# COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY CHANGES AT THE PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN CROATIA FROM 2001 UNTIL 2013

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University of Zagreb

Faculty of Political Science

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DOCTORAL THESIS

Supervisor:

Assistant Professor Tihomir Žiljak, Ph.D.

Zagreb, 2016

Sveučilište u Zagrebu

Fakultet političkih znanosti

Nikola Baketa

# KOMPARATIVNA ANALIZA PROMJENA POLITIKA VISOKOG OBRAZOVANJA NA JAVNIM SVEUČILIŠTIMA U HRVATSKOJ OD 2001. DO 2013. GODINE

DOKTORSKI RAD

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Zagreb, 2016.

MENTOR'S CURRICULUM VITAE

Tihomir Žiljak was born in Zagreb. He earned his graduate, master's and doctorate degree at the Faculty of Political Science at the University of Zagreb. His basic fields of interest are public policies. He is particularly interested in educational policies, policies concerning people with disabilities, local cultural policy and the Europeanisation of public policies.

Žiljak is the editor of a few collections of papers on these topics (four books of proceedings on adult education in cooperation with Milan Matijević, a book on the strategic planning in the city of Zagreb in cooperation with Sanjin Dragojević). He published a great number of papers in international journals, the most prominent being the Croatian Education Policy in the EU Context (Faculty of Social Sciences Ljubljana), Professional accountability and personal responsibility in non - formal adult education (Cambridge Scholars Publishing), Older Students as Active Citizens? (ESREA). His significant articles in magazines are Lifelong Learning and Changes of the University (Politička misao), Lost in Translation: Discursive Obstacles in Educational Policy Transfers (Politička misao), Educational Policy Work Instead of the Depolitisation of Education (Odgojne znanosti), Strengthening the City Neighbourhood and Local Community with Cultural Development. Potential of City Cultural Centres (Društvena istraživanja), The European Framework for National Education Policies (Anali Hrvatskog politološkog društva), Lifelong learning policies in EU and Croatia (Anali Hrvatskog politološkog društva), Disability Is a Question of Human Rights: Can Education Help Their Implementation? (Anali Hrvatskog politološkog društva). He participated in research projects dealing with educational policies, disability policies (he is a member of The Academic Network of European Disability experts) and active ageing.

Žiljak teaches at the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb, Faculty of Law in Zagreb, Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation in Zagreb, University of Mostar (department of Pedagogy and department of Political Science). He has acted as a mentor on a great number of diploma theses and a few doctoral theses regarding the topic of educational policies and disability policies. He is a member of the editorial board of the Annals of the Croatian Political Science Association and the Andragogy Newsletter.

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# ABSTRACT

The focus of the thesis is on the policy changes at the public universities in Croatia in 2001-2013 time period. The topic is approached from historical institutionalism theoretical framework and managed through specific policy change model. The main goal is to explain the policy change in six sub-policies (structure and curriculum, mobility, quality assurance, social dimension, enrollment policy and tuition fees policy) at seven public universities in Croatia after the introduction of the Bologna Process. The model of policy change takes into account institutional framework of the higher education system and policy-actors' characteristics (strategic interests, beliefs and capacities) in order to explain the process of policy change. Also, the goal is to improve the policy change model in order to make it applicable on other levels of higher education policy and in other public policies. Methodology includes process tracing, directed content analysis (strategic documents of universities, universities' minutes, Rectors' Conference minutes, newspaper interviews) and semi-structured interviews.

Results indicate that particularly worrisome was the institutional organization. Namely, even when there were suitable actors' characteristics, it was not possible to conduct changes since the institutional non-integration was disabling bringing and conducting of decisions that would enable the policy change.Also, mere existence of an integrated structure did not prove to be a sufficient condition for change and it was necessary to fulfill the condition of compatibility of actors' characteristics with surrounding contexts (European and national). On the other hand, the example of the UNIRI revealed that the strive to establish integration, insisting on functional integration on the level of the University, the decreased influence of constituent units and compatibility of actors' characteristics with surrounding contexts ensured foundation for changes.

KEYWORDS: policy change, higher education, Croatia, university, integration, policy actors

## STRUCTURED (EXTENDED) SUMMARY IN CROATIAN

Bavljenje istraživačkim radom, barem u društvenim znanostima, pretpostavlja nastojanje ispitivanja tema koje su velikim dijelom neistražene ili ih se smatra društveno važnima. Iz moje perspektive takav pristup znanosti opravdava i znanstveni i društveni doprinos. Zbog toga smatram da tema Komparativna analiza promjena politika visokog obrazovanja na javnim sveučilištima u Hrvatskoj od 2001. do 2013. godine donosi doprinos u različitim istraživačkim aspektima, a to u ovom radu nastojim i pokazati. Istraživanje obuhvaća sedam javnih sveučilišta – Sveučilište u Zagrebu, Sveučilište u Splitu, Sveučilište Josipa Jurja Strossmayera u Osijeku, Sveučilište u Rijeci, Sveučilište Jurja Dobrile u Puli, Sveučilište u Zadru i Sveučilište u Dubrovniku te šest politika visokog obrazovanja – strukturu i kurikulum, mobilnost, osiguravanje kvalitete, socijalnu dimenziju, upisnu politiku i školarine.

Prije svega, bavljenje pitanjem promjene politike je kompleksan i zahtjevan pristup koji pretpostavlja detaljan i iscrpan istraživački rad. U radu se posebna pažnja posvećuje epistemološkim i teorijskim pitanjima promjene politike, a zatim i razradi modela promjene politike. Upravo je razrada modela promjene politike unutar teorije historijskog institucionalizma glavna tema s teorijskog aspekta ovog rada. Razmatranje specifičnog odnosa institucionalnog uređenja i uloge aktera u promjeni politike smatram glavnim teorijskim doprinosom ovog rada.

Nadalje, ovaj rad je fokusiran na primjenu modela promjene politike u svrhu testiranja modela i objašnjavanja promjene u politikama visokog obrazovanja na javnim sveučilištima u Hrvatskoj. Fokus na politike visokog obrazovanja proizlazi iz nekoliko motiva. Kao prvo, istraživanja ovog podsustava javnih politika u Hrvatskoj su uglavnom usmjerena na razmatranje sustava na nacionalnoj razini i to prvenstveno na razini pojedine politike. Stoga, rad cijelu priču razmatranja politika visokog obrazovanja spušta na razinu javnih sveučilišta i šest specifičnih politika visokog obrazovanja. Nadalje, obuhvatnost istraživanog perioda je usmjerena na vremensko razdoblje ulaska Hrvatske u Bolonjski proces i promjene koje su slijedile nakon toga, odnosno obuhvaćen je period od početka 2001. godine do 1. srpnja 2013. godine. S obzirom da se predviđa da je za promjene potrebno minimalno deset godina (Sabatier 1999) tako i ovo istraživanje obuhvaća duži vremenski period kroz koji je moguće promatrati taj proces. Konačno, istraživanje politika visokog obrazovanja na razini javnih sveučilišta predstavljalo je i istraživački izazov po pitanju dostupnih podataka. Naime, cijeli

sustav je obilježen nedovoljno sustavnim pristupom u osiguravanju podataka i njihovom javnošću. S obzirom na specifičnost istraživanja i nedostupnost kvantitativnih pokazatelja za pojedine politike visokog obrazovanja u cjelokupnom promatranom razdoblju i za svako pojedino sveučilište, odlučio sam se za kvalitativni pristup istraživačkom problemu. Ovo je također bilo izazovno iz razloga što su sveučilišta prilično zatvorene institucije te je pojedine dokumente bilo iznimno teško ili nemoguće dobiti na uvid. Prikupljeni korpus dokumenata predstavlja značajan istraživački poduhvat i daje dodatnu vrijednost ovom radu.

Rad se sastoji od šest cjelina, uz kratki uvod i zaključak. U prvom dijelu je naglasak stavljen na teorijski pristup historijskog institucionalizma. Kroz tu raspravu pokazuje se glavno razlikovanje historijskog institucionalizma u odnosu na druge varijante unutar škole novog institucionalizma poput institucionalizam racionalnog izbora, sociološkog institucionalizma i diskurzivnog institucionalizma. Osim toga, izdvojena je i povezanost pristupa historijskog institucionalizma i razmatranja promjene politike, kritike koje se odnose na ovaj pristup te njegovu primjenu u području javnih politika.

Nadalje, idući dio rada koncentriran je na raspravu o pristupima i modelima promjene politike. Tu je stavljen naglasak na epistemološka i teorijska pitanja promjene politike koji pokazuju kompleksnost ovog problema. Ovaj dio se nastavlja na raspravu o historijskom institucionalizmu te su predstavljene razlike pristupu promjeni u vidu isprekidane ravnoteže i ovisnosti o prijeđenom putu. Isto tako, nastavljajući se na argumente iz dijela o historijskom institucionalizmu, autor je usmjeren na restrukturiranje modela promjene politike kojeg predstavlja Witte (2006) i to posebno u dijelu koji se odnosi na aktere. Sami model je kreiran unutar teorijskih pretpostavki historijskog institucionalizma te se pretpostavlja djelovanje organizacijskih aktera s obzirom na njihove karakteristike (strateške interese, uvjerenja i kapacitete).

Nakon dvaju poglavlja usmjerenih na teoretske pretpostavke i razradu modela promjene politike slijedi dio koji se odnosi na metodološki pristup promjeni politike. Uvodno su objašnjena polazišta kvalitativnog istraživanja, postavljene su hipoteze istraživanja (glavna, pomoćna i tri alternativne) i odnosi pojedinih koncepta. Glavna hipoteza (H1) glasi – Promjena politika visokog obrazovanja na javnim sveučilištima u Hrvatskoj je povezana s razinom integracije i posredovana sukladnošću karakteristika aktera s nacionalnim i europskim institucionalnim kontekstom visokog obrazovanja. Pomoćna hipoteza (Hs) – Sukladnost uvjerenja aktera s nacionalnim kontekstom visokog obrazovanja, sukladnost

strateških interesa aktera s europskim institucionalnim kontekstom visokog obrazovanja i snažniji kapaciteti aktera koji zagovaraju promjene doprinose promjeni javnih politika. Nadalje, u skladu s postavkama praćenja procesa postavljenu su i alternativne hipoteze kako bi se provjerila druga objašnjenja promjene politika. HA1 – Promjena politika visokog obrazovanja na javnim sveučilištima u Hrvatskoj proizlazi iz razine institucionalne integracije sveučilišta. HA2 – Promjena politika visokog obrazovanja na javnim sveučilištima u Hrvatskoj proizlazi iz karakteristika aktera (njihovih kapaciteta, uvjerenja i strateških interesa). HA3 – Promjena politika visokog obrazovanja na javnim sveučilištima u Hrvatskoj proizlazi iz promjene stranke na vlasti, odnosno, pri tome politika (*politics)* određuje promjenu javne politike (*policy change*). Pri tome je moguće krenuti od pretpostavke koja proizlazi iz klasičnog institucionalizma (HA1), prema kojemu isključivo institucije određuju djelovanje aktera i samim time promjenu politike tj. da promjena ovisi isključivo o institucionalnom uređenju. Odnosno, u ovom slučaju, da će se na integriranijim i mlađim sveučilištima na lakši način donositi odluke te da će zbog toga ona biti pogodnija za promjenu politike. S druge strane, manje integrirana sveučilišta i starija sveučilišta će biti otpornija na promjenu politike. Osim toga, moguće je krenuti i od pretpostavke (HA2) da će se promjene politika odvijati samo zbog karakteristike aktera. Odnosno, da će akteri sa snažnijim kapacitetima, jasno usmjerenim strateškim interesima i uvjerenjima provesti promjene politika bez obzira na institucionalno okruženje u kojem se nalazili. Tako s tom pretpostavkom objašnjenje promjene ne bi bilo vezano uz razinu integracije sveučilišta nego uz karakteristike koje akterima omogućuju promjenu u onom smjeru u kojem su usmjereni s obzirom na svoje strateške interese pomoću alata koje zagovaraju. Nadalje, moguće je i objašnjenje (HA3) da politika (*politics*) oblikuje javne politike (*policy*) te bi pod tom pretpostavkom promjena stranke na vlasti donijela i promjenu politike visokog obrazovanja na sveučilištima.

Nakon toga slijedi objašnjenje pojedinih metoda istraživanja – praćenje procesa (*process tracing)*, kvalitativni intervjui s ekspertima iz područja visokog obrazovanja, usmjerena analiza sadržaja te korištenje sekundarnih izvora podataka. Uz to, predstavljena je metoda triangulacija koja se koristi za povezivanje metoda istraživanja kako bi se dobio uvid u istraživačko pitanje iz različitih kutova. Ovaj dio objašnjava glavne metodološke alate koji se koriste u radu s ciljem objašnjavanja promjene politike, preciznije govoreći kako bi se pokazalo koji uvjeti pogoduju promjeni politike, a koji onemogućavaju promjenu. Analiza obuhvaća sve zapisnike sjednica senata javnih sveučilišta u Hrvatskoj u promatranom

razdoblju, zatim zapisnike sjednica Rektorskog zbora i Saborskog odbora za obrazovanje, znanost i kulturu, strateške dokumente sveučilišta, 510 intervjua iz novina koji su omogućeni kroz bazu agencije Presscut, devet polu-strukturiranih intervjua s ekspertima za politike visokog obrazovanja te sekundarne izvore podataka.

Iduće poglavlje donosi prikaz dvaju važnih konteksta u kojima se odvija promjena politika visokog obrazovanja na javnim sveučilištima u Hrvatskoj. Za početak, to je europski kontekst visokog obrazovanja unutar kojeg je prikazan razvoj Bolonjskog procesa, glavnih politika i ideja koje se promoviraju na ovoj razini. Nakon toga slijedi i prikaz nacionalnog konteksta visokog obrazovanja. Taj dio uključuje pregled stanja visokog obrazovanja u Hrvatskoj te povijesni razvoj i nastanak sveučilišta što je izuzetno važno za razumijevanje trenutnog stanja stvari i procesa koji se odvijaju na sveučilištima. Osim toga, u ovom dijelu već započinje i analiza prikupljenih materijala i to po pitanju razine integriranosti sveučilišta i karakteristika aktera (strateških interesa, uvjerenja i kapaciteta).

Nakon bavljenja sveučilištima kao organizacijskim akterima rad se usmjerava na pojedine politike visokog obrazovanja. S obzirom na pretpostavke historijskog institucionalizma, modela promjene politike, kvalitativnog istraživanja i praćenja procesa izložena je analiza šest politika visokog obrazovanja – struktura i kurikulum, mobilnost, osiguravanje kvalitete, socijalna dimenzija, upisna politika i školarine za svako pojedino sveučilište kroz razdoblje od 2001. do 2013. godine. Svaki dio uključuje kratki uvodni pregled razvoja politika na nacionalnoj razini te postojećih istraživanja u toj sferi.

Konačno, slijedi rasprava o prikupljenim i prikazanim podacima te analiza promjene politika na javnim sveučilištima u Hrvatskoj kroz model promjene politike te su detektirani glavni uvjeti koji omogućuju ili onemogućuju promjenu politike. Analiza je izvršena za svaku pojedinu politiku visokog obrazovanja te je u konačnici dan jasan zaključak o odnosu institucionalne strukture i karakteristika aktera i njihovoj ulozi u promjeni politike.

Odbacivanjem alternativnih objašnjenja i provedbom logičkih testova koji su sastavni dio praćenja procesa pokazano je da je promjena politika visokog obrazovanja na javnim sveučilištima u Hrvatskoj bila povezana s razinom integracije i posredovana sukladnošću karakteristika aktera s nacionalnim i europskim kontekstom visokog obrazovanja.

Prema rezultatima, izrazito bitnom se pokazala institucionalna organizacija. Naime, čak kad su postojale odgovarajuće karakteristike aktera nije bilo moguće provoditi promjene zbog toga što je institucionalna neintegriranost onemogućavala donošenje i provođenje odluka koje

bi dovele do promjene politike. S druge strane, na primjeru Sveučilišta u Rijeci se pokazalo da je težnja k uspostavi integracije, inzistiranje na funkcionalnoj integriranosti na razini sveučilišta te smanjeni utjecaj pojedinih sastavnica osigurala podlogu za promjene. S druge strane, primjeri integriranih sveučilišta pokazuju da samo postojanje integrirane strukture nije bilo dovoljan uvjet za promjenu te je bilo potrebno ispuniti i uvjet podudarnosti karakteristika aktera.

Kod karakteristika aktera se pokazalo da su sva sveučilišta imala usklađene strateške interese s europskim institucionalnim kontekstom Bolonjskog procesa. Iako sveučilišta tu ne variraju za pretpostaviti je da je ovo bio važan uvjet za promjenu. Taj zaključak temelji se na činjenici da se promjene u ovim dimenzijama počinju događati tek nakon što je u Hrvatskoj započela prilagodba Bolonjskom procesu. Naime, u prethodnom razdoblju sustav visokog obrazovanja i sveučilišta su se pokazala kao inertna i sklona održavanju *statusa quo*, a to se vidi i kroz sporu, inkrementalnu promjenu koja je uslijedila nakon pristupa Bolonjskom procesu. Nadalje, važnost uvjerenja se očituje u razilaženju i sukobu s uvjerenjima koja su promovirana na nacionalnoj razini i to prvenstveno kroz nadležno Ministarstvo. S obzirom da se uvjerenja odnose na različite razine (duboko ukorijenjena uvjerenja na fundamentalne vrijednosti, *policy* ukorijenjena uvjerenja na podsustav javnih politika i vrijednosne prioritete na toj razini te sekunardna uvjerenja na sklonost pojedinim alatima) pokazalo se da razilaženja na razini *policy* ukorijenjenih uvjerenja predstavljaju prepreku promjeni, a da su se sekundarna uvjerenja mijenjala i usklađivala s onima na nacionalnoj razini kako bi se uskladio smjer i omogućila promjena politike. Duboko ukorijenjena uvjerenja nisu bila jasno izražena kroz zapisnike i intervjue, ali treba napomenuti da je pretpostavka da bi razilaženje u fundamentalnim vrijednostima dovelo uopće u pitanje promjenu politika. Konačno, kapaciteti aktera su se pokazali kao važni za mogućnost provedbe promjene politike i često je upravo njihov izostanak okarakteriziran kao važna stavka u onemogućavanju promjene. Važnim, ovisno o slučaju su se pokazali i ljudski i financijski kapaciteti, a u slučaju Sveučilišta u Zagrebu i njihovi politički i veto kapaciteti.

Rad donosi neke od već poznatih pogleda u istraživanju javnih politika, ali isto tako uvodi i novitete koji su obrazloženi i utemeljeni na teoretskim pretpostavkama. Isto tako, u metodološkom pogledu nudi inovativnu i zanimljivu kombinaciju istraživačkih metoda u okviru kvalitativnog istraživanja. Naglašavajući i uzimajući u obzir važnost razumijevanja konteksta te isprepletenost varijabli pokazuje kompleksnost pitanja koja se otvaraju u raspravi

o javnim politikama te se time ujedno upozorava na ponekad česta pojednostavljivanja u istraživanjima koja mogu biti voditi krivim zaključcima.

Kao ostvareni konačni cilj može se izdvojiti unaprjeđivanje i testiranje modela promjene politike. Ovo se prvenstveno odnosi na pozicioniranje modela promjene unutar teorijskih postavki historijskog institucionalizma, razradu karakteristika aktera te odnos strukture i aktera. Tako je pokazano da je moguće razraditi model promjene politike koji je temeljen na teorijskim postavkama historijskog institucionalizma. S druge strane, ukazivanjem na razlike između različitih varijanti škole novog institucionalizma argumentiralo se zbog čega je kombiniranje postavki tih škola nespojivo zbog epistemoloških razlika. Osim toga, čak je i unutar samog historijskog institucionalizma pokazano da postoje jasne razlike između pristupa promjeni politike. Nadalje, razrađene su karakteristike aktera koje uključuju strateške interese, uvjerenja i kapacitete, a takva razrada omogućuje jasno praćenje karakteristika aktera na tri razine – ideje u vidu strateških interesa kojima se vode u politikama, alati i rješenja u javnim politikama koja zastupaju te kapaciteti koji stvaraju preduvjet za rad na promjeni javnih politika. Upravo taj dio je ono po čemu se ovaj rad razlikuje od radova ostalih autora koji su predstavljeni tijekom razmatranja modela promjene politike. Konačno, pokazan je specifičan odnos strukture i aktera koji upućuje na važnost institucionalne strukture, ali uzima u obzir i djelovanje aktera unutar modela isprekidane ravnoteže.

Osim ovog teorijskog doprinosa, rad se pokazao značajnim i po pristupu razmatranja politika visokog obrazovanja. Osigurana je analiza promjene politika u šest specifičnih područja visokog obrazovanja na javnim sveučilištima u Hrvatskoj u navedenom razdoblju te su prikupljeni, analizirani i sistematizirani i neki dosad nedostupni podaci. Također, analiza je provedena na razini sveučilišta, a ne na nacionalnoj razini ili samo za pojedinu instituciju kako je to dosad bio princip. Time je, kako je već spomenuto u raspravi, osiguran značajan doprinos korpusu literature vezanom za politike visokog obrazovanja.

Konačno, ostvaren je i metodološki doprinos u vidu korištenja praćenja procesa koji zajedno s usmjerenom analizom sadržaja, kvalitativnim polu-strukturiranim intervjuima i sekundarnim izvorima, kroz triangulaciju dobivenih podataka, daje upotpunjenu sliku promjene politika. Predstavljeni model promjene politika ostavlja mogućnost korištenja i kvantitativnih metoda, ali smatra se da zbog svoje specifičnosti, praćenje procesa, ostaje nužna potreba zadržavanja kvalitativnog pristupa kao okosnice istraživanja. Razlog za to leži u potrebi za

razumijevanjem procesa i specifičnostima konteksta koje se javljaju, a kvantitativnim metodama se mogu previditi ovi aspekti.

Osim teorijskog i metodološkog te doprinosa korpusu literature, ovaj rad je pokazao i važnost sustavnog i transparentnog prikupljanja podataka u visokom obrazovanju, a što vrijedi i za druge sektorske politike. Izostanak podataka pokazao se preprekom u istraživanju fenomena i onemogućio uvide u pojedina pitanja koja su se pokazala važnima i zanimljivima. Uz to, postojala je i određena netransparentnost po pitanju dostupnosti podataka od strane sveučilišta. Time se pokazalo da su istraživači često onemogućeni u cjelovitoj analizi zbog rigidnosti institucija kojima ne odgovara da se njihovom problemu pristupa analitički, a istodobno se same ne bave značajnijim analizama stanja. S druge strane, sustavnost u prikupljanju podataka o sustavu omogućila bi i samim institucijama praćenje procesa pojedine politike te donošenje odluka koje su utemeljene na jasnim pokazateljima. Upravo je ovaj problem istaknut od strane nekoliko eksperata u sklopu intervjua. Naime, oni ističu da ne postoji jasna osnova na temelju koje se donose odluke, slijedom toga ističu i da se ne vrše analize kako bi se provjerilo jesu li ostvareni zacrtani ciljevi te da u konačnici ne postoji mogućnost donošenja odluka utemeljenih na analizi kako bi se unaprijedile politike. Iz ovih razloga, ali i zbog razvoja samog sustava, potrebno je ubuduće sustavno prikupljati podatke te omogućiti transparentan uvid u njih istraživačkoj zajednici te zainteresiranoj javnosti.

Osim same analize, dani su i prijedlozi za daljnja istraživanja, primjenu modela i potencijalno unaprjeđivanje. S obzirom da je model pokazao mogućnost objašnjenja promjene politika u visokom obrazovanju na javnim sveučilištima u Hrvatskoj, bilo bi potrebno i poželjno raditi na daljnjoj primjeni i testiranju modela kako u visokom obrazovanju tako i u drugim sektorskim politikama. Prvenstveno je potrebno prepoznati važne institucionalne razlike unutar promatrane politike. Tako to može biti razlikovanje privatnih i javnih institucija u obrazovanju ili zdravstvu, obiteljskih gospodarstava i krupnih konzorcija u poljoprivredi, znanstvenih instituta i sveučilišta u znanstvenoj politici, zatim usporedba različitih nacionalnih sustava ukoliko se razinu analize podigne na razinu sustava

Naravno, istraživanje ne mora nužno ostati samo unutar kvalitativnih metoda. Međutim, smatram da bi one svakako trebale biti dio ovakvih istraživanja jer omogućuju razumijevanje procesa i uvid u problematiku promjene. S druge strane, u ovom istraživanju kao realan problem se pokazao nedostatak kvantitativnih pokazatelja tijekom promatranog razdoblja što

je onemogućilo analizu koja bi pokrila sve dimenzije, na svim sveučilištima tijekom promatranog vremenskog perioda.

Model zasigurno otvara mogućnosti i za dodatne sugestije i unaprjeđivanje u okviru historijskog institucionalizma. Zasigurno je moguće poraditi na pojedinim konceptima predstavljenima unutar model. Tako je moguće raditi na dodatnoj razradi kapaciteta te tu potencijalni doprinos vidim u načinu razrade koncepata kako ih vide Wu, Ramesh i Howlett (2015). Naime, ovaj rad je objavljen u vrijeme kada je istraživanje predstavljeno u njemu bilo u poodmakloj fazi te nije bilo moguće razmotriti ovakav način koncipiranja kapaciteta. Ovaj pristup je koristan jer donosi razlikovanje kapaciteta na razini pojedinaca, organizacijskoj i sistemskoj razini te prema analitičkoj, operacijskoj i političkoj vrsti vještina i kompetencija. Time se dobiva devet tipova kapaciteta, odnosno po tri na svakoj od ovih razina. Ovo zasigurno otvara mogućnosti još strukturiranijeg pristupa problemu promjene te potencijalno omogućuje jednostavnije povezivanje kapaciteta koje imaju pojedinci unutar neke institucije s onima koji se nalaze na organizacijskoj razini. Osim toga, model je otvoren i za dodatni rad na drugim dijelovima, ali trenutno se ovo smatra glavnom idejom koja bi doprinijela dodatnoj razradi modela.

**Ključne riječi:** promjena politika, visoko obrazovanje, Hrvatska, sveučilište, integracija, akteri javnih politika

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## Abbreviations

AMEUP - Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes

ASHE - Agency for Science and Higher Education

CBS – Croatian Bureau of Statistics

CEEPUS – Central East European Programme of University Studies

CES – Croatian Employment Service

EC – European Commission

ECTS – European Credit and Transfer System

EHEA – European Higher Education Area

ENQA - European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

EPS – European Policy Statement

EQAR - European Quality Assurance Register

ESCC of the Croatian Parliament - the Education, Science and Culture Committee of the Croatian Parliament

ESG - European Standards and Guidelines on Quality Assurance

EU – European Union

EUA – European University Association

EUC – European University Charter

HEIs – Higher education institutions

HRK – Croatian kuna

IDE - Institute for the Development of Education

LLP – Lifelong Learning Programme

MOZVAG - Directory of study programmes

MSES - Ministry of Science, Education and Sports

MST – Ministry of Science and Technology

NCHE – National Council of Higher Education

SMP - Student mobility of placement

SMS - Student mobility for studies abroad

STA - Staff mobility for teaching mobility agreement

STT - Staff mobility for training

UNIDU – University of Dubrovnik

UNIOS – Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek

UNIPU – Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

UNIRI – University of Rijeka

UNIST – University of Split

UNIZD – University of Zadar

UNIZG – University of Zagreb

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# INTRODUCTION

Research work, in social sciences at least, assumes aiming to examine the topics that remain unexamined for the greater part or are considered socially important. From my perspective, such approach to science justifies both the scientific and social contribution. Due to this fact, I find that the topic Comparative Analysis of Higher Education Policy Change at Public Universities in Croatia from 2001 to 2003 contributes to various research aspects, which I aim to demonstrate further in the thesis. The research encompasses seven public universities – the University of Zagreb (UNIZG), the University of Split (UNIST), the Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek (UNIOS), the University of Rijeka (UNIRI), the Juraj Dobrila Univeristy of Pula (UNIPU), the University of Zadar (UNIZD), the University of Dubrovnik (UNIDU) and six sub-policies – structure and curriculum, mobility, quality assurance, social dimension, enrollment policy and tuition fees.

Firstly, dwelling on the issue of policy change is a complex and demanding approach that implies detailed and comprehensive research work. The complexity of policy change is thoroughly presented in the part that discusses this issue, and in the development of the model of policy change. From the theoretical aspect, the development of model of policy change within the theory of historical institutionalism is the main topic of this thesis.

Furthermore, this thesis is focused on the application of the model of policy change with the purpose of testing the model and explaining change in the sub-policies of higher education at public universities in Croatia. The focus on the higher education policies is brought about by several motives. Firstly, the researches of this subsystem of public policies in Croatia were mostly focused on considering the system on the national level and primarily on the level of individual policy. Therefore, the thesis lowers the entire idea of considering the higher education policies onto the level of public universities and six sub-policies of higher education. Furthermore, comprehensiveness of the research period is focused on the time period of Croatia's entry into the Bologna Process and the changes that ensued it. Seeing that it is anticipated that changes require minimally ten years to be realized (Sabatier 1999), this research also encompasses a longer time period. Finally, researching the higher education policies on the level of public universities also presented a researching challenge regarding the available data. Namely, the entire system is marked by inadequately systematic approach to assuring data and their publicity. With regard to the specificity of the research and

unavailability of quantitative indicators for certain sub-policies in the entire observed period and for each of the universities, I have decided to apply the qualitative approach to the research problem. This was also challenging since the universities are quite closed institutions and some documents were either exceptionally difficult or impossible to acquire. Gathered corpus of documents presents a significant researching endeavor and provides additional value to this thesis.

The thesis is composed of six parts, in addition to the short introduction and the conclusion. The first part emphasizes the theoretical approach of the historical institutionalism. Through this discussion, I present the main difference between the historical institutionalism and other variants within the school of new institutionalism such as the rational choice institutionalism, sociological institutionalism and discursive institutionalism. Also, I point out the relationship of the historical institutionalism approach and considerations of policy change, as well as critiques referring to this approach and its application in the field of public policies.

Furthermore, the next part of the thesis is dedicated to the discussion on the approaches and models of policy change. Here, I dwell on the epistemological and theoretical issues of policy change that demonstrate the complexity of this issue. This part presents a sequel to the discussion on the historical institutionalism, and the differences of the approach in terms of the punctuated equilibrium model and the path dependency model are also presented. By following the line of the arguments from the part on the historical institutionalism, I reconstruct the model of policy change, particularly in the part referring to the actors. The very model is created within the theoretical assumptions of historical institutionalism and assumes acting of organizational actors in regard to their characteristics (strategic interests, beliefs and capacities).

After the two chapters focused on the theoretical assumptions and elaboration of the model of policy change comes the part that refers to the methodological approach to policy change. Introductory, I present the starting points of the qualitative research, I set the hypotheses of the research and the relationships of individual concepts. This is followed by the explanation of the individual research methods – process tracing, qualitative interviews with the experts in the field of higher education, directed content analysis and usage of secondary sources of data, as well as the triangulation explanation. This part explains the main methodological tools I use in order to explain the policy change, or more precisely said, in order to demonstrate the conditions that benefit the change policy and those that disable it.

The next chapter provides the overview of two important contexts in which the policy change of higher education at the public universities in Croatia is taking place. Initially, this is the European context of higher education, which contains the development of the Bologna Process, main policies and ideas promoted on this level. This is ensued by the overview of the national context of higher education, which includes the overview of state of higher education in Croatia and the historical development and foundation of universities. This is of great importance for understanding the current state of the situation and the processes that take place at the universities. In addition to this, this part already initiates the analysis of the acquired materials regarding the issue of integration level of the universities and actors' characteristics (strategic interests, beliefs and capacities).

After presenting the universities as organizational actors, I consider the individual sub-policies. Having in mind the assumptions of historical institutionalism, model of policy change, qualitative research and process tracing, I present the analysis of the six sub-policies – structure and curriculum, mobility, quality assurance, social dimension, enrollment policy and tuition fees for each of the universities over the period from 2001 to 2013. Each segment includes a short introductory overview of the policy development on the national level and the existing researches of this sphere.

Finally, the discussion on the acquired and presented data is elaborated, as well as the analysis of policy change at the public universities in Croatia through the model of policy change. Also, the main conditions that enable or disable change are identified. The analysis was conducted for each of the sub-policies and eventually the clear conclusion was given regarding the relationship between the institutional structure and actors' characteristics, as well as their role in the policy change. Also, proposals for further researches, model application and potential improvement are given.

This introductory part shows the importance, main aspects and the framework of this research. The thesis brings some of the already known perspectives in the researching of public policies, but it also introduces innovations that are explained and based on theoretical assumptions. In the methodological sense, it also offers an innovative and interesting combination of methods of research within the framework of qualitative research. By having in mind and emphasizing the importance of understanding the context and the intertwined variables is confirmed by the complexity of the issues that are raised in the discussion on

public policies and this simultaneously warns about sometimes common simplifications in the researches that can be misleading.

# 1. THEORETICAL APPROACH

## 1.1. The New Institutionalism in Political Science

Institution dwelling had represented the traditional orientation in political science during the first half of the 20th century. However, focus that was set on institutions in political science had been replaced by the arrival of the behavioral approach, followed by various types of borrowing from the economic science, such as rational choice, which placed them in the center of research interest. Behaviorism and rational choice were, for the biggest part, focused on individuals. Namely, within these approaches, it is considered that individuals act autonomously and rationally and that their behavior is not conditioned by institutions within which they act. Modification in terms of the research subject was accompanied by changes in the methodological plan. In explanation, tendency was to introduce 'more scientific' methods with the aim of applying more rigorous approach in political science, which recognized the institutional approach as incompatible with the new view of the political science. Methodological side was accompanied by concentration on a big number of cases, development of statistical techniques and methodological individualism, i.e. the differences in political acting were explained by choices made by the individual rather than institutional surroundings (Peters 1999; Peters 2013; Caramani 2013). Previously mentioned approaches are focused on studying behaviors deemed measurable, rather than institutions that are more unique and thus more demanding for a simple envelopment by variables and quantification (Steinmo 2008, 121).

However, during the 1980s, renovation of institutionalism occurred, though it was never completely removed from usage seeing that it was partially kept in teaching of public policies and public management. New institutionalism maintains basic characteristics of the old institutionalism, but it also introduces new perspectives and questions. Re-studying of institutions was meant for better understanding the behavior of individual actors and clarifying the complexity of political processes (Miller 2010, 23). Authors of the new institutionalism, March and Olsen, thought that the prevalent approaches (behaviorism and rational choice) are marked with contextualism, reductionism, utilitarianism, functionalism and instrumentalism (March and Olsen 1984).

Contextualism refers to giving excessive attention to contextual occurrences such as economic conditions, demography, language, culture, technology and other factors.

Reductionism represents the reduction of collective behavior to individual. In other words, all decisions and consequences occurring on a collective level are considered the result of individual interactions and their choices. Besides that, decisions are evaluated in terms of what they bring to individuals, i.e. they only carry value because they achieve (maximize) individual's interests, but they do not have a higher normative value, which is implied by utilitarianism. Contrary to that, institutionalists consider that decisions are also brought based on institutional criteria and values, which simultaneously actualizes the normative part and not only the individual interest. Furthermore, functionalism refers to the criticism focused on observing history from the standpoint of rational choice and behaviorism. Namely, these approaches claim that history is efficient and that there is a course of progress where every following stage is more advanced than the previous one, while according to institutionalists, development is unpredictable and does not necessarily lead to functional development. Finally, instrumentalism refers to putting an emphasis on the outcomes and it neglects processes, identity, values, rituals and emotional components. (March and Olsen 1984; Peters 1999).

New institutionalism was meant to replace those characteristics and establish a new approach in political science that allows explanations of the phenomena of that scientific area in a more thorough way. Within new institutionalism, the emphasis is placed on collective behavior, mutual influence of social factors and the phenomenon of the political factor, as well as including more aspects in studying policy. Thusly, in 1990s, this approach became the dominant approach to political science and was used in numerous researches of various questions (legislation, social movement, public policies). Reasons to this also rest in the fact that this approach allows analysis of more than one level simultaneously while the original institutionalists were focused strictly on the level of macro analysis, and behaviorists on the micro level (Miller 2010, 23-25). However, there are more variations of the new institutionalism and each of them have their own vision of the relationship between actors and structures and certain specificities. This is how the variation of institutionalism of rational choice gives a central place to rational actors, sociological institutionalism brings out the importance of cultural dimension and cultural patterns of action, discursive institutionalism places emphasis on ideas and discourse and historical institutionalism emphasizes institutional development and path dependence. It can be said that the new institutionalism is "an umbrella term for a wide variety of complementary but clearly different methodologies" (Miller 2010, 25).

## 1.2. Varieties of the New Institutionalism

In her text, *The Theoretical Core of the New Institutionalism*, Ellen Immergut (1998, 18) points out the most important characteristics of the approach of the new institutionalism through several categories – interests, political process, actors, power and institutionalism mechanisms. For each of the schools, the author emphasizes the way they approach these categories. Also, an important insight into the school differentiation within the approach of the new institutionalism is given by Colin Hay (2006, 56-57), who offers main characteristics in terms of theoretical approach, assumptions, analytical approach, methods, institution perception, institutional change, key topics and weaknesses of these schools.

Within the rational choice institutionalism, institutions are meant to ensure rules and incentives for steering the behavior of rational actors, i.e. they are considered the "system of rules and incentives" (Rhodes et al. 2006, xiii). Actors who act within those institutions strive to maximize their benefit, they have fixed preferences and behave instrumentally (Hall and Taylor 1996, 944-945). Therefore, actors have 'egoistic behavioral characteristics' and "the basic argument of the rational choice approaches is that utility maximization can and will remain the primary motivation of individuals" (Peters 1999, 44). In addition to that, actors acquire norms and values that are dominant within institutions in order to achieve success with their actions while their preferences and interests remain externally defined. However, rules, incentives, norms and values of institutions ensure predictability for every participant and for the possibility of calculations, implying that the bigger efficacy of the institutional surroundings may cause stronger shaping of actors' preferences. However, due to this attempt of the actors to maximize their own benefit there is a constraining effect of the institutions in order to prevent free ride and the tragedy of common good. Precisely this is the reason why institutions that aim to steer the actions of an individual towards socially desirable outcomes exist. Peters names three main characteristics within the rational choice approach – a common set of assumptions (referring to previously mentioned rules, incentives and restrictions that serve as action guidelines for rational actors), a common set of problems (problems of collective decision-making) and a tabula rasa (according to this, historical development of institutions does not play an important role, it suggests that the changing of rules causes changes in actor's behavior and interest). Special problems in this approach occur due to the reason that every actor's action can be characterized as rational and because the composition of models that explain action may cause enhanced simplification of reality (Peters 1999, 43-61; Miller 2010, 25). Shepsle (2006, 32) claims that "the research program of rational choice

institutionalism is founded on abstraction, simplification, analytical rigor, and an insistence on clean lines of analysis from basic axioms to analytical propositions to empirical implications.“ In their researching, theoreticians of this school are mostly focused on public governance and bodies of legislation. Within the branch of public policies, this approach has received significant attention regarding the questions of influence of the European Union (EU) on the member states (see Börzel and Risse 2000).

Sociological institutionalism has roots in organization theory, anthropology and cultural studies (Miller 2010, 26), i.e. it aims to apply organizational sociological perspective to the researching of the political phenomenon. This approach tends to replace the vision according to which institutions function in concordance with rational principles, and introduces cultural dimension and cultural pattern of action as key variables. Institutions are observed as myths and ceremonies (Witte 2006). According to Hall and Taylor (1996), there are three specific characteristics of this approach within the new institutionalism. Firstly, they define institutions in a much broader sense than other approaches – in this approach, other than formal rules and procedures, institutions include symbolical systems, cognitive scripts and moral templates that shape one’s actions. Similar approach is offered by Peters (1999, 106), who claims that the definition of institutions in sociological institutionalism does not omit almost anything, i.e. that everything can be considered an institution. Furthermore, in terms of relationship of institutions and actors, it can be stated that institutions do not influence their calculations in the fashion that it was presented in the rational choice institutionalism, but that they influence the very identities of the actors. Seeing that actors accept norms by internalizing them, they become a part of the identity and actors practice them in the way that they themselves are strengthening the conventions (institutions) in terms of which they behave. Finally, changes in institutions occur due to the fact that “strengthening of the social legitimization of the organization or its participants” (Hall and Taylor 1996, 949) is recognized in the new institutional forms. This approach is most commonly used in explaining the influences of cultural heritage in the organization on development of various policies, institutional isomorphism and such. However, as Miller claims (2010, 26), this approach was the least represented and was the least influential.

Discursive or constructivist institutionalism is the youngest amongst the variants of the new institutionalism. This approach “defines institutions dynamically [...] as structures and constructs of meaning internal to agents whose ‘background ideational abilities’ enable them to create (and maintain) institutions while their ‘foreground discursive abilities’ enable them

to communicate critically about them, to change (or maintain) them" (Schmidt 2010, 1). Mentioned author, originator of this approach, considers that it allows understanding of the way actors construct their comprehension, create answers and think of ideas that eventually bring about the reinterpretation of institutions or turning of agents towards another institution. It is important to differentiate ideas and discourses within this approach. Ideas are means with which agents express their intentions, while discourses represent ideas and the process of interaction in institutional context (to whom, where and when actors share their ideas). Mentioned discursive process of idea sharing within the context is used to explain why certain ideas in the end are successful as public policies and why some are not. In all of this, it is important to point out that there are two spheres within which it is possible to monitor discourses – public policies and politics. In the sphere of public policies, actors include each other in coordinative discourse of constructing a public policy, but also in elaboration and the implementation of policies. Therefore, it is necessary to monitor the discursive process in order to explain success or failure of ideas (Schmidt 2010, 3; Schmidt 2008, 305-306; Hay 2006, 63-66).

Finally, according to the approach of historical institutionalism, institutions are relatively stable and permanent entities, but the possibility of their change still exists. However, changes and decisions regarding public policies can be caused by both external and internal factors, depending on particular authors and their approach. In historical institutionalism, there are different approaches such as dependence on establishment and development of the institution, which is known as path dependence – according to this approach, all important decisions and choices occurring during the early phase of the policy development are also determining and limiting possible future choices. In this case, in order to implement changes and modify the path, it is necessary to ensure a strong political pressure (Peters 1999; Hall and Taylor 1996). On the other hand, there is also the approach of punctuated equilibrium, where marginal (incremental) and atypical (paradigmatic) changes are considered (Howlett and Rayner 2006, 11-12). Seeing that the approach of historical institutionalism will be used in this thesis, that approach and particular choices within it will be more thoroughly explained in further text.

