy</i> , has many objectives including but not limited to higher education issues – monitoring exit-polls during political elections, conducting sociological investigations, informing the public on political processes, etc. (Fund ‘Demokratychni Initsiatyvy,’ 2015).
2	Offices of European organisations such	This group contains offices of

	as the <i>British Council, European Fund of Education, the German programme DAAD, the EU Delegation</i> in Ukraine. In addition, there are even offices of several American organisations and programmes such as <i>USAD, Fullbright, IREX, Peace Corps</i> that are claimed by interviewees to contribute to Bologna in Ukraine by supporting academic mobility.	foreign organisations in Ukraine that support Ukrainian higher education but do not always explicitly state that they are engaged with Bologna. Most of these organisations are subordinate structures of other international establishments that are not formally recognised as Bologna consultative members.
3	The National Bologna Centre and the National TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office.	This group includes two organisations that emerged specifically to deal with the Bologna Process in Ukraine.

I will demonstrate in this section that the tendency for a cooperation gap to exist between the central governing bodies and the civil sector mentioned by Protsyk (2003) has been preserved during the reform as well. I exemplify this by discussing the National Bologna Centre. Such a gap is argued by the representatives of this organisation to be a barrier in higher education Europeanisation. At the same time, I will show that this gap narrowed as a result of the cooperation between the Ministry and at least one civil sector organisation called the National TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office. Input from civil sector organisations into the development of higher education politics in Ukraine has emerged and grown considerably in the Bologna context. This happened as a result of the increasingly important role of the civil sector in Bologna. Civil sector organisations have been: attempting to encourage other clusters to learn about Bologna related issues; supporting the cooperation among Ukrainian institutions and between Ukrainian and foreign institutions; and providing opportunities for the development of Bologna through the offering of various grants.

### **5.5.1. The National Bologna Centre**

The National Bologna Centre, according to its website, proclaimed itself at its inception to be ‘the curator’ of the Bologna Process in Ukraine (National Bologna Centre, 2015). This signaled its intent to play a key role in the Bologna reform in the country. It emerged as a voluntary association of interested individuals who then recruited other actors to participate in it. These actors include several institutions and three civil sector organisations that deal with higher education matters. The primary goal of the National Bologna Centre has been to provide consultancy to other higher education actors in Ukraine. Nevertheless, the representatives of this organisation argue that it has no real opportunity to influence the development of

the reform in Ukraine. This is also suggested by a Ministerial representative:

*The civil sector gives recommendations to the legislature... Another thing is how much they are able to influence something (i.32).*

The representative of the National Bologna Centre expressed disappointment with the way their efforts to contribute to the development of Bologna have been ignored by the central governing bodies. Some statements provided below convey strong feelings about their disappointment. For instance, the quote below suggests that higher education is unimportant for state policy-makers. The quote demonstrates well the strengths of interviewee's opinion about not being heard by the central cluster, primarily by the Ministry:

*Higher education and education in general have been absent from the agenda of all Ukrainian politicians... This hinders Europeanisation... The Ministry is not able to cooperate with the civil sector on equal terms and with a sense of mutual respect. Thus, we felt only zealous non-acceptance and ritualistic unwillingness to cooperate on behalf of the Ministry. The picture is totally different if we look at our cooperation with higher education institutions... The role of the civil sector in the enactment of the Bologna Process in Ukraine is far bigger than the real work of the Ministry and other establishments at the 'top' ... because we do cooperate with institutions, unlike the Ministry which controls and exploits institutions. In fact, all sensible work in the area of the Bologna Process is based on the initiative of the civil sector or sometimes personal initiative of some workers of higher education institutions (i.43).*

The above quote underlies the position in the Bologna reform held by a large proportion of the civil sector organisations, albeit a slightly exaggerated account of the minimal positive role of the Ministry. It is emphasised in this quote that the Ministry has been successful in limiting the work of the civil sector while not doing much itself. However, earlier analysis of the role of the Ministry made clear that it formally started and has been maintaining Bologna. Some changes were initiated by the Ministry with its consultative bodies, too. Examples of the changes include the initiation of the implementation of the credit system by the Ministry and the organisation of the conferences and workshops for higher education institutions by the Institute of Innovative Technologies. Nevertheless, the civil sector, indeed, has been doing much more in terms of the organisation of various learning events about Bologna and grants for academic mobility:

*We organised professional seminars that aimed to prepare coordinators of the ECTS [the credit system] at institutions. We contributed to the publication of literature on Bologna [the study by Finikov (2012), referenced in the next Chapter]. We have been providing consultancy to institutions. We have also been arranging cooperation among Ukrainian institutions and some universities abroad for academic mobility... We tried to advice the*

*Ministry on the format of the Bologna diploma supplement, but they thought they were smarter. On top of that, the Ministry, of course, did not want to support us financially (i.39, another representative from the National Bologna Centre).*

Such a situation is typical with regard to the work undertaken by the majority of the civil sector organisations in Bologna. This demonstrates the persistence of the failure to cooperate between the central governing bodies and the civil sector.

### **5.5.2. The National TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office**

After discussing a typical civil sector actor in the Bologna Process, I am now going to present findings related to the organisation which, in contrast to others, managed to improve its communication with the central governing bodies. The National TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office had its pre-history as the international TEMPUS Programme before it emerged as an actor in Bologna. The international TEMPUS Programme aimed 'to support higher education modernisation in the Partner Countries of Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Western Balkans and the Mediterranean region, mainly through university cooperation projects' (EACEA, 2015). Ukraine joined this programme in 1993. Obviously, this preceded the Bologna Process.

The office of the TEMPUS Programme continued to support the modernisation of the Ukrainian higher education after the country joined Bologna. It has done so by providing financial and informational assistance to higher education institutions. This assistance was meant to aid in the adjustments of institutions to the new structure of study cycles, implemented by the Ministry (EACEA, 2015). Thus, the office of the Programme was not an actor that emerged specifically to support the Bologna Process.

The National TEMPUS Office in Ukraine emerged in 2009 on the basis of the TEMPUS Programme to deal specifically with the Bologna Process. The creation of the National TEMPUS Offices in the Bologna countries was an initiative of the Education and Culture Department of the European Commission. The Commission cooperated with the Institute of Leadership, Innovation and Development, which is a civil sector organisation in Ukraine. This cooperation resulted in the creation of the National TEMPUS Office (National TEMPUS Office, 2009). The National TEMPUS Office, according to its website, intended to coordinate cooperation among a number of higher education actors in Ukraine, such as the Delegation of the EU in Ukraine, the Ministry, higher education institutions and other interested parties (National TEMPUS Office, 2009).

The National TEMPUS Office managed to achieve some sort of cooperation with the Ministry. Appraisal of the impact of the work that has been done by the National TEMPUS Office in cooperation with the Ministry and other actors is obvious from the following quote. It illustrates the main difference in the work of the National TEMPUS Office and the actor discussed earlier – the National Bologna Centre:

*The Bologna Process was developing a bit slowly in Ukraine. It speeded up after 2009, according to our observation... We see the dynamics of changes associated with the Bologna Process. People used to be far more ignorant about what the Bologna Process was... and there used to be far more negative evaluations of the Bologna Process. There is a tendency for improvement now. More people understand and support Bologna largely due to our work (i.28, National TEMPUS Office representative).*

Indeed, the time after the creation of the National TEMPUS Office was marked by, for instance, the issue of “Ministerial decree №943” (2009). The decree was related to improving the credit system in Ukraine. The National TEMPUS Office made significant contributions to raise awareness about the Bologna Process in Ukraine. This might be a reason why a large number of the representatives from different Bologna Process clusters of actors in Ukraine are aware of the National TEMPUS Office in some capacity:

*The word ‘TEMPUS’ is always common among students and instructors, especially those who deal with all these academic mobility issues (i.17, instructor at a university).*

I will illustrate how the National TEMPUS Office has been facilitating cooperation in Bologna using an example of the team of the Higher Education Reform Experts (HEREs). The team has been functioning within the TEMPUS Office since its inception. Many of the initiatives of the National TEMPUS Office are co-facilitated by the HEREs. Meetings of the HEREs are often held to discuss Bologna related processes. The establishment of the teams of the HEREs in the Bologna countries was initiated by the European Commission, much like the establishment of the National TEMPUS Offices themselves.

Membership in the Ukrainian team of the HEREs, unlike the BFUG, is transparent. It comprises a cross-clustery mixed group of individuals from the Ministry, higher education institutions, and the civil sector. It consisted of ten members in 2009-2010. The team comprised of 13 members from 2010 to 2014, and 11 members starting from 2014 (National TEMPUS Office, 2009). The interviews were conducted with the 2010-2014 membership of the team. However, most of the representatives that participated in the study are also part of the 2014 team.



The main tasks of this cross-clustery mixed team is to 'participate in the development of policy and reforms' and 'work on counseling and advising higher education institutions with regard to the introduction and implementation of the national and institutional Lisbon and Bologna strategy' (National TEMPUS Office, 2009). The function of the TEMPUS Office to inform the members of the higher education sector in Ukraine about Bologna is largely enacted through the HEREs team.

At the time of data collection, the National TEMPUS Office was in the process of being renamed into the National TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office. The change was triggered by the fact that the National TEMPUS Office was about to establish connections with the ERASMUS Plus. This is the programme of the European Commission aimed at promoting academic mobility in the Bologna countries. This programme is an extension of the ERASMUS Programme, which has been supporting student exchange since 1987 in a smaller range of countries currently belonging to the EU (ERASMUS Plus Programme, 2015). Ukraine was not part of the EU, and thus, did not have the opportunity to participate in the ERASMUS Programme. With the development of the ERASMUS Programme into ERASMUS Plus, countries that do not belong to the EU like Ukraine, were invited to participate. Ukraine joined ERASMUS Plus almost right after data collection finished – in 2014. Ukraine joined this programme to facilitate inward and outward academic mobility in Europe. Since the main theme of this programme – academic mobility – is associated with Bologna, the coordination of this programme became another task of the National TEMPUS Office. These developments triggered the change of the name of the National TEMPUS Office. It is now called the National TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office (National TEMPUS Office, 2009).

This Office appears to be the only civil sector actor that managed to bridge the cooperation gap and establish close ties with the Ministry. While the TEMPUS Office does manage to convey ideas onto the Ministry, the relationship between the two actors is still not equal. The HEREs team, for instance, could be seen as being controlled to an extent by the Ministry. One aspect that resonated among a number of the HEREs was related to how the Ministry participated in approving the memberships of the HEREs:

*Experts from all major universities of Ukraine were suggested, and then it was the Ministry that chose people on the basis of certain criteria...the Ministry made their own corrections [in the list of experts] (i.27, HERE and a university instructor).*

Another example of control arises when the Ministry limits the expertise of the HEREs in their advice on Bologna. This demonstrates how centralisation persists

even in the case of the partnership like this:

*We learn together with other teams of HEREs at other countries... but we cooperate with the Ministry and agree our ideas with them. ...we know the politics of the country, so we should always mind what to suggest (i.26, HERE and a university vice-rector).*

Thus, the National TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office is successful only in facilitating the cooperation among different clusters of actors in Ukraine in Bologna. It does not coordinate this cooperation, although this is what is stated on the website of the Office.

The National TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office and the National Bologna Centre differ with respect to how they have been managing to put across what they have been learning about Bologna. It might have been caused by a different approach in seeking cooperation with the Ministry. The National Bologna Centre expected their expertise to be recognised by the Ministry and considered in its work. The National TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office has been looking for partnership with the Ministry, agreeing to compromise on some of its ideas and not expecting Ministerial financial assistantship.

In this section, I have demonstrated that the lack of cooperation between the civil sector and the central governing bodies has been preserved in the Bologna Process. Also, there has been a development in the cooperative ties between the Ministry and the civil sector, such as in the case of at least the National TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office. Furthermore, the inputs from civil sector organisations into the development of higher education policy-making in Ukraine has increased in the Bologna Process, albeit modestly. This happened due to the growing importance of the role of the civil sector in the Bologna reform. The civil sector organisations have been attempting to enlighten other clusters in a number of Bologna matters; they have been supporting the cooperation among Ukrainian institutions and between Ukrainian and foreign universities. They have also been providing opportunities for the development of Bologna through the provision of various grants.

## **5.6. Higher education institutions**

This section explains how policy continuity and change are expressed in the work of higher education institutions. They constitute another cluster of higher education actors in Ukraine. I will illustrate policy continuity and change by discussing research conducted on two universities (A and B), and supplement this

analysis by the data from 12 other institutions (C-N) Specifically, by the analysis of mainly institutions A and B, I will exemplify how institutions in Ukraine remain bound to the unquestionable fulfillment of decision-making by the Ministry. I will also show how the Ministry tends to demonstrate (or imitate) that it encourages cooperation among the institutions. Despite the continuation of the centralisation legacy, I will also show how institutions have been increasingly contributing to the weakening of the centralisation of higher education with the help of the civil sector. The civil sector has been facilitating the cooperation between them and foreign universities.

Unlike the relationship between the central bodies of policy-making and non-governmental organisations, the cooperation between the central bodies of policy-making and higher education institutions was well-established before Bologna (Kremen et al., 2006). The authors, however, state that it worked just one way – the Ministry dictated to the institutions what to do. The educational content taught at all types of institutions (state, communal and private) was largely influenced by the central bodies of policy-making. Moreover, the state and communal institutions were financially dependent on the central bodies of policy-making or their local branches. Rectors were the main mediators of the interests of the central bodies of policy-making to institutions (Kremen et al., 2006).

Ukrainian institutions have remained somewhat dependent upon the decisions of the central governing bodies during Bologna as well. The following quote demonstrates this. It also points to the idea argued earlier – that the Ministry has taken over most of the power in higher education policy-making within the central governing bodies:

*There is a single influential establishment in our study process. It is the Ministry. Our higher education is controlled from the top very strictly... rectors are dependent people. They are totally dependent. They cannot express their opinion if it is different from the prevailing opinion of the Ministry. Those who expressed such an opinion once, do not express it any longer [because they lost their posts]... We can either talk about our 'top' in a good way or not talk about it at all (i.1, instructor and head of department).*

Institutions located in different parts of the country differ, although to a small extent, in the precaution undertaken in criticising the work of the Ministry. My initial assumption about the influence of ideological differences of western and eastern Ukraine on the work of institutions in Bologna, explained in the introductory Chapter, was supported by the findings only to a small extent. The representatives of the university in the western part of the country (university A) tended to criticise the Ministry and its control a bit more, whereas this was less

common in the interviews with the representatives of the university in the east (university B):

*The Ministry in Ukraine is a structure responsible for the implementation of the Bologna Process. However, paying attention to the actions of the officials from this establishment demonstrates their ignorance in the Bologna questions... What can we do, we can only complain to each other and patiently keep abiding by the rules (i.4, instructor and dean from western Ukraine).*

*I know that some representatives of the Bologna countries get together from time to time to discuss progress [meaning the Bologna international conferences]. I think it would be better if the Ministry took also some people from lower levels to these meetings... It would be great if... people from institutions, and not only higher academic managers, but also representatives from schools or departments within universities went to these meetings (i.24, instructor and dean from eastern Ukraine).*

The direct control of institutions by the Ministry can also be noticed in the following. A number of institutions were involved in the Ministerial initiative that appeared to target the imitation of the cooperation among these institutions. A clear example of this is the cooperation among institutions that was developed by the Ministry for the Bologna pilot project. It was explained in the methodology Chapter that 59 Ukrainian universities, chosen for the pilot, were divided into two groups – the regional basic institutions and subordinate institutions. This research focuses on two subordinate universities. The findings demonstrate that no specific cooperation took place at each of these institutions with the institution they were technically assigned to. Moreover, none of the interviewees seemed to know or remember the two groups of institutions identified for the pilot project, and any collaboration between them. It was apparently only a bureaucratic division of the institutions.

There was, however, potential for real cooperation among the institutions. Further on in the Bologna Process, institutions began cooperation among one another and foreign universities. Ukrainian institutions started this cooperation primarily through their involvement with different civil sector organisation. The cross-membership of many civil sector representatives with institutions is evident from the list of my interviewees (see Appendix 1). For instance, a representative of the Trade Union of Education and Science Workers is also an instructor at an institution. In addition, Ukrainian institutions started cooperating with one another through their participation at the Bologna learning events, which were arranged by the civil sector organisations. Various seminars, workshops, trainings, conferences, and study days have been arranged by different organisations. It was demonstrated earlier that, for instance, the National Bologna Centre arranged many events similar to this. Besides simply benefiting from the learning events organised by the civil

sector organisations, and thus, being passive recipients of the information, institutions had to become active learners during the Bologna reform:

*It was my own experience and time that helped me understand what the Bologna Process is all about and what I had to do with it. No one gave me any full comprehensive explanation of what it was... There were some helpful seminars, but they could not suffice. There were not enough of them, they could not accommodate everyone, and they were not conducted all the time... If you wanted to figure out what the Bologna Process was really about, and not just to follow blindly brief orders of the authorities, you would have had to figure this out on your own somehow. That is what most of us, those who are more active, had to go through (i.7, instructor).*

Ukrainian institutions have also been cooperating with foreign universities largely due to efforts from the civil sector. Offices or centres of the civil sector organisations have been created within Ukrainian institutions:

*We have the Centre for International Cooperation, and there is a number of different centres working within it. For example, Ukrainian-Israel, Ukrainian-Chinese, Ukrainian-Polish, Ukrainian-Russian and other centres... They work with foreign universities and assist in attracting foreign students to come here. There are students from 23 countries at our school... However, there are not many of them... These centres also assist our students in going abroad, even though not many go because of financial problems. These centres give information about funding opportunities. They also give information about the documents that have to be submitted [to apply for study programmes and funding] (i.23, instructor and dean's assistant).*

These developments have been facilitating the Bologna academic mobility idea. The findings of this research also demonstrate that there are cases when Ukrainian institutions themselves, having been supported by the civil sector earlier, start initiating the establishment of partnership connections with foreign universities:

*We have to arrange everything by ourselves... We sometimes have some external support, but it is not enough... So we look for a serious partner in the EU, develop joint study programmes and joint diplomas. It is very hard because everything revolves around money. There is always a problem with limited funding. Even if we succeed and develop partnership, only very few of our students can take advantage of this, because they usually have to fund their studies abroad themselves, and everything is usually more expensive there. Less students from there come to us, especially from more developed countries. It is because they probably do not consider us prestigious enough yet (i.24, dean and instructor).*

The low mobility provides a reason in explaining why students tend to be ignorant about the Bologna Process ideas. It was explained in the methodology

Chapter that my initial attempts to interview students showed that they were not really aware of the Bologna Process and the opportunities it gives.

