

TRANSFORMING UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE BOLOGNA
PROCESS: A CASE STUDY OF UKRAINIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

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By

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ABSTRACT

Over the last 25 years, Europe's strategic efforts to retain its significance in higher education have resulted in the Bologna Process – the largest and most influential initiative affecting the higher education systems of 49 countries, including Ukraine. Despite extensive research on Ukrainian educational reforms in the context of the Bologna Process, the university governance transformation has received little attention in the relevant literature and minimal empirical support. This study sought a comprehensive understanding of how the Bologna Process influenced the governance of Ukrainian public universities. Ukrainian universities deserve particular attention to their reorganization efforts because their unique positions are determined by specific historical, political, and socio-economic realities in Ukraine.

Using a qualitative case study methodology, I investigated how the Bologna Process had transformed university governance in three Ukrainian universities: National Aviation University, Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University, and Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University. I examined challenges to, supports for, and implications of university governance transformation. Through document analysis and individual interviews with senior university administrators, I identified six themes in the collected data: the Bologna Process and its implementation, university autonomy, university collective governance, the increasing role of internationalization, marketization of higher education, and reconceptualizing national identity. The interpretation of these themes allowed me to distinguish decentralizing higher education governance inherited from the Soviet times and responding to European regionalization policies as two directions of university governance reforms. These directions were recognized as attempts to step away from the Soviet inherent governing practices, such as highly centralized educational governance and the Soviet relative isolation from the world, towards more open and democratic policies of the European Higher Education Area. The two contesting influences of Soviet legacies and the Bologna Process caused both the change and inertia of Ukrainian university governance.

This study is a timely investigation of Ukrainian university governance transformation, for it advances our understanding of European regionalization and its impact on higher education governance in former socialist countries. The findings from the study are relevant to policy-makers within Ukraine and internationally, as they shed light on Ukrainian public universities' inner workings, guiding policies, and decision-making processes.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PERMISSION TO USE.....	i
ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
CHAPTER ONE – Introduction.....	1
Background to the Problem	2
Statement of the Problem.....	4
Research Purpose and Research Questions.....	6
Delimitations.....	6
Limitations	7
Significance of the Study	8
The Researcher.....	10
Organization of the Dissertation	12
Definitions of Terms	12
CHAPTER TWO – Literature Review	15
The Structure of Ukrainian Higher Education	15
Ukrainian Higher Education	16
Inherited Concepts of Higher Education Governance	19
Internationalization of Higher Education in Ukraine.....	21
Internationalization in the Ukrainian Context.....	21
The Bologna Process as a Regionalization Initiative.....	23
Ukrainian Education Reforms in the Context of the Bologna Process.....	25
Europeanization in Question.....	29
The Bologna Process and University Governance.....	33
The In-Between Position of European Universities.....	33
The Implications for Ukrainian Universities	35
Theoretical Considerations and Conceptual Framework	39
Sociological Institutionalism	40
Historical Institutionalism.....	43
CHAPTER THREE – Methodology.....	46
Philosophical Stance	47
Research Design.....	49
Study Sites	52
Research Methods.....	54
Document Analysis.....	54
Interviews.....	55
Data Analysis and Interpretation	58
Trustworthiness.....	59
Ethical Considerations	60
CHAPTER FOUR – Data Analysis and Findings.....	62
Three Ukrainian Public Universities.....	62
National Aviation University (NAU).....	64

Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University (TVHNPU)	65
Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University (ZIFSU)	66
Reflections on Data Collection Process	67
Treating Resistance as Data	69
Organizing and Analyzing Data.....	72
Coding Data	73
Emerged Themes	75
The Bologna Process and Its Implementation	76
University Autonomy.....	78
University Collective Governance.....	83
The Increasing Role of Internationalization	85
Marketization of Higher Education	88
Reconceptualizing National Identity.....	91
CHAPTER FIVE – Interpretation of Findings.....	95
Revisiting Research Questions and Conceptual Framework	95
Decentralizing Higher Education.....	98
University and the State	100
University Internal Governance and Decision-Making	105
Responding to European Regionalization Policies	109
Universities’ Internationalization and Marketization Strategies.....	110
Challenges within Marketization and Internationalization Policies	114
Implications of University Governance Transformation	116
CHAPTER SIX – Conclusion and Reflection	120
Discussion of the Results	120
Implications of the Study	123
Theoretical Implications	123
Policy Implications	125
Recommendations for Future Research	127
Reflections on the Research.....	128
REFERENCES.....	132
APPENDIX A – State Policy Documents and University Statutory Documents	160
APPENDIX B – Interview Guide (English).....	163
APPENDIX C – Interview Guide (Ukrainian).....	165
APPENDIX D –Behavioral Research Ethics Board Approval.....	166
APPENDIX E – Email of Invitation to Participate in the Study (English)	167
APPENDIX F – Email of Invitation to Participate in the Study (Ukrainian).....	168
APPENDIX G – Qualitative Data Analysis Details/Guide.....	169

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1. Bologna Process Development.....	23
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LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Ukrainian Higher Education until 2014.....	18
Figure 2.2 Conceptual Model for Understanding Governance Change in Ukrainian Universities in the Context of the Bologna Process.....	44
Figure 3.1 Research Framework.....	46
Figure 4.1 Organizational Structure of a Ukrainian Public University.....	63
Figure 5.1 University Governance Transformation in Ukraine.....	98

CHAPTER ONE – Introduction

For the last 15 years Ukraine has been participating in building a unique European area of higher education. Such European regionalization has become a world-leading initiative in higher education and an undeniable force affecting political and economic processes around the globe (Austin & Jones, 2016; Knight, 2013a). In higher education, regionalization aims to build “connections and relationships among higher education actors, structure and systems within a region” (Knight, 2013a, p. 113) with the intention to retain the region’s significance in world affairs. Within European regionalization, the Bologna Process has become the largest and the most influential intergovernmental initiative to harmonize the higher education environment in Europe (Knight, 2013a). The Bologna Process has transformed the world of higher education in all 49 participating countries, including Ukraine. It has influenced national educational policies and triggered broader national reforms (Kushnarenko & Knutson, 2014; Nikolaev, 2017b; Sovsun, 2017; Wynnycky, 2015).

Ukraine’s pro-European educational direction has caused a chain response in Ukrainian public universities. While national and international policies around regionalization have been widely discussed in the literature (Altbach & Knight, 2007; de Wit, 2011; Knight, 2004, 2012, 2013b; Zmas, 2015), there is a need for a more comprehensive understanding of how regionalization affects universities (Stensaker et al., 2008). Equally important is to understand how universities balance and adapt to global, regional, and national influences (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002). Located in specific historical, political, socio-economic, and cultural contexts of the region/country (Knight & de Wit, 1995; Scott, 2009), and shaped by institutional history, tradition, characteristics, and strategic ability (Stensaker et al., 2008), universities adapt and respond to these influences very differently. Ukrainian universities’ adapting and responding to the Bologna Process deserve particular attention, as their unique position is determined by the specific historical, political, and socio-economic realities in Ukraine (Kremen & Nikolajenko, 2006; Mishchenko, 2016; Sikorskaya, 2017; Zeludenko & Sabitowa, 2015). This study explores how European higher education regionalization influences the operation of Ukrainian universities. In particular, the study seeks a comprehensive understanding of how the Bologna Process has impacted the governance in Ukrainian public universities. In this chapter, I start with a discussion of the background of the problem, outline the purpose of the study, and introduce the research questions. The chapter also presents limitations and delimitations of the study.

Moreover, the significance of the study and the researcher's positionality are considered. The chapter further proceeds with reviewing the dissertation organization and defining the key terms.

Background to the Problem

Modern Ukraine is a successor of the Kyivan Rus—the first eastern Slavic state, one of the largest and most powerful states in Europe during the 10th and 11th centuries (Kubicek, 2008; Morelli, 2017). During the following centuries, its territory was conquered, divided, and ruled by various powers: the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Ottoman Empire, Austria-Hungary, and the Russian Empire (Kubicek, 2008). Ukraine had two short periods of independence during the collapse of czarist Russia in 1917 and during World War II. Finally, Ukraine gained its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. Since then, it has officially maintained its independence as a sovereign state (Kubicek, 2008). Unofficially, Ukraine moved back and forth from a 'free country' in the Commonwealth of Independent States to a 'partly free' category following several rounds of power change: the Orange Revolution, the collapse of governing coalitions, a short period of democracy, the threat of authoritarianism, the Revolution of Dignity, and the collapse of governing coalitions (Haran, 2013). Located in Central and Eastern Europe, Ukraine occupies “the sensitive position between Russia and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member states Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania” (Morelli, 2017, p. 1). Geopolitically, located between Europe and Asia, West and East, Ukraine is “caught between Russia and NATO” (Johns, 2016, p. 26) in the long-termed and tense relationships between Russia and the West (Haran, 2013; Johns, 2016; Kubicek, 2008; Plekhanov, 2016). According to a policy analyst Harah (2013), before 2013, Ukraine always managed to navigate between Russia and the West, “to pull back from the edge of the abyss” (p. 68), to make the most important decisions in governing through compromises, and to avoid violent confrontations.

For the last 30 years, the country has experienced many difficulties: economic problems after the collapse of the Soviet Union (Kubicek, 2008); political unrests caused by “incessant bickering among rival political groups” (Kubicek, 2008, p. 9); and social problems of “creating an identity for a nation with territorial, ethnic, and linguistic issues” (Zeludenko & Sabitowa, 2015, p. 865). This situation has been worsened by the constant changes of power, each followed immediately by new political and educational directions for the nation (Kostrobyi & Rashkevych, 2017). Such a carousel of political confrontations between pro-Russian and pro-

European forces has led to antigovernment demonstrations and, consequently, to two revolutions ten years apart (Johns, 2016; Katchanovski, 2016; Kubicek, 2008; Morelli, 2017; Plekhanov, 2016). As a result, the nation has prioritized the Euro-integration policy, lost a part of its territory, and become caught in a war with the Russian Federation in the east of the country (Chernova & Pashkova, 2017; Johns, 2016; Kurilla, 2016; McDermott, 2016; Morelli, 2017).

All of the identified problems have been negatively affecting the education system of Ukraine, including its universities. Despite these difficulties, Ukraine has continued “to follow the path it started on in the 1990s toward decentralization and opening the land up to Europe” (Zeludenko & Sabitowa, 2015, p. 865) by joining the Bologna Process in 2005 (Kremen & Nikolajenko, 2006; Zeludenko & Sabitowa, 2015). Similar to other states of the former Soviet Union (Niyozov, 2017; Scott, 2009), Ukraine had been developing its education system under the influence of the Soviet Union until 1991 (Kubicek, 2008). Since its political independence, Ukraine has been restructuring its initial post-Soviet education system following the nationalist movements inside the country and globalizing influences from the outside (Sikorskaya, 2017; Zeludenko & Sabitowa, 2015). Therefore, the discussion about restructuring higher education in Ukraine within the Bologna Process is heavily grounded in the context of a post-Soviet education system and numerous attempts to reform it.

Historically, at the national level, these reforms were caused by the move from the communist to post-communist society (Scott, 2009). At the institutional level, they always had national political motives (Sikorskaya, 2017). These political influences in educational reforms were coupled with another driving force: the internationalization of higher education (Sikorskaya, 2017). The strategic importance of internationalization became evident with the necessity for universities to adapt to local and global needs (Marginson, 2004; Marginson & Rhoades, 2002; Sikorskaya, 2017). Therefore, as a European country, Ukraine naturally benefits from joining the Bologna Process and its integration into the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) (Kremen & Nikolajenko, 2006; Zeludenko & Sabitowa, 2015). As a post-Soviet country, Ukraine is still transitioning from the Soviet legacy in education and recovering its national identity (Zeludenko & Sabitowa, 2015). Finally, as a country caught in the tension between Russia and NATO (Johns, 2016; Plekhanov, 2016), Ukraine realizes the importance of reconsidering universities’ subordinate position from the state to join the European community

(Nyborg, 2003b). Under these circumstances, it is essential to explore how the Bologna Process influences governance in Ukrainian public universities.

Statement of the Problem

During the first years of its independence, Ukrainian faced the challenge of moving towards a new social order. Ukraine transitioned “from totalitarianism to democracy, from a command economy to market economy, from a passive to an active social role of individuals serving their nation and local communities” (Kremen & Nikolajenko, 2006, p. 11). Consequently, such changes in ideology and social structure evoked concurrent changes in education. Education played a significant role in achieving the new social and political priorities.

During the last several decades, Ukrainian public universities have encountered many problems associated with the collapse of the Soviet education system and its reformation in independent Ukraine. These reforms in the higher education sector came as an attempt to restructure the Soviet education legacy (Kremen & Nikolajenko, 2006; Zeludenko & Sabitowa, 2015), to rediscover national identity, and to introduce national values in education (Myshchyshyn, 2008; Ponomarevsky, 2012; Unynets-Hodakivska & Maceluk, 2007). The increasing importance of internationalization of higher education adds to the challenge for Ukrainian universities. Although Ukraine maintains a reputation as a country with high standards of teaching and learning (Kushnarenko & Knutson, 2014), it can be considered new to internationalization processes in education. Therefore, the focus of educational reforms has shifted from diversification of higher education as a response to its uniformity during the communist era (Kremen & Nikolajenko, 2006; Scott, 2009) to prioritizing internationalization in higher education, specifically, Europeanization and the Bologna Process (Kvit, 2017; Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014; Wynnycky, 2015).

Despite the radical character of educational reforms at the national level, Ukrainian public universities have responded carefully in their reorganization efforts (Kushnarenko & Knutson, 2014; Wynnycky, 2015). As former Ukrainian Minister of Education Kvit (2017) emphasized in his speech on higher education reforms, there is a gap between new and progressive national policies and their implementation at the institutional level. According to Kvit, this gap is evident in several manifestations. First, the attempts to reform national higher education are numerous. However, because of the lack of administrators competent to implement the educational changes, most of the reforms have been undertaken by state figures schooled on

Soviet ideologies. Second, even though internationalization of higher education is one of the core priorities of the national reforms (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014), some consider these ministerial internationalization policies quite “clumsy and ambiguous” (Kushnarenko & Knutson, 2014, p. 27). As such, they could reduce institutional motivation and response.

At the same time, the Bologna Process introduces changes to three major areas: the system of higher education, the quality assurance, and the relations between the state and the university (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014; Wynnycky, 2015). The reforms in these areas have consequently changed how Ukrainian public universities are governed (Estermann, 2015; Wynnycky, 2015), including governing bodies, internal governing mechanisms, and decision-making processes.

Ukrainian higher education provides a particularly interesting national context for exploring how the Bologna Process influences university governance, especially regarding multiple gaps between regionalization policies in Ukrainian higher education and their implementations at the institutional level. The existing gaps are between (a) the formal university autonomy legally granted by the *Law of Ukraine “On higher education”* (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014) and too little actual autonomy or rather the university financial dependence on the state (Kvit, 2017; Estermann, 2015; Wynnycky, 2015); (b) the need for effective university governance and the lack of clear and coherent vision of university development (Semenets, 2017; Sovsun, 2017); and finally, (c) the necessity of following the Bologna Process and the unwillingness to abandon the previous Soviet norms (Oleksiyenko, 2016). The last controversy leads to “pathological mixtures of different education elements” (Gomilko et al., 2016, p. 195) and to universities’ careful approach to the reorganization efforts (Kushnarenko & Knutson, 2014; Wynnycky, 2015). The identified gaps raise questions about how Ukrainian public universities respond to the Bologna Process within the national education strategy; how this regionalization initiative is reflected on university governance; and what challenges and supports the universities might have while adapting to European regionalization. The understanding of these multiple gaps and the accompanying questions informed the research purpose and related research questions of this study.

Research Purpose and Research Questions

The study seeks a comprehensive understanding of how the Bologna Process has impacted the governance of Ukrainian public universities. Therefore, the research is guided by the following questions:

1. How has joining the Bologna Process changed the governance of public universities in Ukraine?
2. What are the challenges to and supports for transforming the governance in Ukrainian public universities?
3. What are the implications of the governance change for university policies and practices?

Delimitations

This study is primarily delimited by the research purpose and the specific context of the study. Although the Europeanization of Ukrainian higher education is not limited to the Bologna Process, this study analyzes the university governance changes triggered explicitly by the Bologna Process. Within European regionalization, the governance reforms in Ukrainian higher education are examined in wide time ranges, from 2005 when Ukraine joined the Bologna initiative until 2020, that constituted 15 years of compliance with the Bologna requirements.

The chosen conceptual framework of institutional theory delimits the line of inquiry to the governance transformation in Ukrainian public universities as organizations that function in broader institutional fields of the Ukrainian higher education system and the EHEA. As such, Bologna-associated university governance reforms predominantly focus on universities' decision-making systems, their mission and purposes, the patterns of authority and hierarchy, and the involvement of different stakeholders in the university governance. At the same time, the selected inquiry line prevents me from scrutinizing a wide range of university governance-related issues: the relationships between various administrative ranks and academics, the effects that governance reforms have on academic cultures, gender equity dilemmas, and the role of women in university governance. Moreover, the conceptual framework of sociological and historical institutionalism limits critical examining the interplay between individual and institutional agency.

The purpose of the study determines the research design of the study – a qualitative case study, and research methods – document analysis and individual interviews. Thus, the study is delimited to three public universities in Ukraine, which have recently experienced a change in

leadership – National Aviation University (NAU), Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University (TVHNPU), and Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University (ZIFSU). The participants are senior administrators who have worked at the chosen universities for more than six years. I assume those are the people with extensive knowledge on the subject, as their time on the post allows them to speak about university governance before 2014 and reflect on the recent changes introduced by the new *Law “On higher education.”* Senior administrators’ academic backgrounds and areas of academic specialization are not taken into account.

Regarding the document analysis, choices are made to analyze only those state documents, which (a) establish the basic legal, organizational, and financial principles of the functioning of the Ukrainian higher education system; (b) define the purpose, strategic directions, and main tasks for implementation of the state policy in the field of education; and (c) were issued before Ukraine’s official commitment to the Bologna Process in 2005 and in recent years. Therefore, at the national level, two versions of the state’s *Laws “On education”* of 1996 and 2017 and “*On higher education”* of 2002 and 2014, as well as the national strategies for the development of higher education of 2002 and 2013 are analyzed. While at the institutional level, university statutes – before 2005 and more recent ones – and existing development strategies are selected from every research site as those which regulate university activities and best convey university policies.

Limitations

There are several limitations to this study. First, as the study concentrates on the governance in three individual public universities in Ukraine, such a focus limits the generalization of the findings. While the data is obtained due to the analysis of context-specific documents and interviewing a small number of participants, the impact of the Bologna Process on the university governance might be different for different Ukrainian institutions. Thus, expanding the results beyond the chosen universities is limited.

Second, due to the nature of qualitative research, the data obtained during the interviews is limited to participants’ own experiences, perceptions, and interpretations and entirely depends on the participants’ truthfulness, accuracy, and openness. Likewise, interview interpretations and document analysis are limited by my previous experience and knowledge as a researcher. Moreover, I am aware of my potential bias and how they might have affected both the interviews

and the interpretation of the data. Additionally, as a ZIFSU graduate and later employed at NAU, I am familiar with some of the participants.

The final limitation comes from my affiliation with a Canadian university and my research focus on Ukrainian universities. Due to such geographic boundedness, multiple translations from English into Ukrainian and back might have led to some misunderstandings or misinterpretation of information. For example, the interview questions were first written in English for the Research Ethics Board's approval and then translated into Ukrainian for the interviews because of my participants' limited knowledge of English. Similarly, the interview transcripts were first done in Ukrainian and subsequently translated into English for the data analysis.

Significance of the Study

The discussion on the realities and perspectives of Ukrainian public universities regarding European regionalization is timely and relevant for a number of reasons. First, although internationalization of higher education institutions is widely discussed (Altbach, 2002; de Wit, 2011; Elkin et al., 2008; Knight, 1997, 2004, 2012, 2013a Smidt, 2015), research on bridging the gap between national policy-making and institutional needs is insufficient (Stensaker et al., 2008). There also remain understudied issues of university functioning "beyond national states, markets, and systems of higher education" (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002, p. 281). For example, more research is needed on university governance in the context of the regional dimension of higher education (Austin & Jones, 2016), particularly in extremely challenging conditions and multiple pressures on public universities in Ukraine (Gomilko et al., 2016; Osipian, 2017).

Second, the efforts of Ukrainian public universities to adapt to European regionalization have much in common with institutional efforts in other post-Soviet countries (Boyadjieva, 2017; Kushnarenko & Knutson, 2014; Osipian, 2017). As drivers for general education reforms, the Bologna requirements are difficult to meet (Kushnarenko & Knutson, 2014). Thus, a broader and more comprehensive understanding of how regionalization policies affect individual institutions is needed (Stensaker et al., 2008), especially in the countries with Soviet legacies in education (Gomilko et al., 2016; Sparks et al., 2015). At the same time, as regional level initiatives evolve in different parts of the world, Europe serves as "a catalyst and model" for regionalization in Africa, Asia, and Latin America (Knight, 2013a, p. 109). The issues of

regionalization influences on university governance might arise worldwide. Therefore, the current study creates a holistic picture of how the governance in Ukrainian public universities is transformed in the context of the Bologna Process.

Third, as a European country, Ukraine is currently negotiating the possibility of joining the European Union. The subject of these negotiations is multiple reforms required in major areas, including education (Klympush-Tsynadze, 2017; Stone, 2017). However, these reforms will not bring immediate results, and Ukrainian universities are still lagging at the global and European levels (Boyadjieva, 2017; Kostrobiiy & Rashkevych, 2017). Such a situation raises the question: “does higher education in the former socialist countries hold a useful potential for the development of the European higher education area, or does it represent a challenge, and even a threat, to that development?” (Boyadjieva, 2017). Therefore, the proposed study also addresses existing concerns.

Ukraine’s educational orientation towards Euro-integration and new educational reforms have positioned the country as a prospective partner for international cooperation. The understanding of the university governance transformation contributes to the perception of both the landscape of Ukraine higher education and the realities of higher education institutions. The study offers insights for universities in other countries to consider perspective strategies for a long-term collaboration with Ukrainian institutions. For example, the findings from the study give the opportunity for Canadian universities to consider prospective cross-border partnerships with Ukrainian universities, attract international students not only from Ukraine but also from other European countries, and promote Canadian students to study and practice internationally. Moreover, the study informs the development of alternative forms of international education between Canadian and Ukrainian universities, such as joint Canadian-Ukrainian degree programs, branch campuses, distant learning, and academic virtual mobility. In terms of practice, this study contributes to the understanding of how to build international partnerships between Ukrainian and foreign universities.

Lastly, the study lays a foundation for comparative analysis that can be applied in future research, for Ukrainian universities have “broadly similar [issues] to those that preoccupy higher education in Western Europe or North America” (Scott, 2009, p. 281). According to Scott (2009), these issues are the tension between systemic planning and institutional initiative, the balance within institutions between central administration and faculties, and the relationship

between research and teaching. However, the significance of Ukraine's attempts is that they are made in a limited time and on a wider scale than in Western Europe (Hurch, 2007; Scott, 2009).

The Researcher

My positionality as a researcher in this study is ultimately determined by my previous experiences, background, values, and interests. Through my school and university, especially while working as a teacher in Ukrainian higher education, I witnessed the changes happening in a newly born Ukrainian society and reflected in education. Those changes were not easy. I saw how the people's shame of being Ukrainians eventually transformed into something close to pride. Surprisingly, I remembered that my people experienced similar shame when instead of Russian, they started to use the Ukrainian language publicly. I witnessed the people's puzzlement when they compared what they believed was true and what had happened in history. However, the most difficult challenge was to rediscover what it meant to be a Ukrainian and at the same time to locate ourselves as a nation within the global community.

Education reflected all those social changes. There were debates about the status of Ukrainian as the only state language, the attempts to introduce national identity and national values into the curriculum, and the necessity to catch up with global trends in education and connect with the global community. Working at a Ukrainian university, I observed how university administrators and faculty tried to cope with those challenges. My initial excitement about new reforms and a new national education strategy to introduce the Bologna Process changed into reluctance. There seemed to be neither strategic plans for their implementation nor logical and clear policies to follow. My colleagues and I always believed that the top-down nature of the educational reforms posed a real complication for their translation at the institutional level. Without an action plan, we struggled as educators to implement every new idea or program in the scope of the Bologna Process. It sometimes seemed as if the responsibility of the whole institution came to rest on the shoulders of individuals.

As a result, my colleagues and I had to deal with numerous controversies caused by our expectations from the state reforms and institutional reality. In its attempts to increase the quality and competitiveness of higher education, Ukraine joined the Bologna Process. Yet, the number of students seeking education abroad doubled since then while there was almost no increase in the number of international students entering Ukrainian universities. Moreover, Ukrainian universities legally gained autonomy in major decision-making, yet they stayed financially

dependent on the state. Such autonomy seemed to become not a motive for actions but a significant challenge to university administrators. These were the few examples that raised questions about the implications of pro-European education policy for Ukrainian universities. Even though I came to Canada with a vague idea of what constituted the research problem I would like to examine, my research interest became clearer as I moved through my graduate program. As I drew from my experiences at the National Aviation University, I became genuinely interested in how the Bologna Process impacted university governance in Ukraine.

Regarding my relative positioning within the research, I identify myself as both an insider and an outsider in this research (Hellawell, 2006; Kelly, 2014; McNess et al., 2015). I have examined my own national context while studying in Canada, which brings an international perspective to the study, a unique lens into research – “adjusted through the process of studying in another country” (Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2014, p. 61). As this study deals with Ukrainian higher education, and I see myself as a product of Ukrainian and Canadian higher education, potential insights come from my familiarity with the system of higher education in Ukraine and my exposure to higher education in Canada. Being a graduate from a Ukrainian university and having more than ten years of teaching experience in Ukrainian higher education, I am familiar with transformation processes at the institutional level. The introduction of the Bologna Process, international programs, collaboration agreements, and curricula redesigning were a few examples of those changes I witnessed as a faculty member and contributed as a section chair at the National Aviation University. Additionally, my experience of an international graduate student at the University of Saskatchewan distances myself as a researcher from the Ukrainian education context and makes me the right person to understand how the governance in Ukrainian public universities transforms in the context of the Bologna Process.

I believe my background, experience, and unique positionality as a researcher are assets in addressing the research questions of the study. The opportunity to analyze the works by Ukrainian authors and by authors from different national contexts and reflect on divergent perspectives in higher education administration benefitted the research. Most importantly, my connections in Ukrainian universities helped me identify and access the relevant educational stakeholders to understand their perspectives on transforming the governance in Ukrainian public universities in the context of the Bologna Process.

Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation consists of six chapters organized in the following order. Chapter One presents the introduction of the study, the background to the problem, statement of the problem, research purpose, research questions to address, limitations, delimitations, and significance of the study. The researcher's positionality is revealed, and the definitions of the terms are suggested to develop a deeper understanding of the main concepts. Chapter Two provides a general review of the literature on the conditions under which Ukraine formed its education system, the educational reforms, and the current state of Ukrainian higher education. Furthermore, this chapter concentrates on European regionalization, the Bologna Process, and its implications for the university governance in Ukraine. The literature review identifies the significant gaps in the present state of research, which are addressed in the study. In this chapter, the focus is also given to the conceptual framework guiding the study.

The description of the research methodology and methods of data collection and analysis is presented in Chapter Three. The participant recruitment process is also introduced in this chapter. The chapter expands on ethical considerations and trustworthiness issues in more detail. Chapter Four describes three selected research sites, gives a short overview of the data collection process, and shares some personal reflections on the process. Further, the coding process is illustrated, and the six overarching themes are developed to guide the subsequent interpretation of findings.

Chapter Five begins with revisiting the research questions and proceeds with the interpretations of findings through the lens of sociological and historical institutionalism. This chapter presents a data-based narrative by interpreting the themes within the influences of the Bologna Process and inherited Soviet legacies and structures. Such interpretation enables me to recognize two main directions of university governance reforms in Ukraine. Chapter Six concludes the dissertation with a discussion of the study's findings and ends with recommendations for further research and some final reflections on the research process.

Definitions of Terms

For the purpose of the research, frequently used concepts and terms need to be clarified. The definitions of the terms eliminate the confusion associated with the use of the key terminology and provide common grounds necessary for a shared understanding of their

meanings. The following terms are used most frequently in the study: higher education, regionalization of higher education, the Bologna Process, and university governance.

Higher education: According to the World Declaration on Higher Education (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 1998), higher education refers to “all types of studies, training or training for research at the post-secondary level, provided by universities or other educational establishments that are approved as institutions of higher education by the competent state authorities” (para. 1). However, for the purpose of this research, I have chosen Marginson’s definition of higher education. This definition helps me step away from the description of higher education as a unitary system of an individual state closer to the image of a single worldwide arrangement (Marginson, 2006) that is essential in the current supra-national educational context. Thus, higher education is understood as

a [...] combination of (1) global flows and networks of words and ideas, knowledge, finance, and inter-institution dealings; with (2) national higher education systems shaped by history, law, policy and funding; and (3) individual institutions operating at the same time locally, nationally and globally. (Marginson, 2006, p. 1)

Regionalization of higher education: According to Knight (2013a), regionalization of higher education is “the process of intentionally building connections and relationships among higher education actors, structure and systems within a region” (p. 113). The current study adopts this definition to underline a more proactive role and ‘agency’ of higher education. In relation to internationalization, regionalization is perceived as its version (Teichler, 2004) or “the phenomena of internationalization on a ‘regional’ scale” (Van der Wende, 2004, p. 10).

The Bologna Process: In this study, the Bologna Process is defined as a European regionalization initiative, an intergovernmental voluntary agreement incorporating a number of higher education reforms aimed at establishing a European Higher Education Area. This goal is achieved by harmonizing higher education structures and standardizing key elements in educational systems of participating countries (Bologna Declaration, 1999; Kushnir, 2015; Luchinskaya & Ovchynnikova, 2011).

University governance: As the study seeks to understand the changes in the internal governance of Ukrainian public universities under the influence of an external regionalization process – the Bologna Process, university governance is defined considering its external and internal aspects (Marginson & Considine, 2000). Therefore, university governance

is concerned with the determination of values inside universities, their systems of decision-making and resource allocation, their mission and purposes, the patterns of authority and hierarchy, and the relationship of universities as institutions to the different academic worlds within and the worlds of government, business and community without. (Marginson & Considine, 2000, p. 7)

CHAPTER TWO – Literature Review

This literature review explores recent research and scholarship on the governance of Ukrainian public universities in the context of the Bologna Process and builds a foundation for the study. The review is organized into the following themes, which provide a well-rounded picture of my research interest:

- the structure of the education system of Ukraine and the conditions under which it has been formed;
- the internationalization of Ukrainian higher education and the educational reforms triggered by European regionalization;
- the regionalization policies as education quality improvement versus simple standardization of some educational elements;
- the Bologna Process as a driver to reinforce the governance at European universities and its implications for Ukrainian public universities.

A literature review within these themes narrows the scholarship on the governance of Ukrainian universities in the context of the Bologna Process to the identifiable gaps that delineate what needs investigating. Finally, this chapter suggests a conceptual framework to set the boundaries of the inquiry. The conceptual framework also helps me identify ideas relevant to the study and map connections between them.

The Structure of Ukrainian Higher Education

The discussion about the Ukrainian higher education system always went hand-in-hand with the discussion about its history and social parameters (Kremen & Nikolajenko, 2006; Kushnarenko & Knutson, 2014; Kutsyuruba & Kovalchuk, 2015; Osipian, 2014; Zeludenko & Sabitowa, 2015). As Niyozov (2017) indicated, three different paradigmatic shifts marked the development of all former Soviet Union countries: from “the largest unified country with a single party and state monopoly” (Niyozov, 2017, p. 92) to an independent nation-state with multiple parties and various movements; from a command planned economy to a market economy; and from an atheistic state with a single ideology to a state with religious freedom and nationalist discourses. Ukraine was not an exception. Although the education in Ukraine remained highly centralized, the shifts in the value systems reflected on the priorities, reconstruction, and further development of Ukrainian higher education.

Ukrainian Higher Education

Ukrainian higher education is a complex and multi-layered system (Kremen & Nikolajenko, 2006), which is mostly “a legacy of the post-Soviet era” (British Council, 2015, p. 1) and multiple attempts of modernization through the Bologna Process (Gomilko et al., 2016; Kutsyuruba, 2017; Muliavka, 2019; Oleksiyenko, 2014, 2016). The researchers were unanimous in their assessment of the resultant clash of the Soviet university tradition and the European-level education reforms leading to the hybridization of Ukrainian higher education (Dobko, 2013; Gomilko et al., 2016; Kutsyuruba, 2017; Kutsyuruba & Kovalchuk, 2015; Oleksiyenko, 2014, 2016). Assessing the Soviet legacy in Ukrainian education, Dobko (2013) emphasized the significant damage caused to higher education:

the divorce between education and research within the university setting. It gave rise to a myth of self-sufficiency and engendered reluctance and anxiety about international collaboration. It brought up a collapse of culture of academic freedom and severely handicapped university autonomy. (p. 77)

At the same time, relevant literature suggested that joining the Bologna Process had not improved the situation (Dobko, 2013; Gomilko et al., 2016; Kutsyuruba & Kovalchuk, 2015; Oleksiyenko, 2014, 2016). On the contrary, the government’s caution about radical reforms (Oleksiyenko, 2016) and its “cosmetic nature instead of substantial one” (Gomilko et al., 2016, p. 184) brought to life the neo-Soviet system as “a much worse replica of the Soviet model” (Oleksiyenko, 2016, p. 136). As a result, the educational reforms strengthened post-Soviet bureaucracy and diminished the role of education in nation-building (Oleksiyenko, 2016).

The most common inherited distinction of higher education in all post-Soviet countries is its centralized nature, which lies in a centrally organized and uniform national education system (Zeludenko & Sabitowa, 2015). The *Constitution of Ukraine* (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 1996), the *Law of Ukraine “On education”* (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2017), and the *Law of Ukraine “On higher education”* (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014) constitute legal frameworks for governing education in Ukraine. Therefore, in Ukraine, the constitutional responsibility for the regulation of higher education belongs solely to the state. The majority of Ukrainian higher educational institutions (HEIs) fall under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 1996). Such supervision manifests in both national higher education policy and national quality assessments (Kremen & Nikolajenko,

2006). In addition to the state laws, decrees and regulations of the president and cabinet of ministers of Ukraine define the main directions of the state higher education policy.

Since joining the Bologna Process, certain decentralization tendencies have been enacted. According to the *Law of Ukraine “On higher education”* (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2002), HEIs, the state, and the public cooperate to ensure external and internal quality control. The external assessment is carried out through the licensing and accreditation of degree programs and higher education institutions, students’ attestations, and state inspections. These responsibilities used to belong to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and their sub-division of the State Accreditation Commission and the State Inspectorate. Following European quality assurance strategies, Ukraine has established a separate unit—the National Agency for Quality Assurance (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014).

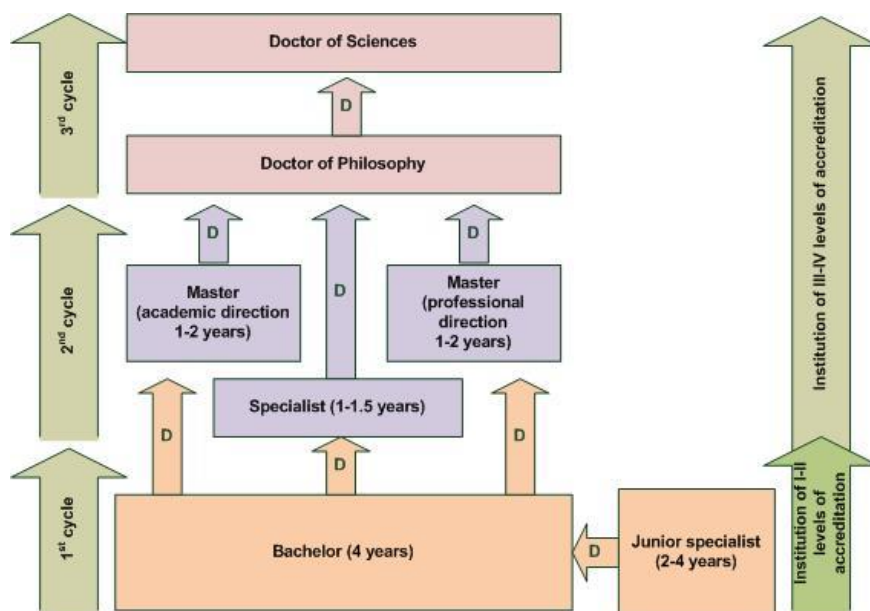
Similar to all post-Soviet countries, Ukraine offers the joint acquisition of educational and professional training (Hladchenko et al., 2016; Kremen & Nikolajenko, 2006; Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014). Such an inherited education model often makes the distinction between university education and higher professional education difficult and unclear (Hladchenko et al., 2016). This combination of academic and professional areas means that by mastering corresponding levels of educational and professional training, students receive academic and professional qualifications. Students’ diplomas are usually both educational certificates and professional licenses (Kremen & Nikolajenko, 2006).