Despite the existing similarities between these schools, such as the emphasis on the institutions and visions of how they ensure certain regularities and predictability, as well as the fact that they are seen as the result of the intentional product of actors (Peters 1999, 141-145), this short overview of various schools within the new institutionalism reveals that there are clear differences in their view of the actors, way of their action, institutions and

relationships between institutions and actors. Different roots of these approaches (such as economic in rational choice institutionalism and the organizational theory in sociological institutionalism) point to different positions of these approaches. It is precisely these different basic settings emerging from the root of the approach, such as tabula rasa in terms of institutions in rational choice institutionalism in regard to the emphasizing of path dependence in historical institutionalism or rationality and tendency towards maximization of actors' interest in rational choice institutionalism in regard to the importance of actor's identity, values and collectivistic approach in sociological institutionalism, reveal that there are fundamental differences between them. Thusly, Peters (1999, 145-149) states that schools of new institutionalism are different in terms of the institution definition, view of the preferences, conceptions of changes and the relationship between actors and institutions. In this introductory part about the theoretical approach, it needs to be said that, based on these fundamental differences, I will be building the argument associated with the possibility and desirability of the usage of only one of these approaches in constructing the model of policy changes in order to ensure the consistency of explanation and strength of the argument.

In addition to this, there are other schools of the new institutionalism (international institutionalism, empirical institutionalism, normative institutionalism). However, they are not as represented in studying of public policies as the previously mentioned approaches. For the needs of this research I will be using the theoretical assumptions of historical institutionalism. Reason to this is the importance of this approach for explaining choices in the process of shaping and implementing of public policies, taking into consideration both formal and informal institutional administration, and the importance of temporal dimension that grants insight into the implementation of public policies over a period of time (Peters, Pierre, King 2005). Also, as stated by Peters (1999), historical institutionalism is, in a specific way, central part of the new institutionalism theory. Moreover, same author considers that it is possible to create integrated institutionalist theory based on that approach.

## 1.3. Historical Institutionalism

Authors of this school define institutions as "formal or informal procedures, routines, norms and conventions embedded in the organizational structure of the polity or political economy" (Hall and Taylor 1996, 936). Thusly defined institutions present frames within which actors act. In their actions, actors are constrained by certain previous events in the historical development of the institution. Importance of influence of institutions, their perseverance and different structure on the actors are represented in many researches associated with public

policies. To illustrate, we can present the thesis of Sven Steinmo (2008), in which the author demonstrates how two different institutional structures in particular states formed actions and attitudes of the elites and the public. Finally, it is precisely the action under this influence that has caused various outcomes in the tax policy, i.e. different public policies have been developed as the product of existence of different institutional structures.

Previously mentioned characteristics, highlighted by Immergut (1998) and Hay (2006) can be used as an important basis for understanding the basic starting points of the historical institutionalism. According to Immergut (1998, 18), within historical institutionalism, actors' interests are shaped by institutions' actions, and the historical development of the institution within which they act is also manifested. Furthermore, self-reflection is an important feature of actors who, in their actions, take into consideration social, cultural and historical norms, and the political process is structured via constitutions, state structures, political institutions, networks of public policies and group relations. Within such system, power depends on recognition by state, access to decision bringing and similar factors. Finally, institutional mechanisms that actors use are calculations of interests and aim formations regarding rules, structures, norms and ideas that surround them. On the other hand, in his overview, Hay (2006, 56-57) displays the way in which historical institutionalists approach such vision of reality in their research, i.e. such theoretical assumptions about reality. Historical institutionalists tend to contextualize actors within historical and institutional surroundings, and then use that historical development and time sequences in order to make conclusions and explain processes. In this, they often use the narrative method, method of thick description or the historical method. Furthermore, researches are directed at the meso level of analysis, but they also dwell on questions of macro level and unlike, for example, rational choice, they reveal greater flexibility in level inter-connectivity. Finally, focus of the approach is never placed strictly on a particular institution, but it includes more institutions and organizations and the relationships between them. These basic settings are important in order to understand the logic of functioning of historical institutionalism.

Main question to which the authors of this approach strive to answer is why a certain choice is even made, why the certain outcomes appear and how institutions shape individual's behavior. Seeing that the role of historical development is given priority, it should be emphasized that there is a big number of variables that influence that development, and they can be encompassed in a clear and quality manner only through studying that development. In addition to that, important variables are often not clearly separated. On the contrary, they

shape each other and it is impossible to apply methods and separation of variables that are used in other approaches, which particularly refers to behavioral approach in political science or other methods taken from natural science. Therefore, Steinmo (2008, 134) states that "studying history with methods and models derived from physics is like studying poetry with algebra." This is why the causality in research within historical institutionalism is always contextual. This means that the tendency to build causal models through breaking down the events to clearly separated, individual variables and their isolation from the context of historical and institutional development is impossible due to the reason that this separation would ignore the logic of causality assumed by the historical institutionalism. This problematics is clearly summed by Pierson and Skocpol (2002, 711):

> Behaviorists, for example, are happy to use statistical techniques to analyze data from as many 'cases' as possible – often data from surveys of thousands of individuals – because they are prepared to assume that very general variables are operating independently of one another come together to account for the patterns of behavior they are trying to explain. Historical institutionalists, by contrast, assume that operative variables may not be independent of each other at all. When it comes to analyzing the origins and impact of institutions, causally important variables are often bundled together in the real world; and there may be alternative causal paths to similar outcomes.

For example, Ellen Immergut (1998) names the incidence of economic crisis and unemployment as the factors that preceded the occurrence of fascism in Europe in the 20th century and she claims that even if such economic predispositions re-appeared, it would not possible to guarantee that they would result in the same outcome. Reasons to this are located precisely in the importance which historical institutionalists place on historical processes. Importance of history can be seen in three aspects. First one is associated with the historical context. In this view, the context in which the observed process and political events occur can be seen. Then, learning from historical experience, i.e. the behavior of actors and their choices are not secluded from previous experience and knowledge of previous events. Finally, expectations of actors are based on experiences from the past (Steinmo 2008, 127-128). Having this in mind, it is possible to focus on the comprehension of causality in historical institutionalism. Thusly Stinchcombe (1987), by pointing out the historical and temporal dimension of research, defines the type of causality applied in this approach as the historical causality. Namely, due to the different context and learning conducted by the actors based on historical events in different time periods, it is not possible to make conclusions about the same types of outcomes based on the same variables (Immergut 1998; Steinmo 2008). In concordance to that, the attitude within the historical institutionalism, which is clearly

presented by Pierson and Skocpol (2002, 699), is that it is necessary to emphasize the importance of theoretical interconnectivity of variables and systematic monitoring of process that happened. This approach to the political process, analysis and causality clearly points to the differentiation of historical institutionalism in relation to the rational choice institutionalism. Hall and Taylor (1996, 942) notice that the historical institutionalists "posit a world that is more complex than the world of tastes and institutions often postulated by rational choice institutionalists."

Despite the fact that theoreticians of the historical institutionalism prioritize institutions, it is necessary to emphasize that they are certainly not the only causal factor taken into consideration. Namely, they represent only one of the links in the chain of causality, which influences the roles and actors' behavior (Hall and Taylor 1996; Thelen and Steinmo 1992, 3). Seeing that the emphasis is placed on the mutual intertwining of the variables, the impossibility of their separation and the importance of context, chosen method of research is process tracing. The results are presented via thick descriptions based on empirical research and the chosen method of deduction is inductive logic.

In some historical institutionalists, concentration on the context and the process tracing implied the usage of severely thick descriptions and narratives in order to connect the chain of causality, which, in the sense of historical institutionalism, can be extremely lengthy. Because of this comprehensiveness and the need for detailed process tracing, the studies of historical institutionalists are focused on only one or a small number of cases. However, over time, the tendency is to increase the number of processed cases in great number of details, based on which it is possible to compare various results and explain the logic of causality (Steinmo 2008; Sanders 2006). Also, it is necessary to point out the fact that

> historical institutionalists usually do not examine one institution or process at a set point in time, but rather they tend to look at politics as a very complex set of processes and institutions that vary over time and that interact in interesting and unexpected ways. (Miller 2010, 26)

Naturally, this approach has constrained possibility of prediction and it is actually more focused on some type of explaining. However, the very epistemological position of historical institutionalism does not allow the possibility of prediction because it considers that, due to the previously mentioned complexity and interdependence of variables, prediction is not possible. It is because of this that it is considered more descriptive rather than a prognostic approach (Peters 1999; Steinmo 2008; Sanders 2006).

Also, according to Pierson and Skocpol (2002) and Steinmo (2008), the main interest of historical institutionalism is solving the important questions, dwelling on real issues, addressing questions about why certain phenomenon occurred or did not occur, and what the reasons of occurrence of certain structures in specific temporal and spatial circumstances are. Focus on actual problems has appeared as the reaction and disappointment with behavioristic focus on grand theories. Same authors also emphasize another important characteristic of the historical institutionalism, which was repressed as unwanted in behavioral science because scientists were expected to be neutral regarding the area of their profession, which is called normativity. Seeing that they are focused on real issues, which include a series of normative dilemmas, theoreticians of historical institutionalism often question certain solutions and issues like equality and freedom. In this approach, researches are not merely neutral observers of certain phenomenon but they actively participate, question and suggest potential improvements, which are more in concordance with the normative idea. However, it is necessary to clearly differentiate evaluation research from the classical scientific research. According to Kustec Lipicer (2012), basic differences can be found in several parts. In this sense, the author mentions – research purpose, authorship of the research plan, preparation of the research plan, criteria and standards for evaluation of the adequacy of research plan and results and the way results are presented. Classical scientific research primarily differs according to its purpose, which is improvement of the knowledge corpus in a specific area of research. On the other hand, evaluation research is shaped according to wishes and needs of clients and based on research conclusions, it strives to give recommendations and advice for further action and issue solving. In spite of that, the normativity of historical institutionalists in scientific research remains an added value, next to scientific innovation, and it is not formed like recommendations that can be found in evaluation researches.

## 1.4. Critiques, Change and Temporal Dimension in Historical Institutionalism

After the overview of basic settings of historical institutionalism, it is also necessary to emphasize the critiques, which are directed at the theoretical foundations of this approach, along with the implications brought to the research. As the main flaws, critiques of the historical institutionalists mention neglecting of the actors' roles in regards to the institution, way of explaining institutions' changes, subsequent explanations and falsifiability. Authors who particularly deal with issues historical institutionalism encounters are Peters, Pierre and King (2005) and Peters (1999).

There is an issue in the application of historical institutionalism in researches when there is an attempt to explain the role of the actors in the political process, because within this approach, actors' actions are considered to be greatly determined by institutional environment. In spite of the fact that there was a moment of change and institutional frame that influenced actors' behavior, unavoidable factor in the end were still actions of certain actors. Contrary to this view are mostly the authors of rational choice institutionalism, who place a bigger accent to actors and offer a clearer connection between actors and institutions, as well as the theoreticians of the actor-centered institutionalism. As an example of the approach of rational choice institutionalism, it is possible to mention Zohlnhöfer (2009), who emphasizes the interaction of veto actors and maximization of strategies as starting points in explaining policy changes, as well as explaining the incentives towards change that he sees in external shocks. It is also necessary to point out Scharpf (1997), who is a significant representative of actor-centered institutionalism that places actors in their main focus. Thusly, he considers that "actors and their interacting choices of policy responses, rather than institutions, are assumed to be the proximate causes of policy responses, whereas institutional conditions, to the extent that they are able to influence actor choices, are conceptualized as remote causes" (Scharpf 2000, 764). Even though these approaches and frames do not neglect structures within which actors act, they still place a smaller emphasis on them and focus more on the actors.

In historical institutionalism, it is assumed that constraints emerging from an institutional organization are acquired by the actors and that they act in concordance with them. Even though there is a clear connection, i.e. direction of influence of the institution towards the individual, it is still not completely clear how individuals shape and influence institutions. Therefore, it is necessary to work on the so called 'solution' to the problem of structure and agency in an attempt to achieve better connection of the results, processes leading to the results and actors, who achieved results with their actions. In this view, it is necessary to point out that additional analysis of actors' roles in decision making and their activity within institutions would allow more explanatory power and it would bring forth an inherent logic into historical institutionalism (Peters, Pierre and King 2005, 1284). Therefore, I will attempt to offer the model of change within the historical institutionalism framework that has the influence of institutions as its starting point, and also emphasizes the actors' characteristics and their actions.

Furthermore, problem of explaining changes is an often sequel of the problem of actors' roles. Precisely due to the neglect of the actors' roles, it is considered that it is necessary to seek

other explanations of the change that would be coherent to the internal logic of historical institutionalism. This objection often suggests that historical institutionalism is static. Therefore, critics point out that this approach is more suitable for explaining long durability and survival of the institutions and political processes associated with the periods of stability rather than for the very changes that occur during different time periods. Thelen and Steinmo (2002, 14) emphasize two common problems – "(1) the emphasis on analyzing 'comparative statics' and (2) the relative underdevelopment of theories of institutional formation and change." Approach to change within historical institutionalism has certain solutions regarding the questions of relationship between statics and dynamics and I will attempt to solve this issue within the model of policy change. Namely, I consider that the so called moments of statics actually bring the incremental changes, i.e. a more moderate dynamics, and that an exceptional dynamics of events and changes is more dominant during the punctuated equilibrium. In addition to that, explanation of the change, according to the opinion of the majority of critics, is based on the assessment of individual authors rather than on strict measuring. Critics find reasons to this in dominant usage of quality methods in historical institutionalists, which, according to them, leave a greater possibility of subjective assessment (Peters, Pierre and King 2005). This objection, associated with the assessment of change and qualitative methods, is brought about mainly by the authors who apply behavioral approach to political science and take different epistemological starting positions. Finally, it is the development of the model within historical institutionalism based on punctuated equilibrium that brought the stronger dealing with critique in terms of change.

Also, critique was directed at the supplementary explanation, i.e. lack of predictability in this approach. An explanation to this objection had been provided earlier in the view of epistemological position of the historical institutionalism according to which, due to the specificity of each individual case, it is not possible to assume in the way that is applied in natural sciences. Furthermore, there is a critique that refers to the falsifiability of the explanations that emerge from the work of the historical institutionalists. In explanation, Peters (1999, 75) asks a question if the historical institutionalism fulfills one of the conditions of scientific theory set by Popper. Peters considers that historical institutionalists can explain every occurrence by referring to the influences of previous events and that there is a small number of beforehand determined criteria that would set clear conditions based on which it could be said that the explanation of the historical institutionalism has failed. I attempt to solve this issue by setting the alternative hypotheses that offer alternative solutions. I am

aware that historical institutionalism cannot possibly explain all events and that introducing a stronger element of actors contributes to falsifiability within this approach.

In the view of the discussion regarding the change within the historical institutionalism, it is interesting to point out different hypotheses elaborated by individual groups of authors. Therefore, Peters, Pierre and King (2005) highlight the work of Brunsson and Olsen (1992), in which they claim that change can occur if there is a big difference between norms and actual actions of institutions, and Sabatier and Jenkins (1993), who claim that changes of dominant paradigm will not happen if there is not an adequate substitution. Furthermore, according to Pierson (2000), successive changes can occur after the disturbance of stability because it is very difficult to re-establish equilibrium after a long period of stability. In addition to them, authors like Thelen and Steinmo (1992) see main causes of change in the change of external influences. As visible from these attempts to explain change in historical institutionalism, most authors are oriented towards external explanations, which maintain primary and dominant role of institutional frame as the central explanatory factor, and the actors' role is constrained.

However, all of these attempts at explaining change can be resumed to much more general theoretical explanations characteristic to historical institutionalism. According to Howlett and Rayner (2006), those include historical narratives, critical junctures and path dependence, as well as punctuated equilibrium. These approaches are different according to their complexity and comprehension.

Historical narratives are based on retroactive observation of the entire sequence and in this fashion, the attempt is to discover the narrative that would explain a process from its beginning to its end. This approach has introduced the importance of time sequences to observation of historical process and emphasized its importance for causality. There are two main directions – narrative positivism and narrative post-modernism. However, as Abott (1992) states, the main issue is determining when an individual process begins and ends. Authors within historical narratives primarily use thick descriptions and process tracing, but this type of approach to change issues is also reflected through the inability of identification of patterns of actions and replicable results (Howlett and Rayner 2006, 2-4, 8-10).

Next, critical junctures and path dependence are an explanation referring to the "moments when substantial institutional change takes place thereby creating a 'branching point' from which historical development moves onto a new path" (Hall and Taylor 1996, 942).

Moreover, a more detailed explanation of necessary circumstances for change can be found in Peters (1999), who claims that the juncture is an occurrence in which a series of political powers act simultaneously and that they are capable to lead to changes. Speaking of them, each of them individually would not be powerful enough to lead to a point of change. According to Collier and Collier (1991), main feature of this explanation is that it aids the understanding of how certain policy directions have been selected, i.e. how the junctures of individual events have influenced policies' outcomes. One of the critiques in this case is directed at the testing issues of the same cases in the context of other events. In other words, it is difficult to determine that the same outcomes would not appear in the case of a different historical development (Peters, Pierre and King 2005). Besides, the issue is also the fact that authors often do not explain important matters in an institutional organization, which is selected at the point of critical juncture in order to be sustained during a certain period of time. According to my perception of literature on historical development, and especially according to the arguments of Steinmo (2008), there are a couple of reasons of long-term sustainment of institutions. Thus, there can be resistance by the ones who enjoy a privileged position. Also, it can occur because the existing structures ensure predictable rules of the game and outcomes, and actors who, based on them, form their expectations and interests which they are not prepared to exchange for potentially unpredictable situations. Plus, change can create costs or simply speaking, actors can create a tendency towards a specific solution, which they are not willing to exchange for new institutional organizations due to the reason of habit. This part of explanation is located in the part of the literature referring to the feedback mechanisms (Thelen 1999, 400) and it is clearly associated with the corpus of literature about the critical junctures.

The view on dynamic and static of institutions, through the lenses of punctuated equilibrium, assumes that the institutions would endure within the equilibrium and function according to the decisions made at the moment of their creation or in the point of their last disruption. This is the explanation developed primarily by Stephen Krasner (1984), and it was borrowed from evolutionary biology. According to Thelen and Steinmo (1992), this approach perceives institutions as exceptionally stable forms (in equilibrium), capable of surviving as such during a longer period of time. Stability of institutions allows the explanation of policy outcomes and the way of actors' actions. However, it is possible that over time, a crisis would occur (punctuated equilibrium), which would cause an institutional change after which comes a longer period of stability. Crisis causes, or the so called motors of change, are political or

economic factors, change amongst the supporters or a conflict. However, primarily listed as causal mechanisms are exogenous variables, even though there is a combined causality of exogenous and endogenous variables (Capano 2009, 20-21). Changes in external environment can lead to changes in three ways. Firstly, great changes of social-economic and political context can cause stable institutions to change. Then, it can occur that existing institutions receive a new purpose, which introduces new actors into them. Finally, external changes can lead to setting new goals and strategies of institutions, which imposes new roles on the existing actors in these institutions (Thelen and Steinmo 1992).

Howlett and Rayner (2006) point-out models of punctuated equilibrium as the most adequate and most developed for studying changes, and so they state that "probably the best developed empirical evidence supporting a particular model of historical sequencing in the policy sciences is that supporting the 'punctuated equilibrium' form of the general process sequencing model of policy change" (2006, 11). According to them, this approach also synthesizes elements of path dependence and historical narratives. It emphasizes the importance of sequences and establishes connectivity of the events that occurred in different time periods. Haydu (1998) notices advantages of this approach in terms of path dependence and historical narratives because it "provides a plausible way to represent and account for historical trajectories; it builds social actors and multiple causal timelines into explanatory accounts; and it offers a richer sense of how earlier outcomes shape later ones" (1998, 341). The latter part discerns it in terms of the path dependence, because the selection of the new trajectory is not left to random events. Instead of that, social processes represent links in the process of re-establishing equilibrium.

Thelen (1999, 399) presents an extremely important observation associated with approach to change and stability by noticing that it was necessary to observe institutional and policy change along with stability. Skowronek (1995) argues in the same direction and he considers that it is necessary to take the reflexive character of change into consideration and he argues that "it will begin to dissolve the boundaries that have traditionally separated the study of order from the study of change, and with them the homeostatic understanding of change and development that is so pervasive in social science theorizing" (1995, 96). I aim to achieve this perception of relationship between change and stability with this thesis and with the model of policy changes, which will be presented and tested through the research associated with the changes of policies of higher education in Croatian public universities. This model, based on

punctuated equilibrium, offers a foundation for considering change. Namely, as Howlett and Rayner state (2006, 14):

> The kind of hybrid model represented by process sequencing, one that draws creatively on the methods of the literary critic or the economist without seeking to imitate them in a slavish way, has the most potential to provide an historically-sensitive alternative transcending the ahistorical 'general linear' model in the study of policy-making over time.

In the continuation of the thesis, the policy of change and theoretical and epistemological choices that are necessary to make during the studying of this phenomenon will be explained in a more thorough fashion. However, prior to that, I will shortly discuss the importance of temporal dimension in historical institutionalism and studying of public policies.

Through the discussion regarding the theoretical settings of historical institutionalism, it is clear that temporal dimension and sequencing play an important role in explaining the phenomenon in this school of new institutionalism and that they cannot be neglected. It should be pointed out that the historical institutionalism differentiates from plain noting of the individual historical events or facts that happened. Therefore, historical institutionalists' research "mean investigations that look not just at the past but at processes over time" (Pierson i Skocpol 2002, 698). This is where we can see the difference in reference to behaviorists focusing on research results that show only individual points in time (snap-shots) and in reference to rational choice that, in its analysis, demands simultaneously fixated game rules, actors and preferences at the beginning of the game observation, which becomes complex when it encompasses a longer period of time and it is not possible to conduct such models (Pierson and Skocpol 2002, 705).

All previously mentioned explanations of change take time and timing into consideration. When it comes to critical junctures and path dependence, big importance is given to the moment of choice of a specific path that is later traced in the historical development, i.e. a new time sequence begins. Then, in the explanation of change through the punctuated equilibrium, there is a shift between two time sequences. In one, the equilibrium is stable and in the second, it is disrupted. Finally, historical narratives imply observation of a long time sequence that encompasses the entire process from its beginning to the end and it emphasizes the importance of historical path, which differentiates it from the stochastic model that observes a process via ahistorical approach (Howlett and Rayner 2006).

Paul Pierson deals with temporal dimension thoroughly in his book called *Politics in Time: History, Institutions and Social Analysis* (Pierson 2004). In the mentioned book, Pierson focuses on the specific role of time sequences – how individual events develop over time, how they overlap and cause changes. In essence, the idea is:

> The linking of discrete elements or dimensions of politics in the passage of time. If two events or particular processes occur at the same historical moment, the results may be very different from when they are temporally separate […] To say that timing matter implies the timing of something relative to something else. (Pierson 2004, 55)

This brings us back to the question and understanding the context. In order to understand individual results of political processes, it is not enough to observe the correlations of individual variables, it is also necessary to know which events preceded the occurrence of individual results. That way, the same result can exist in different institutional contexts, but due to different reasons.

Time sequencing of processes allows the author to establish results of individual sequences and determine the result of an individual sequence as well as how events of the following sequence are upgraded to them. Breaking down of the political process to time sequences allows us to determine the connectivity between the events and the explanation of the process development. In path dependence, this can be seen in the occurrence of critical junctures, and in models based on punctuated equilibrium, this can be seen in the re-establishment of the equilibrium.

## 1.5. Public Policies and Historical Institutionalism

Finally, it is necessary to emphasize that historical institutionalism is used, to a great extent, in analyzing of public policies, formation of various policy solutions and policy changes. So far, in the thesis, several examples of papers have been sporadically listed, in which the authors have used the approach of historical institutionalism in order to explain various aspect of policy forming, such as the constraints of actors in terms of decision bringing, policy development, policy changes, etc. Discrepancy of usage and application in dwelling with public policies can be seen in the work of Peters, Pierre and King (2005), who use historical institutionalism in order to explain the return of the support programs in exchange for work (so called, workfare) and their development in Denmark, USA and Great Britain, the reform of public administration in Great Britain and counties of Commonwealth, as well as the crossing from Keynesianism to monetarism in Western countries. Furthermore, Reich (2000) sees historical institutionalism as an adequate theoretical approach for studying redistributive

public policies, and Pierson and Skocpol (2002) apply the same approach on the concrete policy – the policy of pension systems. Pierson (1996) uses historical institutionalism to explain integration policies of the EU, and Bulmer (2009) expands his work. Besides that, it was applied on special public policies in the United States of America, so Howard (1997) works on both tax and social policy, while Gottschalk (2000) works on labor, business and health care policies. Based on this series of listed sector policies, versatile application and usefulness of the approach in different public policies and in different levels of analysis is obvious.

In terms of the presented differences within new institutionalism, specificities and flaws of the school of historical institutionalism as well as the applicability of this approach, it is possible to draw main conclusions associated with this part of the thesis. It is these possibilities of long-term process tracing, taking the context within which the researched instance is observed into consideration, connecting different levels of analysis, importance of structure, and leaving enough space for actors to act, are the main reasons why I chose to apply historical institutionalism in the research of the phenomenon of policy change in public universities in Croatia. Seeing that the analysis will encompass a period of ten years and that it will be focused on a bigger number of organizations and actors, I consider that the approach of historical institutionalism is not only adequate but desirable in order to enable the explanation of the researched phenomenon.

Main conclusions of this chapter, which need to be emphasized, based on which the main arguments are going to be developed are:

1. Aim of historical institutionalism is to explain how certain instances happened, and what the reasons for appearing of individual structures in certain time and spatial circumstances are.

2. Causality is considered contextual within the historical institutionalism

3. Institutions constrain actors' actions, but actors are also self-reflexive and take social, cultural and historical norms into consideration in their actions.

# 2. POLICY CHANGE

## 2.1. Main Approaches to Policy Change

In the previous part, I have referred to various approaches to change within the historical institutionalism. However, it is necessary to more thoroughly expound certain parts associated with this topic seeing that it is the main idea of this thesis. In this part, I will attempt to thoroughly explain the policy change, how it is possible to approach this phenomenon, how it fits into the theoretical basics of historical institutionalism, as well as point out the complexity which research of policy change implies.

Initially, it is necessary to see how approaches of punctuated equilibrium and path dependence, which I presented in the part associated with the historical institutionalism, observe basic epistemological and theoretical questions (Table 1). Differences between these two approaches within the historical institutionalism are far deeper than it seems according to the description in the previous part. According to the epistemological and theoretical selections pointed out by Capano (2009), which will get more attention in the following part, these two approaches share similarities only according to the question of dynamics of change, giving advantage to the structure over the actors and partially according to the combined causal mechanisms. Table 1 reveals the complexity of dealing with the policy change as well as numerous characteristics of this phenomenon, which we need to take into consideration during the approach to analysis.

Table 1. Epistemological and Theoretical Choices in Policy Change

| | **Punctuated Equilibrium** | **Path Dependency Framework** |
|---|---|---|
| **Epistemological Choices** | | |
| Way of event progression | Disconnected linearity | Non-linearity |
| Dynamics of development | Evolutionary (sequence slow/rapid changes) | Disconnected evolution |
| Motors of change | External crisis, partisan change, conflict | Increasing returns; history |
| **Theoretical Choices** | | |
| Definition of policy development and change | Particularly focused on punctuations in agenda setting, in policy image construction, and in legislative behavior | Covering the entire process |
| Type of change (incremental or radical) | Structural link between both types | Both |
| The output of change | Reversible | Irreversible |
| The level of abstraction | Macro | Co-evaluative perspective |
| The structure-agency dilemma | Structural prevalence | Structural prevalence |
| Causal mechanisms | Combinative causality with the prevalence of exogenous variables | Combinative causality; historical paths; critical junctures |
| Explanatory variables | Critical external events; institutional arrangements; cycles of public attention; dynamics of processing information | Self-organized innovation, chance, contingency |

Source: Capano (2009, 20:21).

Through previously presented theoretical perspectives, policy change contains a lot of aspects and it is incredibly complex. Therefore, we can say that policy change is a complex pheomenon and a complex process that "includes all aspects of transformation, redesign, i.e. (in)stability of some policy" (Petek 2014, 137). In this thesis, I observe policy changes "as forms and aspects of institutional change since both require the adjustment of formal and informal features" (Witte 2006, 60). Witte (2006) and North (1990) perceive institutional change as a process in which there is a mutual relationship of formal and informal constraints as well as relationship between institutions and organizational actors. On one hand, institutions constrain actors, and on the other hand, they change institutional structure with their actions (i.e. formal and informal characteristics as they are defined by the approach of historical institutionalism). So, when we speak about the policy change as the form of institutional change, then it is referring to both formal and informal rules at the university, as

well as procedures, norms and conventions, while on the other side, universities participate in the process as an organizational actor[1] (North 1990, 4-5).

Importance and theoretical complexity of the policy change research have been particularly thoroughly and clearly presented by Giliberto Capano (2009) in his text called *Understanding Policy Change as an Epistemological and Theoretical Problem*. By considering important epistemological and theoretical issues, this author brings forth the main problems that occur in researching and creating models in this area. Therefore, some of the raised issues associated with the policy change are those regarding the linearity or non-linearity of the process of change, evolutionary or revolutionary development of change, the question of motors of change, consideration of question of what makes an object of change, which type of policy change (incremental or radical) is occurring, the question of irreversibility and the reversibility of the output of change, consideration of abstraction level and the associated dilemma of structure/agency and finally, the author also deals with the causal mechanisms and variables (see Table 2). Even though these are all important dimensions and aspects of policy change that have to be taken into consideration, here I will merely briefly point out some of them, which I consider to be crucial for further work.

[1] "The emphasis in this study is on the institutions that are the underlying rules of the game and the focus on organizations (and their entrepreneurs) is primarily on their role as agents of institutional change; therefore the emphasis is on the interaction between institutions and organizations." (North 1990, 5)

Table 2. The Main Characteristics of Policy Change

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Direction of change | Path of change | Linear | Connectivity of sequences |
| | | Non-linear | Separation of sequences |
| | Path logic | Cumulative | Diachronic sequence of change is favorable to various policy paradigms |
| | | Adaptive | Change sequence is a simple process of adaptation of currently present policy characteristics to changes in the external environment. |
| Dynamics (tempo) of change | Evolutionary | Slow | Constant adaptation |
| | | Fast | |
| | Revolutionary | | Radical, discontinued, unpredictable abruption |
| Motors of change | Competition, learning, imitation | | |
| | Conflict | | |
| | Institutional rights | | |
| | Consensus and cooperation | | |
| | Self-organization, coincidence, actors | | |
| Type (level) of change | Incremental | Depending on: | Level of abstraction – micro/macro |
| | | | Tempo of change |
| | Radical | | Path logic |
| | | | Envelopment of change |
| Output of change | Reversibility | | |
| | Irreversibility | | |

Source: Adapted from Capano (2009).

Initially, it is necessary to state that, according to Capano (2009, 13), theoretical choices imply deciding about "how to develop the epistemological premises when choosing how to study the research object." First epistemological question that we need to start from refers to the direction of change. Unlike Cashore and Howlett (2007), Howlett and Cashore (2009) and Baumgartner and Jones (2002), who only take the logic of path (adaptivity and cumulativity) and change into consideration during the observation of direction of change, Capano (2009) observes two aspects – the first one being the path of change, and the other is the logic of direction. Having this in mind, path of change can be linear and non-linear, and the logic of direction tells us if the change process is cumulative or adaptive (according to the author, the second question is more of theoretical nature than it is of epistemological). Linearity and non-linearity of change are not exclusive categories but are located at the ends of the continuum, meaning that actual cases are always less or more linear, i.e. non-linear. Linearity represents

the connectivity of sequences of events and in such case of policy development, it is impossible to return to the previous state, while non-linearity marks the policy progress that does not follow previous sequences and the causal connection between previous and future events does not have to exist. This epistemological choice is relevant because it clearly demonstrates the author's vision of reality, way that it connects events and the origination of change. Furthermore, the dynamics of development reveals if the policy development is evolutionary or revolutionary. Evolutionary progress presents continual adaptation, but in terms of tempo, this progress can be both slow and fast. On the other hand, revolutionary dynamics presents sudden and unpredictable abruption to past and it results with completely new solutions.

As previously mentioned, Capano (2009) considers a number of questions regarding the nature of policy change and the relationship between the type (incremental and radical) and tempo of change (slow and fast). Taxonomy of policy change presented by Durant and Diehl (1989) in the Table 3 moves in the similar direction.

Table 3. Policy Change Types According to the Mode and Tempo of Change

| | Tempo or Speed of Change | |
|---|---|---|
| Mode of Change | Fast | Slow |
| Paradigmatic | Classic Paradigmatic (one large step) | Gradual Paradigmatic (one large step but a slow moving one) |
| Incremental | Rapid Incremental (many small but fast steps) | Classic Incremental (many small and slow moving steps) |

Source: Howlett and Cashore (2009, 40) adapted from Durant and Diehl (1989).

These authors present four types of change (Table 3) - classical paradigmatic change (one large step), gradual paradigmatic change (one large step, but with slow progress), sudden incremental change (many small changes, but with fast progress) and classical incremental change (many small and slow steps). Even though their classification covers one part of the significant characteristics of policy change emphasized by Capano, it disregards path of change and the logic of progress, i.e. it does not reveal anything about the nature of cumulativity/adaptivity and (non)linearity of change, which is additionally included into other dimensions presented by Capano (Cashore and Howlett 2007). Furthermore, the problem of slow and sudden change was considered by Rayner (2009). This author thinks that the slow change enables gradual observation of change, but with the possibility of progressive improvement outside the given frames. On the other hand, sudden change may introduce the occurrence of completely new institutions or adaptation of the existing ones to the

environment. As visible, this narrow observation, only within the frames of the tempo of change, brings a great dose of unpredictability. It is precisely because of this unpredictability occurring during the consideration of this dimension, Rayner (2009) claims that it is necessary to take the nature of institution and its relationship with the environment into consideration.

The nature of institution refers to its rigidity (low/flexible or high/resistant to change), and the relationship with the environment refers to the extent of concurrency of institutions and environment (low/significant gaps and high/firmly embedded). Having this in mind, it is possible to differentiate four contexts: a) the one that includes bigger gaps in terms of environment, but due to their flexibility, institutions are constantly adapting, b) the one containing exceptionally rigid institutions that are deviating in terms of environment, which causes accidental critical junctures and fast stabilization of institutions, c) context in which the flexible institutions are embedded into the environment, and in this case, stable trajectories of development exist and there are no dramatical changes, and finally, d) the context in which the extremely rigid institutions are strongly embedded into the environment, which leads to less coincidences in terms of changes and bigger cumulativity, and due to external shocks, big changes occur due to their lower flexibility (which does not exclude incremental changes during the period of stability, but they are significantly more demanding than in institutions with lower institutional rigidity) (Table 4). This is how Rayner implements the relationship of environment and institutions into this discussion and he claims that the punctuated equilibrium is usually used in the analyses associated with the latter case.

Table 4. Contexts of Policy Change

| | Extent of Institutional Rigidity | |
|---|---|---|
| Degree of Congruence Between Institutions and Environment | Low – Flexible | High – Resistant to change |
| Low – Significant Gaps | (a) | (b) |
| High – Firmly Embedded | (c) | (d) |

Source: Rayner (2009, 93).

The last epistemological choice that is necessary to make is the question of the motor of change. In this view, Capano (2009) points out endogenous actors and exogenous causes – external crisis, actors, institutional rights, conflicts, increasing returns, history and similar. Of course, motors of change taken into consideration depend on the frame of policy change selected by the author. This is how the models based on the principle of punctuated equilibrium are focused on the combined causality with the dominating influence of

exogenous variables – critical external events; institutional arrangements; cycles of public attention; dynamics of processing information.

Furthermore, first theoretical choice is defining the development of policy and change, i.e. determining the object of change. Object of change can be an issue in question, structure and content of agenda or program, outcome of implementation and so on. It is important to clearly explain what the author is concentrated on, what is being observed and to avoid the trap of reductionism that one can fall into when only one specific part of the process of policy formation is considered a policy change (Capano 2009, 14). According to the type, as previously mentioned, change can be incremental or radical. However, in order to determine the type of change, it is necessary to take the following into consideration: a) level of abstraction (what appears radical on a micro level, can be considered incremental if it is observed from a macro perspective), b) speed of change – is it incremental change that occurred suddenly through a series of fast, smaller changes or is it radical, i.e. is it a radical change that occurred slowly or an incremental change?, c) logic of progress – cumulativity or adaptivity of change and d) volume of change (complete policy or only its part or a subsystem). (Capano 2009, 14)

In dwelling on policy change, this is why it is always important to determine the level of policy that is in author's focus. Therefore, Capano (2009) considers that it is necessary to determine if the macro level of policy is being observed, where the policy change is the result of macro factors (political competition, economic conditions and public opinion) or if the micro level is included, which implies detailed analysis and reconstruction of a specific policy development on lower levels. In both approaches, it is necessary to keep an eye on reductionism and not attempt to explain all characteristics of policy within a single level. In addition to that, it is also important to determine the relationship of structure and the actors. More specifically, relying on a single aspect should be avoided – structuralism places bigger emphasis on the structure and neglects the role of actors. On the other hand, extreme independence of actors leads to unpredictability of the process. Also, causal mechanisms and variables are revealed to be extremely important. Associated with the causal logic, it is possible to establish the positivistic logic, which is linear and in which there is a clear segregation of independent and dependent variables. It is used in order to attempt to answer the question why something happened. On the other hand, it is possible to focus on a series of causal conditions that lead to specific outcome. In this case, it is necessary to identify this combination of conditions and "once these combinations are identified, it is possible to

specify the contexts that enable or disable specific individual causes" (Ragin 2006, 640) and the aim is to answer the question how the change occurred. I consider that this question is also determined by the theoretical approach selected by the author and that in this case, the second option is more related to the approach of historical institutionalism and its logic, which are presented in the previous part.

Furthermore, change output can be reversible and irreversible, i.e. in the first case, return to previous state is possible, while in the other, it is considered that this return is not possible since specific choices have been made and have brought about a certain output. Important claim for my thesis and argumentation, which Capano (2009) emphasizes, is that the change is irreversible, considering the theoretical frame of path dependency. However, models of punctuated equilibrium leave the possibility of return to previous state if it is revealed that the new policy is not an adequate solution to a certain policy issue that caused the policy change.

Howlett and Rayner (2006, 12) offer their observation of punctuated equilibrium and changes it implies:

> In the policy realm, punctuated equilibrium describes a situation whereby normal policy-making involves fairly common, routine, non-innovative changes at the margin of existing policies utilizing existing policy processes, institutions, and regimes. Atypical, paradigmatic or non-incremental change then involves new policies which represent a sharp break from how policies were developed, conceived, and implemented in the past but are still rooted in the same general concerns and problems.

With regard to that observation, it is necessary to emphasize several points. First of all, punctuated equilibrium takes both evolutionary (non-innovative changes at the margin) and revolutionary (paradigmatic or non-incremental change) changes into consideration, seeing that evolutionary occur during a period of stability and ensure change within an existing frame. On the other hand, revolutionary changes cause sharp abruptions, and at the same time, the explanation that includes previous historical development is also maintained (Haydu 1998, 341).

Having long periods of stability (equilibrium) in mind, which are located between two moments when the equilibrium is punctuated, it is necessary to consider the types of gradual changes in the system. This is why Mahoney and Thelen (2009) isolate four types of gradual policy change: displacement, layering, drift and conversion. Characteristics of these changes are associated with the relation towards the old and new rules (see Table 5).

Table 5. Types of Gradual Change

| | Displacement | Layering | Drift | Conversion |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Removal of Old Rules | Yes | No | No | No |
| Neglect of Old Rules | - | No | Yes | No |
| Changed Impact/Enactment of old rules | - | No | Yes | Yes |
| Introduction of new rules | Yes | Yes | No | No |

Source: Mahoney and Thelen (2009, 16).

Displacement marks a change where current rules are removed and replaced by new rules. It mostly presents a radical change in terms of the previous state because institutions are breaking apart and new institutions are established. However, change does not have to be sudden but it can be slow (as previously mentioned when discussing the tempo of change) and new and old institutions may exist simultaneously. Layering implies a change where new rules are established in addition to the existing ones or based on existing rules. In this case, completely new institutions are not being established, but changes occur via engrafting, revision, adding new institutional solutions to the existing ones. Significant change can occur through the process of accumulation over a course of time or if complete logic of functioning of institution occurs. Furthermore, drift is a change that implies the alterations in the environment changing the nature of influence of the existing rules. Changes in existing institutions do not occur, but the environment within which they function is changing, which also changes their influence. Finally, conversion implies the change of the way the old rules are applied due to their strategic regrouping. Namely, institutions remain the same, but the way they are interpreted and applied is changed, i.e. actors are converting them with their interpretations (Mahoney and Thelen 2009). As visible, in the first two cases, rules/institutions are directly changing. However, in the last two cases, rules/institutions remain the same, but changes occur either in the environment within which they function, which imprints them with a new role or the actors are starting to interpret them in a new fashion with the purpose of achieving different goals or fulfilling new functions.

According to these authors, there are two main sources that influence the type of change that will occur. First one includes the characteristics of political context in terms of veto possibility left to actors (strong or weak possibilities) and the second includes the

characteristics of the aimed institution in sense of level of discretion in interpretation/application (Table 6).

Table 6. Types of Changes According to the Characteristics of Political Context and Institutions

| | | Characteristics of Targeted Institutions | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristics of the Political Context | | Low Level of Discretion in Interpretation/Enforcement | High Level of Discretion in Interpretation/Enforcement |
| | Strong Veto Possibilities | Layering | Drift |
| | Weak Veto Possibilities | Displacement | Conversion |

Source: Mahoney and Thelen (2009, 19).

Existence of actors with strong veto possibilities favors layering and drift due to the fact that actors with strong veto possibilities disable direct change of old institutions or change of their interpretation. In this context, there is a bigger possibility of establishing new institutions or upgrading the existing ones. Furthermore, high level of interpretations corresponds to drift and conversion because it leaves enough space for interpretations of existing institutions and their application, i.e. in these cases, space is being sought in the existing institutions for their re-purposing. On the other hand, in layering and displacement, there are no attempts to reinterpret the existing institutions but completely change them or upgrade them with new institutions.

Finally, based on previous overview of theoretical and epistemological questions associated with the policy change, it is clear that examining of this phenomenon is neither unambiguous nor simple. It is clear that we have presented here only a small part of the wide corpus of literature dealing with policy change and that there is a whole additional series of aspects and characteristics. However, following the literature and theoretical settings of historical institutionalism, choices associated with the approach to policy change are clearly narrowed. However, even within the historical institutionalism, there is a series of specific and different aspects. Even though Capano presented and clearly segregated the approaches, it is necessary to emphasize that this is the ideal type perspective and that individual elements between the models or discrepancies are often being borrowed. This was noticed by Capano (2009, 27) himself, who stated that "policy scholars are required to borrow a variety of different theoretical and epistemological concepts and perspectives. The object of our research is ambiguous, multifaceted, ubiquitous and evasive." This attempt to enfold the process of

change in a more precise way demands solutions based on various assumptions. In spite of that, it is necessary to be careful in order to avoid creating a model that it is impossible to untangle, which uses completely different concepts.