Further conversation with the interviewee, quoted above, reveals that the main means of developing partnership with foreign universities stems from some initial connections between certain representatives of both institutions – in Ukraine and abroad. For instance, a common way of establishing connections and further partnership usually starts with conference visits by Ukrainian instructors to foreign universities. The attendance of Ukrainian instructors at these conferences was often supported by the civil sector.

Importantly, the interviewee above expressed an idea, also echoed by other interviewees, which points to a mismatch in the inward and outward student mobility to and from the countries of the EU. Another interviewee quoted earlier did not mention such a mismatch with regard to the centres of international cooperation at that particular institution. A reason for this is that the interviewee dwelled on mobility not associated only with the countries of the EU (the respondent mentioned Ukrainian-Israel, Ukrainian-Chinese, Ukrainian-Russian centres). Indeed, that interviewee admitted off the record that most of international students come from post-Soviet countries. The misbalance associated with the inward and outward mobility to and from the EU is related to the status of institutions, or even the level of economic development of the countries, as suggested by the interviewee in the last quote. The situation of limited funding might improve as the result of the work undertaken by the National TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office. The increase of funding, which this Office should receive from the European Commission for academic mobility in the framework of the ERASMUS Plus Programme, should, arguably, provide opportunities for more Ukrainian students to be mobile.

This section has analysed how policy continuity and change has been interacting with changes in the Bologna reform at the Ukrainian institutions. The Ukrainian institutions have been increasingly contributing to weakening the centralisation of higher education in the country to some extent. This has been happening alongside with the continuation of the governing of the institutions primarily by central governing bodies, without much space for institutional autonomy, as the Bologna process in Ukraine may have suggested.

## 5.7. Conclusion

This Chapter has provided the details of the political context of Ukraine and presented the findings of the research conducted on the higher education actors. Four clusters of actors were discussed: the central governing bodies, their consultants, civil sector organisations and higher education institutions. All of these clusters existed before Bologna. Prior to Bologna, the relationships among them were defined by the central cluster. It fully controlled the work of higher education institutions and the consultative bodies, and it avoided the influence of the civil sector. Such power relations among these actors have been partially preserved in Bologna and have been argued by the civil sector to hinder the Europeanisation of higher education. However, the strict centralisation in the higher education system of Ukraine has started to weaken, albeit marginally, during Bologna. The cooperation between the civil sector and the central governing bodies strengthened, largely, due to the partnership developed between the Ministry and the National TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office. The latter actor, in its turn, has been slightly diluting the strict control of the Ministry over higher education policy-making. A gradually burgeoning and increasing cooperation among different actors, facilitated primarily by the civil sector, seems to have been accompanied by a slowly decreasing centralisation in the relationships among higher education actors in Bologna.

The work of the National TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office, that initiated the creation of the team of HEREs, is a bright example of policy brokering that the civil sector has been exercising in Bologna in Ukraine. This tendency will be further illustrated in the next Chapter in the presentation of the findings about the development of the Bologna instruments.

Evidently, policy actors and instruments are interconnected in the reform process. The presentation of the findings about the Bologna actors and instruments was separated here for analytical purposes. An integrated discussion of both will be provided at the end of the thesis in Chapter 7.

# Chapter 6

## Bologna instruments in Ukraine

### 6.1. Introduction

I explained in Chapter 2 that the term *instruments* is used in the policy literature with three connotations. In brief, the policy instrument may mean the ways in which policy learning happens (Hall, 1993). The second meaning of the *instrument*, is a broad policy project, such as UN's *Education for All*, for instance (Grek, 2009). The third and much more frequently used meaning of the *instrument* is a policy idea – policy itself (e.g., May, 1992; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Radaelli and Dunlop, 2013). I adopt the third meaning of policy instruments. By policy instruments I mean specific policies – policy content, which is associated not just with policy texts, but also with how they are negotiated and practised (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; Fimyar, 2008). In the context of Bologna, policy instruments are Bologna action lines (such as the credit system, the study cycles, etc.).

This Chapter explains the development of the Bologna instruments in Ukraine through the interaction of the policy continuity and change. In particular, I will review how the development of the Bologna instruments in Ukraine was triggered and guided by the Bologna action lines, as well as by the old national higher education policies. I will look at the cases of four Bologna instruments. They are the system of credits, the study cycles, the diploma supplement and the quality assurance. The findings about other Bologna instruments suggest that they were formed in a similar way (national qualifications framework, academic mobility, lifelong learning, student-centred learning). The development of all instruments is summarised in Table 7 below.

Table 7: The development of the Bologna instruments in Ukraine

<i>Instruments</i>	<i>Their development</i>
System of credits	The old module system + the new idea of credits = the credit-module system that included the ideas of modules, grades and credits ("Ministerial decree №49," 2004); The credit-module system + the new idea of credit transfer = the European credit transfer system that includes the ideas of modules, grades, credits and their transfer ("Ministerial decree №943," 2009).
Study cycles	The old education-qualification cycles (Junior Specialist's,



	<p>Bachelor's, Specialist's, Master's) and scientific cycles (Candidate of Sciences and Doctor of Sciences) ("Law about Higher Education," 2002, chapter 2, article 6) → a new label – cycles ("Ministerial decree №48," 2004);</p> <p>Five old cycles formed the basis of a new three-cycle system (Junior Bachelor's = the initial cycle; Bachelor's = the first cycle; Specialist's, Master's = the second cycle; <del>Candidate of Sciences</del> → PhD = the third cycle; Doctor of Sciences = the scientific cycle) ("Law about Higher Education," 2014, chapter 2 articles 5-7).</p>
Diploma supplement	<p>The old national diploma supplement and the new Bologna diploma supplement were issued in parallel ("Ministerial decree №275," 2010). Few graduates requested the Bologna diploma supplement. Later, the new Bologna diploma supplement substituted for the old national diploma supplement ("Ministerial decree №365," 2010).</p>
Quality assurance	<p>The old external checks of students' performance at exams + the new label of external reviews ("Ministerial decree №948," 2007);</p> <p>The old quality assurance practices and the lack of institutional autonomy ("Ministerial decree №49," 2004) + some new requirements ("Ministerial decree №612," 2007);</p> <p>The old practice of ensuring quality through certain proportions of instructors and students + a new label of <i>a European standard</i> ("Presidential order №128," 2013);</p>
National qualifications framework	<p>The old idea that qualifications, which were grouped according to work fields and which were the basis of higher education ("Law about Higher Education," 2002, chapter 1, article 1) + the new label of the national qualifications framework ("National Bologna Implementation report," 2007).</p> <p>The levels of the Ukrainian national qualifications framework from 'zero' to 'nine' were developed without the description of qualifications ("Governmental resolution №1341," 2011). The five last levels became associated with the Bologna three-cycle system of studies.</p>
Academic mobility	<p>New international agreements between Ukrainian and foreign higher education institutions about new joint degrees ("Law about International Agreements," 2004) + old barriers in recognition.</p>
Lifelong learning	<p>The old policy of after-diploma education has been preserved (it has included re-qualification, obtaining a specialisation, upskilling, and internship on the basis of the education-qualification level obtained earlier) + the new label of <i>the lifelong learning</i> ("Law about Population's Employment," 2013, chapter 1, article 3);</p> <p>A new idea about informal education recognition emerged ("Law</p>

	about Population's Employment," 2013, chapter 1, article 5).
Student-centred learning	The old idea of the personality-oriented teaching defined as the subject-subject partnership between the teacher and students has been preserved. In addition, interactive teaching methods in class to combat the Soviet teacher-oriented teaching have been recognised as the meaning of the student-centred learning (Zankova, 2005). The new idea of students' independent work out of class emerged and became associated with the student-centred learning ("Ministerial decree №774," 2005; "Ministerial decree №612," 2007).

## 6.2. The system of credits

The system of credits – the European credit transfer system (ECTS) – was developed in Ukraine on the basis of the old national relevant policies. The ECTS is a learner-centred system for credit accumulation and transfer, in which the credit is based on the workload students need in order to achieve expected learning outcomes. The ECTS also presupposes a standardised grading scale where grades range between the highest grade 'A' and the lowest grade 'F'. They are awarded on a percentage basis – students' grades correspond to the percentage of material learnt. Additionally, the ECTS is related to the percentage of students with certain grades in class. The ECTS users' guide (2009) provides an example based on a small study, which concluded that there were usually less students in class with 'As' and 'Fs,' and there were more students with other grades in between. The ECTS users' guide (2009) suggests that a similar grade distribution might be typical in different classes. The ECTS as it is explained here had been developing to this point and acquiring these features since the beginning of Bologna.

The system of credits in Ukraine, at its beginning, combined the old national policy – the module system – and the new Bologna idea about credits. The resulting initiative was entitled *the credit-module system*. It was later further reformed/renamed into *the ECTS*. However, as the discussion below demonstrates, this initiative, in a nutshell, still replicates to a great degree the credit-module system. Therefore, many interviewees talk about the credit-module system in the present tense assuming it is equal to the ECTS.

### 6.2.1. The old module system

The Bologna idea about a system of credits in Ukraine was built on the basis of the module system that existed in Ukraine before Bologna. Such an idea is not directly expressed but rather implied by Finikov (2012). The author made a brief

reference to a 'national module-ranking system' (p.16) as a similar old policy. Such an idea is also voiced by several interviewees:

*There was something slightly resembling it [the Bologna idea of the credit system] stated in our old higher education regulation of 1993. However, this similar thing – assessment by modules – was not really used by higher education institutions (i.32, representative of the Ministry, the BFUG and the team of the HEREs).*

Indeed, the "Ministerial decree №161" (1993) was issued long before the Bologna Process. The decree states that 'a higher education institution can use modules or other forms of the evaluation of students' knowledge after a logically complete part of lectures and seminars in a certain subject, and use the results of this evaluation to calculate a final course grade.' This form of assessment after each topic of the course is presented in the decree as an alternative to the end-of-semester evaluation by exams. The idea of modules became a basis for the idea of the credit-module system, which started to be pushed by the Ministry since 2004.

### **6.2.2. The credit-module system**

The Bologna pilot project that the Ministry initiated in 2004 placed a lot of emphasis on the development of the credit-module system. It was defined as 'a model of study process organisation which is based on the combination of the module way of studying and the examination education units (examination credits)' ("Ministerial decree №48," 2004). The development of the credit-module system was a response of the Ministry to the call to develop a credit system, expressed in the Bologna international documents (e.g., "Prague communique," 2001).

The credit-module system focused on such three interrelated issues: modules, grades and credits. The module idea brought about a focus on grades accumulated with the help of modules:

*It [the credit-module system] makes students and instructors work on a daily basis... Instructors have to grade students' progress several times during a semester rather than once at the end of it... Well, students used to get grades during a semester before the Bologna Process. Usually these grades were based on students' participation in a single class and not for a module. These grades were not taken into account for the calculation of the final semester course grade. These grades were in a different grading scale... There was also a module principle of grading, but it was not widely used. It is used these days (i.20, university instructor and dean).*

The different grading scale the interviewee mentions was the four-point scale. It ranged from 'two' meaning a 'fail' to 'five' meaning 'excellent.' This grading scale was substituted by the 100-point scale in the credit-module system. The new

scale is the percentage-based grade range from an 'A' to an 'F' (ECTS users' guide, 2009). So the module way of studying under the credit-module system has been a preserved old national module policy. However, it was changed slightly in the Bologna context because of the idea of credits and the new grading scale. This is how the new scale has been working in practice:

*Let's say there are three modules in a course. Each module has 30 points, and the final test is worth ten points. Adding everything up makes it 100 points. The process of students' knowledge assessment became more differentiated in Bologna... However, we have not quit the habit of thinking in the old scale yet and converting the grades into 100 points. If a module is worth 30 points, I give a grade in the four-point system first in my mind. Then, I compose a mathematical proportion to count how many points I can give to a student who, for example, demonstrates knowledge equal to grade 'four,' which is a 'good' (i.18, university instructor).*

This quote demonstrates how the established practices kept affecting new policy ideas. The Ministry turned the old modules with new grades into the foundation of the credit-module system. A new ECTS idea of measuring academic workload in credits was added to it. *The credit* was a new term, but the idea of measuring academic workload was not novel. Academic hours spent in class had been used for this purpose earlier. They disregarded how complicated tasks had to be performed. The credits, on the contrary, were supposed to be more about the scope of the task rather than the time taken, according to the ECTS. The term *credit* in Ukraine was a label for the old practice of measuring workload in academic hours. It has been overlooking the idea of the complexity of tasks, as well as the ideas of credit accumulation and transfer:

*It was hard to transfer all study plans into these credits. One credit is 36 academic hours. We had to count all these hours to make 60 credits during one academic year and 240 credits during four years for Bachelor's Programmes, for example. It was a problem for my assistant. We spent so much time thinking hard how to do that math... My school has an agreement with... [a foreign University – name omitted]. Some students from that University came to us for the whole semester and they got all the courses and grades transferred to their home institution. Our students could go only for one month because we do not have the courses that are at that university. So I could let them go for only one month so that they come back and catch up with what we study here, and so that they take exams at the end of the semester. There are no study plans agreements between institutions that have cooperation agreements... From the point of view of our foreign colleagues at partnership higher education institutions, certain courses have to be in the study plan, and we think that other courses have to be there (i.24, instructor and dean).*

Evidently, the idea of credits was put to practise by assigning credits to the tasks that students usually did for particular programmes. No further changes were

made by the Ministry for a while to make credits serve their original purpose, which was to measure students' workload, not simply time spent in class.

### **6.2.3. The European credit transfer system**

The ECTS used to be mentioned in the Bologna international documents till 2003 as an option of a credit system for the Bologna countries. In the communiques starting from 2003, the ECTS was not mentioned as an option of a credit system any more. It became its only model. For instance, the "Berlin communique" (2003) claims that 'Ministers stress the important role played by the ECTS in facilitating student mobility and international curriculum development' (p.4). It was also the time when the accumulation potential of credits started to be emphasised. Six years after the ECTS was agreed on the international scale to be the only model, the ECTS was introduced in Ukraine ("Ministerial decree №943," 2009).

The introduction of the ECTS in the Ministerial decree was facilitated by the current National TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office, as explained in the previous Chapter. Although some new ideas appeared in the 2009 decree, the ECTS does not seem to have brought about any significant changes to the way the credit-module system worked. The Ministerial decree itself contained limited information about how it was different from the credit-module system:

*The ECTS is still absent, although the Ministry issued a decree in 2009 about the implementation of the ECTS. Nothing was said in that document about what to do with the credit-module system. People at institutions were made totally confused then. They did not know what they had been implementing till 2009 if they got an order to implement something that they thought they had already implemented... Most of the educational community in Ukraine thinks today that they have implemented the ECTS if they are using the credit-module system (i.26, representative of a university and the team of the HEREs).*

One novel idea that appeared when the ECTS was introduced in 2009 was the change in the value of a credit. It was reduced from 36 academic hours to 30 academic hours. This suggests that the overall idea of the credit as a way of measuring workload, based on how complicated tasks are, continued to be overlooked.

The second new idea that accompanied the introduction of the ECTS was the idea of accumulation. This was mentioned in the 2009 decree in addition to the idea of transfer; however, this innovation was not really taken forward. The decree did not address how the idea of credit accumulation could be accommodated with the national tradition of having a fixed course schedule at institutions. A fixed schedule

of courses for study programmes did not allow for other courses to be used as substitutes, or to be recognised as part of the programme (Finikov, 2012). So the idea of the accumulation of credits, as agreed at the international ministerial conferences, was not really addressed by the Ministry. It was perhaps because the Ministry had already introduced another related modernisation which was mentioned earlier – this was the accumulation of points for modules during a semester to make up the final grade. Further on, the decree was followed by “Ministerial letter №1/9-118” (2000) to higher education institutions. It specified that accumulation and transfer in the context of the fixed course schedule should be implemented by adding up to 20 credits by students in order to catch up with the programme of a new institution after transferring to it. Furthermore, the transfer of credits had to be applied to all kinds of education including informal education.

Finally, the association of a system of credits with grades, made in the credit-module system, continued in the ECTS in Ukraine. “Ministerial letter №1/9-118” (2000) to institutions explained that: 10% of students in class could end up with ‘excellent’ grades which equals an ‘A,’ 25% – with ‘very good’ which equals a ‘B,’ 30% – with ‘good’ which equals a ‘C,’ 25% – with ‘satisfactory’ which equals a ‘D,’ and 10% with ‘not satisfactory’ which equals an ‘F.’ Here is a comment of an interviewee about this:

*...the international ECTS suggests that a certain proportion of students get certain grades. Let's say, only 10% get 'A' grades, and 25% get 'B+,’ but it is just an example, it is statistics. What happens in Ukraine at some institutions? Instructors come at the beginning of a semester and say to a group of 20 students that, ‘according to the Bologna Process, only two of you can get an ‘A,’ seven can get a ‘B’ and so on. Such occasions are not rare (i.27, representative of a university and the team of the HEREs).*

Indeed, the idea of percentages of students with different grades in class stems from the international ECTS users’ guide (2009). It suggests that the distribution of students with different grades in class might vary. A reason for the interpretation of this idea as some sort of a rule may be related to state funding of students. One interviewee mentioned off the record that there has been a limit on the number of raised stipends for state funded students. Students who get excellent marks for most courses receive raised monthly stipends for the next semester, while those who do not perform that well, get lower stipends. A similar problem before Bologna had been sorted by purposefully downgrading some students by instructors to get right numbers of students for stipends in the end (i.21, instructor and dean’s assistant). Ensuring that the number of students with excellent marks does not outbalance the number of available raised stipends may be done through the appropriation of the ECTS idea. This, in turn, further illustrates how the

development of the innovative policy ideas is guided by the practices established before Bologna, and how the established practices are reshaped by the modernisation agenda.

The latest development in terms of the ECTS has been outlined in the new “Law about Higher Education” (2014). It has defined the ECTS as ‘a system of transfer and accumulation of credits, which is used in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) with the aim to provide, recognise and confirm qualifications and education components and support academic mobility of students.’ The Law further explains that the ECTS ‘is based on defining students’ workload, which is required for achieving target results of studies, and which is calculated in the credits of the ECTS’ (chapter 1, article 1). The Law has specified the ECTS, yet the explanation of how to measure workload and how to enact transfer is limited. Another problem is the absence of the guidelines on whether the module way of grading students should be preserved. All of these issues might make the ECTS continue the practices established earlier in the credit-module system. This could make the ECTS a continuation of the credit-module system in a slightly more specified form.