The other manifestation of the Soviet legacy is the existence of various levels of accreditation of Ukrainian HEIs. These levels are based on the official recognition of an institution’s right to offer certain educational activities and assure the quality of education (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014). Thus, the higher education network in Ukraine comprises over six hundred institutes of higher education of various accreditation levels (State Statistics of Ukraine, 2017): universities, academies, institutes, conservatories, colleges, and technical schools (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014). According to the *Law of Ukraine “On higher education”* (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014), these HEIs fall into one of four levels: Levels I and II – all vocational and technical institutions of non-university level; Level III – all educational establishments that offer university-level programs but do not conduct their own research programs; and Level IV – all universities, conservatories, academies, and some institutes that conduct independent research and can award doctorates. Since independence, a

number of Levels I and II institutions have merged into the larger academic units; some institutions have been reorganized or closed (Kremen & Nikolajenko, 2006). Alongside different accreditation levels, some public institutions may receive national status, which brings them broader autonomy in decision-making (Kremen & Nikolajenko, 2006; Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014). This autonomy usually concerns the creation and reorganization of their structural units; awarding of their own academic degrees of associate professor and professor; additional internal incentives to their academic and administrative staff, to name a few.

Figure 2.1

Ukrainian Higher Education until 2014



Note. D – Diploma. Adapted from *The structure of the system of education in Ukraine* elaborated by Shynkaruk (2008), see also Kovács (2014).

Ukrainian higher education is multi-leveled and based on a multi-cycle degree system (see Figure 2.1), which corresponds very much to degrees awarded under the Soviet system (Zeludenko & Sabitowa, 2015). Thus, in Ukraine, a three-level structure of higher education (incomplete, basic, and complete levels) combines with a multi-cycle degree structure and corresponding professional qualifications (Kremen & Nikolajenko, 2006; Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014). Regardless of the Bologna requirements for a three-cycle degree system (Bologna Declaration, 1999) and the corresponding adjustments in the *Law* (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014), some institutions have granted until recently the degrees of Junior Specialist and

Specialist alongside the degrees of Junior Bachelor, Bachelor, Master, Doctor of Philosophy, and Doctor of Science (Gomolko et al., 2016; Shevchenko, 2019; Zeludenko & Sabitowa, 2015).

Overall, Ukrainian higher education has formed under the influence of different historical and socio-political contexts. As a post-Soviet country, Ukraine has a complex and multi-layered higher education system, which is centrally organized and regulated by the state laws and decrees of the president of Ukraine and its cabinet of ministers. Apart from the desire to preserve the vivid Soviet heritage in higher education, Ukraine simultaneously attempted to modernize its higher education by joining the Bologna Process. The following subsection presents the main organizational principles of Ukrainian higher education inherited from the Soviet model of university governance. These inherited concepts serve as a basis to understand university governance changes since Ukraine's commitment to the Bologna Process.

Inherited Concepts of Higher Education Governance

An increasing array of the literature identified that higher education in the post-Soviet countries developed unique governing models influenced mainly by the Soviet past (Azimbayeva, 2017; Dobbins, 2015; Dobbins & Khachatryan, 2015; Lunyachek, 2017; Osipian, 2014, 2017). Historically, Soviet totalitarianism affected the educational genesis in all 15 member countries. However, this influence was the most tangible in Ukraine. During the Soviet era, Ukraine survived the collectivization period, three famines, including the genocide of 1932-1933, the destruction of the entire intelligentsia, mass repression, mass resettlement of Ukrainian people, and fierce eradication of Ukrainian national self-consciousness (Dziuba, 1998; Lunyachek, 2017; Subtelny, 2009). In addition, the internationalist policy of the Soviet Union was aimed at merging nations and forming a kind of nationless Soviet people. Dziuba (1998) noted that such continuous oppression turned out to be a drama of the Ukrainian nation, deprived of its history, culture, and language on the way to so-called Soviet russification.

The Soviet totalitarian regime with an extremely high degree of control over public and private life manifested in hyper-centralized control over the education system. Universities resembled "factory-like" organizations, where "indoctrination and inquiry-less learning serve the purposes of establishing military-style organizational principles and mentality" (Oleksiyenko, 2018, p. 197). The administrative hierarchy was reinforced by extreme bureaucracy, "focused on "one size fits all" distribution and control of resources" (Oleksiyenko, 2018, p. 197), hyper-control over faculty and students, regulated access to buildings, controlled classes and breaks,

surveillance of teachers outside universities, and so forth. Oleksiyenko (2018) characterized such a model of education governance as “soldierism” (p. 197). Similar to soldiers, academics did not have the right to question superiors’ commands, they implemented tasks “in compliance with regulations set by the officers of the state” (Oleksiyenko, 2018, p. 200) no matter how absurd the orders were. As a result, higher education in Ukraine became an obedient instrument of the Soviet political ideology, and educational administrators were transformed into “obedient performer[s] of the government’s will” (Lunyachek, 2017, p. 87).

By the estimations of scholars, such hierarchical structures of the past and the Soviet army-style management survived in many post-Soviet universities as remnants of organizational principles present in the administrative core of Soviet education (Azimbayeva, 2017; Dobbins, 2015; Oleksiyenko, 2018; Osipian, 2014, 2017). Kuraev (2016) summarized these principles as follows: (1) uniformity, (2) top-down administration, and (3) single-person management.

According to Kuraev (2016), uniformity was present in all vital academic issues, such as a structural composition of administration, students, faculty and staff, curricula formation, the organization of classes, and student services. Central and peripheral institutions (universities, technical, or pedagogical institutes) followed the same basic rules and had the same collection of executive offices engaged in academic matters. A top-down administration principle was reflected in the decision-making process: from the ministry of education through the territorial ministries down to the institutional level without the participation of local and institutional levels administrators. HEIs were “training facilities executing government instructions” (Kuraev, 2016, p. 187). Under the single-person management principle, undivided authority belonged to the chief administrator of an academic institution; “[t]he application of this organizational principle literally meant that any order from a superior had to be executed fully, exactly and within the given time frame” (Kuraev, 2016, p. 188). This management principle informed the administrative practice of every university rector/president.

These inherited authoritarian elements laid a foundation for many organizational principles in Ukrainian universities before the Bologna Process (Sichkarenko, 2014). Therefore, it is essential to analyze the recent research and scholarship on the transformation of Ukrainian higher education since the Bologna Process. The next section will discuss what European regionalization means for Ukrainian higher education governance.

Internationalization of Higher Education in Ukraine

Having gained its independence, Ukraine started seeking international collaboration in higher education. Ukraine looked for mutually beneficial intergovernmental agreements with the neighboring states and European Union (EU) members and the countries in Asia, Africa, and North and Latin America (Kremen & Nikolajenko, 2006; Zeludenko & Sabitowa, 2015). Zeludenko and Sabitowa (2015) admitted that international cooperation was particularly complicated because Ukraine was simultaneously trying to step away from its Soviet legacy in education (Dobko, 2013; Kremen & Nikolajenko, 2006; Kutsyuruba & Kovalchuk, 2015; Polese, 2010) and to create a national identity. At present, Ukraine is “not a central player in international education” (Kushnarenko & Knutson, 2014, p. 25), it is still searching for its position in the international arena. This search is greatly predetermined by Ukraine’s special geographic location – between the EU and Russia (Dragneva & Wolczuk, 2015; Mishchenko, 2016; Muliavka, 2019; Sakwa, 2015).

Internationalization in the Ukrainian Context

The move to economic and political integration with the EU defined the character of internationalization of Ukrainian higher education, which is mainly European regionalization (Muliavka, 2019; Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014; Zeludenko & Sabitowa, 2015). The drivers for such significant interest in Europeanization were the prospects of higher mobility and employability of graduates, the increase of external funding, and the attraction of international partners into research programs and projects (Bosenko, 2014; Hurch, 2007; Kostrobij & Rashkevych, 2017; Kremen & Nikolajenko, 2006; Kushnarenko & Knutson, 2014; Martynyuk, 2014; Rodchenko et al., 2017; Strategic Advisory Committee “Education,” 2014). In addition, Bosenko (2014) and Martytyuk (2014) emphasized the emergence and distribution of modern technologies and the transition to a knowledge society as motives behind Europeanization. Therefore, Ukraine, for the most part, adopted a pro-European policy to increase the quality and competitiveness of its higher education.

Europeanization represented more than three decades of strategic efforts by EU authorities to internationalize education (Altbach & Knight, 2007) in response to the emergence of a global higher education market and enhanced international competition (van der Wende, 2003). As part of the economic and political integration, educational integration was aimed at strengthening European higher education’s position and competitiveness of (de Wit & Hunter,

2014; Guri-Rosenblit, 2015; Neave, 2005; van der Wende, 2003). With this intent, the scope and the focus of European regionalization of higher education had expanded. Thus, van der Wende (2003) observed that European actions reached across policy levels and geographical borders over the last decades. For instance, European governments undertook various initiatives from promoting student mobility and education programs such as the European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (ERASMUS) and Socrates to harmonizing entire education systems with the Bologna and the Lisbon processes (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Knight, 2013a; van der Wende, 2003). Likewise, the focus of regionalization of European higher education had also expanded beyond the EU member states and European countries to countries in Latin America and the Asia-Pacific regions (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Asian Development Bank, 2012). Overall, European governments initiated a wide range of regional-level collaboration and reforms inside and across its geographical borders to secure Europe's position as a global higher education market.

For the wide range of inside- and cross-border programs and partnerships, Knight (2013a) recognized Europe as a model for regionalization of higher education. The scholar stated that such regionalization was an ongoing process aimed at harmonizing systems and comprising various bilateral and multilateral international efforts (Knight, 2013a). According to Knight, internationalization evolved into the regionalization of higher education. This evolution occurred through voluntary participation, adoption of general policies, intentionality in building relationships, the notion of 'togetherness,' and respect for differences in local cultures and context. In a similar vein, Austin and Jones (2016) admitted the significance, growing interest in, and strategic importance of the regionalization of higher education for the region's development, especially in the era of globalization.

Being a priority for Ukrainian higher education, European regionalization was not the only Ukraine's internationalization direction. The scope of international cooperation and cross-border collaboration between Ukrainian and foreign educational institutions increasingly grew. Kremen and Nikolajenko (2006) noted that in 1999, the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Ukrainian higher education institutions had signed agreements with 46 countries. Several years later, the number of such agreements increased to 82 inter-governmental and 46 inter-departmental ones with educational institutions in more than 60 countries. The geography of those agreements ranged widely and included Albania, Armenia, Belarus, Bulgaria, Canada,

China, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Libya, Luxembourg, Slovakia, Tajikistan, the Czech Republic, Vietnam, and other countries (Kremen & Nikolajenko, 2006). Although internationalization in the Ukrainian context mainly meant European regionalization, it was not limited to pursuing only the European direction. This Ukraine’s proactive internationalization of higher education was caused by its desire to increase the quality and competitiveness of its higher education.

The Bologna Process as a Regionalization Initiative

Implementing the European policy in Ukrainian higher education began in May 2005 when Ukraine joined the Bologna Process (Bologna Follow-up Group, 2005; Shaw et al., 2011). The strategic purpose of the Bologna Process aligned with other European initiatives is to retain both “Europe’s weight in world affairs” and “a formative influence in shaping the Knowledge Society” (Neave, 2005, p. 120). Ultimately, the Bologna Process is “arguably the largest higher education regionalization project in the world” (Austin & Jones, 2016, p. 190). It aims at harmonizing European higher education, strengthening its position and competitiveness, and establishing the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) (de Wit et al., 2015; Bergen Communique, 2005; Neave, 2005; Nyborg, 2003a; van der Wende, 2003).

According to Neave and Maassen (2007), the *Magna Charta Univeritatum* laid the foundation of the Bologna Process by outlining the fundamental values of the university in 1988. Yet, as a voluntarily intergovernmental agreement, the Bologna Process started only ten years later with the Bologna Declaration (1999) and further incorporated many higher education reforms discussed at the subsequent meetings in Prague (Prague Communique, 2001), Berlin (Berlin Communique, 2003), Bergen (Bergen Communique, 2005), London (London Communique, 2007), Leuven (Leuven Communique, 2009), and so forth (Luchinskaya & Ovchynnikova, 2011; Nyborg, 2003a, 2004b). These meetings affirmed a range of actions towards establishing the EHEA with the most important ten outlined in Bologna, Prague, and Berlin (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1

Bologna Process Development

Agreements	Action lines/Goals	Member states
Magna Charta Univeritatum (1988)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic freedom • The freedom to teach and learn • University autonomy 	388 rectors and heads of universities from all over Europe and beyond

Sorbonne Declaration (1998)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A common frame of reference within the EHEA • Students, graduates, and teaching staff mobility • The promotion of qualifications 	Britain, France, Germany, and Italy
Bologna Declaration (1999)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A system of easily readable and comparable degrees (the Diploma Supplement) • A two-cycle degree system • A system of transferable credits (ECTS) • Students and teacher mobility • Co-operation in quality assurance • The European dimension of higher education 	29 European countries
Prague Communiqué (2001)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life-long learning • Students as active partners in HEIs • Promoting the attractiveness of the EHEA 	33 European countries (including Russia)
Berlin Communiqué (2003)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The synergy between higher education and research • The inclusion of the third cycle in the degree system 	40 European countries
Bergen Communiqué (2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The common understanding of the principles, objectives, and commitments of the Bologna Process • The structure of the EHEA (the overarching framework for qualifications) 	45 countries (including Ukraine)
London Communiqué (2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarizing the main developments at a national level over the period of 2005-2007 	46 countries
Leuven/ Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué (2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social dimension: equitable access and completion • Student-centered learning and teaching • International openness • Multidimensional transparency 	46 countries
Budapest-Vienna Declaration (2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommitment to the principles and objectives of the Bologna Declaration • Strengthening the EHEA in the next decade 	47 countries
Bucharest Communiqué (2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The progress of the Bologna Process • The key policy issues for the future 	47 countries
Yerevan Communiqué (2015)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A renewed vision of the priorities • Making the systems more inclusive 	48 countries
Paris Communiqué (2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress in implementing agreed reforms • Innovation in teaching and learning (digitalization) • Strategic planning of moving beyond 2020 	48 countries
Rome Communiqué (2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaffirmed commitment to building an inclusive, innovative and interconnected EHEA by 2030 	49 countries

- Commitment to meeting the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals by 2030
-

Note. Based on the analysis of *Bergen Communiqué: The European Higher Education Area – Achieving the goals* (2005); *Berlin Communiqué: Realizing the European Higher Education Area* (2003); *Bologna Declaration* (1999); *Bucharest Communiqué: Making the most of our potential: Consolidating the European Higher Education Area* (2012); *Budapest-Vienna Declaration on the European Higher Education Area* (2010); *Leuven Communiqué: The Bologna Process 2020 – The European Higher Education Area in the new decade* (2009); *London Communiqué: Towards the European Higher Education Area: Responding to challenges in a globalized world* (2007); *Magna Charta Universitatum* (1988); *Paris Communiqué* (2018); *Prague Communiqué: Towards the European Higher Education Area* (2001); *Rome Ministerial Communiqué* (2020); *Sorbonne Declaration* (1998); and *Yerevan Communiqué* (2015).

Alongside the action lines defined by these agreements, the fundamental principles of the Bologna Process were equally essential for the participating countries to follow. They constituted a foundation for the development of European higher education. These principles were international academic mobility, autonomous universities, students' participation in higher education administration, public responsibility for higher education, and social dimension of the Bologna Process (Nyborg, 2003a, 2003b, 2004a).

Thus, the harmonization of the entire academic system of the region, as Stensaker et al. (2008) summarized, occurred through the standardization of key higher education elements: compatible degree structures, transferable credits, and equal academic qualifications within the EU states and non-EU member countries. Therefore, for Ukraine, the commitment to the Bologna Process inevitably brought consequences for national legislation and required profound reforms of the Ukrainian education system. They aimed at facilitating national strategies for socio-economic development, collaboration, and integration into the European and world education environment. As the following subsection will show, the reforms relate not only to the structural elements and quality assurance system but also to the higher education governance.

Ukrainian Education Reforms in the Context of the Bologna Process

For the last two decades, Ukraine has taken a number of steps to gradually change its higher education, to introduce new ideas and approaches, and to create new meanings and new solutions in the context of European regionalization (Kostrobyi & Rashkevych, 2017; Kremen &

Nikolajenko, 2006; Kutsyuruba & Kovalchuk, 2015; Shpatenko, 2007). At the national level, this European direction has been introduced through the *Law of Ukraine “On education”* (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 1996, 2017), the *Law of Ukraine “On higher education”* (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2002, 2014), the *National Doctrine on the Development of Education* (President of Ukraine, 2002), and the *National Strategy for Development of Education in Ukraine until 2021* (President of Ukraine, 2013). This legal framework conveys the key idea that in the context of globalization, the state encourages the integration of national education into the international education space (President of Ukraine, 2002). Moreover, by fostering Bologna-associated educational reforms, the state recognizes the increasing importance of internationalization and cooperation in higher education. Given the global labour market demands, Ukraine’s participation in the European regionalization is conceptualized as progress and a necessity for Ukrainian higher education. Therefore, Ukraine’s current policy aims to further develop higher education and facilitate its integration into the European and global community.

Many recognized that, in terms of the state policy, the *Law of Ukraine “On higher education”* (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014) became a turning point in the country’s strivings for quality education and international recognition (Nikolaev, 2017b; Sovsun, 2017; Zeludenko & Sabitowa, 2015). The reason for such a claim was that the *Law* had been prepared not only by the government representatives but also by the representatives of the leading universities and the public, presumably, conveying the values and interests of all stakeholders in higher education (Nikolaev, 2017b; Sovsun, 2017). Moreover, the *Law* was often characterized as progressive (Kvit, 2017), sometimes even referred to as a guide for the necessary changes (Nikolaev, 2017a) and the first significant system reform (Sovsun, 2017). However, Gomilko et al. (2016) observed a gradual attitude shift from euphoria to criticism of the *Law*. They emphasized that the work on the *Law* was carried out by two different teams—first, by previous pro-Russian politicians and, second, adopted during their tenure by progressively minded state leaders. Therefore, such a strategy resulted in preserving the remnants of “the modified old and cumbersome system” (Gomilko et al., 2016, p. 186).

The *Law of Ukraine “On higher education”* (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014) provides the legal framework for the reforms in higher education of Ukraine. Among the main policy principles, the *Law* defines the assistance in society’s sustainable development by

ensuring the resources and the conditions for life-long education, accessibility of higher education, and international integration (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014, Art. 3). In alliance with these principles, the *Law* envisions the development of higher education through introducing a new quality assurance system, enhancing university academic and financial autonomy, establishing transparent enrollment procedures, and integrating Ukraine's higher education into the EHEA (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014; see also Belotserkovskaya, 2014; Nikolaev & Dluhopolsky, 2016; Nikolaeva, 2015).

Although a new version of the *Law of Ukraine "On higher education"* (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014) became a benchmark of educational reforms targeting internationalization of higher education, Gomilko et al. (2016), Kutsyuruba and Kovalchuk (2015), and Sovsun (2017) recognized that it had not changed the situation in higher education dramatically. Sovsun indicated that in contrast to simplistic ideas, society had now developed a wider understanding of the complex problems in education. To support this view, Hurch (2007) admitted that Ukraine had built the basis for higher education transformation and determined the guidelines for developing its education system. However, he insisted that so far, Ukraine had not found the optimal tactics to implement this strategic plan. Shevchenko (2019) believed that it took Ukraine almost ten years (from 2005 to 2014) to start the reform. However, as he went on, "[t]he reform [was] carried out inconsistently, slowly, there [was] no clear strategic plan and roadmap for reform. The responsibility for this [rested] primarily on the MES [the Ministry of Education and Science]" (Shevchenko, 2019, p. 248). For this reason, most of the Bologna declaration principles had not been implemented into educational practice (Gomilko et al., 2016; Hurch, 2007; Kuznetsova, 2012; Shevchenko, 2019; Sovsun, 2017). The majority of scholars agreed that higher education system demanded further institutional reforms (Hurch, 2007; Kostrobyi & Rashkevych, 2017; Kuznetsova, 2012; Shpatenko, 2007; Sovsun, 2017). First of all, the development of Ukrainian higher education required fundamental changes in the relationships between science, the state, and the market (Kuznetsova, 2012).

Many scholarly works argued that nothing had significantly changed in education, regardless of a somewhat progressive Ukrainian legal framework. For example, Kutsyuruba and Kovalchuk (2015) recognized a significant gap between stated and actual change in education. In their analysis of teacher education, scholars emphasized that the implementation of the Bologna Process in Ukraine had not been "a smooth undertaking" (Kutsyuruba & Kovalchuk, 2015, p.

48). Moreover, they claimed that some reforms did not take place at all in the education system. The struggle between forces of progress towards innovation, represented by the Bologna Process, and those of a reactionary past was one of the reasons why meaningful educational transformation had not happened.

Similarly, Gomilko et al. (2016) were convinced that neither joining the Bologna Process in 2005 nor issuing a new version of the *Law* in 2014 had produced as simple a change as a transfer to a three-degree system; instead, a hybrid six-degree one existed in Ukrainian higher education. In their study, Gomilko et al. reasoned that the inability of the reforms to satisfy initial expectations and hopes was because of the “unproductive hybridity” (p. 185) of the Ukrainian education system. The authors explained it as

[t]he combination of cultural phenomena of our time, which go beyond it, [and] has important implications for HE. On the one hand, the involvement into the Bologna process is an example of present-day European standards. On the other hand, the dominance of non-modern and pre-modern educational elements (colonial, Soviet, national) are deeply rooted in Ukrainian education. Thus, liberal democratic Bologna models transform themselves into unattractive ‘mutants,’ which are not typical for either progressive global strategy, not even for traditional local education practices. (p. 185)

Alongside the efforts to internationalize higher education and the desire to preserve deeply rooted Soviet elements in education, the revival of the national component and national values in higher education occurred gradually over several decades (Kremen & Nikolajenko, 2006; Kuzio, 2002; Zeludenko & Sabitowa, 2015). The *National Doctrine on the Development of Education* stated that the national education system conveyed the principles of humanism, democracy, cultural diversity, and tolerance. Ukrainian education should affirm a national idea and promote a national self-identification and Ukrainian culture development (President of Ukraine, 2002). In fact, Ukraine’s pro-European direction in higher education was legally guided by the following principles: the priority of national interests, the preservation and development of the intellectual potential of the nation, tolerance towards the achievements of other educational systems, and adapting these achievements to the needs of the national education system (President of Ukraine, 2002). However, the public feared that the internationalization of higher education might interfere with the state policy on preserving national education, which

unreasonably hindered the implementation of the Bologna principles in Ukraine (Myshchysyn, 2008; Ponomarevsky, 2012; Unynets-Hodakivska & Maceluk, 2007).

Analyzing the period of higher education reforms in Ukraine, it was fair to say that Ukrainian reforms would not bring immediate changes but rather changes that would be more obvious in the long run. As Sovsun (2017) characterized it, the government initially set the task of reforming the education system so wide that no one spoke about instant results and that everyone should have been prepared for a marathon, not a run for a short distance. Many were not that optimistic about the reforms (Gomilko et al., 2016; Kostrobiiy & Rashkevych, 2017; Kuznetsova, 2012; Shpatenko, 2007). For instance, Kostrobiiy and Rashkevych (2017) criticized that despite some successes (Ukraine's formal entry in the EHEA, the introduction of the Bologna Process, and internationalization of individual universities), there were evident shortcomings in Ukraine's educational transformation. Those deficiencies consisted of the following: the unity between education and science was absent; the three-cycle degree system had not been fully implemented; educational programs had been implemented without proper understanding of the European Credit Transfer System and the competence approach; academic autonomy had remained a dream; and the universities had taken no real steps to ensure education quality. Such assessments of Ukrainian reforms found their support in other scholarly works that reported that the Ukrainian higher education system lagged behind its European neighbors (Boyadjieva, 2017; Gomilko et al., 2016; Osipian, 2017).

Being both favorably accepted and harshly criticized, the *Law of Ukraine "On higher education"* nevertheless became a significant phase in reforming higher education and introducing internationalization as a key strategy. While the *Law* remained a remarkable step in the country's search for a place in the international arena, Ukrainian education problems were more systemic and complex to be solved in the near future. Even though Ukrainian higher education gradually opened to internationalization, a desire to preserve the post-Soviet elements in education persisted. Such determination grew even stronger when scholars started to question the European agenda.

Europeanization in Question

Being a trigger for a wide range of education reforms, the Bologna Process caused an immediate public response. Many scientists and policy analytics reasoned in favor of Ukraine's prime focus on European regionalization (Belotserkovskaya, 2014; Dubasenyuk, 2011; Hurch,

2007; Lyuznyak, 2007). Such support was based on the expectations for the modernization and quality improvement in higher education (Sbrueva, 2005), especially while the Euro-integration processes stressed fundamentalization, humanization, and differentiation in education (Bosenko, 2014; Dubasenyuk, 2011). Over time, the shift towards a more moderate perception of Europeanization became evident in the literature. The excitement about the Bologna Process turned into more profound reflections on the challenges that Ukrainian universities faced in their attempts to join European regionalization (Gladushyna, 2016; Kutsyuruba & Kovalchuk, 2015; Muliavka, 2019; Oleksiyenko, 2016; Osipian, 2014; Shevchenko, 2019; Sikorskaya, 2017).

Scholars became more cautious in assessing the Europeanization of Ukrainian higher education. Ponomariov and Shpatenko (2007) and Sbrueva (2005) warned against limiting this process mainly to the introduction of the Bologna Process into Ukrainian education and the standardization of its key elements (Sbrueva, 2005; Stensaker et al., 2008; Unynets-Hodakivska & Maceluk, 2007). As Sbrueva (2005) noted, such standardization might often be perceived as a rather mechanical transfer of foreign experience in education or as formal uniformity of norms and principles instead of deep and meaningful modernization. Unynets-Hodakivska and Maceluk (2007) expressed concerns regarding the loss of national identity in education while Ukraine pursued the integration into the EHEA. Similarly, Hurch (2007) warned against public ideological stereotypes about the loss of sovereignty in decision-making, which the country might experience in the EHEA. According to Hurch, these judgments were historically predetermined and rooted in a long-term absence of regular interactions between Ukraine and European countries at the levels of national educational systems and of individual universities.

In addition to the opposing views on Europeanization, much literature focused on the number of different socio-economic and political factors that hindered the pro-European transformations in Ukrainian education. Some factors were associated with the state of the Ukrainian education system still transitioning from homogeneity imposed by communist ideology to promoting national elements in education (British Council, 2015; Nanivska, 1999; Shpatenko, 2007). For this reason, Kostrobyi and Rashkevych (2017) and Tryniak and Rudenko (2007) warned that the Ukrainian legal framework did not facilitate the implementation of a new three-cycle educational structure recommended by the Bologna Process. Hurch (2007) went further in his analysis and concluded that several incompatibilities were hindering the transformation process—for example, between historically-formed highly controlled

management system in Ukraine and institutional autonomy in the EHEA, and between Ukrainian educational philosophy formed during the Soviet era and so-called Western views on education. Those macro-level controversies caused the meso-level mismatch “between the existing logic of university governance rooted in a Soviet model of higher education and the logic presumed in the European reforms” (Shaw, 2013, p. 7). Therefore, the urgent problem of the day was to form a new philosophy of education that would transform the requirements of transitioning society into institutions’ specific tasks (Shpatenko, 2007).

In the literature, the second set of factors originated from the nature of European higher education policy. For example, the policy had some shortcomings, such as the lack of legally binding measures to coordinate the implementation of intergovernmental agreements at the national level and the lack of democratic control over the above-mentioned implementation (van der Wende, 2003). A mild criticism of the European higher education policy also came from the distinction between ‘readiness’ and ‘embeddedness’ in the integration-inspired initiatives (Neave, 2005). Thus, Neave (2005) affirmed the importance of the distinction between the intention to act (not necessarily the capacity) at the state level and the effective take-up, location, and practice at the institutional level. He argued that progress towards the Bologna Process, for example, did not mean the balance between the readiness among state leaders and embeddedness within the institutions.

Finally, the unique strategic geographical location of the country – between the European states and the Russian Federation – pressured Ukraine to choose its alliances carefully in all spheres, including education (Dragneva & Wolczuk, 2015; Kushnarenko & Knutson, 2014; Mishchenko, 2016; Sakwa, 2015). Lately, the major challenge in the operation of universities, by estimation of some scholars, arose from the war initiated by the Russian Federation in Eastern Ukraine (British Council, 2015; Dabrowski et al., 2020; Muliavka, 2019; Osipian, 2017; Peterson, 2016; Popa, 2017; Shevchenko, 2019). Managing the severe disruptions of universities in the war zone became an immediate priority (British Council, 2015; Muliavka, 2019; Shevchenko, 2019). In light of military activities in eastern regions, more than thirty Ukrainian state universities were reported to have been evacuated from the invaded areas of Donetsk Oblast, Luhansk Oblast, and from the annexed Crimean Peninsula. They lost their campuses, equipment, and documentation, not to mention the reduced number of students after their displacement (Dabrowski et al., 2020; Gladushyna, 2016; Oleksiyenko et. al., 2021; Shevchenko,

2019; Popa, 2017). Approximately 40,000 students moved from the war zones together with evacuated universities (Oleksiyenko et al., 2021), and some transferred to other universities in Ukraine. Another impact of the war with the Russian Federation on universities came from their students volunteering to join military forces: many dropped out of classes to fight in the war regions (Peterson, 2016). Overall, about 703,000 students experienced psychological difficulties obtaining education due to the war (Shevchenko, 2019). The war and the relocation of Eastern Ukrainian universities challenged university communities in Ukraine and had a long-lasting impact on research and teaching employees. Oleksiyenko et al. (2021) attested that in the process of relocation, ‘displaced academics’ emerged as a new group. University professors experienced material loss and major personal trauma. Not only had they to redefine their space (e.g., where to live and work), but they also had to go through soul-searching and to rediscover their cultural identity. Oleksiyenko et al. (2021) explained that the displaced academics

often had to face a range of confrontational issues (e.g.,[.] transnational politics; the status of refugees; historical and cultural legacies; allegiances to the Ukrainian, Russian, or mixed languages and communities), which impelled them to develop new ‘selves’, and find stores of resilience that would allow them to contribute to civil society. (p. 102)

With the outbreak of the war and the economic and political crisis, higher education funding dropped significantly. The substantial cuts in public spending on education had a direct impact on educational reforms. As Muliavka (2019) noted, while the Ukrainian education system required development and modernization, it faced a cut of financial support instead. The economic stagnation caused by government expenditures on the war and the need to pay off the international debt pushed Ukraine’s education agenda out of focus (Dabrowski et al., 2020; Muliavka, 2019; Shevchenko, 2019).

However, the strongest criticism lay in the comments about the incompatibility of the traditional Ukrainian and the up-to-date European system (Kuznetsova, 2012; see also Gomilko et al., 2016; Nanivska, 1999). Nanivska (1999) argued that the Soviet legacy had hampered the progress of reforms in Ukraine. Ukraine inherited a government, which lacked “the skills needed to fulfill its new role in a market economy” (Nanivska, 1999, p. 171). They reasoned this government’s incapacity for policy-making with its inability to step away from just executing orders and make radical political choices. The author concluded that the reforms had not worked because they had not touched government institutions, and “the Soviet-style government

machine remains intact . . . [and] engaged in a dual-track system of work, with new tasks being added to the unchanged old patterns” (Nanivska, 1999, p. 173). Similarly, Kuznetsova (2012) believed that while the Bologna system was favorable for highly developed countries, it was too soon to talk about implementing the Bologna principles in Ukraine. Many admitted that Ukraine needed to solve economic, social, and political issues and change the relationships between science, the state, and the market before the Bologna system started to work in Ukrainian higher education (Kuznetsova, 2012; Shpatenko, 2007).

This section showed that there were different perspectives on the Europeanization of the Ukrainian education system in the literature. While some argued in its favor, others took a more moderate stance assessing the particular state policy. Their concerns were mainly associated with reducing the Bologna Process only to standardizing higher education, the Ukrainian transitioning education system, the nature of European higher education policy, the unfavorable situation in Ukraine, and the incompatibility of the Ukrainian education system with the European one. The next section will narrow the literature analysis to the impacts of the Bologna Process on university governance.

The Bologna Process and University Governance

Empirical research in higher education governance had offered both macro-perspective (Keszei et al., 2015; Smitd, 2015) and institutional-level analyses of the education reforms in the context of the Bologna Process (Guri-Rosenblit, 2015; Neave, 2005; Shattock, 2014a, 2014b; Sparks et al., 2015; Stensaker et al., 2008). While many recognized that European regionalization at the national level was challenging (Guri-Rosenblit, 2015; van der Wende, 2003), even more scholars agreed upon the enormous pressure it placed on universities (Gladushyna, 2016; Guri-Rosenblit, 2015; Kovtun & Stick, 2009; Neave, 2005; Osipian, 2014). European integration processes have greatly affected the university dynamics, as the Bologna Process bestowed a central role in connecting education, research, and innovation upon universities.

The In-Between Position of European Universities

European universities became institutions where European regionalization efforts could be most visible, affecting universities’ activities directly. For instance, Neave (2005) argued that the test of whether the Bologna principles were consistently embedded in practice was not at the system level but the level of institutions. He even characterized Bologna as an iceberg having a subsurface of “far-ranging consequences” (Neave, 2005, p. 115) for European universities.

Among these consequences, Shattock (2014b) exemplified the transformation in the state-university relationships and their impact on university internal governance structures, institutional leadership, and the introduction of an external element into university governance. Guri-Rosenblit (2015) envisioned those consequences in five contrasting trends that each university navigated to develop their missions, strategic planning, and operational practices. These trends included serving national priorities versus operating within an international setting; government steering versus institutional autonomy; increased diversity versus harmonization policies; competition versus collaboration; and intellectual property versus intellectual philanthropy (Guri-Rosenblit, 2015).

Reflecting on the impact of the EHEA, Smidt (2015) similarly advocated for the opposing trends of convergence and increased diversity notable in higher education. As higher education was deeply rooted in regional and national cultures, “[g]overnments and European higher education institutions ha[d] been caught in a conundrum between adapting to joint European policies and frameworks and maintaining and highlighting their national/institutional and cultural uniqueness” (Smidt, 2015, p. 625). Based on the analysis of Scandinavian universities, Stensaker et al. (2008) also emphasized the in-between position of universities. They stated that universities represented their own deeply embedded values, cultures, and traditions and became multidimensional meeting places for national and international policies. Thus, adapting to those multiple influences, the institutions faced fundamental questions not only about the state-university relations and university internal governance (Shattock, 2014b) but self-understanding, their roles, and missions (Stensaker et al., 2008).

In research about the influence of the Bologna Process on national policies and separate universities, studies on post-Soviet countries occupied a significant place. Their unique position and challenges were widely discussed by Boyadjieva (2017), Keszei et al. (2015), and Scott (2009). Individual studies concentrated on policy challenges at the national level and university practices in Belarus (Dangerfield, 2011; Yahorau & Antashkevich, 2016), Kazakhstan (Sparks et al., 2015), Kyrgyzstan (Niyozov, 2017; Sabzalieva, 2015), Moldova (Dangerfield, 2011), Russia (Luchinskaya & Ovchynnikova, 2011; Telegina & Schwengel, 2012), Tajikistan (Niyozov, 2017), Ukraine (Gomilko et al., 2016; Luchinskaya & Ovchynnikova, 2011; Osipian, 2014, 2017; Yahorau & Antashkevich, 2016); and Uzbekistan (Weidman & Yoder, 2010). Thus, the common trends in education policy and university operations in all of these countries could be

identified as follows: (a) the majority of these states were characterized as transitioning; (b) the Bologna Process became a focal point of their internationalization strategies; (c) education was exposed to epistemological, ideological, and ethical crises; (d) strict political and administrative control over universities was changing into a more autonomous model of university governance; (e) universities became open to European regionalization and forced to balance national and local influences; and (f) everything mentioned influenced university governance.