In summary, this part offers a theoretical insight into the question of policy change and it is considered that the following items are needed in terms of policy change:

1. Determine the way and speed of policy change (classical paradigmatic, sudden incremental, gradual paradigmatic and classical incremental change).

2. Determine the political context in terms of the rigidity of the institution and implementation of the institution into the environment.

3. Determine the type of change according to the characteristics of the institution and the political context (layering, drift, displacement, conversion).

4. Recognize the characteristics of change in terms of the type of change (removing the old rules, neglecting the old rules, change of influence/bringing of the old rules, introducing the new rules).

## 2.2. Model of Policy Change

In regard to the historical institutionalism approach, its characteristics and the approach to change through the punctuated equilibrium, it is necessary to present the model of policy change that will be used for the needs of this thesis, as well as the explanation of policy change of higher education at the public universities in Croatia. In this part, it will be necessary to recall the characteristics of various approaches within the theory of new institutionalism in order to justify and understand individual choices during the composition of model of policy change, which will be used in this thesis.

Therefore, on one hand, there is an interest for studying policy change as a complex process where various influences are intertwined, and on the other, there is the approach of historical institutionalism as the framework, which I believe enables strong and plausible approach to this question. Having all this in mind, I chose the model that proved its potential, but that also leaves enough space for modification. Namely, in the approach to the policy change, I chose to use and modify the earlier developed model, which covers certain parts of policy change. This model is based on the work of North (1990), Scharpf (1997) and Witte (2006).

Initially, it is necessary to emphasize that both North and Scharpf are primarily institutionalists of rational choice. However, within the model presented in the book called

*Institutions, Institutional Change and Economics Performance* (1990), North leans towards the historical view of the institutions and he is, according to Thelen (1999) "concerned with tracing, historically, the emergence of different kinds of institutional arrangements that either promote or distort development" (1999, 379). On the other hand, work of Scharpf (1997) and Mayntz and Scharpf (1995) is directed towards actor-centered institutionalism, which is based on the rational choice institutionalism, but dedicates greater attention to realistic games and directs theoreticians of these games to considering a series of additional settings in regard to their approach, which is sometimes abstract and disconnected from the reality. Witte (2006) tends to build a unique model based on these two approaches. She combines these two models in order to construct the model of policy change and use it to explain the differences in changes of higher education policy and convergence between four systems of higher education (Germany, France, Great Britain and Netherlands).

By incorporating these two models and constructing a new one (Figure 1), Witte decided to combine the theoretical assumptions of the three approaches of the new institutionalism – rational choice institutionalism, historical institutionalism and sociological institutionalism. Even though I generally support eclectic approaches and I consider them to be desirable, the issue with them is that they allow authors to combine theoretical assumptions even in those cases when they are incompatible and complete explanations by combining such epistemologically incompatible assumptions. Complexity and diversity of these approaches is partially presented in the part associated with the approaches of the new institutionalism. From my point of view, theoretical assumptions of the historical institutionalism offer enough space for improving this model and they provide a strong theoretical basis for further research within this theoretical framework, which results in more consistent explanations. It is necessary to emphasize that the very school of historical institutionalism has a series of various epistemological and theoretical assumptions within itself, which pose challenges to the researchers, while combining the three approaches of the new institutionalism, as it is the case with Witte, practically places the assumptions that are impossible to coherently explain and connect on deeper epistemological levels into relationship.

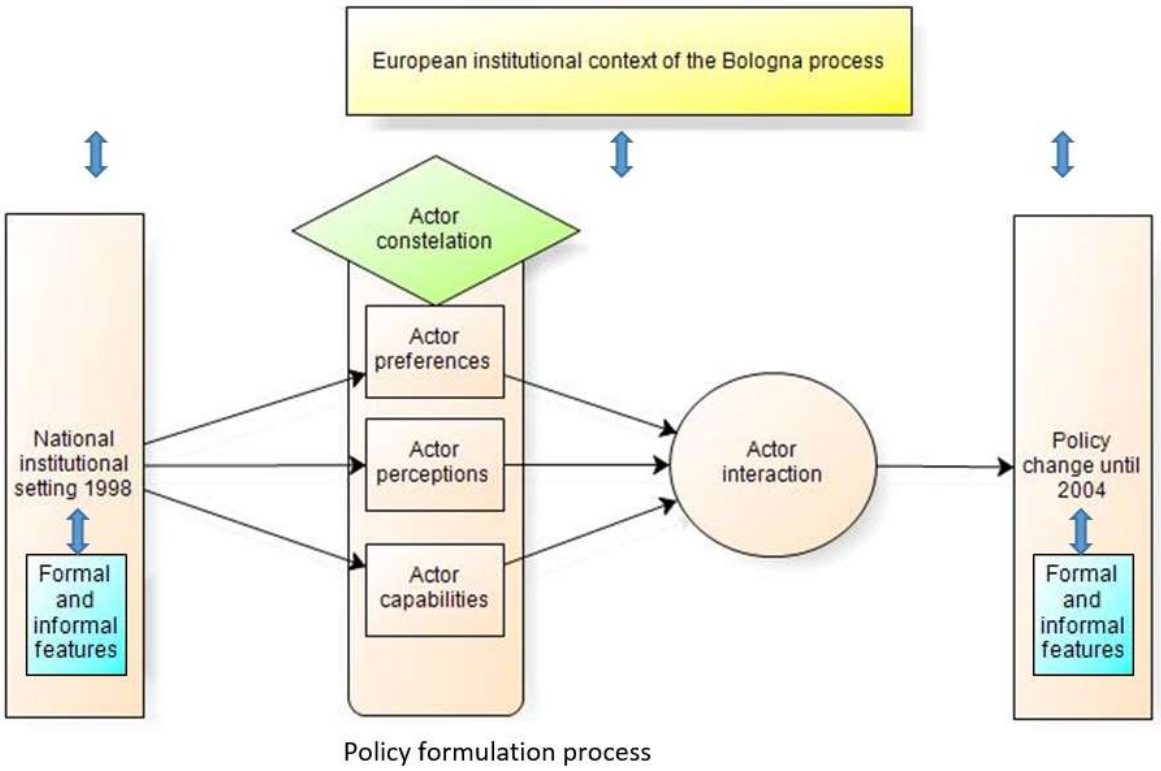


Figure 1. Model of Policy Change of Johanna Witte – Combination of North and Scharpf's Approach.

Source: Witte (2006, 93).

Firstly, I find that the concept of policy change is exceptionally compatible to the approach of the historical institutionalism, which enables comprehensive understanding of the complete process from starting point to the finishing point of change examination. Reason to this is that the approach of historical institutionalism is not under the constraint of time and space as the rest of the variants of the new institutionalism (Peters 1999, 76). According to the definition of institutions made by Hall and Taylor (1996), these formal and informal procedures, routines, norms and conventions explain the relationship between the institutional framework and actors and enable tracking of institution's development and explanations of changes. In this form, institutions influence the actors' disposal and possibilities in decision making (they shape possibilities, but do not determine them) and are not the only cause of final outcomes (Thelen and Steinmo 1992; Immergut 1998). Same authors claim that the actors within the historical institutionalism are not rational maximizers (which is one of the basic assumptions of the rational choice institutionalism), but are, within the approach of historical institutionalism, considered obeyers of rules that tend to achieve their goals within the existing institutional frame satisficers.

I find that the institutional part of the model (Figure 1) is often discussed and analyzed by various authors such as Immergut (1998), Sanders (2006), Steinmo (2008), Thelen (1999), etc. If we are guided by the definition of institutions offered by Hall and Taylor and the view of policy change as the aspect of institutional change, then it can be said that the policies of higher education, as the essential part of the institutional frame, are changed under the influence of the external factors and through the interaction of actors whose actions are constrained by the institutional frame. Witte includes seven sub-policies into the institutional part, the central part being the national structure of study. Other sub-policies are funding, institutional types, curriculum management, curricula, approach to education and transition towards employment (Figure 2).

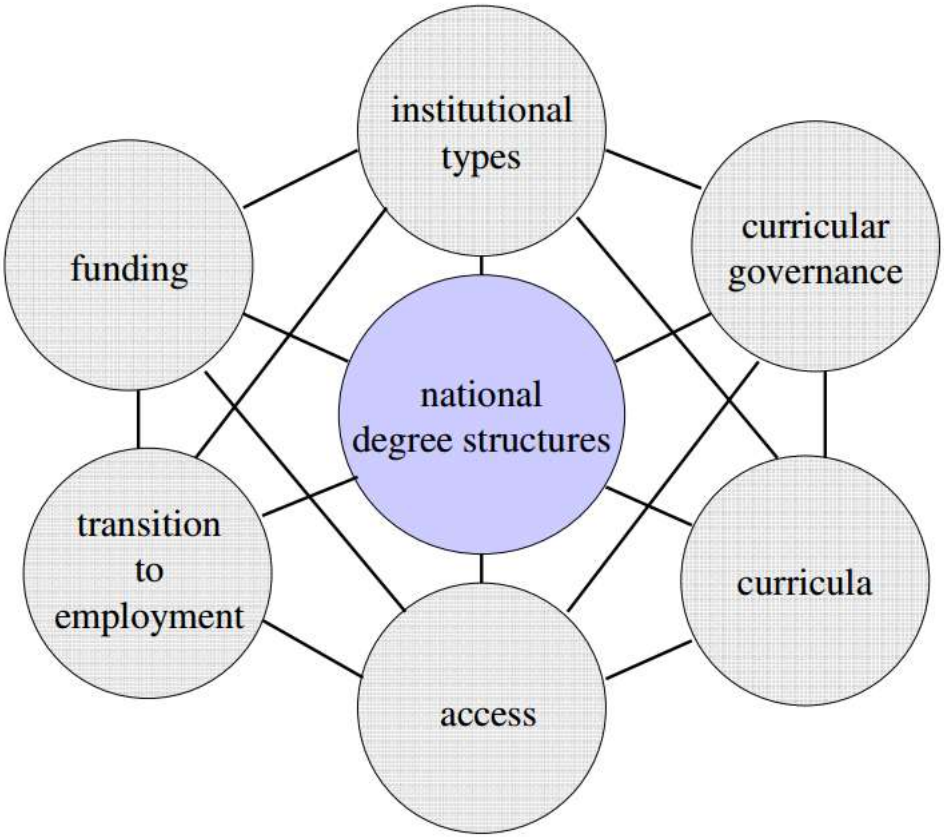


Figure 2. Institutional Dimensions of National Higher Education Systems

Source: Witte (2006, 79).

On the other hand, part of the model referring to the actors is based on the work of various authors. Namely, North (1990) uses opportunities, incentives and mental maps, and Scharpf (1997) and Witte (2006) use capabilities, preferences and perceptions. As previously mentioned, in his model, North leans towards the historical institutionalism in terms of

institutions. However, his vision of actors and their characteristics remains within the perspective of rational choice institutionalism. On the other hand, concepts used by Scharpf and Witte seem inadequately precise and hardly reachable through the research. According to Witte (2006), preferences include interest, norms, identities and interaction orientations. Interests are the personal interest of actors, norms are "preferences derived from organizational goals and missions, but also from the normative limitations defined by the purpose of an organization" (Witte 2006, 70), identities are interests and norms based on corporative identity and interaction orientations are preferences based on relationship with other actors. Furthermore, perceptions are subjective perceptions of reality that encompass facts and causal relationships. Finally, capabilities are all resources that enable actors to influence the outcomes (position, financial resources, etc.).

Figure 1 shows how Witte combines the findings of North (1990) and Scharpf (1997) in order to create the model to explain the policy change in higher education. The model she develops is based on a two-way influence between institutions and actors. Namely, the author first observes the institutional framework before the implementation of the Bologna Process, within which there are certain formal and informal characteristics that influence the actors (their preferences, perceptions and capabilities are determined by the institutional environment and historical heritage). However, those same actors with their mutual interaction cause changes in institutional order through the process of policy formulation. Final result is the altered institutional framework with the new formal and informal characteristics, which was created under the influence of prior institutional environment because the complete actions of actors during these changes were guided by their preferences, perceptions and capabilities that were conditioned by the institutional environment where they used to be located (Witte 2006). Even though her approach is not completely in alignment with the tradition of the historical institutionalism, she considers it to be the closest of all neoinstitutionalisms. However, she rejects to completely identify with this tradition and sees it as the combination of the three approaches of the new institutionalism (historical, rational and sociological). In my opinion, this model can be used to explain policy change in other areas, too. However, I believe that it is necessary to introduce certain changes and explain them prior to that.

In the model I present, there are three important characteristics of actors that are used to understand their roles in the policy change – capacities, beliefs and strategic interests. I find that these three concepts are theoretically more appropriate (within the framework of

historical institutionalism and studying the policy change) and more consistent to the examination of public policies in terms of the concepts represented in the previous models.

Actors' beliefs refer to the ideas actors use to make decisions in the process of creation of public policies and they influence political activities of actors (Sabatier and Weible 2007; Žiljak, 2014). Beliefs are the more appropriate concept within the literature of public policies than perceptions and they lead actors to strategic consideration and selection of instruments of public policies. It is possible to distinguish deep core beliefs (hardly changeable), policy core beliefs (pervious to change) and secondary beliefs (changeable). Deep core beliefs refer to the values and socio-cultural identities (fundamental values – freedom, equality, general relationship of the market and the state). Policy core beliefs are associated with the subsystem of public policy, understanding of seriousness and cause of the problem, i.e. value priorities on the level of a subsystem. Secondary beliefs mark the tendency towards individual governmental tools for achieving goals or stance towards specific problems (Sabatier and Weible 2007). Based on the example of higher education it could be said that one of the policy core beliefs was the issue of the relationship between the job market and the state in general seeing that beliefs on this level are not influenced by a specific public policy. Furthermore, policy core beliefs would refer to the priorities on the subsystem level, in this case, the subsystem of higher education. For example, we could take the issue of availability of higher education, and then as secondary beliefs the concrete questions associated with the certain tools that are used to achieve this policy – direct and indirect support, public funding of higher education, etc.

Furthermore, I consider capacities to be more appropriate than capabilities and opportunities since they indicate the totality of resources that are at actors' disposal and their legal possibilities. According to the authors who deal with the concept of capabilities, such as Sen (2002), Martins (2006) and Nussbaum (2011), this concept represents a certain potential that can be actualized, i.e. capabilities are a type of freedom to realize various actions. In this sense, concept of capabilities is used in the analysis of freedoms and rights. On the other hand, the concept of capacity presents the totality of resources at actors' disposal in regard to their position. The examples of capacities, in this case, include the veto possibilities of actors, financial authority, personnel capacities, and political influence. Therefore, in this case, we speak about the usage of another term that is more appropriate to the content of research, and this is the capacity instead of capabilities used by Witte.

Finally, I consider strategic interests to be more appropriate than preferences and incentives seeing that they are the articulated expression of internal preferences of actors (that are hard to detect as such) and incentives (that can be interpreted differently by the actors). Even though it can be seen that this concept strives towards the rational choice institutionalism, I consider it to be more appropriate due to several reasons. I stated that actors in the historical institutionalism have constrained rationality and are capable to develop and follow interest within certain constrains. As Goddard (2010) demonstrates, strategic interests are incorporated into cultural and social networks. Pierre (2006) differentiates substantial and strategic interests. This is why I find that strategic interests are not based on absolute knowledge, are not short-termed and are not directed towards the maximization. Strategic interests are located in the basic documents of the universities, but can also be identified in the interviews of institutions' leaders. Examples of strategic interests are harmonization with the European framework, quality, internationalization, autonomy. In regard to North's concepts, Witte (2006, 68) claims in her paper that she was guided by concepts presented by Scharpf because they were more precise and had a bigger degree of operationalization, which alleviated the empirical analysis. I agree with Witte in this sense, but I also find that concepts she uses greatly lack clarity and are not appropriate for empirical analysis. This is why I consider that these theoretical improvements are necessary (Table 7).

Table 7. Actors' Characteristics

| **North (1990)** | **Scharpf (1997)**<br>**Witte (2006)** | **Baketa** |
|---|---|---|
| Incentives | Preferences | Strategic interests |
| Mental maps | Perceptions | Beliefs |
| Opportunities | Capabilities | Capacities |

In addition to changes regarding actors' characteristics, it should be stated that there is a difference regarding the level of change that is being observed. Namely, in her work, Witte (Figure 3) suggests several levels within which the policy change occurs. Her attention is directed at the first level of policy change – transition from the European level to the national level of policy formulation. She is focused on the first level of implementation and considers the entire system of higher education. I will concentrate on the second level referring to the policy formulation on the level of institutions, i.e. exclusively public universities and this choice will be explained in the part associated with the methodology and case selection. Due

to the simultaneity of the processes, I think that it is difficult not to refer to the changes on the national level. This is the reason why I am encompassing both of the levels in this thesis while concentrating, as already mentioned, on the level of policy change at the universities. Simultaneously, when discussing policy change on the national level, it will be referring to the changes associated with the policies of higher education at the universities.

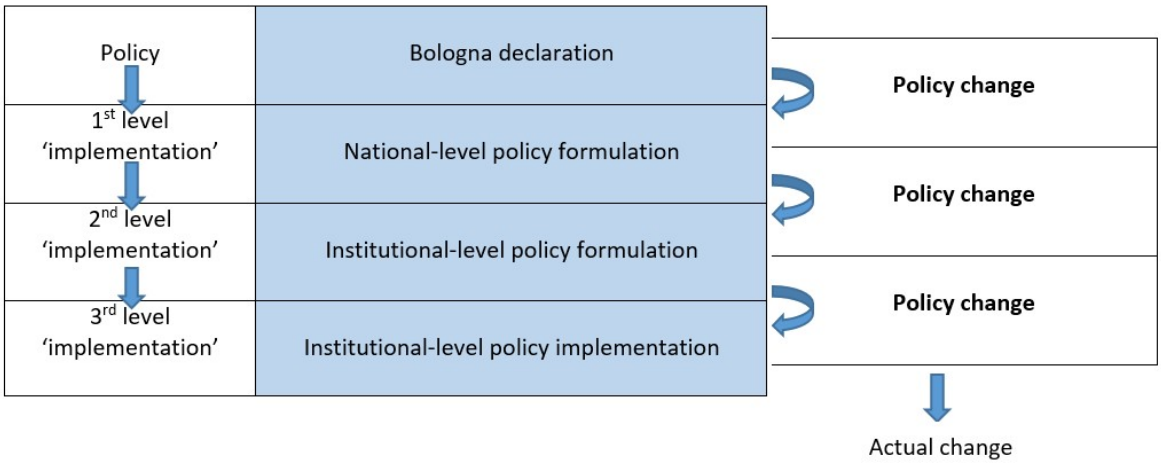


Figure 3. Levels of Implementation and Policy Change

Source: Witte (2006, 23) based on Windhoff-Héritier (1980, 5).

Finally, the adapted model of policy change is presented (Figure 4), which is used in this thesis for the analysis of the policy change of the higher education at public universities in Croatia. Seeing that it is based on previously presented models, it is clear that the graphic overview contains visual similarity, but differentiates in regard to the level that is being observed and the biggest change is done in terms of the theoretical foundation that emerges exclusively from the historical institutionalism and is the characteristic of actors, which are more precisely and simply encompassed in the research.

The model clearly presents different levels – supranational and national in regard to the level of the university. Previous two levels must not be neglected because they represent the framework that contains universities as institutions where the policy change occurs in higher education. On the supranational level, this is surely the establishment of the Bologna Process as the institutional context that influences the beginning of the policy change on national levels. On the national level, this context comprises of legal framework, strategies, organization of the higher education system, etc. Sub-policies within the institutional part I

will be observing in this thesis are structure and curriculum, mobility, quality assurance, social dimension, enrollment policy and tuition fees.

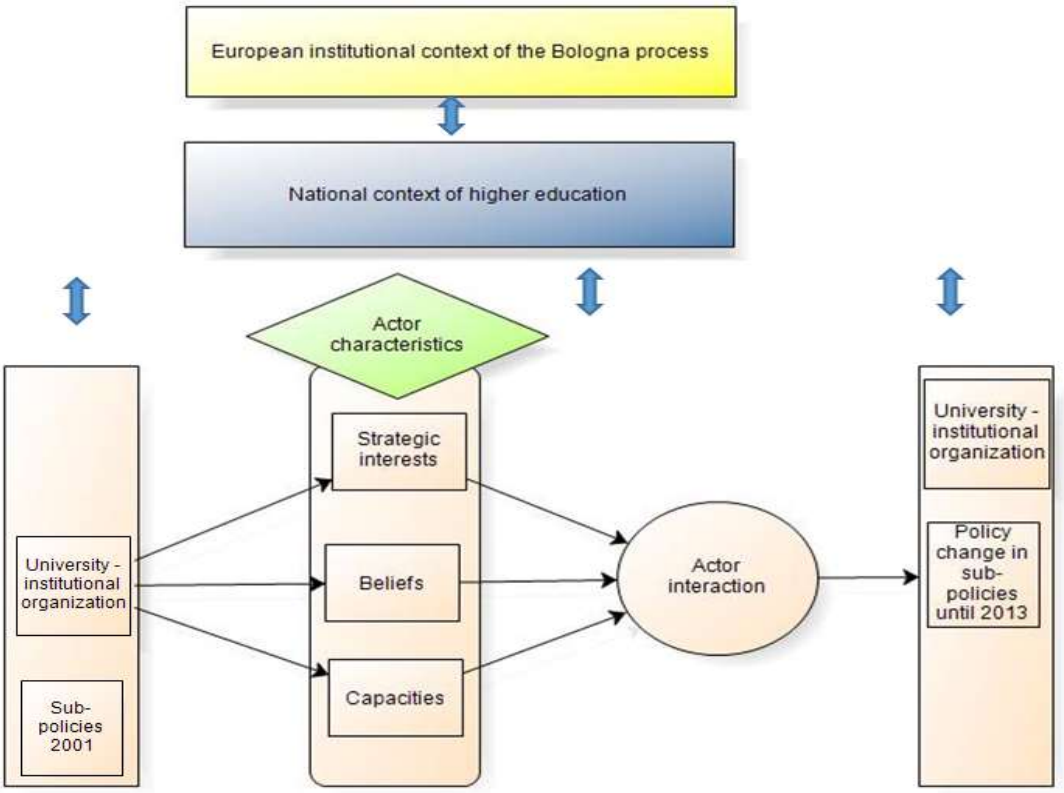


Figure 4. Adapted Model of Policy Change

Source: Adapted from Witte (2006).

In this part, the goal was to clearly elaborate on the reasons why I find that the approach of the historical institutionalism is adequately comprehensive and sufficient for the analysis of policy change. Based on that argumentation, I redesigned the model of policy change, which I will be using for this purpose. Now it remains to demonstrate the methodological tools I will be using and how I intend to encompass aspects that are relevant for the analysis of policy change.

It should be stated that the previous disccusion associated with the policy change and the model of change are located on two different levels of abstraction, but they are immensely connected and the model of policy change is based and emerges from the theoretical and epistemological settings that are presented in the first part.

I have presented the theoretical settings of policy change and the model of policy change based on historical institutionalism, or, more specifically, based on punctuated equilibrium. First part is based on the work of Capano (2009) and other authors who dwell on theoretical and epistemological issues of policy change. Questions being referred to by these authors often do not have to be explicit in individual works about policy change, but it is important that the author has clearly expounded answers in order to provide quality and methodologically consistent work on the empirical data. The other part contains the model of policy change based on the work of North (1990), Scharpf (1997) and Witte (2006) and additional innovations introduced due to theoretical consistency. The model of policy change is focused on the empirical part and it is only the surface of what has been discussed in the part about the theoretical and epistemological settings. This is how the questions of linearity, dynamics of development, change initiators, type of change and so on, reveal the complexity of the problematics and are the necessary choices that need to be conducted as well as build the model of policy change based on them.

Of course, discussion about the theoretical and epistemological questions provides a foundation for innovations that are introduced into the model of policy change. Namely, Witte (2006) starts from the position in which she combines approaches of sociological institutionalism, rational choice institutionalism and historical institutionalism, meaning that the characteristics of actors and view of policy change are built on various foundations. On the other side, once we pay notice to epistemological and theoretical choices associated with the policy change, it is visible that there are basic differences in terms of these questions within the very historical institutionalism. It is based on this complexity of policy change, which is presented in the first part, interventions are made in the model so that they would make it theoretically consistent once it is applied to actual cases so that its conclusions would be based on stable basis.

# 3. METHODOLOGY

## 3.1. Main Concepts and Hypotheses

As previously mentioned, the research aim of this thesis is to analyze the change of public policies in the system of higher education on the level of public universities in Croatia after entering the Bologna Process. The thesis is focused on the university level (meso level), however, the analysis is also going to reach the change of public policy in the system of higher education in Croatia (macro level) because in certain parts, it is impossible to completely separate these two levels. The thesis is not going to encompass the micro level, i.e. the very implementing level.

Having basic assumptions of historical institutionalism and changes of public policies in mind, as well as the fact that this is exclusively a qualitative research, it is necessary to state that setting the hypotheses in positivistic form, which is characteristic for quantitative methods, is not crucial. Even when they are set, drawing conclusions is not based on the linear causal model that is characteristic for quantitative methods, but rather on theoretically established model based on logic (Goertz and Mahoney 2012, 51). Logical conclusions are based on process tracing and four logical tests (straw-in-the-wind, hoop test, smoking gun test and doubly decisive test). Same authors differentiate quantitative and qualitative approaches in the following way:

> Instead of speaking in terms of variables and indicators, we need to distinguish between concepts and data to grasp the qualitative culture. By 'concept', we mean a category (or set) in which cases can membership, including often different degrees of membership. For example, a standard qualitative concept is 'economically developed country'. By 'data' we mean diverse qualitative and quantitative information that can be used to assess whether or the extent to which cases are members of concepts. There is an obvious analogy between 'variable' and 'concept', on the one hand, and 'indicator' and 'data', on the other. Concept and variables are words and associated ideas that we use to formulate theories, while data and indicators are empirical information that we use to measure concepts and variables. (Goertz and Mahoney 2012, 140)

The researchers who apply qualitative methodology often use expressions suited for quantitative methods in order to be understood clearly, but this differentiation is required to further understand the methodological assumptions. By relying on the previously mentioned assumptions of historical institutionalism according to which the priority is given to the role of historical development and on the book *A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research* (Goertz and Mahoney, 2012), it should be stated that there is a big

number of concepts (variables) influencing the historical development, and they can be encompassed in a clear and quality way only through examining the very development. In addition to that, important concepts are often not clearly separated. Quite the contrary, they form each other and it is impossible to apply methods and concept (variable) separation that is used in other approaches, which particularly refers to behavioristic approach in political science or other methods acquired from natural science. Steinmo (2008, 134) states that "studying history with methods and models derived from physics is like studying poetry with algebra." Therefore, the causality in researching within the historical institutionalism is always contextual (Falleti and Lynch 2009). Thus, this is the reason why the causality in research within historical institutionalism is always contextual. This means that the tendency to build causal models through breaking down the events to clearly separated, individual variables and their isolation from the context of historical and institutional development is impossible due to the reason that this separation would ignore the logic of causality assumed by the historical institutionalism. Likewise, within the very dealing with the change of public policies, it is possible to focus on a series of causal conditions that lead to a specific outcome. In this case, it is necessary to identify this combination of conditions and "once these combinations are identified, it is possible to specify the contexts that enable or disable specific individual causes" (Ragin 2006, 640) and researches are attempting to answer the question how the change occurred.

By accepting previously listed assumptions (importance of context and inability to separate concepts, i.e. variables) and having methods that are going to be used as well as the very application of qualitative methods in mind, following concepts (variables) and hypothesis were set.

**Main hypothesis (H) – Policy change of higher education sub-policies at public universities in Croatia is associated with the level of integration and mediated through the compatibility of actors' characteristics with the national and European institutional context of higher education.**

Explanation – in respect with the theoretical frame of historical institutionalism and the model of change of public policies, it is assumed that the institutional organization of universities is associated with the policy change of higher education policies. However, the very institutional organization does not necessarily guarantee a certain outcome. Namely, both non-integrated and integrated universities sustain policy change of higher education if the characteristics of

organization actors are in concordance with the national and European institutional context. Apropos, it is possible that completely integrated universities, due to the actors' characteristics, do not sustain changes of public policies. Hypothesis setting is guided by logic of qualitative methods, therefore, necessary and sufficient conditions for achieving changes of public policies are assumed (Goertz and Mahoney 2012, 33-34). Intermediation of actors' characteristics excludes one-sided association of the level of integration and change of public policies and demands an auxiliary hypothesis. Actors' characteristics include their beliefs, strategic interests and capacities, which are more thoroughly explained in the part describing variables.

**Sub-hypothesis - Hs – Compatibility of actors' beliefs with the national context of higher education, compatibility of strategic interests of actors with the European institutional context of higher education and stronger capacity of actors who advocate changes contribute to the change of public policies.**

Explanation – Model of change of public policies implies intermediation of actors' characteristics in the process of change, therefore, the compatibility of individual characteristics with the contexts within which the actors perform actions is important. In regard to the definition of beliefs, they should be in concordance with the national context of higher education, strategic interests of actors should be in concordance with the European institutional context, and actors' capacities allow them easier implementation of public policies.

Due to the methodological settings of process tracing that will be presented, it is necessary to set the alternative hypotheses. Reason to this is observing the alternative solutions and if they are unable to explain the policy change at public universities in Croatia, their rejecting (in concordance to the policy tracing assumptions) will contribute to enhancing the basic hypothesis.

**Alternative hypothesis - Ha1 – Policy change of higher education sub-policies at public universities in Croatia emerges from the level of institutional integration of the universities.**

Explanation – Classical institutionalism assumes that the institutional organization is crucial for the decisions of actors and thus the policy change would depend exclusively on the institutional environment. In this case, it would mean that the level of integration of certain universities is the prerequisite for the policy change. Therefore, the more integrated

universities would experience the policy change since such institutional organization enabled a more homogenous actions. On the other hand, the institutional structure of non-integrated universities prevents the policy change due to the lack of internal relations and the legal status of certain constituent units.

**Alternative hypothesis – Ha2– Policy change of higher education sub-policies at public universities in Croatia emerges from the actors' characteristics – their capacities, beliefs and strategic interests.**

Explanation – This hypothesis has the starting point that prioritizes actors. Namely, it is considered that the actors would, regardless of the institutional organization, be able to change policies based exclusively on their characteristics. In this sense, the capacities, beliefs and strategic interest would independently explain the policy change at the universities. On the other hand, their institutional structure, i.e. level of integration would not be influential since it is assumed that the actors are not constrained by the institutional environment but act independently.

**Alternative hypothesis - Ha3 – Policy change of higher education sub-policies at public universities in Croatia emerges from the change of party in power, i.e. the politics determines policy change.**

Explanation – Alternative hypothesis is set so that its testing would reject the alternative explanation according to which the politics determines the policy change of higher education at Croatian public universities. Therefore, it is considered that the very change of party in power will bring the policy change of higher education at Croatian public universities as an alternative explanation contradicting the one containing institutional organization (level of integration) and actors' characteristics.

**Main Concepts**

a) Sub-policies of higher education on a level of a university.

Explanation – sub-policies of higher education on a level of a university imply the aspect directed at solving issues via choosing between alternative paths that can solve them. Public policies do not include struggle for power, political espousal and irrational approach (Petak and Petković 2014, 93). In this context, I will be observing sub-policies of higher education at universities associated with tuition fees, mobility, quality assurance, social dimension, structure of study, curriculum and enrollment. As previously mentioned, I consider the change

of public policy to be a form of "institutional change since [it requires] the adjustment of formal and informal features" (Witte 2006, 60). When we speak about the change of public policies as a form of institutional change, we are referring to both formal and informal rules, procedures, routines, norms and conventions of a university (see North 1990, 4-5).

b) European context

Explanation – European institutional context of the Bologna Process presents ideas, demands and regulations established by the initiator of the process, which are defined by the Bologna Declaration and the accompanying documents. Changes in the national context of policies of higher education, as well as the very change of policies of higher education at the universities, is under the influence of trends on the European level. Formulation of policies of higher education and their change was guided by ideas of the Bologna Process. During the analysis of the European institutional context of the Bologna Process, I was focused on the promotion of main policies and ideas that include the harmonization with the European framework, internationalization, autonomy, quality and interdisciplinarity.

c) University institutional organization

Explanation – University institutional organization refers to the level of its integration, which implies its formal organizations (rectors' and deans' authorization, relationship between higher and lower units of university – senate, constituent, departments) and informal functioning (relationships that are not regulated, but serve as attributes of level of integration – neglecting senate's decisions, absence of sanctions for deviations from formal decisions, supporting or resisting integration). Insights into the level of integration are visible through documents of individual universities, their choices, actions and statements of actors of individual university. Integration is covered through four aspects – formal determination, decision-making, self-defining and size.

d) Actors' characteristics

Actors' characteristics are already described during the defining the model of change so I will present them only briefly here.

It is considered that, in order to conduct the policy change, it is necessary for actors' strategic interests to be in concordance with the strategic interests promoted at the highest level towards which the sector policy is oriented, which in this case is the European level. The assumption is that if none of the universities primarily have the strategic interests harmonized

with those of the European context, the change would be either prevented or steered into another direction.

I consider the term 'capacity' more appropriate for describing what Witte considers 'capabilities' because it implies the totality of resources that are at actors' disposal and their legal possibilities. According to authors such as Sen (2002) and Nussbaum (2011), capabilities are certain potentials that can be actualized, meaning that they are a type of freedom of achieving various actions. In this view, capabilities are more commonly used in the analysis of various rights and freedoms. On the other hand, capacities mark the totality of resources at actors' disposal in regard to their position. In this case, we are therefore speaking about the usage of another term that is more suitable for the research content, which is 'capacities' instead of 'capabilities' used by Witte. Capacities include financial, political, human and veto capacities of the actors.

Actors' beliefs refer to the ideas actors use to make decisions in the process of creation of public policies and they influence political activities of actors (Sabatier and Weible 2007; Žiljak, 2014). It is possible to distinguish deep core beliefs (hardly changeable), policy core beliefs (pervious to change) and secondary beliefs (changeable). Deep core beliefs refer to the values and socio-cultural identities (fundamental values – freedom, equality, general relationship of the market and the state). Policy core beliefs are associated with the subsystem of public policy, understanding of seriousness and cause of the problem, i.e. value priorities on the level of a subsystem (in this case – subsystem of higher education). Secondary beliefs mark the tendency towards individual governmental tools for achieving goals or stance towards specific problems. The beliefs will be observed in regard to the beliefs on the national level arriving from the MSES and attention will be given to the potential disagreement in beliefs and existence of confrontations. The assumption is that the confrontation causes rejecting to conduct the policies and thus the change itself.

## 3.2. Process Tracing

Process tracing is "a qualitative method that uses probability tests to assess the strength of evidence for specified causal relationships, within a single-case design and within a control group" (Punton and Welle 2015, 1). Similar to these authors, Mahoney (2012) describes process tracing as combining of existing knowledge and generalization with the insights emerging from studying of the observed case and drawing conclusions about the connections between concepts and explanations of a specific case. Blatter and Blume (2008) indicate the difference between process tracing and two other approaches (co-variational and congruence

analysis) of drawing conclusions. According to them, prerequisites for process tracing are "a full 'storyline' with density and depth and an 'authentic' and fine-grained 'picture' of events within their contexts" (2008, 319) and smoking-gun observations. However, it is necessary to emphasize that the method of process tracing includes other logical tests besides the very smoking-gun observations. It includes four logical tests (straw-in-the-wind, hoop test, smoking-gun test and doubly decisive test). This is how the researchers do not only constrain themselves to seeking of traces that indicate the confirmation of their hypothesis (which is the basic purpose of smoking-gun observations, i.e. results of smoking-gun test), but other observations are acquired that can lead to discarding of the remaining explanations or serve as a support of the author's thesis even though independently they do not confirm it.

Going through each of these tests determines if the necessary or sufficient criterion for accepting or rejecting of hypothesis is fulfilled. In this sense, straw-in-the-wind is the weakest test and it cannot offer conclusions regarding the necessary or sufficient criterion but it establishes important parameter for further researching. On the other hand, the strongest is the doubly decisive test that offers the confirmation of the hypothesis and rejection of the alternative explanation. Hoop test and the previously mentioned smoking-gun test are located in between. Hoop test is marked by setting of the hoop through which the hypothesis has to pass through in order to even be relevant for further consideration, but this very passing does not imply its affirmation (see Punton and Welle 2015; Mahoney 2012; Falleti and Lynch 2009; Goertz and Mahoney 2012; Bennett 2008). As Goertz and Mahoney (2012, 93) state, "the presence of the evidence posited by the hoop test is a necessary condition for the hypothesis to be valid". On the other hand, passing of the smoking-gun test gives strong support to the thesis, however, if it does not pass, the hypothesis is not refuted. Collier describes it by stating that "the metaphor of a 'smoking gun' conveys the idea that a suspect who is caught holding a smoking gun is presumed guilty. However, those with no smoking gun may not be innocent" (2011, 827). Table (see Table 8) description of individual tests and their significance for the research is brought by David Collier in his work *Understanding Process Tracing* (2011).

Table 8. Process Tracing Tests for Causal Inference

| | | Sufficient for Affirming Causal Inference | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | NO | YES |
| Necessary for Affirming Causal Inference | NO | 1. Straw-in-the-wind | 3. Smoking-gun |
| | | a.Passing:Affirms relevance of hypothesis, but does not confirm it. | a.Passing:Confirms hypothesis. |
| | | b.Failing:Hypothesis is not eliminated, but is slightly weakened | b.Failing:Hypothesis is not eliminated, but is somewhat weakened. |
| | | c.Implications for rival hypotheses: Passing- slightly weakens them. Failing- slightly strengthens them | c.Implications for rival hypotheses: Passing- substantially weakens them. Failing- somewhat strengthens them. |
| | YES | 2. Hoop | 4. Doubly Decisive |
| | | a.Passing:Affirms relevance of hypothesis, but does not confirm it. | a.Passing:Confirms hypothesis and eliminates others. |
| | | b.Failing:Eliminates hypothesis. | b.Failing:Eliminates hypothesis |
| | | c.Implications for rival hypotheses: Passing-somewhat weakens them. Failing-somewhat strengthens them. | c.Implications for rival hypotheses: Passing- eliminates them. Failing-substantially strengthens. |

Source: David Collier (2011, 825), adapted from Bennett (2010, 210), who builds on categories formulated by Van Evera (1997, 31–32).

This approach is present both within the historical institutionalism and public policies. There is a series of authors who use process tracing as a method in various areas in an attempt of determining mutually associated mechanisms that had resulted with certain outcomes. Concretely, within the frames of higher education, it is possible to identify a doctorate study conducted by Catharina Bjørkquist at Karlstad University Studies (2009) called *Stakeholder Influence in Higher Education* where the process tracing method was used within the theoretical frame of historical institutionalism. In addition to that, this method was applied in other areas, therefore Brady (2010) uses it in the analysis of presidential elections in the US and Tannenwald (1999) in the analysis of nuclear taboo.

## 3.3. Semi-Structured Interview

The second method that is going to be used in the research is the semi-structured qualitative interview conducted with experts in policies of higher education. The importance of qualitative interview for the political science emerges from the fact that interviews represent

an extremely important source of information, which allows deeper consideration of a certain phenomenon. There are various views and definitions of a research interview, but most of them are based on the fact that the research interview is a qualitative method that acquires pieces of information that are not visible in any other way – subjective point of view, life history, events that are not (completely) documented, complex processes that are only partially documented, various discourses. Therefore, interviews enable the creation of a more detailed image about the cases and researching issues we are interested in (Richards 1996).

According to Rathburn (2008), problem with the research (qualitative) interview is that it is, as a method, insufficiently used. In addition to that, according to Richards (2008), there is a limited source of methodological literature dealing with the interview and the university subjects teaching this method are small in numbers. Similar to that, Berry (2002) states that methodological subjects give more attention to statistical methods. On the other hand, interviews receive a smaller part of the matter and it is mostly based on ways of formulating questions. This type of relationship creates an enclosed circle, thus making the usage of interview in researching quite constrained despite the fact that it has its advantages when compared to other methods. However, seldom usage of interview does not only occur due to lack of education or literature but also due to assumed constraints (some are well founded and some are not) attached to this method.

Common objections are that the data acquired with the interviews is imprecise and subjective and that it is impossible to draw conclusions that can be applied to a wider population based on them. This type of critique mostly comes from behaviorists and advocates of rational choice theory, who base their view of science on extremely solid considerations acquired from natural sciences. However, these kind of critiques can be applied to some other methods, and the solution to this is located in the step preceding the actual method application, which is the study design (Rathburn 2008). Also, solution to the problem of objectivity rests in the triangulation technique presented at the very end of this chapter.

Interviews can be divided into three types according to the concept of questions asked during the interview. Therefore, they can be:

- standardized (structured)
- non-standardized (unstructured)
- semi-standardized (semi-structured)

Standardized interview contains clearly defined list of questions, which does not allow the researcher to improvise within the set frame. Goals are also clearly defined and the intention is to acquire all necessary information using the questions formulated in advance. This type of questions enables a simpler comparison of results gained from different examinees because the same set of questions is repeated during every interview. Also, this type of questions demands limited answers. Non-standardized interviews are completely different. They contain topics and not questions that are prepared in advance, they allow improvisation and the researcher can be flexible and adaptable during the interview. This type of interview offers greater freedom to examinees in terms of answering questions and is also considered to be a journalistic type of interview (Peabody et al. 1990).

Semi-standardized interview is located in the middle, between the previously mentioned two types. There is an entire grey zone containing semi-standardized interviews that come closer to either standardized or non-standardized to a certain extent. During the interview, the interviewer is guided by previously established questions. However, the interviewer has the freedom to ask questions that are not on that list and he/she does not necessarily have to obey the order of questions from the list. While conducting the interview, the interviewer can also use questions that could be useful, but were not prepared earlier. Also, semi-standardized interview uses questions that do not limit respondent's answer (open-ended questions). The main idea is to allow the respondent to present his/her vision and observation of certain events, but still acquire information valuable for the research through a beforehand prepared frame (Berg 2001; Myers and Newman 2007).

Elite interviewing is mostly conducted via semi-structured type of interview. The importance of the elite emerges from the fact that its members can secure information possessed by a very narrow specter of people. It is because of their position or influence that the elites are capable of providing the interviewer with the insight into processes occurring during the implementation of certain policy or into the way some political processes function, which is often closed for non-participants or demands specific knowledge characteristic for the members of the elite. Elite interview actually has three goals – acquiring information from the sample in order to generalize it to the rest of the elite population, discovering individual important information or acquiring insight into an important document and gathering information and guidelines used in researching other sources of data (Goldstein 2002).

According to Richards (1996), elite interview has various advantages. This type of interview assists in document interpretation, understanding of personas participating the bringing of political choices as well as the reasons behind such choices, acquiring information that are unavailable from other sources, setting connections with other important actors in this area of research and understanding the context of the researched problem. As visible, through the elite interview, it is possible to secure information that cannot be collected in any other way and are narrowly associated with the problem of the research because the very conducting of the interview is based on gaining such information.