In this section, I have presented how the Bologna instrument – the credit system – has been developed by the higher education actors in Ukraine. It was the combination of the national module system and the new ideas related to credits. The credit-module system – later renamed into the ECTS – appears to be the old national higher education policy, initially taken by the Ministry to represent Bologna in conjunction with a new idea about credits. The idea of credits itself has been a new label for the old practice of measuring workload in academic hours. Moreover, such a combination put the credit transfer idea, which should have been key in the credit system policy, on a secondary position. The focus was on the existence of modules and changing the grading system. The accumulation of grade points for modules and assigning credits to academic hours were both policy innovations taken forward by the Ministry at the start of the process. The idea of credit transfer became an area of emphasis more recently. This idea has not been widely established in practice. There are still considerable problems in transferring credits in student academic mobility.

## 6.3. The study cycles

Study cycles is another Bologna policy instrument which was developed on the basis of related national policies. The higher education actors in Ukraine at first renamed the old national education-qualification and scientific cycles of studies into 'study cycles'. These actors have been later gradually changing the old policies according to the guidelines worked out on the international scale. A two-cycle system was first promoted internationally and nationally in Ukraine before a three-cycle system was recognised at the international ministerial conferences to be the priority.

The Bologna study cycles in Ukraine have been shaped in a similar way to how the system of credits has been developed. The system of the Bologna study cycles was primarily shaped by providing new labels to old structures, and by making minor changes in other old structures.

### **6.3.1. The old education-qualification cycles and scientific cycles**

Before the Bologna Process, Ukraine used to have education-qualification cycles (Kremen, Nikolajenko, Stepko, & European Centre for Higher Education (UNESCO), 2006). The education-qualification cycles included Junior Specialist's, Bachelor's, Specialist's and Master's cycles that led to corresponding degrees ("Law about Education," 1991, chapter 2, article 30; "Law about Higher Education," 2002, chapter 2, article 6). The two scientific cycles led to the following degrees: Candidate of Sciences and Doctor of Sciences, ("Law about Education," 1991, chapter 2, article 31; "Law about Higher Education," 2002, chapter 2, article 18).

The "Law about Higher Education" (2002) demonstrated an attempt to define the education-qualification cycles (chapter 2, article 8), unlike the earlier "Law about Education" (1991). This attempt was unsuccessful because the definitions of the cycles were similar, and thus, did not explain differences among the cycles. For instance, Junior Specialist's was the cycle of studies to acquire 'certain skills and knowledge, which are sufficient for the functions of production in a certain cycle of professional activity.' This cycle led to the Junior Specialist's degree which was 'uncompleted higher education.' Bachelor's was the cycle of studies to acquire 'fundamental and specific skills and knowledge... sufficient for fulfilling tasks and responsibilities (jobs) of a certain cycle of professional activity.' This cycle of studies led to the Bachelor's degree which was 'basic higher education.' The definitions of other education-qualification cycles revolved around similar vague ideas.



The “Law about Higher Education” (2002) specified the procedure of access among these cycles. Studies at all consequent cycles could be undertaken by students, but not all the cycles were mandatory to access the highest education-qualification cycle – Master’s. It could be accessed after the completion of either Bachelor’s or Specialist’s. Specialist’s could be accessed after finishing Bachelor’s. Junior Specialist’s did not have to be completed to access Bachelor’s. In general, a prerequisite for accessing higher cycles was a completion of a lower mandatory cycle in ‘the same or related specialty’ (Law chapter 2, article 8).

With regard to the scientific cycles, both Laws just mentioned them without really defining them. A reason for the scientific cycles to be left out from the “Law about Higher Education” (2002) was discussed by Talanova (2014). The author argued for a historical separation of higher education and research in Ukraine and mentioned that scientific cycles were regulated by the “Law about Scientific and Scientific-Technical Work” (1992). My reading of this Law revealed that the cycles which led to the degrees of the Candidate of Sciences and Doctor of Sciences were Aspiratura and Doctorate’s, respectively. Additionally, the Law stated that the access to the latter degree was conditional upon a successful completion of the former one (Law chapter 3, articles 19, 20). Ironically, comprehensive definitions of either of the degrees or cycles leading to them were absent. Talanova (2014) emphasised that the legislature of Ukraine did not explain how the scientific cycles were related to the education-qualification cycles. The author found it problematic because research was detached from higher education in all education-qualification cycles. Scientific cycles were related to higher education only by the fact that they could be acquired at higher education institutions in addition to research institutes.

### **6.3.2. The two-cycle study system**

The national education-qualification and scientific cycles were associated by the Ministry in its decrees with the Bologna idea of the study cycles. The participants of the Bologna conference agreed that undergraduate and postgraduate studies made the two parts of the two-cycle system. The two-cycle system was associated with the undergraduate Bachelor’s cycle and the postgraduate cycle which, at first, denoted both ‘Master’s and/or Doctorate’s’ (“Bologna declaration,” 1999: p.3).

The introduction of the two-cycle system was among the targets of the Bologna pilot in Ukraine (“Ministerial decree №48,” 2004 and “№49,” 2004). However, no particular explanations were provided in the decrees about how the system was to be implemented. The only exception was a reference that Specialist’s

and Master's degrees belonged to the second cycle ("Ministerial decree №48," 2004). It remained unclear where other structures fell. However, the reference about the second cycle showed that the implementation of the two-cycle system was sought through relating the old structures and the new cycles.

### **6.3.3. The three-cycle system**

The relationship between Master's and Doctorate's degrees did not change at the international ministerial conferences until after the Berlin conference (2003). It is stated in the communique of this conference that 'First cycle degrees should give access... to second cycle programmes. Second cycle degrees should give access to doctoral studies' (p.4). Obviously, the statement suggests that the Doctorate was not regarded as the second cycle any longer. However, it was not explicitly identified as the third cycle back in 2003. That was why, perhaps, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine referred to the two-cycle system at the beginning of the Bologna pilot project. A Doctorate's degree was recognised internationally as the third cycle in 2005. This change occurred at the meeting of the international BFUG Working Group on the Third Cycle in Salzburg in 2005. The BFUG developed a list of the so-called Salzburg principles. They stated, for instance, that the third cycle is the PhD. It should last from three to four years and presuppose conducting original research ("Salzburg principles," 2005). The third cycle was later recognised at the Bergen conference ("Bergen communique," 2005).

The earlier attempt of the Ministry to fit the old education-qualification cycles into the cycle system was preserved. The education-qualification and scientific cycles were decided by the Ministry to be the basis for the representation of the Bologna three-cycle study system in Ukraine. For instance, the national implementation report of 2007 noted that the Bologna three cycles of studies had been implemented in Ukraine. This claim was perhaps made on the basis of the "Ministerial decree №612" (2007), which mentioned the necessity to improve the three-cycle system in Ukraine. However, it was unclear how exactly all Ukrainian structures were to fit into the three cycles, and how to justify the multiple degrees within each cycle.

The Ministry appears to have been ignoring the fact that too many degrees existed in Ukraine. For example, the Minister of Education and Science made a request to certain units within his Ministry, as well as the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Economics and 'other interested central bodies of executive branch.' The Minister requested them to 'develop measures aiming at a gradual implementation of the three-cycle system (Bachelor's, Master's and

Doctorate's cycles), considering the national context and a possibility of the existence of interim qualifications' ("Ministerial decree №612," 2007). In fact, the decree did not ask to change anything in what had been already established in terms of the cycles of studies in the Ukrainian higher education. The reason behind this process of seemingly ignoring the problem by the Ministry is explained by an ex-representative from the central governing bodies who discussed the case of the Specialist's degree:

*The difference between the programmes for Specialist's and Master's is in two-three courses. These degrees are very similar, in fact... The "Law about Higher Education" [2002] does not really specify the difference between the two degrees. Well Master's is higher. Nevertheless, both degrees can be undertaken after Bachelor's. Both are around one year long. Both require a dissertation to be written... We need to get rid of Specialist's. However, if we liquidate Specialist's, people who obtained this diploma earlier will come to employers, and what? They need some additional piece of paper that would make them equal to those who have Bachelor's. However, it would mean abusing their rights because those who obtained Specialist's studied one year more than Bachelor's). Otherwise, we would need to make them equal to Master's. However, we do not have the right to do so either. How can we do this if graduates with the Specialist's degree have not studied in the same way that those with Master's did? So we would have to organise a system of qualification upgrading. This is millions of people. For what money? Thus, there is a conscious procrastination - not ignorance (i.29, ex-representative of a working group at the Parliamentary Committee of Education and Science Matters, ex-representative of the BFUG, current academic manager at a university).*

The establishment of correspondence among the study cycles in Ukraine and the three Bologna cycles had been postponed for a while by the central governing bodies. Meanwhile, some steps were taken by the representatives of other clusters to develop the Bologna study cycle instrument. These changes pertained to the cross-programme access among the cycles and the equation of one research cycle in Ukraine to the Bologna PhD cycle.

The impossibility of cross-programme access among the cycles was preserved for a long time in Ukraine. This was in spite of the necessity to ensure that such access was recognised at the international ministerial conferences ("London communique," 2007). The difficulty in the cross-programme access from Bachelor's to either Specialist's or Master's in Ukraine is mentioned in the international "Stocktaking report" (2012). It is also discussed by a civil sector representative:

*The Ministry prohibited applying to a different study area after completing a degree in another area. If you study, for example, Political Studies for your Bachelor's, you cannot apply for a Master's programme in Sociology... The same is with this Specialist's degree and with the Candidate of Sciences... You cannot write a thesis, for example, in Sociology if you*

*have a background in Geography* (i.41, representative of the Fund Demokratychni Initiatyvy).

The debate around the problem with the cross-programme access was gaining momentum. It was even raised at the meetings of the cross-cluster team of the HEREs (i.27, representative of the team and a university instructor). These discussions prompted the Ministry to start a pilot in cross-programme access (“Ministerial decree №548,” 2013). The pilot targeted students whose Master’s programmes commenced in September 2014. The initiative was limited to 12 institutions and ten specialties within them. The cross-programme access from the first to the second cycle was later made a countrywide policy in the new “Law about Higher Education,” (2014, chapter 2).

The cross-programme access has not been the only arrangement needed to make the three-cycle system work in Ukraine. The civil sector organisations and institutions have been trying to clarify the meaning of the third cycle in Ukraine. Finikov (2012) and EACEA, National TEMPUS Office, and Shytikova (2012) mention that a pilot project was initiated by the National University ‘Kyiv-Mohyla Academy’ to create its doctoral school to offer PhD programmes. The project was not encouraged by the Ministry and did not gain recognition in the country. It was perhaps because of the unclear status of the PhD degree back then, in relation to the two national research degrees. The examination of the website of this doctoral school (Doctoral School, 2010) suggests that the school was created in 2008. The work of the school became limited to offering professional development courses for those working towards obtaining the Doctor of Sciences degrees. There was an obvious association of PhD with Doctor of Sciences by this university. In addition, the equation of the Candidate of Sciences cycle in Ukraine with the Bologna PhD was long promoted by the National TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office:

*PhD is sort of in the middle between our Candidate of Sciences’ degree and Doctor of Sciences. It is closer to the Candidate of Sciences, though, because of a similar duration of studies. Far more people here get Candidate of Sciences than Doctor of Sciences. So it is better to equate Candidate of Sciences to PhD. This means that more people will get a PhD. If we equate it to Doctor of Sciences, a lot of people won’t get to PhD because not many people target to get the Doctor of Sciences’ degree. People will do the Candidate of Science’s degree, which is not recognised in Europe* (i.28, TEMPUS Office representative).

#### **6.3.4. Five cycles in the three-cycle system**

The equation of the Candidate of Sciences degree with the PhD, promoted by the National TEMPUS Office, was legalised in the new “Law about Higher Education” (2014). In addition to the change in name of the third cycle made by the

Law, the first and second cycles have also undergone changes.

The Law has left the Junior Specialist's degree in place, having renamed it into Junior Bachelor's. The Specialist's degree was canceled in the new "Law about Higher Education" (2014, chapter 2, article 5). Hence, the Master's degree became the only degree in the second cycle. This change raises a question about how Specialist's diplomas, obtained earlier, will be dealt with by employers. The new Law has also substituted the Candidate of Sciences degree with the PhD degree. It is defined as a four-year programme of doing 'scientific, scientific-technical, scientific-pedagogical, scientific-organisational' work. While an explanation of the meanings of different types of this work is absent, it is clear that the PhD degree is 'obtained at the third cycle on the basis of a Master's degree... The Doctor of Philosophy degree is awarded after a successful completion of a relevant education-scientific programme and a public defense of a thesis with a special scientific council' ("Law about Higher Education," 2014, chapter 2, article 5). The degree of Doctor of Sciences, according to the new Law, has been preserved. Its duration is undefined, but its requirements are provided. Doctor of Sciences presupposes 'mastering the highest competences in the field of the development and implementation of research, conducting original research, obtaining results that support the answer to an important theoretical or practical question' (chapter 2, article 5). It could be assumed that the specifics of this degree remained unchanged in comparison to how it worked before the new Law.

Clearly, the Law has preserved the two degrees that are lower than the second cycle – Junior Bachelor's and Bachelor's. It also kept the two degrees that are higher than Master's – PhD and Doctor of Sciences. However, the first and the third cycles, according to the Law, contain only one degree. Junior Bachelor's and Doctor of Sciences formed two separate cycles in addition to the three Bologna cycles. The Law states that Junior Bachelor's degree belongs to the initial cycle, Bachelor's – to the first cycle, Master's degree – to the second cycle, Doctor of Philosophy degree – to the third cycle, and Doctor of Sciences degree – to the scientific cycle (article 5). So the puzzle of implementing the three-cycle system without too many changes in the national system of degrees was resolved by confirming five cycles. The first and the last cycles fall beyond the three Bologna cycle system. The equation of one research cycle in Ukraine to the PhD cycle, the elimination of the Specialist's degree and the renaming of the *Junior Specialist's* into *Junior Bachelor's* were done through re-branding the old structures.

This section has shown how the Bologna study cycle instrument in Ukraine has been developed on the basis of the old national education-qualification and scientific cycles. The Bologna study cycles in Ukraine have been shaped by the higher education actors primarily by providing new labels to old structures. They have been making minor changes in some of the old structures from time to time.

## **6.4. The diploma supplement**

This section shows how the Bologna diploma supplement instrument has been developed by the higher education actors in Ukraine. They have been considering the pre-Bologna national diploma supplement policy, and the new Bologna idea about the diploma supplement. The new idea was agreed upon at the international ministerial conferences. Both the old and the new diploma supplements are documents which are issued for graduates in addition to diplomas. Diploma supplements provide the details of the completed study programme and academic performance of the graduate. According to the BFUG Working Group on Structural Reforms, specifically the Bologna diploma supplement is supposed to reflect other Bologna developments in higher education. It is also supposed to provide the details of studies of a particular graduate. It should be in a widely spoken language in the EHEA, and should be issued free of charge to graduates (“Terms of reference,” 2013).

The Bologna diploma supplement in Ukraine has been developed somewhat similarly to the system of credits and the study cycles. The last two instruments were mainly formed by labeling older higher education qualifications in novel ways for a while before the old policies and some new ideas were combined in a new policy. The Bologna diploma supplement had been developed as a separate policy for a while along with the preservation of the old national policy until recently. The new policy has now substituted for the old national diploma supplement policy.

### ***6.4.1. The national diploma supplement***

The policy about the national diploma supplement had existed in Ukraine since 1997 (“Governmental regulation №1260,” 1997). This regulation was a response of the Government to the “Law about Education” (1991). The Law stated that the specifics of the documents that should be issued to graduates was to be developed and confirmed by the Government (“Law about Education,” 1991, chapter 1, article 27). Although no deadlines for the Government to confirm the list of such documents were set, “Governmental regulation №1260” (1997) can be

considered to be slightly delayed. There was uncertainty around what to issue for graduates for six years after the Law was passed. It can be assumed that some old Soviet practices had been carried on till the regulation was passed. According to it, diplomas and national diploma supplements were issued free of charge to graduates of all education-qualification cycles. The completion of the scientific cycles was followed by issuing the national diploma supplement and certificates instead of diplomas.

The national diploma supplement policy, introduced by the Government, was further specified by the “Ministerial letter №1/9-118” (2000). The Ministry developed recommendations to the format of the national diploma supplement. It listed 25 points that institutions had to fill in the diploma supplement. These points were about: the student, institution, programme, specialty, courses, and achievements. The most recent template of the national diploma supplement was presented on the website of the Ministry (“Ministry of Education and Science,” 2012). It is a relatively brief one double-sided page document. It asks to outline the information about the programme of study, and is focused on the list of courses and grades in the national four-point scale.

#### **6.4.2. Two types of the diploma supplement**

The development of the Bologna diploma supplement had been ongoing since the commencement of the Bologna pilot project in 2004. This was taking place in the context of the national diploma supplement at work. According to “Ministerial decree №49” (2004), the Scientific Advisory Centre, which is a consultative body of the Ministry, was supposed to create a template of the diploma supplement ‘corresponding to the European template.’ This is actually the term used to refer to the Bologna diploma supplement in all the documentation of the central policy-making bodies. It was also the term used by most of the interviewees from all clusters, excluding the National TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office. The representatives of this Office understand that there has not been a single European template of the diploma supplement up until around 2010. There were suggestions for the creation of the Bologna diploma supplement at the international ministerial conferences. However, the exact design of the diploma supplement corresponding to ‘the European template’ was not there to be followed in Ukraine. In particular, the diploma supplement idea was specified in the “Berlin communique” (2003), which states that the diploma supplement should include all information about studies. Additionally, this communique states that ‘...every student graduating as from 2005 should receive the diploma supplement automatically and free of charge. It should be issued in a widely spoken European language’ (p.5). These

recommendations were not followed in Ukraine for a while.

It was explained in the previous Chapter that the Scientific Advisory Centre had not apparently created the Bologna diploma supplement template for Ukraine since the same task was set in 2007 (“Ministerial decree №612,” 2007) and then in 2010 (“Ministerial decree №275,” 2010). In 2010, the task was delegated to a cross-cluster working group that was comprising some HEREs. The group was to participate in the creation of the Bologna diploma supplement template and the development of recommendations for higher education institutions on how to fill it in. This attempt was successful at least in the sense that the Bologna diploma supplement became available on graduate’s request since 2010. Yet, the majority of graduates were still issued the national diploma supplement. It was so perhaps because the national diploma supplement was less expensive, and because the majority of graduates did not have any further education or work plans abroad. Therefore, diploma recognition abroad was apparently not an issue for them:

*We have had the [Bologna] diploma supplement for three years available on request of those who want it. They have to pay for it more than for our [national] diploma supplement. That is why most graduates choose our diploma supplement (i.4, dean and instructor).*

The charge graduates had to pay for the Bologna diploma supplement obviously contradicted the idea that the Bologna diploma supplement should be free, as was mentioned earlier. The existence of this fee can be seen as an expression of how the new policy was influenced by the old policy about the national diploma supplement. The old diploma supplement was also not free for graduates. Gozhyk (2014) states that, despite the creation of the template, sufficient explanations about it – its price, responsible bodies for filling it in – were not tackled in the Ministerial decrees.