The Implications for Ukrainian Universities

While Europe-wide, the analysis of the effects of the Bologna Process on universities was prioritized over the macro-level perspectives (Guri-Rosenblit, 2015; Neave, 2005; Shattock, 2014a, 2014b; Sparks et al., 2015; Stensaker et al., 2008), a controversial trend was observed in Ukraine. An overwhelming number of studies concentrated mainly on the Bologna Process and Ukrainian reforms to modernize the system of higher education (Gomilko et al., 2016; Kostrobiiy & Rashkevych, 2017; Luchinskaya & Ovchynnukova, 2011; Nikolaev, 2017b). For example, Kostrobiiy and Rashkevych traced the development of Ukrainian higher education from 1991 until 2013 and linked it to the socio-economic processes in Ukraine. The authors mainly concentrated on educational reforms placing them on the scale of either being a successful or complete failure. Nikolaev continued this line of inquiry but focused primarily on analyzing the 2014 *Law of Ukraine "On higher education"* and its implementation. Gomilko et al. (2016) shifted the focus to explain the unsuccessful and unproductive modernization of Ukrainian higher education. In particular, they analyzed global and local influences on the entire education system. The central concept of their analysis became the hybridity of higher education, which revealed itself in viable "versions of crossbreeding postcolonial, post-totalitarian, liberal-democratic and national educational trends" (Gomilko et al., 2016, p. 195). This hybridity resulted in the post-totalitarian bureaucracy in Ukrainian higher education and the post-colonial complexes of inferiority and humiliation. These, in turn, caused extreme corruption, a significant loss of moral values, and professional demotivation in higher education.

Even though many admitted the need for radical organizational changes in Ukrainian universities (Kushnarenko & Knutson, 2014; Morska, 2010; Nikolayev, 2017a, 2017b; Osipian, 2010, 2014), little attention was paid to the institution-level analysis. For instance, Shaw et al. (2011) focused on how individual academic staff viewed their careers and professional roles in response to the changes caused by the Bologna Process in a Ukrainian university. Kovtun and

Stick (2009) were interested in the administrators' and instructors' perception of the Bologna Process. The effects of the Bologna Process on organizational culture (Shaw et al., 2013) and quality assurance (Filiatreau, 2011) were also explored, while the changes in governing structures in the context of the Bologna Process received little or no attention in the relevant literature (Osipian, 2010, 2014).

At the institutional level, Gomilko et al. (2016), Kovtun and Stick (2009), and Sikorskaya (2017) recognized that the pro-European government policy had altered the focus of Ukrainian universities and challenged their operations. Kovtun and Stick even stressed that implementing the Bologna Process put great pressure on Ukrainian universities. Gomilko et al. (2016) further estimated that alongside evident benefits and challenges of implementing the Bologna Process, Ukrainian universities faced “quite fundamental negative consequences” (p. 187). In light of the Bologna Process, the relevant literature attributed these consequences mainly to the following aspects: the unclear relationship between the state and universities (Kvit, 2017; Nikolaev, 2017b, Osipian, 2014, 2017); the lack of a clear and coherent vision on university development (Kutsyuruba & Kovalchuk, 2015; Semenets, 2017; Sikorskaya, 2017; Sovsun, 2017); and the careful approach of Ukrainian universities towards the reorganization (Kostrobyi & Rashkevych, 2017; Kushnarenko & Knutson, 2014; Kvit, 2017; Sikorskaya, 2017).

The vast amount of research focused on *the relationship between the state and universities*: decentralization, autonomy, and self-governance of universities (Dobko, 2013; Estermann, 2015; Nikolaev, 2017b; Osipian, 2014, 2017; Sovsun, 2017; Wynnycky, 2015) as an explicit prerequisite for all Bologna associated reforms (Nyborg, 2003b; Magna Charta Universitatum, 1988). As defined by Nyborg (2003a), university autonomy was “the sum of [university] legal rights and duties and its financial and other resources” (p. 16) to act by its own choices fulfilling its mission. Despite joining the Bologna Process in 2005, Ukrainian universities were only legally granted the right to make decisions without prior approval from the state in 2014 (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014). Nevertheless, the question of when, if at all, the universities received an actual autonomy from the state remained open (Dobko, 2013; Kvit, 2017; Osipian, 2014; Sovsun, 2017). In the case of Ukrainian higher education, the historical and socio-political factors amplified the issues of the state-university relationship brought on by the Bologna-associated educational reforms. Thus, Gomilko et al. (2016), Osipian (2014, 2017) and Sovsun (2017) blamed the inherited centralized governance that manifested not only at the

national level but also at the level of separate institutions. Kvit (2017), Muliavka (2019), and Shevchenko (2019) recognized the financial dependence of the universities from the state as hindering the state-university relationships.

Similarly, Nikolaev (2017b) and Sovsun (2017) tied university autonomy with state financing and budgeting issues. Sovsun (2017) stressed that, although these issues tended to emerge at the national level, they were particularly dramatic at the level of universities. Even though the universities were challenged to change their formal hierarchical structures, they were still the “remnant[s] of the Soviet educational bureaucracy, which [was] a rigid form with little new content” (Osipian, 2014, p. 82). As a result, such centralization was difficult to change because it increased the risks of corruption at all levels (Muliavka, 2019; Osipian, 2014; Sovsun, 2017). Moreover, financing through so-called ‘state order’ – the state quota for universities to train particular specialists free of charge – required revision and radical changes (Sovsun, 2017). At the same time, Osipian (2014) recognized that regardless of its initiation of decentralization movements, the Ukrainian government did not want to lose its control over universities. The government would still prefer university subordination over a free-floating system.

The second set of consequences of the Bologna initiated reforms concerned *the lack of a clear and coherent vision on university development* (Kutsyuruba & Kovalchuk, 2015; Semenets, 2017; Sikorskaya, 2017; Sovsun, 2017). Sovsun (2017) argued that this lack of vision originated from the lack of a coherent national development strategy. Kvit (2012) and Shandruk and Shatrova (2015) also supported this view and admitted that Ukraine joined the Bologna Process without having the national consensus on the forthcoming reforms or seeing the necessity to reform its higher education. For this reason, Sovsun claimed that it was hardly possible to expect that higher education in Ukraine would successfully develop when neither society nor the universities comprehended what role higher education should play in Ukraine’s development. Therefore, it was impossible to fully understand what universities the society needed, what priorities they should have, and how they should be governed (Sovsun, 2017; see also Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency [ACEA], 2010; Shandruk & Shatrova, 2015).

The lack of a more holistic view on the role of higher education and a university was fraught with meaningless changes (By et al., 2008). For example, within the Bologna Process, Ukraine was encouraged not only to renegotiate the state-university relationships but also to rebalance external and internal influences in university governance (Bergen Communiqué, 2005;

Morska, 2010; Nyborg, 2004b). On the one hand, such a rebalance intended to change university governance to make universities more competitive and adaptive in the global environment (Bergen Communique, 2005; EACEA, 2010; Morska, 2010; Nyborg, 2004b; Shandruk & Shatrova, 2015). On the other hand, some scholars were afraid that this structural reorganization of Ukrainian universities lacked proper quality components (Shandruk & Shatrova, 2015) implementing “change for the sake of change” (By et al., 2008, p. 21; see also Shandruk & Shatrova, 2015). For the change to be meaningful, the universities needed to be strengthened “through more determined university strategies and a strong, unitary and professional leadership and management capacity” (Morska, 2010, p. 43).

The conflicting state-university relationships coupled with the lack of a coherent vision on the university development led to the issue of *institutional response to the Bologna initiated reforms* (Kostrobyi & Rashkevych, 2017; Kushnarenko & Knutson, 2014; Morska, 2010; Shandruk & Shatrova, 2015). Exploring the Bologna impact on European universities, Neave (2005) advocated for the reiterative rather than the linear character of policy implementation. He emphasized the renegotiating process when the policy went down through successive levels in decision-making. This policy reinterpretation occurred at the faculties and departments, each of which translated it “to its own advantage, emphasizing its strengths and shoveling whatever weaknesses it [was] prepared to admit to itself, beneath the rug” (Neave, 2005, p. 117). Shandruk and Shatrova (2015) similarly envisioned the challenge for Ukrainian universities in how policy was elaborated, operationalized, and translated into practice at the institutional level.

While Ukraine had rather ambiguous ministerial policies (Shandruk & Shatrova, 2015), the universities were left to cope on their own with the implementation of these policies (Kushnarenko & Knutson, 2014). According to Shandruk and Shatrova (2015), their implementation was also hindered by the top-down nature of the reforms and the absence of a more holistic approach to their implementation. The authors specified that their implementation should have been made considering the benefits of their outcomes, the relevancy of the policies to the problem, and their value to the stakeholders (Shandruk & Shatrova, 2015). As a result, Ukrainian universities stayed relatively rigid and careful in their response to the Bologna influences (Kostrobyi & Rashkevych, 2017; Kushnarenko & Knutson, 2014). While there was no clear vision of a university’s role and priorities, alongside low wages, poor working conditions,

and outdated equipment, a significant obstacle to the reforms would always exist: the personnel were neither interested in, nor motivated by the reforms (Morska, 2010; Muliavka, 2019).

The literature analysis made it possible to identify several gaps in recent scholarly research. Much attention had been focused on the existence of controversies between new and progressive Ukrainian policies and their implementation at the institutional level, and on the multiple challenges Ukrainian universities faced following the Bologna requirements. At the same time, little research related to the ways to address these challenges. The discussion mainly concentrated on the necessity of radical changes rather than identifying particular actions to be undertaken by both the state and the institutions.

Another shortcoming defining the literature originated from a lack of empirical studies and, consequently, a lack of understanding of how Ukrainian universities responded to the Bologna agenda and the accompanying changes in university governance. Although Ukrainian universities had challenges transforming university governance, there was little analysis on how university governance in Ukraine had changed in the context of the Bologna Process. Moreover, the very analysis of these challenges at the institutional level was done predominantly as a literature review rather than a comprehensive empirical study. Such situation raised the question about the superficial nature of this analysis.

Therefore, this study addresses the identified gaps. Specifically, the study analyzes how the Bologna Process has influenced the governance in Ukrainian public universities and what supports and hinders the process. For this purpose, two theoretical streams of the institutional theory are used as a conceptual framework to focus the inquiry.

Theoretical Considerations and Conceptual Framework

The definition and use of theoretical and conceptual frameworks in qualitative research were relatively obscure (Green, 2014; Ravitch & Riggan, 2017; Rocco & Plakhotnik, 2009). Among the available studies on the topic, there was a lack of clarity about the differences between the two (Rocco & Plakhotnik, 2009). Green (2014) attributed this confusion mainly to the interchangeable usage of these terms in the literature. In this study, the distinction between theoretical and conceptual frameworks is based on their functions in qualitative research. Following Becker (1998) and Rocco and Plakhotnik (2009), I recognize the purpose of a theoretical framework in further investigating a specific theory and providing theory-based assumptions for data collection and analysis. In contrast, a conceptual framework situates the

study by defining the main ideas, concepts, beliefs, and theories and mapping relationships between them (Maxwell, 2013; Miles & Huberman, 1994). In this study, I use a conceptual framework to set the boundaries for my research and narrow the inquiry rather than test a theory. Therefore, the conceptual framework focuses the current study and helps me connect the key concepts: regionalization, the Bologna Process, institutional context, influences of a social environment, organizational change and resistance, and university governance.

For the research purpose, two theoretical streams of institutional theory – sociological institutionalism (Meyer & Rowan, 1977) and historical institutionalism (Hall & Taylor, 1996) – ground the study in the relevant knowledge bases and serve as interpretative perspectives guiding the study. In particular, they help me understand the relationships between organizations, their environment, organizational change, and persistence. Furthermore, sociological and historical institutionalism enable me to conceptualize the underlying tension between Europeanization processes and embedded historical legacies and structures in Ukrainian higher education.

Sociological Institutionalism

Due to the increased attention to regionalization and its influences on higher education and embedded institutions, scholars applied institutional theory and its different streams to analyze organizational change and persistence (Dobbins & Knill, 2017; Knill, 2001; Pilbeam, 2009). For instance, Knill (2001) incorporated institutional theory as a part of the theoretical framework to address the topic of the European policies and administrative transformation in the context of Europeanization in Britain and Germany. Similarly, drawing on institutional theory, Dobbins and Knill (2017) explored how the states reacted to transnational pressures and how the preexisting country-specific governance structures changed due to European integration.

This study employs sociological institutionalism for a number of reasons. First, sociological institutionalism supporters envisioned organizations as institutional actors (Thoenig, 2011) and placed them in the broader institutional context considering social, cultural, and political environments (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). These institutional contexts shaped organizational structure, behavior, and practices. They enabled or constrained organizational action through policies, social rules, expectations, and cultural norms (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). Therefore, sociological institutionalism provided the basis to examine Ukrainian public universities within a transnational environment framed by the EHEA and within the national system of higher education.

Second, sociological institutionalism focused on isomorphism, organizational choice, and decision-making; however, it did not reduce human agency to complying with successful policies in the organizational environment (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; see also Austin & Jones, 2016; Manning, 2018). One of the assumptions of sociological institutionalism postulated that decisions and policy-making in organizations could not be traced to only one cause (Manning, 2018). Moreover, institutional contexts and larger institutional structures (e.g., the rule of law, bureaucracy) did not merely dictate decisions and policy-making, diminishing human agency. On the contrary, agents could make decisions “outside the realm of existing institutional structures” (Manning, 2018, p. 122). Recent institutional theorists recognized the existence of multiple (sometimes conflicting) rules in any situation, which left it up to individuals to decide which rules to follow in a particular instance (Scott, 1995). Manning (2018) exemplified that there simultaneously existed contradictory approaches of growth versus non-growth, corporate versus traditional priorities to enable theorists to raise the issues of academic freedom in higher education,

[c]ollege and university members’ participation in their academic disciplines and professional fields, personal experiences, diverse backgrounds, and other social structures present a myriad of choices regarding priorities and management. Overarching institutions such as higher education coordinating boards and state governments need not be deterministic but can be shaped by human actors who may oppose recommendations, rules, and approaches they judge as congruent with, and detrimental to, the goals of higher education generally and a college or university in particular. (p. 125)

Following this, the theory could explain European regionalization’s powerful capacity to promote similarities among member-state universities (Bastedo, 2004; Dobbins & Khachatryan, 2015). At the same time, it allowed me to look beyond the Europeanization frame and search for other influences on organizational decision-making, such as human agency.

The central argument of institutional isomorphism was that organizations developed and aligned themselves with external models and policies successful in their organizational environment in order to survive in their struggle for legitimacy (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). According to DiMaggio and Powell (1983), organizations developed and changed under one or more of three external institutional forces acting simultaneously: coercive (power), mimetic (imitation), and normative (attraction). Thus, universities might be forced to conform to external

pressures such as governmental laws and regulations or other social groups – coercive isomorphism. In contrast to coercive, mimetic isomorphism was based on mimesis rather than power. When faced with uncertainty or ambiguous goals, universities voluntarily imitated structures and successful practices from other universities. Finally, normative isomorphism enacted similar professional values, backgrounds, and beliefs, which would lead relevant group members (e.g., faculty members) to decide how universities should be governed (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; see also Austin & Jones, 2016).

Later, Beckert (2010) added competition as the fourth mechanism to the three isomorphic forces described above. The author also argued that it was one-sided to perceive these four mechanisms as only homogenizing forces. Beckert claimed that the same mechanism could cause an institutional change to head in either convergent or divergent directions depending on the conditions under which this mechanism operates. For example, power as a mechanism of institutional change could not always lead to homogenization; it might contribute to a divergent institutional change when

the power holder has no interest in homogenization despite a unilateral distribution of power. In terms of political regimes, the politics of colonial powers provide examples of this. These regimes developed institutional structures that were distinctively different from those in the “motherland”—for instance, in terms of political rights of the colonial subjects. Here power preserves divergence. (Beckert, 2010, p. 154)

Therefore, Beckert’s conceptualization provided a different way to interpret isomorphism in an organizational environment. Isomorphism could be homogeneous and heterogeneous, depending on a broader institutional context and various accompanying organization-specific conditions.

Within the framework of institutional isomorphism, the Bologna Process was frequently seen as a platform for European “soft governance” (Dobbins, 2015; Dobbins & Khachatryan, 2015; Kushnir, 2015). It promoted the harmonization of the entire EHEA as a convergence mechanism for international integration and exchanges (Dobbins & Khachatryan, 2015). With the intent to strengthen Europe’s position in the international arena, the Bologna Process also pressured European universities and higher education systems to legitimize themselves. For example, universities had to conform to more market-oriented policies and entrepreneurial governance approaches to compete internationally. However, this raised a question about the causes of national institutional differences.

Historical Institutionalism

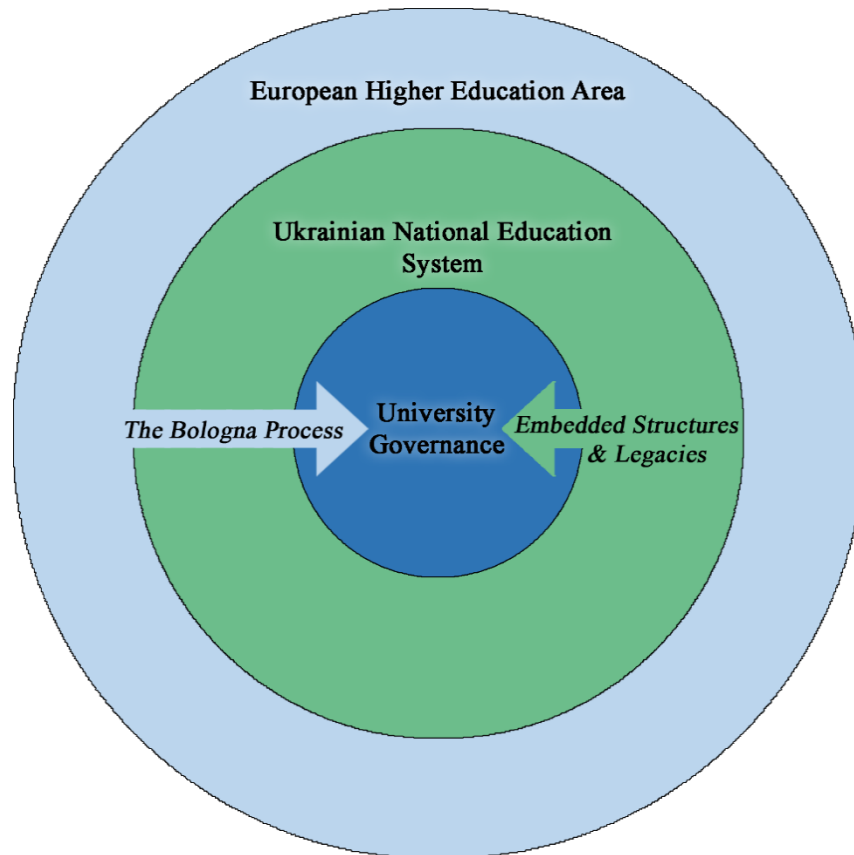
Drawing upon Beckert's idea about the necessity to analyze the multiple conditions of institutional change, this study also looks at university governance transformation through the lens of historical institutionalism. As a theoretical stream within the institutional theory, historical institutionalism emerged in the early 1980s (Thoenig, 2011). It considered the possibility that institutional changes and policies reflected the interests of the strongest social forces and past arrangements. It could concisely be summarized as follows: “[p]olicy choices made in the past shape choices made today” (Thoenig, 2011, p. 170). As such, historical institutionalism emphasized path dependence and unintended consequences, and it was grounded in the assumption that institutional development was strongly conditioned by embedded legacies and structures (Hall & Taylor, 1996). However, it also implied that “[p]revious events in a sequence influence outcomes and trajectories but not necessarily by inducing further movement in the same direction” (Pierson, 2000, p. 252).

Widely used in political science, historical institutionalism and path dependence theory were relatively new to education (Shaw, 2013). Dobbins and Knill (2017) recently elaborated it to analyze how historical legacies had impacted policy pathways in higher education governance in France, Germany, and Italy. Shaw (2013) also used path dependence as an analytical framework for studying higher education reforms in the Ukrainian context. Similarly, the current study attempts to understand how the Soviet educational legacies and structures intersect with the Bologna Process at the institutional level, and how they affect university governance.

Therefore, in contrast to the Bologna Process, which acts as a convergent force in transforming university governance among European countries, the path-dependency concept helps understand the uniqueness of outcomes in the Ukrainian national setting. Path-dependency implies that “the same operative forces [will] generate the same results everywhere in favour of the view that the effect of such forces [will] be mediated by the contextual features of a given situation often inherited from the past” (Hall & Taylor, 1996, p. 941). Following this, the path-dependency concept can be used to view the inherited Soviet legacies and governing structures as a divergent force and understand the stability and persistence of Ukrainian public universities. Thus, the current study is guided by the central concepts of sociological and historical institutionalism, graphically depicted in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2

Conceptual Model for Understanding Governance Change in Ukrainian Universities in the Context of the Bologna Process.



Note. Adapted from *Concentric Circles Structure (Bull's Eye Metaphor)* in Manning (2018).

According to institutional theory, Ukrainian public universities can be envisioned at the center of the bull's eye, made up of concentric circles. The Ukrainian national education system occupies the next circle and influences university governance through embedded structures and legacies. The EHEA inhabits the final circle. The EHEA influence on the university governance comes as a pressure to comply with the Bologna requirements. Therefore, the inquiry on the university governance change can be situated in the domain of two main contesting forces of the historically inherited structures and the Bologna Process.

In summary, formed under various, sometimes controversial, historical and socio-political influences, Ukrainian higher education is undeniably complex. This complexity, coupled with Ukraine's predominantly European direction in its internationalization efforts, required significant changes in the Ukrainian higher education system. This chapter showed that

the focus of educational reforms shifted from diversification of the inherited uniform system of education to prioritizing European regionalization in higher education. The views on this international direction of Ukrainian education were not unanimous. Alongside positive comments, this chapter presented recent scholarship discussing the negative consequences of Ukraine's pro-European policy. The concerns were mainly related to the standardization of higher education instead of preserving national identity, the incompatibility of Ukrainian education system with the European one, and the universities' reluctance to reorganize.

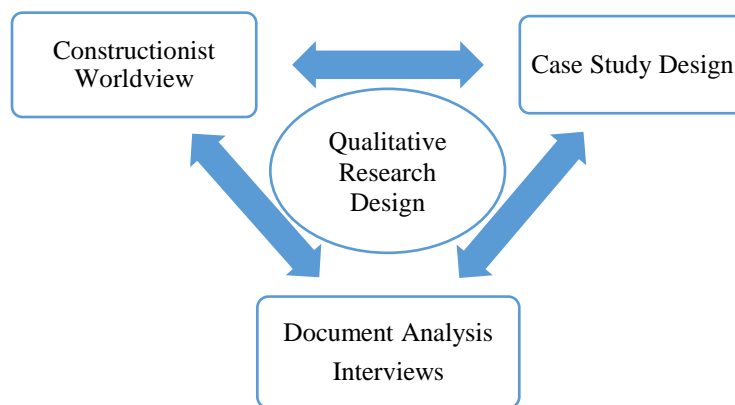
Ukraine's integration into the EHEA and its strategic pro-European policies brought implications for universities. The literature analysis showed that Ukrainian universities recognized the necessity to reorganize their governance and governing structures to integrate into the EHEA. However, in their reorganization efforts, public universities in Ukraine faced many challenges. This chapter suggested the concepts of sociological and historical institutionalism to understand university governance reforms in Ukraine. These concepts will help to navigate the inquiry on how Ukrainian universities have reacted to transnational pressures and how historically inherited governing structures and practices have mediated these reactions. With the conceptual framework outlined in this chapter, the next chapter will describe the research design that I used in conducting the study.

CHAPTER THREE – Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research approach. According to Creswell (2014), this approach is defined by the intersection of three main components: philosophical assumptions, research design, and research methods. Following Creswell’s framework, in this chapter, I describe the reflections on my philosophical stance, which informs my research approach. I suggest a research design and methods that align best with the purpose of the study. This chapter discusses a social constructionist perspective as a theoretical grounding to understand universities as organizations, individuals and groups as social actors in the institutional field of higher education, and organizational change as a response to external influences. While the changes of Ukrainian higher education governance are widely discussed in the relevant literature, the complexity and holism of these changes in their systemic and interdependent relationships with the Bologna Process have received little consideration. For this reason, this qualitative research utilizes a case study as a research design. The use of a case study enables me to understand how the governance of particular universities has changed with each university’s involvement in the Bologna Process. I will examine the challenges to, supports for, and implications of transforming the university governance in Ukraine. The framework for the proposed study is depicted in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1

Research Framework



Note. Adapted from *A framework for research – The interconnection of worldviews, design, and research methods* elaborated by Creswell (2014).

Apart from philosophical grounding and the methodology, in this chapter, I develop a data collection plan by introducing the site and participants, outlining research methods, and assessing the trustworthiness and ethical considerations of the study.

Philosophical Stance

As a researcher, I came from a strong positivist background. There was no space for asking questions about the nature of reality, knowledge, or the research process. The belief in the social world as something objective, observable, and measurable dominated in social sciences and eliminated any other assumptions about reality. The research approach and methodology were clearly outlined for all researchers even before they were engaged in the research. A real struggle in finding who I was as a researcher began when I came to Canada. I felt particularly challenged by the array of ontological, epistemological, and methodological dilemmas and uncertainties. At the same time, I appreciated and feared the freedom of making my own methodological choices.

My intellectual journey in social theory started with two big discoveries. First, I learned that apart from a positivist perspective, there were alternative views of social reality – different ways of seeing. As Pablo Picasso said, “[t]here is only one way to see things until someone shows us how to look at them with different eyes” (Pablo Picasso quote, n.d.). Learning about different ways of knowing, I also realized that my positivist background neither determined who I was as a researcher nor limited who I could become. The second discovery was that being a researcher was about constant development and growth. Therefore, I saw my philosophical stance as something that changed over time depending on how my views evolved. Such evolution was possible as I agreed with Toma (1997), who conceptualized paradigm assumptions as a continuum of beliefs rather than dichotomous choice:

[S]ome scholars are closer to the boundaries of a paradigm ... than others; some may even straddle the lines between paradigms. In other words, paradigms might be thought of as a continuum with the recognition that, even though people fit into different categories, they may occupy different places within them. (p. 38)

Kezar and Dee (2011) supported this conceptualization and stated that “the boundary between two polarities (such as objectivism and subjectivism) becomes permeable” (p. 275). Therefore, it was possible to talk about a constant movement along the continuum.

As I examined my previous experiences, I noticed a significant shift in my ontological and epistemological beliefs: from the objectivist stance towards the subjectivist position. I started questioning reality as an objective phenomenon and the existence of incontrovertible knowledge about it. Instead, I tended to think of reality as a social construction, relative and dependent on one's engagement with others and the world within the social contexts (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Berger & Luekmann, 1967; Creswell, 2014; Crotty, 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Therefore, my research direction aligns with the constructionist/ interpretative view of reality and is influenced by three key assumptions. First, the human mind is actively constructing knowledge by engaging in the world and interpreting it (Creswell, 2014; Schwandt, 2015) as an interplay between objective and subjective (Crotty, 1998). As Miller and Crabtree (1999) stressed, this paradigm "recognizes the importance of the subjective human creation of meaning, but does not reject outright some notion of objectivity" (p. 10). Second, the construction of knowledge or meaning is historically and socio-culturally 'embedded' (Creswell, 2014; Crotty, 1998; Schwandt, 2015). The meanings are constructed through interactions with others and historical and cultural norms. Finally, qualitative research is always context-focused and influenced by the researcher's own experience and background (Crotty, 1998).

My study is guided by social constructionism. In contrast to constructivism, which concentrates exclusively on individual knower and acts of cognition, "meaning making activity of individual mind" (Crotty, 1998, p.58), constructionism emphasizes "collective generation of meaning" (Crotty, 1998, p.58). It focuses on social processes and interactions, different forms of social action that help construct everyday realities (Holstein & Gubrium, 2011; Schwandt, 2015). As Greenwood (1994) stated,

[s]ocial realities, therefore, are constructed and sustained by the observation of the social rules which obtain in any social situation by all the social interactors involved... Social reality is, therefore, a function of shared meaning; it is constructed, sustained[,] and reproduced through social life. (p. 85)

As such, a social constructionist paradigm allows me to look into the transformation of university governance as a constructed social reality of individuals in a particular context, which combines individuals' views and organizational practices. Therefore, I can explore the transformation of university governance in the context of the Bologna Process through understanding the meanings individuals and groups ascribe to this process. These meanings

allow me “to look for the complexity of views” rather than “to rely as much as possible on the participants’ views of the situation” (Creswell, 2014, p. 8). Moreover, guided by social constructionism and located within the institutional theory umbrella, this study targets explicitly the inquiry line where institutional change is expected as a response to external influences and tries to find an explanation when institutions confront stability (Lawrence & Shadnam, 2008). As the social constructionist paradigm strives to find the meaning of everything within a specific context, I can analyze the transformation of university governance considering its institutional ‘embeddedness,’ the effects of social rules, norms, and expectations, historical influences, and distinctive cultural settings. Finally, I recognize that my background and experiences within Ukrainian and Canadian higher education systems shape my interpretation of the participants’ meanings.

Research Design

The constructionist paradigm of qualitative research alongside the purpose and research questions of this study determined the choice of research design – a case study. Depending on a researcher’s ontological beliefs underpinning the study, a case study could be placed within either positivist/post-positivist or interpretive/constructionist paradigms (Lauckner, Paterson, & Krupa, 2012). For instance, Yin (2009) leaned to a more positivistic stance in his perspective on case study research. Stake (1995; 2006) described the qualitative case study approach from the interpretive/constructionist view. In this study, I follow Stake’s approach and use a case study within an interpretive/constructionist paradigm to understand the university governance change as a context-specific process and examine what is perceived as its challenges, supports, and implications.

As a source of rich research data, a case study had received widespread use, but it could be characterized by a certain indistinctness and confusion in its definition (Starman, 2013). A case study was understood either as a type and methodology of research (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Cohen et al., 2011; Creswell, 2014; Johanson, 2003; Merriam, 1998; Starman, 2013) or as a method (Crotty, 1998; Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013; Yin, 2009; Zainal, 2007; Zucker, 2009). According to Starman (2013) and Yazan (2015), such ambiguity could be explained by different epistemological bases upon which the researchers leaned, and by a narrow focus attributed to the individual case or number of cases.

This study views a case study approach as more than just a research method, but rather as a research design (Creswell, 2014) or a research methodology (Merriam, 1998). Therefore, this study elaborates on the views of Merriam (1998), Simons (2009), and Yin (2009) and defines a case study as an intensive holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon (a program, an institution, a person, a process, or a social unit) from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness within a real-life context. Such definition allows me to incorporate three important aspects of case studies identified by Flyvbjerg (2011): the focus on individual units, intensity or richness of data, and its relation to the environment.

I have chosen a qualitative case study for a number of reasons. This study seeks a comprehensive understanding of how the Bologna Process has influenced the governance in Ukrainian public universities. This purpose comprises two distinct advantages to prioritize a case study among other qualitative designs: its concentration on the process (Creswell, 2014) and the overall interpretative intent of the study, expressed by the research questions (i.e., “what” and “how”) (Merriam, 1998). In education, the application of a case study also means the concentration on a holistic picture and detailed data analysis of a process with the focus on the environment and the context (Yin, 2009; see also Cohen et al., 2011; Creswell, 2014; Simons, 2009) and is “specific to time and space” (Johansson, 2003, p. 5). Finally, case studies have been widely used in governance-related research (Shaw et al., 2011; Stewart, 2012). For instance, Stewart (2012) specified that case studies were particularly valuable as they could provide insights into “relationships between organizational structures, management processes[,] and outcomes” (p. 80).

From a methodological point of view, I have an opportunity to incorporate various methods of data acquisition (e.g., document analysis and interviews) under a single framework (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2009) and gain multiple perspectives from a range of sources. Using a case study, I explore a complex process of transforming governance in Ukrainian public universities holistically and in order to provide an intensive description and analysis of Ukrainian public universities as bounded systems (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2009; see also Cohen et al., 2011; Yazan, 2015). Moreover, according to Starman (2013), a case study helps me examine complex causal relations such as interaction effects and path-dependency.

Given the conceptual framework of institutional theory presented in Chapter Two, a case study approach can be used as an effective research tool for investigating isomorphism within

organizations and institutional fields (Pyper, 2010). Pyper (2010) emphasizes that the case studies within the institutional theory framework bear the potential “to expand on the concept of isomorphism through highlighting specific experiences of an organization as it contends with pressures to adhere to a common set of standards, norms, and values within an organizational field” (p. 503). As a case study approach can provide the rich empirical data and in-depth examination of the Bologna-associated governance reforms, it allows me to focus on the transformative change that public universities undertake in their pursuit of legitimization within the institutional fields of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and Ukrainian higher education system. From the historical institutionalism perspective, a case study approach is also relevant to examine the inherited Soviet structures and legacies which make Ukrainian universities resist the EHEA homogenizing pressures. Therefore, a case study serves as an appropriate approach to examine both the isomorphic processes leading to similarities among European universities and the uniqueness of Ukrainian universities’ transformation trajectory.

The interpretative case study design (Merriam, 2009) is chosen to analyze the governance transformation in Ukrainian public universities in the context of the Bologna Process and explore the perceived challenges to, supports for, and implications of the process. At the same time, I choose to employ a case study with multiple research sites (Stake, 2006). Such case study design helps me understand the process of interest shared among the number of relevant universities (Stake, 2006; see also Lauckner et al., 2012). Using a case study with multiple research sites, I analyze governance changes in several universities within the same national context and the Bologna Process implementation to understand patterns across organizational boundaries (Yin, 2009). Such an approach promotes richness, depth, and complexity of data due to looking into multiple sites and seeking understanding through multiple perspectives. Following the logic, I fully understand that my research aims not to generalize but rather to investigate several individual yet similar sites.

As this case study is located within the constructionist paradigm, I acknowledge my role as a researcher in co-constructing interpretations of the phenomenon under research. My background and experiences provide me with personal and professional perspectives to approach the research. In particular, I bring to this study a general understanding of the inner workings of a Ukrainian university, which undergoes transformations in the context of the Bologna Process. At the same time, I come with the knowledge of the governance and decision-making process in a

Canadian university, autonomous to a significant degree, compared to Ukrainian higher education institutions. Finally, I bring the desire to understand the effects of the Bologna Process on university governance in order to inform further university policies and practices. The acknowledgment of my assumptions and experiences helps me conduct the study more transparently and reflectively.

Apart from the evident advantages just described, conducting a case study has its distinct challenges. The critique involves reliability, validity, and generalizability issues (Starman, 2013; Yin, 2009). This study has no intent to produce general and context-independent theory; instead, it looks at the knowledge that comes from concrete cases and is context-dependent. Thus, the generalization is based on analytical, not statistical induction (Yin, 2009, Starman, 2013). By examining a particular case, analytical induction focuses on the relationships among events or processes and enables a researcher to make inferences from those connections. If such connections exist even in just one case, according to Mesec (1998), they might be theoretically important (as cited in Starman, 2013). Even though when reliability is somewhat mitigated in case studies (Starman, 2013, p. 41), it can be achieved through the detailed track of every step of the case study, the accurate description of data collecting procedures and the circumstances under which they are collected (Cohen et al., 2011; Starman, 2013; Yin, 2009).

Study Sites

Several scholars, including Baxter and Jack (2008), Creswell (2014), and Yin (2009), emphasized the essentiality of placing boundaries on a case for researchers to avoid the overly broad topic or too many objectives for one study. To outline each unit's borders or to bind the case meant to establish what counts as a case and what became its context. Thus, this study used multiple perspectives to explain the governance change at several Ukrainian public universities as separate research sites within the Bologna Process context from 2005 until 2020. Creswell (1998) suggested limiting their number to four or fewer individual cases to adequately explore multiple sites. Therefore, as multiple research sites, three Ukrainian universities were selected: National Aviation University (NAU), Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University (TVHNPU), and Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University (ZIFSU).