Usage of elite interview is particularly appropriate if the research topic is of newer date, which significantly limits sources of information. In addition to that, respondents are probably more available because they are still actively involved in the aimed problematics, meaning that their memories of vital events are more accurate, which contributes to the quality of the research. Furthermore, this type of interview is suited for the majority of political science research – comparative politics, public administration, state institutions and other areas. On the other hand, this method cannot be applied in political theory, political history or the choice analysis.

By using the work of Lilleker (2003), Peabody et al. (1990) and Aberbach and Rockman (2002), it is possible to isolate four phases of the elite interview:

- study design
- locating and contacting the examinees
- conducting the interview
- coding the interview

Similar division, although a bit more specific, is presented by Beamer (2002) – identification of constructs and development of measures and instruments, development of sampling procedures in order to maximize the validity of the study, conducting the interview and acquiring additional materials and data analysis.

Various experts and actors are encompassed by the interviews in this thesis. In terms of this method, elite interviews were conducted with the experts of the domain of policies of higher education, based on whose insights I attempted to gain information unavailable via documents that demand specific knowledge and are tending to clear potential dilemmas occurring in the findings acquired with other methods. Reasons for excluding the leading people of the universities or individual institutions rest in the fact that there had been numerous changes in

the leadership of these institutions during the past several years and it would be extremely difficult to include all the important actors. In addition to that, I consider that, due to the temporal distance, they would be unable to present conditions of that period in a clear and precise manner, meaning that the reconstruction of the events from that period would be biased. On the other hand, people who are experts in their domain of higher education and who had been examining the state in this area for a number of years should have a more objective view and a possibility to contribute to completion of collected data. Criteria for the selection of experts for the interviews are – position/function, duration of performing a certain function, scientific research references in the field of higher education and dealing with a particular part of public policies in higher education (tuition fee, mobility, quality assurance, social dimension, structure of study, curriculum, enrollment). Nine interviews[2] were conducted with experts in higher education policy. All interviews covered multiple sub-policies that are in the focus of the research, but the concentration was mostly placed on the individual sub-policy belonging to participant's expertise. Considering the semi-structural type of the interview and the specific sub-policies belonging to participants' expertise, a set of semi-open-ended questions[3] was prepared for each interview, as well as the topics for which the experts offered their vision of problems. All participants gave a written consent to the interview and were guaranteed anonymity, interviews were recorded, followed by the transcript of the interview. Acquired data was used for the need of triangulation along with the findings collected through other methods.

## 3.4. Content Analysis

There is a series of definitions and views on the content analysis. Therefore Cole (1988, 53) offers a more general view of the method and considers it to be "a method of analyzing written, verbal or visual communication messages." On the other hand, Krippendorff (2004, 19) analyzes definitions and classifies them into three groups – ones that take "a) content to be inherent in a text, b) content to be a property of the source of a test, c) content to emerge in the process of a researcher analyzing a text relative to a particular context." In concordance with this classification and associated with the third group, Krippendorff provides a more precise definition and considers content analysis to be "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use" (Krippendorff 2004, 18). Content analysis can be quantitative and qualitative and the choice between these two options depends on the interest of the researcher and the research

[2] See List of Interviews in Appendix A
[3] See Interview Guide in Appendix B

question. Quantitative content analysis is focused on counting words and topics, establishing the frequency of their occurring or content coding within the categories, and processing by using statistical methods. Quantitative analysis is greatly decontextualized, i.e. observed frequencies are mostly important on their own and it neglects the ambience in which the text had been embedded. On the other hand, qualitative content analysis goes beyond that point and aside from allocating parts of the text that have a common topic or meaning, it places context consideration and text interpretation into the very categories (Morgan 1993; Weber 1990; Forman and Damschroder 2008).

Furthermore, qualitative content analysis is considered "a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes" (Hsieh and Shannon 2005, 1278). However, there are certain nuances that differentiate within the qualitative content analysis. Hseih and Shannon (2005) present three different approaches. By using different approaches to coding schemes, origins of coding and threats to trustworthiness, they discern conventional content analysis, summative content analysis and directed content analysis (see Table 9).

Table 9. Major Coding Differences Among Three Approaches to Content Analysis

| | **Study Starts With** | **Timing of Defining Codes or Keywords** | **Source of Codes or Keywords** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Type of Content Analysis** | | | |
| Conventional Content Analysis | Observation | Codes are defined during data analysis | Codes are derived from data |
| Directed Content Analysis | Theory | Codes are defined before and during data analysis | Codes are derived from theory or relevant research findings |
| Summative Content Analysis | Keywords | Keywords are identified before and during data analysis | Keywords are derived from interest of researchers or review of literature |

Source: Hsieh and Shannon (2005, 1286).

Conventional approach is used when describing a case and when a strong integration in the theoretical approach and previous research does not exist. In this case, there are no pre-defined categories according to which the coding is conducted, but the categories and codes

occur during the work on the data. According to Hseih and Shannon, it can be considered an advantage of this approach on one hand, because this does not limit the researcher to previous categories, but on the other side, it leaves the possibility of overlooking important categories due to lack of knowledge about the context. Furthermore, summative content analysis is directed towards understanding of the context in which certain words or content is used in a way that they are initially quantified, then patterns of associability are discovered, followed by an attempt of revealing "underlying meanings of the words or the content" (Hsieh and Shannon 2005, 1284). Finally, the last approach is the directed content analysis. In this approach, the researches start with an existing theory and previous researches with the aim of supplementing and upgrading the said theory. Basic goal is additional work on the theoretical frame and concepts. As mentioned by the authors, it is precisely the existing theoretical and empirical knowledge that eases the formation of the research question, work on variables and initial concepts and codes. However, during the work on the material, an option of recognizing new categories and codes that prove to be relevant to the research still remains. It is these new insights that help promote existing knowledge in the field of research or offer new insight on the researched phenomenon. Finally, Hsieh and Shannon (2005, 1283) point-out the main strength of this approach and it is

> that existing theory can be supported or extended. In addition, as research in an area grows, a directed approach makes explicit the reality that researches are unlikely to be working from the naive perspectives that is often viewed as the hallmark of naturalistic designs.

It is this latter approach to content analysis that I selected as the appropriate method in this thesis. Namely, taking the existing previous researches in the field of public policies of higher education into consideration, as well as the theoretical basis within the frame of historical institutionalism, punctuated equilibrium and policy change, this type of approach to content analysis has revealed itself as the method that ensures a successful research, quality insights and answers to set research questions. In addition to that, this approach also offers the possibility of creating new categories during the coding, which is significant in this case, since I am focusing on a lower level of the analysis that results with adaptations required for understanding policy changes of higher education on the level of the university such as recognizing issues of social dimension or enrollment policy as important sub-policies. Also, policy change based exclusively on the historical institutionalism in relation to Witte (2006), who combines three approaches of new institutionalism, and introducing new actor characteristics demands the possibility of working on new categories. This is how this

approach to content analysis according to all three aspects listed in the Table 9 is compatible with my approach and aims of the research.

Qualitative analysis of important national and international documents provides information regarding the promoted ideas, policies and context on these two levels. Also, they provide data about the actors of public policies (particularly about universities) and their capacities, beliefs and strategic interests. These documents include laws, acts, declarations, official announcements, strategic plans, etc. Furthermore, main part of the analysis contains minutes of conferences of the universities' senates, Rectors' Conference and Education, Science and Culture Committee of the Croatian Parliament starting with January 1, 2001 and ending with July 1, 2013. Most of the minutes are available on official web-sites of these universities, and in those cases where they are not, competent authorities were contacted and those minutes were requested. Afterwards, analysis of interviews with the designated actors that had been published in press media during the researching period was conducted. With the help of the Presscut agency, 510 interviews and texts of relevant actors in higher education (ministers of education, rectors, vice-rectors, state secretaries, etc.) were acquired. The interviews were searched through the database that encompassed a series of daily and regional newspapers according to the following key words – the Bologna Process, university, rector, higher education. The interviews with the main actors were detected afterwards and they were analyzed. Sampling was unnecessary since, during the research, I was not interested in the frequency of occurrence of certain topic but in the actors' characteristics. Seeing that the regional newspapers were also included, this also assured the representation of the representatives from the smaller universities, but it should also state that the items associated with the UNIZG were more common, which is understandable due to its size and influence.

It is precisely these interviews given during the process that are more appropriate for detecting beliefs and strategic interests of actors because they were not subsequently reconstructed or potentially changed under the influence of the elapsed time or new circumstances (which could be the case if the selected method was interviewing of actors in higher education). These sources (particularly national documents), in addition to detecting characteristics of actors, enabled the reconstruction of institutional surroundings (through previously listed sub-policies) that existed in different phases of policy change process. Seeing that the number of encompassed minutes and newspapers articles is considerable, I will only concretely list those that were quoted directly, while the rest are considered to be acquired data and the insight into them will be available if there is a demand for it.

Computer program NVivo 10 was used during the implementation of the qualitative content analysis that enables coding of various data sources. It was also used for processing the acquired data. Data was coded for each particular university, Rectors' Conference, Ministry of Science, Education and Sports (MSES) and Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE). This was followed by coding of the sub-policies of higher education whose change is being observed – mobility, social dimension, enrollment policy, tuition fees, quality assurance, structure and curriculum. Structure and curriculum were coded separately, but it was revealed that these two policies are exceptionally interlaced and were eventually observed as a unique sub-policy. Coding in terms of characteristics was conducted for all universities included, which incorporated beliefs, capacities and strategic interests.

## 3.5. Secondary Source Analysis and Triangulation

In order to supplement data acquired via interviews and qualitative content analysis, it is necessary to include secondary sources of information into the analysis, i.e. already existing data acquired from other researchers or competent institutions and their papers. This firstly includes data from institutions such as the Croatian Bureau of Statistics (CBS), the ASHE and the MSES. In this case, the most valuable data refers to the change of number of students enrolled to individual universities, number of study programs and so on. This allows monitoring the change of policy in technical indicators, which occurred during this time period in certain sub-policies that I am analyzing.

The idea of triangulation is to, by using other sources, remove possible subjective influences that might interfere with the final conclusion. Triangulation enables the researcher to see the problem from another perspective, i.e., "the use of different standpoints for qualitative perception rather than quantitative measurement means that one not only sees the same thing from a different angle, one sees entirely different facets of that thing" (Davies 2001, 75). Example of triangulation that the previously mentioned author uses in his paper illustrates the components this procedure should contain. This triangulation composes of a triad of primary sources – interview, newspaper articles and documents, with the addition of secondary sources used for further verification (Figure 5). This way it is possible to examine information through various forms of data and establish the relevance of collected data, and also supplement information that might not be contained only in one of the data sources.

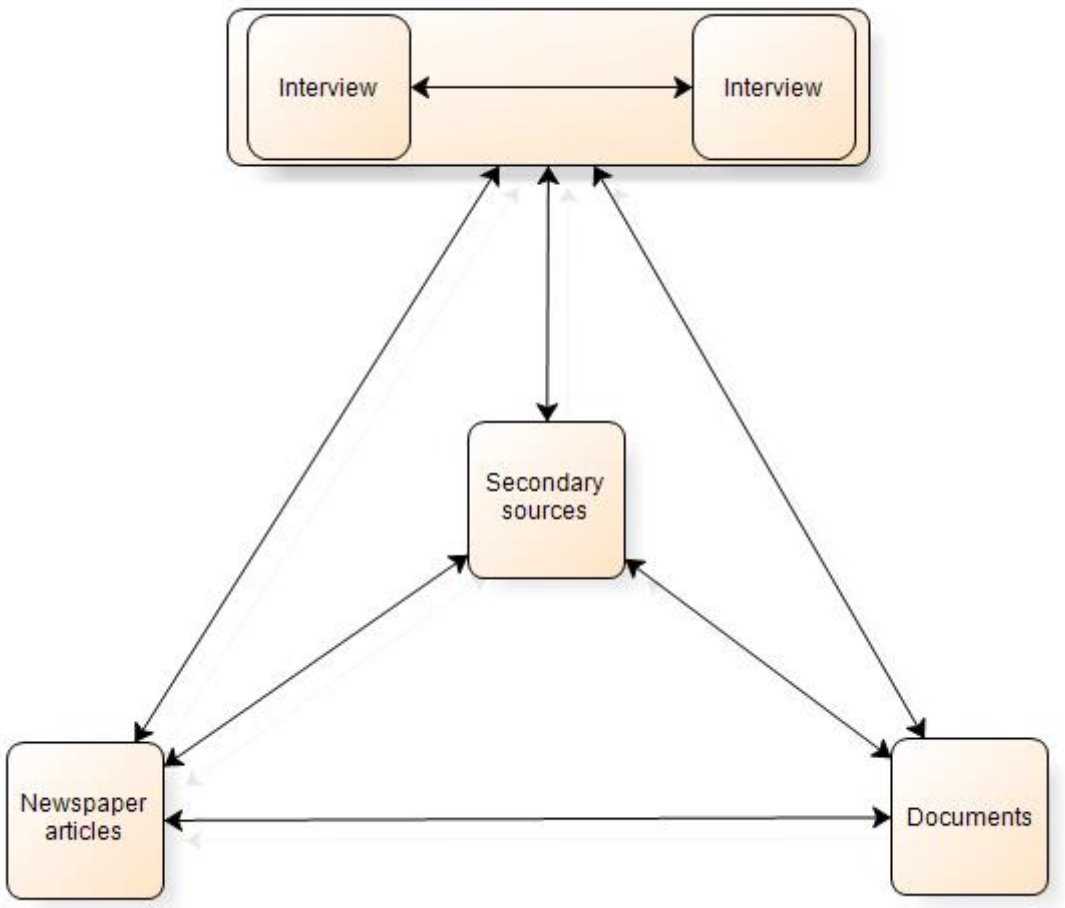


Figure 5. Triangulation Procedure Scheme

Source: Adapted from Davies (2001, 78).

This research includes interviews with experts in the field of higher education policy, newspaper articles containing interviews with relevant actors in the field of higher education observed during a certain time period, different documents such as laws, strategies, declarations, minutes of conferences of the academic senate and Rectors' Conference and secondary sources. This procedure aims to assure completion of insights that would be lacking without it, which would cause omitting the potentially important information.

# 4. CONTEXT OF HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY AND ACTORS' CHARACTERISTICS

## 4.1. European Context

Changes in the national context of policies of higher education, as well as the very change of policies of higher education at the universities, is under the influence of trends on the European level. Formulation of policies of higher education and their change was guided by ideas of the Bologna Process. However, the Bologna Process was often used as a justification of changes introduced by national actors, but were not necessarily associated with that very process. Similar findings are presented by Ligia Deca, who claims that "it is perhaps with time that Bologna Process signatory countries employed the 'Bologna brand' to justify various national reforms, which sometimes had a feeble (if any) link to the commitments made at the European level, as they were broadly understood" (Deca 2013, 4).

Similar is the consideration brought by Dobbins and Knill (2014) in their book *Higher Education Governance and Policy Change in Western Europe – International Challenges to Historical Institutions*. Its authors think that the Bologna Process brings legitimacy to decision makers on the national level to implement reforms reaching outside the frames set by the Bologna Declaration. Also, they are interested in learning how the deep-rooted national systems of higher education react to policy changes occurring on a transnational level and take historical institutionalism as their starting point, which concurs with my theoretical approach. Besides them, Musselin (2009) also demonstrates the way French ministry of education used the Bologna reform for change in relations between HEIs and the states through introducing a contract between these instances that acquire bigger autonomy to HEIs.

The fact that this was also the case in Croatia was confirmed by various experts in the conducted interviews. Therefore, Expert 3 stated that:

*What we say regarding the Bologna Process, the unsatisfactory things that happened in our country, we ascribe a lot of these things to the Bologna Process without a valid reason. But there are a lot of things that we did not do right that are actually not connected to the Bologna Process and these items can always be changed and improved.*

Also, Expert 5 claimed that:

*There were some Croatian specificities that were a part of a wider reform of our system, which was called the Bologna reform. For example, the mandatory attendance of classes, which is kind of associated with the Bologna Process, but I also think that it is interesting to observe the Bologna Process, the very name of the process, the Bologna Process as some sort of… Trojan horse, for a lot of other things.*

Finally, Expert 6 stated:

*Therefore, in regard to the famous Bologna and these Euro-integration processes, someone once called them the golden straitjacket and when it was first initiated here, the Bologna contained absolutely everything.*

This is why it is necessary to set frames of the European context of higher education in order to monitor which processes occur during the observed time period and how they are decreasing to the national level and then to the level of public universities in Croatia. In concordance with the sub-policies of higher education I am observing at the universities, I will monitor the development of these concepts through a series of conferences of European ministers of education and communiques brought on the European level. In this view, it is necessary to start with the Sorbonne Declaration of 1998, which was the basis and introduction to the Bologna Declaration of 1999. It was followed by a series of conferences taking place every two years with the purpose of analyzing previous conclusions and progress and with the aim of bringing new communiques. Conferences were held in Prague (2001), Berlin (2003) Bergen (2005), London (2007), Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve (2009), Budapest-Vienna (2010) and Bucharest (2012).

Certainly, the aim of this chapter is not to completely analyze movement and formulation of policies on the European level. Such venture would demand a completely segregated research and it would be necessary, due to the nature of process that includes a great number of countries, to also analyze the influence national educational policies have on the policies on the European level. As Witte (2006, 123) states, "with the increase in the number of member states in the course of the process, this influence became increasingly complex and erratic." Analysis of such process over this time period is highly demanding and I will be focusing on the most important points associated with the needs of my subject.

Sorbonne Declaration (1998) came into existence based on the initiative of a French minister of National Education, Research and Technology named Claude Allègre, who invited his colleagues from Italy, United Kingdom and Germany with the aim of establishing a

foundation for cooperation of European states in higher education, harmonization of systems and building of a common educational area. This act was also motivated by a French minister's attempt to use a European document as a reference point for reforms of national system of higher education, but it also presented a path that would bypass the European Commission (EC), which would reveal stronger political associability in addition to the economic associability (Ravinet 2005; Witte 2006; Deca 2013). Main characteristic of this initiative is its bottom-up perspective, whose aim was to encourage other states to join, which would achieve its actual realization in terms of the Bologna Declaration. Basic ideas promoted in the Sorbonne Declaration are mobility, the two-level system, usage of transferable credits and employability of students. The question of mobility is directed towards the importance of spending at least one semester at universities abroad and the emphasis is placed on the historical importance of students' circulation over the continent as the value that needs to be reanimated. This diversity of offers of various universities is perceived as the potential that should enable students to achieve their capacities and gain what they consider to be the most relevant. When speaking about the harmonization in this sense, it does not refer to the harmonization of individual programs, but the two-level structure of higher education (Sorbonne Declaration 1998). Following that idea, Witte (2006) explains the difference between the idea of harmonization and unification and offers Allègre's explanation, according to which, their aim was preservation of differences through mutual recognition, while the goal of the EC was to unify the program. Witte also notices that the duration of individual cycles was not clearly determined, but that it can be associated with the 3+2+3 model and that the relevance of a bachelor's degree on the job market was not mentioned. In terms of transferrable credits, European Credit and Transfer System (ECTS) is not concretely mentioned, but ECTS credits are only listed as an example and their importance is emphasized in terms of concept that should allow flexibility and inclusion in the educational process at any point in one's life.

Addition to the Sorbonne Declaration, but including a wider specter of states, was the meeting held in Bologna after which the Bologna Declaration was signed. According to Reinalda and Kulesza-Mietkowski (2005) and Witte (2006), during this period, the EU was becoming more involved in the Bologna Process, through both drafting the very declaration proposal and through increasing funding of the process. Bologna conference was held in July 1999 and 29 state representatives participated. Following the lines of the Sorbonne Declaration, the need for creating the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) was emphasized in order to

promote mobility and employability of students. In addition to that, increase of compatibility and comparability of systems of higher education was also listed as a relevant element of the process. Primary goals of the declaration, which should contribute to establishment and development of the EHEA, are adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees, adoption of a system essentially based on two main cycles, establishment of a system of credits, promotion of mobility, promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance and promotion of the necessary European dimensions in higher education (Bologna Declaration 1999, 4-5).

Some of the sub-policies I am observing in the view of policy change of higher education at public universities in Croatia are pointed out with these goals. In such a manner, the structure of study that should be composed of two levels is emphasized, where the duration of the first degree is defined to minimally three years and should be relevant on the job market. Then, the ECTS, which I am also examining within the sub-policy of the structure of study as an important prerequisite of study reconstruction in the crossing from the system that was not based on points according to the Bologna system and, as such, the system of credits presents a novelty in the higher education in Croatia. Finally, two goals that have been substantially lacking at the universities in Croatia – mobility and quality assurance. In addition to previously listed goals that were clearly emphasized and perceived as important, social dimension is also mentioned. It is listed in the very introductory part of the Bologna Declaration, but has not been emphasized or defined and therefore cannot be considered a concept promoted with this document.

Here it is possible to accentuate that the aims emphasized in the Bologna Declaration (1999) are either a complete novelty for the system of higher education in Croatia and its universities or they are significantly lacking in this system, which will be visible in the following analysis. Besides that, Croatia was not one of the signatories of the Bologna Declaration in 1999, but it became one on the conference in Prague afterwards. In Bologna, 29 states signed the declaration, 15 of them being members of the EU. Even though this process was untypical for the EU, “the linkage with the EU was present and grew stronger throughout the process” (Witte 2006, 133). Also, the Sorbonne Declaration itself emphasized the importance and promoted the strategic interests of harmonization and internationalization, while, in addition to them, the Bologna Declaration emphasized quality and autonomy.

Until the conference in Prague in 2001, the connecting of the EU with the Bologna Process resumed. Namely, during these two years, the EU ministers of education first established a consultative and steering group containing, among others, the representatives of the EC. Furthermore, the conference of the Council of Europe was held and it marked the beginning of Lisbon Process that placed more emphasis on education, and according to Witte (2006), in 2002 in Barcelona, the Lisbon and Bologna Process become associated. However, what might seem less important in this period, but will later in Prague become the integral factor of the Bologna Process and is associated with one of the sub-policies I am observing in my thesis, is the foundation of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) in 2000. ENQA was founded by the incentive of the EC and after six years of various projects funded by the EU, primarily Socrates (Kristoffersen 2010). As accented on the web-sites of ENQA, their goal is "to act as a major driving force for the development of quality assurance across all the Bologna signatory countries" (ENQA web-site). It is interesting to notice that a more intensive association occurred in terms of dimension that ensures long-term quality control of the institutions and programs.

Furthermore, in the period between Bologna and Prague, there was a convention in Salamanca (2001). This is when the Confederation of EU Rectors' Conferences founded the European University Association (EUA). It emphasized the principles of autonomy with accountability, education as a public responsibility, research-based higher education, organizing diversity and the main problems of quality, trust building, relevance, mobility, compatible qualifications at the undergraduate and graduate levels and attractiveness. Within these principles and main problems, similar concepts are accentuated, just like in the declarations I had previously mentioned. However, it is clearly emphasized that the first degree of education should be between 180 and 240 credits, which means that its anticipated duration is three or four years. In addition to that, it is emphasized that it is possible to establish integrated studies in exceptional cases and that such studies would lead directly to a Master-level degree. Through this, the system of ECTS credits was directly accepted as the framework. Also emphasized were the ideas of internationalization, quality and autonomy of the university as important strategic determinants that should guide the development of higher education policies.

At the conference in Prague, six main points brought with the Bologna Declaration were affirmed and three more states were included (Croatia, Cyprus and Turkey) as well as Lichtenstein, which signed the Bologna Declaration in the meantime. Social dimension still

remained neglected and undefined and it is only mentioned in the context of mobility. What is recognizable is that some states have already introduced the two-level structure into their systems of higher education and several more were seriously considering doing the same. Also, speaking of the system of credits, it has been revealed that it can be the ECTS system or some other system that is compatible to the ECTS system. In addition to that, there has been activity on the trace of the Salamanca conclusions in terms of quality assurance. Namely, Communique of Prague (2003, 2) stated that the ministers are

> called upon the universities and other higher education institutions, national agencies and the European Network of Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), in cooperation with the corresponding bodies from countries which are not members of ENQA, to collaborate in establishing a common framework of reference and to disseminate best practice.[4]

Finally, the sub-policy of mobility started to be connected to the mobility programs of the EU. These three moves achieved the association with the credit system that was in circulation since 1988 through the Erasmus Programme initiated by the EC, programs of mobility and combining with the ENQA that was the result of the EC's actions. This is how Zgaga (2004) recognizes the role of the programs of the EC (Socrates and Erasmus) in terms of introducing the ECTS system, and Witte (2006, 137) explains that the conference in Prague caused a complete change of the EC's status. From a mere observer, it has become an active participant and a member of the preparation group for any upcoming activities. Therefore Capano and Piattoni (2011) recognize this process of overlapping and call it as the 'Lisabonisation' of the Bologna Process. Dobbins and Knill (2014) also recognize the incorporation of the Lisbon process into the Bologna, but they also realize that the EU has used the weakness of its member states in terms of funding and by increasing the means for the needs of the mobility programs, it ensured itself a position from which the policies of higher education can be managed. This is how the Erasmus Programme was used for the purpose of internalization and Europeanization, and for goals that were wider than the educational policies such as the construction of the European citizenry (Teichler 2012).

During the period between the conference in Prague and the one in Berlin, it is necessary to mention the Graz Declaration by the EUA (2003) for which the *Survey on Master Degrees* and *Joint Degrees in Europe* (Tauch and Rauhvargers 2002) were composed. Those two documents evidently determine that the second cycle should encompass minimally 60 credits,

[4] European Network of Quality Assurance in Higher Education was renamed into European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in 2004.

but other variations were also given as possibilities. They presented other possibilities of organization in terms of 3+2, 4+1 and 0+5, and it was requested that the participants of the conference in Berlin concur with these conclusions. Even though these variations were offered, it should be pointed out that the research of Reichert and Tauch (2003, 48) revealed that

> the most common pattern appears to be: 180 credits Bachelor + 120 credits Master. The Master's degree can also carry less than 120 credits, depending on the length and content of the Bachelor program, but a minimum of 60 credits at postgraduate level has to be respected.

This is how the 3+2 system imposed itself as the dominant system within the Bologna Process. Besides that, the Graz Declaration pointed out the social dimension as an important sub-policy of higher education, which would gain more importance at the conference in Berlin. Adapting to the European framework in regard to the EHEA was deemed important, which was followed by the quality and autonomy of the university.

The conference in Berlin mostly confirmed previously set goals, such as quality assurance, two levels of study, promotion of mobility, system of credits, degree recognition. Ministers have also taken conclusions from Lisbon in 2000 and Barcelona in 2002 into consideration, along with the conclusions drawn during the convention in Graz in 2003. Particular emphasis was placed on monitoring of development and implementation in the part referring to the quality assurance, two-level system and recognition of degrees and study elements. Those three topics are listed as priorities for the following two years. Third level in the sense of a doctoral study was added, which offered a clear mandate to ENQA to develop standards, procedures and guidelines in the area of quality assurance in cooperation with the EUA, European Association of Institutions in Higher Education and the National Unions of Students in Europe. Therefore, it was established that the national systems of quality assurance should, by 2005, include the following:

- a definition of the responsibilities of the bodies and institutions involved
- evaluation of programs or institutions, including internal assessment, external review, participation of students and the publication of results
- a system of accreditation, certification or comparable procedures
- international participation, co-operation and networking. (Berlin 2003, 3)

Association of the EU and the Bologna Process resumed in terms of mobility regarding accentuation of the substantial support of the EU programs in this sense and regarding the ECTS system that was bound to become a basis for national credit systems.

Finally, important topic of this conference was the social dimension. Social dimension was considerably accentuated in Berlin for the first time on a number of meetings of the European ministers of higher education. This is why they emphasized the need to enhance social cohesion by decreasing social differences and the need to position higher education as a public good. In this aspect, the ministers bound to make "higher education equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means" (Berlin Communique 2003, 4).

This is how the conference in Berlin clearly opened all the sub-policies I am studying in this thesis. Mobility, quality assurance, structure of system and social dimension are directly addressed, while enrollment policy and tuitions, even though not explicitly listed, are closely associated with the topics of approach of higher education, but also with the association with the job market.

Also, the entire conference in Berlin was directed towards the realization of the EHEA, thusly promoting the idea of harmonization with the European framework, which was accompanied by the emphasized quality, need for internationalization of institutions and maintaining autonomy of the university in its functioning.

At the conference in Bergen in 2005, it was recorded that a great progress had been made in terms of the three goals that were monitored after the conference in Berlin, but they also isolated the need to ensure a consistent progress in states included in the Bologna Process and exchange of experience and expertise amongst the participants. Main aims were addressed once more. Associated with the structure, the emphasis was placed on the satisfaction with the implementation of the two-level system but the issue of bachelors' employment remained. Also, diversity amongst the national context was recognized and it brought about the idea of composing national frames of qualifications that would be compatible with the frame of qualifications of the EHEA.

When it comes to quality assurance, it was concluded that all the states had made an advance towards the system based on set criteria, but it also revealed great space for further progress. Particularly stressed is the need for work on internal mechanisms of quality assurance on higher education institutions (HEIs). Standards and guidelines proposed by the ENQA were also accepted and the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR) was set. Biggest progress was achieved in ratification of the Lisbon Recognition Convention that ensures the recognition of degrees and periods of studies. It was ratified by 36 of total 45 signatory states of the Bologna Process. Also emphasized was the importance of autonomy of the university

in conducting reforms, international dimension and cooperation and achieving the EHEA, which implied the adaptation of policies.

Significance for the conference in Bergen belongs to isolating the social dimension as a future challenge and priority. While it was mostly declaratively listed in previous conferences, it now acquired a place amongst the priorities (Puzić, Doolan and Dolenec 2006). These authors state that the social dimension is, as it had been presented in the documents associated with the Bologna Process, substantially limited and even exclusive. Reasons to this include its focus on the problem of study funding or how the authors summarize that the vision of social dimension in the Bologna Process "refers to the institutional measures contributing equal chances during the enrollment process, then in the course of its duration at the end of the study, with particular emphasis in the students from socially endangered groups" (Puzić, Doolan and Dolenec 2006, 246) and neglecting other social factors such as invalidity or age.

According to the Bergen Communique (2005, 5), aims to be achieved by 2007 are:

- implementation of the standards and guidelines for quality assurance as proposed in the ENQA report;
- implementation of the national frameworks for qualifications;
- the awarding and recognition of joint degrees, including at the doctorate level;
- creating opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education, including procedures for the recognition of prior learning.

Meeting in London was held two years after the one in Bergen. London Communique (2007), as the previous one, referred to what had been accomplished during the former period according to the established goals and the tendency to resume with the changes and progress in those areas that remain on an unsatisfactory level. The emphasis is once again placed on the need for comparability and compatibility of the systems of higher education, but also on respecting and appreciating their differences and individual traditions. Final text of the Communique suggested that the smallest progress has been made in terms of national qualification frames and that more efforts are going to be needed in order to implement this goal. On the other hand, substantial progress is detected in establishing the system of quality assurance on national levels. However, it is emphasized once more that "since the main responsibility for quality lies with HEIs, they should continue to develop their systems of quality assurance" (London Communique 2007, 4). This clearly reveals expectations from the actors on a national level and of HEIs in the sphere of quality assurance. Internal system of quality assurance of an individual HEI should be a cornerstone for trust and establishing quality.

Main topics that need to be monitored during the two years following the meeting in London are completing the fully established three-level system, mobility, social dimension, data acquisition, employability, the EHEA in a global context and stocktaking process. It is significant that the social dimension is acquiring an important place and that it is set as one of the aims in the following period, but it should be stated that its focus has not been changed not even after this meeting. It still remained attached to the economic aspect of excludability, in spite of the fact that one part suggested that the student body "should reflect the diversity of our populations" (London Communique 2007, 5). Furthermore, one of the more important goals was to collect data in order to track progress of individual members, but also to compare their achievements. Importance of data acquisition will be obvious on the example of system of higher education in the Republic of Croatia. It can also be visible how the nonsystematic acquisition of data and its deficit can aggravate the decision making, measure bringing and researching of trends in higher education.

The next meeting of ministers was held in 2009 in Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve. In addition to the usual topics and affirming previously set principles and goals, this meeting emphasized prioritizing the importance of public investing into the higher education, which is related to tuition-fees. The importance of public responsibility towards the higher education is accented, as well as the need for HEIs to be "responsive to the wider needs of society through the diversity of their missions" (Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve Communique 2009, 1). Narrowly associated with this is the social dimension, which partially distances itself from the exclusively economic criterion and it is stated that the

> access into higher education should be widened by fostering the potential of students for underrepresented groups and by providing adequate conditions for the completion of their studies. This involves improving the learning environment, removing all barriers to study, and creating the appropriate economic conditions for students to be able to benefit from the study opportunities at all levels. (Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve Communique 2009, 2)

Even though these underrepresented groups are not clearly defined, this expression encompasses a series of groups, not only those that are in socially unfavorable position. The conclusions of the Communique stated that the very public funding of education is the guarantee of equitable approach and autonomous development of HEIs. Both London, and then the Louvain-la-Neuve, emphasized the international openness, but they also pointed out the ideas of quality and autonomy of institutions in conducting reforms.

Development of national qualification frames and their implementation should be finished by 2012. In terms of mobility, the deadline was set for 2020, meaning that by 2020, 20% of the graduates should spend a part of their study or qualifying abroad. Also, in terms of mobility, practical measures are suggested regarding the funding that would ensure growth in this segment.

Year after the previously mentioned meeting, there was a conference in Budapest and Vienna, where the Budapest-Vienna declaration on EHEA was brought. This declaration marked the proclaimed goal of the Bologna Declaration about the establishment of this area. In the meantime, the Bologna Declaration was signed by 47 states and the ministers stress a significant progress during the previous period. This declaration did not introduce novelties, but it only confirmed previous tendencies and the review of the state was announced for the regular meeting in Bucharest in 2012.

The conference in Bucharest presented a troublesome review of the economic crisis that significantly influenced the higher education in terms of both funding and employability of highly educated people. In terms of funding, there was a need to secure the "highest possible level of public funding for higher education and drawing on other appropriate resources" (Bucharest Communique 2012, 1). Interesting progress was made regarding the issue of availability of education and the new concept of widening approach to education was introduced, according to which, it is necessary to grant approach to wider groups. It is interesting that, in this document, this concept is introduced before the topic of social dimension, which does not bring a significant progress from the concept presented in Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve in 2009. Also, the stress is placed on the challenges that are occurring, but also on the accomplishments that were achieved during the previous period. Communique presented the following topics that are amongst the priorities set for 2015 – providing quality education for all, enhancing employability of graduates and strengthening mobility. When it comes to quality assurance, there was a bigger opening, therefore it was given the possibility to conduct accreditations within the EHEA agencies registered in the EQAR, as long as they respect national demands. In the sense of mobility, it was more precisely determined how to reach the goal of 20% of graduates spending part of their study or qualifying abroad.

What can be said, which concurs with Deca's (2013) claims, is that this Communique switches from policy making to policy implementation, which is visible according to detailed points and goals to be achieved, i.e. "one can speculate that a mental step has been taken

looking at the tone of detail of the Bucharest Communique (2012) compared to the other EHEA ministerial documents" (Deca 2013, 15). The author thinks that the Bucharest Communique is the first apparent and explicit roadmap with the goal of consolidating EHEA, but at the same time, it offers clear instructions for goals on national level.

This overview reveals the most important steps in the development of the Bologna Process and it is focused on several issues such as quality assurance, mobility, social dimension and structure. Simultaneously, it was stated that the Bologna Process was often used as a justification of changes arriving from the national actors, but were not necessarily associated with the very process. Emphasis was also placed on the way the associations occurred with the processes emerging from the policies of the EU. These processes are extremely complex and often cannot be segregated, and I will not be too involved with this issue. The European context and a more intense emphasis on the changes in higher education must have been a trigger for changes on the national level. What we need to bear in mind is that they provided the framework, which is visible from the severely unstructured way they were set, while actors filled the framework on the national level. Since the initial phase of the Bologna Process, it represented mobility, introducing the two-level system (later the third level was introduced) and the changes associated with the curricula. Over the course of time, quality assurance and social dimension were presented and introduced. The issue of the enrollment policy and tuition was associated with the assuring approach to higher education that appears in the Bologna Process, and also with the social dimension. In addition to this, all these documents point out the basic ideas guiding the universities on the national level – quality, interdisciplinarity, autonomy, promotion of the EHEA and harmonization with the European framework.

Finally, it should be stated that an important part of the European framework was the area of science and that it could not be considered as secondary question. However, this thesis is focused on the issues associated with the higher education policies.

## 4.2. National Context

This chapter shortly presents the status of the higher education in Croatia and the historical development of public universities in Croatia, which are the subject of research in this thesis. At the end, I will also devote attention to the institutional organization of universities, i.e. level of integration.

According to the ASHE, the system of higher education in Croatia recognizes three types of institutions: schools of professional higher education, polytechnics and universities that differ according to their ownership – private and public. Therefore, there are 7 public and 3 private universities, 11 public and 3 private polytechnics and 3 public and 21 private schools of professional higher education (see Table 10) [5].

Table 10. Number of Higher Education Institutions in Croatia

| Category | Public | Private |
|---|---|---|
| Type | | |
| University | 7 | 3 |
| Polytechnics | 11 | 3 |
| Schools of professional higher education | 3 | 21 |

Source: Directory of study programmes (MOZVAG web-site).

The reason why I am focusing on public universities only rests in the fact that they encompass the biggest portion of study programmes and students. Public universities (undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate) conduct 1265 programmes in total, while private institutions and public polytechnics conduct 95 programmes in total. Therefore, public universities encompass 87% of the total programmes (Table 11) offered in the system of higher education and 79% of the students (Table 12). In addition, not one of the other private or public type of institutions encompasses more than 5% of the study programmes or more than 13% of the students. On one hand, including a certain type of institutions (e.g. public polytechnics) multiplies the number of units of analysis that should be encompassed, which is not possible due to the constrained time, spatial and financial resources. On the other hand, including private universities or polytechnics is not relevant for the analysis according to the portion of the study programmes and students.

[5] This was the number of institutions at the end of the research period (July 2013) and it has slightly changed in the last three years

Table 11. Number of Study Programmes Regarding the Category and Type of the Higher Education Institution

| Category | Public | Private |
|---|---|---|
| Type | | |
| University | 1183 | 20 |
| Polytechnics | 75 | 22 |
| Schools of professional higher education | 7 | 53 |

Source: Directory of study programmes (MOZVAG web-site).

Table 12. Number of Students in the Academic Year of 2012-2013

| Category | Public | Private |
|---|---|---|
| Type | | |
| University | 126 112 | 497 |
| Polytechnics | 20 743 | 2662 |
| Schools of professional higher education | 1598 | 7973 |

Source: Croatian Bureau of Statistics (Data delivered on demand).

Studies conducted in Croatia are either integrated or have different combinations of undergraduate or graduate studies in terms of the duration. In case of integrated studies, there are those that last 5 and 6 years, and in cases of non-integrated studies, there are more types – 3.5 + 1.5, 3+2 and 4+1. In spite of this difference, Croatia is a country where 75% and more of the programmes are in the 3+2 form (Eurydice 2012).

When it comes to main decisions within the observed period on the national level, it is possible to point out several of them. Croatian Minister of science and technology[6], Hrvoje Kraljević, signed the Bologna Declaration in 2001 in Prague. By doing so, Croatia accepted the implementation of guidelines prescribed by the declaration by 2010. Furthermore, in the

[6] On December 23, 2003, the Ministry of Science and Technology (MST) and the Ministry of Education and Sports merged into the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports.

same year, the Education Sector Development Plan 2005-2010 (MSES 2005) is accepted and it defines the main goals of the higher education. This plan additionally emphasizes the acceptance and implementation of ideas promoted in the Bologna Declaration – recognizable and comparable academic and professional degrees, diploma supplement with the purpose of quicker and easier employment and international recognizability, unique system of the three cycles of studying, increase in integration of the university and so on. After approaching the Bologna Process, the new Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act was brought in 2003 and the first academic programmes according to the new system were initiated in 2005-2006. After numerous changes and supplements, this Act is still valid. In the meantime, in 2010, there was an attempt to bring three new acts that would cover this area, but were not accepted in the end. Legal framework was completed in 2009, when the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education was brought. Finally, starting with the academic year of 2012-2013, performance based agreements were introduced, which were ensuring financing of the tuition fees for the full-time students, as well as material costs for a three year period, and the universities acquired four goals, with at least three of them being from the general list of goals and one from the special[7]. More thorough overview of development on the national level will be presented within each of the observed sub-policies of higher education and it will be focused on key events and decisions important for understanding policy changes on the level of the universities.

#### 4.2.1. Historical Perspective of Universities in Croatia

In order to understand the context, it is necessary to lower oneself on the level of the university, which is the focus of my thesis, and briefly explain its development. Namely, when focusing on public universities, it is visible that there are three groups in terms of the period of their establishment. The UNIZG, which is the oldest, is in the first group by itself, followed by the universities of Split, Rijeka and Osijek, which were established in the beginning of 1970s, and the universities of Zadar, Dubrovnik and Pula, which were established in 2000s. Bearing the deficit of literature associated with the historical development of the universities in Croatia in mind, in this part I particularly relied on the review of Borivoj Samoločev (1989) *Higher Education in Yugoslavia: A Historical Overview* and on information regarding the development of the universities available of the web-pages of individual institutions.

[7] General list of goals offered five goals and the special list offered ten goals.

The UNIZG developed through several phases since 1669, when the Neoacademia Zagrabiensis, run by the Jesuits, was founded. After 1776, the state took control of it, following the decree issued by Maria Theresa and the Regia Scientarium Academica was established. Another change occurred in 1850 as the consequence of the revolutionary events in Europe in 1848, and the Acadamy of Jurisprudence was established. About 20 years later, in 1874 to be more precise, the UNIZG was founded and it consisted of the Faculty of Theology, Faculty of Philosophy and the Faculty of Law (UNIZG web-site). Further development prior to the World War I was marked by founding of new faculties (Faculty of Medicine) and a series of departments within the Faculty of Philosophy, which later produced the Faculty of Pharmacy and the Faculty of Forestry. After World War I, all the universities in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes were named the University of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and after the Act on Universities of 1930, it was defined that the UNIZG consisted of seven faculties (Philosophy, Law, Theology, Medicine, Veterinary Science, Technical and Engineering Sciences and Agriculture and Forestry) (Samolovčev 1989).