The Bologna diploma supplement template presented on the website of the Ministry seems to be quite detailed (“Ministry of Education and Science,” 2012). However, my interviews suggest that higher education institutions did not find it straightforward. An 11-page Bologna diploma supplement is based on the Bologna terminology. It is associated with the Bologna policies such as the system of credits and the study cycles, and detailed explanations about the meaning and value of grades, qualifications and the degree overall. However, there was a conflict between the old and the new diploma supplements in terms of their content. There were also issues with English translations. Additionally, there was uncertainty about whether, and if so, how to provide the Bologna diploma supplement to those who graduated before 2010. In addition, the new document was not popular because of the old



procedures for international degree recognition in Ukraine. They were established when Ukraine only had the national diploma supplement.

In particular, a representative of an institution negatively evaluates the fact that the national diploma supplement makes the Bologna diploma supplement redundant:

*The Bologna grades, such as these letters from an 'A' to an 'F' and 100 points, work during the study process, but our grades are put into our diploma supplement. I do not understand why the Ministry made us use these ECTS grades if they are unnecessary in the end (i.13, instructor and dean's assistant).*

Furthermore, the English translation was an issue that higher education institutions have been dealing with. It is stated in the study by Lynyova and Zhdanova (2014) that 27 out of 55 rectors claim that English translation of the Bologna diploma supplement is the main difficulty at institutions. My research participants explained how much of a problem English was for them:

*As far as I understand, such a diploma supplement has been available only at certain higher education institutions by now. It was because not all institutions have figured out how to fill it in, especially the English part. Some universities, like us, still use the Soviet principle – let's get into something and then figure out how to do it. There are many people at our university who know English, but they cannot advice on the English version of the template because they need to know the details of Bologna, the terminology (i.5, vice-rector and instructor).*

Another issue was related to providing the Bologna diploma supplement to those who graduated before 2010. The civil sector has been attempting to deal with this. The National Bologna Centre initiated the issuing of the Bologna diploma supplement for students who graduated prior to 2010. This initiative made the rights for academic mobility equal for the graduates who wanted and obtained the Bologna diploma supplement after 2010, and for the students who graduated before 2010 and were issued the national diploma supplement but later decided they needed the Bologna diploma supplement (National Bologna Centre, 2015). This has been done by the National Bologna Centre through requesting a list of documents from graduates which it would then pass to the All-Ukrainian Academic Union (another civil sector organisation). This Union, in its turn, would ensure the issuance of the Bologna diploma supplement after the agreement with the Ministry. Here is what a representative of the National Bologna Centre commented about this initiative:

*This idea has not been popular at all. First, many people do not know about it.*

*Second, it is more expensive because graduates have to pay for the translation of their documents and for a notarial attestation of the translations. Then, they have to pay for the Bologna diploma supplement itself. If some graduates really want to go abroad to study or work, they just use translations and notarial attestation, and it works. One more reason why this practice has not been popular is because people are afraid that something, which is not produced by the Ministry, is illegal. They do not know that we agreed this through the All-Ukrainian Academic Union, which somehow managed to agree this with the Ministry... The Union has been supported by the TEMPUS Programme, as far as I am aware (i.43).*

The last issue around the implementation of the Bologna diploma supplement was associated with its low popularity. Many graduates tended to follow previously established procedures of a mutual recognition of Ukrainian and foreign degrees. This low popularity could have also been related to the poor awareness of the graduates about a possibility to obtain such a Bologna diploma supplement. Only 31,7% of current students, who were asked what Bologna offers them, mentioned the Bologna diploma supplement (Finikov, 2012). So current students have a limited knowledge about the possibility to obtain the Bologna diploma supplement. This implies that graduates who do not deal with academic matters any longer might be not aware of the Bologna diploma supplement at all. The recognition of Ukrainian degrees was ensured by translations of Ukrainian diploma and the national diploma supplement, as explained earlier in the quote.

The question of the recognition of foreign degrees in Ukraine was raised by the central governing bodies far before Bologna started. This is demonstrated by a list of policy documents outlined by Zarubinska (2014). For example, the author lists two recent documents – “Ministerial decree №1012” (2010) and “Ministerial decree №632” (2012). My reading of them suggests that they did not make the recognition of foreign diplomas automatic. Instead, they specified a bureaucratic procedure for confirming such diplomas at the Ministry. Besides, there was one more document found during the data collection for this research. “Ministerial decree №563” (2003) confirmed the role of the Ministry in ‘organising and conducting nostrification.’ This meant the necessity to defend a foreign qualification by its holder in Ukraine again. Finikov (2012) supports this by the statement that the recognition of foreign research degrees in Ukraine happened in case of another viva. It was conducted according to a simpler procedure than it would be if getting the degree in the first place.

#### **6.4.3. The Bologna diploma supplement**

The low popularity of the Bologna diploma supplement and issues around the recognition of foreign degrees in Ukraine were gradually changed. The Bologna diploma supplement eventually substituted for the national one. A single template

of the Bologna diploma supplement was to be issued in both Ukrainian and English (“Governmental resolution №655,” 2013). According to the Governmental regulation, all graduates of 2013/2014 were expected to receive the Bologna diploma supplement. The substitution of the national diploma supplement by the Bologna one is also confirmed in the new “Law about Higher Education” (2014). The Law states that ‘An essential part of Bachelor’s, Master’s and PhD diplomas is the diploma supplement corresponding to the European template that contains structured information about completed studies.’ The Law further states that ‘the diploma supplement includes information about the results of studies, names of study programmes, grades, ECTS credits, as well as data about the national system of higher education of Ukraine’ (chapter 1, article 7).

The new “Law about Higher Education” also eased the process of foreign degree recognition. Study Councils at higher education institutions are supposed to be responsible for recognising foreign degrees when admitting students or employing workers. The previous practice of sending everyone to the Ministry for the verification of their degrees was canceled (chapter 1, article 30).

This section has demonstrated that the Bologna diploma supplement instrument was developed by the Ukrainian higher education actors in the context of the old similar policy at work. The previously established policy was gradually changed as the new ideas about the Bologna diploma supplement, agreed upon at the international ministerial conferences, were added. The Bologna diploma supplement had been developed as a separate policy for a while, along with the preservation of the old national policy until recently. The new policy has already completely substituted for the old national diploma supplement policy. Some further changes in the Bologna diploma supplement template should be expected in the near future. It is because the new Law regarding higher education made some changes in other Bologna instruments, such as the study cycles, discussed earlier.

## **6.5. Quality assurance**

Similar to the other instruments discussed so far, the Bologna quality assurance policies developed on the basis of the pre-Bologna national quality assurance policies. Quality assurance is perhaps the broadest area for change out of all other Bologna action lines. Quality assurance ideas are all-encompassing since all other developments in higher education, including the ones discussed earlier in this

Chapter, could be seen to pertain to quality assurance.

The Bologna action line about quality assurance was developed internationally from brief statements about the 'Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance' ("Bologna declaration," 1999: p.4). This action line was eventually turned into a more specific policy idea with certain steps to take. In particular, the "Berlin communique" (2003) specified that there should be 'a definition of the responsibilities of the bodies and institutions involved; evaluation of programmes or institutions, including internal assessment, external review' (p.3). The idea that quality assurance should include internal and external review was further developed during the international ministerial conferences. This idea was also explained in detail in the report entitled *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA* ("ENQA report," 2005).

Before Bologna, no set of concrete policies seemed to stand out as quality assurance mechanisms in Ukraine. In other words, the term *quality assurance* tended not to be explicitly discussed in policy documents, as much as it has been discussed after the commencement of Bologna. There were, though, a number of policies which implied quality assurance. They were: external checks of institutions by Ministerial delegations, and licensing and accreditation of institutions by the Ministry.

During the Bologna Process, internal and external quality assurance of institutions developed. External quality assurance has remained a key quality control mechanism in higher education. It has been exercised for a while exactly the way it used to exist earlier, but it has been modified slightly recently. The old practices of licensing and accreditation of institutions by the Ministry, and the checks of institutions by the Ministry, were gradually reformed. In addition, international quality assurance in the form of institutional autonomy came out to the forefront.

### **6.5.1. External review**

Two main external quality assurance mechanisms include external checks of institutions and accreditation requirements.

#### **6.5.1.1. External checks of institutions**

It was explained above that external review, according to the international meetings, was to be enacted by independent agencies ("Berlin communique," 2003). However, the idea of the external review seems to have been interpreted by the

Ministry in Ukraine in a different way for a long time. The Ministry has been considering that the external review equals the old practice of delegated inspections of students' performance during exams, and the inspections of documentation. Study plans and reports, which instructors and academic managers had to produce, have been the documents for inspection.

The State Inspectorate of institutions has been a division of the Ministry. It was supposed to keep arranging annual exams for students at all institutions to check their knowledge, and to report about the results to the Minister. Moreover, the State Inspectorate was also responsible for checking whether institutional workers produce necessary documentation, and whether they do it correctly. In the Bologna context, the Ministry positioned these inspections as central in the development of the Bologna quality assurance policies ("Ministerial decree №948," 2007). The following two quotes illustrate how such practices kept meeting discontent by the representatives of institutions:

*We have some original courses at our school. They are prepared and taught as electives by respectable smart Doctors of Sciences. These professors cannot support the idea that someone else comes and checks students' knowledge on these courses. Someone else does not know well what was taught! This also pertains to all courses we have. We never know what course will be checked. We used to have this phenomenon earlier too, as far as I remember myself as an instructor and as a student once too. We can never agree that checking our original courses is the right thing to do... Correcting us in teaching these courses does not really raise quality of higher education (i.24, dean and instructor).*

*We need time for a qualitative preparation for classes, methodology, literature and so on. I personally have to prepare so many documents for the Ministry, for our authoritative bodies, it is totally unbelievable... we always get such an information [about changes in documents to make] at the beginning of summer. We do everything in summer because we have to start working in autumn according to the new documents. Everything has to be renewed by autumn because we always have commissions coming to check our work because the Ministry orders to do so... The work is checked in the documents. They better give us more time to prepare for our work and to do it well, rather than asking us to take time from our work for paperwork. Honestly, this paperwork is often a performance rather than a reflection of the reality (i.13, instructor and dean's assistant).*

Recently, a new consultative body for the Ministry – the National Quality Assurance Agency – has been created by the new "Law about Higher Education" (2014, chapter 4, article 12). This Agency was created in Ukraine in response to the international agreement to have such external independent agencies for the external review of the work of institutions ("Bergen communique," 2005). Furthermore, at the time of the adoption of the Law, this Agency was not yet registered with the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education. It is the organisation in

which all national quality assurance agencies in the Bologna country are to be registered to develop common guidelines for work ("Terms of reference," 2013). Neither was it associated with the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, which is a Bologna international consultative member that deals with higher education quality. Ukraine has not been officially affiliated with this actor since the commencement of Bologna. However, it cooperated with it in the framework of the Bologna Working Group on Structural Reforms. Both this actor and Ukrainian Ministerial officials that represent the Ukrainian BFUG are members of the Bologna Working Group on Structural Reforms (European Higher Education Area, 2014).

This National Quality Assurance Agency in Ukraine might establish the connections, mentioned above, in the future. It can also potentially propel the development of executive documentation that would deprive the Ministry of the right to conduct external inspections of students' academic performance. The National Higher Education Quality Assurance Agency, represented by Field Expert Councils, is supposed to start working independently from the Ministry ("Law about Higher Education," 2014, chapter 4, article 21). It is supposed to substitute for the three quality assurance actors which existed within the Ministry earlier as its divisions. They were the State Inspectorate of Institutions, the Accreditation Commission, and the Attestation Collegium (Luhovy, 2014). The National Higher Education Quality Assurance Agency is not funded by the state, and it is a non-profitable actor ("Law about Higher Education," 2014, chapter 5, article 22). This was the compromise reached by the cross-cluster group.

The Agency is supposed to cooperate with the Ministry, for instance, in the area of the external review of institutions. So the creation of the Agency does not presuppose the halt of these external checks. Rather, it presupposes their enactment more in line with the agreements reached at the international Bologna conferences. In fact, the Agency is to conduct the external review in the form of asking the representatives of the institutions about their work. Dealing with the bureaucracy to make the decisions of the Agency official is the responsibility of the Ministry (article 18).

Given the fact that this Agency was created at the time which marks the end of the period this research covers, it is unknown how exactly this Agency works after its establishment. If its cooperation with the Ministry does not become too much censored by the Ministry, the Agency could lessen the strict control that the central governing bodies have had over higher education. This is an expectation expressed by a TEMPUS Office representative. This individual argued in favour of

the creation of such an agency before the Law was passed:

*We need an independent quality assurance agency which is suggested in a draft law but it is a too radical step for the Ministry to take. That is why it has not been taken yet. If such an Agency is created, we would conform to the Bologna standards and we would move away from the Soviet type of control (i.28).*

The development of the idea of external reviews of institutions to ensure quality has evolved similarly to how other Bologna instruments developed. Initially, an old national policy – Ministerial checks of institutions – was labeled as the Bologna external review practice. The logic behind this re-branding was that the Ministry was an external body. The external checks of the Ministry, especially their preoccupation with checking institutional documentation, was not really helpful in terms of promoting quality, as suggested in the quotes above. The call to create such an agency recurred in many Bologna international meetings (e.g., “Berlin communique,” 2003; “London communique,” 2007). Since it was also supported by the National TEMPUS Office in Ukraine, an eventual change of the old practice and the creation of such an Agency in Ukraine was inevitable.

#### *6.5.1.2. Accreditation requirement change*

Apart from external checks of institutions, accreditation requirements have also been part of the external review in Bologna in Ukraine. Since the independence of Ukraine, all institutions in the country, after being licensed by the Ministry, used to go through accreditation. This accreditation process had to be performed right after licensing and further on, once every four years. Accreditation meant recognising that the quality of work at higher education institutions corresponded to certain norms. The Ukrainian legislature (“Law about Higher Education,” 2002) identified four levels of accreditation. There were higher education institutions of:

- the I level of accreditation – prepared Junior Specialist’s;
- the II level – prepared Junior Specialist’s and Bachelor’s;
- the III level – prepared Bachelor’s, Specialist’s and Master’s;
- the IV level – prepared Bachelor’s, Specialist’s, Master’s, Candidates of Sciences and Doctors of Sciences.

Osipian (2010) questions the validity of the accreditation procedure in independent Ukraine. The author discusses the cases of bribery paid by private institutions to the Ministry. Bribes were exchanged for licensing and for high levels of accreditation. Therefore, the implementation of Bologna quality assurance ideas, one of which was about transparency in such procedures, was quite timely.

The Bologna quality assurance instruments have been expressed in three accreditation related policies in Ukraine. One of them concerned the increase of accreditation requirements for all institutions. This policy idea was not really guided by policy continuity. However, it pertained to the four accreditation levels that existed earlier:

*Small institutions cannot survive any longer because... of the work towards the increase of the accreditation requirements since the beginning of the Bologna Process here. The collegium [of the Ministry] decided at its last meeting that Master's programmes can be offered only by institutions whose professors have at least one citation in one of the world famous databases... This means that small institutions are losing Master's programmes. First of all, they do not have professors [title], and second, their professors do not have such citations... The state does not shut down institutions because it would be hard for people psychologically. The state acts through increasing requirements – if you can prove your quality, you can exist even if you have some 600 students. The Kyiv Mohyla Academy has 2000 students, but they prove (by their quality and their professors) that they have the right for existence... The state will set another accreditation requirement in the future for institutions pertaining to the number of professors who taught abroad. More institutions will get closed down (i.29, ex-representative of a working group at the Parliamentary Committee of Education and Science Matters, ex-representative of the BFUG, current academic manager at a university).*

The increase of accreditation requirements apparently resulted in the decrease of the number of higher education institutions. There were 1003 higher education institutions in 2006 (Kremen et al., 2006). This number went down to 850 by 2012 (Danilko, 2014).

Besides the policy to increase accreditation requirements, there was another one. Accreditation requirements had to be changed for those small institutions, which survived the increase of accreditation requirements. These small institutions became required to get affiliated with bigger institutions to pass further accreditation. This policy idea had the Bologna label, despite the fact that it pertained to the old national policy about the organisation of institutions. Moreover, it did not directly stem from the international agreements:

*We are actually returning to something that we used to have long time ago. We used to have the Kyiv Polytechnic Institute that had 10-15 filial establishments across Ukraine. This meant that there were several main institutions. They had the best professors and the best approaches to teaching... We have had so-called research establishments since around 2008. They have really strong requirements for accreditation similarly to European universities. These universities in Ukraine give bigger salaries to instructors, and in general they are better funded... There are only seven universities like that (i.29, ex-representative of a working group at the Parliamentary Committee of Education and Science*



Matters, ex-representative of the BFUG, current academic manager at a university).

These seven institutions were created; however, it did not happen in 2008, as claimed by the interviewee above. Additionally, they were not called research institutions officially. 'The regional universities' were planned to be formed by uniting smaller institutions ("Ministerial decree №612," 2007). They were eventually established in 2010 ("Governmental resolution №76," 2010). The governmental regulation identified seven institutions in Ukraine, which were granted the status of the research institutions. According to this regulation, these institutions were supposed to have the right to make the final decision concerning awarding scientific degrees. They could issue certificates and diplomas in accordance to the sample approved by the Ministry. All other institutions were supposed to have to continue relying on the decisions of the Ministry in regard to scientific degrees and research titles. The status of the research institution was also meant to grant freedom to define the proportion of students and instructors, which should not be less than 5:1. Additionally, this status was supposed to give financial benefits to its workers. The way other institutions had to affiliate with these seven institutions was not specified in the regulation.

The new "Law about Higher Education" (2014) adds that an institution that has been conducting breakthrough research in any field can obtain the status of 'the research university.' It has to apply for this status to the Government. The National Quality Assurance Agency can also make such an application to the Government to grant this status to an outstanding institution in research. In both cases, the final decision about the status is supposed to be approved by the Prime Minister (chapter 6, article 30). This demonstrates that the central governing bodies are not ready to give up too much of their sphere of authority to the National Quality Assurance Agency.