The choice of the universities was guided by this question: what research sites would provide best opportunity to achieve the goal of the study? Therefore, I used purposeful sampling techniques suggested by Patton (2002) to select information-rich sites to seek “insights and in-

depth understanding rather than empirical generalizations” (Patton, 2002, p. 230). I decided that intensity sampling would help to develop a comprehensive understanding of governance changes, as it would involve selecting sites that were “excellent or rich examples of the phenomenon of interest, but not highly unusual cases... not at the extreme’ (Patton, 2002, p. 234). Following this, I had chosen my three universities for a series of reasons identified through their websites (NAU, n.d.; TVHNPU, n.d.; ZIFSU, n.d.). First and foremost, all three universities were public educational institutions. According to the institutional theory, they functioned in and were influenced by a number of nested institutions, such as the Ukrainian system of higher education through the state legal framework for university governance and the EHEA through the corresponding agreements between all member countries. All three chosen universities had Level IV accreditation and, according to state law, were granted similar rights and responsibilities. As such, they were also required to comply with the Bologna requirements in their activities.

The universities were established around the same period – the first half of the 20th century, which gave me a reason to assume that the same historical events might influence their development in terms of governance. Moreover, 2017-2018 became a critical year for all three universities as they experienced changes in their governance. Finally, each university is located in mid-to-large-sized Ukrainian regional centers. NAU is located in Kyiv, the capital and a regional center of Ukraine. The other two are in Ternopil and Zhytomyr, in western and northern Ukraine, respectively.

Along with the similarities, there were some differences among the universities. The number of students, the structural complexity of the universities, and their specialized nature varied. National Aviation University constituted the largest and structurally most complex institution among the three, with over 25,000 students and 26 structural units. In comparison, the other two had only 7-8,000 students and from 10 to 18 structural units. The other difference came from universities’ place in the top 200 Ukrainian public universities in 2019. According to the IREG Observatory on Academic Ranking and Excellence, the three chosen universities were 13th, 115th, and 120th correspondingly (Lynovytska, 2019). Only NAU and TVHNPU received national status, which granted broader autonomy and the privilege of additional funding from the state (President of Ukraine, 1995). Finally, the specialized nature of universities varied. NAU positioned itself as a university primarily focused on aviation. TVHNPU specialized mainly in

pedagogy, while ZIFSU had a state status, which widened the university's specialization and allowed for a broader scope for university majors. These differences in the structural complexity and specialization did not influence the choice of the universities. As the universities were established around the same period, they functioned for most of their history as Soviet higher educational institutions (see Chapter Two), abiding by the same administrative principles of uniformity, top-down administration, and single-person management (Kuraev, 2016).

The criticism I address in this section is related to the possible subjective case study selection criteria (selection bias) (Starman, 2013). As a researcher, I realized that I had prior knowledge about some of the research sites. However, my prior knowledge enabled me to make a better research plan and develop a strong theoretical base for the research. Moreover, as a researcher believing in multiple interpretations of reality, I brought my own construction of reality to the research situation by interacting with other peoples' constructions on the effects the Bologna Process had on the university governance.

Research Methods

According to Cohen et al. (2011), the distinction between methodology and method lies in understanding the difference between “approaches and instruments, styles of research and ways of collecting data” (p. 128). Following this view, this study defined a method as an instrument to undertake the research. As such, the research methods should correspond to the purpose of the study and the methodology. As a case study design required data from multiple sources to present holistic and detailed results, the study incorporated document analysis and individual interviews as data collection methods. The use of these methods in combination provided highly complementary data.

Document Analysis

Document analysis is defined as “a systemic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents – both printed and electronic (computer-based and Internet-transmitted) material” (Bowen, 2009, p. 27). It is generally used to “uncover meaning, develop understanding, and discover insights relevant to the research problem” (Merriam, 1998, p. 133). For case studies, as Yin (2009) states, document analysis is primarily used to corroborate and augment data from other sources, to provide additional details, and to make inferences for further investigations. As an effective means of gathering data, document analysis has its advantages and limitations. The latter comprise low retrievability, biased selectivity, reporting bias, and insufficient detail

(Bowen, 2009; Yin, 2009). While this study recognized document analysis limitations, it relied on this method's efficiency, availability, cost-effectiveness, lack of obtrusiveness and reactivity (stability), exactness, and broad coverage (Bowen, 2009; Yin, 2009).

For this study, document analysis was used to analyze background information and historical insights for the university governance transformation and provide data on implementing the Bologna Process at the national and institutional levels. In conjunction with interviews, document analysis helped me contextualize data collected during interviews and review the interview procedures. Additionally, it served as a means of triangulation. According to these purposes, the sources for document analysis varied from state-level to institutional-level documents. At the national level, Ukrainian public universities could be considered organizations embedded in the larger institution of the Ukrainian national educational system and thus influenced through macro-level policies and practices (Manning, 2018). Therefore, state laws and national development strategies were also analyzed as those conveying institutional policies (see Appendix A). The main criteria for selecting state-level documents were the following: (a) the documents served as legally binding guidelines for higher education policies and practices, and (b) the documents defined the national policy for implementing the Bologna requirements. At the institutional level, university statutory documents, mission and vision statements, and university development strategies were examined for every research site. To track university governance reforms, I selected two sets of the abovementioned documents: (1) those issued before 2005, that is, before Ukraine formally joined the Bologna Process, and being in force in 2005 and (2) the recent ones, which guided the university operations at the time of data collection and analysis (see Appendix A).

Interviews

The next method employed in the study was a semi-structured individual interview. Cohen et al. (2011) defined an interview as “a constructed and usually a specifically planned event rather than naturally occurring situation” (p. 409), in which a researcher gathered the information through direct verbal interaction between individuals. As one of the most important sources of case-study information (Yin, 2009), interviews were chosen in conjunction with other research methods in the case study framework. The interview is “a flexible tool for data collection” (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 409) for a specific purpose and, at the same time, can grant some spontaneity and space for participants. Among other interview strengths are its direct focus

on a case study topic and the ability to provide perceived causal inferences and explanations (Yin, 2009).

In this study, the semi-structured interview was chosen as an alternative between the highly structured and the unstructured. Therefore, the interview questions were of both types: structured and open-ended. The first type of questions was intended to provide more specific information. The second allowed the participants to expand on their answers and comment extensively on the aspects of particular importance in their opinion.

The literature analysis and the conceptual framework of institutional theory (see Chapter Two) prompted the case study development. Structurally, the case study constituted a three-step process that provided data on the nature, challenges and supports, and implications of the university governance changes in the context of the Bologna Process between 2005 and 2020 (during 15 years of compliance with the Bologna requirements). As a research method, individual interviews were used to acquire the data of all three of the above-mentioned areas. Therefore, the interview questions were designed to guide the conversation in the following categories: information about the background of the university in the context of the Bologna Process, knowledge and understanding of the nature of the university governance change, perception about challenges and supporting factors of the university governance change, and perception about the implications of the university governance change. While Appendices B and C provide the full interview guide, some of the sample questions are listed below:

1. Could you tell me a little about what you know about the Bologna Process?
2. Could you tell me about how the university first became involved in the Bologna Process?
3. How much were you or your department/division involved in the process?
4. What is the Ministry of Education's involvement in university affairs with particular reference to the Bologna Process?
5. What significant changes to the university governance structure have you noticed over the course of your career?

Choosing the participants for interviews, I followed a four-point approach to interview sampling in qualitative research suggested by Robinson (2014). According to Robinson, four categories of theoretical and practical concerns needed to be addressed while selecting

interviewees. These concerns were (a) setting a sample universe, (b) selecting a sample size, (c) devising a sample strategy, and (d) sample sourcing.

Defining a sample universe meant specifying inclusion and exclusion criteria for potential participation (Robinson, 2014). In this study, I decided on the inclusion/exclusion criteria for the potential participants, considering the research purpose, accessibility of the potential interviewees, and their expertise. Therefore, the prospective interviewees were selected due to their administrative positions (i.e., their direct involvement in university governance), distinct responsibilities at the universities, and time held on the post. I assumed those were the people with extensive knowledge on the subject. Given these considerations, the semi-structured interviews were conducted with the university presidents, provosts, and other senior administrators, who had worked at the chosen universities for more than six years.

Both theoretical and practical considerations influenced my decisions on the sample size and sample strategy. As there were no specific rules for selecting sample size in qualitative research (Patton, 2002), Robinson (2014) suggested limiting a sample size in qualitative research to a sufficiently small number of participants for an intensive analysis of each site, like three to 16 participants for a single study. Thus, the sample size for my study was limited to 11 participants, from three to five interviewees at each university, to collect rich and in-depth data. Since selecting the potential participants was based on specific criteria, I used a purposeful sampling strategy (Patton, 2002) to locate interview participants. When I gained access to some senior administrators, I used the snowball, chain, or network strategy (Merriam, 1998) to identify other relevant participants. For instance, I asked the interviewees to recommend other eligible individuals who might be willing to participate in the study.

The fourth set of considerations was associated with sample sourcing, which included “matters of advertising, incentivising, avoidance of bias, and ethical concerns pertaining to informed consent” (Robinson, 2014, p. 25). According to the ethical protocol, the participants provided their written consent prior to the interviews; their responses were accurately captured and returned to each interviewee for verification shortly afterward. Apart from the researcher’s notes, audiotapes and transcripts of interviews ensured the reliability of data acquired. As the participant had no or limited knowledge of English, the interviews were conducted in Ukrainian. I initially designed the interview questions in English to receive the Behavioural Research Ethics

Review Board's approval and then translated them into Ukrainian. Other ethical considerations are addressed further in the chapter.

In addition to audiotapes, I took notes of the most pertinent information before, during, and after the individual interviews. The goal of my researcher's notes was twofold. On the one hand, I wanted to summarize key concepts that could be of use later, either during the interviews or while data analysis. On the other hand, I intended to record the information that could not be otherwise captured on tape. For example, I commented on whether the participants felt comfortable answering the questions or whether they deflected from discussing particular issues. In my notes, I did not try to write down participants' every word; instead, I preferred the outline format of notetaking. I used bullet points or numbered lists to distinguish the most relevant pieces of information. Chapter Four elaborates more on the use of the researcher's notes as a data source.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

This section gives a brief account of the data analysis procedures discussed in more detail in the next chapter. Merriam (1998) advocated for the necessity to perform data analysis in conjunction with data collection. She specified that in qualitative research, data collection and analysis were simultaneous activities, recursive and dynamic. The emerging insights from already conducted document analysis and interviews should guide the following data collection procedures. Even though data collection was completed, data analysis did not stop; it only became more intensive (Merriam, 1998). Lincoln and Guba (1985) pointed out that in contrast to the positivist paradigm, naturalistic tended to inductive data analysis: “[d]ata accumulated in the field thus must be analyzed ... from specific, raw units of information to subsuming categories ... in order to define local working hypotheses or questions that can be followed up” (p. 203).

In the course of the study, I employed an inductive approach. I looked at qualitative data analysis as a progression from the specific to the general, which involved the following steps (Creswell, 2014, pp. 197-200): (1) organizing and preparing data for analysis; (2) familiarizing with data – reading and looking through all the data; (3) coding the data; (4) generating categories or themes for analysis; (5) presenting the themes within the study – comparing, contrasting, looking for relationships, and so forth; (6) interpreting findings and results. Once the data was collected, the interviews were transcribed, translated into English, and reviewed by participants. The study incorporated multiple levels and stages of data analysis (Creswell, 2014;

Merriam, 1998) for all data sources (documentation, interviews, and researcher's notes). Thus, the data were coded, categorized, or generated into themes, and interpreted (Creswell, 2014; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1998; Saldaña, 2016). Coding allowed me to detect and analyze the emerging themes with their subsequent cross-referencing through other data. For each specific theme, the data were grouped into categories, which helped me make the necessary inferences and cross-interview comparisons. To organize and manage the data, I used NVivo qualitative data analysis software. I also compared my notes and reflections with the interview transcripts for more substantial inferences.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is often referred to as an equivalent of validity in qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and thus defined as “the degree to which the findings are interpreted in a correct way” (Kirk & Miller, 1986, p. 20). Trustworthiness is usually combined with reliability for qualitative research (Yin, 2009). In this study, I followed Kidder and Judd (1986), Lincoln and Guba (1985) and focused on transferability, dependability, credibility, and confirmability.

In this qualitative case study, the research nature and the uniqueness of the situation neither permitted nor required to guarantee the results' transferability at a positivist scale (Kidder & Judd, 1986; Yin, 2009). This study's narrow focus on three Ukrainian public universities limited the transferability of the findings to some extent. However, I carefully selected the universities as potentially information-rich research sites as they had experienced university governance change around the same period. Moreover, a thorough analysis of state legislation and university statutory documents, a limited number of participants, and meticulously constructed interview questions provided sufficient richness and quality of obtained data. Therefore, it is possible to apply the research results to other Ukrainian public universities under similar circumstances and with careful consideration. Also, this case study intended to be a part of the growing pool of data on the Bologna Process and its impact on university governance. Thus, the research results contributed to a better understanding of organizational change in higher education in the context of institutional isomorphism, and its analytical generalization may be only possible to similar cases after scrupulous deliberation.

To guarantee dependability of the research, I employed several case study tactics. First, I used different data collection methods from multiple sources – document analysis, individual interviews, and researcher's notes. According to Denzin (1997), such triangulation of sources

and methods ensured the research outcomes (see also Cohen et al., 2011; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and encouraged convergent lines of inquiry (Yin, 2009). Second, I developed a careful case study protocol where I aligned the research questions and conceptual framework with appropriate data collection sources, their sequence, and data collection procedures. Finally, I established the chain of evidence to be consistent in data collection. For instance, document analysis preceded individual interviews and provided background information on Ukrainian higher education reforms within European regionalization. Nearly simultaneous data collection and analysis of individual interviews and researcher's notes allowed me to cross-reference information and thus contributed to construct validity.

In this case study, I addressed credibility and confirmability from a social constructionist position. I did not seek to demonstrate the extent to which the research constructs reflect some external reality. Instead, I approached and considered credibility from the multiple perspectives of the researcher and participants as the narrative co-constructors (McGinn, 2010). I adopted a reflexive approach and acknowledged that my own bias, as well as those of senior administrators, might influence data collection and interpretation. However, I cross-checked the interview inferences with document analysis to limit the bias and ensure that their interpretation could lead to appropriate conclusions. As senior administrators participated voluntarily without coercion or compensations of any kind, they were more likely to be open and honest during individual interviews. Moreover, the inferences were made with a concentration on quality and intensity of information, consideration of the patterns emerged in data, and separation of “the *significant few* from the *insignificant many* instances of behavior” (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 294, emphasis in original). Finally, triangulation also contributed to the consistency between collected data and results.

Ethical Considerations

This study was guided by the highest standard of ethical conduct and the moral imperative to respect human dignity (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, & Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 2014). Following the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (Canadian Institutes of Health Research et al., 2014), the study sought the approval of the University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Research Ethics Board. I secured the approval before any data collection and participants' involvement (see Appendix D).

The research was performed outside Canada and the jurisdiction of the University of Saskatchewan. As there were neither Ethics Boards nor other corresponding institutions in Ukraine, I sought no approvals, other than from the University of Saskatchewan.

I conducted the study considering potential risks to participants, anticipated benefits to participants and organizations, and respect for privacy and confidentiality. To ensure the informed consent, I familiarized the participants with the purpose of the study and their rights before the interviews. Moreover, I constantly reminded the participants about their right to avoid answering questions with which they were uncomfortable or to withdraw from the study at any moment without giving any reason. To protect participants' identities, I used pseudonyms for all participants. For the same purpose, I concealed all identifying information, including the affiliated university units. However, in the cases of university presidents, confidentiality was guaranteed only to some extent, considering their status and responsibilities in organizations. The interactions with participants happened without any coercion or influence in a respectful and friendly atmosphere. As a researcher, I was cautious not to place the participants in any position, resulting in mental, physical, or social harm.

I used the necessary precautions while collecting, storing, and presenting all research data. The participants revised the interview transcripts in Ukrainian and their translations in English to verify the correct interpretation of the responses during the interviews and give their feedback on the preliminary findings. I provided copies of publications and other research reports to the host institutions, considering their limited access to the disseminated results.

While this chapter discussed the study's research design, research methods, and some ethical considerations, the next chapter will present a more detailed account of the data collection and analysis procedures.

CHAPTER FOUR – Data Analysis and Findings

As this qualitative case study seeks a comprehensive understanding of how the Bologna Process has impacted governance in Ukrainian public universities, this chapter's purpose is twofold. First, I will give a detailed description of the three research sites to provide a context for the case study. Such contextualization of data deepens my understanding of participants' experiences and perspectives as context-dependent and helps me to analyze and interpret interview transcripts, university documents, and my research notes. Second, Goldberg and Allen (2015) conceptualized the goal of the data analysis section as “to generate an understanding of how the analysis was done in order to engender trust in and understanding of the story that the authors tell about the data” (p. 10). With this in mind, I present a short description and personal reflections on the data collection process. Further, this chapter outlines the coding process to illustrate the initial data analysis. Finally, the chapter describes themes that emerged from data analysis, which will guide the subsequent interpretation of findings.

Three Ukrainian Public Universities

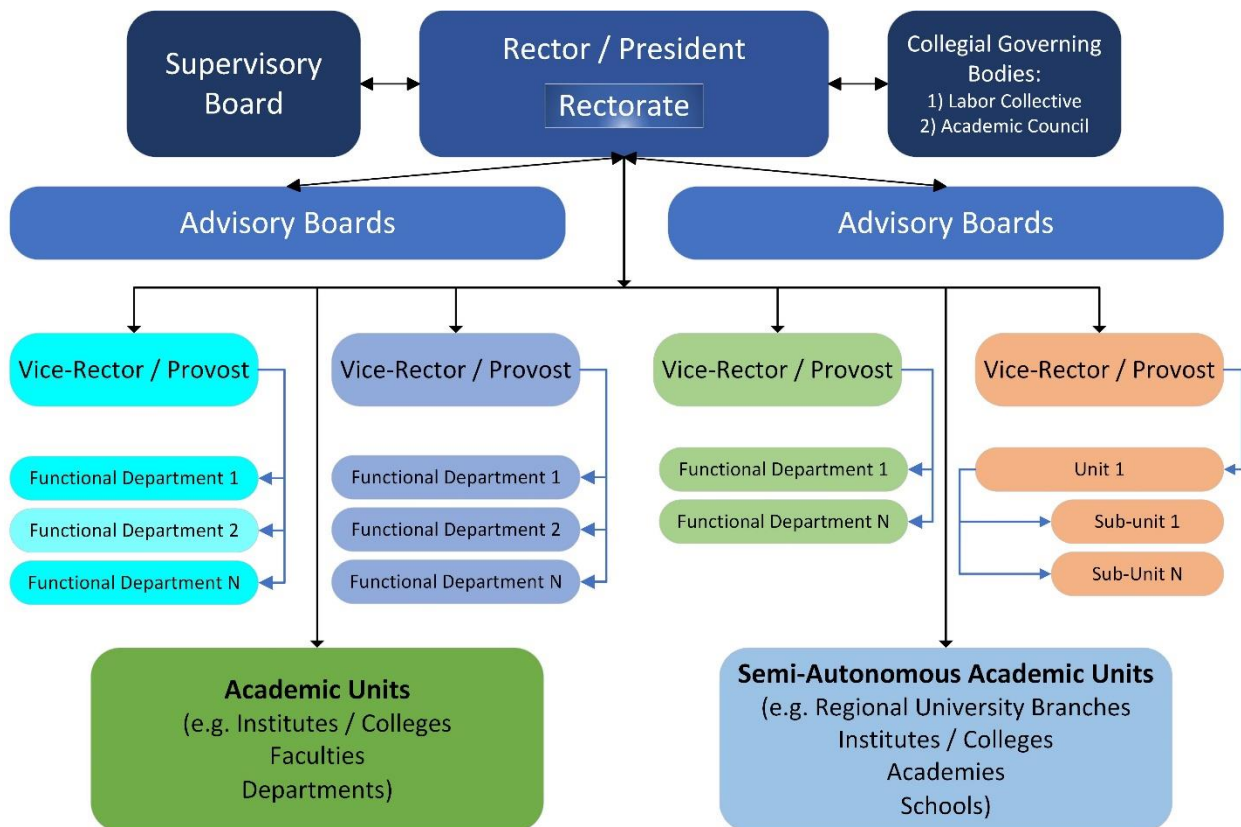
In Chapter Three, I provided a brief overview of three Ukrainian universities – National Aviation University (NAU), Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University (TVHNPU), and Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University (ZIFSU). As previously noted, I selected the research sites that would provide the best opportunity to achieve the research purpose. I believed these three selected universities were information-rich sites for me to understand university governance changes in the context of the Bologna Process, for they all had recently experienced restructuring and changes in their governing bodies. Moreover, the universities had other common characteristics: their status as public institutions, their involvement in the Bologna Process, their founding around the same period, and their location in regional centers. Finally, like other Ukrainian public universities, these three universities shared organizational similarities (see Figure 4.1).

With the introduction of supervisory and collegial governing bodies, the administrative hierarchy of Ukrainian universities stepped away from the Soviet single-person management principle (Kuraev, 2016) towards a more collegial mode of governing (Austin & Jones, 2016). The rector's role and responsibilities as a single authority in Ukrainian universities had changed considerably over the last 20 years. According to the recent state laws and university statutory documents (Academic Council of NAU, 2018; Academic Council of TVHNPU, 2016; Academic

Council of ZIFSU, 2019; Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014), a university rector/president shares some administrative responsibilities with collegial governing bodies of a higher education institution – an Academic Council and a Labour Collective/Conference of Labour Collective. Additionally, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine has created a Supervisory Board at each university to supervise the management of a university’s property and its compliance with governmental policies. Even though the three research sites differ in structural complexity, the number of units, and the number of administrative positions, they have similar administrative hierarchies with a rector/president as a university head and several supervisory and collegial governing bodies (Academic Council of NAU, 2018; Academic Council of TVHNPU, 2016; Academic Council of ZIFSU, 2019). Therefore, the current administrative structure of Ukrainian universities largely resembles the non-state-centric governing approaches of other European countries (Austin & Jones, 2016).

Figure 4.1

Organizational Structure of a Ukrainian Public University



Note. Developed on the analysis of the *Law of Ukraine “On higher education,”* by Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (2014), the *Statute of National Aviation University*, by the Conference of

Labour Collective of NAU (2018), the *Statute of Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University*, by the Conference of Labour Collective of TVHNPU (2018), and the *Statute of Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University*, by the Conference of Labour Collective of ZIFSU (2016).

Alongside similarities, these three universities differ in the number of students, ranking, and status in relation to the state. This section provides a more detailed description of the universities to situate the individual sites in political, social, and historical contexts and contextualize data analysis.

National Aviation University (NAU)

Ranked 13th in the top 200 Ukrainian universities (Lynovytska, 2019), NAU is located in Kyiv, the capital city of Ukraine. It is home to over 25,000 students, including international students from 55 countries of the world, and thus, it is often considered one of Ukraine's largest universities (NAU, n.d.). The university is structurally complex. It comprises 26 units – five institutes, ten faculties, a military training department, seven colleges, two lyceums, and the Flight Academy. This institution also has branch campuses in four other locations in Ukraine (Conference of Labour Collective of NAU, 2018; NAU, n.d.).

The NAU website states that during its more than 85-year history, the university has always been and remains a non-profit public higher education institution (NAU, n.d.). The university's public status legally posits the state and its public authorities as central decision-making governing bodies with specific rights outlined in the *Law* (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014). Moreover, the state laws “*On education*” and “*On higher education*” guide NAU activities, including the state-university relations and the university governing bodies. Officially accredited by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine as Level IV, NAU offers courses and programs leading to Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctorate degrees in more than 50 areas of study. However, the university is best known for training specialists in aviation and the related areas (NAU, n.d.). Since 2000, NAU has also held the national status, which means that the university has more legal autonomy to manage its property, facilities, and structural units (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2002).

Additionally, NAU can independently award professorial statuses to its employees as well as reward them materially. The national status has brought the privilege of additional funding from the state budget to support the university's academic and research activities

(Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2002). From 2009 to 2014, NAU had the status of an autonomous research university. As a research institution, the university was expected to strengthen the connection between research and education, collaborate with research institutes, such as the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and sectoral academies of sciences, and establish joint research and education centers (Hladchenko et al., 2016). Correspondingly, the government allocated additional funding for research and modernization of research infrastructure (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014).

The university is actively integrating into the international academic space. For several decades, NAU has cooperated with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). Two ICAO training centers have been opened in the university (Rector of National Aviation University, 2018). Joint research with the universities of Great Britain, Spain, Holland, Germany, France, South Korea, China, and other countries also attests to NAU international activity (Rector of the National Aviation University, 2018).

The year 2018 became a watershed in the NAU's modern history, as the university governance underwent significant changes. In March 2018, NAU held the first university-wide rector elections following the new election procedure outlined in the 2014 *Law "On education."* For the first time, the labour collective alone elected a university rector without the Ministry of Education and Science's final decision. The same year, the university labour collective issued the latest version of the university statute (Conference of Labour Collective of NAU, 2018). For the first time, the NAU Academic Council developed the university strategy, mission, and vision statements (Academic Council of NAU, 2018).

Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University (TVHNPU)

The IREG Observatory on Academic Ranking and Excellence ranked TVHNPU as 115th of the top 200 Ukrainian universities in 2019 (Lynovytska, 2019). TVHNPU is located in the regional center of Ternopil. The university is one of the oldest higher education institutions in western Ukraine, dating back to 1620 when the Kremenets Brotherhood School was set up to prepare elementary school teachers (Conference of Labour Collective of TVHNPU, 2018; TVHNPU, n.d.). However, as a public higher education institution, it has functioned only since 1940. Like NAU, TVHNPU is officially accredited and recognized by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine as a non-profit Level IV institution. TVHNPU is a medium-sized university providing services to only 7,000 students. It offers courses and programs at the

bachelor, master, and doctorate levels in several areas of study; however, its primary focus is on pedagogical education. The university positions itself as the second among Ukrainian pedagogical universities (TVHNPU, n.d.).

This 80-year-old university does not have a complex structure. As shown on the website (TVHNPU, n.d.), it comprises only 18 administrative and academic units. The university has six administrative departments, one institute, nine faculties, and two centers – the Center of University Preparation and Postgraduate Education. Like NAU, TVHNPU holds the national status and has more legal autonomy in making decisions. As a national university, TVHNPU receives additional funding from the state for academic and research activities. However, unlike NAU, TVHNPU has never been recognized as an autonomous research university.

The university has been actively engaged in international activities. Universities of Austria, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Greece, France, and Poland are among its international partners. TVHNPU has 35 agreements of cooperation at present with universities in Europe, Canada, and the USA. The university has established a Double Degree Program with a Polish university that allows students to study abroad and receive diplomas from two higher educational establishments (TVHNPU, n.d.).

For three years, the university has changed its governance structures and policies. In 2016, the University Academic Council approved its university development strategy valid until 2025 and specified its university's mission and vision statements (Academic Council of TVHNPU, 2016). In November 2017, the university labour collective publicly elected a current university rector, following election procedures and principles of transparency, democracy, and university autonomy of the 2014 *Law*. A year later, TVHNPU issued an updated University Statute (Conference of Labour Collective of TVHNPU, 2018).

Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University (ZIFSU)

According to the IREG Observatory on Academic Ranking and Excellence, ZIFSU occupies the 120th place among the top 200 Ukrainian universities (Lynovytska, 2019). Similar to the other two research sites, it is located in a regional center, which is reflected in its name. According to its website (ZIFSU, n.d.), the university was established in 1919 and has had a history of over 100 years. It is a non-profit public higher education institution and officially accredited as a Level IV institution. In 2004 the university changed its status from a pedagogical to a state university. In comparison, its pedagogical status had limited the university's study

areas exclusively to pedagogy, a state status allowed for a broader scope for university majors. Currently, ZIFSU offers courses according to the three-level degree system in a number of study areas to over 8,000 students (Conference of Labour Collective of ZIFSU, 2016; ZIFSU, n.d.). Unlike NAU and TVHNPU, ZIFSU has received neither national status nor the same autonomy as the other two universities before 2014.

The university positions itself as an institution that has been developing the most dynamically during the last decade (ZIFSU, n.d.). Therefore, today ZIFSU is a complex multi-structural system that includes ten academic units – three institutes, five faculties, and two pre-university and post-graduate centers. Several inter-university research centers and institutes function in the university. Internationally, ZIFSU is cooperating with higher education institutions in Belarus, Bulgaria, Great Britain, Georgia, Italy, Canada, Lithuania, Germany, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, France, and the Czech Republic, among other countries. ZIFSU has also developed joint programs with the University of Warsaw (Poland). The university has recently established the Department of International Relations and Regional Affairs to promote international and regional cooperation in education and research (ZIFSU, n.d.).

Similar to NAU and TVHNPU, ZIFSU has experienced governance changes over the last several years. Thus, ZIFSU reissued the university statute in 2016, following the new state legislation on higher education (Conference of Labour Collective of ZIFSU, 2016). In 2018, the labour collective elected a new university rector. As for the development strategy, the university is currently using a version developed and approved by the Academic Council in 2019 (Academic Council of ZIFSU, 2019).

Reflections on Data Collection Process

Data collection was the most exciting but challenging stage of my research. Working on my dissertation meant navigating between two countries, Canada and Ukraine. That very fact posed a considerable logistical challenge. An academic year in Canada and Ukraine differs in duration and the number of terms. To get in touch with my prospective participants and to collect necessary data, I needed to capitalize on a narrow window of opportunity – two summer months. On my arrival in Ukraine, and as soon as I had secured the Behavioural Research Ethics Approval (see Appendix D), I started contacting prospective participants via e-mail (see Appendices E & F).

My first attempts to communicate about my research and to recruit participants for individual interviews failed. As became evident in the recruitment process, not all Ukrainian universities maintained a high level of online openness, nor did they provide senior administrators' contacts on their websites. Regarding my research sites, only TVHNPU could be singled out of the three selected universities as its website provided all the necessary information on its administrators and contacts. On June 3, I sent around 20 e-mail invitations to those limited e-mail addresses and received only two responses, both refusals. Within a week, I had to change my recruitment strategy and contact prospective participants in person. This strategy turned out to be more successful. I secured my first participants and scheduled individual interviews in the third week of June. It was interesting to note that while negotiating the interview prospects, I had to explain the qualitative nature of my study to prospective participants. As research philosophy in Ukraine might be considered predominantly positivist, many senior administrators were not familiar with qualitative data collection methods and related ethical considerations. Sometimes, they expressed willingness to fill in questionnaires instead of being interviewed. Moreover, I addressed many concerns about the "objectiveness" and the reliability of the information provided.

As I sought to interview senior administrators, their roles and positions at the universities meant hectic schedules and fewer opportunities to plan their participation on considerably short notice. As a result, I had to travel between the three cities of Kyiv, Ternopil, and Zhytomyr all the time, getting participants committed to specific interview times and securing participants' consent to release transcripts. Therefore, I interviewed participants within a month between June 17 and July 15 and received participants' consent on interview data release within the overlapping period from July 1 to August 19. The other disadvantage of participants' busy schedules was that they usually had limited time for interviews. As a researcher, I needed to prioritize the most important questions under those circumstances, so I planned interviews accordingly. In total, I conducted 11 individual interviews, which lasted from 30 to 70 minutes. During and after each interview, I took detailed notes of everything that was not recorded: participants' comments before the recorder was on and after it was off, physical settings, participants' reactions, my perceptions of whether they were comfortable answering questions or if they asked to omit some of them. I also took careful notes of my every visit to all three

universities, my impressions when communicating with people, and other significant events during the data collection phase.

Overall, the situations with participants recruiting differed among all three universities. For instance, in NAU, I found people to be more open to the idea of the research and eager to share any information about the subject to the best of their knowledge. The interviewees did not even care about confidentiality assurance. They made it clear that they would have participated even when their names, positions, and contributions had been publicly known. As I used to work at NAU, I could not but consider the possibility that people's willingness to participate might be partially attributed to their limited familiarity with me as their former colleague. Even in their interviews, participants were continually referring to my possible knowledge about the university and subject matter in general or people with whom I had worked. Such shared status facilitated establishing rapport with interviewees and promoted the participants' openness. I assumed that the participants trusted in my integrity as a researcher because they either knew or heard about me before the interviews. Frequently, I had the impression that they treated me as an insider, 'one of them,' someone who knew and understood the university's inner workings.

In TVHNPU, the referral strategy worked best. All I had to do was to secure the first interview. After that, my contacts and the research information were passed to other administrators, and people approached me themselves volunteering to participate. At some point, I even had to stop recruiting participants and not approach those referred to me. Five out of my 11 participants were from TVHNPU. The rest six participants were from NAU and ZIFSU, three interviewees from each of the two.

While at the research sites, I could easily find university administration locations, even in unfamiliar settings. All university campuses were arranged in the same manner. The administrative offices were always in the so-called "first" or "main" academic building on the second floor. This observation made me reflect on whether such an arrangement of the administrative offices might be attributed to the uniformity principle, previously discussed in Chapter Two. As Kuraev (2016) indicated, uniformity was present in all organizations at Soviet times, making one education institution resemble the others in all vital issues and appearances.

Treating Resistance as Data

During data collection, I experienced several expressions of resistance. While treating resistance as a source of insight (Kizlari & Fouseki, 2018), I do not intend to provide a

framework to interpret the collected data. Neither can I present resistance as having unequivocal meaning. This section merely points to the possibility that identified resistance during data collection might be a valuable asset in contextualizing the findings.

During my data collection stage, the most common active kind of resistance was senior administrators' refusal to participate in the study. The most challenging task was to find participants from ZIFSU. As soon as they heard that their insights would concern recent university governance transformation, they hesitated to agree to the study. They usually asked whether I had received "approval from the above" or if the administration knew. Even though I assured them that senior university administrators had given their unofficial approval to conduct my research at the site, a "what if" concern was still present. For instance, what if the administration would change their mind later. In two other cases, after I turned off the recorder, the interviewees noted that they had said nothing compromising after all. In the context of the study, I attributed such explicit and implicit behaviors of participants to fear. Although analyzing resistance was beyond my research scope, I could not but connect these participants' behaviors to the remnants of the highly bureaucratic Soviet administrative system, when people had been afraid of any disapproval from an administrator's direct superior (Kuraev, 2016).

I experienced latent resistance of several forms: when a participant presented a "polished" narrative (Kizlari & Fouseki, 2018, p. 1953), when a participant avoided answering specific questions, or when an interviewee tried to deflect a focus away from the question. In those cases, I kept in mind that the absence of information was still information. Therefore, I tried to track when the participants usually employed those strategies. I noticed such latent resistance when the discussion concerned power-related issues, such as the comments on superiors' actions or ministerial policies. For example, one of the participants tried to align the authoritarian style of a former university head with a collective seemingly voluntary agreement to a new university policy,

I will express great respect for the head of the university. He was the very reason that we all agreed [to join the Bologna Process]. And the skillful leadership of our rector. He was able to find an approach to each teacher. Well, firstly, it was in the authoritarian form. We were told that we were joining the Bologna Process, and that was final. At the same time, it was well-received, although many complained that there would be much work. (Interview D, June 24, 2019)

As my study drew not only on individual interviews and researcher's notes, different legal documents were also data sources. I could easily access all state legislation on higher education for the last 30 years through the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine website. There were no problems to find the current university statutes and development strategies on each university website. In NAU and TVHNPU, the senior administrators personally provided previous versions of university statutes, according to which universities functioned before 2005 and their formal commitment to the Bologna Process. However, all my attempts to secure the ZIFSU's previous statute failed. I not only needed proper permission from several university senior administrators to work at the university archives, but I was also not allowed in the university archives even with the permissions secured. I was informed that the university archive had transferred all outdated statutes to the Regional Archives and did not possess them anymore. On my inquiry at the Regional Archives, I received a formal statement that the Regional Archives had neither kept any statutory documents from any educational institutions nor ever requested those organizations submit their legal documentation to the Archives.

Such instances of active and latent resistance from prospective participants could be attributed to the remnants of "the Soviet army-style command-and-control management" (Oleksiyenko, 2018, p. 197), discussed in Chapter Two. Such Soviet governance style was characterized by the culture where tolerating abuse from authority and being silent were standard practices. Speaking out against any superiors' actions could be easily interpreted as disloyalty, disobedience, or betrayal and result in dismissal or severe punishment (Oleksiyenko, 2018; see also Kuraev, 2016). I could trace the effects of such Soviet practices on prospective participants' behaviors. Schooled on Soviet ideology, many did choose to be silent and not engage in any conversation which might potentially cause their superiors' disapproval.