In concordance to the historical institutionalism theory, the period that ensued World War II can be characterized as the beginning of new balance after the equilibrium in the area of higher education was exceptionally punctuated. Namely, as Samolovčev (1989) and Šoljan (1991) stated, there were two developments that could not be neglected – bigger portion of the infrastructure was destroyed and a lot of the personnel was killed during and immediately after the war. Furthermore, the war was ensued by a period in which the expansion of higher education occurred, and this was actually the period when the foundation of the current system of higher education was set. Even though there are no data about the growth of each of the universities, it is still possible to illustrate the size of the growth if the numbers regarding the entire Yugoslavia were observed. Namely, Samolovčev claimed that there were 18 faculties at the universities of Ljubljana, Zagreb and Belgrade in 1941 and 27 faculties in 1949. He also stated that 14 new universities were opened in the period from 1957 to 1979. Similar growth occurred concerning the number of students. Therefore, Reichard (1992) stated that the number of students in 1970 was 641%* bigger when compared to the period before the war, i.e. 1939. Today, the UNIZG has 29 faculties, three art academies and one university center, and there were 62 985 students in the academic year of 2012-2013.

Three more universities in the area of the today's Republic of Croatia were founded in the mentioned period of expansion. All three universities were founded in 1970s and according to

Samolovčev (1989), they belonged to the period of higher education expansion and self-governing transformation from 1954 to 1982. Clear establishment of legal personality of the faculties with regard to the universities occurred precisely in this period. Therefore, Samolovčev claimed that "the 1963 Federal and Republic Constitutions made Faculties and Colleges autonomous and self-governing organizations of particular social interest. Though not specifically mandated, the Universities remained in practice compulsory associations of Faculties and Colleges" (1989, 31).

Juroš (2006) also stated that the universities were stripped of their actual power of deciding through the principle of self-governing even during the 1970s and that it was acquired by the constituent units that gained legal personality. Historical development and an overview of the structure of these universities can, except in these papers, be seen in the work of Uvalić (1952), Potkonjak (1989), Šoljan (1991) and Mandić (1992). Giving the autonomy to the faculties in relation the university directed the further development of these institutions in the way that the faculties maintained this legal personality in regard to the university, and the governing structures of the university actually had no actual possibility of governing or control over the constituent units. When it comes to the UNIZG, such legal solution was reinforced by the additional factor of size (number of constituent units and students), i.e. bigger number of constituent units, with some of them having a big number of students. The very process of establishing the UNIZG, and as seen in further text, the establishment of the universities of Rijeka, Split and Osijek, was based on the individual faculties, which were founded based on schools of professional higher education or were established as faculties. These faculties interconnected over the course of time and universities were founded as governing institutions. Such historical development, from the bottom to the top, surely influenced the development of separate identities of individual constituent units, and such development gained an additional legal basis through the previously mentioned constitutional solutions.

The UNIRI was founded based on several schools of professional higher education established at the end of 1940s and in the beginning of 1950s – the Theological College of 1947, the Merchant Marine College of 1949 and the Teachers School of Professional Higher Education established in 1953. Later founded were the Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Faculty of Economics and the Higher Technical and Civil Engineering School (UNIRI web-site). The UNIRI was officially founded in 1973 and it incorporated the existing HEIs and established new constituent units. At its very beginning,

the number of students was around 8000, and at the end of the 1980s, there were eight constituent units, two researching institutes and one junior college (Samolovčev 1989), as well as two constituent units situated in Pula. Today, the UNIRI has ten faculties, four university departments and the Academy of Applied Art. In 2012-2013, it had 16 892 students. However, it should be emphasized that the UNIRI constituent units situated in Istria segregated and the UNIPU was founded based on them in 2006.

The UNIST was founded in 1974 based on several schools of professional higher education established in the period between 1945 and 1960, the Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture, the Faculty of Chemistry and Technology and the Faculty of Law that were established in the beginning of 1960s. Ten years afterwards, the Faculty of Economics and the Faculty of Civil Engineering were founded (in 1971) and the Faculty of Medicine (in 1974) (UNIST web-site). In the beginning of the 1980s, the University had 5800 students and nine faculties and junior colleges (Samolovčev 1989). In the academic year of 2012-2013, 20 561 students were studying at the UNIST at 11 faculties, four university departments and one art academy. It should be pointed out that, in 2002, based on one of the constituent units of the University - The Faculty of Humanities and Social Studies situated in Zadar, the UNIZD was founded. Also, two more constituent units segregated and became a part of the Polytechnics of Dubrovnik.

Samolovčev (1989) stated that the main reasons for initiating the University of Osijek (UNIOS) emerged from the desire to create a foundation for agriculture development and to educate professional individuals important for the economy of this part of Croatia. Therefore, the College of Agriculture and the Two-Year Post-Secondary School of Economics and Commerce were founded first in 1960. The Faculty of Economics and the Faculty of Agriculture and Food Processing emerged from the previously mentioned institutions (UNIOS web-site). It is precisely these two faculties that, along with the Teacher Training College, the Zagreb Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture, the Zagreb Academy of Music, the City Library of Osijek and the Osijek Historical Archives, established the University of Osijek in 1975. During the initial years, the UNIOS had the support of the UNIZG and the University of Novi Sad, and it had around 5000 students (Samolovčev 1989). The Faculty of Law, the Academy of Pedagogy and the Faculty of Medicine were founded in the following years. Today, the UNIOS has 11 faculties, five university departments and one art academy. In the academic year of 2012-2013, it had 17 261 students.

At the end of 1980s, there were these four universities in Croatia and they were considered more of a non-obligatory composition of faculties than institutions with governance character. Therefore, Marentič-Požarnik, Lapajne and Mihevc (1989, 63) describe faculties as:

> Higher education institutions are self-governing units of a university. A faculty, for example, can consist of more of such institutions. Each of them has a council to manage its affairs […] The University is more or less a loose association of faculties and other institutions. It coordinates admission procedures, common core curricula and the international contacts of its members; it issues diplomas, certificates and awards to outstanding students.

The last three universities were founded in the period from 2002 to 2006 and there was no legal personality of individual constituent units. Universities were structured according to the department principle and the constituent units were under the clear authority of the university.

Among them the UNIZD was founded first. Namely, the basis of the development of the UNIZD was the Faculty of Humanities and Social Studies that was established in cooperation with the UNIZG in 1956 and entered the composition of the UNIST in 1974, where it stayed until 2003, when the UNIZD was founded (UNIZD web-site). At the moment of its establishment, the University had 16 departments and 280 students, and today it has 26 departments and in had 4384 students in the academic year of 2012-2013. Later in the same year, the UNIDU was founded. It was founded based on the Faculty of Maritime Studies and the Faculty of Tourism and Foreign Trade (established in 1970), and both of them were a part of the UNIST since 1976 (UNIDU web-site). However, in 1996, the segregation from the UNIST occurred and the first public Polytechnic in Croatia was established. It sustained until 2003, when it was transformed into the UNIDU and it had 2355 students at the time. In the academic year of 2012-2013, the UNIDU had 7 departments and 1662 students. Finally, the last founded university was the UNIPU (UNIPU web-site). It was based on the Higher School of Economics and the Pedagogical Academy that were founded in the beginning of 1960s and were later transformed into the Faculty of Economics and Tourism and Higher Teacher Education and Training School. Prior to 2006, when the UNIPU was founded, these constituent units were a part of the UNIRI. At the beginning, the UNIPU had 2238 students. The UNIPU today has three faculties, three university departments and one art academy, and in the academic year of 2012-2013, it had 2367 students.

### 4.2.2. Institutional Organization of Universities in Croatia

The issue of organization structure in terms of the integration or non-integration is associated with the development of the university. Namely, the research revealed that the integration

could not be observed merely as a formal-legal determination of the status of the constituent units but that it was necessary to pay attention to other elements as well. Therefore, in this thesis, the issue of integration level refers to the formal determinations of the statute of the university, way of decision making, one's own perception of organization and size of the university. The Act on Higher Education Institutions of 1993 enabled the constituent units to maintain the legal personality, which allowed the universities to continue to be loose associations, and the amendments of the Act on Higher Education Institutions in 1996 also were not directed at this issue. The situation in the higher education policies on the national level was complex and a series of processes occurred that were significant for the changes of higher education policies on the level of the university. Namely, Minister Kraljević, who was the minister from 2000 to 2002, initiated the work on the new act on science and higher education that was discarded by the arrival of Gvozden Flego at the head of the ministry. However, the greatest adversaries of this act proposal were the universities, and the biggest objections were directed at the legal and functional integration of the university. After which, Minister Flego presented his proposal of the Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act, which was accepted by the Croatian Parliament in 2003, and the transitional provisions stated that the legal integration of the universities would be complete by December 31, 2007. However, in the meantime, the constitutional claim was filed by the institutions for adult education and the Constitutional Court abolished these provisions. It is meaningful to notice that the constitutional claim was filed by a legal entity not encompassed by the provisions of the Act brought into question, which referred to universities only. Therefore, it remains unclear as to who filed the claim that abolished the obligation of legal integration of the universities. The Constitutional Court evaluated that these provisions violated the autonomy of the university to independent organization of teaching and scientific work and abolished the provisions referring to the legal integration, while the provisions associated with the functional integration remained. Functional integration assumed harmonized functioning of the university and its constituent units in strategic and financial sense.

It should be noticed that all ministers of education and their departments at the time, more or less advocated the integration of the university as important for other changes in higher education in this period. Therefore, in 2003, Hrvoje Kraljević stated that "the fragmentation of our universities is the main obstacle to introducing the type of curricula assumed by the Bologna Declaration" (Croatian Parliament report 2003, 14). In February 2005, the state secretary of higher education, Slobodan Uzelac, pointed out that "the integrated university is

our strategic goal in order to achieve the goals of the Bologna Process easier" (Cvrtila 2005, 15), and similar statements during this entire period arriving from other heads of the Ministry were present.

a) Legal personality of the constituent units[8]

Older universities (UNIZG, UNIST, UNIOS and UNIRI) have mostly faculties as their constituent units, and the newer universities (UNIZD, UNIDU and UNIPU) are the department type, with the exception of the UNIPU that has a segregated structure. Trend of transitioning from departments into faculties occurred at the end of the observed period at the UNIPU and it implied the decreased integration of the University.

At the UNIZG, UNIST, UNIOS and UNIRI, the constituent units have legal personality and greater authority in deciding, while the remaining universities were founded under special laws. Laws on founding these universities define that they are established with university departments, but a more detailed establishment of structure was left to the universities through their statues. Statues of the first group of universities clearly reveal legal personality of the constituent units, while in the second group, it is defined that the legal personality belongs to the universities. This criterion implies the formal legal determination that includes lower or higher authority in decision making of the individual constituent units.

b) Decision-making

Way of the decision making refers to individual decision making at the senates of the universities, if there were issues on which the constituent units made decisions that were contradicting the decisions of the senate (for example, in case of the enrollment policy that is under the authority of the senate, which was often bypassed. See the chapter on the Enrollment policy 5.5.) and if there were confrontations in terms of integration. This criterion reveals that, in spite of the formal-legal determination, there are certain differences between the universities that have the same statuses of the constituent units. Briefly presented decisions are explained here, which discuss the matter of integration, and are more thoroughly presented through the individual sub-policies later in the thesis.

Minutes of the Senate of the UNIZG reveal non-integration and the obstruction of work regarding integration. This was also pointed out by Rector Mencer in 2001 during the discussion on the new act proposals, when one of the constituent units delivered its text of

[8] Usage of the term constituent unit refers to the scientific-teaching constituent units (faculties, academies and departments), which does not include other types such as student center or university libraries

objections to the Minister, in which it opposed the integration. Particularly influential objections to potential abolition or questioning of legal personality arrived from the Faculty of Law. As stated by the representative of social sciences Petrak, reasons to this were of financial nature because the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Economics often perceived the abolition of legal personality as a tendency to abolish the constituent unit's own distribution of funds. Also, common topic of discussion is the issue of interconnecting within the scientific field that reveal the disconnection of the constituent units belonging to the same fields, and when the cooperation was achieved, agreements were signed between the constituent units of the University. Furthermore, pursuant to legal personality, the professors were employees of the individual constituent units, not the University. Also, there were independent decisions of the constituent units regarding the enrollment quotas or bypassing the decisions of the Senate regarding this issue, different conducting of the student poll at individual constituent units, conducing parallel studies at the constituent units, there was no information on international cooperation because it was achieved on the level of the constituent units and there were no records on the level of the University and the conducting of enrollments of students into the higher years was done without prerequisites, which contradicted the decision of the Senate. Then, the constituent units charged the costs of the halls and lecture rooms to each other, and the internal-external cooperation between the constituent units was conducted and there was a special part of the budget of the University designed for that purpose. Non-integration can also be witnessed in not offering elective courses to students from other constituent units, which was especially not possible for the constituent units outside of Zagreb and the series of conducted dislocated students. Particularly emphasized was the case in terms of establishing the amount of the tuition fee in 2002-2003, when this issue was left to the individual constituent units and consequentially, the UNIZG could even not bring a unified decision regarding the refund of tuition fees after the decision of the Minister (more on this topic is presented in the chapter on Tuition fees 5.6.). The UNIZG pointed out great non-uniformity regarding the enrollment criteria between the constituent units, which pointed to nonexistence of enrollment policy, while the constituent units were enabled to independently decide even on the structure of study according to the Bologna Process, which caused complete discrepancy between them.

Not many decisions revealed the integrated side of the UNIZG. Having that in mind, it is possible to emphasize the decision that the Senate would give antecedent opinion on the proposed deans of the constituent units, the conclusion that the UNIZG, instead of the

individual constituent units, would be deciding on the number of students that could be enrolled to individual constituent units (even though this was neglected in a number of cases) and finally, the tendency to establish the Doctorate School on the level of the University.

Even though the UNIRI was formally non-integrated, aspects of integration and real administration from the level of the university could be noticed since its establishment. In 2001-2002, the influence of the University on the reduction of quotas at certain constituent units was noted, which was accepted in spite of their objections, after which, a decision was brought that the enrollment competition should be joint and that the University would be presented as an integrated unit, even though this was followed by repeated objections of certain constituent units. Also, after the Act of 2003, which administered the functional integration at the UNIRI, the conclusion was that the legal personality of the constituent units should not prevent integration and that the preparedness of the academic community for this step was crucial, while the subsidiarity through the legal personality could contribute to functioning. Furthermore, during the bringing of new study programmes according to the Bologna Process, the importance of concern for the integration of the UNIRI was emphasized. This was followed by the decision of 2006 that the Committee for Quality would specially and continuously monitor the realization of institutional development plans of the constituent units, while the deans were obliged to file in the work and business reports, which was later replaced by the report on conducting the strategy of the University.

New constituent units founded in this period had the status of departments, but, on the other hand, one academy was founded and the Teachers School of Professional Higher Education changed its status and became the Faculty of Teacher Education Programme. In the sense of functional integration, the UNIRI constantly monitored the indicators of integration in their Strategy and in the Reports on strategy realization. However, the non-integration of the UNIRI could be seen in the dislocatedness of its constituent units, which was later solved with the foundation of the UNIPU and shutting down a series of dislocated studies. Also, the deans were independently deciding on the amounts of the enrollment fees, and the University was only able to suggest the maximal enrollment fee. Constituent units independently exceeded the enrollment quotas and their redistribution between the various categories of students, the Faculty of Medicine independently increased the tuition fee, certain constituent units independently abolished entrance exams and signed agreements on international cooperation. Non-integration was especially pronounced in 2012 during the discussion on the proposal of changes and supplements of the Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act. At the time, the

UNIRI failed to organize a joint discussion or conclusions, and this task was left to the councils of the constituent units.

Through decision making and discussions at the Senate of the UNIOS, it is visible that it is non-integrated and that the constituent units have the autonomy in decision making with regard to the University as legal entities. Non-integration is clearly recognized through establishing a great number of dislocated studies, the deans are responsible for the personnel policy of their constituent units and the rector refuses to take responsibility for their decisions, individual international cooperation is achieved with foreign universities, versatility is present in the structure of study amongst the constituent units that are free to decide on the matter, and some of them independently restored additional knowledge exams after the state matura was introduced. Furthermore, in the case of determining the enrollment quotas, Rector Kralik advised on the increase or reduction, but did not intervene since the enrollment policy is under the authority of the constituent units. Also, some constituent units made demands for maintaining the legal personality and the presentation given by Srećko Jelenić from the Faculty of Law during his candidacy for rector in 2001 and the presentation of the Dean of the Faculty of Law, Igor Bojanić, could be listed as examples of such cases. During the discussion on the act proposals, Bojanić warned about the importance of maintaining legal personality of the constituent units and independent administration. Finally, after the audit, the ASHE also suggested that not all constituent units were integrated into the quality assurance system. On the other hand, the constituent units founded after the Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act of 2003 were founded as departments, not faculties. However, the Faculty of Theology became a part of the University and academies were founded, while the Teacher Training College changed its status and became the Faculty of Teacher Education Programme. Contribution to integration is the fact that the deans of the constituent units filed a work report every academic year at the Senate's conferences. Furthermore, it was pointed out at the Senate that from 2005, the professors would not require mutual agreement signing between constituent units or approval of the dean or rector for conducting class within the UNIOS, and elective courses were introduced that could be attended by students from different constituent units.

Even though the UNIST is not integrated, it should be pointed out that Rector Pavić emphasized the need for complete legal integration of the university on several occasions and that the provisions regarding a time period for complete legal integration of the university and abolition of legal personality of the constituent units were introduced into the Scientific

Activity and Higher Education Act in 2003 to his initiative and the initiative of Rector Kralik from the UNIOS. However, some constituent units of the UNIST, and especially the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Studies, opposed to the abolition of legal personality. Therefore, certain decisions at the UNIST point to non-integration. Namely, even though there were certain constituent units with the status of departments, their status was changed and they became faculties, certain constituent units anticipated financial compensation for employing professors at other constituent units of the UNIST, the discussion on the authority for changes and supplements of the existing study programmes was rejected because the opinion was that this decreased the independence of the constituent units to a minimum, financial reports prior to 2009 were not compared between the constituent units, some constituent units had their own strategies of development and there was not a unified strategy of development on the level of the UNIST. There were also contrasted tendencies at the UNIST, which was proven by the fact that, prior to 2005-2006, the decision regarding the amount of tuition fees was made by the constituent units, while for the academic year of 2006-2007 and after, the decision was made that the cost was determined by the University. During the observed period, the dislocatedness of certain constituent units and the disproportionate development of the quality system were emphasized. This made the ASHE point out, after the audit was conducted, that the quality system of the UNIST was functionally non-integrated. Finally, the constituent units were free to design the structure during the transition to the Bologna system and therefore, there are both integrated studies and those structured in the 3+2 and 4+1 form.

At the UNIPU, the integration is pointed out by the decision that class conducting at different departments is not observed as external cooperation but that the norm of the professors is added. This was also emphasized by the existence of joint rulebooks (such as the Rulebook on the Final Paper at the University Undergraduate and Professional Studies of 2008 and the later Rulebook on the Final Paper), through which this area is regulated on the level of the university, while the non-integrated universities are given the framework and further regulation is left to the individual constituent unit. However, in the very beginning of the UNIPU, it was revealed that, in spite of the self-defining and the formal definition of an integrated university, there were tendencies that point to non-integration. Therefore, during the Statute bringing in 2007, it was emphasized that, in terms of the Temporary Statute (brought at the point of the establishment of the UNIPU), the authority of the council of departments was increased and that there was still a possibility of transferring additional

authority to them. Furthermore, in 2011, there was a demand for reacquisition of the status of faculty and the decision was made that reintroducing the legal personality was not possible according to the current legal regulation. However, after 2013, certain departments were changing their names and were becoming faculties even though the change of status did not occur, i.e. reintroducing of the legal personality, and partial authority was transferred to the faculties that departments lacked.

In terms of the decision making at the UNIZD, the allocation of the financial means suggested that there was a clear integrated function of the university, as well as tension on the relation between the university and the constituent units for which they were trying to find a solution. Therefore, the need for cooperation is pointed out because, if certain departments did not have enough financial means to function, the survival of the entire UNIZD is brought into question. In addition to that, decisions were brought regarding the prerequisites for student enrollment (obligations in terms of class, seminars, knowledge exams and skills) into individual semesters on the level of the UNIZD for all departments, while the big universities solved this issue on the level of individual constituent units. Also, integration was revealed in the reaction of the Administration concerning the student evaluation of class, when it was decided that all heads of the departments were delivered a notification that all professors were obligated to allow the class evaluation. Even though discussions were conducted regarding the issue of inter-department cooperation in terms of the professors, it was still pointed out that work within the hourly wage at other departments was not observed as additional. Furthermore, during the development and growth of the number of departments, change of organization within the UNIZD was proposed, as well as forming faculties, but Rector Magaš rejected the idea and pointed out that it was necessary to develop an integrated university within which it was possible to develop all areas and fields. In addition to that, he also emphasized that there were no formal constraints regarding the internal mobility and that a positive trend was noted in terms of the transition of students from one study programme to another. On the other hand, the autonomous decision regarding the structure of study was left to the departments and there were smaller exceptions from the 3+2 structure and the decisions on enrollment criteria during the introduction of the state matura. Also, there were differences in understanding quality between the departments, but this was attempted to solve by bringing joint standards, measures and criteria. Finally, bilateral cooperation was based on agreements of a university with another university, and of a department with another department.

The UNIDU proved to be a highly integrated university through a series of its decisions. Significant were the decisions on quotas where it was emphasized that they were not brought on the level of individual constituent units but on the level of the University, on redistribution of quotas between the departments and on the titles of the constituent units, i.e. when the title academy was proposed, it was rejected because of the organization structure of the university that was based on departments. Furthermore, during the establishment of the structure of study, it was decided that all the departments would be structured according to the 3+2 structure in order to achieve uniformity and there were no exceptions. When it came to the issue of introducing the state matura, the approval was immediately given on the level of the university that the results of the state matura should be used instead of the entrance exams upon enrollment, and the decision to request basic level in all subjects was also brought. Finally, the rector made a decision regarding the obligation, amount and means of paying fees at the UNIDU that encompassed all of its departments. Also, there were no exceptions concerning the conducting the student poll at the departments. This is why the Education, Science and Culture Committee (ESCC) of the Croatian Parliament observes the UNIDU as a homogenous institution of higher education with a unique legal personality, and the ASHE emphasizes the integration as a strong point of the UNIDU after the audit.

The importance of institutional organization was also recognized by the experts. Therefore, Expert 3 claims:

*The fact is that the big universities are non-integrated, definite weak point is the administration and any kind of institutional policies, that much is clear.*

Furthermore, Expert 4 states:

*The key fact, in my opinion, is that our non-integrated universities did not have a clear connection between the actions of the constituent units and universities. As if they were two segregated units, the university for itself, the constituent units for themselves.*

c) Self-defining

In the Iskorak 2001 (UNIZG 2002) document, the UNIZG points out non-integration and inadequate administration of the University as one of its weak points. They describe the University as a "loose conglomerate of a big number of higher education institutions with a strong legal personality" (UNIZG 2002, 10) and this is seen as a danger to the University's fragmentation and as a constraint for joining the modern courses of higher education and

mobility. In the document Development and Transformation of the UNIZG, they list that the "very position of the constituent units and the distribution of the administrative and legal authorities on the level of university's bodies and on the level of the constituent units still determines the University as a non-integrated federal structure" (UNIZG 2013, 37). Also, it was listed that there was a tendency to introducing functional integration, which proved problematic in various fields, including the scientific-educational and financial-professional system. Thus, the long lasting procedure and processes were pointed out, which led to inefficacy and slowness of solving important issues, not recognizing the joint services, issues in communication and non-uniformity of the system. Issue for such a situation was also detected in the internal discrepancies, tensions and obstructions. These two documents, one from the beginning and the other from the end of the observed periods, clearly revealed that the non-integration of the UNIZG remained one of the more important characteristics of its functioning. The status of the UNIZG was perhaps best described by Rector Mencer in 2002, when she stated that the issue of integration was the essential problem of the university that simultaneously wished and not wished to be changed and she also added that "the nonexistence of such university is a constraint in the process of joining the University into the European university integrations" (UNIZG minutes 2002a, 8). Also, Rector Bjeliš advocated stronger integration and criticized too small authorities the rector's position implied.

In the Strategy for the period of 2007-2013 (UNIRI 2008), the UNIRI stated that strong integration processes were initiated in the past six years and they perceived the Strategy as the main instrument for the integration of the university functions. They emphasized the integration of functions and harmonized and unified functioning of its constituent units and announced further decisions regarding the issue of integration of the university. The Report on the Successfulness of Implementation of the Bologna Process at the UNIRI of 2012 stated that the UNIRI could be considered a semi-integrated university. Additionally, during this entire period, Rector Rukavina and Vice Rector (and later Rector) Lučin advocated the functional and emphasized the legal integration of the university. Also, Lučin listed integration as an important prerequisite for the implementation of the Bologna Reform. However, in 2011, new act proposals were made and the main objection to them was that they were intended for abolishing the legal personality of the constituent units. Such approach of partial integration brought about the doubling of the administrative part of the work, which was pointed out in 2012.

In the document called Strategy of the UNIOS 2011-2020, the UNIOS (2011) stated that it integrated the functions of its constituent units and assured the harmonized functioning, while this functional integration was based on unique university rulebooks and it was stated that the integrative function of the University was spreading since 2009. This is particularly visible in the financial transactions through the establishing of the University Office for Audit and Financial Control. In 2011, at the thematic conference of the ESCC of the Croatian Parliament (ESCC 2011, 106), Rector Kralik pointed out that

> we are founded according to a mixed model, we have faculties with legal personality, but we also have departments, five departments that do not have legal personality, which function as a branch of the rectorate and I can tell you that this segment of the university acquired the unconditional opinion at the last audit.

Seeing that the UNIST did not have any strategic documents during the observed period, it was necessary to seek their self-defining through the statements of the leading personnel. In 2000, Rector Pavić described the UNIST as a sum of bigger or smaller number of faculties that were poorly connected, and in 2002, he stated that if the integration of the university was to be achieved, the faculties should not maintain their legal personality. The state of the non-integration was also pointed out in 2010 by the Dean of the Faculty of Civil Engineering and Architecture, Harapin, and in 2012, the same idea was confirmed by the Dean of the Faculty of Law, Čizmić, who supported the maintaining of the legal personality by the constituent units and professor Marušić from the Faculty of Medicine, who thought that the deans of the constituent units had complete authority without any control whatsoever and that the integration was necessary.

In the document Development Strategy of the Juraj Dobrila University of Pula, the UNIPU defined itself as a university organized "according to the principle of integrated structure by applying the department type of organization with joint services" (UNIPU 2011, 10). However, it was also pointed out that precisely such organization brought about issues since the constituent units were on different levels of development and due to the different work organization emerging from the assumption of an integrated university.

Starting with the document Developmental Determinants of the UNIZD for the period 2006-2010 (UNIZD 2005), the UNIZD defines itself in its strategic documents as an integrated university and the development of its activities is defined in concordance to that determination. However, the Science Development Strategy of the UNIZD (UNIZD 2009) pointed out that it is primarily integrated in a business sense, but that more work is required

regarding the science and teaching connecting of the departments. Also, in the conducted SWOT analysis, they list integration as one of their strong points. Therefore, the Strategy of the UNIZD 2011-2017 (UNIZD 2011) observes integration as one of the European prerequisites and as their great dedication regarding the strategic development and decision making, but the issue of connecting the departments in terms of class and research is still emphasized as an issue. In terms of functioning, it is pointed out that the practice showed that the decisions "were relatively easy to make, and the administrative procedures were easy and quickly conducted. This should also be complemented by a unique way of communication between the constituent units with the administrative structure" (UNIZD 2011, 87).

The basic characteristic of the University listed in the document Vision and Strategy of Development of the UNIDU (UNIDU 2005) is that this university differs from the existing universities according to its organization structure and that they achieve complete integration through the financing business. They also point out that the UNIDU is the only legal subject in regard to the departments functioning within the university. In addition to that, the Strategy of Quality Assurance at the UNIDU (UNIDU 2013) also presented the UNIDU as an integrated scientific-educational institution that integrates all the functions of its constituent units, which enables making the strategic and development decisions on all academic issues, business and other development plans.

d) Size

Even though the size of the very university does not necessarily imply its non-integration, in this case it was revealed that bigger universities were less integrated than the smaller universities. According to the type and number of the constituent units, the UNIZG stands out as significantly bigger than the other universities, followed by the three universities of medium size – the UNIST, UNIOS and UNIRI. Finally, there are three smaller universities, amongst which the UNIZD stands out according to the number of its constituent units. When observing the number of students (Figure 6) encompassed by these universities, the division to these three groups of universities is visible, as well as the fact that the very number of constituent units (as this is the case with the UNIZD) does not necessarily reflect the size of the university, which is why I am combining the number of students to the number and type of the constituent units.

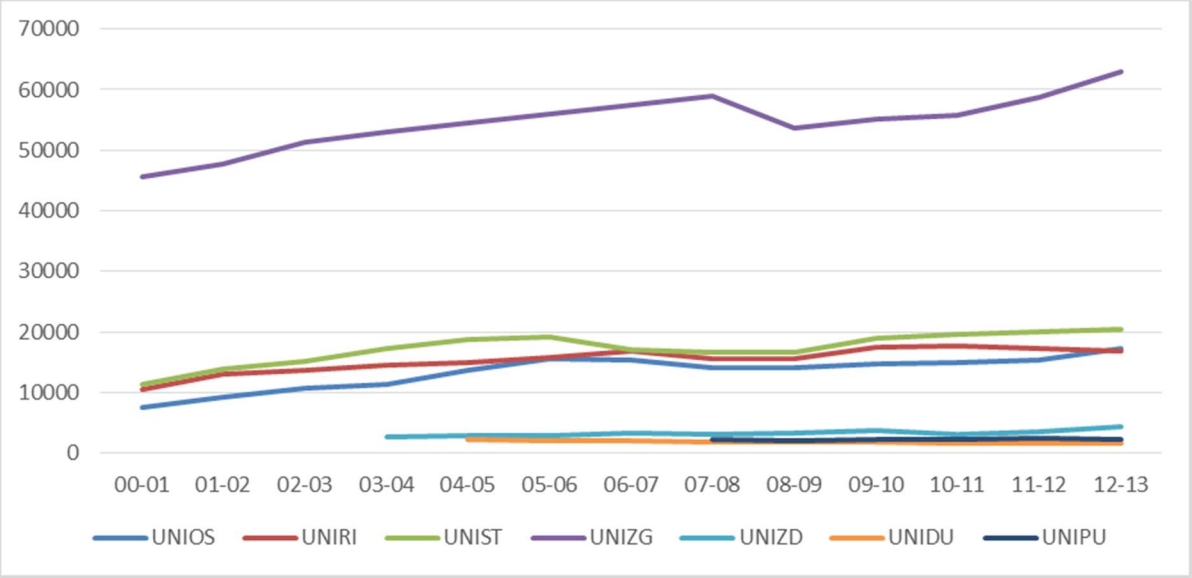


Figure 6. Number of Students at Public Universitis in Croatia from 2000-2001 until 2012-2013

Source: Croatian Bureau of Statistics (Data delivered on demand).

In the sense of the formal-legal criterion, it is clear that there are two types of universities, but once the criteria of way of decision making and self-defining are included, then the differences within these groups are visible. This is how the UNIRI is emphasized amongst the universities where the constituent units have legal personality. The UNIRI proved to be a more integrated university with its decisions and self-defining and can be considered a semi-integrated university. This was also recognized by Expert 7 that stated if

*some university strives to be functionally connected, well organized and in average the University of Rijeka surpasses, i.e. the University of Rijeka is above average, regarding a lot of things, regarding considerations, organization, they are not perfect, far from it. However, they represent a semi-benchmark for others, which are non-integrated… Perhaps the universities that set the course towards this integration, it seems that once again Rijeka appears as some sort of model segment that gradually fills the gaps relatively fast.*

Furthermore, the UNIOS and UNIST displayed higher integration when compared to the UNIZG due to their individual decisions and size. As the biggest university, the UNIZG with its certain constituent units that are bigger than other universities, displays the lowest level of integration with its actions and self-defining. The fact that this was an obstacle for functioning was confirmed by Expert 4, who claimed:

*Due to that, whether the strong Faculty of Law or otherwise strong constituent units at the University of Zagreb, all these innovations are difficult to implement.*

On the other hand, amongst the smaller universities, the UNIDU, which was an insignificantly smaller university than the UNIZD, proved to be the most integrated university, and it was followed by the UNIZD, which made some decisions that were not in concordance to an integrated university**.** Finally, the UNIPU, with regard to the decisions and allowing the departments to change their status to faculties, was revealed as the least integrated amongst this group. Even though the faculties at the UNIPU are not given legal personality, they have bigger authority than the departments. Only in the next period would it be proved if these types of decisions would lead to a further non-integration of the UNIPU. This was also recognized by Expert 8 who claimed that certain universities, even though formally integrated, did not seem that way in reality, therefore Expert 8 stated that:

*Concretely Pula, let us say Pula, and also Zadar. Pula has, you can conclude this yourselves if you observe it. Take Pula for example, they call themselves an integrated university, but they also have the Faculty Economics and Tourism 'Dr. Mijo Mirković', which makes everything clear, am I right?*

Expert 9 also claimed:

*But in our country, it happens that even some integrated universities practically function as non-integrated. Therefore, this leadership in our country is still not on the level on which it is supposed to be.*

## 4.3. Actors' Characteristics

With regard to the definition of actors' characteristics that was presented within the model of policy change I am applying in this thesis, this chapter will present beliefs, strategic interests and capacities of actors. Through three levels (deep core, policy core and secondary values) and considering their definition, beliefs are connected with the decisions on the national level. In terms of the assumption, deep core values are not expressed explicitly and hardly change. On the other hand, policy core beliefs refer to the priorities within the observed subsystem of public policies where the agreements and confrontations are evident between the university and the national level (competent Ministry). Also, in terms of secondary beliefs, referring to the issues of individual tools in the field of higher education, it is possible to witness agreements and disagreements between the actors. Furthermore, strategic interests are compared to the predominating topics that are promoted on the European level and therefore

encompass the strategic interests of internationalization, harmonization to the European framework, interdisciplinarity, quality and autonomy. Through their compatibility with the topics on the European level, it is possible to see if the actors strive towards achieving these interests or if they oppose to certain topics. Finally, actors' capacities (political, financial, human and veto capacities) show if the actors even have possibilities to act in the direction of policy change or are prevented in doing so.

#### 4.3.1. Beliefs

The UNIZG was a strong adversary of the act proposal by Minister Kraljević and was in opposition to the Ministry at the time on the level of policy core and secondary beliefs. The UNIZG found the act proposal to be unclear, unprecise and of poor quality when compared to the existing Act. They were convinced that the Government would not bring an act if the UNIZG did not accept it. Particular difference in opinion occurred on the level of policy core beliefs. Namely, the UNIZG represented the attitude of lower standardizing through the act and higher through the statue, while the proposal of the MSES was focused on higher standardizing through the act. In addition to that, the confrontation was strong in its association with the individual tools, on the level of secondary beliefs, which referred to abolishing the legal personality of constituent units and the integration of the university. Therefore, the UNIZG formed a committee afterwards, which started composing their own act proposal. After the change in the Ministry occurred and Flego became the new Minister, the UNIZG expressed the basic agreement of their own policy core beliefs with those presented by the Minister through his own act proposal. The UNIZG also observed this as an opportunity of consensus regarding the certain secondary beliefs, which they presented in their new act proposal. During the later harmonization, it was pointed out that the proposal of the Minister was based on the university proposal and that it was considered a good starting point. However, after the Act was brought in 2003, a series of objections appeared and there was a request for changing the Act. The determinant in the university's integration was presented as the biggest issue. When the process of discussion on new act proposals started in 2010, the UNIZG claimed that they were brought in secrecy and that the given deadline for public discussion was short, which was interpreted as political pressure. Once again, the disagreement with the tools on the secondary belief level was expressed. Therefore, the need for reform was also presented, which was basically an agreement with the MSES in terms of the policy core beliefs on the level of subsystem of higher education, but it was considered that the proposed drafts of the act, used as tools, could not implement this. Therefore, there was a request for repealing those act proposals from the public discussion. The biggest

adversary of these acts was the Faculty of Law, and once again, the main topic of the disagreement was the legal personality of constituent units.

Regarding the tuition fees and fairness of the system, the UNIZG developed a specific policy core belief. Namely, they considered the system to be unfair and the solution to this was observed through the application of tuition fees on all students, which did not meet the approval of the Ministry on the level of secondary belief. Also, the UNIZG conflicted with the MSES on the level of secondary belief in 2003, when they were the only university that refused to refund the tuition fees after the annulment of the previous decision of Minister Flego regarding the increase of tuition fees. Their belief was that the refund decision was unethical and unfair. Finally, they chose to act independently in terms of this issue and deviated from the tools applied by other universities that had the support of the Ministry by introducing the linear system of charging tuition fees. During the entire observed period and on the level of policy core beliefs, the UNIZG advocated as wide approach to the higher education as possible, but on the level of secondary beliefs, they observed this through assuring loans and scholarships by the state. Also, they advocated the successfulness and excellence as the primary criteria, and the social dimension remained neglected. The disagreement was also expressed with the secondary belief that the tuition fees on the graduate level should be subsidized since it undermined the incitement of excellence. Sign of distrust in the Ministry also occurred in the beginning of tuition fee subsidizing for graduate studies when it was requested that students should sign agreements which bound them to paying the tuition fee in case the state did not do that.

In terms of the Bologna Process, the UNIZG shared policy core belief with the MSES regarding the need to enter and implement it, but, certain strong constituent units within the UNIZG, primarily the representatives of the Faculty of Law, often expressed their disagreement with the reform. However, policy core belief associated with the accepting of the Bologna Process implementation was expressed by Rector Mencer in 2005 by stating that this was not dictated from the national level but that years were spent in preparation for the process, which therefore, did not require a postponement. Therefore, it can be concluded that there was a harmonization with the predominating belief on the national level regarding the importance of entering the Bologna Process.

Particular disagreement in terms of policy core beliefs was associated with entering the Erasmus Programme. Namely, the UNIZG was the only university that advocated earlier

entry and observed the MSES as the main culprit for the postponement of that process. Such decision on the level of subsystems of higher education was the subject of significant conflict. The UNIZG considered that their credibility and integrity on the international plan were undermined. Finally, Expert 7 recognized this position of the UNIZG regarding policy core beliefs and stated:

*The University of Zagreb is in average against everything. Therefore, this has been some kind of practice up to this point. But we never actually defined what they really want, this is a new dimension now. Actually, the incentive to change should arrive from the system, see what the alternative is.*

At the UNIST during 2002, Rector Pavić shared policy core belief regarding the organization of the university, i.e. he claimed that it was necessary to integrate the universities and he also supported the act bringing that was headed in that direction (concurring on the level of secondary beliefs). This was expressed through the attitude that this was the best solution that was offered. Reasons to such agreeing rested in the belief that a non-integrated university disabled progress since the potentials were fragmented and disconnected. One of the bigger disagreements regarding beliefs on the level of the UNIST and those on the national level was the issue of dislocated studies. Namely, policy core belief of the UNIST was that these studies existed due to the demands of the local community and were conducted for same reason, even though they were considered a problem for the very University, i.e. the belief was that it was necessary to ensure the development of higher education in smaller communities. However, when this issue collided with the issue of quality, the conclusion was that the UNIST could shut down those dislocated studies, but that it was necessary to find solutions since those students had to be provided for. There was an interesting situation in which there was a disagreement regarding the particular tools used for achieving policy (secondary beliefs) when the studies of the Polytechnic of Split were incorporated into the UNIST. Namely, the UNIST claimed that they did not wish for that to happen but were forced to accept it, however, the policy core belief was that it was necessary to enable those students to continue and complete their studies, which was the reason behind accepting that solution. Therefore, due to the policy core beliefs, the UNIST accepted the tool that was not in agreement with the secondary beliefs of the UNIST. Similar occurrence happened during the discussion regarding the act proposals in 2010. At the time, it was clear on the level of policy core belief that a reform of science and higher education was necessary, but that the concrete solutions proposed in draft form were unacceptable, i.e. the disagreement occurred on the level of

secondary beliefs. However, eventually the UNIST harmonized the secondary belief to the belief of the MSES and the drafts were accepted, even though they were never realized. Both of these cases demonstrated that the policy core belief was stronger than the secondary belief and if the agreement was achieved on that level, it was easier to find a solution in terms of particular tools used for achieving public policies. During the act proposal of the new minister in 2012, disagreement on secondary beliefs was once again present.

With regard to tuition fees, the UNIST had a different belief than the MSES, but the difference was not radical. Namely, they brought forth the ideas that all students should pay the tuition fees and that it was necessary to work on student loans, but they did not enter the confrontation with the policy core belief on national level but were mostly presenting their belief without taking concrete steps. In addition to that, predominant was the belief that financial support of the higher education by the MSES should be higher and that this was mostly the issue where the UNIST and the MSES could not achieve a clear agreement. On the other hand, they expressed trust in the Ministry by not asking the students to sign the clause on paying the tuition fees if the MSES did not provide with financial means for their subsidizing.

Beliefs of the UNIOS were mostly in agreement with those presented by the national policy and the MSES, especially regarding the issue of entering the Bologna Process. Therefore, at the thematic conference of the ESCC of the Croatian Parliament, Rector Kralik stated that "we have to enter the reform, we chose to do so because we are aware that this is the need on the national level as well as the need of our University" (ESCC 2003, 22/2/ŽG). However, disagreements existed, which is why they expressed the dissatisfaction in 2001 with the decision of Minister Kraljević regarding the quota reduction, i.e. this showed the disagreement regarding the secondary beliefs on tools that strived to organize the determination of quotas. Therefore, the Minister proposed harmonizing with the data provided by the Croatian Employment Service (CES) on the national level, and the UNIOS only considered the data important if it were on the level of the county. Also, even though the policy core belief was expressed that the reform of education was necessary, the UNIOS objected to the act proposal of 2002 and considered that it was necessary to work on individual solutions. However, in 2003, they supported the reform of the system of higher education and the draft text of the act proposal. Furthermore, in 2011, policy core belief of the UNIOS still expressed the desirability of the reform of higher education and, in spite of objections arriving from certain constituent units, the Senate unanimously supported sending

the proposal draft texts of the three acts of Minister Fuchs into the regular procedure with the aim of their bringing. This was also confirmed by Rector Kralik at the thematic conference of the ESCC of the Croatian Parliament by stating that big effort was invested, that they should proceed onward even if some issues were to be solved as they progressed and that she was aware that a consensus would never be achieved. However, these act proposals were not accepted as acts in the end, and during the change of authority, new proposals were made that were unacceptable to the UNIOS, in spite of the fact that it still maintained the policy core belief that the reform was required.

At first glance, the issue of dislocated studies seemed like the belief that brought forth agreement. Namely, even though the UNIOS emphasized the importance of inciting the development of smaller communities in the beginning of the observed period, it was later revealed that this was not the issue of policy core belief, but more the issue of achieving stronger financial capacities. However, when the issue of maintaining the level of quality, too big enrollment quotas and the demand for prohibiting the enrollment to the studies of economics, the UNIOS agreed to shut down the dislocated studies in order to maintain the quality of study and prevent the enrollment prohibition at the Faculty of Economics.