The third policy related to the accreditation of institutions is the recent cancellation of the four types of accreditation of institutions ("Law about Higher Education" 2014, chapter 6, article 28). The process of accrediting institutions exists; however, its meaning has changed. It does not aim to define the level of accreditation any more. It targets defining and confirming one of the following three types of institutions:

- *universities* that specialise in a variety of fields;
- *institutes* and *academies* that specialise in one field;
- *colleges* that usually exist as divisions of the first two types of institutions and prepare Junior Bachelor's and Bachelor's.

The three accreditation policies above have been only partially guided by the Bologna idea of transparency in higher education. The external review mechanisms for quality assurance in Bologna, explained earlier, were somewhat vaguely defined on the international scale, just like other Bologna instruments. This imprecision was coupled with certain contextual issues in the old national accreditation policies.

### **6.5.2. Internal review – institutional autonomy**

In addition to the work of external quality assurance procedures, internal review of institutions has also been under development. Before Bologna the notion of institutional autonomy existed in Ukraine, although its scope was very limited. Internal quality assurance used to be far less important than the external control of institutions by the Ministry. The “Law about Higher Education” (2002), for example, discussed a so-called institutional self-governing, which could be expressed in two ways. First, the community of all institutional workers was allowed by the central governing bodies, for instance, to propose candidates for rectors that would be in the end confirmed or rejected by the Ministry. Institutional workers were also allowed to listen to annual rector’s reports. They could also confirm regulations about students’ self-governing bodies suggested by the Ministry, such as the Student Council within the Ministry (chapter 6, article 37). Second, institutional self-governing used to be associated with ‘students’ self-government.’ It meant that students could, for instance, organise after-curricular activities for their peers. They could also confirm rector’s decisions concerning campus life, and they could participate in the confirmation of the membership of the Scientific Councils at institutions. The limits of that institutional self-governing was suggested in the discussion of the strict control of institutions by the Ministry in the previous Chapter and earlier in this Chapter as well.

The most striking finding regarding the internal quality assurance is that the Bologna Process increased the interest of the Ukrainian higher education community in institutional self-governing or autonomy. Institutional autonomy was defined at the Bologna international meetings as a freedom of institutions in making decisions about their work in different areas (“Bologna declaration,” 1999). This definition of autonomy obviously ran counter to the established strict control of the higher education institutions by the central governing bodies in Ukraine.

The Ministry responded to the international call to develop the autonomy of institutions, but it, apparently, deliberately allowed this response to get stuck at its beginning. The Ministry initiated a small pilot project that formally aimed to develop autonomy of institutions. Kvit (2013) states that a consortium of eight

universities in Ukraine conducted surveys concerning the ideas of students and staff about their autonomy. The consortium developed some draft policy documents to be passed to the Ministry for official issue. These documents suggested to decrease Ministerial control over institutions by, for instance, cancelling the requirement to produce a lot of paperwork to be submitted to the Ministry. Apparently, the documents drafted by the consortium have not been ever issued officially:

*There was a pilot project about institutional autonomy planned for 2007-2011... Our legislature states that institutions are ruled by state bodies that deal with education. We have to change our legislature before we can do such pilot projects. So the idea of the pilot was discussed a lot by everyone, including Yushchenko [ex-President] but it was sort of abandoned in the end. Everyone forgot about that pilot by now (i.29, ex-representative of a working group at the Parliamentary Committee of Education and Science Matters, ex-representative of the BFUG, current academic manager at a university).*

The Ministry made another attempt to demonstrate to other actors that it aimed to develop institutional autonomy. It was during the production of drafts of the new Law regarding higher education. The previous Chapter explained that the drafts produced by the central governing bodies proposed to cut state funding for institutions under the label of increasing institutional autonomy. Such a move might have been aiming to appropriate the Bologna Process to save state budget, while still preserving the centralisation of higher education in the country. In the end, the new “Law about Higher Education” (2014) did not change the funding arrangements. It just reaffirmed the accreditation requirements that had been already driving the closure of some institutions, and thus, some state budget saving.

The Ministry seemed not to plan to grant institutions more freedom in policy decision-making. Meanwhile, the civil sector and the institutions themselves tried to increase and exercise institutional autonomy in the Bologna context.

What concerns the civil sector, the Ukrainian Association of Students’ Self-governing initiated a two-day Students’ Autonomy School in 2013. According to the website of the organisation (Ukrainian Association of Students’ Self-government, 2015), the representatives from eight institutions participated in the event. The purpose of the school was to make student participants realise the importance of students’ effort in organising and implementing projects. By doing this, students could boost their participation in managing institutions. Well-established students’ self-government is positioned by the School as a key component of institutional autonomy:

*The school we organised will hopefully give an incentive to at least a few most active students to come up with some projects at their institutions. We talk here about the projects*

*that would be co-implemented with academic managers who would let students be more involved in institutional management... Students' self-government will contribute to the Bologna idea of institutional autonomy (i.37, member of the Ukrainian Association of Students' Self-governing).*

Policy ideas about developing autonomy were also followed by institutions at least in three ways. First, they have been joining Magna Charta Universitatum which is a declaration initially signed by several foreign universities in Bologna. The signing of this document took place before the commencement of Bologna. The declaration is about university cooperation in the development of their autonomy ("Magna Charta Universitatum," 1988). Evidently, more and more universities from the EHEA continue to sign it, declaring in this way their aim to be autonomous (Magna Charta Observatory, 2013). It is indicated on the website of a university examined in this study that signed this declaration. Only one interviewee briefly mentioned this initiative by confirming the fact of signing and interpreting it as the first small step on the way of developing autonomy (i.9).

The second way in which institutions in Ukraine have been trying to develop their autonomy is through making arrangements for students to express their opinions about changes they would like to see at their institutions. An example of this is a Student Council organised at one university where I conducted interviews:

*Our rector also suggested student monitoring of the study process... I should admit that it is not always possible to take into consideration what students say. Students have to have two elective courses. We give them five options but we cannot offer more. Our school is small, and what will happen if only two or three students choose one course? We are not so rich to let an instructor teach three-four students. Students are dissatisfied saying that they are trying to improve their studies, and we are not letting them do that (i.24, dean and instructor).*

The third approach in which Ukrainian institutions have been trying to develop their autonomy is through inventing their own quality assurance policies in Bologna. This was in addition to fulfilling the quality assurance measures, requested by the Ministry. The introduction of course evaluation forms is an example:

*Our rector has very advanced ideas, and he introduced a policy which presupposes that students evaluate the study process and professors they have. This should be done every semester... Students' evaluations of the study process are anonymous. It is only me who has access to the evaluations of instructors [at that school]. If I see some substantial problems with a certain instructor for a couple of semesters in a row, I talk to that instructor (i.24, dean and instructor).*

The institutional autonomy was developed in Ukraine in Bologna in the

context of the resistance of the old practices to change. The Ministry seemed not to be willing to grant institutions more freedom in policy decision-making, and thus, to allow the development of their autonomy. Regardless of this, the civil sector and the institutions themselves tried to increase and exercise institutional autonomy in the Bologna context. The internal review that was suggested on the international scale has been exercised in different forms in Ukraine. For instance, a student council was created at one institution; study process evaluations by students were introduced at an institution; and an autonomy school was organised by a civil sector organisation.

This section has demonstrated how the Bologna quality assurance policies have been developed in Ukraine by the higher education actors. Most of them were developed on the basis of the national quality assurance policies that existed in Ukraine before the Bologna Process. The Bologna quality assurance ideas, agreed upon at the international ministerial conferences, were gradually added. They have been changing the meanings of the old national quality assurance policies. This section has presented three major ideas associated with the Bologna quality assurance ideas: external checks of institutions and accreditation requirement increase as external mechanisms; and institutional autonomy which is an internal mechanism. Quality assurance continued to be exercised mainly through external mechanisms. Institutional autonomy seems to have been limited all this time. However, the civil sector and institutions have been contributing to its development, despite the resistance from the Ministry.

## **6.6. Conclusion**

This Chapter has demonstrated the interaction of path-dependence and innovations related to Bologna instruments in Ukraine. The Chapter has presented the findings about such four types of the Bologna instruments as the credit system, the study cycles, the diploma supplement and the quality assurance policy ideas.

All of these instruments have been developed through the reconfiguration of the pre-Bologna policies, which were chosen by the Ministry to represent these instruments. Namely, the national module system became the basis for the Bologna system of credits. The pre-Bologna education-qualification and scientific cycles made a foundation for the Bologna study cycles. The old national diploma supplement was a reason for the delay in dealing with the Bologna diploma

supplement, given that *a* diploma supplement existed. The national diploma supplement was taken as the Bologna instrument even though their structure and content differed. Apart from this, the pre-Bologna higher education quality assurance policies started representing the Bologna quality assurance instruments at the outset of the reform in Ukraine.

The examination of these four cases of policy instruments shows that their development began with a mere change of labels for the old policies. New names were attached to them. However, this tendency was not stable. Most of the policies associated with the four instruments, analysed in this Chapter, have been developed by building up innovations to gradually alter the old national higher education policies.

This idea points to such mechanism as *policy layering* at work, which will be analysed in the next Chapter. The next Chapter will draw together the findings about both the Bologna actors and instruments to explain the mechanism of the Bologna reform in Ukraine and its place in Europeanisation in the post-Soviet context.

# Chapter 7

## Bologna in Ukraine and post-Soviet Europeanisation

### 7.1. Introduction

This study uses interviews with key Bologna actors in Ukraine, and some of the most influential policy documents they produced, as well as the literature about Bologna and post-Soviet Europeanisation. Through an in-depth investigation of higher education actors and policy instruments in the case of the implementation of Bologna in Ukraine, this study a) analyses the process of the Bologna reform; and b) examines Bologna as a case of Europeanisation in the post-Soviet context.

The findings of this research show that the Bologna reform in Ukraine has been developing through the interplay of policy continuity and change. In particular, the research demonstrates that continuity has been mainly perpetuated by the Ministry of Education and Science, and change has been facilitated by civil organisations.

There has been a lot of fluidity in the interaction of old practices and policy innovation in Bologna in Ukraine. The interaction between the path dependency and change has primarily been a gradual chaotic, yet creative, and shared build-up of minor innovations by different higher education actors. These innovations in the development of the Bologna instruments may be seen as leading to more substantial transformations over time, such as the emergence of greater degree of distributed, rather than solely central, governance in higher education in Ukraine.

The research findings may also serve as a first step towards a reconceptualisation of the Europeanisation process particularly in the post-Soviet context. Bologna in Ukraine can be seen as an illustration of the ways in which Europeanisation may not always necessitate the elimination of past conventions and practices – indeed, in a policy field such as education, abandoning history and tradition would have been a futile endeavour. Policy continuity in the post-Soviet context may be a foundation in the Europeanisation process during which minor innovations are slowly yet continuously being accumulated. This foundation shapes the nature of changes. Therefore, perhaps, the debate regarding a slow pace of Europeanisation in the post-Soviet space might be erroneous, since it carries a hidden assumption – that it is slow in relation to a much faster Europeanisation and

resulting transformations in the EU. Such a comparison should be revisited in light of a potential difference in the nature of Europeanisation in the two spaces and the acknowledgement of growing overlaps between the two spaces as well.

## **7.2. 'The old' and 'the new' in the Bologna reform**

According to policy learning theory, many reforms in different fields, including higher education, might be related to policy learning. The simplest explanation of policy learning is updating beliefs in a policy context based on prior experiences and knowledge. The old knowledge and new information become interconnected in the process of learning (Borrás, 2011).

What can we infer and how may we theorise what this interplay of the 'old' and the 'new' in the Ukrainian Bologna reform contributes to our understanding of policy process during this particular reform? This study's findings are only partially concordant with previous research about Bologna in Ukraine. That literature emphasises that higher education centralisation restricts and slows down the process of the Bologna reform (e.g., Shestavina, 2004; Filiatreau, 2011; Finikov, 2012). Similarly, this study has demonstrated that strict control of the central governing bodies is indeed the case. The Ministry of Education and Science has been particularly powerful in preserving the old model of centralised decision-making. Nevertheless, this study has also shown that changes have been happening too, mainly due to the efforts of civil sector organisations. Centralisation has probably not been slowing down these changes, but rather it may have been shaping them in a particular way – as we will see in the following section.

This section details how, on the one hand, the Ministry's main function was to maintain the previously established higher education system during Bologna in Ukraine; on the other hand, and despite the Ministry's efforts, civil sector organisations have been pushing for – and sometimes achieving – change. Such a separation of 'the old' and 'the new' is, of course, heuristic, necessary for the analysis. Indeed, the data analysis itself has demonstrated how closely the two interlink and co-shape each other.

### ***7.2.1. Policy continuity***

Although the central governing bodies remained the most important decision-making cluster of actors in higher education in Ukraine, in the context of Bologna one of these actors – the Ministry of Education and Science – developed



from merely an executive body into a powerful actor, directing and guiding higher education policy-making. This is despite its policy-making power being limited under the Constitution. The Ministry is supposed to follow and further specify and develop the decisions and directions for higher education agreed upon by other actors, such as the President, the Parliament and the Prime Minister (head of Government). The literature analysed earlier in the thesis argues that the President used to direct the development of all areas of policy, so that all other actors within the central governing bodies had a merely technocratic function. Nevertheless, within the context of Bologna reforms, the Ministry came to the forefront.

In contrast to the previous state of affairs, since the instigation of the Bologna process in the country, the Ministry has not always been dependent on the decisions of other actors in the central cluster. There were only a few cases when the Minister of Education and Science followed resolutions of the Prime Minister (e.g., development of the national qualifications framework). In most of the other cases associated with the development of the Bologna instruments and the creation of actors to support Bologna, the Ministry was pursuing its own policies. Examples of this include the implementation of the credit system, the study cycles, the diploma supplement and quality assurance policies. Moreover, it was the decision of the Ministry to create many consultative bodies such as, for example, the Scientific Advisory Centre.

The Ministry was the central governing body that took the lead. A potential explanation for this was the fact that some of the policy reforms brought by the Bologna Process needed a much more flexible and faster-paced decision-making process than was previously the case. Indeed, most of the instruments were both initiated and developed by the Minister of Education and Science. No policy documents were issued to reconfigure the relationship between different actors representing different branches of state power in Ukraine, or at least the relationships among the actors within the executive branch – the Prime Minister and heads of ministries. This suggests that it was the practice of the Ministry that was changing this relationship through the actual initiation of some of the Bologna instruments themselves. In other words, what initially may seem to be a relative path dependency, given the centrality of the Ministry's governmental position, might actually be a change in itself. The way many policy innovations in Bologna were introduced was a significant step towards increasing decision-making power of the Ministry and *not* the President or Prime Minister any longer.

It was not just the particular Bologna instruments that were initiated by the Ministry, it was the Bologna Process itself. Following the Congress of Education

Policy-makers, organised by the Ministry, the President confirmed the National Doctrine of Education Development. The aim to integrate into 'the European education space' was outlined in this Doctrine. Of course, we can speculate whether the Ministry overrode the regular procedure for the development of new policies by starting Bologna – following the decisions of the President, the Parliament and the Prime Minister. The Ministry started the Bologna Process in response to the Presidential order that confirmed the National Doctrine of Education Development. In this case, the usual procedure for policy development was preserved. However, if we scrutinise it more, we can see that the President only confirmed the Doctrine, but did not write it himself. The Doctrine was adopted by the participants of the Congress of Education Policy-makers, chaired by the Ministry of Education and Science. Moreover, the Ministry set the agenda for the Congress to discuss whether Ukraine should integrate into the European education space. So the Ministry followed the Presidential decision to 'Europeanise' only technically, while in practice it was leading matters at the core.

Thus, Bologna instigated some significant shift of powers in the cluster of central governing bodies in the area of higher education. This is important for understanding the dominant role of the Ministry in directing higher education matters in Ukraine in Bologna. Bologna seems to be the first time higher education policy-making that was pushed by the Ministry and did not come more from 'above.' Before Bologna, the central cluster of actors was leading the matters in higher education and controlling their implementation at higher education institutions. With Bologna, the relationships between the central governing bodies as a cluster and other clusters of actors remained in many ways the same. The shift of power dynamics within the central cluster has, arguably, not affected the relationship between the central cluster and, for instance, the higher education institutions much. Just like before Bologna, the Ministry continued to be the point of contact of the central grouping of actors and institutions. However, unlike before, the positioning of the actors in this 'central cluster' changed – this is important as it has significant implications for further development of links between the central governing bodies and the civil sector. Chapter 5 demonstrated how the Ministry became eventually receptive to the efforts of the National TEMPUS/ERSMUS Plus Office to establish partnership relationships.

The Ministry has been sidelining the influence of higher education institutions and other clusters of actors, such as consultative bodies and civil sector organisations, in higher education policy-making. The Ministry either refused to cooperate with the civil sector most of the time, or only faked cooperation with it, as well as with the consultative bodies. However, some routes for cooperation with

these clusters were created by the Ministry. For instance, it established the ways in which the civil sector could make suggestions to, for instance, drafting new legislature. Nevertheless, it is apparent that the Ministry often ignored those suggestions from the civil sector. Instead, it either created non-functioning consultative actors or ensured it had its own people in the existing consultative agencies. The persistent failure of the Ministry to take the opinions of the civil sector into account resulted in the perpetuation of its ideas in state policy documents, which higher education institutions had to follow. So the Ministry wanted to appear as if it cooperated with other clusters by allowing for ideas to be expressed. However, it kept following its usual practice of making its own decisions in the development of the Bologna instruments.

This preserved the cooperation gap between the central cluster and the civil sector to a great extent, although not fully. A similar gap between the central governing bodies and civil organisations in higher education in Ukraine during Bologna is mentioned by Finikov (2012). Such a gap is also apparent more generally in policy-making in the whole post-Soviet region (Chudowsky & Kuzio, 2003; Kuzio, 2012). This literature does not acknowledge, however, that the gap has been decreasing slightly in Bologna due to the work of the civil sector, as discussed below.

It is important to analyse the meaning of the apparent isolation that the Ministry has been creating for itself and other central governing bodies in terms of higher education policy-making. Traditionally, such weak communication between the central governing bodies and other actors preserved the strength of decision-making power and regulatory control that the central governing bodies had. The reason why it was the case in Bologna does not seem to be related only with the configuration of powers among policy actors in the Ukrainian higher education per se. The content of national policies in Bologna should also be taken into account in explaining the assumed power of the Ministry.