Moreover, the disruptive and violent history of colonization, genocide, repressions, and exploitation experienced during the Soviet era developed not only a culture of colonial mistrust and resistance. The indoctrination, coercion, and punishment also promoted unquestioned compliance with the totalitarian regime and prevented most Ukrainian scholars from developing critical inquiry, independent thinking, and enlightened citizenship (Oleksiyenko, 2016; Oleksiyenko et al., 2021).

Organizing and Analyzing Data

In the course of the data collection, I always kept in mind the research questions I would like to answer with my study and the conceptual framework with which I approached the subject matter. Therefore, I started organizing and analyzing data even during individual interviews and later when I transcribed and translated them into English. I did not wait until all the interviews were completed to transcribe the recordings. I listened to the recordings and transcribed them immediately after each interview to better understand how to approach the next participant and conduct the interview.

During that time and afterward, I kept writing reflective notes and analytic memos – critical notes in the form of journal entries (Saldana, 2016), which helped me summarize the information, connect it to the main research questions, and identify the concepts of the institutional theory discussed in Chapter Two. As institutional theory stressed external to the organization forces in shaping university behaviors, some of my memos tracked the connections that the participants made between the cultural, political, and social factors and the speed of the reforms or how they were perceived by faculty and staff. As well, some of my reflective notes indicated the types of isomorphic processes or their complexity. One example was when during an individual interview, a participant discussed how their university implemented a Bologna-associated change. The overt relationships between the university and the Ministry of Education and Science forced the organization to conform to the government regulations. At the same time, such a coercive isomorphism was complemented with the mimetic processes. The senior administrators were not sure how to adopt the required standards. They simply modeled the patterns after a European university. Such memos and reflective notes helped me subsequently make meaningful connections between the collected data, the findings, and the conceptual framework to answer the research questions.

For the duration of the data collection and analysis, I had to address two main concerns. First, there was the potential risk of losing or misinterpreting data due to the multiple translations used in the research. For example, the research purpose, questions, and literature analysis were done in English and served as a basis for interview questions. Individual interviews were conducted and transcribed in Ukrainian and then translated into English for further analysis. However, when analyzing data, I frequently consulted the original interview transcripts in Ukrainian to ensure that all expressed ideas were coded and interpreted correctly. For instance,

the meaning of the English third-person neutral pronoun “it” had to be checked in every usage while coding because its Ukrainian equivalent might mean both animated and unanimated nouns of different genders. I needed to be careful to unfold the meaning of each idea expressed by the participants. Moreover, a central research concept “governance” has a somewhat ambiguous meaning in Ukrainian. It might be used synonymously to “management,” “administration,” “leadership,” “subordination,” and “an administrative institution or department of an institution” (Academic explanatory dictionary of the Ukrainian language, n.d.). Therefore, I phrased the Ukrainian equivalents of the interview questions in a manner that would minimize ambiguity. I also tried to provide additional context when the participants asked for clarification or when I noticed that they might interpret the questions differently from that intended.

My second concern was not to become a victim of data overload. I read and reread each transcript multiple times to identify all relevant information. Much information was redundant or overlapped with other information. Sometimes the participants deflected from the topic in their answers. Often, they provided a lot of directly unrelated to the research questions information—for example, participants’ experience of being students, their career paths in different institutions, their experiences working in other countries, or their perception of the modern generation’s values. However, all those data nuances informed a bigger picture of the participants’ experiences, and they helped me understand how participants interpreted the meanings of university governance reforms and made connections between those and their own experiences within academia. Not to be overwhelmed with all the data from individual interviews, I always reminded myself to code the meaning of the participants’ phrases and connect the selected codes to initial research questions. I always kept the research purpose and questions on a sheet of paper nearby and frequently referred to them during data analysis. Such backtracking was one of my analytic strategies. Another strategy was “lumping” the data (Saldana, 2016, p. 23). To filter unrelated information, I deliberately avoided over-detailed or line-by-line coding and preferred capturing the essence of each passage instead. I coded only the essential parts of my data. Exemptions were made in cases of paragraphs rich in material relevant to the study. The next section will provide a more detailed account of the coding process.

Coding Data

Coding the collected qualitative data was a dynamic, intuitive, and creative process of inductive reasoning with the guidance from the works of Creswell (2014), O’Connor and Gibson

(2002), Saldana (2016), and others. I considered different aspects as I coded, such as appropriate coding methods, number of codes, and manual versus software coding. Most importantly, I developed codes and repeatedly used them across different interview transcripts and legal documents to detect any meaningful patterns and commonalities among multiple sources and note isolated peculiarities. When conversing with participants and transcribing and translating their interviews, I could identify some of the emerging patterns, frequently repeated words, phrases, or notions that subsequently served as initial codes. Recognizing those emerging patterns was relatively straightforward as the reviewed literature and the conceptual framework of institutional theory built a foundation for the important concepts and ideas of the study. Coding involved dividing the collected raw data and allocating labels for identified topics from the data. Codes from the first interview served as a starting point when I coded later interviews. My repertoire of codes evolved as I continued to code one interview transcript after another.

For this study, my choice of coding methods was influenced by the research design, my philosophical positioning in the study, and my experience as a beginner in coding and analyzing qualitative data. As this research was a qualitative case study, which incorporated a variety of data forms (e.g., documents, individual interview transcripts, and the researcher's notes) from multiple participants and sites, it was appropriate to use a combination of coding methods for particular data forms (Saldana, 2016). For example, Saldana (2016) insisted that a coding method used for legal documents was not always appropriate for individual interviews. For this reason, I chose to use "eclectic coding" to organize the collected data.

According to Saldana (2016), eclectic coding was a combination of two or more compatible coding methods. For this study, eclectic coding had been developed as a selection of elemental (e.g., descriptive, process, and versus) coding methods. Such selection allowed me to use the same coding for all data forms – documents, researcher's notes, and interviews transcripts. Moreover, according to Saldana (2016), all chosen coding methods were acceptable for a novice researcher.

Descriptive coding was "a word or a short phrase – most often a noun phrase – the basic topic of a passage of qualitative data" (Saldana, 2016, p. 102). Some examples of such codes in my study were "student self-governance," "insufficient funding," "state as a university owner," and others. I realized that topic-based noun phrases could not serve to the fullest the purpose of my research and tell me much about changes over time in the university governance or the

participants' perceptions of the associated challenges and implications. Thus, I added process and versus coding. The process coding method used gerunds or gerundial phrases to represent action in the data, "intertwined with the dynamics of time" (Saldana, 2016, p. 111). As such, it was useful to code the changes overtime – "increasing international cooperation," "becoming more transparent," "introducing democratic governance," and so forth. To identify any dichotomies in the higher education system or governing processes before and after the Bologna initiative, I used versus coding (e.g., "rector election vs. appointment," etc.). Moreover, as a constructionist, I believe in bringing together participants' perspectives and my own to understand a phenomenon or a process. This study engaged Saldana's (2016) conviction that "[s]ometimes the participant says it best, sometimes the researcher does" (p. 109). Therefore, I tried "to honor participants' voices" (Saldana, 2016, p. 106) and to generate codes from participants' actual wording.

As this qualitative research grounded mainly on unstructured textual data from documents of various types, interview transcripts, and researcher's notes, coding was done using qualitative data analysis software NVivo. Computer-based coding was less labour-intensive and time-consuming. It allowed me to manage and analyze the vast amount of raw data and made the process relatively more comfortable.

There was no unanimity among the scholars on the number of codes that should be used in qualitative research. The suggested ranges varied from 30-40 codes at a time (MacQueen et al., 1998) to around 300 different codes (Friese, 2014). In this research, the collected data allowed me to identify 71 codes, which I eventually synthesized into six major themes discussed in more detail in the next section.

Emerged Themes

When I analyzed the codes, I reviewed and revised them and looked for patterns and relationships. I carefully considered the meaning of codes and looked for the relevance of the emerging patterns to the conceptual framework of the study and my research questions. Looking for the deeper meaning of the data, I folded the codes together. I compared their repetitions by the participants and the frequency of referencing to those ideas in different sources to uncover the significance of the emerging ideas (see Appendix G). As well, I frequently returned to the central ideas of sociological and historical institutionalism to categorize the codes and map the relationships among them. The linkage between the codes allowed me to identify six main

overarching themes: (1) the Bologna Process and its implementation, (2) university autonomy, (3) university collective governance, (4) the increasing role of internationalization, (5) marketization of higher education, and (6) reconceptualizing national identity.

The Bologna Process and Its Implementation

The Bologna Process and its implementation was the first theme that emerged from the analysis of documents and interview transcripts. While neither state legislation nor university documents defined the Bologna Process, they all made frequent references to Ukraine's compliance with the requirements and principles of the Bologna Process and the necessity to transform Ukrainian higher education in alignment with them. For instance, both the *National Education Strategies* of 2002 and 2013 and the *Laws of Ukraine "On higher education"* of 2002 and 2014 identified the integration of education into European educational spaces as a priority area of state education development policy (President of Ukraine, 2002, 2013; Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2002, 2014). Such priority could be traced in the underpinning principles of Ukrainian higher education – academic freedom, university autonomy, public responsibility for higher education, life-long learning, promoting academic mobility, equitable access to education, and so forth (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014) – which fully aligned with the main Bologna principles.

The majority of participants showed an in-depth understanding of the European regionalization and the Bologna Process. General concepts that the participants used to describe the Bologna Process were “unification,” “commonness,” and “integration.” One of the participants said,

[t]he Bologna Process is *integrating* the European higher education system to *a common denominator*, to *a common ideology*, to academic exchanges, to the processes of creating joint research, etc. It is the process that emerged as a kind of initiative of *the united European space*. (Interview J, July 8, 2019; emphasis added)

However, among the leading ten Bologna action lines, the participants mostly discussed the introduction of the European Credit Transfer System, the change in educational levels, the quality assurance system, and academic mobility:

The main principles laid there are the advantages of the credit transfer system, the introduction of academic mobility, and quality control issues. These are the basic

principles. Well, the experience gained by European universities has been applied to some extent. (Interview G, July 2, 2019)

Unanimity between the legal documents and the participants' voices was notable concerning the Bologna Process initiation time in Ukraine. All sources provided 2005 as the year of Ukraine's commitment to the higher education reforms. As for universities' commitment to the Bologna Process, the participants named different timeframes of reforms implementation for different universities – from 2003 until 2009. Still, the participants emphasized that the most noticeable reforms happened after 2014, after issuing the newest version of the *Law "On higher education."* However, most recognized that the reforms would not bring immediate changes due to the differences between European and Ukrainian education systems. As one interviewee noticed:

Changes take place indeed. Perhaps, the changes are not at the pace which we would like them to be. But they happen. They are happening very slowly, in our opinion. I would like to wake up in the morning and go to the university where your salary will be a thousand Euros, where students from all over the world will study, where you will conduct only two or three lectures a week, and you will earn good money for conducting them. Ideally, it would be desirable, but it might never happen because each [education] system has pros and cons. (Interview C, June 18, 2019)

When discussing how their universities implemented Bologna-associated reforms, all participants recognized the Ministry of Education's initiative and the top-down nature of the reforms. At the same time, some participants admitted that regardless of the coordinating and controlling role of the Ministry, their units faced procedural challenges as they did not know how to implement those reforms into the educational process:

I'll tell you frankly how a transition to the Bologna Process is taking place. A letter is received from the Ministry of Education and Science. It may be a letter with an order or a recommendation. I want to say right away that a letter of recommendation is similar to one with an order. In principle, the rector or the vice-rector cannot comprehend it entirely, but we consistently comply with these orders in accordance with this letter. What kind of orders can it be? For example, the transition to a 100-grading system [...] We receive a letter, [...] we have to switch to a 100-grading system. How did we do it? Simply. We went online, we searched for European universities, we looked at their scale

of assessment, and gradually we began to apply it ourselves. But it [such an approach] is entirely inadequate. (Interview C, June 18, 2019)

Likewise, some participants expressed concern about the lack of control over implementing the reforms at the institutional level. In particular, one participant stated that the organizational aspects related to the Bologna Process should be “rigidly enforced in Ukraine” (Interview F, June 25, 2019). Another interviewee remarked that the Bologna Process implementation should be controlled by European organizations (Interview C, June 18, 2019).

Overall, the findings revealed that the commitment to the Bologna Process was strong at both the state and institutional levels (see Appendix G). Generally, participants associated the Bologna Process with structural reforms rather than with the transformation of the education governance. Even though Ukraine joined the EHEA in 2005, the associated changes became more noticeable after 2014. There were some procedural challenges while implementing the Bologna principles at the three universities. These challenges could be attributed to opposing views on how the reforms should be enacted.

University Autonomy

University autonomy was “a crucial precondition that enable[d] universities to achieve their missions in the best possible way” (Eastermann, 2015, p. 29) when functioning in a common European education space. Aiming at achieving integration into the EHEA, Ukraine made the first step towards university autonomy in 2002. The *Law “On higher education”* declared that governance of a higher educational institution was carried out based on the principles of (a) autonomy and delimitation of rights, powers, and responsibilities of the owner (state) and higher education governing bodies (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2002). In Ukraine, the scholarly discussion of university autonomy was firmly grounded in the argument about Soviet central authorities’ domination in major university affairs (Oleksiyenko, 2016; Osipian, 2017). Therefore, in the Ukrainian educational context, university autonomy was usually identified as “detachment from the Ministry of Education and Science, and [...] the state [...] that allows the former [university] to act in its own self-interest even if it does not coincide – or even contradicts – the interest of the latter [state]” (Osipian, 2017, p. 235).

Since 2002, university autonomy became a leitmotif of all legislative documents at the state and the institutional levels. However, only recent state documents defined university autonomy and clarified its meaning for Ukrainian universities. For example, the increasing

importance of university autonomy could be noticed if to track how the only two brief mentions of university autonomy in the *Law of Ukraine “On higher education”* of 2002 turned into the main idea and the first concept introduced in the 2014 version of the *Law*. The new *Law* allowed for greater institutional autonomy. Thus, Ukrainian universities received autonomous status – independence and responsibility to decide on academic freedoms, educational process, research, internal management, personnel, and economic activity within the *Law* (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014).

The three universities further elaborated their autonomy into the lists of distinct university rights, which ranged from broad 12 in the TVHNPU documents to a more specific 49 in those of NAU’s (Conference of Labour Collective of NAU, 2018; Conference of Labour Collective of TVHNPU, 2018; Conference of Labour Collective of ZIFSU, 2016). Moreover, the universities’ development strategies recognized university autonomy, democracy, and responsibility as the basis for implementing universities’ missions and visions (Academic Council of NAU, 2018; Academic Council of TVHNPU, 2016; Academic Council of ZIFSU, 2019).

During the interviews, the discussion of university autonomy was centered around three main categories of (a) finances and accountability, (b) the university rector election, and (c) the interference of political parties. Regarding finances, Eastermann (2015) recognized university autonomy as the collective concept of institutional freedom in four areas: organizational, financial, staffing, and academic. Thus, university autonomy could become successful governance principle only through educational reforms in all four aforementioned areas. In the interviews, all participants referred to university autonomy as the main change of higher education governance related to organizational, staffing, and academic matters. However, the majority admitted that university autonomy could hardly be defined as successful or complete because there existed issues of university financial independence from the state and university accountability. Some of the codes used were “university becoming autonomous,” “state as a university owner,” “insufficient funding,” “state restrictions on the use of university funds,” “dependence on the state budget and state order,” “low salary for the faculty and staff,” and so forth. As one of the participants stated,

State-university relations changed in many aspects to positive trends in terms of university autonomy, allowing universities to choose educational trajectories, [and]

educational programs [...] The Ministry did not abandon such careful custody of the university. First of all, it concerns the allocation of budget places. Unfortunately, this process is not regulated by the market [...] the Ministry still did not leave us free in financing matters. All funds are directed centrally. And even those funds that we earn in our education field often fall under the watchful eye of the Ministry of Education. And for every penny, we have to report all the time. (Interview K, July 8, 2019)

The Ukrainian system of funding public universities remained centralized and dependent on the state budgetary planning methods. As Stadny (2016) characterized the current model of funding, “[t]here [has been] no any planned economy or centralized distribution of graduates among enterprises for 25 years, but the state continues to operate under the old practices, which does not cover modern needs” (para. 1). Annually, Ukrainian universities received funds from the State budget as expenditure for building, maintenance, employees’ salaries, equipment, information systems, research, professional training for academic staff, international cooperation, publishing activities, and so forth (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014). The government allocated funds for university needs on a competitive basis and following the expenditures of the previous year (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2013; Stadny, 2016). Funding was entirely dependent on the number of students. There still existed a so-called “state order,” when the state distributed government-funded places to train students among the public universities, and the state as if “ordered” the training of a particular number of specialists in this or that specialty (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2013; Degtyarova et al., 2018; Stadny, 2016). Some participants expressed the opinion that this scheme did not, in any way, encourage universities to meet the needs of society and regional or state priorities of the economy. Some participants suggested that the constant fight for the number of students led to a deterioration in the quality of higher education. As universities were not interested in expelling underperforming students, they even enrolled students with extremely low scores (Interview C, June 18, 2019).

The internal acts governed the university income from other sources (e.g., projects, services, equipment, facilities, etc.). However, universities were obliged to follow the Budget Code of Ukraine and the Cabinet of Ministers’ decrees (Stadny, 2016). Moreover, the State Treasury strictly controlled the state funds and the university’s income expenses. In this regard, participants emphasized that Ukrainian universities were in constant struggle for financial resources to cover their current needs. Only limited funds were spent on logistical equipment,

repair of premises, purchase of vehicles, and machinery. This issue was frequently discussed during interviews. As a participant explained,

Most of these problems usually involve funds—for example, the same dorms.

Unfortunately, we have such legislation that the dormitory fee cannot exceed a certain percentage of student scholarships. By law, the university cannot spend the university's money from the additional income [...] on the dormitory repair. In fact, the dorms can pay for themselves only from the residents' payments for living there. And there is a problem. We have money that we cannot spend on dormitory repair because the controlling authorities [...] will come and accuse us of misusing the funds. (Interview I, July 5, 2019)

The second category within the theme was the state's role in the university rector/president election. Before Ukraine's commitment to the Bologna Process and even at the early stages of higher education reforms, the Ministry of Education appointed a university's rector. University representatives elected several candidates, usually at the Academic Council or at a general meeting of the university's collective self-government body. They held the election by secret ballot on a competitive basis. Afterward, the Ministry of Education chose among those candidates and appointed the rector (Interview G, July 2, 2019; Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2002). With the new *Law "On higher education,"* a rector became elected at the university-wide elections, and the Ministry only formally approved the winner. Similar election procedures worked for other university administrators (Conference of Labour Collective of NAU, 2018; Conference of Labour Collective of TVHNPU, 2018; Conference of Labour Collective of ZIFSU, 2016; Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014).

While the majority of senior administrators characterized rector's elections as democratic, one participant expressed a slightly different opinion describing the rector's election in their university:

It seems that there is no balance in the governance. As a rule, a rector or head of the Academic Council, if he is not a rector—for example, [...] a rector and the head of the Academic Council—should be different persons. [In our university] it turns out that the head of the Academic Council is a person who used to be the rector and transferred his authority because of his age to a successor, whom he also recommended. It “smells” like

a little bit of an arrangement. I do not say corruption, but an arrangement. There are such cases in Ukraine. (Interview F, June 25, 2019)

Finally, the role of political forces was frequently discussed concerning university autonomy. All versions of the *Law "On education"* and *"On higher education"* stated that universities should be governed "independently from political parties, any social and religious organizations (except for the religious higher educational institutions)" (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014, Art. 32, p. 28; Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2002, Art.3, p. 4). Nevertheless, it was evident from the participants' voices that implementing the Bologna principles depended entirely on a political party, which was in power at each particular time. For example, if pro-European parties held the office, they implemented educational reforms faster than the pro-Russian government, and vice versa (Interview G, July 2, 2019). Some participants also emphasized that there used to be a significant interference of political parties in university affairs:

For the most part, they [political parties] do not interfere. And today, when they do not interfere, it helps. Five years ago, representatives of the Security Service of Ukraine would come to us quietly and say that we had to influence our students because some of our students went to Maidan: "Call them off, expel them, scare them, work with their parents." Frankly, I admit that nobody did these things [complied with the orders] because it would be madness. Because if we had told students that, it would have caused a revolution here, not on the Maidan in Kyiv, but it [a revolution] would have been here. No such influences have been felt recently. (Interview C, June 18, 2019)

By Maidan, the participant meant the main square in Kyiv where all revolutions started. Furthermore, the reference to "five years ago" was the reference to the presidency of Yanukovich and the pro-Russian governance. That also was the time when the last revolution, the Revolution of Dignity, took place.

Overall, the theme of university autonomy revealed the existing controversies between its presentation in legal documents and the participants' understanding (see Appendix G). The main inconsistencies were associated with university financing and accountability, the new procedures for electing university administrators, and political parties' interference in university affairs.

University Collective Governance

The third theme was university collective governance. It was formed by the following codes: “establishing collective governing at the university,” “decentralization of decision-making,” “supportive role of teamwork,” “miscommunication between administrators,” “professional administrative training,” “university restructuring,” “changing the role of university Academic Council,” “involving external stakeholders in university governance,” “student self-governance,” and so forth (see Appendix G).

The state legislative documents on Ukrainian higher education (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 1996, 2002, 2014, 2017) affirmed that over the last 20 years, highly centralized higher education governance had been slowly moving towards decentralization and introducing collective governance at the university level. According to the *Law “On higher education,”* collective governance with an Academic Council as the main university governing body replaced single-person management (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014). A university rector became an executive managing body similar to deans, who performed the same functions at the college/faculty level. As a participant explained, “a majority makes decisions” (Interview I, July 5, 2019). Another participant also stated, “governance decisions as any related to management processes are made collectively. This is often an open voting form. It is the absolute freedom of speech that accompanies a phenomenon or a problem” (Interview K, July 8, 2019). However, some participants still recognized the significant role of a university rector in decision-making, stating that “with a proper manager, this process [of making decisions] is ensured” (Interview G, July 2, 2019).

According to the *Law* and corresponding university statutory documents (Conference of Labour Collective of NAU, 2018; Conference of Labour Collective of TVHNPU, 2018; Conference of Labour Collective of ZIFSU, 2016; Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014), a University Academic Council consisted of representatives of academic staff (75%), students (15%) and other university employees, all being elected every five years at the general meeting of university staff (conference of labour collective). Each institute or college within the university had its own Academic Council. Apart from Academic Councils, other governing bodies became involved in the university management—for example, different advisory boards and committees, as decided by the institution (Conference of Labour Collective of NAU, 2018; Conference of Labour Collective of TVHNPU, 2018; Conference of Labour Collective of

ZIFSU, 2016). During individual interviews, the discussion on Academic Councils, other governing bodies, and their roles centered around the concepts of decentralization of decision-making and moving toward democratic governing. As one of the senior administrators said:

I do not decide on my own because, at the institute level, we have the Institute Academic Council. It is elected in the same way – by democratic election [...] All important issues are brought to the Institute Academic Council. We make our proposals and protocol everything [...]. The Rectorate policies are such that they leave the important decisions to us, the Institute Academic Councils. For example, even electing teachers through competition. All this happens first at the department level and then at the Institute Academic Councils. (Interview H, July 5, 2019)

At the same time, the decentralization of decision-making increased the scope of responsibilities of senior university administrators and various councils. Thus, the number of rector's responsibilities significantly increased in 2014, while Academic Councils' responsibilities almost doubled compared to those in 2002 (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2002, 2014). One interviewee described this way: “[n]ow the head of the university has more lobbying responsibilities compared to those of 15 years ago [...] more financial and legal responsibilities when it comes to making decisions” (Interview J, July 8, 2019).

Student participation in university governance was another concept that contributed to the overall theme of university collective governance. As student self-governance became a key reform area in the Bologna Process, the *Law “On higher education”* offered necessary legal provisions for student participation in university governance (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014). Three research sites seemed to be in agreement on the share of student representation on university governing bodies, which constituted at least 15% at each site (Conference of Labour Collective of NAU, 2018; Conference of Labour Collective of TVHNPU, 2018; Conference of Labour Collective of ZIFSU, 2016). Participants unanimously emphasized that students' involvement in university governance became one of the major Bologna-driven changes. As a participant described,

[a]t present, all decisions are made only considering the opinion of the Student Government. The Student Government has its representation at the Institute Academic Council and the University Academic Council. In principle, this is the only thing that has changed so radically. (Interview C, June 18, 2019)

Student self-governance and student representation on university councils became one of the most heatedly debated issues among the participants within the university collective governance theme. On the one hand, all participants recognized the merit of student self-governance for democratic and collegial decision-making. On the other hand, everyone admitted certain obstacles about why student self-governance did not work. Students' incapability to make independent decisions was identified as one of those obstacles. As a senior administrator reasoned:

Student self-governance and its leadership – as it somehow happens – consist of straight “A” students, the best ones. They are not the rebellious kind of students who want to change something. These straight “A” students follow the university leadership in most cases. Frankly speaking, there is no initiative on their part. (Interview C, June 18, 2019)

Overall, comprising around 20 codes, the theme of university collective governance was frequently mentioned in legislative documents and mostly debated during individual interviews (see Appendix G). Within this theme, several issues were raised and discussed, including democratic and decentralized decision-making, the shift from a single leadership towards collegiality, increased responsibilities of collegial governing bodies and senior administrators, and student self-governance.

The Increasing Role of Internationalization

For the 30 years of its independence, Ukraine had not developed a particular national strategy for internationalization in higher education. Reforms related to internationalization were outlined in both *Laws of Ukraine “On higher education”* of 2002 and 2014 (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2002, 2014) and *National Developmental Strategies* of 2002 and 2013 (President of Ukraine, 2002, 2013). All these legislative documents emphasized the demand for internationalizing universities, developing international partnerships, and promoting academic mobility. The *Law* of 2014 devoted the whole section (Section 7) to international cooperation. Section 7 defined state policy on international cooperation in higher education, outlined the main directions of international cooperation, and delimited international for-profit activities (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014, Atr. 74-76). Within state internationalization policy, the state allocated a certain budget for university international cooperation, financed membership in international organizations, participation in international activities, and agreements with international partners. Each research site outlined more specific guidelines and

internationalization strategies in its university development strategy (Academic Council of NAU, 2018; Academic Council of TVHNPU, 2016; Academic Council of ZIFSU, 2019).

Some of the codes that formed the fourth theme were the following: “increasing international cooperation,” “increasing mobility and study abroad opportunities,” “encouraging international internship,” “attracting international students,” “attracting international investments,” “developing double-diploma programs,” “demand for foreign language proficiency,” and so forth (see Appendix G). During the individual interviews, the participants conveyed that all three universities were engaged in international activities. The universities had multiple opportunities for international cooperation; however, they did not always seize these opportunities due to the lack of state formal international strategy. Predominantly, university international cooperation became a challenge for university administrators. As they admitted, international cooperation was usually initiated through personal connections between university staff and international colleagues, and its efficiency depended mainly on the university’s capacity. As one of the senior administrators explained:

A great deal of international cooperation is not taking place. I’ll explain why. All collaboration takes place at the correspondence level. They [international partners] send us some suggestions; we send them ours. If we talk about some close cooperation, it occurs only at the level of separate researchers and teachers. When our researchers, our doctors [of science], become interested in some grants, some programs, they contact international colleagues directly. After that, the collaboration between the departments is established, and institutes or faculties become involved in this cooperation. But this is done somewhat indirectly. (Interview C, June 18, 2019)

The majority of interviewees said that in such situations, the knowledge of foreign languages and the expertise and experience of faculty members became crucial. Some felt pressured to master a foreign language. Likewise, they admitted that the faculty members were also pressured to learn a foreign language, predominantly English, as they have to publish internationally, participate at international conferences, communicate with international colleagues, and teach international students. One participant mentioned:

We make our teachers learn English. There is this famous B2. How it is done and whether everything is right are under the question. How is it organized? Is it B2 that

teachers need to pass? Maybe, they need a different level in their specialty. (Interview F, June 25, 2019)

The participant's comment on B2 was a reference to the fourth level of English in the Common European Framework of Reference. All university faculty members were required to master B2 level of English to maintain a certain position at the university or obtain a degree of an Associate Professor (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014). In this regard, another participant complained:

It was not too difficult to write an article before. Now I need a week so that I can search what scholars from other countries have written. It is in a foreign language; you do not read it freely. You still need a lot of time to translate, to translate correctly. Not all of us know a foreign language. (Interview E, June 25, 2019)

According to university documents (Academic Council of NAU, 2018; Academic Council of TVHNPU, 2016; Academic Council of ZIFSU, 2019) and interview transcripts, student and academic staff mobility was a prime focus of the universities' internationalization strategies. All three universities had established bilateral cooperation agreements with European universities. For instance, cooperation with Polish universities was oriented at the students and academic staff mobility, double-degree programs, and study visits. Faculty members and students participated in European mobility programs, such as Tempus, Erasmus Mundus, and Erasmus+. However, during individual interviews, some participants recognized certain financial and legislative obstacles for bilateral cooperation with European universities:

We can send our students abroad [...] They go there for a semester to study; they study simultaneously here and there. But there is also a problem [...], the Diploma Supplement does not include those courses they take in Poland [...]. Because, according to the law, undergraduate students must complete 240 credits. If they complete more – they complete 240 only at [our] university, they still get additional ten in Poland, and it makes 250 credits – it is not allowed by the Ukrainian legislation. So, students study in Poland, Germany, or France, but they receive only additional certificates. (Interview C, June 18, 2019)

While the participants acknowledged that encouraging students to study abroad and attracting international students to their campuses were benefits of internationalization, increasing brain drain became a disadvantage for university operations. An interviewee described the situation:

Now there is a demographic fall in Ukraine. Moreover, a considerable number of citizens leave. They have a right to self-realization in life, in work, and in studying in other countries. The number of students has been decreasing in recent years. It has decreased significantly. (Interview I, July 5, 2019)

In summary, the increasing role of internationalization was the fourth theme that emerged during the data analysis. The decentralization of higher education governance and university autonomy forced university administrators to develop and enact university internationalization strategies. While academic mobility became a key topic discussed during the interviews, different internationalization opportunities were also outlined in university development strategies (see Appendix G).

Marketization of Higher Education

The marketization of higher education emerged as the fifth theme during the data analysis. This theme was constructed with the following codes: “becoming market-oriented,” “increasing competition,” “emphasis on university image and ranking,” “involving external stakeholders in university governance,” “becoming more transparent,” “digitalization of educational processes,” “assuring the quality of education,” “establishing the National Agency for Quality Assurance,” and so forth (see Appendix G).

Cooperation of European countries within the Bologna Process was aimed at two primary goals: (1) to provide European students and graduates with access to the European labour market and (2) to secure international competitiveness of European higher education (The Bologna Process revisited, 2015). Access to the European labour market and competitiveness of Ukrainian higher education became the main objectives and drivers for the national educational reforms. Ukraine initiated those reforms to accelerate its integration into the European and global educational space (President of Ukraine, 2013; Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014). National education policy promoted cooperation between education, science, business, and the state to ensure Ukraine’s sustainable socio-economic development and improve the education quality in the new economic and socio-cultural conditions. In 2013, the *National Development Strategy* recognized that one of the problems facing Ukrainian education was insufficient compliance of educational services with the needs of the society, the labour market, and graduates. The modern labour market required from graduates not only in-depth theoretical knowledge but also the

ability to apply them independently in non-standard, continually changing situations (President of Ukraine, 2013).

Following the national strategy, universities emphasized labour market orientation, competition, and education quality in their development strategies. Stimac and Simic (2012) stressed that “[i]n order to create a competitive market position for a higher education institution in such circumstances[,] it is necessary that it adopts marketing concept and philosophy and creates its strategy and activities in terms of market performance” (p. 24). As was admitted during the interviews, the marketization of higher education required adapting the curriculum to different stakeholders’ needs, adjusting laws and regulations, and changing education philosophy for universities to survive and develop. One of the participants commented on the influence of the current circumstances on university mission:

The latter [industry] does not only serve as a customer of experts, but it also influences teachers’ way of thinking: how they should work at universities so that a future expert becomes the one wanted by the industry in five years. We are still working out these moments. It’s not so simple [...] A global market is a global market; there are already global players, no longer regional but global problems. It is very important and necessary to understand all this. (Interview A, June 14, 2019)

The participants also discussed the transformations of universities into market-driven organizations and their influence on university policies. They frequently mentioned growing pressure to compete continually and to follow university ratings:

We are always in a race. There are ratings. We are always being told where we are, whether or not we are losing our position [...] we are continually competing, first and foremost, for enrollments. [...] We need to be responsive, continually evolving. It is stimulating. (Interview H, July 5, 2019)

In the discussion of the marketization of Ukrainian higher education, striving for higher education quality manifested itself as a key marketization practice. The policy on marketization through education quality assurance was more frequently mentioned and elaborated in state and university documents than during individual interviews. As was evident from document analysis, quality development strategies were introduced at the state and institutional levels. At the national level, the National Agency for Quality Assurance was recently established as a separate permanent collegial body to implement state policy on assuring the quality of higher education

(Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014). At the institution level, an internal university system of quality assurance was operating at all three universities. Each of them had separate units or boards responsible for quality assurance.

As part of their marketization strategy, Ukrainian public universities were encouraged to move not only towards quality education but also towards more transparency. In this regard, the specific codes were “becoming more transparent,” “digitalization of educational processes,” and “fighting corruption.” For example, the *Law “On higher education”* required all information regarding university governance and operations to be made public on the official university website. Therefore, it was easy to access current university statutes, development strategies, information on governing bodies, and the annual budget of each university, including university financial reports and reports on university performance. As one of the interviewees described this shift towards transparency, “We have all the information in the public domain, on the Internet, on our site. All regulations, all orders. Anyone has access to this. I think this is a positive thing” (Interview H, July 5, 2019). The same participant discussed digitalization as a tool to fight corruption and to marketize higher education:

Perhaps it [digital enrollment record] is a good thing because it helps us avoid corruption in universities. To win budgetary places, we still have to work hard on different metrics, such as research, material base, and teaching. It’s a big competition. (Interview H, July 5, 2019)

Another participant noted the benefits of digitalization as it simplified some administrative responsibilities related to monitoring the quality of education and student progress. He stated:

We were one of the first in Ukraine to digitalize the Bologna Process criteria through an electronic system. To date, we have an electronic system to track student achievements. It is very helpful for recording the ECTS credits. It helps a lot to provide education quality. (Interview J, July 8, 2019)

Overall, with Ukraine’s commitment to the Bologna Process, marketization of higher education became essential for Ukrainian universities. It emerged as a timely and promising strategy to govern Ukrainian public universities. The challenges discussed within the theme of marketization were related to competition, university ranking, education quality, and transparency on university governance.

Reconceptualizing National Identity

Reconceptualizing national identity became the final theme that emerged during the discussion of university governance change. This theme was constructed as collective concepts to unfold shifts in social values that became reflected in teaching approaches, theory and practice of learning, educational methods, and ultimately, educational values. Within this theme, different codes could be distinguished, such as “the influence of revolutions and war on public views and education,” “changing worldview,” “changing pedagogy,” “reviving and preserving national identity in education,” “reflections on Soviet education,” “Soviet authoritarian style of governance,” “differences between European and Ukrainian educational systems,” and so forth.

The theme began to form when a narrative about belonging to an independent Ukrainian nation developed through the document analysis and individual interviews. They recognized that people started to identify national beliefs and values as personally meaningful. As a result, these beliefs were translated into social movements away from the Soviet past toward European integration to establish a united civil political nation. Reconceptualization of national identity changed people’s attitude towards culture, religion, and language and consequently influenced educational practices (Interview C, June 18, 2019; Interview D, June 24, 2019; Interview I, July 5, 2019).

Gomilko et al. (2016) described current Ukrainian education philosophy and pedagogy as those, which contained a mix of “postcolonial (imperial — Russian, Austro-Hungarian), post-totalitarian (Soviet), national (Ukrainian), modern (European/Western) and global (world high standards) paradigms of higher education” (p. 178). According to these scholars, Ukrainian higher education was marked with such hybridity and the double totalitarian trauma from massive violence of Stalinism and Nazism, complicated by the repressive colonial practices.