In terms of financing, the UNIOS advocated the construction of a loaning system modeled according to the UNIRI, which acquired the support of the MSES as the tool of achieving the policy of financing the higher education. During the student protests, they were supportive of the students in their attempts and demands, but not in terms of the methods that prevented the realization of class and disabled work.

The UNIRI shared policy core belief in agreement with the national policies in higher education in terms of entering the Bologna Process and it was stressed as an extremely important and vital work, without which, entering the EHEA would not occur. Also, regarding the secondary beliefs, they supported the bringing of the new act solution that offered individual tools for achieving the higher education reform, which had been proposed by Minister Kraljević in 2001. However, when the work was being conducted on the new version of the act by the UNIZG, the UNIRI stated that they would not support this version. Eventually, after Minister Flego took office, a compromise proposal was composed and the UNIRI claimed that it was incomplete. Particularly stressed was the policy core belief that the transition from the model of state administration to the model of state supervision was necessary, which was not enlisted in the act proposal. However, bringing of the Scientific

Activity and Higher Education Act in 2003 was welcomed at the UNIRI and they considered that the policy core belief was in agreement, i.e. that the transition towards the model of state supervision was achieved. Vice Rector Lučin took a clear stand in front of the UNIRI at the thematic conference of the ESCC of the Croatian Parliament and emphasized that the policy core belief was that the universities should integrate and that this should be accepted, which was one of the most important beliefs of Minister Flego. Therefore, Vice Rector Lučin explained the support of the UNIRI to the act proposal as the responsibility to the state and society and that this was the issue of deciding if a modern university wished to be established. When the new act proposals appeared in 2010, the UNIRI supported the reform, but on the level of secondary beliefs, it expressed certain objections, especially regarding the supervision of the universities. In spite of that, the belief was still that the reform was required, but with the necessary discussion on individual solutions. Also, in terms of joining the Erasmus Programme of Mobility, the UNIRI represented the belief that joining should be placed on hold, which was in agreement with the belief of the MSES.

Regarding the functioning of higher education, the UNIRI considered the student loans the tool that could achieve this and were the first to initiate the composition of the loan model, which was greeted by the support of the Ministry. However, Lučin, the vice rector at the time and soon the rector, emphasized on several occasions that higher education should be public good and that it was not sustainable if only the financial means were prioritized. When the student protests and blockade occurred, the UNIRI was supportive of demands of the students for abolishing tuition fees on the level of policy core beliefs, but it did not support the method, i.e. class blockade. Despite that, they still thought that subsidizing all the students was not possible and that it was necessary to develop a loaning system. Finally, the UNIRI signed the agreements on subsidizing, but it did not force the students to sign the clause stating that they were to pay the tuition fees in case the state did not do so, and also, Rector Lučin stated at the time that they were trustful of both the MSES and the Government of the Republic of Croatia.

The UNIPU mostly acted in agreement with the beliefs present on the national level, especially associated with the policy core beliefs. On the other hand, on the level of secondary beliefs, the UNIPU expressed distrust and concern in terms of the speed of changes that were meant to be enforced by the new act proposals in 2010. Also, regarding the tuition fee subventions, the UNIPU basically agreed with the decisions on the national level, but also considered that other mechanisms should be introduced, such as student loans. Therefore,

they supported the students' demands when they advocated the abolishing of tuition fees, but they were not supportive of the class disabling through the class blockade. Eventually, they agreed to the proposals of the MSES, and secondary beliefs associated with other mechanisms fell into the background. Also, they objected to constraints of tuition fees that the MSES aimed to introduce since they observed it as a threat to the financial unsustainability of study programmes. The UNIPU supported the act proposal in 2011, but they also considered that it could not enter the procedure since the objections of the academic public were not accepted. They expressed their support to the act proposal in 2013 since the opinion was that it offered better solutions than the existing Act of 2003.

Policy core belief at the UNIZD was that an integrated form of university was necessary and that its nonexistence represented the finality of all changes, which mostly agreed to the attitude of the MSES that failed to implement it. In addition to that, the UNIZD supported the implementation of the Bologna Process and in terms of this issue, it was in agreement with the national policy, but on the level of secondary beliefs, the UNIZD objected to short deadlines and the demand for a quick entry into the Bologna Process. However, the policy core belief that entering the Bologna Process would achieve a quality and recognizable university was prevailing.

Particular disagreement of beliefs occurred during the act proposal in 2010, when the UNIZD stated that they were shocked and confused by the method and the way of proposing the act. They considered the proposals to be radical, that they were prepared in secrecy and that the previous quality act solutions were demolished.

Policy core beliefs of the UNIDU mostly agree with the policy of higher education on the national level. Their objections were mostly associated with the issues on the level of secondary beliefs. However, they expressed disagreement with the restrictive enrollment policy (policy core level) and the specific method of implementing this policy through the reduction of quotas (secondary level). On the same level, disagreement regarding the distribution of financial means to the universities was emphasized since it was based on size, and the UNIDU stressed the inequality of initial positions of certain universities. In addition to that, the issue of distribution of financial means was also the subject of disagreement due to constant establishment of new HEIs that was not followed by sufficient financial means. Also, even though the UNIDU basically supported the expansion of the network of HEIs (policy core level) in terms of the particular tools used to ensure such policy, the University was

convinced that private institutions gained easier access to credentials than the public universities. Agreeing with the national policy in higher education on the level of policy core belief was particularly emphasized during the implementation of the Bologna Process when the UNIDU actively supported the change. This was also confirmed through the expression of enthusiasm regarding the implementation of the Bologna Process, by emphasizing the belief that entering the Bologna Process was not early and according to the words of Rector Milković, the existing impatience to merge the Bologna Process with the community at the UNIDU. Also, the UNIDU shared the policy core belief that introducing the model of student loans was an acceptable way of financing the higher education. Regarding the subsidizing the higher education, there was a divided belief on the correctness of such model on the level of policy core belief, and on the level of secondary belief, it was considered that it was not applicable since the state did not have enough financial means to conduct it. However, in the finality, they agreed to such way of financing. The UNIDU also supported the act proposals of 2011.

#### 4.3.2. Strategic Interests

As a strategic interest of the UNIZG, internationalization was represented during the entire observed period. It was expressed through cooperation and agreement signing with the foreign universities and participating in various networks (for example, Rectors' Conference of the Alps-Adriatic Universities, University Network from the Capitals of Europe, EUA) and international projects. Also, programmes were established in cooperation with foreign partners and in foreign languages. In accordance with that, UNIZG – The International Mission and Policy was composed in 2002, which contained wishes, intentions and plans regarding internationalization and it promoted encouraging the agreed, and not the unachieved cooperation. Also, the UNIZG recognized the issue that the university services did not know the range of international cooperation since it was conducted through the constituent units that did not inform the main university. Also, Rector Mencer emphasized the importance of constituent units participating in as much international projects as possible. Therefore, one of the guidelines of work of the UNIZG was the systematic joining the European programmes and networks, and in 2007, the Declaration of the Promotion of Inclusion in International Exchange Programmes was brought, which emphasized the importance of internationalization of education through this type of activities, and the Plan of Activities and Measures for Inciting International Exchange was also brought. The strategic interest of internationalization was particularly stressed during the advocating of earlier entry into the Erasmus Programme, in which the UNIZG was the only university in Croatia that promoted the earlier entry. Aspect

of internationalization was pointed out in 2010 during the discussion on the document Development and Transformation of the UNIZG, when it was pointed out that work would be conducted on further increasing of international recognizability and attractiveness, and internationalization was pointed out as one of the strategic interests that needed to be included into the national strategy.

At the UNIZG, autonomy of the university was raised as an important strategic interest and it was emphasized that achieving autonomy was the basic prerequisite for the actual influence of the University. Particular concern associated with jeopardizing the autonomy was expressed in 2001, during the discussions on the act proposal of Minister Kraljević at the time, by referring to the basic principles of the Magna Charta Universitatum declaration, which gained them the support of the representative of the Magna Charta Observatory. Solution on the university autonomy and interfering into the internal structure was pointed out as one of the conceptual objections to the act proposal. During her inauguration in 2002, Rector Mencer emphasized autonomy of the university as the prerequisite for entering the European university integration and achieving their mission the modern and rational way, which confirmed the strategic importance of autonomy. However, she also warned about the internal issue of the autonomy of the UNIZG, i.e. regarding its relationship with the constituent units of the University that acted mostly independently, and she emphasized the importance that the University functioned uniquely and undividedly. Therefore, on one hand, there is a strong attitude of the constituent units regarding their autonomy, and on the other, there is the attitude of the administration on the importance of unified functioning. Advocating this strategic interest resumed during the discussion on the act proposal of the Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act offered by the new Minister Flego. Opinion of the UNIZG was that every university should independently find the best solution for themselves based on the principle of autonomy and tradition. The continuity of advocating this strategic interest was presented in 2006 by the newly elected Rector Bjeliš, who emphasized the importance of autonomy in sense of independence with responsibility and also stated that this should not be treated as the confrontational element of the state and the university. However, during the discussions on the new act proposals in 2010, the issue of autonomy of the constituent units reappeared as the issue, i.e. of internal reorganization of the university, as well as the issue if the state was supervising the university or managing it. The UNIZG pointed out that constitutional settings and the European standards of university's autonomy should be treated as the guidelines during the strategic planning of development of higher education, and that

the act proposals are headed in the direction of directly jeopardizing the autonomy of the university. Similar attitude was presented during the discussion of act proposals in 2013.

Emphasizing the harmonization as the strategic interest was mostly represented during the first half of the observed period at the conferences of the Senate, between 2001 and 2005, to be more precise. Therefore, Rector Jeren of the time, stressed that joining the European higher education processes and following the European trends was important and that Croatia was too small not to be a part of it. After Jeren, Rector Mencer also warned about the importance of the Bologna Process and timely joining, while the Senate supported the reform of higher education through which the adjustment to the EHEA was requested. Harmonization was observed as the establishment of coherent and compatible systems of higher education, but with maintaining the versatility of national and cultural specificities. Vice Rector Vizak Vidović confirmed the orientation towards this strategic interest and she considered that the process of harmonization was running late, but that it was important to keep up to the states that had already initiated this process earlier. In this sense, Rector Mencer also stated that quite a lot had been achieved in terms of harmonization, but that there was still the problem of inadequate financial support that would alleviate the process and that the Bologna principles were conducted at the UNIZG even without the legal framework. After 2005, this strategic interest was less represented at the Senate's conferences, and more in the statements of leading personnel. Therefore, Rector Mencer stated in 2006 that they were ensured enough time to conduct discussions and comparison of programmes and harmonize with the European system and this attitude was also presented by the newly appointed Rector Bjeliš, who added that comparability should be the goal instead of uniforming**.** Two years later, Bjeliš pointed out that harmonization enabled the identification and elimination of errors in the system, for which there was no motivation or knowledge prior to that and that this was the course they should follow.

Interdisciplinarity at the UNIZG was expressed through the discussions and establishment of interdisciplinary study programmes, and in this sense, it was present since the beginning of the observed period. Accordingly, mostly undergraduate study programmes were pointed during this process. In 2002, during the discussion on the proposal of the Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act, it was emphasized at the UNIZG that students needed to be offered a wide variety of study combinations, which would ensure interdisciplinarity. Importance of interdisciplinarity was emphasized by Rector Mencer in 2006 by stating that every global document mentioned interdisciplinarity and that projects containing it were

welcomed better in Europe. Importance of this strategic interest was recognized by the candidate for rector at the time, Bjeliš, who observed interdisciplinarity as the potential for functional connecting. In addition to that, interdisciplinarity was emphasized as the important argument of establishing the doctoral school on the level of the University.

Advocating the quality as an important strategic at the UNIZG was mostly present during the entire observed period. Importance of achieving greater efficacy and better quality was emphasized. This was also pointed out by Rector Mencer during assuming her function, and she observed it as an important factor of joining the EHEA. Particularly stressed was the importance of maintaining quality at the point when an increasing number of HEIs occurred in Croatia, and this strategic interest was also showed by constraining the activities of their professors outside the UNIZG in order to avoid jeopardizing the quality of class. As an important strategic interest, quality was emphasized in 2010 during the discussion on the document Development and Transformation of the UNIZG, but it was recognized that the UNIZG was at the mere beginning of the process of establishing a comprehensive and efficient quality assurance system, which was considered the prerequisite for international competitiveness. Finally, in 2013, the composition of the Strategy of Quality Assurance System was anticipated as a part of the more comprehensive Strategy of the UNIZG.

The issue of internationalization at the UNIST was equally represented at the Senate's conferences during the entire observed period. This strategic interest was reflected through the expressed cooperation with foreign universities and joining the international projects. Achieving cooperation with foreign institutions was pointed out, but in agreement with their own spatial and personnel potentials. Work on internationalization was also evident through inciting and establishing certain courses in English language, which brought forth the decision of conducting at least one subject in English language at every constituent unit in the academic year of 2007-2008. It should be pointed out that in 2011, Vice Rector Andričević stressed the importance of internationalization, but he also recognized that the potential problem in this aspect was the non-integration. Namely, he emphasized the importance of the university being the holder of cooperation in the agreements with the international partners, which demanded work on functional integration in the higher education system.

During 2001, the leadership of the UNIST was clearly focused on protecting the autonomy of the university, which was also pointed out at the thematic conference of the ESCC of the Croatian Parliament and during the discussion on the act proposals during 2002. In this sense,

Rector Pavić pointed out the importance of internal autonomy of the university with regard to the constituent units, for which he thought they should be integrated. Also, the UNIST advocated the autonomy during the discussions on the act proposals in 2010, but certain Senate members pointed out at the time that the autonomy of the university was an expression of the autonomy of the faculties as its constituent units. This brought distance from the perceiving the autonomy as the strategic interest that was presented in 2002 and strived towards integration.

The issue of harmonizing with the European framework was not emphasized at the Senate's conferences, and the lack of such strategic interest was recognized by certain members of the Senate. In 2002, it was pointed out that the UNIST did not participate enough in the processes in which other universities participated, i.e. that it was insufficiently involved in the issues associated with the Bologna Process. The issue of harmonization was emphasized by certain deans and members of the Senate in the newspapers. Therefore, the importance of higher education was emphasized as a link to uniting Europe, as well as advocating the full integration of Croatia into the EU. Importance of complete implementation of the Bologna Process was also pointed out.

As a strategic interest, interdisciplinarity was expressed at the conferences of the Senate through proposals and acceptance of new programmes. Contribution to this strategic interest was also the establishment of the University Study Center for Interdisciplinary Research in 2008. The issue of quality was stressed in 2002 as an important factor of competitiveness in the Croatian educational area. However, after that, it did not gain significant attention at the conferences of the Senate as a strategic interest.

The strategic interest of internationalization at the UNIOS was represented during the entire observed period and was expressed through signing the agreements on cooperation with foreign universities and joining projects. In addition to that, it was emphasized that the UNIOS should be mindful when entering the international cooperation and that it should not take signing the agreements lightly. However, it was recognized that the internationalization of the UNIOS was based on enthusiasms of individuals or certain constituent units and that it was necessary to conduct systematic work on its achieving. Also, the UNIOS actively participated in the work of the Danube Rectors' Conference. In 2002, the Strategy of Development of the Service for International and Inter-university Cooperation was brought, which steered the international activity of the University. However, it should be particularly

pointed out that the constituent units were independently establishing cooperation with foreign institutions, thusly taking over part of fulfilling this strategic interest. The international cooperation was observed as a way of achieving international recognizability, primarily through the programmes of the EC. Finally, this strategic interest was also deemed as an important item in bringing of the Vision and Mission of International and Inter-university Cooperation 2011-2015 and in the Strategy of the UNIOS 2011-2020 (UNIOS 2011). Strengthening and deepening the internationalization of the UNIOS was advocated through the previously stated documents.

The issue of autonomy as a strategic interest was considered at the conferences of the UNIOS Senate during the entire observed period. In 2001, it was emphasized that the autonomy implied dignity, freedom, financial and material independence, but it was also considered the characteristic of internal and external relationships. During 2002, the autonomy of the university was advocated during the discussion on the act proposals and the potential constraining of the autonomy caused concern. During the presentation of the implementation after the first year of the Bologna Process, Rector Kralik emphasized the importance of an autonomous university within the Bologna Declaration. This type of vision of the university was the goal according to her and it had to imply taking responsibility and be dynamic and flexible. Autonomy was considered during the act proposals in 2010 and 2011 and it was once again pointed out that they were violating the guaranteed autonomy. Also, this strategic interest was strongly represented in the strategic documents of the university.

Harmonization with the European framework was recognized by Rector Kralik at the very beginning of the observed period and she stated it as a necessity. In addition to that, the UNIOS was chosen as the pilot project for introducing the ECTS, thus bringing externally the harmonization with the European framework at the UNIOS. Therefore, this strategic interest began developing at the UNIOS in 2001 and it was considered that the Europeanisation of the university did not merely imply new buildings/objects but also developing the existing studies and establishing new studies. Rector Kralik found the restructuring of the UNIOS into a modern European university to be an important strategic interest and emphasized work on introducing the ECTS the basis of constructing this strategic interest. Also, membership in the EUA since 2001 confirmed the work on harmonizing with the European framework through expanding the EHEA and adopting the compatible mechanisms. This strategic interest was used as a guide during the Strategy of Development of the Service for International and Inter-university Cooperation, when the following of development of modern European universities

and the role in the EHEA were emphasized. In order to achieve this goal and as an expression of action in this direction, the Committee for Implementation of the Bologna Process was established, the project of introducing the information system at the University was initiated, which was presented as the prerequisite for achieving the goals of the Bologna Declaration and harmonizing with the European framework, as well as the harmonization of the Statue. This was emphasized by Rector Kralik who considered the harmonization of the Statue to be a step closer towards a modern European university. Achieving the harmonization was expected to attract students from other states and potential cooperation with the foreign institution. Therefore, in 2008, 2010, 2011 and 2012, after the analysis on successfulness of the Bologna Process implementation, the conclusion was that the measures were successfully conducted and that it was necessary to continue the work on bringing the UNIOS to the level of high compatibility to the unique EHEA.

Since the beginning of the observed period, the UNIOS promoted interdisciplinarity as a strategic interest through proposing and establishing interdisciplinary studies. Also, the emphasis was placed on openness to international and interdisciplinary cooperation with other institutions. In her candidacy upon re-election, Rector Kralik also stated the importance of promoting interdisciplinarity and cooperation, while achieving the interdisciplinarity was observed as expanding the integrative function of the University. In addition to establishing programmes at the UNIOS, the University Council for University Interdisciplinary Undergraduate and Graduate Studies was established, which was in charge of the issue of those studies.

The issue of quality as the strategic interest of the UNIOS started appearing at the Senate's conferences in 2003, parallel to the discussion and bringing of the new Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act. This was more directly expressed during the bringing of changes and supplements of the Statue in 2004, when it was pointed out that the UNIOS should have quality assurance and monitoring in mind, which was integrated into the Statue. The necessity of this strategic interest for the UNIOS emerged from the reason that quality assurance was viewed as an opportunity of attracting students from foreign countries, and in agreement with that, the strategic plan of quality improvement was composed in 2006. During the election for this position, Rector Turkalj also emphasized quality as an opportunity for achieving recognizable and competitive university, which expressed the continuity of this strategic interest.

The UNIRI conducted work on internationalization as the strategic interest during the entire observed period. The UNIRI participated in the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative, established cooperation with foreign institutions and joined various networks of universities as a part of achieving this strategic interest. Aside from signing agreements, the internationalization was conducted through introducing studies that gathered professors from various European universities. Pursuant to the emphasized importance of this strategic interest, the Plan of Development of International Cooperation was brought in 2002, which was pointed out as one of the strategic goals of the UNIRI since its establishment and confirmed the fact that they were securing better conditions for the development of internationalization in the last two years by opening towards the EU. Such Plan was brought for the following years, and Rector Lučin emphasized in 2013, during the re-election, the importance of establishing studies in English language in order to achieve greater internationalization at the UNIRI.

Autonomy advocating was emphasized at the UNIRI during the discussions on the proposal of the Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act in 2002, when it was warned of jeopardizing the autonomy of the university. Eventually, bringing of the Act was greeted by satisfaction at the UNIRI since they considered that the increased autonomy was maintained, which was in concordance with the strategic interest of the UNIRI. Importance of autonomy was pointed out by Vice Rector Lučin, who thought that it was impossible to fulfill the set mission without an autonomous university. Defense of autonomy as a strategic interest was once again actualized during 2010 and 2011 and the proposals of new legal solutions, during which the importance of autonomy of the constituent units was also emphasized.

Harmonization with the European framework was established as the strategic goal since the beginning of the observed period. Therefore, the importance of harmonizing with the ECTS system of credits was emphasized and these activities were deemed important and vital on the way to the EHEA, during which the importance of the new Act was stressed, which organized the adaptation of structure of higher education and organization of the university with the European universities. The importance of this strategic interest was pointed out through applying to the project of the EUA though which the UNIRI gathered European experience in various areas of work. In addition to that, it was pointed out at the Senate's conference that the first goal was approaching Europe, which required including as many individuals as possible in order to realize this goal. Therefore, the work conducted on the new Statue in 2004 also expressed striving to adapt to the unique EHEA.

Interdisciplinarity at the UNIRI was observed as the possibility of achieving stronger connection within the university and the area within which the function of the university could be executed as the central institution that helped the constituent units realize the joint programmes. Therefore, Lučin, upon assuming the function of rector in 2009, pointed out that it was important to conduct work on interdisciplinarity in order to achieve integration of the University and additional value. As a strategic interest, interdisciplinarity was also expressed through discussions and bringing the interdisciplinary study programmes. The existence of active consideration of this strategic interest was confirmed at the Senate's conferences when certain members advocated the importance of initiating interdisciplinary projects with foreign universities with the goal of composing personnel that would allow stronger construction in this area. In finality, interdisciplinarity was also given a significant position in the Strategy of the UNIRI.

Quality was emphasized as the basic requirement of the Bologna Declaration and from 2002, the importance of concern for quality and accepting the European criteria for quality evaluation was emphasized. The UNIRI joined the international projects that developed quality improvement and a planned approach to achieving this strategic interest was revealed through planning the development of the system and researching in this area. By bringing the new Statue in 2004, the importance of culture of quality for the development of the UNIRI was also emphasized. In the same year, Rector Rukavina warned that it was necessary to constantly improve work with a systematic and institutional fight for quality, that this was the basic requirement of the Bologna Process and that quality needed to be proven at all times. The fact that quality was an important strategic interest was confirmed though the projects the UNIRI applied for the development of the quality assurance system. It was evident that the Administration of the UNIRI recognized quality as the basis for improving the institution and the programmes, which was also confirmed by Vice Rector Lučin in 2006, while Bezinović, the director of the Center for Quality Improvement, mentioned that the impulse regarding quality derived from this very University.

As the strategic interest of the UNIPU, internationalization gained importance through the plan of international cooperation that organized activities in this area. This was contributed by the memberships in the Rectors' Conference of the Alps-Adriatic and the Danube Rectors' Conference, and in 2010, work was dedicated to applying for membership in the Euromediteranean Permanent University Forum, which was successfully achieved.

The issue of autonomy was seldom mentioned at the conferences of the Senate of the UNIPU, but the autonomy itself was emphasized in the documents. At the conferences, the issue of autonomy was associated with the discussions on the act proposals in higher education and these discussions warned about the importance of maintaining autonomy and associated it with the principles pointed out by the Bologna Declaration.

Harmonization with the European framework was also rarely mentioned at the conferences, it was mostly mentioned within the context of importance of conducting work on the ECTS system of credits and bringing rulebooks associated with this issue. However, despite the fact that this was an important strategic interest, it was emphasized as a difficult experience for both the professors and the students. At the Senate's conferences, interdisciplinarity was emphasized during proposing the establishment of new studies, but was poorly represented as an explicit strategic interest based on which the institution was developing.

Internationalization was represented since the very beginning of functioning of the UNIZD to the end of the observed period. Therefore, the UNIZD conducted work on being accepted into the EUA, the Alps-Adria University Association and the Danube Rectors' Conference. The need for establishing cooperation and signing agreements on bilateral cooperation with foreign universities was also expressed. This strategic interest was presented in the cooperation with the partners upon establishing studies in English language. During the establishment of joint studies, the importance of associating and networking was pointed out within the EHEA, as well as increasing the reputation of the University in the region and the scientific aspect.

As a strategic interest, autonomy was emphasized through the signing of the Magna Charta Universitatum in September 2004. In addition to that, at the Senate's conferences, the issue of autonomy was not deliberated to a great extent prior to 2010, during the discussion regarding the new act proposals when the emphasis was placed on the importance of maintaining autonomy and disagreeing with certain provisions of the proposal that were considered to be constraining the autonomy.

Harmonization was pointed out regarding the coordination of studies with the Bologna Declaration and advocating bigger class load of the elective courses. Even though this process was emphasized as demanding and difficult, the UNIZD observed the department (integrated) structure of the university as their strong point. Rector Magaš pointed out that there were no bigger issues, but that they were constrained regarding space and personnel. Also, Vice

Rector Proreković claimed that, in terms of conditions and short period of time at their disposal, they conducted the process of system harmonization and that this was a process that would last for a longer period of time. She also stressed the issue of not understanding the spirit of the Bologna Reform and the notion that it was enforced, as well as the unpreparedness to change and the servitude to traditional values.

The issue of interdisciplinarity was the issue considered at the UNIZD since its very establishment and the point of Croatia's entry into the Bologna Process. This strategic interest was particularly associated with the organization of the double major studies and the need to adjust class conducting in order to achieve this strategic interest. Interdisciplinarity at the UNIZD was also defined as an important strategic interest since it was a smaller university, which brought about the need for organizing the doctorate studies that would include more departments with the purpose of being both functional and appealing.

As a strategic interest, quality was being emphasized since the very establishment of the UNIZD. It was pointed out that it was necessary to ensure an optimal relationship between the professors and students since it would lead to higher class quality and if they wanted to be a quality university, the UNIZD would then have to meet the set parameters. In this area, the strategic interest of establishing the Office for Quality Promotion was emphasized, but in this sense, the UNIZD was depending on the approved work positions by the Ministry. Therefore, Rector Magaš pointed out in 2004 that his vision of the UNIZD ten years from that point was that it became a recognizable and quality university, but not in the sense of quantity but in the sense of quality of programme. Commitment towards quality was also emphasized during the establishment of the Committee for Monitoring Work Quality in 2005, and in the sense of assuring conditions, it was pointed out that a lot had been achieved, but that the Bologna Process demanded much more. Therefore, Rector Magaš stated that he supported the development, but that it had to imply the guaranteed necessary conditions of quality and spatial and personnel standards.

Internationalization as a strategic interest at the UNIDU was visible through applying to the TEMPUS projects with foreign partners and insisting that they key determinant of the UNIDU was international cooperation through initiating new study programmes with foreign partners. Signing agreements on cooperation with foreign universities demonstrates clear focus on internationalization. However, numerous problems associated with internationalization were emphasized, such as the complexity of the procedure and the small

number of employees that dealt with the issue of joint studies with foreign universities. International orientation, as an important strategic interest, was confirmed by Rector Milković who stated that the UNIDU should be the university center with a significant international orientation. During the performance based agreements signing, the UNIDU selected internationalization of HEI as their special goal. Also, the UNIDU brought the Strategy of International Development (UNIDU 2009) that emphasized the importance of internationalization as a strategic interest that should be strived towards in everyday activities of the University. On the other hand, regardless of clear expression of interest for internationalization, it should be stated that the UNIDU was, during the discussion on joining the Erasmus Programme, part of the group of universities that supported the postponement and did not insist on earlier implementation.

Discussions regarding the issue of autonomy were exceptionally rare at the UNIDU, mostly associated with the discussions on the new act proposals. This clearly expressed the desire to maintain the acquired level of autonomy and its additional improvement. As a strategic interest, autonomy gained much greater significance in the strategic documents of the UNIDU.

Harmonization with the European framework was emphasized within the fact that the UNIDU was the first university to start implementing the Bologna Process in Croatia. It was emphasized that a great step had been made when compared to the other universities in Croatia, as well as the importance of the ambition to fully implement the provisions of the Bologna Process and monitor their realization in the shortest period possible. Involvement of departments in monitoring the implementation was encouraged, and the emphasis was placed on the importance of intensifying the coordination of administration and the departments. It should be stressed that this strategic interest was more pronounced during the first years of functioning of the UNIDU – 2004-2005 and 2005-2006. Later years emphasized the reflection towards the implementation of the Bologna Process and the need to conduct work on changes and supplements of the programmes and rulebooks with the aim of keeping up with courses on the European level.

The issue of interdisciplinarity as the strategic interest of the UNIDU was mostly emphasized during 2006-2007, when cooperation with international and national partners were considered and developed. Interdisciplinarity was once again emphasized after the new Rector Vrtiprah

was elected in 2012, when the importance of introducing new interdisciplinary studies with the aim of attracting students from Croatia and abroad was emphasized.

Accentuation of quality as the strategic interest of the UNIDU was present since the very establishment of the University. Particularly emphasized was maintaining the continuity with the Polytechnic of Dubrovnik, based on which the UNIDU was formed. Quality was emphasized as the important determinant of the UNIDU in the document Vision and Strategy of Development of the UNIDU 2006-2015 (UNIDU 2005). It was recognized that the achieving of quality was the foundation for defining the core activities of the University, and there were also determinations of re-examining activities associated with achieving this strategic interest by certain members of the Senate. Achieving this strategic interest was evident in the realization of activities of assuring quality that had been conducted since the very establishment of the UNIDU. In addition to that, the UNIDU rejected the establishment of programmes if they did not have enough of their own personnel, which confirmed the importance of achieving this strategic interest. On the other hand, even though quality was emphasized as an important item at the UNIDU, they accepted the reducing of criteria for enrollment to their programmes due to the decline in the number of students and by doing so, they assumed the survival of quality programmes for the enrolled students.

#### 4.3.3. Capacities

Based on the minutes of the senate's conferences and newspaper articles, it was possible to reconstruct the actors' capacities. Namely, this material revealed the political capacities, i.e. which political actors were included and how the universities communicated. Then, how they defined themselves in terms of their financial capacities and what their weak points regarding this issue were. Also, the status of human capacities was also presented, as well as positions assumed by the leading actors of individual universities. Finally, only the UNIZG demonstrated the veto capacity in the area of higher education policies. It is clear that this case would be well complemented by the quantitative indicators as well, however, they are unavailable for the entire period in the same form. Therefore, the CBS presented the division of 2008 to the employed on basis of employment contract and engaged on contractual agreement, and the Ministry of Finance presented the overview per individual university from 2005. Seeing that I will not be using quantitative methods, this data will be presented with the purpose of confirming information acquired by qualitative methods.

Expenses from the State budget for regular activity of the university and for capital investments and construction (including the financial means for paying off the installment

loans) are available per university since 2005 (Appendix C). These financial means do not include expenses for the construction of student dormitories and functioning of student centers. It reveals that the amount of financial means was in agreement to the size of the university and if the relationship with the number of students was taken into account, it was evident that bigger universities acquired less financial means per student. However, it should be emphasized that the amounts of tuition fees charged to students by the universities were not part of these incomes but were considered to be university's own income. Therefore, Hunjak (2008) emphasized that, in the period from 2003 to 2007, the ratio of university's financial means with regard to the budgetary means was 30:70, and that the tuition fees were summed to 38% of the university's financial means. It should be taken into account that the universities with more students achieved greater income on the market from the tuition fees, i.e. the state, after the subvention of tuition fees for students and charging the ECTS credits to students was initiated. This was contributed by the data published in the studies Model of Financing the Higher Education (IDE 2010), that were presented from the studies conducted by Bajo (2008a; 2008b). According to Bajo (2008a), the highest percentage of students paying their studies belonged to the UNIST (63%), followed by the UNIRI (59%), UNIST (48%), UNIDU (47%), UNIZG (43%) and the UNIZD (34%). The same author also emphasized that in 2007, the first two universities according to incomes from the scientific-educational, publishing and professional activities were the UNIZG and the UNIRI, the UNIZG being the only one with significant incomes (Bajo 2008b).

Except in the financial sense, there are clear differences in human capacities that are visible according to the number of the employed professors at the universities during the five year period presented in Table 13 and Table 14.

Table 13. Employed on Basis of Employment Contract

| | | 2008-2009 | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UNIZG | Full time | 4723 | 4762 | 4888 | 5142 | 5065 |
| | Part time | 112 | 115 | 113 | 110 | 130 |
| UNIST | | 923 | 974 | 1001 | 981 | 985 |
| | | 115 | 117 | 110 | 112 | 111 |
| UNIOS | | 826 | 900 | 903 | 963 | 992 |
| | | 165 | 148 | 149 | 158 | 159 |
| UNIRI | | 901 | 984 | 1006 | 998 | 989 |
| | | 192 | 186 | 199 | 208 | 202 |
| UNIPU | | 137 | 158 | 161 | 166 | 164 |
| | | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| UNIZD | | 304 | 337 | 346 | 392 | 369 |
| | | 14 | 21 | 12 | 22 | 29 |
| UNIDU | | 120 | 147 | 148 | 145 | 145 |
| | | 6 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 7 |

Source: Croatian Bureau of Statistics (Statistical Reports on Higher Education 2010a; 2010b; 2011; 2012; 2014).

Table 14. Engaged on Contractual Agreement

| | | 2008-2009 | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UNIZG | Full time | 98 | 96 | 71 | 64 | 54 |
| | Part time | 1278 | 1435 | 1526 | 1519 | 1676 |
| UNIST | | 20 | 34 | 13 | 2 | 22 |
| | | 1005 | 1049 | 1273 | 1014 | 1168 |
| UNIOS | | 7 | 36 | 15 | 2 | 2 |
| | | 509 | 471 | 420 | 474 | 470 |
| UNIRI | | 19 | 31 | 28 | 26 | 19 |
| | | 587 | 500 | 548 | 499 | 468 |
| UNIPU | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | 46 | 109 | 100 | 79 | 82 |
| UNIZD | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 7 |
| UNIDU | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | 101 | 154 | 91 | 85 | 85 |

Source: Croatian Bureau of Statistics (Statistical Reports on Higher Education 2010a; 2010b; 2011; 2012; 2014).

According to the Senate's minutes, the UNIZG achieved nearly 30% of the budget through their own incomes, thusly demonstrating significant financial capacities, but also emphasizing that this merely compensated for the lacking financial means from the state budget. However, it should be pointed out here that in the beginning of 2000s, the UNIZG acquired 67% of the financial means for capital construction from the state budget, which was allocated according to the portion of the number of students and professors, while the rest of the universities shared the remainder. On the other hand, the UNIZG complained in 2002 that the Ministry of Science and Technology (MST) delivered approximately 25% of the financial means for the material costs of the constituent units, which had been allocated in the same period in 2001, that this barely managed to cover the utility bills and that some constituent units were threatened to sustain shutting down of electricity, water and gas. Regarding the UNIZG, it remains interesting that certain constituent units acquired more financial means from the state budget than it had been decided at the Senate. At this point, the assumption was presented that

this was achieved through direct contact of the constituent unit with the Ministry, which was rebutted at the Senate. However, additional re-allocation of financial means between the constituent units was not achieved since the allocation of finances was already planned. Therefore, after assuming the duty, Rector Bjeliš pointed out that he was most concerned about the non-transparency of financial functioning of the University. During the transition to the Bologna system, the UNIZG claimed that greater financial means were necessary for the purpose of development, changes and harmonization with the European higher education, which aimed to ensure stronger financial capacities. After that, they stated that the introduction of the Bologna Process did not entail adequate financial support, which was why they were unable to achieve the proclaimed results. Rector Bjeliš stated that the financial means were getting smaller in percentage year after year and that they were conducting the re-purposing of financial means from science and research for the needs of tuition fee subventions. He claimed that the financial means were inadequate for a quality development and that those universities with higher ambitions could not achieve this with such means from the budget.

In the beginning of the observed period, the UNIZG aimed to use its political influence through direct addressing of the Rector to the highest officials (the President of the Government, the President of the Republic and the President of the Croatian Parliament) regarding the relieving of the Minister, and the Rector's intention was to, in representation of the UNIZG, assist in solving the problems of that time. Rector Mencer sent letters of protest to the Government of the Republic of Croatia in 2003 associated with investing in science and higher education, and such was also the practice of Vice Rector Bjeliš who wrote to the State Secretary Uzelac. The political capacity of the UNIZG was also revealed in 2004 during the appointing of the National Council of Higher Education (NCHE), when the UNIZG did not agree with the representativeness of their personnel in this council. Rector Mencer attended a meeting with Minister Primorac, who intervened by removing the list from the agenda of the ESCC of the Croatian Parliament and revoked the Decision on appointing the new National Council. Also, the UNIZG personnel was appointed, for example, into the Committee that conducted conversations with the Ministry of Family, Veterans and Intergenerational Solidarity about the direct enrollment of students to HEIs according to the Article 53 of the Act on the Rights of Croatian Defenders of the Homeland War and their family members (OG 174/2004) in which three out of four members were from the UNIZG. The practice of direct dialogue via letters resumed in the time of Rector Bjeliš, when the decision was to send an

open letter to the President of the Republic of Croatia and the President of the Croatian Parliament seeking an intervention due to the new act proposals in order to protect the dignity of the UNIZG since a dialogue had not been established between the UNIZG and the MSES. In this context, interesting was the statement of Minister Fuchs in 2011, when he referred to solving the issues with Rector Bjeliš by stating that the two of them would resolve the matter "by having a conversation over a beer, just as we have previously solved certain dilemmas" (Lilek 2011, 5). Important role of the UNIZG was pointed out by Minister Fuchs, who stated that the Act could not be brought against the UNIZG. This actually articulated the role that the UNIZG had assumed in higher education in Croatia, which was the role of a strong veto actor. Several years prior, at the thematic conference of the ESCC of the Croatian Parliament, Rector Bjeliš clearly emphasized this issue during his description of the relationship with the MSES by stating:

> It is not easy for us to behave in such manner and thusly actually build ourselves, and I assume that the colleagues from the ministry are having a difficult time accepting this method, but we will persist on it since we cannot achieve it any other way, especially as the representatives of the biggest, oldest university with a strength of its own and which will always strive to use this strength for the good of everyone and of course, in the constructive sense, which is something the colleagues from the ministry need to understand that our critiques never strived to eliminate but to find the best solution. (ESCC 2008, 21/3/SG)

Finally, the political influence was also evident during the initiation of work that was to be conducted on the national strategy associated with science and higher education when the UNIZG brought a document as a foundation for the beginning of work on this strategy. Minister Jovanović accepted this initiative and gave special recognition to the UNIZG.

The strength of human capacities of the UNIZG was evident in the fact that the professors of the UNIZG occupied the biggest portion of positions in the NCHE (11 out of 17 positions), but it should be stated that the number of members was determined according to the size of the institution, which later encountered the objections of other universities. Rector Mencer was the President of the NCHE since 2002, while later presidents of the newly established NCHE were also the UNIZG professors. The UNIZG found the Senate of the UNIZG the most influential body by far regarding influence and expertise in Croatia amongst the other university senates and that only the NCHE surpassed it. Regarding the human capacities, the UNIZG stated during the implementation announcement for the Bologna structure of study that they had obtained all the necessary prerequisites for the implementation, which particularly referred to the human capacities. However, Prorector Jerolimov pointed to the

fact that the situation at the UNIZG had a quality average since their ratio entailed one professor per 23 students, but that this was dependent on particular constituent unit since some entailed one professor per 80 students. Therefore, Jerolimov estimated that the UNIZG required about 500 to 600 professors. As an even bigger problem, he stated that there were no adequate candidates upon the job competition. Similar problem was repeated at the Rectors' Conference when he pointed out that the UNIZG was experiencing difficulties in realizing class since the transition to the Bologna system and that it was necessary to ensure the personnel requirements. At the end of her mandate, Rector Mencer pointed out that the UNIZG did not have enough professors and that they would not be able to reach the European standards in that way. However, it is important to state that, according to the words of Rector Mencer, the differences in human capacities at the constituent units within the UNIZG depended on the connections and managing on the job market. During his candidacy for the rector's position, Bjeliš confirmed that there was a great difference in the human capacities. He established that ad hoc work had been conducted and that there was no systematic monitoring regarding where the personnel lacked, and at the thematic conference of the ESCC of the Croatian Parliament, he emphasized that even if the financial means were secured, it would not be possible to ensure sufficient human resources since the necessary personnel was nonexistent. Therefore, during the discussion on the document Development and Transformation of the UNIZG in 2010, the conclusion was that the resources were missing, but that the system was still encumbered with the big number of professors from the UNIZG who taught at other institutions. However, the UNIZG also emphasized that a great number of external associate lecturers was hired at the UNIZG, and this was particularly pronounced when the MSES did not pay in the financial means for the external cooperation, which jeopardized class at certain constituent units that depended on the external associate lecturers. On the other hand, it was not mentioned that the functioning of the programmes and the whole University was jeopardized during this period due to the lack of human resources while it was emphasized at other universities. Also, the very constituent units stated that the necessary personnel existed during the proposals of study programmes, but when the credentials were issued, they would request the financing of external cooperation.

Lack of financial capacities at the UNIST was present in the beginning of the observed period when some constituent units were not able to pay the anticipated class since they acquired by 30% less financial means for the external cooperation. Also, certain constituent units were on the verge of bankruptcy since they were not paying the overhead expenses (water, phone,

etc.). In the moment when the studies should have been conducted according to the requirements of the Bologna Process, the UNIST pointed out that they were lacking one third of the financial means for these activities. Also present at the UNIST was the issue of financing the external cooperation, for which the financial means by the MSES were not transferred, and this jeopardized the conducting of class. Particular issues of financial capacities were solved through personal contacts. Therefore, Rector Pavić stated that he personally contacted the officials of the MSES in order to arrange a meeting with the representatives of the Faculty of Chemistry and Technology and the representative of the MSES with the aim of solving the financial problems of this constituent unit.

The issue of human capacities was present at the UNIST as well. On one hand, there was a certain dependency on the external cooperation, and on the other hand, the Senate was forced to recommend stricter regulation of involvement of their own personnel at the institutions outside of the UNIST system. In addition to that, it was later decided that the consent for working at other institutions could be achieved only based on a special agreement on cooperation that was signed between the constituent unit of the UNIST and the institution that wanted to hire the professor in question. Non-coverage with their own personnel at some study programmes was pronounced during the transition to the Bologna Process and the conclusion was that this issue was attempted to solve by dropping the certain study programmes or reducing the enrollment quota in order to achieve more favorable ratio of students and professors, which would meet the criteria. The personnel issue was also emphasized in 2010, when the lack of payment by the MSES brought the hiring of external associate lecturers and the realization of certain study programmes into question.

The UNIOS expressed dissatisfaction with the way of covering costs by the MSES and they claimed that it was necessary to solve the new and the discovered problems in the financing, especially problems regarding the material costs and the increased costs caused by the implementation of the Bologna Process. At the end of the observed period, new Rector Turkalj observed the issue of financial capacities as the biggest problem since the state had constrained the financing and the conclusion was that it was necessary to secure additional means for normal functioning of the University. Turkalj observed the EU funds, public-private partnerships, formation of funds and entrepreneurship centers as sources of financial means that needed to be secured.