I provided examples earlier of how the Ministry chose the national higher education policies that appeared similar to the Bologna instruments, and presented them as if they were the new Bologna instruments. Such a label change was exercised a lot during the beginning of the Bologna Process in Ukraine. It enabled the preservation of the old higher education policies (to a great extent) by simply re-branding them as the Bologna instruments. A similar bureaucratic approach to the Bologna reforms is also acknowledged in the literature on Bologna in Ukraine (Goodman, 2010). However, this literature discusses this approach as a problematic aspect of Bologna implementation. This literature does not recognise that although

this tendency prevailed at the beginning of Bologna, in fact, it carried the seeds of change which would come later.

This re-branding of existing policy is a very significant issue in the Bologna reform. It has been a powerful discursive resource the Ministry has been using. Certain intentions and strategic decisions might have been hidden behind it. Bologna has been explicitly presented in most of the policy documents that were analysed as a Europeanising tool for the Ukrainian higher education and society more widely. The fact that it was adopted by the Ministry, and then little or no real change was made, signifies that the Ministry did not see those changes as necessary. The preservation of the old policies was a priority instead. New labels were attached to 'similar-looking' old policies.

Research into the Bologna reforms in other post-Soviet countries does not explicitly acknowledge that the reforms unfold through preserving old policies and through presenting them as if they are new policies. Nevertheless, such a tendency can be traced in some of the research into Bologna in post-Soviet states. For example, in Russia and Kazakhstan, the old Specialist's degree was presented as one of the Bologna cycles, despite the fact that it does not really belong to the Bologna three-cycle system (Pyykkö, 2008; Esyutina, Fearon and Leatherbarrow, 2013). This suggests that old policies become the basis for the development of the Bologna instruments might be a common phenomenon not just in Ukraine but also in other post-Soviet countries. However, more research is needed to support this idea and to explain how exactly Bologna instruments may be developing on the basis of the old policies in other post-Soviet countries.

In Ukraine, resources could have been a reason for such practices, since the economic difficulties Ukraine has been facing after the fall of the Soviet Union have not been favourable for the Ukrainian central governing bodies to plan big expenditure on the change of higher education policies. It could have also been difficulty in understanding the very meaning of what exactly could be changed, and how changes could occur, to make improvements in the old. This was perhaps a problem at the outset of Bologna, but later the Ministry appears not to have taken the opportunity to solve this problem by considering the advice of the civil sector. There was also at least one Bologna idea, that of university autonomy, that the Ministry apparently did not agree with and did not encourage its implementation. The Ministry did not want to expand the very limited decision-making power that institutions had. This suggests the alliance of the Ministry with the past ideology of the centralised control.

The change that the Ministry apparently wanted to see in Ukraine in the Bologna context was not related to the reconfiguration of power relations among the policy actors, nor, in fact, to national higher education policies. Rather, the Ministry saw Bologna as an opportunity for the internationalisation of Ukrainian higher education. Such internationalisation would allow increased inward and outward academic mobility that the Ministry was pursuing. Such mobility, however, could be facilitated only through modernisation of the system through innovations, such as the credit system, cycles of studies, diploma supplement, and quality assurance. The Ministry, although resisting at the start, had to gradually give in to the new proposals. These proposals came in primarily from the civil organisations since they were more open to develop new knowledge about Bologna. Thus, they gradually turned into an important cluster of higher education policy actors.

### **7.2.2. Change**

The literature that emphasises the top-down policy-making in Ukraine (Fimyar, 2008; Kuzio, 2012) overlooks an important development in terms of the participation of the civil sector organisations in the process of reforms. My study has demonstrated that civil organisations have been facilitating change, despite the apparent policy centralisation that the Ministry exercises.

The civil sector has been emerging as a generator and distributor of ideas in Bologna. This has been happening mainly through the policy brokering that the civil sector has been exercising. *Policy brokers* or *bridges* are people who translate and mediate the demands, set out at the international documents, across nation states or institutions (Freeman, 2006; Steiner-Khamsi, 2006; Grek et al., 2011). These individuals are involved in policy learning, the directions of which are messy and hard to track either because of the mobility of these individuals across institutions, or their cross-membership in more than one institution.

In Ukraine, the policy brokering of the civil sector resembles policy brokering analysed in the literature. Some civil organisations (such as the Ukrainian Association of Students' Self-Governing) participate in the international meetings dedicated to Bologna. However, research findings clearly suggested that this is not the only source of learning of these organisations. The expertise they use for brokering is gained in other ways too. Civil organisations tend to cooperate among one another and higher education institutions in, for instance, studying the Ukrainian higher education context.

Policy brokering of the civil sector to higher education institutions is significant primarily because of their work with institutions and frequent cases of

cross-membership between civil sector organisations and institutions. Ten out of the twelve representatives of the civil sector who were interviewed were also instructors or academic managers at higher education institutions. The civil sector representatives mediate to these institutions some ideas from the international ministerial conferences, which they visit together with the Ministry. Civil organisations also draw on the expertise they develop from networking among one another and studying the Ukrainian context.

The civil sector mediates ideas not just to institutions but also to the central cluster of actors. However, this type of brokering is still quite weak. The central governing bodies are largely outwith the influence of these civil sector policy brokers for the reasons outlined earlier. There is also a lack of evidence about the cross-membership between the central cluster and the civil sector. However, the case of the National TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office is one important and enlightening exception to this status quo.

The work of this organisation could be considered influential in pushing for more cooperation from the Ministry. Despite the general reluctance of the central governing bodies to collaborate, the National TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office created a cross-cluster team of the Higher Education Reform Experts. This team offered a space for policy brokering. The fact that it is comprised of representatives from different clusters, including two Ministerial members, marks a significant step in bridging the cooperation gap between the civil sector and the central cluster in higher education policy-making. This cooperation has been ongoing, despite some problems that this Office still experiences in communicating its ideas to the two Ministerial representatives of the Higher Education Reform Experts. The Office managed to establish cooperation with the Ministry perhaps because of the inflow of funding from the European Commission to support the Bologna Process, which was useful for the Ministry. This organisation broke the wall between the two clusters.

Most civil sector organisations also established fruitful cooperation with higher education institutions, and facilitated their learning about Bologna and their cooperation with institutions abroad. In the highly centralised system that had existed in Ukraine prior to Bologna, one would expect Ukrainian higher education institutions to respond primarily to the requirements of the Ministry during the Bologna process, too. The requirements of the Ministry have been mandatory for the institutions to follow. The fulfillment of these requirements leaves little room for their own initiatives to contribute to the development of the Bologna instruments. Nevertheless, the civil sector (through its brokering) managed to make higher

education institutions active in learning about Bologna, that is, learning beyond the requirements of the Ministry.

The civil sector served often as a broker in translating Bologna ideas to higher education institutions through arranging learning events, such as conferences, workshops, and seminars. This is a vivid example of the notion 'learning by meeting' introduced by Freeman (2008). These meetings (learning events) built a platform for the representatives from different universities to mingle and network with one another. They tended to use their connections in the future for professional development by arranging similar inter-institutional learning events or cooperating in some projects funded by civil sector organisations. The assistance provided by the civil sector resulted in institutions increasingly cooperating with one another. Moreover, increasing networking of the Ukrainian institutions with foreign universities in Bologna has been often facilitated by the civil sector and subsequently started to be initiated also by the Ukrainian institutions themselves. Thus, Ukrainian higher education institutions have taken a step away from being passive recipients of requirements passed down by the Ministry. Institutions have been emerging as active learners about Bologna, and have been contributing to the development of the meanings of its instruments. Such a change of the role of institutions in the Ukrainian higher education points to their emerging role as policy brokers as well.

The analysis above shows that policy continuity during the Bologna reform in Ukraine has been mainly perpetuated by the Ministry and change has been facilitated by civil organisations. There were, of course, exceptions to this rough division of the roles of these two types of policy actors. However, this is the general pattern which was expressed quite strongly in the research findings. The policy continuity and change are two important aspects of the learning process. Policy learning was defined earlier as updating beliefs in a policy context based on prior experiences and knowledge. The role of the Ministry might be understood in relation to the aspects of prior experience, while the work of civil organisations might be seen as exemplifying the process of updating beliefs.

The analysis of continuity and change separately in the Bologna context is important for understanding the two facets of policy learning during the Bologna reform in Ukraine. However, policy learning is not really just about the existence of these two facets. It is about the interconnection between them. It is now crucial to understand that the changes in Bologna in Ukraine have influenced the policy

continuity; and yet, these changes themselves have been impacted by this policy continuity. Old knowledge and new information became intertwined in the process of learning. The fluidity between policy continuity and change in the Bologna reform did not allow the higher education system in Ukraine to completely replicate the pre-Bologna version. Neither did it let Bologna rapidly change it. It is now crucial to theorise how continuity and change linked together in the reform. The dialogue between 'the old' and 'the new' in the process of policy learning during Bologna has been happening through *layering*.

### **7.3. Layering in the Bologna reform**

This study casts light on the development of actors and their relationships as an essential part of the reform, rather than only examining the development of policy instruments, as in Cocosatu (2012) and Esyutina, Fearon and Leatherbarrow (2013). Other studies, such as, for instance, Witte (2006) and Cusnir (2008), map out the system of actors that participate in the implementation of Bologna instruments, and thus, conceptualise policy actors as rather static. On the contrary, this study explains the interdependence of Bologna instruments and actors through the notion of *layering*.

Layering is a useful notion for the analysis of the Ukrainian case. As explained in Chapter 2, layering stands for an incremental change of the elements in a given policy setting, as well as the addition of new ones, while many other aspects remain the same (Thelen, 2003). This explanation might give an initial impression that layering is a structured process resembling, for instance, geological layers. This research has suggested that this might be true only to an extent. Layering in the Bologna reform in Ukraine has not been that structured. It has been quite messy and, at the same time, creative. Moreover, it has increasingly been emerging as a shared process among different higher education actors.

#### **7.3.1. Messiness of layering**

The Bologna reform in Ukraine has been happening though a slightly messy accumulation of layers of innovations on top of old structures. All of the Bologna instruments have been developed through the reconfiguration of the pre-Bologna policies. These old policies were at first chosen by the Ministry to represent the Bologna instruments. As I have shown earlier, the national module system became the basis for the Bologna system of credits. The pre-Bologna education-qualification and scientific cycles became the foundation for the Bologna study cycles. The old



national diploma supplement was a reason for the delay in dealing with the Bologna diploma supplement, given that *a* diploma supplement existed and could be taken as the Bologna instrument even though their structure and content differed. The pre-Bologna higher education quality assurance policies, such as external checks of higher education institutions, represented the Bologna quality assurance instruments at the outset of the reform in Ukraine. The development of all Bologna related instruments started with a mere change of labels of older policies already in place. As such, the first layer in the Bologna reform process was usually one of re-naming established policies to represent new structures.

As a result, new layers appeared. Each innovation in a way ‘needed’ previous layers to ‘stand’ on. A rough division among these layers and a relatively structured picture of their accumulation was illustrated in the previous Chapter. For instance, the system of credits developed through the module system, the credit-module system, and then the European credit transfer system. Similarly, other instruments developed through the appearance of new layers. Of course, such a separation of the series of layers was instrumental in this analysis. These layers are, indeed, quite muddled in reality.

Freeman, Griggs and Boaz (2011) argue that policy learning is always chaotic. Indeed, layering is not clear-cut; layers might overlap, and they are different in scope. For example, the Bologna three-cycle system of studies was developed from being just a label for the six old cycles to the idea of the accumulation of credits. The idea of credits originates from the credit system instrument, but as we have seen, the number of credits for the courses of particular cycles eventually became the basis for the definition of the study cycles, which is a different Bologna instrument. This illustrates how the links among the various Bologna instruments were gradually established. Because of such muddled lines among the layers and a degree of spontaneity in their development, layering in the development of the Bologna Process in Ukraine can be considered to be a messy process.

What is more interesting perhaps is that this messiness was partially unavoidable, but also – and crucially – partially strategic. The literature in Chapter 3 suggested the wide policy scope Bologna came to represent, as well as the ongoing developments of the Bologna instruments at the international level. Thus, it was impossible for key policy actors in Ukraine to anticipate the new developments. At the same time, a relatively spontaneous development of Bologna instruments in Ukraine (not planned well ahead) might have been intentional in a way. The Ministry, as the main policy-making body in this context, might have avoided

providing exhaustive accounts of policy details for the development of the Bologna instruments in the initial documents. This might have, arguably, enabled the Ministry to change the track of the development of certain instruments on the way, such as in the case of the development of the credit system.

### **7.3.2. Creativity in layering**

This study has shown that different higher education actors in Ukraine, especially civil sector organisations and higher education institutions found themselves in the middle of great uncertainty about how to deal with Bologna, especially at the beginning. These actors had to engage in a significant sense-making process. They took time to work out what was suggested in the international documents, and to understand how those ideas could be developed in the Ukrainian context. They could not just implement the action lines. They faced the necessity, and thus, an opportunity to actually *interpret* Bologna. This supports Freeman's (2006) argument about the meaning of learning. The author claims that policy learning 'is, in a fundamental way, about creating the world' (p.382). He further argues that policy is 'generated rather than disseminated' (p.379). This suggests that the productive nature of policy learning may be about the emergence of the meaning of policy through layering.

This uncertainty in Ukraine was partially caused by ambiguity in the international documents. After all, the Bologna Process is managed on the international scale through soft power (Fejes, 2006; Ravinet, 2008). The documents produced at the ministerial conferences and other related international meetings give recommendations. They are never prescriptive. They provide guidelines for countries and allow for a degree of reconfiguration at the national level. In addition, Bologna did not stand still; new ideas were added to the mix by each international ministerial conference. Based on my analysis of the international Bologna declarations and communiques, there has not really been an ultimate vision of the number and content of the action lines on the international scale at any given point of time.

The development of Bologna in Ukraine was not just about production rather than reproduction of international ideas. It was about creativity too. Out of the four types of the Bologna policies in Ukraine that have been discussed extensively in this thesis, the credit system turned out to be the terrain that allowed for the most creativity by the Ministry and institutions. For example, the idea of the accumulation of credits got extended to the idea of the accumulation of points during a semester in order to add them up at the end of a semester to make a final

grade. The idea of the Bologna credit system was also used to aid the national scholarship policy by limiting the number of students who would receive increased stipends. Creativity in such cases could allow for 'window dressing'; that is, concealing real political goals under a different label, and thus, appropriating policies (March & Olsen, 1989). However, of course, appropriation was not always present in the development of the Bologna instruments.

While the credit system opened up a wide scope for creativity, the diploma supplement offered limited scope for creativity. This instrument was developed somewhat more easily than others perhaps because the diploma supplement is the simplest instrument. What is meant here is that this instrument is basically a table – a descriptive summary of the graduate's experience of other Bologna instruments during the study process.

The way the creativity in the development of the Bologna instruments was unfolding in general is slightly different from what is suggested in the literature about policy uncertainty. The literature claims that the bigger the uncertainty, the more policy actors are active in seeking new knowledge. They need to explore examples of best practices of dealing with similar situations. This serves as a basis for policy actors to identify possible options to address the issues they face (Burch, 2007; Zarkin, 2008).

The opposite was the case in Ukraine. The lack of knowledge about Bologna contributed to the fact that path-dependency was the strongest at the beginning of the reform process. At the outset of the Bologna Process, the avoidance of changes by simply relabeling the old policies as the new Bologna instruments appears to have been consciously and deliberately exercised. It was particularly noticeable in terms of the Ministry. It issued multiple decrees to develop the Bologna instruments mainly by changing labels for the old national policies. Such a discursive shift was the case at the beginning of Bologna, but it changed later on.

This suggests that both path-dependency and change in layering should not be seen as constraints to each other, but rather as inherently interconnected creative powers, neither of which could be avoided in the Bologna reform. The preservation of the old conventions tends to be seen as a constraint for change in the literature that looks at the Bologna reform process in different countries, including Ukraine (e.g., Andreichuk, 2007; Pyykkö, 2008). This study, building on the idea of *layering*, suggests looking at policy continuity from a different perspective. Continuity does not appear here to be an obstacle to change. Previously established policies can be used as a basis for the introduction of slow changes. The Ukrainian case shows how

it was the old that became the basis for the new. So continuity and change should not be viewed as two forces that pull the development in different directions. A more productive way to look at the role of policy continuity and change in the development of the Bologna reforms is to see these two processes as intertwined in shaping the reforms.

### **7.3.3. Shared nature of layering**

The messy and creative layering in the Bologna reform in Ukraine has been the result of contributions from different higher education actors. Thus, it generated a shared and more horizontal policy-making mode, or what some authors call *governance* (e.g., Enders, 2004). Increasingly the joint learning of the different Ukrainian higher education actors about Bologna has been slowly reconfiguring the relationships among them. Some new actors emerged at different time points – such as some establishments that represent the civil sector, and the group of consultative bodies for the central cluster (even though some of them are non-functioning). All other actors, which support Bologna now, existed before the reform, and have been gradually getting involved in the reform process. Layering and, more crucially, its shared nature has been facilitated primarily by the civil sector.

The extent of the contributions of the actors in the reform process has varied, depending upon how active each has been in Bologna learning in terms of a particular Bologna instrument at a particular time. The Ministry has been the most active at the beginning of the reform. However, the civil sector organisations and higher education institutions have recently become active by increasingly engaging in the learning process too, mainly thanks to the brokering of civil sector organisations. All these actors, in Freeman's (2006) terms, have been 'piecing together' the Bologna instruments. The actors have been increasingly constructing, interpreting and reinterpreting the meanings around the Bologna instruments.

Thus, a more horizontal policy-making in higher education in Ukraine began to emerge. Bologna has very slowly, yet steadily, been giving way to the development of governance in the higher education sector in Ukraine. The findings of this research suggest that such a distributed policy-making has not yet come to replace the traditional government mode in Ukraine, as the literature on contemporary policy-making in general suggests (Enders, 2004). This literature argues that we can witness a clear shift from government to governance in policy-making practices. The particular policy setting of Ukraine, with its still quite strong dependence on the Soviet centralisation legacy, indicates that the shared governing mode is only at its beginning.

It is now important to analyse in what way the emergence of shared layering in Bologna in Ukraine can be seen as the effect of the reform process. In Reichert's (2010) terms, it could be viewed to be close to the phenomenon of 'unintended effects' of Bologna. The author states that such effects might be those that go beyond the reformers' original intentions. They can also be triggered by some higher education processes that happen at the same time as the Bologna reforms, and therefore, become associated with them by the members of higher education communities.

