

# **The Bologna Reform in Ukraine**

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

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*This book is dedicated to my parents.*

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# Table of Contents

List of Tables and Figures	<i>xi</i>
List of Acronyms	<i>xiii</i>
About the Author	<i>xv</i>
Preface	<i>xvii</i>
Acknowledgements	<i>xix</i>
<b>Chapter 1 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background and Relevance	2
1.3 Research Setting	4
1.4 Methodological Considerations	6
<b>Chapter 2 Europeanisation as Policy Learning</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 Introduction	9
2.2 Europeanisation in the EU and the Post-Soviet Space	10
2.3 The Concept of Policy Learning	14
2.3.1 Path-dependence and Change	16
2.3.2 Layering	17
2.3.3 Messiness and Productive Nature of Collective Learning	18
2.4 Studying Policy Learning	21
2.4.1 Actors	23
2.4.2 Instruments	24
2.5 Conclusion	25

<b>Chapter 3</b>	<b>The Bologna Process</b>	27
3.1	Introduction	27
3.2	Bologna on the International Scale	28
3.2.1	The Meaning of the EHEA	28
3.2.2	'Soft' Power in the EHEA	32
3.2.3	Convergence and Regionalisation in the EHEA	33
3.3	The National Context: The Bologna Reforms	37
3.3.1	Implementation Implications	37
3.3.2	The Process of the Reform	40
3.3.3	Bologna in Ukraine	42
3.4	Conclusion	45
<b>Chapter 4</b>	<b>Major Actors in the Bologna Reform in Ukraine</b>	47
4.1	Introduction	47
4.2	Political Context	48
4.3	The Central Governing Bodies	52
4.3.1	The Ministry of Education and Science	53
4.4	Consultative Actors	59
4.4.1	The Scientific Advisory Centre of Higher Education	60
4.4.2	The Bologna Follow-up Group	64
4.5	The Civil Sector	67
4.5.1	The National Bologna Centre	69
4.5.2	The National TEMPUS/ERASMUS Plus Office	70
4.6	Higher Education Institutions	73
4.7	Conclusion	77
<b>Chapter 5</b>	<b>Bologna Instruments in Ukraine</b>	79
5.1	Introduction	80
5.2	The System of Credits	80
5.2.1	The Old Module System	83
5.2.2	The Credit-Module System	83
5.2.3	The European Credit Transfer System	85
5.3	The Study Cycles	88
5.3.1	The Old Education-Qualification Cycles and Scientific Cycles	88



5.3.2	The Two-Cycle Study System	89
5.3.3	The Three-Cycle System	89
5.3.4	Five Cycles in the Three-Cycle System	92
5.4	The Diploma Supplement	93
5.4.1	The National Diploma Supplement	94
5.4.2	Two Types of the Diploma Supplement	94
5.4.3	The Bologna Diploma Supplement	97
5.5	Quality Assurance	98
5.5.1	External Review	99
5.6	Conclusion	107
<b>Chapter 6</b>	<b>Bologna in Ukraine and Post-Soviet Europeanisation</b>	<b>109</b>
6.1	Introduction	110
6.2	‘The Old’ and ‘the New’ in the Bologna Reform	110
6.2.1	Policy Continuity	111
6.2.2	Change	115
6.3	Layering in the Bologna Reform	117
6.3.1	Messiness of Layering	117
6.3.2	Creativity in Layering	119
6.3.3	Shared Nature of Layering	120
6.4	Post-Soviet Europeanisation	122
6.4.1	Europeanisation in Ukraine	122
6.4.2	Europeanisation in the Post-Soviet Space	125
<b>Chapter 7</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>127</b>
	References	133
	Appendix 1 List of Interviewees	153
	Appendix 2 List of Documents	155
	1. Documents of Higher Education Institutions	155
	2. Documents of the Central Governing Bodies (and Their Consultative Actors)	155
	3. Bologna International Documents	161
	4. Documents of the Civil Sector (the National TEMPUS Office)	162
	Index	163

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# List of Tables and Figures

## Chapter 4

Table 4.1.	Central Governing Bodies and Their Roles in the Bologna Process before 2014.	54
Table 4.2.	List of Draft Laws.	59
Table 4.3.	Consultative Bodies of the Central Governing Cluster and Their Roles in Bologna.	61
Table 4.4.	Key Civil Sector Actors and Their Roles in the Bologna Process before 2014.	68

## Chapter 5

Table 5.1.	The Development of the Bologna Instruments in Ukraine.	81
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## Chapter 4

Figure 4.1.	Clusters of the Bologna Actors in Ukraine.	52
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# List of Acronyms

BFUG	Bologna Follow-up Group
EACEA	Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
ENQA	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
ERASMUS	European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students
EU	European Union
HERE	Higher Education Reform Expert
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
TEMPUS	Trans-European Mobility Scheme for University Studies
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

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## About the Author

**Dr Iryna Kushnir** is currently a Senior Lecturer in Education Studies at Nottingham Trent University. She previously worked at the University of Sheffield and the University of Edinburgh. Dr Kushnir's research in the area of sociology of education combines the following main interdisciplinary angles: higher education, education policy, Europeanisation, internationalisation and post-Soviet transition. Her interdisciplinary approach has led to empirical and theoretical contributions, which reveal how education policy on one hand and wider societal process of internationalisation on the other hand are interrelated and mutually shape one another.

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## Preface

This book explores the process of the Bologna reform in the Ukrainian higher education system, particularly focusing on the period between the start of the reform in Ukraine in 2004 through a Bologna pilot project, which turned into a nation-wide reform in 2005 – all the way until 2014. The book also considers higher education developments in the country prior to the start of the Bologna reform – since Ukraine gained its independence in August 1991. Bologna is one of the most well-known and influential European projects for cooperation in the field of higher education. It aims to create an internationally competitive European Higher Education Area (EHEA) through a range of such objectives as the adoption of a system of credits, cycles of study process, diploma supplement, quality assurance, qualifications frameworks, student-centred education, lifelong learning and the promotion of student and faculty mobility. Through an in-depth examination of higher education actors and policy instruments in the case of the implementation of Bologna in Ukraine, this book aims to (1) analyse the process of the Bologna reform in Ukraine and (2) examine Bologna as a case of Europeanisation in the post-Soviet context. This analysis is based on interviews with key policy actors and text analysis of selected policy documents.

The book suggests that the Bologna reform in Ukraine primarily developed as an interrelationship between policy continuity and change. On the one hand, the book shows that most of the key powerful actors and networks in the country, established before the introduction of Bologna, retained their prior influence. As a result, Bologna – to a large extent – simply reproduced established relationships and pre-existing higher education policies. The Ministry of Education and Science was the primary actor pushing for this kind of policy continuity. On the other hand, Bologna also partially changed some aspects of the old higher education instruments and the established relations among the actors. These changes took place due to the involvement of civil sector organisations which increasingly became crucial as policy brokers in the process of this reform. The book suggests that the old practices and innovations in Bologna were interacting in layering – a gradual messy and creative build-up of minor innovations by different higher education actors in Ukraine. The accumulation of these innovations led to more fundamental changes – the beginning of the emergence of a more shared higher education policy-making in the previously centrally governed Ukraine. These

findings shed some light on the broader process of Europeanisation in the post-Soviet context. The Ukrainian case thus suggests that at least in the post-Soviet context, Europeanisation is the process in which change and the continuity are not mutually exclusive, but rather closely interconnected.

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