Gomilko et al. (2016) summarized that modern education still carried the remnant of the past:

Instead, having got into the context of market relations, they [Ukrainian educational institutions] have demonstrated a flexible capacity for hybridization. The totalitarian has taken root firmly in the grip of the bureaucracy of HEU [higher education on Ukraine], while the colonial shows itself in its complexes of inferiority and humiliation. As a result of their hybridization, corruption has blossomed [...] with lush flowers of plagiarism, diploma “mills,” public disregard, loss of motivation to teach and learn, the humiliation of mind. (p. 182)

The theme of reconceptualizing national identity evolved as the participants narrated about social and historical triggers of the university governance transformation and frequently compared the old Soviet education system and the new Bologna-oriented Ukrainian education. Finally, all these social and historical transformations reflected in redefining the role of education in nation-building and the values of democracy and individual liberty. Since independence, Ukrainian universities had been transforming themselves fundamentally – away from Soviet ideals towards democratic values, institutional autonomy, and academic freedom (President of Ukraine, 2002, 2013; Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2002, 2014). Some participants kept connecting the events of Maidan with the emergence of democratic and liberal tendencies in the state-university relations. For example, one interviewee said,

[i]t seems these challenges in the state mainly helped. We have gone through a certain number of different revolutions [...]. And as a result of each of these revolutions, some things changed locally [at universities] as well. Some things changed in governance. From a certain authoritarian mode of governance, we went to democratization. Still, it is impossible to call our [university] governance completely democratic (Interview C, June 18, 2019)

The language also reflected this social transformation. For example, there appeared a new verb in the Ukrainian language rooted from *Maidan*, meaning to protest or stand for the ideals of the people on Maidan, democratization, freedom of speech, and the pro-European direction in policy (Tatarenko, 2014). Some participants used this newly-coined verb during their interviews. However, one participant complained that meaningful changes could not happen just through revolutions alone. The long-rooted collective consciousness of the oppressed nation should also change. He went as follows,

As Professor Preobrazhensky in the "Dog's Heart" said in Bulgakov's words: "The ruin is not on the streets, the ruin is in our minds" [a reference to a well-known book by a revolutionary Soviet writer]. The generations must change, the consciousness and the feeling that something depends on your thought, your voice, and your action should emerge. Unfortunately, most people think now, "It does not depend on me; I decide nothing." It leads to the fact that the society, the public is not active. The most active are either leaving or traveling to major cities or other countries. Less active remain. I hope this will change sometime. That is why it is impossible to say that something has changed

dramatically; it is happening bit by bit. No one canceled the process of evolution. We walk revolutionary paths. (Interview I, July 5, 2019)

Following the Bologna Process, Ukrainian higher education recognized the importance of building an effective education system on critical thinking, democratic and civic values essential to any democratic society. Such change in the overall vision for Ukrainian education called for new approaches to the study process itself and learning outcomes. As the theme progressed, the narrative unfolded that the social strivings for European integration brought not only democratization of education, but also the change in pedagogy, from teacher-centered to more student-oriented approaches. The following quotation might summarize the ideas of many participants on those changes:

[N]ow a teacher's role is to be a mentor, not as it used to be before the Bologna Process. It is more of a student's self-education through consultations with teachers. And, as a result of these actions, firstly, the activity of students and graduates is growing, and secondly, they are starting to work more independently. (Interview B, June 14, 2019)

Another participant admitted the following:

When I started [my career], I was asked whether a student was a subject or an object of the educational process [...] I said that they were subjects, and the Academic Council objected [...] Now it's no longer news that a student is a subject. Because, indeed, at first, they were only perceived as objects: everything was built around the fact that we were teaching them. They were like mummies. Now everyone is listening to what students say – ratings of teachers, questionnaires for students, students' opinions, what they think about teachers, and whether or not they are satisfied. These are the changes. (Interview D, June 24, 2019)

Reconceptualizing national identity was the last theme related to the university governance reforms. The theme was constructed to discuss the social and subsequent educational changes throughout Ukrainian independence and Ukraine's joining the Bologna Process. Such changes were identified as shifts towards democracy, reviving national identity, and reexamining public worldview and pedagogy.

This chapter presented six overarching themes that emerged in the course of data analysis. They were: the Bologna Process and its implementation, university autonomy, university collective governance, the increasing role of internationalization, marketization of

higher education, and reconceptualizing national identity. These themes guided my understanding of how the Bologna Process had impacted governance in Ukrainian public universities. The following chapter discusses the themes within the conceptual framework of institutional theory suggested in Chapter Two and interprets them in relation to the research questions.

CHAPTER FIVE – Interpretation of Findings

In the previous chapter, I presented key findings from the study and outlined six themes that emerged from the collected data. These themes helped me communicate the findings as well as bring required coherency to the data. Moreover, the outlined themes enabled me to understand how the Bologna Process had impacted Ukrainian public universities' governance. This chapter will illustrate how these themes fit together and relate to each other, drawing on the guiding conceptual framework presented in Chapter Two. As I analyzed and interpreted the findings, I kept in mind that the ultimate goal of this chapter was to communicate “data-based story/narrative, ‘map,’ framework, or underlying structure for the phenomenon or domain” (Elliott et al., 1999, p. 223) under analysis.

This chapter presents a data-based narrative by interpreting the meaning conveyed in the themes and applying concepts from the literature review and conceptual framework proposed in Chapter Two. Therefore, I look at the six themes from the perspective of sociological and historical institutionalism that places the interpretation of findings between two contesting influences of the Bologna Process and inherited Soviet legacies and structures. Based on the interpretation and synthesis of the six themes within the conceptual framework, I outline the main directions of university governance transformation in Ukraine. These directions help me address the research questions and bring coherency to the research narrative. I demonstrate that the university governance transformation in Ukraine occurs as reshaping inherited Soviet governing practices in the context of the Bologna Process. The institutionalization of Ukrainian higher education in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) results in the decentralization of higher education governance at the state and the university levels. Moreover, internationalization and marketization of higher education become two cornerstones of university development strategies. I conclude the chapter by exemplifying how the Bologna Process and Soviet legacies' interplay results in both the change and inertia in Ukrainian university governance. Consequently, university administrators are forced to reconcile some controversies caused by the tension between the Bologna Process and Soviet legacies in their governing practice.

Revisiting Research Questions and Conceptual Framework

While analyzing data, I always kept in mind my research questions and conceptual framework for the study. This study sought a comprehensive understanding of how the Bologna

Process impacted the governance in Ukrainian public universities and was guided by the following questions:

1. How has joining the Bologna Process changed the governance of public universities in Ukraine?
2. What are the challenges to and supports for transforming the governance of Ukrainian public universities?
3. What are the implications of the governance change for university policies and practices?

When I revisited my research questions at the end of my data analysis, I noticed that all research methods employed in the study provided data to answer the research questions to some extent. For example, the analysis of state legislation, university statutory documents, and individual interviews significantly contributed to my understanding of the university governance changes. However, I predominantly drew from analysis of individual interview transcripts while answering Research Questions 2 and 3. As for data analysis themes, each of the six relevant themes identified in Chapter Four addressed the research questions to a certain degree. Thus, the insights on university governance transformation, its challenges, supports, and implications could be found to varying degrees throughout all six themes: the Bologna Process and its implementation, university autonomy, university collective governance, the increasing role of internationalization, marketization of higher education, and reconceptualizing national identity.

As for a conceptual framework, two theoretical streams of institutional theory – sociological institutionalism (Meyer & Rowan, 1977) and historical institutionalism (Hall & Taylor, 1996) – guided the study and helped me interpret the findings. In Chapter Two, the study's conceptual framework situated Ukrainian public universities in the environments of the Ukrainian national educational system and the larger EHEA. Ukrainian public universities experienced isomorphic influences from these two distinct institutional fields. Consequently, the universities function in the domain of two main contesting forces of the Bologna Process and the historically inherited Soviet structures.

According to sociological institutionalism, the Bologna Process acted as an impetus to transforming university governance in Ukraine and a convergent force within the EHEA. Ukraine's commitment to the Bologna Process forced universities to change to respond to the new demands of the EHEA. In this case, Ukrainian universities were pressured to homogenize with other European universities. They accepted and legitimized certain governing practices to

be competitive in the new environment. Given the historical institutionalism, Ukrainian universities operated in the specific context of post-Soviet higher education. The Soviet authoritarian values and beliefs still survived in this institutional field. Therefore, the inherited Soviet legacies and governing structures represented a divergent influence on the rhetoric and practice of Bologna reforms in Ukraine. As a result, the transformation of Ukrainian university governance could be portrayed as the continuous interplay between different isomorphic influences of the Bologna Process and Soviet legacies.

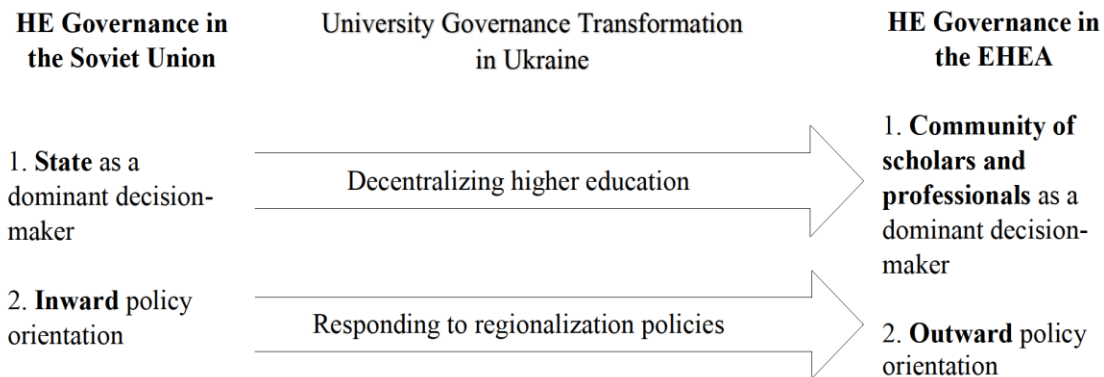
Revisiting research questions, conceptual framework, and literature review allowed me to inquire the extent or means by which European market-oriented policies had caused the three Ukrainian public universities to converge to more open and participatory governing models. Concurrently, I tracked the inquiry line where the Bologna reforms intersected with the Soviet foundations of higher education governance. Of particular interest were instances where such intersection enabled preserving the Soviet inherited administrative principles, such as single-person management or top-down decision-making (see Chapter Two). Therefore, guided by the institutional theory, I interpret the six overarching themes from the collected data within two directions of university governance transformation in Ukraine. The two directions are (1) decentralizing higher education inherited from the Soviet times and (2) responding to European regionalization policies. These directions can be conceptualized as the institutionalization of Ukrainian higher education on its way to the EHEA. They are visualized as those placed on the trajectory between the Soviet education model and the EHEA with a more “marketized” education approach (see Figure 5.1).

For example, the first direction of decentralizing higher education emerged considering the shift in dominant decision-makers in university governance from the state (Soviet legacy) to the community of scholars and professionals (the Bologna Process). Likewise, the second direction of responding to European regionalization policies was placed on the continuum between relative isolation from the world and inward orientation (Soviet legacy) to global openness and competitiveness (the Bologna Process). Such visualization made it possible to achieve several goals. First, I incorporated the dynamic aspect into the interpretation of findings and approached the research from the perspective of institutional isomorphism in the context of organizational change. Second, the discussion of findings within these directions illustrated an intersection of the Bologna Process and Soviet legacies in university governance. It opened up

the opportunity to analyze the challenges to and supports for university governance transformations posed by the contesting forces of two institutional fields: the EHEA and the Ukrainian higher education system. I also examined isomorphic influences of state and university governments (e.g., the Ministry of Education, other governmental organizations, and the universities themselves) and relevant stakeholder groups (professionals, employees, students, etc.) in university governance transformation. Finally, the two directions of university governance reforms allowed me to look at the Ukrainian educational system, keeping in mind a unique set of historical, social, economic, and political conditions to identify implications of university governance transformation.

Figure 5.1

University Governance Transformation in Ukraine



The following sections of this chapter offer an interpretation of research findings within two identified directions of university governance transformation. A short overview of the Ukrainian institutional landscape before the Bologna Process precedes the discussion of each direction. These overviews serve as a starting point for the analysis of the university governance reforms. Such an approach enables me to detect and interpret distinctive features of the Bologna-associated reforms in the Ukrainian educational context and trace public university governance transformation since 2005.

Decentralizing Higher Education

With independence in 1991, the point of departure for Ukrainian universities was some distinctive post-Soviet characteristics such as state-centeredness and central planning. Seven decades of Soviet institutional arrangements shaped a strong top-down administration pattern at all levels of higher education governance (Kuraev, 2016; Rummyantseva & Logvynenko, 2018;

Shaw, 2013; Smolentseva et al., 2018). Joining the Bologna Process brought substantial variation in how Ukrainian higher education was governed. The rhetoric started about the necessity to limit government roles in the organization and management of Ukrainian universities.

Decentralization became a key focus of all educational reforms. All six themes identified in the data analysis allowed me to interpret the research findings within the direction to decentralization and self-governing in higher education. However, the themes of the Bologna Process and its implementation, university autonomy, and university collective governance contributed the most to such an interpretation.

In public education, decentralization usually refers to the transfer of decision-making authority from the central government such as a ministry of education to local governments, communities, and universities or schools (Winkler, n.d.)—that is, “closer to the consumer or beneficiary” (Winkler, n.d., para.2). The discussion about the decentralization of higher education was centered around a primary consideration of who made major decisions regarding university functioning and activities. Both document analysis and individual interviews showed that decentralization had been unfolding at the state and university levels. The following quotation from an individual interview reflected participants’ common perception of decentralization tendencies at these two levels,

There have been some changes here if we talk about the administration and the interaction between the state and the university, and they are stated in the new Law “On higher education” adopted in 2014. [...] these are decentralization, university autonomy, and, respectively, the autonomy of their structural divisions in decision-making on educational, methodological, organizational, personnel [issues]. It is truly observed today. (Interview B, June 14, 2019)

In terms of institutional theory, decentralization of Ukrainian higher education can be interpreted through the degree of isomorphism exerted by the state and university governments and the redistribution of powers among the institutional actors. Therefore, the following subsections will discuss how the decentralizing and self-governing tendencies have evolved in state-university relations and internal university governance. I will interpret to what extent and by what means the Ministry of Education continues to exercise coercive influences on university functioning. Moreover, I will elaborate on whether the restructuring of university administrative bodies and the introduction of new actors influence organizational choice and decision-making.

University and the State

The decentralization of Ukrainian higher education at the state level manifested itself through the reforms in state-university relations—specifically, introducing university autonomy as a primary vector of such reforms. These changes occurred through introducing additional actors in higher education governance and redistributing the responsibilities among existing ones.

Establishing the National Agency for Quality Assurance (NAQA) could illustrate the first strategy. Since 2019, the NAQA had been functioning as a new independent agency and assumed the Ministry of Education's responsibilities related to the program accreditation at all higher education levels. As such, the NAQA took over responsibilities for the accreditation of institutions and programs, standards development and approval, opening and closing programs and institutions, and degree registration (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014). In comparison, the Ministry was still responsible for setting accreditation standards. Many participants questioned how this division of responsibilities for quality insurance at the national level would operate in practice at the level of universities. The question also remained whether the NAQA would prove itself a decentralizing power capable of opposing overly bureaucratizing quality verification procedures formerly enacted by the Ministry (Interview A, June 14, 2019; Interview F, June 25, 2019; Interview I, July 5, 2019). These concerns originated from the unreasonably long process of its creation (i.e., more than five years) and the agency of people involved.

The second decentralization strategy was redistributing the responsibilities among newly created and already existing actors. While new independent agencies were created at the state level, some old committees that were utterly subordinate to the Ministry, such as the Higher Attestation Committee, were liquidated. Thus, the universities assumed their responsibilities for the degree awarding process. Additionally, university freedom from the state expanded to cover educational, research, personnel, and some financial issues (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014).

One of the many examples of autonomous university operation was the university's developing its mission and vision statements. Before joining the Bologna Process, the Ukrainian government solely determined the goals of higher educational institutions. Those goals depended on the predetermined national agenda outlined in the *National Development Strategy*. Ukrainian universities recently received the right to act in their self-interests, develop their strategies, and elaborate their university vision and mission statements based on their unique interests and

specialization areas. In all three research sites – National Aviation University (NAU), Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University (TVHNPU), and Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University (ZIFSU), university development strategies never existed before the Bologna Process and even in the years after 2005. The first mission and vision statements were developed by ZIFSU as early as 2013. They were further elaborated on in 2019. NAU and TVHNPU developed their strategies only in 2016 and 2018, respectively. Those strategic plans were grounded on the National Development Strategy; however, each university defined its priorities and was guided by its specialization area. For instance, NAU determined its goals following the recommendations of international aviation organizations, such as the International Civil Aviation Organization and the European Aviation Safety Agency (Academic Council of NAU, 2018).

Hladchenko (2016) viewed the acquired right of Ukrainian universities to define their mission and vision statements as a method to define their organizational identities. The researcher emphasized that in their transition from the Soviet past to the European future, Ukrainian universities should exercise their autonomy “to interpret and respond to the changes in the institutional environment, claiming their organizational identity through mission statements” (Hladchenko, 2016, p. 376). However, the analysis of the universities’ strategies showed that only ZIFSU defined itself through its mission statement. All other universities preferred to declare their aspirations through goal-setting instead of defining themselves. Therefore, their mission and vision statements performed similar functions of envisioning the development of the universities. Such aspirations varied from comparatively broad to more specific goals – from “a contribution to the social development at the national and international levels through the generation of new knowledge and innovative ideas” (Academic Council of NAU, 2018, p. 2) to the preservation, dissemination, and development of the values of Ukrainian and world culture (Academic Council of TVHNPU, 2016).

In all three research sites, University Academic Councils had developed universities’ strategies, including their mission and vision statements. No information was available on the involvement of other university members, people from outside universities, and various stakeholders in developing the mission and vision statements. As there was no to minimal reference to the universities’ level of openness, public and private sectors, analysis of current industry trends, and other parameters, it was difficult to conclude whether each of the three research sites was guided by the long-term approach in university strategizing.

Another example of a university's increased responsibility within the decentralization direction was organizational autonomy. Even though the existing legal framework limited the capacity to shape their internal academic structures, Ukrainian universities became relatively free to decide on their administration or organizational structures. The vivid manifestation of increased university's administrative autonomy became a limited government role in the university governing body's (s)election. As Chapter Four described, the appointment and dismissal of university rectors by the state were replaced with university-wide elections. Similar procedures of electing administrators occurred at each university level, starting with university presidents and academic councils' election to more unit-specific elections of department heads. The following quotation exemplifies the participants' unanimous favorable attitude towards their universities' administrative autonomy:

The rector's office is elected by staff, and deans and directors are elected entirely by the staff. If earlier these positions were simply appointed, the rector was appointed by the Ministry of Education, he came and ruled here. Now the situation has slightly changed. It has to be a person chosen by the entire staff. The same also applies to deans and directors. (Interview C, June 18, 2019)

Such elections by popular vote were designed to involve the academic community in managing university affairs. However, it also served as a ground for concerns. Two participants hinted at the possibility of corruption and improper administrative influences as significant interferences during the university rector election (Interview F, June 25, 2019; Interview G, July 2, 2019). The public widely supported this line of narrative. There existed a fear that university autonomy would let universities' rectors "rule their institutions at their will" (Osipian, 2017, p. 239), which inevitably led to corruption. Therefore, public control should be strengthened and introduced as a lever to counterbalance university autonomy (Hrynevych, 2016).

While the government handed over responsibility for academic, organizational, and administrative issues to universities, it blocked their financial autonomy. Kvit (2018), a former Minister of Education, summed up that while "[the] state renounces its right to intervene in the operational activities of higher education institutions [and]... recognizes key principles of university life such as trust, respect and openness" (para. 7), it reserved to itself necessary financial tools. This financial governance highly resembled the Soviet state-centered one, with the state budget as the primary funding base and itemized funding approach. The senior

administrators recognized that the lack of financial autonomy became a significant challenge to cope with while decentering higher education governance in Ukraine. One participant put it as follows: “it is impossible to call our governance completely democratic since we depend entirely on the Ministry of Education, both in financing and allocating publicly-funded places. Therefore, it is rather difficult to say that we have complete autonomy” (Interview C, June 18, 2019).

The lack of university financial autonomy originated from two specific issues. First, Ukrainian universities remained highly dependent on the state budget as the primary funding source. Ukrainian universities were financed from the budget based on the expenses from the past years, which had been based on perceived university’s needs. Moreover, there was no formalized control of whether the state order adequately reflected society’s needs and the economy. The number of state-funded places depended entirely on the university capacities for educational services and the number of faculty. Such a situation led to a deterioration in the quality of higher education, as universities were interested neither in expelling failing students nor in accepting only high performing ones:

How can we develop? If we take the financial side, we are entirely dependent on the state. For each “state-funded student,” the Ministry of Education pays about 40,000 hryvnias per study year. The tuition fee of a student who pays for herself is a maximum of 24,000. [...] Therefore, we depend entirely on the number of state-funded places that the state allocates to us. [...] That is why we are forced to enroll “average” and “weak” students. (Interview C, June 18, 2019)

Second, the right to allocate any funds – distributed by the state or received from other sources – was still strictly controlled by the state. Existing treasury services and budget planning created enormous obstacles in allotting financial autonomy to universities. The laws specified certain restrictions on the use of university funding by the university administration. The line-item budgets were still used, and universities could not shift funds between budget lines. For example, the maximum available amount might be prescribed to a particular budget line or funding from a specific source should be used only in a certain way.

The insufficient state budget funding forced all three universities to diversify sources of their funding. The universities tried to attract budgets of all levels: private and commercial funds, sponsorship of foreign partners, international organizations, and foundations. University senior administrators had to continuously analyze new challenges in university activities, closely

monitor university finances, negotiate, expand public relations, develop plans for international cooperation, and liaise with the relevant ministries and their enterprises to attract additional funds. As well, a lack of clear legislation on international funding posed challenges for university administrators. As one participant put it:

To date, every day of the university's functioning is a challenge. [...] The emergence of a proposal for cooperation, whether from China, Poland, France, or Germany, is also a challenge. [...] Signing a new dual diploma agreement is also a challenge. [...] We are planning excellent cooperation with China. It is a challenge for our region to open the first Confucius Institute [...]. (Interview J, July 8, 2019)

Finally, the political dimension of educational reforms constituted an additional challenge for the higher education governance transformation. Top-down implementation of any initiative was rooted in the Soviet educational practices, with the Ministry of Education and political parties in government playing a decisive role. Even though document analysis revealed that any Bologna-driven educational reforms were to be initiated and implemented in a strictly top-down fashion, only individual interviews capitalized on the remaining Soviet bureaucracy scale. Some participants emphasized that the top-down implementation of the Bologna left no place for contextual adaptation. No opportunity was left for university administrators to voice their thoughts on the initiatives. Moreover, several participants complained that the Bologna reforms' speed was directly related to the governing parties' political agenda. Thus, the government's attitude significantly determined whether Europeanization was the educational direction to follow. Half of the participants explicitly stated that Yanukovich's presidency and the pro-Russian government meant a stagnation period for all Bologna reforms in Ukraine. In contrast, the very first year of pro-European majority in government resulted in new Bologna-driven legislation (Interview A, June 14, 2019; Interview C, June 18, 2019; Interview A, June 25, 2019; Interview G, July 2, 2019; Interview I, July 5, 2019).

Overall, Bologna-associated reforms in Ukraine centered around decentralizing higher education governance, primarily in state-university relations. While the universities received administrative, organizational, and academic autonomy, they desperately called for the financial one. The still-existing government-funded system and the current legislation on allocating university funds significantly challenged university governance. An additional challenge to the decentralizing efforts came from political parties' interference in the educational reforms.

University Internal Governance and Decision-Making

At the university level, decentralization meant transferring powers from higher to lower levels of an organization (State University, n.d.; Wynnycky, 2015). The Bologna-driven decentralization at the university level was discussed in three distinct areas: (1) the division of responsibilities between university administrators, (2) students' participation in decision-making, and (3) the involvement of external stakeholders in university governance.

The analysis of state legislation and university statutory documents presented a well-rounded picture of how responsibilities were distributed between university administrative structures. All three research sites had multiple actors involved in the university self-governance: rector/president, academic council, supervisory board, a supreme collegial body of public self-governance at the university, deans and directors, departmental heads, students' self-governing body, different task forces, units, and temporary committees. The dominant message of individual interviews was that a university rector's power was no longer absolute. The Soviet single-person management principle had been formally substituted by a shared governance approach carried out by an Academic Council. Moreover, a rector was legally not entitled to chair an Academic Council at all three research sites. The participants identified that such legislative move was a step towards university internal decentralization:

Our rector is not the head of the Academic Council. In my opinion, it is right. It adds to the university's ability to move in a more democratic direction. To some extent, it offsets administrative pressure, which is not, as I would say, direct. (Interview I, July 5, 2019)

However, the rectors could still cancel any decision of other university governing bodies. They could both delegate a part of their responsibilities as well as gain them back. Such an opportunity created the preconditions for a somewhat deformed governance system, which was too "tied" to the university rector (Fedorchenko, 2016).

The functioning of an Academic Council could be compared to the administrative authorities of a Western university's Senate. An Academic Council's authority complemented a rector's authority to a certain point. Thus, this governing body had the legal authority to approve budgets and expenditure, to open academic programs, to decide on quality assurance procedures, to hire and promote (Conference of Labour Collective of NAU, 2018; Conference of Labour Collective of TVHNPU, 2018; Conference of Labour Collective of ZIFSU, 2016; Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014). University Academic Councils could even question a rector's

performance and suggest the academic community recall a rector. Academic Councils were created not only at the university level but also at each institute or college level. These collegial decision-making bodies assumed the responsibilities, which belonged solely to deans and directors, thus decentralizing university internal governance.

The distribution of authority among university governing bodies was evident in the state legislation and universities' statutory documents. However, of all governing bodies at the university, a rector still had the widest scope of authority and responsibility. Moreover, a few participants stated that university staff still endowed the rector with the enormous power of decision-making, as the majority still perceived university governance as authoritarian. One of the participants explained this as follows:

Unfortunately, the development of our society today is such that administrative pressure or any external pressure is greater in people's minds than in reality. People imagine more by themselves or think that whatever their boss said should be 100% true. They do not try to analyze, think, or read regulatory documents. (Interview I, July 5, 2019)

The perception of such an authoritarian style of governance could be traced through the language participants used or ideas they expressed. For example, "with a proper manager, this process [of decision-making] is ensured" (Interview G, July 2, 2019) or "we were told [...] and that was final" (Interview D, June 24, 2019). Another participant complained, "there is a desire to work. However, this desire is not always achievable due to, sometimes, the conservatism of the leadership" (Interview F, June 25, 2019).

Such obsolete Soviet perception of superiors' undivided and unquestionable authority became a significant challenge for university governance reforms, as it hindered individuals' ability to exercise their agency. An agency suggested an intrinsically proactive human will, a person's capacity to act on her behalf (Marginson, 2014). Marginson (2014) envisioned agency as historically grounded and subject to relations of power. Individual agency of university staff required their ability to act independently, make an autonomous decision within their newly acquired responsibilities, and show initiative. Before Ukraine's commitment to the Bologna Process, Soviet-inherited centralization of power in the administration core precluded university members from practicing critical thinking and decision making. As Reilly (1995) phrased it, "[t]he system expected, demanded, and rewarded conformity. Independent decision making and action were punished" (p. 242). It could be vividly traced through individual interviews that

modern university administrators and staff often lacked personal initiative for decision making. For instance, the inability to exercise individual agency was described as following:

It might sound strange, but it is necessary to activate deans as well. I would like them to take a more active position in university governance. [...] There is a certain fate of conservatism. There is a certain fate of traditionalism as a rector used to decided everything. Deans did nothing if a rector did not tell them otherwise. To take the initiative was very harmful. (Interview J, July 8, 2019)

The senior administrator characterized the lack of independent action as ‘conservatism’ or ‘traditionalism’ and stated further that it had debilitating effects on university governance reforms. Such perception implied that the inability to exercise individual agency was rooted in the Soviet practices of top-down command and decision-making. However, the Bologna-driven reforms required individuals to change more dynamically and become proactive in university power relations.

While the lack of individual agency became a liability, teamwork was identified as one of the supports in reforming university governance. The facilitating power of teamwork and joint efforts were viewed as helpful and essential. The participants used the phrases like “[a] team of professionals who helped” (Interview G, July 2, 2019), “we help each other” (Interview E, June 25, 2019), “the supporting factor was the team” (Interview J, July 8, 2019). Even the TVHNPU’s Development Strategy stressed that the university could develop purposefully and dynamically only by means of “the coordinated teamwork” (Academic Council of TVHNPU, 2016, p. 2).

The second central area of university internal governance transformation was students’ participation in decision-making. A strong student government became a cornerstone of a dynamic university community and a power to be reckoned with in developing a democratic society (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014). Driven by the Bologna Process, the universities granted students more rights to participate in university governance through a system of student government and student unions (Conference of Labour Collective of NAU, 2018; Conference of Labour Collective of TVHNPU, 2018; Conference of Labour Collective of ZIFSU, 2016). Students were involved in major governing decisions ranging from appointments of vice-rectors and deputy deans to property management. Participants unanimously recognized that student self-government was an essential means of forming democratic traditions and culture. However, some expressed concerns about whether students possessed the required knowledge and skills to

practice democratic procedures. Participants phrased their concerns as follows: “[students] do not know [...] how democratic processes are ensured. Students do not have elementary concepts” (Interview G, July 2, 2019); “[t]hey do not feel this responsibility at the moment” (Interview A, June 14, 2019); “the student body sometimes goes out of its mercantile interests” (Interview I, July 5, 2019); or “these young people are not always able to exercise their authority” (Interview J, July 8, 2019). The participants deemed student self-government as incapable of solving student problems and decentralizing university governance. Students’ passivity, inertia, and indifference to many university activities remained a significant problem. Participants identified the lack of students’ agency as a challenge to effective student self-governance. One of the interviewees compared student self-governance to *makhnovshchyna* – an attempt to form a stateless anarchist society during the Ukrainian Revolution of 1917 to 1921, the Free Territory called Makhnovshchyna (Subtelny, 2009):

At the level of decision-making on the Academic Council, [...] their [students’] contribution is not very significant yet. I think the same is happening in the whole of Ukraine, not only in our university. Regarding their independence as such, at the moment, it is still a kind of makhnovshchyna. Students understand that they are a significant part of the university in organizing all processes, influencing these processes, they want to have many rights, but somehow, they shift responsibility to someone else.

They do not feel this responsibility at the moment. (Interview A, June 14, 2019)

As a result, students did not fully understand how to exercise their newly acquired rights in university governance. As well, the universities had not developed traditions of interaction and cooperation between student government and university administration.

The involvement of external stakeholders in university governance was the third area of university internal governance transformation. In 2014, Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine legally provided a framework to involve external stakeholders in the university governance. The universities received the right to form various advisory bodies (e.g., the council of investors, the council of industry representatives, etc.) to develop universities’ strategies. While external representatives were in the minority on the governing body, their presence might still ensure that no single group was in a majority position (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014). Thus, each of the three universities had a Supervisory Board. Each institution’s statute defined the composition of this governing body and its responsibilities based on the *Law*. No university employee was

allowed to be its member. According to the quota, supervisory boards consisted of delegates from the state government, local government, and industry representatives, reelected every five years. Supervisory boards also gained more responsibilities. However, only one interviewee mentioned their actual participation in university affairs. The senior administrator characterized external stakeholders' involvement as somewhat limited and exemplified only one occasion when they were present at the graduation exams (Interview D, June 24, 2019). Such minimal attention to external stakeholders questioned their meaningful involvement in university governance.

Thus, while the decentralization processes began at the state and university levels, it was too soon to talk about substantial institutional change. Ukrainian universities received administrative, organizational, and academic autonomy; however, the state reserved the right for financial decisions as a mechanism of coercive power in organizations. Simultaneously, the institutional contexts of Ukraine's political vectors either enabled or constrained university governance transformation. In their attempt to legitimize themselves in the wider international environment of the EHEA, the three universities adhered to the Bologna reforms. They divided the responsibilities among the university administrative bodies and allowed different stakeholder groups to participate in the decision-making processes. Yet, the inherited Soviet values and beliefs about university governance still exerted normative isomorphism and acted as a divergent force in the pro-European trajectory. They resulted in the lack of agency on the part of some administrators and students to contribute to university organizational processes.

Responding to European Regionalization Policies

Responding to European regionalization policies is the second direction of university governance transformation in the context of the Bologna Process. Although all themes described in Chapter Four contributed to identifying this direction, it was mainly formed by the themes of the increasing role of internationalization, the marketization of higher education, and reconceptualizing national identity. If placed on the continuum between the Soviet educational model and the EHEA, responding to European regionalization policies could be conceptualized as a shift from the Soviet relative isolation from the world to the global openness and competitiveness of the Bologna Process. In 1991, Ukraine inherited the Soviet system of higher education with central planning and a top-down command structure. Higher education was required to train a certain number of specialists in demand for a national economic planning

system (Kuraev, 2016; Romyantseva & Logvynenko, 2018; Smolentseva et al., 2018). The government guaranteed students' employment after graduation. Central supervision over training specialists eliminated competition in higher education and loosened the direct connection between higher educational institutions and specific industries. Smolentseva et al. (2018) described the Soviet type of organizing higher education as a "way of linking the training of higher educated cadre with the needs of industrialization and military mobilization" (p. 8). However, such an approach left no place for institutional autonomy, global competition, marketization, and internationalization.

Ukraine's joining the Bologna Process opened the universities to internationalization within the EHEA and external orientation toward global demands and the global labour market. Given the conceptual framework of sociological and historical institutionalism, Ukrainian universities faced the choice to align themselves with the external governance models and policies successful in the EHEA. In this case, the EHEA served as a platform to exercise European 'soft governance.' The Bologna Process promoted the consolidation and international openness of the EHEA while "strengthening dialogue between public authorities, academia, student representatives and civil society" (Parliamentary Assembly, 2012, para. 1). Bologna-driven reforms called for a more distinct direction towards the market and society, both nationally and globally. For Ukrainian higher education, such policy meant a significant shift from relatively inward to comparatively outward educational orientation. Moreover, the harmonization of higher education among all participating countries not only served as a convergence mechanism but also invoked competition between the EHEA members. Thus, in the following subsections, the discussion will unfold around the meaning of Ukrainian universities' policies and governance reforms within the broader institutional environment of the EHEA.

Universities' Internationalization and Marketization Strategies

Ukrainian higher education's direction to respond to European regionalization policies could be traced through universities' internationalization and marketization strategies. The three Bologna-oriented research sites prioritized internationalization in their development strategies. Their internationalization agenda varied from international partnerships – European-focused and expanded to other continents – to internationalization at home. Internationalization initiatives included but were not limited to academic mobility, domestic and international, cooperation with international universities and non-educational organizations, participation in

international research projects, and joint research. All three research sites had extensive geography of international cooperation, including universities in Belarus, Canada, China, France, Germany, Italy, Mongolia, Russia, Poland, Turkmenistan, Turkey, and the USA. The partnership lists of the three research sites did not differ much, though the nature of those partnerships had slight differences. While TVHNPU and ZIFSU mainly focused on educational partnerships, NAU deliberately sought partnerships with international industries. For example, TVHNPU cooperated with a Chinese university to launch the Confucius Institute program to promote language and culture learning and facilitate cultural exchanges with China. In comparison, NAU was developing industrial cooperation with a Chinese company to train a number of aviation specialists for the fast-growing aviation sector in China. Given the partnerships with international universities, Polish universities remained the primary international partners for all three research sites despite the three universities' intentions to broaden the geography of cooperating countries in dual diploma programs. Each university had developed very close cooperation with Polish universities at the levels of institutes, individual faculties, and specialties.