In the Ukrainian case, the appearance of distributed policy-making in higher education is perhaps an impact that has gone beyond the intentions of the Ministry. The Ministry has been trying to preserve control over higher education. The Ministry has been limiting external advice and also often imitating the development of shared policy-making by creating non-functioning consultative bodies for itself.

The strategic pretense of the Ministry to develop consultancy mechanisms is an interesting issue here. The development of distributed higher education policy-making in the Bologna countries was not a Bologna objective agreed upon at the international Bologna meetings. However, the promotion of university autonomy has been recognised as part of the quality assurance idea. The freedom of universities in their decision-making might be seen as part of a horizontal decision-making. University autonomy in the Ukrainian case would presuppose that the Ministry gives away some of its control and allows higher education institutions to have more freedom in their decision-making. So this would mean co-management of higher education by central governing actors and higher education institutions. However, the Ministry chose a different route to 'develop' university autonomy. As evident from Chapter 5, the Ministry positioned university autonomy as the freedom of universities in looking for the sources of funding. In addition, it seems to have been trying to showcase wider higher education decentralisation by creating some consultative bodies.

A similar tendency to create the appearance of shared policy-making in higher education, whilst the opposite is the case, can be traced in other post-Soviet countries, too. Georgia and Armenia have been experiencing the development of discourse about the participation of both central governing bodies and universities in higher education policy-making (Dobbins & Khachatryan, 2015). However, unlike in Georgia and Armenia, the relationships among the actors in Ukraine have been slowly transforming in practice, despite the resistance from the Ministry.

It was argued earlier that policy process and effects are intertwined

categories because it is impossible to identify where the end of the process is, and then to see its effects. So the 'unintended effects' discussed above could be well seen as the more fundamental changes that have been part of the layering process. They have been built up through minor innovations on the basis of the old conventions. It is precisely such fundamental transformations that the phenomenon of layering presupposes (Thelen, 2003).

The dynamics of layering on the national scale suggest that these more fundamental developments are only at their beginning. A new way of governing has been pushed by civil sector organisations, yet it is an undercurrent in a (still) centrally governed Ukraine. The Bologna reform in Ukraine is not over yet, and further layering is highly likely to happen, given that some significant developments in the higher education system are still only in their infancy.

## **7.4. Post-Soviet Europeanisation**

Bologna in Ukraine is interesting not just in itself. The process of convergence of higher education systems in the whole EHEA through Bologna is associated with Europeanisation – Bologna is primarily a European endeavor (Silova, 2002; Vukasovic, 2013). The Bologna reform in Ukraine is a case of Europeanisation in the post-Soviet context – Europeanisation that takes place beyond the borders of the European Union (EU) and its applicant states. It is important to analyse in what way the Bologna reform is a case of Europeanisation in Ukraine, what the Ukrainian case suggests about the phenomenon of post-Soviet Europeanisation, as well as what makes it distinct from Europeanisation in the EU.

### ***7.4.1. Europeanisation in Ukraine***

According to Kuzio (2012), the central governing bodies in Ukraine have been promoting the Europeanisation discourse in the country in general to address the aspirations of the majority of the population who want to join the EU. Further, according to the author, establishing close cooperation with the EU and obtaining membership was seen – at least by the pro-European population of the western and central parts of Ukraine – as a way to overcome the huge transition crisis. Establishing close cooperation with the EU was handy for the central governing bodies in terms of obtaining funding for the country's development and winning the support of the population that wanted the country to join the EU. However, the membership in the EU was perhaps too much of a commitment. It would require significant reforms in the internal matters and international relations of Ukraine in

order to comply with the EU regulations. That would mean a U-turn from the tight cooperation with Russia in all policy fields, as well as abandoning the established practices of corruption and clientilism, which were much more developed than in the EU (Gal, 2010), and apparently convenient for Ukrainian central governing bodies.

The literature tends to associate Europeanisation with change and view the Soviet legacies as a barrier to Europeanisation (Levada, 2008; Malle, 2009; Spechler & Spechler, 2009). My study suggests the need to revisit our knowledge about the role of the past and the advent of change in relation to Europeanising forces. This study has shown that the Bologna reform in Ukraine involves a productive combination of the old and the new. Hence, Europeanisation in higher education in Ukraine may be seen neither as hindered by the past, nor as associated only with the implementation of new ideas. Rather, it proceeds through the development of the interrelationship between the past and the new through layering.

The most crucial point here is to understand that the Ukrainian case in the post-Soviet context may be an extreme one. What is meant by extreme is that both 'the old' and 'the new' in Ukraine are very strong. The recent political events in Ukraine in general as well as the development of the Bologna reform in particular have demonstrated this. The difference between traditionalists and modernisers in Ukraine is the strongest in the whole post-Soviet space.

In the area of Ukrainian higher education, Europeanisation through Bologna has been taking place with two main types of motivations: one is the modernisation of higher education governing, and the other one is the appropriation of Europeanisation ideas by those in power to achieve their own purposes without really modernising anything. These two types of motivations for the development of post-Soviet Europeanisation are also mentioned in the literature (Börzel & Pamuk, 2011). The actions of the representatives of the civil sector and, later, higher education institutions seem to be driven by the first motivation (modernisation). These clusters of actors have been advocating change in higher education policies as well as the development of governance in higher education. This is a crucial step in beginning to change how policy-making in the country is done. The practices of the Ministry of Education and Science were probably driven mainly by the second motivation (appropriation), although it officially started Bologna in Ukraine. It did so, using the openness of the EHEA to the inclusion of new members and the support of Bologna at the Congress of Education Policy-makers in Ukraine in 2001. These circumstances formed a 'policy window' – a catalytic situation for policy innovations in Steiner-Khamsi's (2006) terms – for the Ministry to start the Bologna

pilot. Since the beginning, the Ministry seems to have been using Bologna as a platform for the continuation of a declarative Europeanisation of Ukraine. This merely discursive Europeanisation started back at the outset of the independence of Ukraine – the goal of Ukraine to join the EU was announced by the central governing bodies in 1994 (Wolczuk, 2004). The initiation of Bologna in Ukraine could be partially seen as a response of the Ministry to this ‘European direction’ of development proclaimed in 1994. This is only to an extent, though, since Bologna is not a requirement for the accession into the EU.

During Bologna, an indication of a declarative nature of Europeanisation that the Ministry was attempting to promote was, for instance, its hindrance of the development of the autonomy of institutions in their decision-making. It is an example of the work of ‘veto players’ – those who tend to oppose Europeanisation in practice and, at the same time, promote it on a discursive plane (Börzel & Pamuk, 2011). In this case, the Ministry has been a ‘veto player’. Ministerial control here seems to be related to the preservation of the old conventions. The practice of the Ministry to avoid consulting actors from other clusters is perhaps not their strategy to take control over introducing innovations. The previous Chapter explained the re-branding practice of the Ministry that dominated at the beginning of Bologna. So the Ministry was not interested in significant change. However, the practice of re-branding started to be accompanied by some real innovations later: this was mainly due to the participation of the civil sector in the development of Bologna in Ukraine.

Because of the long Soviet history and the preservation of its legacies after the Soviet Union collapsed, change cannot happen rapidly in such a context. Therefore, perhaps, the introduction of new Bologna instruments could not just substitute for the previous policies overnight. The fact that the central governing bodies resist change and try to preserve the pattern of the old higher education system is part of the reality of how Europeanisation in Ukraine happens. The strengths of the resistance of the central governing bodies as well as the quality and strengths of the reaction to that from other policy actors is what shapes the peculiarity of Ukrainian Europeanisation. Beside the work of the central governing bodies, there is an impact of civil organisations and some impact (although less developed) of higher education institutions. These clusters of actors strive for real change in the content of higher education policies in Ukraine and the relationships amongst major actors. The existence of both ‘veto players’ and those who want real change is perhaps the main factor that sets the pace of Europeanisation in Ukraine.

The discussion of the characteristics of Europeanisation above did not aim to provide a definition of the term. Europeanisation should be treated as an area of



ongoing inquiry and a process, rather than a notion that can be defined (Wolczuk, 2004). The Ukrainian case illustrates how the process of Europeanisation unfolds and how 'the old' and 'the new' interact in it. We can use the analysis of Europeanisation in higher education in Ukraine to understand and further learn about wider Europeanisation processes in the post-Soviet region both in higher education and beyond. Of course, a degree of tentativeness should be acknowledged in this speculation – it is based on the results of this research and previous relevant literature. Europeanisation in higher education in Ukraine is an example of post-Soviet Europeanisation since this case is embedded in wider geopolitics that characterises the region.

#### **7.4.2. Europeanisation in the post-Soviet space**

Ukraine belongs to the post-Soviet region not just based on geography, but rather based on a broader geopolitical context. Political and historical setting is important here. Ukraine shows that the post-Soviet space is a fluid scene – now constantly being reshaped by the way in which the Soviet past and innovative tendencies stemming from European integration ideas come into play.

The notion of *layering* can, arguably, explain the general process of post-Soviet Europeanisation in Ukraine and maybe other post-Soviet countries. Following the logic of the development of Bologna in Ukraine, the notion of *layering* can suggest, for instance, that the Rose Revolution in Georgia in 2003, and the two revolutions in Ukraine, that aimed to counter the Soviet past, could not suddenly overthrow the previous political systems and other conventions in these countries. It was difficult for the rallying masses to achieve their aims because almost all policy-making power in these countries belongs to the central governing bodies. People in these bodies who continued in similar posts after the collapse of the Soviet Union found it challenging to move away from the deeply rooted Soviet conventions. These challenges were related perhaps both to their professional routines as well as to personal goals of career progression through existing corruption (Osipian, 2010). A new generation, who took over from those who continued in their posts after the Soviet Union collapsed, seems to have been guided by the same ideology.

While the concept of *layering* has a potential for explaining the general process of post-Soviet Europeanisation, it probably cannot explain why its speed is so different in different countries. There must have been other factors at work, besides layering, which guide post-Soviet Europeanisation. These factors were probably weakly related to the intention to join the EU. Most of these countries, such as Russia or Kazakhstan, have not even had such a plan. However, some

countries such as Ukraine did declare this goal. Other factors that set the pace of Europeanisation in post-Soviet countries may be somewhat related to the influence of Russia on them. There is an abundance of literature which argues that Russia has preserved its control over the post-Soviet region in different policy fields (e.g., D'Anieri, 2012; Kuzio, 2012).

Education in Russia and other Soviet countries during the Soviet times used to be a powerful tool to raise docile citizens who would unquestionably contribute to the development of socialism and strive to reach communism. This was promoted through the courses about communism and Marxism-Leninism, as well as the discouragement of students' critical thinking and through the promotion of the traditional didactic learning controlled by the teacher. All of these ideas stemmed from the central government of the Soviet Union in Moscow.

After the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia has been trying to preserve its control over education systems in post-Soviet countries. For example, Shevel (2011) argues that ex-Minister of Education and Science in Ukraine, Mr Tabachnyk, was a pro-Russian figure suggested to the-then Ukrainian Prime Minister by the Russian political elite. Mr Tabachnyk tried to influence the content of history textbooks in Ukraine. The example of indirect Russia's attempts to control the content of history textbooks through Mr Tabachnyk implies that Russia has been influencing education in post-Soviet countries at the time of Bologna. However, this influence seems to have been quite indirect. Russia seems not to have been trying to establish control specifically over the Bologna Process per se in the post-Soviet region of the EHEA. At least, such a tendency is not discussed in the literature, nor has my analysis of Ukraine suggested it. Moreover, Russia itself is a member of the Bologna Process. So layering does not explain how the intentions of Russia developed to the point of purposefully bringing in the discourse (about Europeanisation) to which it has been and still is inherently opposed.

Russia's influence in higher education might be mainly mediated through the link between higher education and other policy fields in post-Soviet countries. An example of such a mediation is the late introduction of Bologna in Belarus (only in 2015). Some other factors apparently prompted 'veto players' in Belarus not to declare Europeanisation in higher education by joining Bologna before 2015. They could have done so and then resisted change, just like the Ukrainian 'veto players' did. Perhaps Russia's influence on Belarusian politics more widely was much stronger than in Ukraine, at least earlier. According to Kuzio (2012), the flourishing of totalitarianism and dictatorship, with high levels of clientelism, corruption and bureaucracy that dominated all policy fields, has been the case in Belarus. Applying

for the membership in the EHEA was perhaps not among the top priorities for Belarusian central bodies of governing. The emergence of higher education Europeanisation as a priority for Belarus now might be related, in part, to the degree of Russia's influence and how this has varied. The extent of Russian influence in different post-Soviet countries at different points of time after the collapse of the Soviet Union should be investigated in further research. This could help advance our knowledge about post-Soviet Europeanisation in higher education and beyond and better understand the difference between Europeanisation in the post-Soviet space and the EU.

# Chapter 8

## Conclusion

This thesis has examined higher education actors and policy instruments in the case of the implementation of Bologna in Ukraine with the aim to analyse the process of the Bologna reform in Ukraine, and examine Bologna as a case of Europeanisation in the post-Soviet context.

This investigation was framed by policy learning theory, and particularly the concept of *layering*. In brief, the policy learning theory maintains that reforms develop through a combination of policy continuity and change (Borrás, 2011; Freeman, Griggs, & Boaz, 2011). The connection between continuity and change develops through layering – a gradual incremental accumulation of minor changes on the basis of old structures. This accumulation is usually messy, creative and collective due to the participation of multiple policy actors. The amassing of minor innovations leads to more significant transformations over time (Boas, 2007). There are challenges around certain aspects of this theory, particularly the ways of studying the actual reform process (Radaelli and Dunlop, 2013). Nevertheless, according to the authors, policy learning is a ‘promising framework’ for this kind of policy research (p.924), which proved to be the case in this study.

Thematic analysis of 43 interviews with major higher education actors in Ukraine and the analysis of 88 policy documents, most of which were produced by these key actors, generated interesting research findings. Based on them, this study makes a contribution to literature and informs policy practice.

This study *contributes*, first and foremost, to the body of literature that investigates Bologna in Ukraine. This is a large-scale study about Ukraine that explains how the Bologna reform has been progressing. At the beginning of the thesis, we learned that there has been an ongoing assumption in the literature about the existence of a purely centralised policy-making and passive civil sector organisations in Ukraine (Fimyar, 2008; Kuzio, 2012). In contrast, this study has argued that the development of a more shared policy-making in higher education is underway in the Bologna context.

The Bologna Process in the Ukrainian higher education system has been partially reproducing the previous power structures and the old relationships amongst them. The central governing bodies have continued to control higher

education institutions and have remained the key cluster of actors directing the development of higher education policies. The Ministry has been establishing itself as the most significant policy-making body in higher education in relation to other central bodies of higher education governing. The study has also identified the continuity of the cooperation gap between the central cluster of actors and the majority of the civil sector organisations that deal with higher education. This gap pre-dates the entry of the country into the Bologna Process and is largely maintained throughout it. The study has also shown how Bologna in Ukraine has been, in part, reproducing previously established national higher education policies. These policies were selected by the central governing bodies, first and foremost by the Ministry of Education and Science, as the foundation to create the 'new' Bologna instruments: the credit system, the study cycles system, the Bologna diploma supplement and quality assurance policies. Initially, the development of the Bologna instruments involved a re-labeling' process, through which the national higher education policies were re-presented as if they were the new reforms, following the Bologna action lines. The Ministry was aiming to maintain the old higher education system in the new political context of Bologna; in other words, a degree of Europeanisation was desired, as long as the established policies and 'ways of doing things' remained intact.

Although Bologna has been reproducing the old higher education system to an extent, the study has also found out that, at the same time, due to the reform, the centralised management of higher education has been gradually losing some of its former power. The reform in Ukraine has been encouraging the cooperation among some actors, such as the Ministry and the National TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office. More crucially, Bologna has been promoting the enlargement of, and networking within the civil sector, and a much more active sense-making of the new higher education ideas by higher education institutions. The Bologna Process has also promoted cooperation between the civil sector and higher education institutions, among Ukrainian higher education institutions and foreign institutions, and between at least one civil sector organisation and the Ministry. Such cooperation among and within all these clusters of actors has largely been exercised through the role of policy brokers, performed mainly by the individuals who have some sort of affiliation with the civil sector.

Particularly important are the dynamics of the interactions between the old experience and new ideas. They have been developing through the active process of *layering*. Although the notion may at first create the impression of a new and structured process, the contrary was probably the case. In Ukraine, it was messy, creative and worked as the shared accumulation of small innovations in the old

unchanged context. This eventually led to more fundamental changes, such as the emergence of a more distributed policy-making in higher education. All of these growing changes in the higher education system have been slowly weakening policy continuity – the old political status quo.

This study also contributes to the literature that investigates Bologna in the national contexts more broadly and particularly in the post-Soviet region. Generally, the literature about Bologna in the national context lacks an analysis of the process of the reform. This study primarily examined how the actual reform has been happening in Ukraine. Unlike the small body of literature that does look at the Bologna reform process in the countries (e.g., Witte, 2006; Cusnir, 2008; Ravinet, 2008), this study also analyses the development of actors' relationships and roles, in addition to the development of instruments. This study shows that the Bologna reform in a national context is not just about transferring relevant international ideas and implementing them in practice. It is about creation based on intertwining international ideas and the local conventions. The peculiarities of the local conventions and their dynamics prior and during Bologna in Ukraine could share some similarities with some other post-Soviet countries in the EHEA, given their long common history.

Crucially, the analysis of the reform process in Ukraine also gives some insight into the literature about wider Europeanisation processes in the post-Soviet context (e.g., Cowles, Caporaso, & Risse-Kappen, 2001; Wolczuk, 2004; Börzel & Pamuk, 2011). The Ukrainian case is particularly strong for studying Europeanisation. Both 'the old' and 'the new' in Ukraine are very well-expressed. The recent political events in Ukraine in general as well as the development of the Bologna reform in particular have demonstrated this.

The specifics of the Bologna reform in Ukraine have given some insight into the phenomenon of post-Soviet Europeanisation in higher education and other policy fields in Ukraine as well as more widely in the post-Soviet region. Layering in the recent higher education reform in Ukraine might be illustrative of the way in which Europeanisation in general proceeds in Ukraine. This process seems to have been taking place with two major motivations of key policy actors. In the case of higher education, one of them has been the modernisation of higher education, which was the priority mainly of the civil sector. The other major motivation – the appropriation of Europeanisation ideas to achieve other purposes – was held by the Ministry. The Ministry seems to have been pursuing Bologna to continue an outward-facing Europeanisation that tries to maintain the inward centrally governed policy space stable and unchanged. The work of these two important

clusters of actors in Ukraine is perhaps the main factor that sets the pace of change in higher education in the context of Ukraine. This research has suggested that Europeanisation in Ukraine and perhaps other similar post-Soviet contexts is not simply a process of change. Rather – and more interestingly – it is about non-change perhaps as much as it is about change. It is a process, which involves an interaction between the past and the new. The Soviet past is what may be making Europeanisation relatively distinct in the post-Soviet space.