Satisfaction was expressed at the UNIOS at the beginning of the observed period regarding human capacities in the sense of science novices and progress was noted in terms of this issue. In spite of that, Rector Kralik encouraged signing the Agreement with the UNIZG since a great number of university professors from the UNIZG participated in conducting class at the UNIOS. It was emphasized that some studies would not even exist if it was not for the external cooperation, and that it was difficult to find adequate experts in these areas in Croatia. During the implementation analysis of the Bologna Process at the UNIOS, the conclusion was that the number of employed professors was not satisfactory and that it was necessary to improve the ratio of professors and students. The issue of human capacities was particularly stressed in 2008, when the need to include a great number of external associate lecturers appeared, as well as the debt of the MSES for the external cooperation since a great portion of professors at some constituent units were precisely the mentioned external associate lecturers. Finally, in 2013, new Rector Turkalj also pointed out enhancing the personnel and employment of new professors as one of the priorities.

In the beginning of the observed period, the UNIRI claimed that they were assigned less financial means during the past years than other universities and that it was necessary to compose different criteria that would ensure equal financial capacity of all institutions. They deemed the system exceptionally centralized and claimed that an intervention by the MSES was required. However, lack of payment of the anticipated financial means for the material costs by the MSES brought the functioning of certain constituent units into question. Also, Rector Lučin warned about the lack of financial means at the Rectors' Conference and he pointed out that payment of professors' salaries was also brought into question due to the lack of financial means.

The UNIRI associated its political capacities with the cooperation with the local authorities with which it founded the Trust Fund of the University, and it was pointed out that they had obtained clear support in their planned development by the local political structures. Also, they were associated with the representatives from the parliament of the three counties within which the University functioned and they strived to assure the support on the state level as well. It should be emphasized that Vice Rector Lučin was the head of the negotiation team with the EU regarding the issues of science and research, education and culture, and he was also the president of the Administrative Committee of the Foundation for Science, Higher Education and Technological Development of the Republic of Croatia. Also, the state matura project was entrusted to the assistant rector Petar Bezinović.

Regarding the administrative capacities, there were no bigger objections at the UNIRI regarding the teaching personnel. However, in 2003, they noticed that they experienced a lack of professors that could be the holders of interdisciplinary studies and that work was required in that field in order to achieve further development. Furthermore, in 2005, significant increase in science novices was recorded, which was considered a big potential of further development. In addition to that, in 2005, the UNIRI pointed out that they had requested a smaller number of external associate lecturers necessary for realization of new study programmes and that they were the most complete university after the UNIZG in terms of the personnel. Satisfactory status of human personnel was confirmed by Vice Rector Lučin by stating that the UNIRI and the UNIZG were in a more favorable position in this sense than the other universities in Croatia, but Vice Rector Kalogjera stated that the issue of insufficient personnel was still present at some constituent units. Therefore, Kalogjera stated that, "in spite of the fact that the University had increased the number of employments in the teaching segment in the last five years by over 30%, the UNIRI still cries out for new teaching personnel" (Marinković Škomrlj 2006). Furthermore, Rector Rukavina pointed out that investing into the human personnel and enhancing in this direction was an important goal at the UNIRI. Therefore, he stressed that in the period from 2000 to 2007, the scientific-researching potential of the UNIRI was increased by 40%, which acquired greater recognizability. In addition to that, they attracted young scientists and persons from the diaspora, which was presented by the result of the vision of development introduced in the beginning of 2000s.

During the establishment of the UNIPU, an issue was raised regarding the University's possibility of achieving the demands of the ratio of science-teaching personnel and the number of students, and the conclusion was that the new university could secure the development of a new teaching personnel that was needed by not only this university, but other universities as well. However, it was established that it would be difficult to maintain programmes conducted at the time when they were a part of the UNIRI, which brought about the suggestion regarding the forming of a department type university without faculties as separate legal entities. The UNIPU experienced a similar problem as the UNIDU, which was the great number of external associate lecturers for which, as claimed by the UNIPU, the MSES often did not cover the financial costs and this brought conducting class into question. They pointed out their tendency to decrease the number of external associate lecturers, and also the fact that they could not eliminate the external cooperation completely since their own

personnel was insufficient. This emphasized the over-capacity of hourly wage, i.e. full-time work over the proscribed norm. According to Vice Rector Deklva-Radaković, the decreased capacity of teaching personnel was also reflecting on the development of new studies. Regarding the achieving of political capacities, the UNIPU was focused on local community and the Istria County.

Regarding the financial capacities, it was pointed out that the University functioned based on the financial means acquired by enrollment tuition fees and that this system was deemed non-functional, which raised the question of covering expenses. Also, the UNIZD used their own financial means to cover a small portion of the budget, and Rector Magaš emphasized that their own means amounted merely to 5-6% of the amount provided by the MSES, but that they were hoping for a better status in the state budget.

The political capacities were poorly expressed and constrained, but the UNIZD appealed to the Minister due to the disapproval of certain study programmes and strived to influence the changes of the decision through the direct communication between the Rector and the Minister. However, the UNIZD was mostly focused on the local authority and even at the very University, it was pointed out that there was some sort of lobby behind every university, while the UNIZD had none, even though that certain citizens of Zadar held powerful positions, which brought up the question if Zadar even required higher education. The UNIZD was aware of their lack of political influence and they emphasized that members of the UNIZD were omitted during the composition of the National Coordination Body that was meant to compose the Strategy of Education, Science and Technology. They also considered that their opinion in previous procedures was ignored by the national bodies.

The UNIZD experienced similar issues as other smaller and newer universities regarding the human capacities. Therefore, Rector Magaš sought the assistance of the MSES at the Rectors' Conference in solving the personnel issues and emphasized the need to open new work positions at the newly founded universities. However, even when the new work positions were opened, there was not enough educated personnel to fill them. Therefore, the insufficient personnel issue also reflected during the initiation of studies according to the Bologna system. Namely, it was pointed out that even though the credentials were issued for all study programmes, this should be differentiated from actual possibilities and that it was necessary to consider with which study programmes they should begin. Furthermore, just like other universities that relied on the external associate lecturers, there was a problem with their

payments that depended on the state, and the fragmentation of the personnel occurred since their travel expenses were not covered. This caused an alarming situation concerning the personnel at some departments, and Rector Magaš warned that all departments should contribute maximally to their own survival. The UNIZD stated that it was necessary to establish cooperation with other universities and that only the UNIZG could cover their needs regarding the personnel, while the other universities had to support each other in this sense. In 2007, Rector Magaš emphasized the evident deficit of teaching personnel and stated that this problem had existed earlier as well. He claimed that certain professors were overly burdened and that some programmes could not be conducted optimally. Certain Senate's conferences suggested that the UNIZD was held responsible for this state and one of the members of the Senate emphasized his skepticism during the opening of new studies without the personnel. Lack of personnel was also evident in the relationship towards the establishment of the undergraduate studies. It was recognized that this situation was jeopardizing the functioning of the University and the conclusion was that they needed to define themselves in terms of the hiring of their own professors at other institutions since it jeopardized the survival of current and future programmes at the UNIZD. Personnel deficit was stressed by Vice Rector Belak at the Rectors' Conference in 2009 by stating that something had to be done with the new universities because they were in the most difficult situation.

Difficult financial situation was pointed out at the UNIDU, particularly with regard to the unfulfilled financial obligations of the MSES towards the University. Therefore, the non-payment of means for material costs that were of great importance for everyday functioning and non-payment of means for various levels of study were emphasized. Rector Vrtiprah stated that one of the two main difficulties of the UNIDU was the issue of financing since the means transferred by the MSES were not sufficient for regular activities, especially considering that 80% of the financial means were achieved by the University from the state budget. In addition to that, Vrtiprah also pointed out the importance of focusing on other incomes and decrease of portion of the financial means from the state budget to 60%.

Furthermore, the political capacities of the UNIDU were mostly not expressed, they were focused on cooperation with the local authorities with the aim of acquiring space and support for functioning of the University. According to the available data and its involvement, the UNIDU did not have the possibility of positioning itself as a veto actor in the policy of higher education.

The issue of human capacities was particularly expressed at the UNIDU, and it was pointed out on several occasions that the University did not have sufficient personnel to conduct class. In spite of the signed agreements on external cooperation that secured the additional personnel, the UNIDU was still facing the problem of securing the required professors. Such situation with the human capacities reflected the credentials for the studies that were not published since it was impossible to ensure the coverage of class with their own personnel. Lack of human capacities was particularly emphasized during the application of the study programmes for the Bologna Process. The UNIDU acquired negative opinions on certain undergraduate programmes since they only had 21% of their own teaching personnel. This resulted in dropping all the graduate studies and two undergraduate in order to achieve the requested 50% of professors employed on basis of employment contract. In the following years, it was emphasized that work was required on opening new studies, but that it was first necessary to enhance the personnel structure in order to avoid negative opinions and denial of credentials. Unfavorable situation regarding the human capacities forced the UNIDU to review their programmes and to re-examine the possibilities of conducting study programmes with the existing personnel, which compelled them to become flexible in terms of the programme offer.

The collected data offered an insight into the actors' characteristics and it is possible to make several conclusions within these concepts. Firstly, the strategic interests of all actors reveal harmonization with the topics promoted on the European level. All universities represent the strategic interests of harmonization with the European framework, internationalization, interdisciplinarity, autonomy and quality. Previously listed items are recognized as important and they are presented as interests that should be permanently strived towards and work through them in order to create a modern university.

On the other hand, regarding the issue of actors' beliefs and capacities, there are distinct differences between the actors. Namely, when observing actors' beliefs, it is noticeable that the UNIZG often diverges according to its beliefs from those represented at the national level, especially regarding the policy core beliefs and secondary beliefs. The UNIZG often promotes or advocates solutions in the subsystem of higher education policies that differ from the policies of the MSES and proposes various tools for achieving these policies. Then, the UNIST, UNIOS and UNIRI mostly have minor disagreements in terms of the secondary believes, while in addition to the very agreement of their policy core beliefs with those of the MSES, they also achieve mutual support regarding the issue of certain solutions. Finally,

smaller universities mostly agree regarding the belief with the ones from the national level, but they express concern over the speed of conducted measures and the way the financial means are distributed. These disagreements are understandable when taking the capacities at their disposal into consideration.

Finally, regarding the financial capacities, it is visible that all universities emphasize the difficult financial situation and lack of means. However, even though the smaller universities (UNIZD, UNIDU and UNIPU) acquire more means from the state budget according to their number of students, they achieve less income of their own, especially due to the fact that the majority of those incomes is achieved through tuition fees, and these universities have a significantly smaller number of students (Bajo 2008a; 2008b; Hunjak, 2008). Regarding human capacities, all universities point out the issue of functioning. However, it is possible to emphasize three groups here. The first group encompasses the UNIZG and the UNIRI, which state a favorable ratio of professors on the level of the university, but certain constituent units are deemed problematic. Also, the UNIOS experienced smaller issues with the human capacities and the problem of hiring too many external associate lecturers was emphasized. Finally, the remaining four universities encountered a big problem of human capacities, and this is evident through the issues of conducting class, dropping a part of the proposed programmes, and through a smaller number of proposed programmes, which is visible in the part that is dedicated to structure and curriculum. Also, the UNIZG and the UNIRI are pointed out by the fact that the actors from those universities assumed powerful positions in certain bodies or projects of great relevance for the development of higher education. Political capacities reveal that the UNIZG is oriented towards communication and orientation towards the leading structures on the political level through communication with the presidents of the Government, state and the ministers, while the UNIRI balanced between the communication with the local politicians and the representatives in the Parliament. On the other hand, other universities note orientation towards the local and county political representatives. In addition to that, the veto capacity was only recorded at the UNIZG, for which the usage and preparedness for usage is expressed, and it is based on the size and the tradition of the University.

# 5 HIGHER EDUCATION SUB-POLICIES AT PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN CROATIA

In this chapter, I will present the way of development at each of the universities for every sub-policy in the observed period based on the minutes of the senates, documents brought by the universities and the newspapers articles. In addition to this, I have pointed out the existing researches and the secondary sources of information for each of the individual sub-policies. Every sub-policy consists of an introduction, where a short overview of the specific policy is presented, followed by the development at each of the universities and a short conclusion in the end. More detailed analysis of policy change will be presented in the final discussion.

## 5.1. Structure and Curriculum

Framework for the way of bringing the study programmes and organizing the structure of study is proscribed by the acts referring to higher education. Thus, it is necessary to observe how this issue was formed over the course of time in the Republic of Croatia. The Act on Higher Education Institutions of 1993 proscribes that there are university and professional studies. First are conducted at the universities and the second at the polytechnics and schools of professional higher education. University studies are conducted as undergraduate, postgraduate scientific, postgraduate professional and postgraduate art studies, and professional studies are conducted as undergraduate, postgraduate professional and postgraduate art studies. According to this act, the university undergraduate study lasted minimally four years, and the postgraduate scientific minimally two years for acquiring the academic title of Master of Science and minimally three years for acquiring the title of Doctor of Science. The university postgraduate art study lasted minimally two years, and the postgraduate professional study minimally one year. Class programmes were brought by the academic councils of the university, and the NCHE evaluated the need, gave incentive for introducing or abolishing programmes and studies and gave opinion concerning the fulfilling of standards of quality for structure and study implementation. After the changes in 1996, the Act on Higher Education Institutions stated that all types of studies conducted at the university and their duration remained the same, but it was possible, with the permission of the minister and due to the special state interest and for a definite period of time, to conduct professional studies at the university. However, changes occurred afterwards with the decision and the resolution of the Constitutional Court (OG 14/2000) that abolished the

provision of the article 132, paragraph 2, sub-paragraph 3, and the senates of the universities could bring class programmes of postgraduate scientific study hereafter without the opinion of the NCHE.

By joining the Bologna Process, the new Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act was brought in 2003, which had the aim of structuring the higher education system pursuant to new goals. Therefore, it was proscribed that the university and professional studies would be harmonized to the ones in the EHEA and that the university studies would encompass undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate studies. The formation of integrated studies encompassing the undergraduate and graduate level was possible with the approval of the NCHE. It was enlisted that the undergraduate university studies lasted three to four years and acquired from 180 to 240 credits. Graduate studies lasted three years and they acquired the degree of Doctor of Science or Doctor of Art, and the conducting of the postgraduate specialist study was also possible, which lasted one to two years and acquired the title of specialist in a certain area. Also, the possibility that the universities could enroll professional studies until 2010-2011 remained, but was annulled by the Decision of the Constitutional Court and the universities were still free to enroll professional studies.

The critique ensued regarding the way the transition from the pre-Bologna to the Bologna studying was conducted in terms of structure. Therefore, Kurelić (2011) claimed that this was actually an anti-Bologna process that was non-functional and uncoordinated to the one in the EU. One of the author's main arguments was that the prior overburdened four-year studies were merely extended to five years, but were not refined with the purpose of creating the 4+1 system, for which Kurelić claimed that was the closest to the previous system. This is why he claimed that the Bologna in Croatia was not 3+2 or 4+1, but 5+0 since the Bachelor's Degree was unrecognized at the job market and practically all students resumed their studies. As a complement to that statement, Kurelić added the equalization of the previous four-year degree with the degree of the second cycle acquired after five years of study. As a context that favored this, Kurelić listed the uncertainty regarding the higher education financing and the fact that the HEIs forced the MSES to cover the costs of study for both of the cycles through the statement that the actual degree was acquired only after five years of study. The issue of uncertainty of financing also proved to be important in my research, and it will be presented later in the text. The recognition of that problem was recognized by Expert 4, who stated:

*Seeing that you did not have the necessary information then… if the graduate study would be financed, if it would not be, you know, then pushing all the professors at the undergraduate level since it was uncertain if the graduate level would even be… if it was not financially covered for the students, if the students would even enroll it. A series of unknown information was present and in such a period, it was impossible to compose a quality programme.*

The fact that the entire process of change did not start on time and that everything was conducted quickly was confirmed by the statement of Expert 9:

*We have been preparing since the signing of the Bologna Process, but not enough. This surely influenced the quality of the first, the proposals of the first curricula that entered these procedures of accreditation.*

Similar was confirmed by Expert 4:

*Because they composed programmes over the night… I became the Vice Dean in October 2004, my task was to compose programmes in the period from the beginning of October to February of the next year, so that we could send them to the Agency for evaluation before June, i.e. the National Council of Higher Education, which would then issue the credentials so that we were able to realize these programmes from October 1. How is that even possible? … And I tell you, if you evaluated 800 programmes during a period of several months, I mean, who can conduct this evaluation of programmes and conduct it properly.*

The same Expert also added:

*Do not ask me why the work was not conducted. Why nothing changed from 2001, when the approach to the Bologna Process was signed, to 2004. As a professor of the university, I heard nothing, I was not even informed, like everyone else, let alone for us to do something.*

The Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act proscribes that the new organization of study had to be conducted from the academic year of 2005-2006 at the latest and that the ECTS system of credits will be introduced. Seeing that the Act implies the foundation of the ASHE, this also determines the way the study programmes will be evaluated. Namely, according to the Act of 2003, the NCHE was in charge of evaluating the study programmes at the HEIs. Study programmes are evaluated minimally every five years, the NCHE issues the credential, denies the credential or sends a letter of expectation, the studies that are being conducted without the NCHE credential are not considered a study and their completion does

not entail academic titles or degrees[9]. However, according to the statement of the State Secretary, on November 25, 2005, it was announced that, for the purpose of continuity of education at postgraduate level, it would be possible that the universities began implementing the postgraduate studies even before acquiring the credential, i.e. evaluation, from the NCHE but on condition that the programme gained approval of the Senate and that the guarantee was given to the MSES that the study programme was in concordance with the Act. As stated in the Work Report of the NCHE in 2007 (NCHE 2008), even though the universities took on obligations, accepted the postgraduate studies and guarantees, they did not import the necessary data into the electronic system, which disabled the NCHE in their process of evaluation. Therefore, at the beginning of 2007, the NCHE requested that the universities abode by the rules. In May 2007, the MSES issued a statement that, in the future, the beginning of conducting the postgraduate studies would only be possible after the Ministry issued the credential.

The Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education was brought last, in 2009. This Act gave authority to the ASHE over all activities associated with accreditations and programme evaluations, which previously belonged to the NCHE according to the Act of 2003, while the ASHE was in charge of the assigned initial accreditation based on which, the Ministry, at the recommendation of the ASHE, issued the credential necessary for implementation of the proposed study programme. However, university study programmes were formed and conducted by the decision of the senate and based on the evaluation of the unit for the internal system of assuring and improving quality, which based its evaluation on the conditions proscribed by this Act. Therefore, the establishment of the university study programmes was left to the universities, but, in order to achieve state budget financing, they would have to acquire positive opinion of the ASHE and conclude an agreement with the MSES.

According to the currently valid statues of the universities, it is visible that there are certain differences in proscribing structure. Therefore, the UNIDU and UNIZD proscribe that the undergraduate study lasts for three years and the graduate study for two years. At the UNIZD, it states that 'as a rule' undergraduate lasts for three, i.e. and graduate study for two years. At

[9] Changes and supplements of the Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act (OG 105/2004) state that the evaluation was under the authority of the Agency for Science and Higher Education, while the NCHE still gives recommendation to the Minister on the matter of issuing the credential based on those evaluations. The ASHE takes the full integration over the evaluations and accreditation after the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (OG 45/2009) was brought.

other universities, the statue defines that the undergraduate studies last three to four years, and the graduate one to two. Also, other universities keep the possibility of conducting the integrated undergraduate and graduate studies, and the UNIZG maintains the possibility of the graduate study lasting longer than two years, with the approval of the NCHE. Undergraduate doctoral and postgraduate specialist studies last equally at all universities.[10]

#### 5.1.1. University of Zagreb

The issue of structure was sporadically discussed at the Senate during the first several years of the observed period. Therefore, in 2001, a reaction was marked towards the information in the media, according to which, the studies would be structured completely according to the 3+2+3 model. The UNIZG found this information to be completely contrary to the Bologna Declaration and that it had nothing to do with the actual state. However, next academic year, it was pointed out that the harmonization to the Bologna Declaration and the 3+2 system was formally acceptable, but the question was raised as to how this would be possible to conduct for the professions of stomatology and medicine since its students could not be qualified for a certain profile in merely three years. Also, the UNIZG set a deadline for the implementation of the ECTS system of credits for the beginning of May 2001 and the deans of constituent units were in charge for the introduction of the credit system. This brought about the question if there was sense in constituent units renewing the credentials for their postgraduate studies if the new Act bringing was announced, to which Rector Mencer stated that the current functioning was in concordance to the valid Act, but that the new curricula should be formed according to the Bologna Process. Therefore, in 2001-2002 and 2002-2003, all new study programmes that were being brought were harmonized according to the ECTS credits. After the new Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act was brought in 2003, work was conducted on changing the structure of study. In the discussion during 2003-2004, it was stated that there were many dilemmas. Namely, the UNIZG was not certain if the Bologna Process should be conducted at the level of university or individual level, i.e. level of the University or individual constituent units. This reveals the independence of the constituent units and uncertainty of the Administration of the UNIZG regarding the possibility of coordinated implementation on the level of the University. They pointed out that many constituent units resisted to changes and that they expected instructions on implementation and the course of the reform from the University.

[10] See Number of Programmes per University According to ECTS in Appendix D

Regarding the earlier beginning of the reform, the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture was emphasized, which began implementing the new structure in 2003-2004, and there were ideas that Croatia should develop its own autochthonous model, i.e. stay true to the Bologna Declaration, but also respect the specificities of the national system. In this sense, the flexibility of solutions was pointed out, which could be both 3+2 and 4+1. In addition to that, the issue of national legislation was emphasized, i.e. Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act, which the UNIZG found non-implementable and this did not make a quality foundation for the reform. Conclusion was made that, in order to successfully include the UNIZG into these processes and the realization of the new system, it was important that the University was functional and organizationally integrated. However, the practice showed that this was not achievable. Furthermore, change of the system was observed as the potential for increasing both horizontal and vertical mobility within the University and this was one of the more complex recognized tasks, along with the attracting students from other HEIs. Also, the UNIZG established that they had all the necessary prerequisites, especially human potentials, for introducing the new system of study. The decision was that the new structure of study would be proposed by the individual constituent units and that these proposals would later be considered at the university level. Also, a form was composed, which was supposed to be used by the constituent units to define, among other, the duration of various levels of study. One month after the deadline for delivering the files, only 2/3 of the constituent units defined their solutions, while the other 11 constituent units did not do that not even two months past the deadline. In the meantime, this issue was the subject of the Committee for Reorganization and Development of University Studies and the conclusion was that a discussion should be opened on the study programmes, despite the fact that one third of the constituent units did not deliver the forms. The idea was to consider the materials according to the scientific areas and that a joint discussion would produce a conciliated concept of study programmes. When three months after the set deadline none of the remaining nine constituent units delivered the forms, it was decided that the waiting should end and that the presentation of the acquired materials would begin. This case once again clearly illustrated the inability of the Administration of the UNIZG to coordinate its constituent units and influence them to meet the agreed deadlines.

At this point, presentations of particular solutions for individual constituent units were initiated. Thus, the Faculty of Law claimed that all faculties of law in Croatia had an agreement regarding the establishment of an integrated system, but that the NCHE rejected

that demand and that the Act was interpreted bureaucratically. Vice Rector Bjeliš, who was also the member of the National Council, claimed that the Council had no authority anymore since there were no legal prerequisites and that it lacked the authority to influence individual studies. In addition to the Faculty of Law, objections arrived from the Faculty of Civil Engineering as well. Their representatives in the Senate stated that the 3+2 scheme was not proscribed anywhere and that the professions should choose between the 3+2, 4+1 or 5+0 models. It should be stated that the 5+0 structure was not based on the Bologna Declaration, but that only through the Survey on Master Degrees and Joint Degrees in Europe (Tauch and Rauhvargers 2002) for the purpose of the Graz Declaration (2003) emphasized the demand for integrated studies, but it listed studies of medicine and associated sciences in this sense. Regarding the reasons for introduction of integrated studies Expert 8 stated:

*Short and clear, there are no reasons. There are no reasons, once again these were the lobbies, once again these were some sort of structures, if the faculties of economics are taken into consideration, the NCHE with the current President had brought the decision regarding the integrated study of the Faculty of Economics in Zagreb. They appealed to a single study, and before this was realized, we conducted an analysis of how many of such faculties there were in Europe and we discovered that there are none, with the exception of a single programme at a Norwegian university, which is associated with maritime, i.e. economics associated with maritime.*

Finally, in July 2004, there was a discussion based on the forms (March was the deadline for delivering the forms) and the conclusion was that the majority of constituent units chose the 3+2+3 scheme as the most appropriate one. However, there was a series of discrepancies and the combinations 3.5+1.5, 5+0+3, 6+0+3 and 4+1+3 were also advocated. In this sense, the Faculty of Law still insisted on demanding an integrated study and stated it would repeat the demand towards the NCHE. Three constituent units belonging to the humanities group of studies concluded that the completion implied five years of studies, while certain departments and studies could not and did not have to have the Bachelor's Degree after three or four years. Conclusion from the field of biomedicine sciences was that all five or six years should be integrated. Also, unlike the faculties of law or medicine that achieved an agreement on a national level, the Faculty of Economics of the UNIZG was the only one offering the 4+1 structure, while other faculties of economics agreed to establish the 3+2 model. The Faculty of Economics of the UNIZG observed this as a differentiated product on the job market and as the biggest faculty of economics, they wanted to have a special market position. They claimed

that this would influence the decrease of interest for their programme. However, they considered themselves compatible to others and that they would be able to accept students at any point of study. Having the determined schemes in mind, the decision was that a more detailed programmes should be elaborated prior to spring of 2005, that they should be ready for implementation from the academic year of 2005-2006 and that this was the goal the UNIZG should impose on itself.

The issue that proved important in the discussion regarding the structure of study is the question if the MSES would finance only the undergraduate or/and the graduate study. In the next academic year, the Rectors' Conference brought, and the NCHE supported, the Activity Plan of Implementation of the Bologna Process, which determined that the outline work on the study programmes should be finished until the mid-January 2005, after which it was anticipated that these programmes should be reviewed in two months after the end of March. This plan was on the agenda of the Committee for Reorganization and Development of University Studies and it, on the trace of the previously mentioned last year's discussion, concluded that they could not answer questions of great importance for further development of study programmes since they did not know which levels would be financed. Rector Mencer concluded that there was not a country or a university that would agree to having only financed the undergraduate cycle and that, by raising this issue, they were only attempting to help the Minister to ask the people responsible for bringing the budget the same question once it was on discussion, while Vice Rector Bjeliš pointed out that such uncertainty was not good because the new programmes were given more thought in the context of uncertain financing than within the aspect of content.

During the planning of new study programmes, the attitude was that, even if the consideration of what to do with the study programmes was conducted for years, it would not just happen that the existing programmes were reframed into a new form that was enlisted by the EHEA, while some individuals found that the new study programmes were a matter of enthusiasm until the point the UNIZG established the committee for quality managing. Rector Mencer also found that the faculty councils should ensure the proper procedure of altering study programs, which encompassed the comparison of the existing programmes with the programmes of foreign universities and the requirements of the job market. Upon implementing the new programmes at the UNIZG, there was a need to change parts of some programmes, and the process was slowed down by the fact that the NCHE had to approve these changes, which resulted with the UNIZG strongly accepting the proposal of the UNIOS

that the modification of 10-15% of the study programme was under the authority of the university in order to make this a quicker and more simple procedure. In addition to that, they also thought that it was necessary to question the decision that the NCHE, as a body outside the university, decided on accepting the study programmes since the university had constitutional independence. During 2006-2007, the entire procedure of accepting class programmes and plans of the undergraduate and graduate studies was transferred under the jurisdiction of the council of the field, which then informed the Senate that confirmed the decision of the council. Also, there was a critique that would be often repeated later on. Therefore, Gvozden Flego from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Studies pointed out that the programmes remained the same, but that the ECTS credits were introduced and that, to his knowledge, the number of credits was also determined according to the status of the professor and not according to the workload of students. It should be stated here that the Students' Conference warned about the ECTS credits not being harmonized since the initial implementation to the workload of students and that the study programmes remained unchanged, but that the work was conducted in the manner that the previous two-semester courses were merely 'pushed into' one-semester courses.

Additional complication in terms of the structure was, in the academic year of 2006-2007, introduced by the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture and therefore proposed the integrated undergraduate and graduate programme (5+0) that was conducted parallel to the 3+2 programme. The proposal was accepted at the Senate and was forwarded to the NCHE with the purpose of acquiring the credential. The issue of structure once again intensified during 2007-2008 since this was the academic year when the first Bachelors completed their studies, which once again brought forth the issue of enrollment to graduate studies. Previous occurrences revealed that, during the process of determining the structure and during the transition to the Bologna Process, there was no clear vision of connecting the two levels. Therefore, at some constituent units, enrollment prerequisites were nonexistent for the students arriving from other HEIs, which confirmed the fact that these procedures were not elaborated and that the interdisciplinarity was neglected.

In the academic year of 2007-2009, the NCHE brought the decision, pursuant to the proposal of the UNIOS that was supported by the UNIZG, and allowed the universities to conduct certain alterations independently in the procedure of changing and supplementing the programmes that had obtained the credential. Therefore, it was necessary to send a demand for evaluation if the change of the study title or titles of more than 20% of the courses

occurred, if the change of more than 20% of the content occurred in more than 20% of the courses, if there were changes in competences and declared work qualifications or changes of relationship of the ratio of ECTS credits between obligatory and elective courses. All of these changes, regardless if they occurred within these percentages or those forwarded to the NCHE for evaluation, had to be entered into the MOZVAG system with the purpose of evidence. Attitude of Rector Bjeliš regarding this decision was significant. He claimed that this was merely an orientation document, and some members of the Senate claimed that 20% differs in Physics and some other subjects from the social or humanistic field.

It is indicative that from 2008-2009, when the first graduate studies were initiated, the critiques regarding the structure became a lot stronger. It was pointed out that political blessing for the introduction of the Bologna Process was necessary, that the content of the 6+0 or 7+0 programmes was supposed to be inserted into the 3+2 or 4+1 variants, the meaningfulness of the 3+2 model was brought into question if it did not enable employment after three years of study, the issue of to what extent should the specificity of individual professions should be taken into consideration was raised and so on.

Ljubotina, associate of the Office for Quality Management, pointed out a particular issue regarding the structure by noticing the problem of bureaucratic procedure in the new structure since it demanded a formal completion of the undergraduate study, followed by a formal enrollment to the graduate study. Ljubotina observed the Bologna Process as a necessary formal change that should prove the comparability to the European degrees, but that it caused a lot of problems due to the deviation from the domestic tradition. The question as to how the initial accreditations were even conducted was once again actualized by Rector Bjeliš. He emphasized that many study programmes were merely redesigned into the 3+2 model and that they were not modified in concordance to the settings of the new way of studying. Bjeliš also stated that "the Bologna way of studying is merely applied and installed on the old system, which was dominated by the lack of concern for the students" (Knežević 2005, 23). Individuals from the UNIZG thought that the studies were not prepared for the changes implied by the Bologna Process and that the solutions regarding the structure were offered by the very constituent units, and that the MSES accepted them. Regarding this issue, Polšek from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Studies emphasized that the selfish interests of the departments of the constituent units were strong and that they needed to be removed in order to achieve progress. This was similarly argued by Gregorić from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Studies, who found that it was necessary to renew the existing programmes and

submit them to a serious international review, and not as it had been conducted during the first time the credentials were issued. Furthermore, according to Dean Mornar from the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing, the programmes were not adequately unburdened and the lectures were not adapted to the ECTS credits, while the programmes were insufficiently changed and the reforms were rarely conducted thoroughly in terms of the Bologna Process. Similar attitude was repeated by Vice Rector Kovačević at the Rectors' Conference in July 2009, when she stated that the Bologna Process was not functional because everyone was aware of how the new study programmes were brought – through the cosmetic refining of the old programmes, that there were too many study programmes and courses, while the system was expensive, and that quick and quality change was necessary. In April 2010, Rector Bjeliš repeated that harmonization of programmes was done quickly, that the whole package was not unified and that the programmes were too fragmented.

Demands for establishing the integrated studies, which had occurred earlier when the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture made such a demand in 2006-2007, were taken one step further and the UNIZG requested the opinion of the MSES since some constituent units were striving to initiate the procedure of accepting the new study programmes according to the model of integrated studies with the possibility of obtaining the Bachelor's Degree after acquiring 180 credits. The MSES stated that there was no legal possibility for doing so since it was not possible to issue the Bachelor's Degree within an integrated study programme because the degree could only be issued upon the completion of programme, i.e. it was necessary to complete the accredited study programme and not only one of its parts. Vice Rector Divjak referred to these demands and she thought that the tendency of transition from the 3+2 scheme to the integrated 5+0 scheme had no justification in the quality of study and that it was not in concordance to the European practice. Therefore, the committee for research, development and technology gave opinion on the integrated five-year study and concluded that this could have serious consequences on the researching component of the University due to the decline of competences of graduated students.

Therefore, according to the words of Vice Rector Divjak, the UNIZG opened several new study programmes in 2010-2011, while around a hundred of study programmes were being reviewed, and further work was being conducted on evaluation of the arriving proposals and changes and supplements of the existing ones through the Committee for Quality Management. In this sense, Vice Rector Divjak pointed out that the Committee was often

encountering demands for accepting the integrated studies and that the Senate should make its attitude on this matter clear. Regarding the integrated programmes, Expert 3 emphasized:

*But it forces [students] in some way, motivates them, strongly motivates them to stay at this institution that organized its study in such a way. This, of course, negatively reflected any type of mobility and in this sense, it was contrary to the ideas of the Bologna Process, where the structure 3+2 or 4+1 was composed in the way that there was mobility not only in the sense of international mobility, but also in the sense of interdisciplinary mobility… Therefore, integration, in my opinion, was completely pointless and bad, just another trend that was a consequence of bad decisions brought by introducing the Bologna Process.*

However, based on the example of the study programme of Kinesiology, it was revealed that the systematic policy in terms of this issue was nonexistent at the UNIZG. Namely, this issue regarding the integrated studies was preceded by the decision from July 2009 on the temporary organization and implementation of the integrated programme of Kinesiology, and the new study programme was to be evaluated only in 2011, which caused the implementation of the integrated programme to be prolonged for two years in a row. The same issue was also discussed in October 2012, when Vice Rector Divjak stated that the decisions on prolongations of the integrated studies were being brought since 2009, even though the credentials were originally issued for the undergraduate and graduate studies. She found that there was no justification for this type of implementation and that this was also the issue of such decisions being established by the Act. The Senate eventually accepted the integrated study.

Following this, there was also a discussion on the issue of supporting the integrated studies and members of the Senate had different opinion on the matter. On one hand, integrated studies were advocated and the opinion was that there was no horizontal or vertical mobility at some constituent units, which made the integrated system possible. On the other hand, the supporters of the 3+2 model claimed that it enabled mobility, porosity, completion and recognition with the European framework. The NCHE did not approve the introduction of an integrated study at the Academy of Music, the reason to this being that by signing the Bologna Declaration, the Republic of Croatia had taken the obligations in concordance with the goals of that declaration and that there was no just reason for approving the introduction of an integrated programme since the credentials for undergraduate and graduate studies were already issued.

In March 2010, the proposal of the Rulebook on Evaluating the Study Programmes of University Undergraduate, Graduate, Integrated Undergraduate and Graduate, and Professional Studies was presented. Rector Bjeliš emphasized that the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education came into force in April 2009 and that Minister Fuchs brought the Rulebook on Evaluating the Study Programmes in February 2010, implying that the whole series of programmes was waiting the decision and that the proposed Rulebook should be accepted as soon as possible. In the meantime, the Decision of the UNIZG on Evaluating the Study Programmes of University Undergraduate, Graduate, Integrated Undergraduate and Graduate Studies was carried out, and the Rulebook was brought in July 2010. In addition to that, in July the same year, public discussion began on the proposal of the Rulebook on Evaluating the Study Programmes of Doctoral Studies, and the Rulebook was accepted in July 2011. The programme issue was presented during the discussion on the assumptions of the document Development and Transformation of the UNIZG during 2010, while the document itself was officially accepted in 2013. It was enlisted that the UNIZG had too many programmes, which was often accompanied by inadequate resources and that clearly determined needs did not exist. In 2013, the UNIZG initiated the periodical internal evaluation of study programmes, which was obligatory during the period from five to seven years since the credential was issued. During the evaluation, procedures of changes and supplements of the study programmes conducted from 2010 to 2013 were taken into account and the target group would be the study programmes that had not been evaluated through any of the evaluation procedures. The aim was to give recommendations for improvement to the constituent units based on which the study programme would be reorganized and the procedure of changes and supplements would be approached.

Regarding the postgraduate studies, it was pointed out in 2002-2003 that every constituent unit, department and even every professor of the UNIZG had their own postgraduate study, which was in contradiction to the European practice. During 2005-2006, the practice was that the universities would give guarantees for conducting the postgraduate studies that were in the procedure of evaluation at the NCHE since not all programmes could be evaluated due to the fact that the NCHE was overburdened at the time. Therefore, in order to avoid preventing the enrollment, it was left to the universities to initiate postgraduate studies without the credential, but on condition that they stood behind these studies and introduced the data into the MOZVAG, i.e. that they met even the minimal standards based on which the postgraduate

studies should be founded. The attitude of the UNIZG was that each of the constituent units should determine if it can meet the requirements of the NCHE and the MSES for conducing the doctoral studies and decide if the competition would be held. This procedure left the responsibility to the constituent units and the UNIZG only gave guarantee in the end. Already in June 2007, it was emphasized that all future conducting of postgraduate studies would be possible exclusively after obtaining the credential from the MSES. In the course of previous practice, the issue of students studying according to the programmes that had acquired the guarantee of the Senate and would not be granted the credential was raised. Rector Bjeliš claimed that it was necessary to protect the students and also to raise the issue of responsibility of the constituent units that had proposed these programmes. By establishing this procedure, the UNIZG first left the entire procedure to the constituent units and then the responsibility for bringing the postgraduate study programmes.

In 2010-2011, during the discussion on the Rulebook on Evaluating the Study Programmes of Doctoral Studies, it was established that there were 70 doctoral studies at the UNIZG, and that the proposed Rulebook entailed that one doctoral study should be conducted per one scientific or art field. The predominant opinion was that there were too many doctoral studies and that they needed to be reconstructed. However, the lack of development strategy and the strategic plan did not offer a clear direction in which the University should be developed. During the discussion about the document Development and Transformation of the UNIZG, the postgraduate studies were recognized as the key link between the constituent units and their study programmes at the UNIZG. The issue of doctoral studies was also considered at the end of the observed period. The status of the situation was presented and the situation revealed to be quite heterogeneous. Therefore, the number of students varied from 3 to 600, and the number of professors and mentors from 10 to 150. The goal of the UNIZG was to establish a doctoral school through concentration and interdisciplinary connecting. The idea of establishing the Doctoral School of the UNIZG was directed towards encompassing the most quality programmes of the UNIZG. International unrecognizability in this area was also pointed out and the need to establish high criteria in order to avoid a decline of quality during the merging. Also, it was emphasized that this process would introduce stronger connection between the constituent units and abolition of parallelism within the studies. The process of establishing the Doctoral School was initiated in June 2013. However, it was not achieved within the period encompassed with this research.

### 5.1.2. University of Split

In July 2004, deadlines for composition of study programmes were determined in concordance to the Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act. It was pointed out that all constituent units were obligated to compose new programmes and that the advice in this process was to harmonize them to the related studies in Croatia. Deadline for delivering the study programmes to the Senate was end of November 2004, and that was also the time when the ECTS coordinator was named on the level of the University. With regard to the instruction of the NCHE, deadline for delivering the study programmes to the Senate was moved to the beginning of February 2005, and after another round of reviewing, the final deadline was set for the middle of March, after which the approval of the programmes was done at the Senate's conferences on March 30, 2005. The feedback of the NCHE revealed that the insufficient coverage of the study programmes with its own personnel was noted. Particular issue were the 11 reported dislocated studies. The issue of insufficient personnel was raised for ten of them, and the issue of location for seven of them. The conclusion was to solve this issue by making two moves – dropping the certain study programmes and reducing the enrollment quota with regard to the one that was reported. Also, parallel work was conducted on the Rulebook on Studying.

After the statement of the State Secretary of November 25, 2005, informing that, due to maintaining continuity of education at the postgraduate level, it would be possible for the universities to initiate conducting the study prior to acquiring the credential, i.e. evaluation at the NCHE, the UNIST founded the Committee for Postgraduate Studies. It was in charge of reviewing the study programmes in concordance with the Act, Instructions of the Rectors' Conference and the Conclusion of the NCHE, appointing the reviewers and the decision if the proposed study programme required additional work or if it was prepared for Senate's approval. The authority of this Committee was expanded in February 2006, it began conducting the procedure of internal evaluation of new undergraduate, graduate and integrated study programmes and its name was changed to the Committee for Studies. After the Principles for Establishing Postgraduate Doctoral Studies were brought in July 2006 at the senate of the NCHE, they were discussed at the UNIST. The conclusion was that the criteria were not defined precisely enough and that they lacked the disqualifying character, i.e. that the programmes would not be approved only if there were significant discrepancies. Therefore, at the Rectors' Conference, Rector Pavić stated that it was a good idea to give authority to the senates over initiating the doctoral studies, but that the Principles arrived late since some of the programmes, which were not in concordance to the Principles, had already

been approved. However, the MSES and the NCHE noticed that some of the universities failed to comply with the procedures and that some of the postgraduate studies that had acquired the credentials did not meet the criteria. Due to that fact, Vice Rector Zanchi proposed at the Rectors' Conference in March 2007 that the decision that gave authority to the senates to determine if the prerequisites for conducting the postgraduate studies were fulfilled was repealed and that the new studies were not conducted prior to obtaining the credential through the legally proscribed procedure. This proposal was eventually accepted. Criteria for establishing new programmes enlisted in the Higher Education Network, the document brought in September 2011, were criticized by the Dean of the Faculty of Law of the UNIST since he considered them too strict. He also stated that none of the current study programme would meet these prerequisites and he requested the five-year postponement of these criteria. Regarding the complaints about the criteria, Expert 4 stated that:

*There is always this disagreement in our case, how should I put it, between the higher education institutions and the criteria that were proscribed for quality assurance and the rulebook, actually, on the content of credentials and the criteria that need to be met by the institution in order to conduct a certain study programme, where they are, even though these criteria are not rigid, not too strict, constantly attempted to be lowered, their value and pass them somehow.*

Finally, in July 2012, the UNIST brought the Rulebook on the Evaluation Procedure of Study Programmes, and in September 2012, the temporary approval of the integrated study of Kinesiology was rejected prior to the approval of the NCHE. However, the enrollment to the undergraduate study of Kinesiology was approved and if the NCHE approved the integrated study, the enrolled students would then be transferred to that study.