While the internationalization strategies were well-described in universities' statutory documents, some participants considered that their practical implementation lacked clarity and proper comprehensive planning. The universities mainly employed mimetic behaviors to respond to the Bologna requirements. They imitated some of the European structures or practices, such as establishing separate units to manage international cooperation. However, as one senior administrator explained, such imitation was not productive as it lacked proper understanding. The changes could neither be successfully adopted nor bring the desired results. The participant further noted that international cooperation mainly rested on the shoulders of proactive individuals rather than being a product of coordinated institutional effort:

There is also such a collaboration with other universities: invited professors come to us. [...] To increase their qualifications, they should lecture for some time abroad. And professors from Poland, who sometimes teach in Polish, occasionally in Ukrainian or in English, come to us. And this is how the cooperation happens. When live communication between teachers takes place, then it will be continued later, and specific projects might start. One cannot say that our international department initiates projects which we only need to join [...] that is not happening in reality. (Interview C, June 18, 2019)

Internationalization discourses were connected to the issues of reconceptualizing national identity and preserving Ukrainian national values. In such cases, the participants' attitudes toward Europeanization were past-dependent, predominantly influenced by the past Soviet practices and arrangements. As previously mentioned in Chapter Two, during the Soviet times, the internationalist policy was introduced as the path to equality and universal solidarity. According to this policy, separate nations ceased to be themselves, were deprived of their own national identities, and forced to merge into a nationless mass under Soviet-wide Russification (Dziuba, 1998). The knowledge of the Ukrainian national tradition and the historical past were lost due to the complete absence of national education. Ukrainian national culture was treated as second-rate. The Ukrainian language was forbidden to use in public institutions. This internationalist policy eradicated the remnants of national identity both in the Ukrainian collective and individual consciousness (Dziuba, 1998).

Such previous experience of abnormal internationalist policy has marked Ukraine's building international relations with other countries. Thus, the participants expressed two different opinions on internationalization in light of reconceptualizing national identity. First, the integration with Europe meant the opposition to the Soviet past. Thus, the internationalization of Ukrainian higher education was contrasted to the Soviet educational policies and the integration with Russia. Europeanization was implied as a consequence of the political and social movement for the dominance of Ukrainian cultural traditions, away from the oppressive Soviet influences. In this regard, a few participants interpreted the revolutions and the current war with Russia as attempts to protect and preserve Ukrainian national identity. Such interpretation might have resulted from the totalitarian policies that had forbidden Ukrainian culture, religion, and language during the Soviet times. One senior administrator expressed the idea as follows:

[W]e were going through very difficult times. The Orange Revolution. We survived it. It was "before," "during," and "after." When the wave rose, then fell, that wave brought something to its surface... they [students] do not care what a state is and why it is. And this entails both language issues and national culture issues. They [students] need to be citizens of their own country, ... educated on certain values, which they are responsible for defending. [...] The last events had shown that when a considerable part, but not the whole society, came out to defend democratic systems and the desire to go to Europe, a

large portion remained at home and watched it... Why? ... lack of patriotic education. (Interview G, July 2, 2019)

While some participants perceived internationalization as beneficial for rediscovering national identity, the others doubted whether the European integration would be any different from the Soviet unification under the oppressive internationalist policy. The participants recognized the distinctions between the Soviet and the Ukrainian, between the Ukrainian and the European. They feared that the newly-rediscovered Ukrainian national values might be sacrificed in the name of adapting to the European educational principles. The participants voiced this concern as follows: “Then, it [the Bologna Process] happened, and we forgot about our previous system of education” (Interview E, June 25, 2019), “Ukrainian educational traditions must be taken into account and not lost. And yet, a great opportunity [the integration into the EHEA] has been given to higher education institutions” (Interview F, June 25, 2019), and “[T]here are plenty of advantages in unifying educational programs, courses, education systems, but there are many disadvantages because many institutions lose their identity, their history, their system of education” (Interview C, June 18, 2019).

Notwithstanding different opinions on internationalization and rediscovering national identity, the participants agreed that internationalization had broken the long-lasting Soviet policy of self-isolation. Ukrainian scholars gained access to international academic journals, global databases, and uncensored information. They had opportunities to publish their works in international peer-reviewed journals, participate in international conferences, and promote their research outside the country.

Alongside internationalization, marketization became another European regionalization policy that the three universities prioritized in their development strategies. More recently, market-oriented approaches had guided the universities’ decision-making and daily operations. According to Dobbins and Knill (2017), a marketized university “autonomously regulate[s] its own institutional parameters, strategically design[s] structures and study programs, while often aligning them with socioeconomic demands” (p. 71). The scholars did not imply that marketization meant the complete detachment of a university from the state rather than a more direct business and commerce impact on university policy-making. All three research sites set their agendas toward consumer orientation and regional, national, and global economic cooperation. For instance, ZIFSU took into account the needs of the labour market of Ukraine

and other countries when licensing and opening new educational programs. The university systematically analyzed its graduates' employment and facilitated two-way communication with employers and the Association of University Alumni (Academic Council of ZIFSU, 2019). NAU established the Quality Board to monitor and assess the university's strategic response to the external challenges and the global market requirements. Additionally, NAU cooperated with several leading regional and international aviation organizations to meet regional and global labour market demands (Academic Council of NAU, 2019).

Within their market-oriented strategies, the universities adopted a transparency policy. All three research sites disclosed factual information about university governance. Years of non-transparent practices gave way to more openness in universities' policies and practices, daily operations, and decision-making. Senior university administrators timely updated university economic, academic, research, and administrative activities on the official university websites. Consequently, all documentation of the three research sites was available online. As one of the participants emphasized, "the consequence [of the marketization] is the transparency of the educational process, even for reducing and preventing corrupt schemes, increasing employment opportunities, and improving quality" (Interview D, June 24, 2019). Such transparency determined the university's reputation. The documents for all three research sites stressed that maintaining the universities' reputation as transparent organizations would result in their survival in the market. The same idea was conveyed by one participant who said during an interview, "I do not know how it used to be, but now every respectable university must also care about image policy and university branding" (Interview J, July 8, 2019).

Challenges within Marketization and Internationalization Policies

The marketization and internationalization of Ukrainian higher education challenged university governance in two respects: (1) promoting strategic competition between universities and (2) facilitating the outflow of students from Ukrainian universities. The competition as an isomorphic mechanism (Beckert, 2010) acquired a double meaning for Ukrainian universities. First, Ukrainian universities competed at the national level for higher positions at the national rankings, the state budget funding, and tuition-paying domestic students. Second, Ukrainian universities competed internationally to be represented in global university ranking and attract more international students. Higher positions in global ranking meant securing international partners and third-party funding and receiving more tuition payments. In both cases, universities

adhered to the new institutional rules of market-driven practices. However, all three universities' resources and financial capacity were insufficient for their effective competition in the global market. The participants recognized that universities struggled not only to appear in global rankings but also to stay on the surface among hundreds of Ukrainian universities (Interview A, June 14, 2019; Interview F, June 25, 2019; Interview G, July 2, 2019). As one of the participants explained:

We do not say that we can compete today, for example, with European universities or with American ones. We have different financing. We must realize clearly that an American university, which is among the top ten in the world ranking, has tens of billions of dollars budget, while we have only a few tens of millions of dollars. We aren't so naive to say that we can compete with American or European universities, which have vast traditions of relations with industry. (Interview A, June 14, 2019)

While senior administrators from NAU and TVHNPU talked about their universities being internationally competitive, the participants from ZIFSU concentrated mainly on national or even regional competition. For example, NAU's strategic goal was to enter the global top 1000 universities according to the QS World University Rankings and the top 100 Technical Universities, according to the Times Higher Education World University Rankings. The ZIFSU senior administrators claimed that a vast number of Ukrainian universities increased the competition for them on the national level. Thus, they required solid governing practices to find their unique niche within the regional and national education markets:

[t]he competition has increased. Because of the ratings I mentioned earlier, we keep an eye on it [competition]. Speaking of [the name of the institute], we have always been a monopolist. That is, in our [...] region, we only trained specialists in [major]. However, this year [the name of the competitor] opened a specialty in [major] [...] We need to be responsive, continually evolving. (Interview H, July 5, 2019)

However, all participants admitted that constant competitiveness and maintaining the university's image and ranking had enormous pressure on university governance. Senior administrators framed the current situation as a challenging task: "It is difficult for us to compete in the global market" (Interview A, June 14, 2019), "Every self-respecting university has to prove its existence not only in the city, district, in the region, but also go beyond these borders"

(Interview J, July 8, 2019), and “We are constantly in the race, [...] and we are constantly competing” (Interview H, July 5, 2019).

The outflow of students from Ukrainian universities was the second challenge entailed with the marketization and internationalization of Ukrainian higher education. In Ukraine, brain drain became a national issue, reflected in national education policy and university development strategies (Kiryukhin, 2017; Kyvliuk & Svyrydenko, 2017; Semchuk, 2019; Slobodian & Stadnyi, 2016). Even though no recent empirical studies provided detailed statistics on the scope of students’ outflow from Ukraine, the CEDOS analytical center reported alarming results in 2016. In the 2014/2015 academic year, the number of Ukrainian students at foreign universities was 59,648 people, which constituted a growth of 129% from 2009 (Slobodian & Stadnyi, 2016).

In all three research sites, the brain drain was identified as a threat that university governance had to address. On the one hand, senior administrators stated that the brain drain had challenged the universities as never before. The decreasing number of domestic students had caused various difficulties for university administrators, including lower salaries for faculty members, insufficient income to tend the facilities, and a more competitive admission campaign. On the other hand, most administrators tried to counterbalance the problem by emphasizing the benefits of the Bologna Process and academic mobility. Among their remarks were: “The global educational market, the global labour market, offers opportunities to work on different countries” (Interview G, July 2, 2019); “I understand students. This is usually an advantage for them” (Interview H, July 5, 2019); and “A considerable number of citizens leave, have the right to realize themselves in life, at work, studying in other countries” (Interview I, July 5, 2019). While all three universities intended to address the existing problem, no clear strategies were outlined to minimize brain drain and attract international students.

Thus, in the institutional field of the EHEA, the three Ukrainian universities were pressured to become more open entities. They developed their strategic directions to align with European internationalization and market-oriented policies. However, such alignment resulted in the competition between universities and students’ increased outflow from Ukraine.

Implications of University Governance Transformation

University governance reforms became a response to Ukraine’s commitment to the EHEA and the Bologna principles. Although they started almost two decades ago, some participants recognized that it was too early to talk about the implications of these reforms. Many

admitted that such implications could only be determined from a long-term perspective, possibly in another decade or so; however, everyone would prefer immediate results. As one of the senior administrators emphasized:

I think we will feel those [implications of governance reforms] if all goes well, and Ukrainian education will move in the same direction, no earlier than in 15-20 years. [...] the generations must change, the consciousness and the feeling that something depends on your thought, your voice, and your action should change. (Interview I, July 5, 2019)

In addition to the time constraints, senior university administrators connected the implications of university governance reforms to Ukraine's progress towards the EHEA. Sometimes, the participants took the outcomes of the Bologna Process for implications of university governance transformation. For instance, they could interpret any system change, such as the establishment of easily readable and comparable degrees or transferable credits, within the governance transformation paradigm. Moreover, in the participants' opinion, the further success of the Bologna reforms depended entirely on a change in higher education governance.

Data collected from this study showed that different sources envisioned the implications of university governance transformation in various areas of university operation. For example, the relevant state legislation and university documents mainly attributed expanding internationalization and increasing education quality to autonomous decision-making at the university level. Senior administrators foresaw perspectives of governance transformation in the following undertakings: changing the vision of education and the role of teacher, students becoming more independent, bringing more transparency to daily university operations, developing trustful relationships with external stakeholders, and increasing international collaborations, to name a few. However, each time the senior administrators discussed the implications of university governance transformation, they seemed to counterbalance their expectations with opposing trends. For example, one of the participants mentioned that a steady increase of university's global ratings became one of the implications of university governance reforms; however, later on, she complained that the university would still be incapable of competing with other European universities (Interview A, June 14, 2019).

Given the individual interview data, the implications of university governance transformation manifested themselves as several controversial issues among which university administrators had to navigate through the university's daily operations. The senior

administrators identified controversies between opportunities to increase internationalization and a lack of legislative provision for international initiatives, between increasing students' mobility and fighting enormous brain drain, between opportunities to access the global academic community and the pressure to master a foreign language. While the participants pointed out various implications of university governance reforms, I will further discuss only several of the most frequently mentioned.

Broadening internationalization activities was highlighted among the significant implications of university governance transformation. The administrators' right to make autonomous decisions greatly contributed to developing the university's international partnerships, dual diploma programs, and joint projects. When an unexpected problem emerged in any international negotiations, the administrators could solve it without prior consulting with their superiors. One participant described a similar situation:

We organized a double diplomas system between our university and [name of the university] in Poland, [...]. However, we were faced with the challenge of modifying the curricula. That is, the curricula of the Polish university and ours differed somewhat. Again, through horizontal negotiations, at the level of professors, department heads, we held several seminars, several meetings, and [...] we reached the agreement through negotiations. (Interview B, June 14, 2019)

While agreements with international universities became easier to establish and within department heads' responsibilities, some administrators noted that the lack of proper legislation interfered with larger joint initiatives. For instance, complications usually occurred when it came to large international investments (Interview G, July 2, 2019).

Openness for and accessibility to the global academic community were other widely discussed implications of university governance transformation. The senior university administrators expressed the idea as follows: "a teacher began to work in the international field" (Interview F, June 25, 2019), "[i]nformation is open to the world today" (Interview F, June 25, 2019), or "[i]n addition to the exchange of literature, [...] we are often visited by researchers from Canada, Austria, Poland who use those original sources" (Interview K, July 8, 2019). This higher level of openness called for a higher level of accountability in both research and teaching. As global resources became accessible, the pressure appeared to ground Ukrainian academics' work within those best world practices of teaching, research, and university governance. The

demand for foreign language proficiency increased. The university academic community was forced to master English to communicate with international colleagues, participate in international conferences, and make their research visible. Such pressure to learn a foreign language was of particular interest, considering that during the Soviet times, academics were discouraged from learning languages. This policy aligned with overall Soviet totalitarian practices to keep academics in check, control the influx of information from outside the Soviet Union, and prevent scholars from escaping from behind the ‘iron curtain’ (Oleksiyenko, 2018).

This chapter discussed how the university governance in Ukraine changed under the influences of the wider external environment of the EHEA. This transformation manifested through the reshaping of inherited Soviet governing practices in the context of the Bologna Process. The six themes described in Chapter Four allowed me to identify two main directions of university governance transformation. Thus, Ukrainian university governance reforms, challenges to and supports for the reforms were explained within the scope of decentering higher education inherited from the Soviet times and responding to European regionalization policies. While Ukraine’s commitment to the EHEA acted as an impetus to changes at the state and the university levels, inherited Soviet structures mostly impeded the Bologna-driven reforms. As Chapter Five demonstrated, such interplay between two contesting influences caused some controversies in university governing practices. The next chapter will summarize the research findings and outline the potential directions for subsequent research.

CHAPTER SIX – Conclusion and Reflection

Over the last 25 years, internationalization has evolved into global regions' strategic efforts to retain their significance in higher education. With the Bologna Process as its most prominent initiative, European regionalization became an undeniable force affecting the higher education systems of 49 countries, including Ukraine. Ukraine's commitment to the Bologna Process entailed profound reforms in higher education governance. Despite extensive research on Ukrainian educational reforms, the transformation of higher education governance was debated predominantly on theoretical grounds and lacked sufficient empirical support.

This study examined how the European regionalization of higher education had influenced the governance in Ukrainian public universities. The sociological and historical institutionalism informed the study. This conceptual framework considered Ukrainian universities as organizations functioning in the wider institutional environments of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the Ukrainian educational system and, thus, influenced by both. Using a case study methodology, I investigated how Ukraine's commitment to the Bologna Process had transformed university governance in three Ukrainian universities. I explored challenges to, supports for, and implications of the university governance transformation. I identified six themes in the collected data from document analysis and individual interviews with senior university administrators. The interpretation of these themes allowed me to outline the main directions of university governance transformation. They originated from two contesting influences on the development of Ukrainian higher education – the Bologna Process and inherited Soviet legacies and structures.

In this concluding chapter, I summarize the most important research findings. I identify the implications of this study for theory, policy, and practice. This chapter outlines the potential directions for subsequent research on transforming university governance in Ukraine. I also address current developments in one of the research sites in light of the recent political power changes. Finally, I reflect on the research and my role as a researcher.

Discussion of the Results

This study examined the transformation of Ukrainian higher education governance in the past 15 years. The analysis showed that the interplay between the Bologna Process and the Soviet legacies resulted in both change and inertia in Ukrainian university governance. Based on the interpretation of the key themes in the collected data, I concluded that the university

governance in Ukraine had predominantly been transforming towards decentralizing higher education governance and responding to European regionalization policies. The decentralization direction could be seen as attempts (1) to change state-university relations and (2) transfer powers from higher to lower university levels. While the first area mainly manifested itself by introducing university autonomy, the second was evident through the redistribution of responsibilities between university administrators and the involvement of students and external stakeholders in university governance. Ukrainian universities responded to European regionalization policies through their marketization and internationalization strategies. Both directions – the decentralization of higher education governance and the response to European regionalization policies – were oriented to move away from the Soviet inherent governing practices towards more open and democratic EHEA.

The reforms within each of the two directions were challenging. The decentralization of higher education governance was fraught with many obstacles. First, complete financial dependence from the state prevented universities from exercising comprehensive autonomy in their daily operations. The still-existing Soviet system of state order left universities highly dependent on the state budget as the primary funding source. As well, the state strictly controlled the right to allocate university funds received from other sources. Second, the political dimension of educational reforms constituted a challenge to university governance transformation. The pace and direction of higher education reforms remained highly dependent on the governing party's political agenda. At the university level, the obsolete Soviet perception of superiors' undivided and unquestionable authority, the lack of administrators' and students' agency, and minimal involvement of external stakeholders interfered with the meaningful university governance decentralization. The reforms in the second direction – responding to European regionalization policies – were also demanding for university administrators. The lack of clear internationalization strategies, national and global competition, and increasing brain drain put extra pressure on universities. While challenges to university governance reforms were numerous, identifiable supports were scarce. Thus, the participants singled out teamwork and transparency in university affairs as contributing to university governance reforms.

Findings from this study showed that the implications of university governance transformation could be evident in the long run. At the moment, they were directly related to the implications of the overall Bologna-associated educational reforms. Moreover, different sources

envisioned the implications of university governance transformation in various university operations, including expanded internationalization practices, increased quality of education, and transparency in university operating procedures. Nevertheless, the implications of university governance transformation manifested themselves as controversies in university governing practices. For example, university administrators had to navigate between internationalization opportunities and a lack of legislative provision for international initiatives, between the increasing number of international students and enormous brain drain, and between access to international research and the pressure to master a foreign language.

From the perspective of institutional theory, it was evident that the EHEA and the Ukrainian educational system exerted pressure and forced the three Ukrainian universities to change. This study's findings showed that the combined isomorphic influences (coercive, mimetic, normative, and competition) of the Bologna Process and inherited Soviet legacies and structures affected Ukrainian university governance transformation in multiple and sometimes contradictory ways. On the one hand, Europeanization had become a change-promoting force and accelerated higher education governance reforms. Ukraine's participation in the EHEA did not only question the legitimacy of the existing forms of higher education governance but also caused significant shifts in university governance. Moreover, social and political developments in Ukraine significantly strengthened their influence on academia. Democratic processes in society called for limiting governments' role in higher education. The EHEA democratic and civic values capitalized on students' and other stakeholders' involvement in the university governance.

On the other hand, after almost two decades of educational reforms, Ukrainian higher education was still in the transition period. The government had made the first attempts towards university autonomy, yet it reserved its right to control universities' operations through financial constraints. The universities had attempted to move toward collegial governance, yet their internal structures did not fundamentally change. The university funding from the state budget and the obsolete perception of administrators' authoritarianism remained significant obstacles in decentralization and self-management efforts. Such inherited Soviet structures were deeply rooted in former administrative practices. These structures persisted as professional values that invoked conformity to the past and resistance to the changes. Thus, the interplay of different

influences from the Bologna Process and inherited Soviet legacies and structures resulted in both the change and inertia of Ukrainian universities.

Therefore, the strong perceived attraction of European governance models, the legitimization of institutional autonomy among educational stakeholders, and direct competitive pressures in global labour markets pressure Ukrainian universities toward greater homogenization with European universities regarding university autonomy and collective governance. However, all these mechanisms of institutional homogenization act under the conditions of the prevalence of Soviet institutional rules, diverse political priorities, different national settings, and attempts of Ukrainian culture revival. Such divergent influences allow for a niche in which Ukrainian higher education governance develops alongside its unique trajectory.

Implications of the Study

As regionalization has become a global phenomenon in higher education, European regionalization has led to similar efforts in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The research on the university governance transformation within European regionalization contributes to the discussion on how to bridge the gap between national and institutional policies regarding internationalization, marketization, and other socio-economic pressures. Therefore, the findings from this study will facilitate to the advancement of theory, policy, and practice in higher education governance.

Theoretical Implications

Although internationalization of higher education has been widely discussed, regionalization may be considered a relatively understudied development. This study advances our understanding of regionalization as an emergent global phenomenon and a world-leading initiative. The findings enhance our understanding of European regionalization's impact on university governance. More specifically, this work contributes to the existing knowledge of higher education governance transformation in post-Soviet countries with unique socio-economic and administrative legacies. While many studies offer insights on the Bologna-triggered educational reforms in post-Soviet countries, few choose Ukraine as a focal point. This research provides a unique perspective to examine decision-making at the university level under the influence of two contesting forces – the Bologna Process and inherent Soviet governing structures.

Concerning institutional theory, the study provides a more comprehensive picture of an organizational change when embedded in a number of nested institutions and, thus, influenced by a number of different forces. Specifically, by combining sociological and historical institutionalism, this study illustrates isomorphic processes of institutional fields as homogenizing and as those facilitating heterogeneity among organizations. While the EHEA institutional structures enable change in Ukrainian universities, the inherited values and beliefs operate as constraints to the change. On the example of three Ukrainian universities, this study analyses the interplay of two contesting influences and shows how they result in a fragmentary change or change along the specific past-dependent post-Soviet trajectory.

Examining the European regionalization, I do not focus one-sidedly on the Bologna Process as a homogenizing force, which promotes Ukrainian universities toward greater convergence with European ones. Instead, I use historical institutionalism to explain the conditions under which national institutional differences in Ukraine prevail. For instance, the Soviet oppressive governing practices, culturally anchored worldviews, and political rivalries condition the direction of institutional change. Thus, this study contributes to Beckert's (2010) reconceptualizing of the institutional theory and emphasizes the necessity to integrate divergence into the theoretical premises of sociological institutionalism (see Chapter Two). This study promotes the discussion of institutional influences as both homogenizing and heterogenizing depending on the conditions under which either one of the two processes can be expected. Moreover, in the contemporary world of globalization and internationalization, such a perspective contributes to the discussion on the hybridity of educational forms as attempts to preserve national uniqueness.

Institutional theorists emphasize the role of human agency in the situations of several contesting influences on an organization. They consider such situations as opportunities for leaders to exercise their potential and agency to enable organizational choice (Manning, 2010). This study initiates the discussion on the role of human agency in societies with a totalitarian past, such as Ukrainian. Specifically, the findings from the study illustrate how the past administrative principle of single-person management has resulted in the present inability of university stakeholders to facilitate organizational change. Consequently, the insights on human agency and organizational choice in three Ukrainian universities contribute to reexamining the mechanism of deinstitutionalization of past norms and practices in countries with a totalitarian

past. However, the chosen conceptual framework of institutional theory prevents me from a more profound analysis of the interplay between individual and institutional agency.

Policy Implications

At the global level, the study lays a foundation for comparative analysis in future governance-related research. Ukraine is attempting to reform its entire higher education in a relatively short time. Ukrainian experience serves as a source of insights for many other countries, which undergo similar reorganization efforts. Different systems of higher education governance operate across the EHEA. As Ukrainian higher education governance is trying to step away from a highly centralized system, this study's insights shed light on Ukrainian decentralization attempts for other Eastern European countries. Their efforts to balance national and international influences have much in common with the efforts of Ukrainian universities. Europe-wide, the research findings are useful for Ukraine and many post-Soviet countries as their strivings to join the European Union (EU) and the EHEA are met with similar concerns. These concerns relate to whether higher education in the former socialist countries poses the potential for contributions to the European common higher education area. The European community is also interested in whether the Soviet model can be transformed into the academic self-governance and marketized model of higher education governance.

Internationally, the study opens the discussion on perspectives of cross-border partnerships with Ukrainian universities. As the government, the public, and Ukrainian universities promote the agenda of expanded internationalization, the study provides useful insights on national and institutional strategies for perspective international collaboration. For instance, Canada considers Ukraine one of its priority targets for international cooperation for 2019-2024 (Government of Canada, 2019). The study offers Canadian universities the opportunity to attract more international students from Ukraine and other EHEA countries and promote Canadian students to study and practice internationally. Specifically, the findings inform leadership on fostering sustainable international cooperation by providing a deeper understanding of the inner workings and the decision-making process at Ukrainian universities.

At the national level, the study illuminates a complex sociocultural environment in which Ukrainian universities operate. In the context of the Bologna Process, Ukrainian universities are continually struggling between local and global influences. Established in the Soviet era, they experience the clashes of modernization and marketization with neo-colonial (post-Soviet)

realities. In current circumstances of on-going war with the Russian Federation and Ukraine's negotiations to join the EU, educational reforms' pace and patterns vary every four-five years. Therefore, this study provides insights into how Ukrainian higher education is transforming while navigating internal and external influences. Second, the study contributes to the discussion on state-university relationships. Academic freedom and university autonomy are the main pillars to enhance Ukrainian universities' positions as European and world-class universities. However, it is still too soon to talk about comprehensive university autonomy. This study sheds light on the next steps towards real university autonomy, focusing on university financial freedom as a prerequisite for fundamental governance transformation.

This study addressed the gap in the existing scholarship on the Bologna-associated governance reforms, originated from a lack of empirical research at the institutional level. As became evident in Chapter Two, while many analyzed the transformation of the Ukrainian higher education governance within the Bologna Process, little attention was paid to the reforms' implementation at the level of separate organizations. There were empirical studies on the influence of the Bologna Process on academic careers and professional roles (Shaw et al., 2011), the administrators' and instructors' perception of the Bologna Process (Kovtun & Stick, 2009), systemic, institutional, and individual challenges of academics since independence in 1991 (Oleksiyenko, 2016), the effects of the Bologna Process on organizational culture (Shaw et al., 2013) and quality assurance (Filiatreau, 2011). However, scarce was the scholarship on the university governance transformation. Moreover, the analysis of the challenges entailed with university governance transformation was done predominantly as a literature review rather than a comprehensive empirical study. Therefore, at the university level, the study is significant for it analyzes how the long-awaited fundamental reforms in decentralizing higher education have been implemented in university internal governance structures. This research provides insights on the shift towards a more democratic decision-making process in Ukrainian universities. The discussion of the main challenges to and supports for the process contributes to the dialogue about university organizational principles of academic freedom, shared governance, and intellectual leadership.

Finally, whereas much attention had been focused on controversies between new Ukrainian education policies and their implementation at the institutional level, little research related to the ways to address these challenges. As I concluded in Chapter Two, the rhetoric

predominantly revolved around the necessity of radical changes rather than identifying particular actions to be undertaken by both the state and the institutions. Thus, the study helps university leadership set the agenda for further university governance reforms in Ukraine. First, the still-existing government-funded system with state order and itemized budget requires reconsidering for public universities to acquire complete autonomy. Second, it becomes clear from the findings that public interests should be considered while developing university missions and visions. Third, more suitable mechanisms need to be developed to involve various stakeholders in university decision-making. Finally, this study significantly contributes to reconceptualizing students' role in university governance as well as students' rights and responsibilities within that role. As such, the findings from this study could be used to assist university leadership in critically reexamining faculty-students dynamics at the university academic councils.

Recommendations for Future Research

Findings presented in this study inform the emerging discussion about university governance transformation in the context of broader Bologna-related educational reforms in Ukraine. However, more research and deliberation are needed on many higher education governance issues. First, long-awaited educational reforms have re-envisioned the state-university relationships in Ukrainian higher education. While Ukrainian universities have received organizational, staffing, and academic autonomy, actual financial autonomy is still questioned. Further research is required on the compatibility of the market-oriented government policies and the state-order mechanism of university funding, the ability of Ukrainian universities to generate income from different non-governmental sources, and the expediency of existing restrictions for universities to manage those funds. Thus, overall issues remain on what are the implications of such financial constraints for university policies.

Second, the market-orientation is traceable in both state legislation and university policies. The government opens national higher education to global competition, marketization, and educational entrepreneurialism. However, existing policies lack clarity on how the relationships between higher education, business, and the labour market should be built. As the market-based higher education policies are still fragmentary, further research on the mechanisms to enhance competition, account for the labour market demands, and ensure university accountability is much needed.

Third, student participation in university governance is one of the essential steps in transforming higher education governance in the EHEA. This study has shown that in Ukraine, the student community is sometimes assigned a superficial role in actual university governance. The students' representation at university academic councils and student self-governance seem to be overlooked when it comes to major decision-making on university strategic planning. On many occasions, senior administrators exemplified how limited students' participation was in university governance or how student representatives might 'go with the flow' during academic council meetings. While some expected a more active students' stance at the university governance, others emphasized students' unreadiness to recognize their rights and responsibilities. This research serves as a base for future studies on students' role in university governance. Much research is needed on how student self-governance functions in Ukrainian universities, on students' role in the university decision-making process, and on the faculty-students dynamics at the university academic councils.

Similarly, additional research is required on the role of external stakeholders in university governance. While state laws provide legal grounds to involve external stakeholders in higher education governance, this study has revealed that it is too soon to talk about external stakeholders' significance in university decision-making. Therefore, many questions arise on how external stakeholders' perspectives are accounted for in university policies and the actual versus the stated role of the University Supervisory Boards.

Finally, while Ukraine is moving toward incorporating the EHEA values and principles, higher education seems to continue holding on to the Soviet totalitarian governing system. Reformed on paper, absolute and undeniable authority at the center still haunts people's minds. Therefore, further deliberation would be much welcomed on what extent existing patterns of values and beliefs stand in the way of reflective and meaningful transformations of Ukrainian university governance.

Reflections on the Research

In the following section, I share some final thoughts and critical statements that emerged on the topic while completing this dissertation. I will end this chapter with a brief reference to the most important aspects of the research process. This section also presents personal reflections on my journey as a researcher.

When I started working on Bologna-associated reforms in Ukrainian higher education, I anticipated multiple challenges. First and foremost, I realized that there would be some resistance, especially when discussing higher education and university governance. I fully understood that sometimes I asked too much from my prospective participants. I asked them to critically evaluate educational reforms and their superiors' work and reflect on their role and responsibilities at the universities. Ukrainian rather colonial history and the current socio-political situation did not facilitate such conversations, particularly with an outsider, as I might easily have been perceived. Hence, I was genuinely impressed with the openness and cooperation that some senior administrators showed during individual interviews. In the interviews, they openly discussed such topics as corruption and abuse of political powers from the governing parties. Some interviewees conveyed that the era of political interference in the educational process had come to an end with the rise of democratic processes in society. In the participants' opinion, this era began with the Revolution of Dignity in 2013 when the last pro-Russian government was changed. They were optimistic about the new *Law "On higher education"* as it symbolized a step away from the state's interference in university affairs towards university autonomy.

When I was completing my dissertation, a series of events attracted my attention. After prolonged debates on the candidacy, in the summer of 2020, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine appointed Serhiy Shkarlet as an acting Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine. At the same time, the parliamentary committee did not support Sharklet's appointment as a minister. The academic community even protested against his appointment, as Sharklet was accused of plagiarism and claimed to be a supporter of the pro-Russian government (Rzheutskaya, 2020). Shortly after Sharklet's appointment, the Ministry of Education and Science conducted a series of dismissals of senior administrators at several Ukrainian universities, including one of my research sites – National Aviation University (NAU). All NAU senior administrators were dismissed, including the university rector, vice-rectors, and deans (Hlukhovsky, 2020; Ruda, 2020). The legal reasons for such Ministry's actions, in this case, were put in question. The very procedures of terminating the senior administrators' contracts were contrary to the legal provisions of the *Law* of 2014 (Hlukhovsky, 2020). Such developments in Ukrainian higher education governance made me question whether the era of government interference indeed had come to an end, as the participants had so optimistically emphasized earlier. Moreover, I

wondered what all those would mean for the Bologna-compliant reforms and whether there would be another period of pro-Russian stagnant policy towards the European educational dimension.

Working on this dissertation was an almost five-year-long journey, exciting and rewarding. It began with a tiny sparkle of curiosity – a question – and transformed into a life-changing experience for me as an individual and a scholar. Reflecting on my experiences during these five years, I realized that this dissertation was my journey of character building – becoming resilient, perseverant, goal-driven, and determined. I learned to treat every challenge as an opportunity and every failure as education. As a scholar, I questioned my beliefs multiple times when I continued working on this dissertation. Who was I as a researcher? What could I know? What was the nature of knowledge? Those were only a few dilemmas, pondering upon which changed my understanding of the reality and nature of truth.

To answer these questions, I had to rediscover how I constructed meanings and came to know the reality. I started my research journey tormented by these ontological and epistemological uncertainties. As I leaned towards the constructionist position, the realization that people constructed knowledge through meaningful interactions with the world resounded through me. However, I could fully grasp the collective generation of knowledge only when I interacted with the participants within the specific social contexts. The interplay of contrasting ideas from different participants, the documents, and my observations and notes underpinned my understanding of the phenomenon under research. The interactions between the participants and myself were far more complex than a simple exchange of ideas. They became a collaborative approach to societal and educational phenomena and a key to interpreting university governance transformation.

The understanding of university governance transformation, challenges to and supports for the process, was constructed based on fragments of shared ideas and concepts. It was assembled as a “mosaic,” which acquired meaning through the interplay between all involved and specific contexts. By so doing, the participants and I became co-constructors of meanings. Thus, senior administrators actively participated in the process of interpreting their experiences, inducing unexpected associations, and re-examining meanings as evolving pictures within a new context of time and place. As well, I perceived myself as an explorer, an explainer, and a co-

constructor. Consequently, our interactions enabled us to understand multiple perspectives and collectively create meaning.

Ultimately, this academic journey became an enriching and gratifying experience of analyzing and interpreting data bit by bit, making sense of everything read and heard, and constructing a story together with everyone involved.

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APPENDIX A – State Policy Documents and University Statutory Documents

Table A1

Key Ukrainian State Policy Documents Regulating Higher Education and the Implementation of the Bologna Process in Ukraine and University Statutory Documents (Reverse Chronological Order)

Name	Issuing body, year	Content
State Policy Documents		
<i>Law of Ukraine “On education”</i>	Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2017	The <i>Law</i> regulates social relations in implementing the constitutional right for education, the rights and obligations of individuals and legal entities involved. It determines the rights and obligations of state bodies and local authorities in the field of education.
<i>Law of Ukraine “On higher education”</i>	Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014	The <i>Law</i> establishes the legal, organizational, and financial principles of the functioning of the higher education system. It creates conditions for strengthening the cooperation of state bodies and business with institutions of higher education on the principles of (a) autonomy of higher education institutions, (b) the alliance of education and science and industry, (b) personal self-development, and (c) meeting the needs of the society, the labour market, and the state in the qualified specialists. The <i>Law</i> had undergone multiple changes in subsequent years, with the most recent ones introduced in August 2019.
<i>Decree of the President of Ukraine “On the National Strategy for the Development of Education in Ukraine for the period until 2021”</i>	President of Ukraine, 2013	Based on the analysis of the current state of development of education, the strategy defines the purpose, strategic directions, and main tasks for implementing the state policy in the field of education by 2021.
<i>Decree of the President of Ukraine “On the National Doctrine on the Development of Education”</i>	President of Ukraine, 2002	The Doctrine defines a system of conceptual ideas and views on the strategy and main directions of education development in Ukraine in the first quarter of the XXI century.
<i>Law of Ukraine “On higher education”</i>	Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2002	The <i>Law</i> of 2002 was enacted three years prior to Ukraine’s formal joining the Bologna Process and participating in the EHEA creation. Even though a number of amendments was introduced to the <i>Law</i> annually, starting from 2003 till 2014, the articles’ main ideas remained intact. The <i>Law</i> set the

		main policies of the Ukrainian system of higher education and outlines its development strategies. Among the key strategies were the integration of Ukrainian higher education into the world system of higher education and the preservation of achievements and traditions of the Ukrainian education.
<i>Law of Ukraine “On education”</i>	Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 1996	The <i>Law</i> was adopted in May 1991, before Ukraine became independent. The government repeatedly made various amendments to the <i>Law</i> and adopted a new version in 1996. The <i>Law</i> set the main policies of the Ukrainian system of education and outlined general guidelines for its operation and development. According to the <i>Law</i> , in Ukraine, education was based on humanism, democracy, national consciousness, mutual respect between nations and peoples.