The Ukrainian case has demonstrated that Europeanisation is associated with change as much as it is associated with policy continuity. The pace of post-Soviet change might be related to the interplay of different groups of policy actors who have different motivations – following the past conventions or moving away from them. Change often existed only in discourse because of strongly rooted Soviet legacies of centralisation and established policies. Europeanisation then often served as an object of appropriation by central governing bodies for demonstrating in discourse to the public that change is underway.

Just as in the case of any study, this research has a number of weaknesses that mainly pertain to the sample of participants. The limitations of this study were detailed in Chapter 4.

The findings of this study and its limitations can be a stepping stone to *further research* in such two main areas. The first area is further investigation of the Bologna Process specifically in the Ukrainian context. The ways in which the reform is approached by the new membership of the central governing bodies should be considered in order to understand how they steer higher education development. Further research could benefit from using network analysis to go deeper into the changing power relations among higher education actors. I did not use network analysis because I did not expect that the clusters of the higher education actors could have grown so fluid in Bologna. In addition, learning about the Bologna Process in more higher education institutions, particularly different types, could be investigated as well. This would help to understand potentially growing differences in the meanings of the Bologna instruments in these institutions. The development of a more horizontal policy-making in higher education in Ukraine suggests that such emerging differences are likely to grow in the near future. The establishment of a Student Council at one of the universities where I conducted interviews was not suggested by the Ministry but was seen by the representatives of that institution as a way to develop quality assurance. This is an example of how institutions might be inventive in developing Bologna. Moreover, the implementation of Bologna at the institutions specifically in the Donbas region – where the war is currently taking

place – should be studied perhaps also in the context of wider political and identity questions in Ukraine.

Besides further investigation of Bologna specifically in Ukraine, the process of the development of Bologna reforms in other countries, especially in post-Soviet countries, should be also further explored. Similar studies conducted from the perspective of the policy learning theory could help to understand commonalities and differences among higher education reform processes in these countries. A bigger picture of post-Soviet Bologna reforms would then give us a better understanding of Europeanisation in the region in higher education and beyond. The emphasis of further research on Bologna in post-Soviet countries that are beyond the European Union and even the geographical Europe is vital in order to ultimately better understand what Europe actually is.

This research provides tentative grounds for speculating what (if anything) makes Europeanisation in the post-Soviet space distinct. We could possibly see different underpinnings of Europeanisation in the post-Soviet space and in the EU. This is implied in the literature that states that Europeanisation in the EU has been about creating a strong counterweight to the Soviet ideology, whereas Europeanisation in the post-Soviet space was encouraged by the EU to create a 'security complex' near it (Nikolaidis, 2005; Börzel, 2010; Delcour, 2011). My research also suggests that Europeanisation in these two spaces might differ because the nature of the Europeanisation process is determined largely not just by the emerging motivations (such as to create a 'security complex') but also by the old conventions. They seem to provide the foundation upon which changes develop. Different foundations may shape the changes built on them in different ways.

While the two spaces seem to be different, at the same time a degree of fluidity between them should be acknowledged. One example is a group of the EU member states – Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. The fact that these countries used to be part of the Soviet Union makes them a special case that sits on the margin between the post-Soviet space and the EU. These Baltic countries also suggest that there might be some overlaps in the aims of Europeanisation for some post-Soviet countries and the countries to the west from the border of the post-Soviet space. Furthermore, eastern enlargement of the EU incorporated some EU countries that were part of the Socialist Block, such as, for instance, Poland and Hungary. The Socialist Block was a partner and supporter of the Soviet Union. These countries did not have the experience of being ruled and censored by the Communist Party during the Soviet times to the extent that the post-Soviet countries did. However, some influence of post-Soviet legacies should not be overlooked. Such overlaps



between the post-Soviet region and the EU have been growing. This supports the idea that the two regions have been changing by influencing each other.

The Bologna Process seems to have been widening the borders of Europe further to the east more than any other previous European policy initiative (e.g., the European Union, the European Neighbourhood Policy). It has been promoting the convergence of higher education systems and the facilitation of a common identity and citizenship (Papatsiba, 2009; Zgaga, 2009). Bologna has been emerging as a source of geopolitical changes that are much wider than the reforms of higher education systems in the participating states. Bologna might also be emerging as a source of a new joint image of Europeanisation in the EHEA. Unlike most of the previous initiatives that were focused around Europeanisation in the EU or around the EU, Bologna might become a tool for assimilating different spaces (such as the EU and the post-Soviet area) in their aims for Europeanisation.

Post-Soviet Europeanisation might seem to be a very peculiar case of how Europeanisation unfolds, as suggested by the Ukrainian case. This case shows how much the past conventions are, in a way, largely 'determining' the meaning and speed of change. As this study has shown, the contrast between the old established practices and traditions (especially in the field of higher education), and the breadth of new policy ideas is remarkable. Perhaps, this is precisely the reason that the study of Europeanisation in the post-Soviet region is such a promising and productive research field.

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# Appendix 1 – List of interviewees

1. Instructor and head of department at higher education institution A;
2. Instructor at higher education institution A;
3. Instructor and dean at higher education institution A;
4. Instructor and dean at higher education institution A;
5. Instructor and vice-rector at higher education institution A;
6. Instructor at higher education institution A;
7. Instructor at higher education institution A;
8. Instructor and head of department at higher education institution A;
9. Instructor and vice-rector at higher education institution A;
10. Instructor and dean's assistant at higher education institution A;
11. Instructor and head of department at higher education institution A;
12. Instructor and head of department at higher education institution A;
13. Instructor and dean's assistant at higher education institution B;
14. Instructor and dean's assistant at higher education institution B;
15. Instructor at higher education institution B;
16. Instructor and dean at higher education institution B;
17. Instructor at higher education institution B;
18. Instructor at higher education institution B;
19. Instructor and dean at higher education institution B;
20. Instructor and dean at higher education institution B;
21. Instructor and dean's assistant at higher education institution B;
22. Instructor and dean's assistant at higher education institution B;
23. Instructor and dean's assistant at higher education institution B;
24. Instructor and dean at higher education institution B.
25. Higher education reform expert at the National TEMPUS office, vice-rector at higher education institution C;
26. Higher education reform expert at the National TEMPUS office, vice-rector at higher education institution D;

27. Higher education reform expert at the National TEMPUS office, instructor at higher education institution E;
28. National TEMPUS Office representative;
29. Ex-member of a working group of the Parliamentary Committee of Education and Science Matters, ex-member of the Bologna Follow-up Group, head of department at higher education institution F;
30. Representative from the Department of Higher Education at the Ministry;
31. UNESCO representative, rector at higher education institution G;
32. Representative of the Department of Higher Education in the Ministry, member of the Bologna Follow-up Group, Higher education reform expert at the National TEMPUS office, ex-member of the Scientific Advisory Centre;
33. Ex-member of the Bologna Follow-up Group, vice-rector at higher education institution H, ex-representative of the Department of Higher Education at the Ministry;
34. Ex-member of the Bologna Follow-up Group, ex-representative of the Department of Higher Education at the Ministry, vice-rector at higher education institution I;
35. Representative of the Department of Management (office of international agreements) at the Ministry;
36. Representative from higher authorities at the Ministry;
37. Chief representative of the Ukrainian Association of Students' Self-Government, student at higher education institution J;
38. Representative of the Trade Union of Education and Science Workers of Ukraine, instructor at higher education institution; K
39. Representative of the National Bologna Centre, instructor at higher education institution L;
40. Representative of the Fund *Vidrodzhennya*;
41. Representative of the Fund *Demokratychni Initsiatyvy*;
42. Representative of the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education's partner in Ukraine, worker at a study office at higher education institution M;
43. Representative of the National Bologna Centre, instructor at higher education institution N.

# Appendix 2 – Interview questions

## Core questions

How do you understand the Bologna Process?

Who is involved in the Bologna Process in Ukraine?

How did the establishment, at which you work, get involved in Bologna?

How do you deal with Bologna at your establishment?

What was the role of the Bologna pilot project 2004-2008 for further higher education reform in Ukraine?

Have there been any challenges in dealing with Bologna at your establishment/ in Ukraine? If yes, to what extent are they addressed in Ukraine? By whom?

## Additional questions

Why does Ukraine need Bologna (and membership in the European Higher Education Area)?

What do you consider to be the most important events/issues in the Bologna reform in Ukraine?

What is the role of non-state, international organisations in the Bologna reform in Ukraine? If yes, who are they? What do they do? How important are they in comparison to the Ministry of Education and Science and higher education institutions?

What is your role in the Bologna reform? What do you do? How do you cooperate with other establishments that are involved in the Bologna reform?

# Appendix 3 – List of documents

## 1. Documents of higher education institutions

### *Institution A*

Institutional decree №31 “About conducting the pedagogical experiment in the implementation of the credit-module system of the study process organisation in 2005/2006 a/y (with further changes)” 20 September 2005.

Extract from protocol №2 of [name omitted] 13 October 2005

Institutional decree №152 “About the implementation of the procedure of students’ knowledge assessment in the credit-module system” 17 November 2005

Extract from protocol №5 of [name omitted] 1 January 2006

Institutional decree №70 “About the implementation of the credit-module system of the study process organisation” 14 February 2006

Extract from protocol №10 [name omitted] 26 May 2006

### *Institution B*

Institutional decree №0402-1/007 “About the confirmation of the resolution about admitting foreign citizens at [name omitted]” 18 January 2010

## 2. Documents of the central governing bodies (and their consultative actors)

### *a. National Bologna implementation reports*

National Bologna implementation report. (2004, September 16). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from [http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/Documents/National\\_Report\\_Ukraine\\_05.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/Documents/National_Report_Ukraine_05.pdf)

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[http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/Documents/National\\_Report\\_Ukraine\\_2009.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/Documents/National_Report_Ukraine_2009.pdf)

National Bologna implementation report. (2009, 2012). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from <http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/National%20reports/Ukraine.pdf>

### **b. State documents**

Constitution of Ukraine. (1996). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from <http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/254%D0%BA/96-%D0%B2%D1%80>

Draft law about higher education №1187. (2012, December 28). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from [http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4\\_1?pf3511=45287](http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=45287)

Draft law about higher education №1187-1. (2013, January 11). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from [http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4\\_1?pf3511=45439](http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=45439)

Draft law about higher education №1187-2. (2013, January 21). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from [http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4\\_1?pf3511=45512](http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=45512)

Draft law about higher education №7486-1. (2010, December 22). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from [http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4\\_1?pf3511=39329](http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=39329)

Draft law about higher education №9655. (2011, December 28). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from [http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4\\_2?id=&pf3516=9655&skl=7](http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_2?id=&pf3516=9655&skl=7)

Draft law about higher education №9655-1. (2011, December 30). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from [http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4\\_2?id=&pf3516=9655-1&skl=7](http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_2?id=&pf3516=9655-1&skl=7)

Draft law about higher education №9655-2. (2012, January 6). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from [http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4\\_1?pf3511=42264](http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=42264)

Draft Law about vocational education (not registered in the Parliament). (2013). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from [https://www.google.com.ua/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CCkQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.mon.gov.ua%2Fimg%2Fzstored%2Ffiles%2Fdoc\\_10072013\\_002.doc&ei=VbpJU4SOKdCh7Aa1x4CIBw&usg=AFQjCNEkB4ORB5TDtKs-421POBlGiCBb1g&sig2=hWPtCoD5QIXRObKVZnP0Wg&bvm=bv.64542518,d.ZGU](https://www.google.com.ua/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CCkQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.mon.gov.ua%2Fimg%2Fzstored%2Ffiles%2Fdoc_10072013_002.doc&ei=VbpJU4SOKdCh7Aa1x4CIBw&usg=AFQjCNEkB4ORB5TDtKs-421POBlGiCBb1g&sig2=hWPtCoD5QIXRObKVZnP0Wg&bvm=bv.64542518,d.ZGU)

Governmental ordinance №108 “About the establishment of the Institute of Innovative Technologies and the Content of Education.” (2006, February 7).

Retrieved August 9, 2015, from <http://zakon1.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/108-2006-%D0%BF>

Governmental regulation №71 “About some questions concerning the optimisation of programmes and national projects, economy of state budget and recognition the revocation of acts of the Cabinet of Ministers.” (2014, March 5). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from <http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/71-2014-%D0%BF>

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Governmental regulation №562 “About making changes in the regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine №1260 since 12.11.1997.” (2000, March 28). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from <http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/562-2000-%D0%BF>

Governmental regulation №924 “The question of the National Informational Centre of Academic Mobility.” (2011, August 31). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from <http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/924-2011-%D0%BF>

Governmental regulation №978 “About confirming the ordinance about accreditation higher education establishments and programmes at higher education establishments and higher technical schools.” (2001, September 9). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from <http://zakon2.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/978-2001-%D0%BF>

Governmental regulation №1095 “About some questions regarding the implementation of the external independent testing and monitoring of education quality.” (2004, August 25). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from <http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1095-2004-%D0%BF>

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Governmental resolution №76 “Some questions concerning granting the status of self-governing (autonomous) research national university to higher education institutions.” (2010, February 3). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from <http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/76-2010-%D0%BF>

Governmental resolution №82 “About the creation of the Interdepartmental Commission to support the Bologna Process in Ukraine.” (2006, February 1). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from <http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/82-2006-%D0%BF>



- Governmental resolution №180 “About the liquidation of certain consultative, advising and other additional bodies, created by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.” (2013, March 13). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from <http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/180-2013-%D0%BF>
- Governmental resolution №655 “About making changes in the regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine №1260 since 12.11.1997.” (2013, September 4). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from <http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/655-2013-%D0%BF>
- Governmental resolution №1131 “About the creation of the Interdepartmental Commission to deal with the participation of Ukraine in the Bologna Process.” (2004, August 25). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from <http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1131-2004-%D0%BF>
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Ministerial decree №48 "About a pedagogical experiment on the credit-module system of the organisation of the study process." (2004, January 23). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from [https://www.google.com.ua/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CBwQFjAAahUKEwj\\_mt\\_asZzHAhVGVSwKHVGhDWY&url=http%3A%2F%2Fold.mon.gov.ua%2Fimages%2Ffiles%2Fosvita%2FEvointehraciya%2Fmon\\_48.doc&ei=cXvHVb-eG8aqsQHRwrawBg&usg=AFQjCNF4jX4JOyHhKQITZWAV7KuMWYl4kA&sig2=HQXI36SqDiVMGZY2\\_h48Hw&bvm=bv.99804247,d.bGg](https://www.google.com.ua/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CBwQFjAAahUKEwj_mt_asZzHAhVGVSwKHVGhDWY&url=http%3A%2F%2Fold.mon.gov.ua%2Fimages%2Ffiles%2Fosvita%2FEvointehraciya%2Fmon_48.doc&ei=cXvHVb-eG8aqsQHRwrawBg&usg=AFQjCNF4jX4JOyHhKQITZWAV7KuMWYl4kA&sig2=HQXI36SqDiVMGZY2_h48Hw&bvm=bv.99804247,d.bGg)

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Ministerial decree №275 "Recommendations about the implementation of the diploma supplement corresponding to the European template." (2010, April 30). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from [https://www.google.com.ua/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CCQQFjABahUKEwik8dv5zpzHAhWLVyWwKHQ0jD14&url=http%3A%2F%2Fnmc.univ.kiev.ua%2Fdocs%2FRecomend\\_MON\\_dodatok\\_dipl.doc&ei=G5rHVeT3AYuvsQGNxrzwBQ&usg=AFQjCNGQdGwWxtmMmAR8t3Yhi5cdLChqtg&sig2=A-TbrsxpR5JxxUgCxlCpAw&bvm=bv.99804247,d.bGg](https://www.google.com.ua/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CCQQFjABahUKEwik8dv5zpzHAhWLVyWwKHQ0jD14&url=http%3A%2F%2Fnmc.univ.kiev.ua%2Fdocs%2FRecomend_MON_dodatok_dipl.doc&ei=G5rHVeT3AYuvsQGNxrzwBQ&usg=AFQjCNGQdGwWxtmMmAR8t3Yhi5cdLChqtg&sig2=A-TbrsxpR5JxxUgCxlCpAw&bvm=bv.99804247,d.bGg)

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Ministerial decree №365 "About the confirmation of the procedure for requesting, issuing and registering diploma supplement corresponding to the European template (diploma supplement)." (2010, April 29). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from [https://www.google.com.ua/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=5&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CD0QFjAEahUKEwj859eG6pzHAhVGCSwKHTk1DHI&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.kdu.edu.ua%2Fuch\\_otd%2Fpostanova\\_KMU\\_655.doc&ei=hbbHVbyRPMaSSAG56rCQBw&usg=AFQjCNFlmjV7V4kzm3rsIjxvvk-11FNw&sig2=KMGKQ1Eg5VaLoBd1RR0nMA](https://www.google.com.ua/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=5&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CD0QFjAEahUKEwj859eG6pzHAhVGCSwKHTk1DHI&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.kdu.edu.ua%2Fuch_otd%2Fpostanova_KMU_655.doc&ei=hbbHVbyRPMaSSAG56rCQBw&usg=AFQjCNFlmjV7V4kzm3rsIjxvvk-11FNw&sig2=KMGKQ1Eg5VaLoBd1RR0nMA)

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Ministerial decree №450 "About confirming the norms of workload in hours for planning and assessing study process, and the lists of major kinds of methodical, scientific and organisational work of pedagogical and scientific-pedagogical workers of higher education establishments." (2002, August 7). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from <http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z0698-02>

Ministerial decree №548 "About conducting a pilot project at higher education establishments, subordinated to the Ministry, regarding obtaining the education-qualification level of Master's on the basis of Bachelor's in a different study field'. (2013, May 17). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from [http://osvita.ua/legislation/Vishya\\_osvita/36244/](http://osvita.ua/legislation/Vishya_osvita/36244/)

Ministerial decree №563 "About confirming the regulation about the recognition of foreign documents about education." (2003, August 20). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from <http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z0878-03>

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the study process organisation.” (2005, December 30). Retrieved August 9, 2015, from [http://old.mon.gov.ua/images/files/osvita/Evrointehraciya/mon\\_774.doc](http://old.mon.gov.ua/images/files/osvita/Evrointehraciya/mon_774.doc)

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### **3. Bologna international documents**

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