University Statutory Documents

<i>ZIFSU’s Development Strategy from 2020 till 2025</i>	Academic Council of ZIFSU, 2019	The Strategy is developed to meet the requirements of the <i>Laws of Ukraine “On Education,” “On Higher Education,”</i> as well as decrees of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on the regulation of higher education institutions. The Strategy sets specific tasks, adapted to the requirements of the time and needs of society and trends in education and science. It optimizes the allocation of resources to implement the University’s mission and ensures the University’s development under fierce competition.
<i>Development Strategy of NAU by 2030</i>	Academic Council of NAU, 2018	The Strategy is a strategic plan by 2030, which defines the priorities for the University, its academic and structural units. It has been developed following the recommendations of the International Civil Aviation Organization, the European Organization for the Safety of Air Navigation, the European Aviation Safety Agency, the International Telecommunication Union, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, the European requirements for ensuring higher education quality, ISO 9001 Standards, within the laws of Ukraine and other normative legal documents.
<i>Statute of NAU</i>	Conference of Labour Collective of NAU, 2018	The Statute regulates the activities of the National Aviation University. It is developed following the <i>Constitution of Ukraine</i> , the <i>Laws of Ukraine “On Education,” “On scientific and scientific-technical activities,” “On Higher Education,”</i> and other regulations, as well as Ukraine’s international treaties.
<i>Statute of TVHNPU</i>	Conference of Labour Collective of TVHNPU, 2018	The Statute of the Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University is developed in accordance with the laws of Ukraine and is a document governing its activities.

<i>TVHNPU's Development Strategy from 2016 till 2025</i>	Academic Council of TVHNPU, 2016	The Strategy defines the University's mission, delineates long-term priorities and strategic development in the new socio-cultural context. The Strategy is developed due to the need for radical changes to improve the University's competitiveness and education quality, to solve strategic challenges facing the University in the new economic and socio-cultural conditions and the integration of Ukrainian education in the European and world educational space.
<i>Statute of ZIFSU</i>	Conference of Labour Collective of ZIFSU, 2016	The Statute is developed in accordance with the legislation of Ukraine. It regulates the activities of the Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University.
<i>Statute of NAU</i>	Conference of Labour Collective of NAU, 2005	The Statute was developed in accordance with the former legislation of Ukraine and regulated the activities of the National Aviation University.
<i>Statute of TVHNPU</i>	Conference of Labour Collective of TVHNPU, 2003	The Statute was developed in accordance with the former legislation of Ukraine. It regulated the activities of the Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University, established as the state form of ownership and subordinated to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine.

APPENDIX B – Interview Guide (English)

Transforming university governance in the context of the Bologna Process: A case study of Ukrainian higher education

The interview focused on the ways the Bologna Process affects governance in Ukrainian public universities. The objectives of the interview were to gather data on the individual background of the interviewees within the university, the university background in the context of the Bologna Process, participants' understanding of the nature, challenges, and implications of the university governance changes in the context of the Bologna Process from 2005 until 2019. Below is suggested a pool of questions, which guided individual interviews. The questions were chosen for each individual interview depending on the course of the conversation.

1. Information about the background of the university in the context of the Bologna Process

- Could you tell me a little about what you know about the Bologna Process?
- Could you tell me about how the university first became involved in the Bologna Process?
- How involved were you or your department/division in the process?
- What is the involvement of the Ministry of Education in university affairs, with particular reference to the Bologna Process?

2. Knowledge and understanding of the nature of the university governance change

- What significant changes to the university governance structure have you noticed over the course of your career? Please, comment on such things like university governing bodies, their responsibilities, decision-making authority, and the relationship between state and institution.
- When were those changes enacted?
- How has your role changed?
- What factors (internal/external) led to the changes?

3. Perception about challenges and supporting factors of the university governance change

- What are some challenges of enacting major transformational changes in university governance?
- What factors supported the process of university governance change?

4. Perception about the implications of the university governance change

- What are some of the implications of the governance change for university practice and policy? Please, comment on such things like university partnerships, internationalization strategy, and the mobility of students and teachers, and students' employability.
- How different are these from the existed prior to the changes?
- What do you think are the benefits of the major structural changes for the institution?

APPENDIX C – Interview Guide (Ukrainian)

Трансформація управління університетами в контексті Болонського процесу: тематичне дослідження вищої освіти України

1. Інформація про досвід університету в контексті Болонського процесу

- Розкажіть мені трохи, що Ви знаєте про Болонський процес?
- Чи могли б Ви розповісти, як університет вперше залучився до Болонського процесу?
- Яким чином Ви або ваш відділ брали участь у цьому процесі?
- У чому полягає участь Міністерства Освіти у справах університету, з особливим наголосом на Болонському процесі?

2. Знання та розуміння природи змін управління університетом

- Які істотні зміни в структурі управління університетом ви помітили протягом своєї кар'єри? Будь ласка, прокоментуйте такі речі, як керівні органи університету, їхні обов'язки, повноваження щодо прийняття рішень, а також відносини між державою та установою.
- Коли були впроваджені ці зміни?
- Як змінилася ваша роль?
- Які фактори (внутрішні/ зовнішні) призвели до змін?

3. Сприйняття проблем та допоміжних факторів зміни управління університетом

- Якими викликами супроводжувалися важливі трансформаційні зміни в управлінні університетами?
- Які фактори підтримували процес зміни управління університетом?

4. Сприйняття наслідків зміни управління університетом

- Які наслідки змін урядування для університетської практики та політики? Будь ласка, прокоментуйте такі речі, як партнерство між університетами, стратегія інтернаціоналізації, мобільність студентів і викладачів, а також можливості працевлаштування студентів.
- Наскільки відрізняється цей стан речей від того, що існував до управлінських змін?
- Якими, на вашу думку, є переваги основних структурних змін для установи?

APPENDIX D –Behavioral Research Ethics Board Approval



Behavioural Research Ethics Board (Beh-REB) 30-May-2019

Certificate of Approval

Application ID: 1221

Principal Investigator: Jing Xiao

Department: Department of Educational
Administration

Locations Where Research

Activities are Conducted: National Aviation University Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University Ternopil Volodymyr
Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University, Ukraine

Student(s): Nataliia Zakharchuk

Funder(s):

Sponsor:

Title: Transforming University Governance in the Context of the Bologna Process: A Case Study
Ukrainian Higher Education

Approved On: 30/05/2019

Expiry Date: 29/05/2020

Approval Of: Behavioural Research Ethics Application

Letter of Initial Contact

Consent Form

Interview Guide

Transcript Release Form.

Acknowledgment Of:

Review Type: Delegated Review

CERTIFICATION

The University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Research Ethics Board (Beh-REB) is constituted and operates in accordance with the current version of the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS 2 2014). The University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Research Ethics Board has reviewed the above-named project. The proposal was found to be acceptable on ethical grounds. The principal investigator has the responsibility for any other administrative or regulatory approvals that may pertain to this project, and for ensuring that the authorized project is carried out according to the conditions outlined in the original protocol submitted for ethics review. This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above time period provided there is no change in experimental protocol or consent process or documents.

Any significant changes to your proposed method, or your consent and recruitment procedures should be reported to the Chair for Research Ethics Board consideration in advance of its implementation.

ONGOING REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

In order to receive annual renewal, a status report must be submitted to the REB Chair for Board consideration within one month prior to the current expiry date each year the project remains open, and upon project completion. Please refer to the following website for further instructions: <https://vpresearch.usask.ca/researchers/forms.php>.

*Digitally Approved by Patricia Simonson, Vice Chair
Behavioural Research Ethics Board
University of Saskatchewan*

APPENDIX E – Email of Invitation to Participate in the Study (English)

Dear Sir or Madam,

We are looking for volunteers to take part in the study “Transforming university governance in the context of the Bologna Process: A case study of Ukrainian higher education.” We appreciate the opportunity to provide more information on this study.

We would like to hear from senior university administrators regarding the ways the Bologna Process affects the governance in Ukrainian public universities. As a participant in this study, you would be asked to share your perspectives on your background within the university, the university background in the context of the Bologna Process, and your understanding of nature, and challenges of the university governance transformation in the context of the Bologna Process. I am also interested in understanding what you perceive as implications of university governance changes for university policies and practices.

Your participation would involve one face-to-face interview session. The interview will take place at any mutually agreeable time at a convenient location on campus. The discussion will take approximately one hour and will be audio recorded. Please note that you are welcome to share any information that you wish to share on the matter; however, you may choose not to contribute on particular questions, and you are free to stop the interview at any point without giving a reason. Your participation in the study will remain confidential: any information will be reported in aggregate form, no individually identifying information will be included, and your name will not be disclosed in any dissemination of the research results.

The possible benefits to you for participating in this study are that by raising awareness about the changes and challenges of university governance transformation, you may contribute to developing strategies that work around these challenges and help to eliminate them.

This study has been reviewed by and received approval through the University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Research Ethics Board (# 1221).

For more information about this study, or to volunteer for this study, please contact:

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APPENDIX F – Email of Invitation to Participate in the Study (Ukrainian)

Шановний пане/пані,

Ми шукаємо волонтерів для участі в дослідженні «Трансформація управління університетами в контексті Болонського процесу: тематичне дослідження вищої освіти України». Ми вдячні за можливість надати Вам більше інформації про це дослідження.

Хотілося дізнатися думку керівництва університетів та їх підрозділів про те, як Болонський процес впливає на управління в українських державних університетах. В якості учасника цього дослідження, Вам буде запропоновано поділитися своїми поглядами про власний досвід в університеті, досвід університету в контексті Болонського процесу та про Ваше розуміння сутності та викликів трансформації управління університетом у контексті Болонського процесу. Ми також зацікавлені у розумінні того, що Ви вважаєте наслідками змін в управлінні університетами для університетської політики та практики.

Ваша участь включатиме один сеанс інтерв'ю віч-на-віч. Інтерв'ю відбуватиметься в будь-який час та у місці на території університету, які будуть прийнятними і зручними для Вас. Обговорення займе приблизно одну годину і буде записано на аудіо. Ми надамо копію запитань перед інтерв'ю. Будь ласка, зауважте, що Ви можете поділитися будь-якою інформацією, якою хочете поділитися з цієї теми; також, Ви можете не відповідати на окремі питання з переліку та можете припинити бесіду в будь-який момент без пояснення причини. Ваша участь у дослідженні залишатиметься конфіденційною: будь-яка інформація буде представлена в сукупній формі, жодна особиста інформація не буде включена і Ваше ім'я не буде розкрито під час поширення результатів дослідження.

Можливі переваги Вашої участі у цьому дослідженні полягають у тому, що, підвищуючи обізнаність про зміни та виклики трансформації управління університетами, Ви можете посприяти розробці стратегій, які вирішують ці виклики і допомагають їх усунути.

Це дослідження було розглянуто та отримало схвалення Управління з дослідницької етики Університету Саскачевану (№1221).

Для отримання додаткової інформації про це дослідження або для надання згоди про участь у ньому, будь ласка, звертайтеся до:

Джін Жяо
Доктор філософії, доцент
Кафедра управління навчальними закладами
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APPENDIX G – Qualitative Data Analysis Details/Guide

Figure G1

Word Frequency Cloud Based on Individual Interviews



Note. The Cloud contains the 50 most frequent words used by senior administrators during individual interviews. Word frequency query was run according to the following criteria: (a) including words with a minimum length of 5 letters; (b) including stemmed words (e.g., “changes”); and (c) excluding words without distinct meaning (e.g., “things,” “certain,” etc.)

Figure G2

15 Most Frequent Codes Identified During Data Analysis

Name	Files	References
Increasing international cooperation	17	61
Introducing collective governing at the university	19	50
Assuring quality of education	12	48
University becoming autonomous	21	43
Becoming market-oriented	12	40
Becoming more transparent	15	38
Following Bologna principles	12	38
Changing rectors' responsibilities	11	37
Changing the role of university Academic Council	14	36
Increasing mobility and study abroad opportunities	17	36
Student self-governance	16	33
Digitalization of educational process	13	28
Involvement of political parties in education	13	26
Dependence on the state budget and state order	14	24
Reviving and preserving national identity in education	14	23

Note. The table is generated with the help of NVivo qualitative data analysis software. The codes are presented according to the number of references in different sources, starting with the most frequently used.

Theme 1: The Bologna Process and Its Implementation

The Theme in the Relevant State Legislative Documents

The *Law of Ukraine “On education” of 1996* and *“On higher education” of 2002* mentioned neither the Bologna Process nor European higher education. They only stated that the main principles of Ukrainian higher education were (1) to build relationships with educations in other countries (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 1996) and (2) to integrate Ukrainian higher education into the world system, while preserving and developing Ukrainian achievements and traditions (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2002). While the *Law “On higher education” of 2014* specified that the Ukrainian education system is integrating into the European Higher Education Area by following European standards in education quality, implementing European Credit Transfer System, and introducing European Diploma Supplements. Moreover, all Bologna principles could be easily traced in the new Law (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014).

The Theme in the Relevant University Documents

A similar shift from integrating into the world higher education to more specific integration into the European Higher Education Area could be traced in university documents. Only new university statutes and university strategies mentioned the changes in education principles, standards, and education quality as a part of European integration strategy (Academic Council of NAU, 2018; Academic Council of TVHNPU, 2016; Academic Council of ZIFSU, 2019; Conference of Labour Collective of NAU, 2018; Conference of Labour Collective of TVHNPU, 2018; Conference of Labour Collective of ZIFSU, 2016). However, only TVHNPU’s Development strategy indicated that the University was participating in the Bologna Process (Academic Council of TVHNPU, 2016). No other documents – old or new – from all three universities mentioned the Bologna Process.

The theme has been manifested through the following 17 codes (see Table G1).

Table G1

Codes for the Theme “The Bologna Process and Its Implementation”

#	Codes	Sources	Frequency
1	University becoming autonomous	8 (interviews) 13 (documents)	43
2	Following Bologna principles	2 (interviews) 10 (documents)	38
3	Increasing mobility and study abroad opportunities	7 (interviews) 10 (documents)	36
4	Introducing the European Credit Transfer System	9 (interviews) 2 (documents)	19
5	Unification of education within the EHEA	8 (interviews)	17
6	Coordinating role of the Ministry of Education in the BP implementation	8 (interviews)	17
7	Students’ employability prospects	4 (interviews) 5 (documents)	15
8	Procedural challenges of the BP implementation	6 (interviews)	9

9	Adapting and adjusting to the BP	6 (interviews)	8
10	Timeframe and pace of changes	7 (interviews)	8
11	Changing educational levels	3 (interviews)	7
		4 (documents)	
12	Timeframe of the BP implementation in Ukraine	6 (interviews)	7
13	Timeframe of the BP at the university	7 (interviews)	7
14	Required professional training on the BP	4 (interviews)	6
15	Top-down nature of the BP implementation	5 (interviews)	6
16	Lack of control over the BP implementation	3 (interviews)	4
17	Differences between European and Ukrainian education systems	3 (interviews)	3

Sample Quotes from Interviews:

[university name] has been one of the beacons of this [the Bologna] process in Ukraine from the moment of its emergence when our country signed the Bologna Declaration. We were the first to hold a national conference, scientific and practical, to implement the Bologna Process. We are the first to adopt the legislation of the Bologna Process to the needs of a Ukrainian university. (Interview J, July 8, 2019)

The Bologna Process was introduced in our education process, I think, about fifteen years ago, maybe even more. Roughly. And from that time on, all our curricula, our disciplines have been adapted according to the requirements of the Bologna Process. (Interview B, June 14, 2019)

Perhaps, we should not blindly follow these demands of the Bologna Process, but rather bring in something of our own. They [governments of the Bologna member-states] are going to decide how to do it better, but they all have their own nuances specific to each country, which must necessarily be present in the content of education as well. (Interview D, June 24, 2019)

Theme 2: University Autonomy

The Theme in the Relevant State Legislative Documents

Starting with the *Law “On Education”* of 1996, all laws of Ukraine recognized the autonomy of HEIs. However, amendments on HEIs' autonomy were introduced into the *Law “On Education”* of 1996 in July 2014, after the new version of the *Law of Ukraine “On higher education”* of 2014 was issued (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 1996, 2014). While the first legislative documents briefly mentioned HEIs' autonomy, the later laws elaborated on the concept within all institutional activities. Only the *Law* of 2014 defined what autonomy meant for Ukrainian HEIs. Moreover, academic freedom – participants' independence and autonomy in the education process – became another category closely connected with HEIs' autonomy in the *Laws “On Education”* of 2017 and *“On higher education”* of 2014.

The Theme in the Relevant University Documents

According to the Statutes of NAU and TVHNPU before Ukraine's commitment to the Bologna Process (Conference of Labor Collective of NAU, 2005; Conference of Labor Collective of TVHNPU, 2003), the universities were allowed to exercise their autonomy to a certain degree. Some of the common examples were: (1) to determine the content and forms of education (teaching and learning); (2) to hire research and academic staff and other employees;

(3) to provide additional educational services; (4) to create institutes, research colleges, faculties, departments, branches, and other structural units following the procedure established by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine; (5) to carry out own publishing business; (6) to conduct joint activities with other educational institutions and organizations based on relevant agreements; (7) to participate in the work of international organizations; (8) to introduce their symbols and attributes; (9) to use university land indefinitely and free of charge following the procedures established by the Land Code of Ukraine.

More activities were specified in the NAU's Statute of 2005. For examples, NAU was allowed to determine the structure, plan, and rules of enrollment in agreement with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine; to open new specialties in coordination with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine; to award academic titles and scientific degrees, including honorary ones; to lease non-residential premises and equipment not involved in training and production activities, and others (Conference of Labour Collective of NAU, 2005).

Among the new rights that the *Law* of 2014 granted to the universities were the following (Conference of Labour Collective of NAU, 2018; Conference of Labour Collective of TVHNPU, 2018; Conference of Labour Collective of ZIFSU, 2016): to make a final decision to recognize diplomas (or their equivalents) of bachelor's, master's, doctor of philosophy (candidate of sciences), doctor of sciences and academic titles of associate professor, professor obtained in foreign HEIs; to encourage faculty members' participation in academic and research activities; to create academic, academic and research complexes, research and technical centers; to form the authorized capital of innovation structures of various types and contribute to intangible assets (e.g., property rights, intellectual property rights, etc.); to set the amount of tuition fees; to establish awards and scholarships; to conduct self-accreditation of educational programs (except for those educational programs that are accredited for the first time within the relevant field of knowledge), and others.

The theme has been manifested through the 13 codes (see Table G2).

Table G2
Codes for the theme "University Autonomy"

#	Codes	Sources	Frequency
1	University becoming autonomous	8 (interviews) 13 (documents)	43
2	Involvement of political parties in education	4 (interviews) 9 (documents)	26
3	Dependence on the state budget and state order	4 (interviews) 10 (documents)	24
4	The role of the Ministry of Education in education governance	5 (interviews) 7 (documents)	21
5	State restrictions on the use of university funds	4 (interviews) 6 (documents)	16
6	Low salary for the faculty and staff	6 (interviews) 2 (documents)	16
7	Insufficient funding	6 (interviews) 3 (documents)	15
8	Establishing the National Agency in Quality Assurance	3 (interviews) 1 (documents)	14
9	Rector election vs. appointment	4 (interviews) 7 (documents)	12

10	Lack of clarity in legislation	6 (interviews)	11
11	State as a university owner	2 (interviews) 4 (documents)	10
12	Progressive Law of 2014	2 (interviews)	6
13	Former Higher Certification Committee	1 (documents)	4

Sample Quotes from Interviews:

On the one hand, the personnel’s opinions now seem not to be completely ignored, perhaps not sufficiently considered. It is possible to debate about these things, about the democracy of choice. On the other hand, the owner is the state; that’s the case. And the state must determine who will run the university [...] when we began to elect plant directors, labor collectives began to select those who favored the state’s interests less than the interests of the collective. Where did it lead? To *deriban* (*researcher’s note: the word has become widespread in Ukrainian journalistic circles to write about political events. In their jargon, "deriban" means "sawing," "taking apart," etc.*) [...] The interests of the state, let’s just say, have been crossed out. There were many such losses, wrongful and harmful to the state. I am not a supporter of the preservation of the system that used to be, but the state is the owner. Another thing is that the state needed to pursue purposefully the changes of ownership, the creation of democratic structures inside. However, the Law of the state had to be maintained. I think that the interests of the state should be better represented. (Interview G, July 2, 2019)

[...] there is the state’s vision of a university development, as it should be from the bureaucratic point of view. And first of all, any organization should orient toward it [the vision] to attract financing, the distribution of budget order among universities [...] We have to prove to our Ministry, our state, that [...] we are developing dynamically, [...] we are building our internal strategy accordingly. (Interview A, June 14, 2019)

Theme 3: University Collective Governance

The Theme in the Relevant State Legislative Documents

According to the *Law “On higher education”* of 2014, Academic Council is the main governing body of a university, while a rector has become an executive managing body of the university. The other governing bodies that contribute to the higher education institution management are the Supervisory Board and advisory research or academic councils and committees. Among the recent changes in the Academic Council’s operation also the change in the election of Academic Council chairman. The Academic Council used to be headed by the Rector (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2002). Since 2014, a chairman of the Academic Council has been elected by secret ballot among the Academic Council members. The chairman may not necessarily be the head of the HEI. Table G3 illustrates the code “Changing the role of the University Academic Council” and outlines the responsibilities of Academic Councils.

Table G3*The Responsibilities of University Academic Councils in 2002 and 2014*

Academic Councils of a HEIs were to	
2002	2014
1) develop and submit to the highest collegial body a draft of university statute, as well as changes and additions to it;	1) determine the strategy and directions of academic, research, and innovative activities;
2) approve the university financial plan and annual financial report;	2) develop and submit to the highest collegial body a draft of university statute, as well as changes and additions to it;
3) submit proposals to a rector regarding the appointment and dismissal of the library director, vice-rectors, directors of institutes, and chief accountant; elect by secret ballot the department heads and professors;	3) approve the university financial plan and annual financial report;
4) approve curricula and study plans;	4) decide on and approve the internal quality assurance procedures;
5) decide on the organization of the educational process;	5) decide how to manage the revenues in the state treasury or in banking institutions;
6) adopt main research directions;	6) approve a rector's decisions to create or liquidate structural units;
7) assess the research and academic activity of structural units;	7) elect by secret ballot the deans, department heads, professors, associate professors, the library director, and branch managers;
8) choose candidates for the academic titles of associate professor, professor, and senior researcher	8) approve educational programs and curricula for each level and specialty;
	9) decide on the organization of educational process;
	10) approve, regulate, and issue graduate diplomas as well as joint and double diplomas;
	11) approve main research directions;
	12) assess the research and academic activity of structural units;
	13) award the academic titles of professor, associate professor, and senior researcher and submit the relevant decisions for approval to the attestation board;
	14) recognize foreign documents on higher education and academic titles;
	15) file a motion for revocation of a rector;
	16) consider other issues following the Statute

Note. Based on the *Law of Ukraine "On higher education"* (No. 2984-III; Art. 34) issued by Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in 2002 and the *Law of Ukraine "On higher education"* (No. 1556-VII; Art. 36) issued by Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in 2014.

The Theme in the Relevant University Documents

The Statute of NAU from 2005 stated that the university management was carried out by a rector, who acted single-headedly and was responsible for the results of all university operations. According to the Statute, a rector carried out their activities through a system of linear and functional management, including vice-rectors, directors, deans, executive secretary of the Admission Committee, and department heads (Conference of Labour Collective of NAU, 2005).

A decade later, three updated university statutes emphasized that the universities were managed through the combination of collegial and single-person management principles. While a

university rector directly managed the university, their rights, duties, and responsibilities were determined by Ukraine’s legislation and the University Statute. The rector was a representative of the university when dealing with government agencies, local governments, legal entities, and individuals (Conference of Labour Collective of NAU, 2018; Conference of Labour Collective of TVHNPU, 2018; Conference of Labour Collective of ZIFSU, 2016).

The theme has been manifested through the 20 codes (see Table G4).

Table G4
Codes for the theme “University Collective Governance”

#	Codes	Sources	Frequency
1	Establishing collective governing at the university	6 (interviews) 13 (documents)	50
2	Changing rectors’ responsibilities	2 (interviews) 9 (documents)	37
3	Changing the role of University Academic Council	7 (interviews) 7 (documents)	36
4	Student self-governance	7 (interviews) 9 (documents)	33
5	Moving toward democratic governing	6 (interviews) 7 (documents)	20
6	University restructuring	7 (interviews) 4 (documents)	19
7	Decentralization of decision-making	3 (interviews) 4 (documents)	16
8	Changing directors’ and deans’ responsibilities	6 (documents)	13
9	Involving external stakeholders in university governance	2 (interviews) 6 (documents)	12
10	Changes in university statutory documents	3 (interviews) 4 (documents)	11
11	Lack of clarity in legislation	6 (interviews)	11
12	Required professional administrative training	2 (interviews) 4 (documents)	11
13	Students on university councils	8 (interviews)	11
14	The role of Supervisory Board in university governance	7 (interviews)	9
15	Changing department heads’ responsibilities	1 (interviews) 6 (documents)	6
16	Lack of personal agency for decision-making	3 (interviews) 2 (documents)	5
17	Miscommunication between administrators	2 (interviews) 1 (documents)	5
18	Changing vice-rectors’ responsibilities	2 (documents)	4
19	Supportive role of teamwork	3 (interviews) 1 (documents)	4
20	Intact hierarchical structure	2 (interviews)	2

Sample Quotes from Interviews:

It’s [cooperation] just about introducing corporate responsibility. Part of the authority is delegated to the head of the Academic Council; part of the authority is delegated to the pro-

rectors; part of the authority is delegated to the responsible secretary of the Admissions Committee. (Interview J, July 8, 2019)

Moreover, formal things that describe the relationship between the administration and the units of the university, the administration, and the collective decision-making body are clearly documented by the university's academic council. And relations with students, student councils, trade unions, and other bodies that can influence these decisions at any level of regulation of these processes are described as well. (Interview A, June 14, 2019)

Therefore, governing decisions as related to management processes are made collectively. This is often an open voting form. It is the absolute freedom of speech, which accompanies a phenomenon or a problem. That is why we always involve the best students in the governance of the educational process. (Interview K, July 8, 2019)

Theme 4: The Increasing Role of Internationalization

The Theme in the Relevant State Legislative Documents

The *Law of Ukraine "On higher educations"* outlined the main internationalization activities for Ukrainian universities (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014, Art. 75). These activities were: (1) participating in bilateral and multilateral external, interstate and interuniversity exchange of students, graduates, doctoral students, academics, and researchers; (2) conducting joint research; (3) organizing international conferences, symposiums, congresses, and other events; (4) participating in international academic and research programs; (5) joint publishing activities; (6) providing education services to international students in Ukraine; (7) creating joint academic and research programs with international universities, research institutions, and other organizations; (8) facilitating business trips abroad for academics and researchers to work in accordance with state international agreements, as well as agreements between universities; (9) inviting international scholars and researchers to work in Ukrainian universities; (10) sending Ukrainian students to continue their education at international universities; (11) promoting academic mobility of students, academics, and researchers; and other activities not prohibited by the Law.

The Theme in the Relevant University Documents

University development strategies outlined more specific internationalization activities.

For example, NAU targets strategic international partnerships through

[d]evelopment of cooperation with the leading international organizations primarily in aviation. At the global level with ICAO, IATA, ACI, IFATKA, at the regional level with the ECAC, EASA, EUROCONTROL. Besides, the establishment of at least 5 international scientific and educational consortia (International Aerospace Scientific and Educational Consortium, etc.) is also a high priority. (Academic Council of NAU, 2019, p. 5)

One of the internationalization priorities of TVHNPU is cooperation with members of the European Association of Universities and other international organizations (Academic Council of TVHNPU, 2016). ZIFSU encourages university academics and researchers to participate in international competitions within various programs, such as Erasmus+, HORIZON-2020, and others (Academic Council of ZIFSU, 2019).

The theme has been manifested through the 11 codes (see Table G5).

Table G5
Codes for the theme “*The Increasing Role of Internationalization*”

#	Codes	Sources	Frequency
1	Increasing international cooperation	5 (interviews) 12 (documents)	61
2	Increasing mobility and study abroad opportunities	7 (interviews) 10 (documents)	36
3	Promoting research at the university	5 (interviews) 6 (documents)	21
4	Attracting international students	7 (interviews) 8 (documents)	19
5	Encouraging international internship	5 (interviews) 9 (documents)	19
6	Developing double-diploma programs	7 (interviews) 1 (documents)	11
7	Promoting participation in international conferences	2 (interviews) 8 (documents)	11
8	Attracting international investments	3 (interviews) 3 (documents)	10
9	Increasing brain drain	5 (interviews) 1 (documents)	9
10	Access to world resources	3 (interviews) 4 (documents)	8
11	Demand for foreign language proficiency	4 (interviews) 2 (documents)	8

Sample Quotes from Interviews:

[T]he university has long positioned itself as an active player in the international higher education system. The University is now a member of many international organizations, associations in which we are not just members. We strive to cooperate actively, sometimes even in innovative international activities. (Interview J, July 8, 2019)

[H]ere are several advantages. First of all, the advantage of international communication, cooperation, and partnership. We can see some achievements of international partners, compare, compare, and develop ourselves [...] We support it [internationalization] in every possible way. And often, the university administration motivates the internship of our teachers in international universities, not only in Ukrainian ones. (Interview K, July 8, 2019)

Together with our partner from Poland, we got a project to create new requirements and standards for the development of logistics. This is very important in the global world. We joined the consortium. About ten universities, besides Polish and us, there are Slovaks, British, a couple of universities from Africa [...] Such projects should be as numerous as possible. (Interview G, July 2, 2019)

Theme 5: Marketization of Higher Education

The Theme in the Relevant State Legislative Documents

In the recent legislative documents, marketization of higher education manifests mainly in relation to education quality assurance. Legislative documents pay great attention to establishing a new independent quality assurance agency, the National Agency for Quality Assurance. National Agency for Quality Assurance in higher education is a permanent collegial body authorized by the state to implement the state policy in higher education quality assurance (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2014). According to the *Law*, the Agency prepares and publishes annual reports on the quality of higher education in Ukraine and proposes its innovative sustainable development. As a collegial body, the National Agency for Quality Assurance consists of (1) two members from the National Academy of Science of Ukraine and one from each National Branch Academy of Sciences; (2) 13 members are elected from among representatives of Ukrainian universities; (3) three members from Ukrainian associations of employers; and (4) two members from student self-governance.

The Theme in the Relevant University Documents

The statutes of all three universities emphasized the education and research quality as a prime focus of university marketization policies (Conference of Labour Collective of NAU, 2018; Conference of Labour Collective of TVHNPU, 2018; Conference of Labour Collective of ZIFSU, 2016). For example, NAU's Statute prioritized monitoring the quality of education, ensuring the transparency of education, promoting public control in all university operations. To assess the quality of research, NAU established an advisory body – the Research and Technical Council of the University from internal and external representatives (Conference of Labor Collective of NAU, 2018). TVHNPU's and ZIFSU's Statutes paid less attention to education quality assurance than NAU. According to the statutes, the Academic Councils define and approve internal quality assurance procedures (Conference of Labor Collective of TVHNPU, 2018; Conference of Labor Collective of ZIFSU, 2016).

The theme has been manifested through the 12 codes (see Table G6).

Table G6

Codes for the theme “Marketization of Higher Education”

#	Codes	Sources	Frequency
1	Assuring quality of education	3 (interviews) 9 (documents)	48
2	Becoming market-oriented	3 (interviews) 9 (documents)	40
3	Becoming more transparent	5 (interviews) 10 (documents)	38
4	Increasing mobility and study abroad opportunities	7 (interviews) 10 (documents)	36
5	Digitalization of education processes	6 (interviews) 7 (documents)	28
6	Promoting research at the university	5 (interviews) 6 (documents)	21
7	Increasing competition	6 (interviews) 6 (documents)	20
8	Emphasis on university image and ranking	6 (interviews)	19

9	Establishing the National Agency for Quality Assurance	4 (documents) 3 (interviews)	14
10	Involving external stakeholders in university governance	1 (documents) 2 (interviews) 6 (documents)	12
11	Access to world resources	3 (interviews) 4 (documents)	8
12	Fighting corruption	2 (interviews) 3 (documents)	7

Sample Quotes from Interviews:

[I]n my opinion, the quality of students' knowledge immediately dropped by 30%. Why? [...] Mostly, we had rural youth coming to us, who did not have enough time to prepare in English, Ukrainian. And for the most part, the university teachers [...] prepared them using our base, during practical classes, lectures, in laboratory classes. Now, this whole number [of hours] has been reduced by 30% [...] If we consider the quality of knowledge, then very few hours are left. [...] Now, students study 2-3 classes of a foreign language a week. You see, it slightly reduces the quality of our students' training. (Interview C, June 18, 2019)

Now we have already created a committee on the quality of education. [...] We analyzed that a new understanding of the quality of education [...] it's not just the level of knowledge and skills of students, but also the quality of education services, the education environment, teachers, etc. All this is part of the quality of education. (Interview D, June 24, 2019)

In recent years, a lot of emphases is placed on monitoring the quality of education. There are committees on education quality; the university has created a committee that deals with the quality of education of our graduates, and the same is created at the level of the faculties. We have become familiar with self-control, various quality controls at the level of the administration, control works, and so-called Rector's control works. (Interview E, June 25, 2019)

Theme 6: Reconceptualizing National Identity

The Theme in the Relevant State Legislative Documents

The theme mainly emerges in individual interviews with senior administrators. It is less represented in the legislative documents. Only *the National Education Development Strategy* emphasized that education should be reoriented to prioritize an individual instead of the state and continuous democratization and humanization of the educational process, to reconsider pedagogical ideology in general, that is, to prioritize European humanistic values (President of Ukraine, 2013).

The Theme in the Relevant University Documents

The ZIFSU's Development Strategy (Academic Council of ZIFSU, 2019) states that during this time, there have been dramatic changes in the country's history, which led to the reassessment of values and new priorities and prospects for modern citizens. Ukrainian education, in general, and higher education, in particular, are facing challenges of the modern world, due to both objective and subjective factors. Therefore, the University must be ready for the challenges and risks of the present and the future. (p. 4)

TVHNPU takes a more moderate stance and envisions that the university’s strategic direction should be developed on the philosophic ideas of “human-centeredness” (Academic Council of TVHNPU, 2016).

The theme has been manifested through the 12 codes (see Table G7).

Table G7
Codes for the theme “Reconceptualizing National Identity”

#	Codes	Sources	Frequency
1	Following Bologna principles	2 (interviews) 10 (documents)	38
2	Reviving and preserving national identity in education	4 (interviews) 10 (documents)	23
3	Moving toward democratic governing	6 (interviews) 7 (documents)	20
4	Changing pedagogy	7 (interviews)	14
5	Reflections on Soviet education	7 (interviews)	14
6	Changing worldview	4 (interviews) 4 (documents)	9
7	Influence of revolutions and war on public views and education	3 (interviews)	9
8	Soviet authoritarian style of governance	4 (interviews)	9
9	Adapting and adjusting to the BP	6 (interviews)	8
10	Access to world resources	3 (interviews) 4 (documents)	8
11	Fighting corruption	2 (interviews) 3 (documents)	7
12	Differences between European and Ukrainian educational systems	3 (interviews)	3

Sample Quotes from Interviews:

Let’s say 15 years ago before the Bologna Process. Back then, there was such a Soviet authoritarian style of government. All authority belonged to the leader. The head was not selected on a competitive basis; he was appointed by the Ministry. (Interview G, July 2, 2019)

I will probably say – great respect for the head of the university. This was the very factor that we all agreed [to participate in the Bologna Process]. And skillful leadership of our rector. He was able to find an approach to each teacher. Well, firstly, it was in the authoritarian form. We were told that we were definitely joining the Bologna Process. (Interview D, June 24, 2019)

Unfortunately, the development of our society today is such that administrative pressure or any external pressure is greater in the minds of people than it is from outside. People imagine more by themselves or think that if their boss said so, it should be 100% true. They do not try to analyze, think, or read regulatory documents. (Interview I, July 5, 2019)