#### 5.1.3. Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek

The UNIOS was selected for the pilot project of introducing the ECTS system and the Faculty of Economics was the first that started the implementation. The importance of introducing the ECTS system was pointed out by Rector Kralik during her candidacy for this position. The issue of the ECTS system was initiated from the academic year of 2001-2002, when it was once again pointed out that the Faculty of Economics and the Department of Mathematics would be the pilot projects. In the beginning of the following academic year, the Committee for the ECTS was appointed, which was going to work on introducing the system at the UNIOS. In addition to that, the issue of structure was not considered prior to March 2003 at the Senate's conferences. At the time, it was pointed out that the established goal for the

UNIOS would be accepting the educational system based on two cycles, along with the introduction of the ECTS credit system and other goals of the Bologna Process. It was also pointed out that the contemporary organization of the university based on the principles of departments was necessary. After the new Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act was brought in 2003, the UNIOS announced the reorganization and the fact that the constituent units were obliged to conduct the internal reorganization and changes to the curriculum. In the beginning of 2003-2004, the University Committee for Undergraduate and Graduate Studies and the University Committee for Postgraduate Studies were founded in concordance to the new Act.

First class programme according to the new structure was composed in March 2004. The deadline was set for March 2005 for other programmes regarding the delivery of the proposals of new study programmes for all three levels (undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate) so that they too could enter the procedure and acquire the credentials. It was stated that the deadlines were short, but that serious work and discussions were necessary so that the newly composed programmes could begin from the academic year of 2005-2006. Finally, at the end of 2004, they were given the Instructions for Composing the Proposals of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies, and in the beginning of 2005, instructions arrived for the postgraduate studies as well. Completed proposals for the first two levels were supposed to be finished by the beginning of April, and the proposals for the postgraduate studies by the middle of May. Constituent units filled the forms on time and the versatility of the proposed structures became visible at the UNIOS. Most of the constituent units proposed the 3+2 structure, but there were exceptions in the sense of the 4+1, 5+0 and 3.5+1.5 structures and the Faculty of Medicine that adopted the 6+0 structures (just like all faculties of medicine in the state).

The UNIOS also raised the issue of study structure of the Faculty of Law, just like other universities that had that faculty did. The Faculty of Law of the UNIOS presented arguments for an integrated study by explaining that this was necessary for the purpose of Europeanisation of the Croatian legal system and comprehensive European acquis that entered the national law. However, interesting was the attitude of the dean of the Faculty of Law, who stated that this study would be organized in the way that the obligatory and elective courses would be distributed to first four years and that the fifth would have a bigger number of elective courses and would have the purpose of directing the students. Such idea of a study corresponds more to the 4+1 system than it does an integrated programme.

In 2005-2006, the UNIOS started the initiative (the same initiative came from the UNIRI) that the university senates should have the authority of changing the new study programmes according to the Bologna Process by 15% of the ECTS credits, and the changes were eventually allowed by 20%. After the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education was brought in 2009, the UNIOS appointed the Committee for Evaluation of Study Programmes pursuant to the Act, after which they brought the Rules for Conducing the Evaluation Procedure of Study Programmes of University Undergraduate, Graduate and Professional Studies. At the time, the Rulebook by the MSES was not yet brought and these Rules were necessary for the evaluation of programmes. After accepting the new system, the UNIOS did not conduct greater discussions on the issues of structure. In 2009-2010, there was an issue of resuming the education of students from the professional undergraduate study on the individual programmes at the graduate study, and the programme of Supplemental Year was established at some constituent units. Finally, according to the Strategy of the UNIOS 2011-2020, it was established that a complete analysis of study programmes would be composed in concordance with the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education and the Rulebook on Content of Credentials.

When it comes to postgraduate studies, they passed the faculty councils during 2003-2004, followed by the Committee for Postgraduate Studies and then finally the Senate that appointed the reviewers for grading the proposed programmes. After introducing the new Act, the credentials were under the authority of the NCHE, but the statement of the State Secretary on November 25, 2005, enabled the universities to initiate the conducting of study prior to acquiring the credential, i.e. evaluation of the NCHE, on condition that the programme was approved by the Senate and the MSES was given guarantee that the study programme was in concordance to the Act. At the Rectors' Conference, Rector Kralik stated that this transferred the weight to the Senates. Furthermore, in 2008-2009, she emphasized the importance of doctoral studies as the contribution to the development of science and scientific qualification, and the specialist studies as the concept of lifelong education.

In addition to that, in 2010-2011, the initiative of the Department of Culturology was launched for establishing the doctoral school at the UNIOS. Rector Kralik claimed that the UNIOS had achieved functional integration through the university bodies in the past six years and that the integrated function was also expanded through the organization of the interdisciplinary postgraduate studies. In this sense, her opinion was that the doctoral school would also expand the integrated function of the University and ensure greater efficacy,

logistic support and internalization. Therefore, the Doctoral School in Social-Humanities Sciences of the UNIOS was established in April 2011, even though it only included the doctoral studies for this scientific area.

#### 5.1.4. University of Rijeka

At the beginning of the observed period, there were no discussions regarding the issue of the structure of study at the UNIRI, but the discussions on the adaptation of the study programmes began in 2001. There was a clear attitude that it was necessary to form committees for composing the credit system and that, without the curriculum reform and introducing the ECTS system of credits, the University would not become a part of the unique EHEA. Therefore, in order to assure quality of programme, the decision was that the changes and supplements of the programme, in addition to the Committee for Class Plans and Programmes, would be examined by two more reviewers. In terms of structure, Rector Lučin informed about the changes being introduced by the new the Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act. He pointed out that the priorities of the Bologna Process were harmonization, compatibility and quality assurance. The Act introduced the change according to the 3+2+3 system and this adjusted the organization of the university to the one present at the European universities. Prior to the new Act, the UNIRI initiated the discussion on introducing the ECTS credit system with the purpose of creating the foundation for the change. Vice Rector Kalogjera claimed that they were ready for the progress, that the preliminary actions such as appointing the ECTS system coordinator and the formation of the commission for the ECTS system were fulfilled. Therefore, the conclusion was that not one new programme would be able to pass at the Senate if it did not have the implemented ECTS system, and the introduction of the ECTS system was anticipated for the existing programmes as well.

During the discussion on the new Act, the UNIRI warned that the system would be significantly obstructed if all the changes regarding the study programmes went through the NCHE. The UNIRI proposed the establishment of the National Accreditation Committee, but this proposal did not enter the final version of the Act. Therefore, after adapting the new Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act in 2003, the UNIRI stressed the legal obligation of introducing the ECTS system of credits and composing new study programmes. Committee for introducing the ECTS system informed in May 2004 that they faced numerous issues during that process, but that significant progress was achieved and that 50% of the constituent units decided to compose new programmes, while most of them chose the 3+2 study concept. It was anticipated that most of the programmes adapted to the ECTS system would be

composed during June 2004 and some by the end of 2004 so that they would enter the reviewing procedure and be ready for implementation from 2005-2006. The Senate pointed out that it was necessary to maintain the integration of the University during the composition of the new study programmes. The issue of structure of study was also raised by Vice Rector Lučin at the Rectors' Conference in May 2004. He raised the question of financing the various levels by the MSES, which was also considered at the UNIZG. He thought that it should be stated clearly if the financing would encompass only the undergraduate level and/or other levels. According to Lučin, this produced various procedures in the curriculum as well. Therefore, the 4+1 scheme implied smaller demands with regard to the existing programmes than the formation of the 3+2 scheme. According to Lučin, if the MSES planned to finance only the undergraduate level, then they would compose the undergraduate studies to be as long as possible. In addition to that, in June 2004, the UNIRI brought the Proposal of the elaborate on initiating the study programme that served as an instruction for application of new programmes with the aim of assuring the level of procedure until the bringing of the new Rulebook on Studies in concordance with the Act.

In the beginning of 2004-2005, the assumptions for introducing the ECTS system were executed and the coordinators were introduced to the new system. The entire process entailed problems and it was emphasized that the older professors at the Faculty of Economics obstructed the process, while certain constituent units showed no visible progress. Also, just like at the UNIZG, the Faculty of Law requested support for formation of an integrated five-year study and their reasons to this request included bad experience in countries that had established the 3+2 or 4+1 system, and that after the undergraduate study, it was not possible to take the bar exam. The Senate of the UNIRI supported this solution. Furthermore, during the bringing of final decision regarding the formation of new studies, several conclusions associated with the quality of study were emphasized, such as care about the workload of professors, and the focus at obligations at the main University. Final organization of the system was presented by Vice Rector Kalogjera and stated that all constituent units, except the Faculty of Hotel Management, Faculty of Law and Faculty of Medicine, chose the 3+2 system. The 3+2 system was supported by Vice Rector Lučin as the system that should shorten the duration of higher education and provide employability after the first three years of study. The Faculty of Economics of the UNIRI, unlike the one of the UNIZG, accepted the 3+2 system and their vice dean explained this choice with the comparability in Europe and she also stated that no one had the 4+1 system like the Faculty of Economics of the UNIZG.

The UNIRI claimed that all the instructions of the Rectors' Conference were fulfilled during the composition of new programmes and that the evaluation team of about twenty members evaluated the proposed study programmes in the period from 26 to 28 January, 2005. Final versions were supposed to be completed and delivered to the rectorate by March 25. The opinion was that the deadline for the delivery of complete study programmes to the NCHE, which was set for May 25, was pretty late because the complete evaluation of programme could not be completed, the credentials could not be issued and the enrollment call could not be held. Eventually, the deadline was moved to the end of March, and the reviewers appointed by the NCHE started their work, while the credentials were issued in the beginning of June. Prior to the delivery to the NCHE, the UNIRI claimed that the internal evaluation was conducted by the class vice rector, class vice deans, ECTS coordinators and the associate from the Office for Quality Promotion. The evaluation was focused on the necessary data and at the description of the study programmes and the prerequisites for study implementation. Vice Rector Kalogjera established that the first phase was introducing the system of ECTS credits and that the most demanding and most delicate part of the process was completed in a short period of time. On the other hand, Jasminka Ledić from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Studies thought that there was a problem with the application of the ECTS system and that the reviews would not be able to evaluate the extent to which the old programmes were simply mechanically transitioned into the ECTS system. Eventually, most of the programmes acquired the credentials, and some received the letter of expectation, which signified that thorough changes were necessary.

Dissatisfaction with the implementation of the ECST system was also expressed by the students and Vice Rector Lučin warned that the constituent units should work on this matter and that the students were right to claim that the Bologna conducted the Croatian way was not good. Lučin repeated the same critiques that appeared at the UNIZG, which was that the old courses were merely cut in half and that they were reframed into two one-semester courses. Therefore, at the thematic conference of the ESCC of the Croatian Parliament, held on July 10, 2008, this was presented as the key issue of the first phase of the Bologna Process. This is why Lučin thought that constant improvement and promotion of programmes was necessary and that new harmonization would be necessary when the graduate programmes came to order. Aside the previously mentioned problem, the UNIRI recognized the issue of tardiness regarding the changes and supplements to the programme, and the Senate (on the same track as the UNIOS) proposed to the Rectors' Conference and the NCHE that the senates should be

authorized for bringing final decisions on the changes and supplements to the programmes by 15%. The Rectors' Conference requested that this percentage should be 30%, and eventually, the senate was given the possibility of change by 20%.

Consideration of the enrollment to the graduate studies was not fully defined not even at the UNIRI. Therefore, Vice Rector Lučin explained that it was possible that the entrance procedure would be organized and that the enrollment was certainly going to be organized because the graduate studies should be accessible for all the students anticipated by the study programme. This issue was not entirely solved not even after the first generations of the graduate studies were enrolled, and the three types of prerequisites for enrolling the graduate studies were once again discussed and proposed in 2010 – for the enrollment of the equivalent university undergraduate studies, for the enrollment of the non-equivalent undergraduate studies and for the enrollment from the undergraduate professional studies to the university graduate studies.

By bringing the new Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education in 2009, the universities acquired the authority over the entire procedure of accreditation of new study programmes at the undergraduate and graduate level, as well as integrated studies. In this procedure, the Senate conducted the initial accreditation and then negotiated with the MSES regarding the programme financing. Pursuant to that, the Rulebook on Accreditation of the Study Programmes was brought, which regulated the entire accreditation procedure and it encompassed the forms for the description of programmes, spatial, personnel and financial conditions and quality assurance, and the Manual for Accreditation was also composed. In the next academic year, 2009-2010, the Studies Center was established, within which the Service for Accreditation and Conducting the Study Programmes functioned. The Center conducted activities associated with the harmonization of organization and implementation of studies at the University, as well as composition and introduction of new studies. The database of domestic and foreign reviewers was composed in order to ensure the reviewing procedure. The strategic consideration concerning the establishment of study programmes was also visible during the academic year of 2010-2011, when the idea on defining the priorities of the University for initiating new programmes in concordance to the needs of the surroundings and geographical position was presented. With this goal, the Budget Committee was given the task of defining the portion of budget that would be used for initiating the new study programmes. Some previously determined issues remained present at the UNIRI, such as the non-uniformity of the ECTS system and the workload of students, which had also been

determined through the project called Successfulness of Implementation of the Bologna Process. Finally, in 2013-2014, the evaluation of the actual student workload was initiated at all courses with the aim of harmonizing the demands of the course and the ECTS credits.

Regarding the postgraduate studies, in 2001, the UNIRI conveyed the information that the UNIZG had decided to forward new programmes to the NCHE. However, the attitude was that the autonomy of the university should be respected and that they had competent experts that could conduct the evaluation of quality of postgraduate studies. However, the bringing of the new Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act in 2003 changed the previously presented matter and Vice Rector Lučin informed the Senate that the internal Committee of the University would not conduct the evaluation of postgraduate studies but that it would be conducted by the NCHE. Furthermore, the State Secretary stated on November 25, 2005, that it would be possible that the universities initiated the realization of study even before acquiring the credentials from the NCHE, with the purpose of continuity of education at the postgraduate level, but on condition that the programme gained approval from the Senate and the MSES was given guarantee that the study programme was in concordance to the Act. This task was taken over by the Committee for Evaluation of Postgraduate Studies and it encompassed informing the Senate, evaluation of conducting of the programme, researching the indicators of quality and composition of documents with the measures for improving the study programme. Also, the procedure of evaluating the postgraduate studies was initiated with the aim of improving the successfulness, which resulted with the recommendations for improvement. By bringing the new Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education, the NCHE no longer conducted the accreditation of the new study programmes, the system of accreditation was established and the necessary forms for conducting this procedure were brought.

Since 2010-2011, the UNIRI began the discussion regarding the initiative for integration of the doctoral studies on the level of the University. According to the words of Rector Lučin, this aimed to connect the existing doctoral studies on the administrative and organizational level. The current state was that it mostly implied small groups, which proved expensive, and it was difficult to maintain regularity. Aside from solving these issues, the UNIRI believed that the integration would enable the internalization of study and that the entire Europe was headed in the direction of doctoral schools. This topic was also present during the next academic year. Therefore, it is visible that the initiative for integration of doctoral studies was not yet accepted. However, ten main principles for organization of doctoral studies were

elaborated, and Rector Lučin once again reminded of his attitude associated with the establishment of the doctoral school by pointing out that this concept was already accepted by 75% of the European universities. In 2012-2013, Lučin emphasized that the existing system of doctoral studies was not efficient and that the resources on the level of the University were being lost due to the non-integration. He thought that integration was possible with maintaining of identity of individual doctoral studies.

#### 5.1.5. Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

In the first academic year of its functioning, 2007-2008, the UNIPU received a memo from the NCHE regarding the doctoral studies criteria and it was required to conduct self-evaluation and conduct an insight into the capacities in order to determine the status of their personnel and discover if they could apply the doctoral studies on their own or if they should seek cooperation. In 2009-2010, the Council for Postgraduate Studies was formed, while the Department of Economics and Tourism had already established the Committee for Postgraduate Studies and Scientific Research Work and the issue of duplication of work was raised at this point. However, as pointed out, the establishment of this Council was an obligation towards the Statue and it was significant to have a body that would monitor the work of postgraduate studies. Therefore, the Council was in charge of the harmonization of work regarding the organization, conducting and development of postgraduate studies at the University.

Also, during the academic year of 2009-2010, non-harmonization regarding the ECTS credits was noticed between the courses at certain departments. The review of the programmes was therefore requested, as well as clear description of the change procedure within the 20% since different practice was recorded in this process. Furthermore, in 2009-2010, the Rulebook on Accreditation was brought since, according to the new Act, the Senate brought the decision on accepting the study programmes. In addition to that, recommendation was issued that new undergraduate and graduate studies should not be proposed because of the professors' work overload, and the employment of external associate lecturers was also decreased. The same Rulebook formed the issue of changes and supplements of the study programmes by 20%. Also, changes and supplements at the UNIPU were brought mostly jointly for all study programmes once a year. It was noticed at the UNIPU that the same errors were being repeated in all implementing plans every year. They would list wrong professors' names, wrong subject structure, and the implementing plans were often not harmonized with the changes and supplements of study programmes. Also, it was emphasized that the re-

accreditation was announced for three departments and that the flaws should be eliminated as soon as possible.

### 5.1.6. University of Zadar

Practically since it was founded, the UNIZD was aware that they were required to conduct a large portion of adjustments and that that new study programmes would have to be composed. While they were waiting for the positive opinion of the NCHE and were even accepting the recommendation to place the study initiation on hold since the new Act was being composed, the UNIZD considered that the normal course of study establishment was not accepted at the other universities and that they were independently deciding on the establishment of studies.

The topic of new structure appeared at the Senate's conferences at the UNIZD during the discussion on the proposal of the Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act in 2003. They found the 3+2+3 structure appropriate. The issue of financing was emphasized, as well as the workload this type of change entailed. The issue of financing was the same as at the other universities, and it referred to the levels that would be financed by the Ministry, i.e. the attitude was that they were required to know which of the levels would be financed in order to be able to compose the structure of studies. Some members of the Senate pointed out that that the model was not suited for Croatia and that the specificities of the constituent units should be taken into consideration. In addition to that, they stressed that the time was short, and that the UNIZD had not yet decided on the structure, while it was still necessary to compose the programmes. In this sense, Rector Magaš emphasized that the majority of the universities in Croatia had chosen the 3+2+3 structure and that it was necessary to have doctoral studies to be considered a university. During the change of the programmes, space was left for the departments to autonomously decide on the structure and each of the departments was obligated to propose a scheme of undergraduate and graduate studies, while postgraduate study was not legally mandatory on the level of the departments. The suggestion was that contacts should be established with the similar departments of other universities in order to alleviate the student exchange and the recognition of programmes, while particularly emphasized was the importance of contacting the UNIZG and the UNIRI. The departments were given the deadline by May 2004 to do so. Statement of one of the members of the Senate spoke about the level of acquaintedness of certain members of the Senate of the UNIZD with the Bologna Process, who stated, during the discussion on the structure, that there was an unverified information that the Bologna Declaration was not referring to the technical studies. Furthermore, Rector Magaš confirmed that it was still not decided if the UNIZD would accept

the 3+2+3 or the 4+1+3 structure and to what extent, which was left for the discussions of the departments. Further discussion pointed out that the organization should be conducted per sciences since the compatibility between the studies could be achieved in that way. After the proposals were delivered, Rector Magač established that it was necessary to form a committee that would review the materials before they were delivered to the Ministry. It was once again pointed out that it was necessary to establish the criteria for transition to the graduate study and that bilateral agreements should be made with other universities in Croatia in order to avoid incompatibility.

However, final proposals of the new study programmes, which were to be delivered to the NCHE, were supposed to be handed in March 2005, but not all departments met the deadline and the critiques emerged stating that it would be difficult to conduct the programmes from the beginning of 2005-2006. Also, some of them did not enlist the credits for elective courses, some courses did not have the enlisted holders and the documents were, according to the discussion at the Senate, not harmonized. Eventually, all programmes obtained the credential with the exception of one and they had secured over 50% of their own personnel for the conducting the programmes. However, it was emphasized that the credentials should be differentiated from the actual possibilities for conducting the programmes because the big issue was the lack of space. During the first year of the implementation, the discussion at the Senate produced comments that it seemed that the programmes were not overly changed and that they were not composed in concordance to the Bologna Process. Therefore, the UNIZD was forced to correct the workload of students, the departments were obligated to hold a meeting with the ECTS coordinators and to conduct the analysis about this issue. On the other hand, some members of the Senate warned that the class programmes were often being changed and that these changes were not evident on the web-pages. Common changes brought about the warning that it was necessary to monitor the proposed changes of study programmes since some of them were drastic. Finally, the instruction was that they should not surpass the allowed 30%. The need for reviewing the programmes occurred in 2008-2009 when it was noticed during the enrollment to the higher years of study that the burdening through the ECTS credits was not unified. The criticism of the process of programme bringing during the implementation of the Bologna Process occurred during 2008-2009, similar to other universities, and it was pointed out that the reform was approached resignedly and passively, while the study programmes were merely redesigned in the way that the two-semester courses were turned into two one-semester courses. The Students' Conference warned about the same

issue, they claimed that the curriculum of the old four-year programmes was merely pushed into the three-year programmes, and that the ECTS credits were unreal. The issue of harmonizing the ECTS credits was also pointed out by Rector Uglešić. After the new Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education was brought in 2009, the composition of the Rulebook on Establishing New Undergraduate and Graduate Study Programmes was also initiated. According to the UNIZD, the Rulebook left enough space for the departments to compose study programmes and the Office for Quality assumed a great role in the evaluation procedure of the study programmes. Pursuant to the Act, changes and supplements were constrained to maximally 20%. This encountered a criticism since it was considered that, if there was no university committee that would control the changes, there would be no coordination or comparability to other studies. Finally, this issue was the task of the committee for quality improvement of each of the departments, and the Office for Quality Assurance.

The issue of graduate studies occurred during the discussions regarding the transition from one level to the other. It was warned that everyone had their conceptions during the programme composition and that it would be difficult to settle those differences. The issue of graduate studies reappeared after the first generations started enrolling the graduate studies. Seeing that most of the students intended to resume their studies at the graduate level, the UNIZD reported on the increasing intentions of 5+0 and 4+1 structure.

In 2005-2006, the discussion on the establishment of the postgraduate studies was initiated. Namely, it was pointed out that a small number of departments was prepared for this part and not many of them started the composition and application of the doctoral studies. Having the lack of personnel in mind, it was stated that the workload of professors at the undergraduate and graduate studies should be taken into consideration so that they could be proposed for the postgraduate studies. Instructions on Composing the Proposition of Postgraduate Studies were made, as well as the guide for the postgraduate studies. Discussion was resumed in the next academic year and it was emphasized that association of departments was possible, but that it was not a common practice at the UNIZD. Instead, each of the departments attempted to establish their own doctorate study. Vice Rector Škara pointed out that association of departments was possible since it would benefit the smaller university, which was why it was necessary to work on opening the doctorate school. Doctoral studies were defined as the strategic priority of the UNIZD, but only one of them was established according to the Bologna Process at the time. Thus, Rector Magaš stated that they were required to open

postgraduate programmes because they would become a second-grade university. In addition to that, they were aware that it was necessary to keep the workload of professors in mind due to the insufficient personnel. Moreover, professors were increasingly invited to teach at the other institutions, which implied that the UNIZD could not possibly initiate the postgraduate programmes independently. Finally, the Senate decided that the departments were obligated to draft the development of doctoral studies. The issue prolonged to the following academic year and Vice Rector Škaričić repeated the issues they had been encountering regarding the postgraduate studies, such as the issue of the needed and significant number of professors of the scientific-teaching professions, which the UNIZD did not have enough, as well as the fact that only one programme of the UNZD was harmonized and two in cooperation with other universities. However, even when the postgraduate study was applied, as was the case with the study of Archeology of East Adriatic, the procedure took too long since the Senate appointed its own reviewers before sending it to the NCHE because they thought that the UNIZD was responsible for all programmes delivered for the review and that they should also conduct the review of the content, instead of just technical review.

By accepting the previous arguments in 2009-2010, the decision was made to initiate an interdisciplinary study of a mentor type, which aimed to minimize the financial costs. Vice Rector Marušić explained that this type of doctoral studies implied some forms of class and courses, but not necessarily the exams. According to him, doctoral level should not entail neither class not exams. Finally, in the academic year of 2011-2012, the Rulebook on Procedure of Initiating the Approving, Conducting and Evaluating Programmes of Doctoral Studies was brought and the Report on Postgraduate Studies was composed. The Report suggested that it was necessary to form the Council of Postgraduate Studies and to incite the departments to opening the doctoral studies with the purpose of assuring vertical mobility.

#### 5.1.7. University of Dubrovnik

In the beginning of 2004-2005, Rector Milković presented the four-year plan of the development of the University and one of its main goals was the implementation of all new class programmes in concordance to the Bologna Declaration. Milković found that, even though the UNIDU was far from the real solutions regarding the Bologna Process, the University was ahead of the other universities in Croatia. Plans and programmes of the new undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate studies were already presented and accepted in the beginning of 2004. In this sense, Expert 8 pointed out:

*The University was wise enough to start as soon as the Bologna Declaration was signed.*

All university studies were established according to the 3+2 model and most of the professional studies lasted for two years. It was pointed out that the quality was indisputably greater in the four, instead of the three, years of studying, but also that, if the strategic goal was completion and uniformity, the three-year study would satisfy the needs of the UNIDU. The programmes were afterwards sent to the MSES and the NCHE. However, the process of evaluation demanded more time than it was left prior to the competition for the academic year of 2004-2005 and the MSES gave the temporary approval for the enrollment of students. In the meantime, the NCHE stopped functioning in the old composition and the newly appointed Council brought instructions for composition of class plans and programmes for all studies according to the new instructions. In addition to that, three postgraduate studies were prepared, and during the composition of the Rulebook on Studying at the Postgraduate Doctoral Study, they used the rulebook applied by the UNIZG.

It is interesting to notice that the introduction and education of teachers regarding the calculation of ECTS credits was announced for 2004-2005, while on the other hand, it was claimed that they were the first university that initiated the conducting of class according to the Bologna Declaration. Class plans for study programmes were resent to the NCHE in March 2005, but the UNIDU claimed that they had to rechange all the programmes because the instructions arrived at the beginning of 2005 that all elaborates were conducted as if previous procedure was not conducted. In addition to that, they encountered an issue regarding the personnel since certain universities banned or constrained the work of their professors outside the main institution. Also, they acquired negative opinions concerning some of their undergraduate programmes because they only had 21% of the teaching personnel, which forced them to abandon all graduate studies, which later included two undergraduate studies as well, in order to approach the needed percentage (50%) of professors employed on basis of employment contract necessary for conducting the class programmes. The UNIDU was negotiating with other universities (UNIZG and UNIST) since 2006-2007 on the matter of establishing the joint graduate studies since they were unable to ensure the conducting on their own, and they found that the students should be given an opportunity of resuming their studies at the graduate studies after completing the undergraduate programme. Therefore, in the following years, they were graded positively on individual programmes, while the credentials were not issued due to insufficient personnel, which forced them to seek various cooperation in order to ensure opening of new programmes.

The UNIDU faced the problem of declining number of students and their opinion was that this could not be changed until the class programmes were changed and new studies were opened. Therefore, during the proposing of new programmes, there was a meeting with the principals of high schools in order to ensure the logical continuation of studies for high school students. On the other hand, Rector Milković stated that the existing study programmes were reviewed, new programmes were introduced and that the inventory in every sense was conducted. However, the non-systematicness in the adjustment of programmes remains obvious regarding the changes and supplements to the programmes. Namely, when the evaluation by the ASHE was announced, professional councils of the departments were instructed that they were obliged to conduct self-analysis of their work and that they were held responsible for class programmes and their conducting. The evaluation of the ASHE was particularly focused at the changes and supplements of the programmes and the Senate pointed out that the changes were allowed in the percentage of 20% within the existing credential. The problem was that the extent of the changes was not monitored and regarding this issue, Rector Milković stated "seeing that the practice of changing the programmes took its toll, at this and at other universities, head of the departments should thoroughly analyze changes that were made and inform the Senate about them"(UNIDU minutes 2008, 3).

The UNIDU claimed that the MSES presented it as an example of flexible institution that shut down studies that they were unable to conduct and paused enrolling certain studies. In addition to that, the MSES requested the delivery of data regarding the teaching workload of professors in 2009-2010, which revealed that the UNIDU should seriously review class plans and programmes. It was stated that weak points and illogicalities were spotted, which was associated with the conducting of the graduate studies. Namely, as previously mentioned, the personnel issue caused problems for the UNIDU during the application of undergraduate studies and uncertainty regarding the credentials for the graduate studies. Regarding the establishing of graduate studies, there was also the need to review the undergraduate studies in 2009-2010. Due to the mentioned reasons, as stated at the UNIDU, class programmes of undergraduate studies were overly burdened and the graduate studies were significantly easier and they often merely repeated part of the curriculum that was already established at the undergraduate studies. In the course of this, students of certain studies expressed their dissatisfaction due to the inability to resume their studying at the graduate level and the UNIDU invested additional effort into obtaining the credentials, but was faced with the same issue of insufficient teaching personnel.

Associated with the objections from the MSES, as stated in the minute of the Senate, changes were made and redesigns of the class plans and programmes were conducted, the number of external associate lecturers was reduced by 50% and the ECTS credits were harmonized according to the courses. However, in the next academic year, 2010-2011, Rector Milković once again exposed the previously mentioned problem the UNIDU had with the programmes. Namely, the proposal to initiate the process of changing and supplementing the class programmes was once again made, the Rector noted that the programmes were often modified since the beginning of the implementation of the Bologna Process, but that these changes were not conducted systematically and were not properly recorded. The reason to these procedures could be found in the audit of HEIs and the process of reaccreditation that was announced for the year 2011 by the ASHE. The question of planning new strategies and directions of development of the UNIDU regarding this issue was raised and the Rector's conclusion was that there was a strategy of development, but that its realization was dubious. Seeing that the dilemmas were often present as to how the programmes could be changed, to which extent and which body was in charge of certain types of changes, the Decision on Types and Levels of Change and/or Supplement of Study Programmes with Obtained Credentials was brought at the end of 2011 with the purpose of eliminating these dilemmas and systemizing the process. New Rector Vrtiprah also believed that it was necessary to conduct a review of study programmes, but also open new attractive study programmes.

Finally, lack of personnel was evident even at the very end of the observed period. Namely, the initiative for making the agreement with the Faculty of Humanities and Social Studies at the UNIZG in terms of the joint study in the field of History was supported at the time. As listed, the main reason for initiating the study in humanistic studies was the fact that this was part of the Elaborate for Founding of the University from the very beginning, as well as the later strategic documents. However, due to the lack of the necessary teaching personnel, their decision was to turn to the UNIZG.

Illogicality and non-systematicness in terms of the development of programmes was evident in the example of presentation of theses for initiating the study in the field of visual and musical art. Namely, after the warning of certain members of the senate that the possibilities of employing the students of that field in Dubrovnik and its region were limited, Rector Milković stated that the establishing of new studies should not be exclusively associated with the needs of the City of Dubrovnik or the County. However, if the enrollment policy (see the chapter on Enrollment policy 5.5.) is taken into consideration, it is visible that the UNIDU

was strictly oriented towards the surrounding region and that their structure of students belonged to the City and the County.

The issue of insufficient personnel proved to be an aggravating circumstance at the postgraduate studies as well. In 2005-2006, positive grade was acquired for initiating the postgraduate doctoral study History of the Population, but the recommendation of the NCHE to the MSES was not to issue the credential because the required personnel was not ensured. This is why the UNIDU was forced to negotiate with the UNIZG, after which this study became the joint study of the UNIZG, UNID and the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Art and it was conducted in Dubrovnik, while the holder was the UNIZG. In November 2005, the State Secretary issued the instruction that it would be possible, due to the continuity of education at the postgraduate level, for the universities to conduct the studies even prior to obtaining the credentials, i.e. before the conducted evaluation at the NCHE, but on condition that the programme was approved by the Senate and the MSES was given the guarantee that the study programme was in concordance to the Act. At the Rectors' Conference, Rector Milković claimed that the senates should be conducting the reviews, in which case the risks would be minimal. He also advocated the international cooperation with the purpose of assuring greater quality of doctoral studies and the certainty of their realization.

#### 5.1.8. Conclusion

The important fact that needs to be noticed is that a cosmetic change was primarily conducted during the transition to the new programmes of the Bologna Process. This was also noticed by the actors themselves, which is visible through their statements presented in the previous part, and Expert 1 referred to that issue during the interview:

*People did not understand the whole process. I know firsthand, people did not understand what this was about since all the studies were suddenly accredited in a single move. I mean, I conducted some analysis of those programmes. Then one can see that they merely prolonged the study from a four-year to a five-year study. The same programme, but the most tragic were the outcomes… of those three-year studies… and the entire study in general, they were not defined properly.*

Furthermore, Expert 8 stated:

*Namely, only in the moment when the actual Bologna was initiated, and when we were obliged to change the study programmes and adapt them because most of the first study programmes that arrived after this signing and after we were told that we had to conduct*

*them according to the Bologna Process, i.e. the EHEA – then all these programmes arrived as they were, those that lasted five years were turned into the 3+2 structure, those that lasted four years were somewhat elongated to the 3+2 structure, and as you know, some conducted the integrated programmes, which is absurd, outside the Bologna, which Bologna does not recognize.*

After that this Expert explained how the process went:

*We packed our programmes and they were sent to the universities, which completed the circle and then they were forwarded to the National Council, therefore, there were no referring to the Senate that was supposed to approve or disapprove certain items… The packet arrived, it was either opened or not, it was forwarded to the National Council, which then composed a list, we conducted this, and the list was given to the President of the National Council who merely read it.*

This process explained how the transition to the programmes according to the Bologna Process was conducted. However, there were differences in the transition that were evident at the universities. Therefore, the lowest versatility in the structure was visible at more integrated universities, but in their case, also emphasized was the impossibility of further change in terms of the new programmes, monitoring changes and supplements of the programmes, harmonization of workload of students, etc. As primary obstacle, these universities emphasized both human and financial capacities. Due to this fact, they were unable to initiate new studies or were not given the credentials. On the other hand, less integrated universities had significant differences in structure, but this difference is most evident at the UNIZG, which was the least integrated, while the most harmonized structure was present at the UNIRI. In addition to the level of integration, the UNIRI was also pointed out regarding the necessary characteristics for change and based on these two assumptions, it is most pronounced regarding the policy change in this sub-policy, which will be discussed more in the final discussion.

Also, it should be stated that the non-systematicness existed even after the transition to the Bologna system, and Expert 8 particularly emphasized the following problem:

*The biggest number of programmes were composed when we left the accreditation of the programmes to the universities, this should not have happened, this was not a good choice and it was confirmed by the universities themselves by stating that they want to take that move back, because then you have the dean who says that he has a great idea, this and that*

*programme, you will support me, I will support you, let us realize this programme, then comes the senate, the senate does it superficially because, why would they get involved. This is the false autonomy they constantly call upon, why would the senate now involve in some faculty that proposed some programmes.*

## 5.2. Mobility

Mobility policy holds a key position in the Bologna Process and in the complete European level referring to higher education. The position of this policy is presented in the part about the development of the Bologna Process and its complementary documents. On a national level, in the Republic of Croatia and at public universities, mobility did not have a significant role during the 1990s in the policies of higher education. It is significant to mention that there are no systematically collected data regarding mobility, and consequentially, there are no any researches covering universities involved in this topic. Lack of data is also emphasized by the report *Thematic Review of Tertiary Education in Croatia: Country Background Report* (MSES 2007) composed by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). First more comprehensive study was conducted within the project called *Increase of Mobility of the Croatian Academic Community (MOBIL)* presented by the Institute for the Development of Education (IDE), and its results were published in the manual *Increase of Mobility of the Croatian Academic Community: Croatia's Entry into the Erasmus Programme* (IDE 2008). After Croatia joined the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP), there is a systematic monitoring of outgoing mobility by the Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes (AMEUP). Also, evaluation study is regarding the implementation of the LLP for the period from 2009 to 2013 titled Evaluation of Influence of the Lifelong Learning Programme on Educational Institutions and Higher Education Institutions in the Republic of Croatia is published (Baketa, Brajdić Vuković and Klasnić 2016). Seeing that comprehensive studies covering various areas in terms of mobility policy are also focused on HEIs, which includes public universities, I will be using them as secondary sources of information.

Interview conducted with the Expert 6 in higher education about the state of mobility policy points towards the same conclusion regarding the lack of significant development prior to joining the LLP. By becoming an independent state at the beginning of 1990s, Croatia lost all previously signed bilateral agreements in higher education and was forced to completely start anew. According to the estimations of experts in these interviews, mobility was extremely low during the period before joining the LLP, and similar conclusions were presented in the study (MSES 2007), which revealed the estimation, though lacking sources it was based upon,

that 0.002% of total number of students in Croatia participate mobility. IDE MOBIL study (IDE 2008) considers the increase of mobility within the Central East European Programme of University Studies (CEEPUS) that includes around 200 students per year on a national level, which is considered to be an introductory and a precursor to the Erasmus Programme. Finally, during the interview, Expert 6 also confirmed that:

*Prior to joining the Erasmus Programme, there truly was no centralized monitoring, but various practices. This perhaps is not surprising since the offices were only being capacitated at the time and was not too much work to be done, so maybe there were no pressures or incentives for a more systematic development of activity… which, of course, particularly refers to big, non-integrated universities.*

Public universities were differently readied for preparations and joining the Erasmus Programme. At the beginning of February 2008, a seminar called *Enhancing Academic Mobility in Croatia: Platform for the Entry of Croatian Universities into Erasmus* was organized by the IDE. Participants from seven public universities in Croatia offered a self-evaluation of their own preparedness for entering the Erasmus Programme. None of the universities estimated their level of preparedness to be at a 100%. Highest estimation was given by the UNIZG – 70%, followed by the UNIDU – 60-70%, then the UNIRI – 60%, the UNIZD and the UNIST – 50%, the UNIOS – 40%, while the UNIPU chose not to conduct the total evaluation. Furthermore, during that time, only three universities had the European Policy Statement (EPS) - UNIPU, UNIRI and UNIZG, and in terms of programmes in foreign languages, only the UNIZG clearly and undoubtedly claimed to have them. The UNIZD stated that they had study programs in foreign languages and the UNIDU claimed to have such programs but that they were smaller in numbers, while the UNIPU had only some programs in foreign language. When it comes to universities of medium size, the UNIOS and the UNIRI stated that they did not have programs in foreign language, while the UNIST claimed to have them proposed. Existence of plan for coordination with the necessary constituent units and administration was listed by the UNIZD, the UNIDU and the UNIPU. It is interesting that the non-integrated medium sized universities did not have this system established before joining the Erasmus Programme. Also, only three universities claimed to have the established system of managing data for monitoring mobility (UNIZG, UNIST and UNIPU), while all the universities, except the UNIDU, established positions of Erasmus coordinators at a level of the university (IDE 2008).

Entry to the LLP was postponed because of the estimation that there were no suitable capacities for drawing funds that would be paid in terms of membership. The UNIZG was advocating earlier entry and was a harsh critic of the MSES and the Government, which were, in their opinion, the main culprits for postponing the entry. Judging by the interviews with the experts, it is visible that certain lack of understanding towards this process was present. Estimations of unpreparedness were focused at the complete system because the LLP also includeed sub-programmes associated to every level of education and not only the higher education, meaning that the capacities on all levels were inadequately developed. On the other hand, as visible from the self-evaluation of universities, they were also not fully prepared for their entry in 2008, despite the fact that some of them claimed differently during that process.

Croatia joined the Erasmus Programme within the LLP in 2009, and became a full-fledged member in 2011, which granted her the incoming mobility from the academic year of 2011-2012. In this sense, Expert 6 stated:

*Regarding a more coherent policy, perhaps this will sound a bit lenient in a significant way, seeing that the instruments were so small prior to 2009 and that the administrative capacities were only in development, perhaps it is not surprising that this joining the Erasmus 2 or 3 years before, from 2005, 2006, when we first initiated the negotiations with the Union, to 2009, was the main push, a trigger of some sort, and an incentive to better capacitate and organize offices, to sensitize administration to the subject itself, to create some documents and foundations and to introduce into the topic of mobility regardless of how rudimental.*

Since 2009-2010, four of the biggest and least integrated universities joined in and a year after that, all of the other public universities followed suit. Outgoing mobilities and assigned funds by the AMEUP within the Erasmus Programme are available in Appendix E and it is visible that the number of mobilities depended on the assigned funds and that they were assigned depending on the size of the university. Through this overview, I will be referring to the important decisions and documents brought during this period and I will also isolate patterns of actions.

In addition to the international mobility, I will also pay attention to the internal mobility within the individual universities. Namely, due to the different degrees of integration of the universities in Croatia, they are unable to assure the horizontal mobility of their own students between different constituent units. Even though, at first glance, this might not seem connected to the international mobility, I find that it is questionable how the universities can

assure quality study on the level of the entire university for the international students if they are unable to assure this for their own students. Therefore, I observe the internal mobility as an important provision of this issue and, in spite of the relatively scarce data, I will refer to it during the data overview and the discussion.

### 5.2.1. University of Zagreb

At the UNIZG, the question of mobility does not occur in the minutes in the beginning of 2001 of that academic year of 2001-2002. However, it is addressed in the Iskorak 2001 document (UNIZG 2002), which was a type of development strategy of the UNIZG. It recognizes the low degree of mobility on all levels and it is stressed that it is necessary to increase the international mobility of both students and professors. Main reasons of poor internal mobility are the non-integration of the University and resistance to change in this sense. Associated with that, during the academic year of 2002-2003, the issue of internal mobility is mostly discussed. Namely, non-integration of the University represents a problem to the very mobility between individual constituent units, which is visible in the segment of offer of elective courses that are at students' disposal. Additional element to this aspect is the fact that there are three constituent units in that period, which are outside of Zagreb, and this raises question regarding how to grant equal position to the students of these constituent units. The question of internal mobility is not disconnected from the segment of international mobility because it raises question of how the institution is able to achieve quality offer and mobility for incoming students if there are real problems with achieving internal mobility for its own students. This fact is definitely one of the starting points when considering the mobility policy.

First reference to the Bologna Process and the EHEA, in the Senate's minutes, occurred in the academic year of 2003-2004. The discussion refers to the increase of horizontal and vertical mobility of students in the complete university area as well as the possibility of bigger flexibility of study programmes. This was pointed out as one of the most complex tasks the UNIZG has to fulfill. Up to this moment, there is no more systematic work done on the international mobility and the system to accompany these activities remains undeveloped. Under-development of the system of monitoring the international mobility is also obvious in the fact that only in 2003-2004 a program for monitoring evidences of international cooperation is developed, where data on mobility of professors and students are being gathered.

On the other hand, the problem of mobility within the University remains. Particularly stressed is the expression of inability to achieve agreement within the biomedical area in terms of class organization and student mobility between the constituent units. Actual complexity of the situation and the seriousness of this problem can be witnessed in the opinion of the representative of the Faculty of Science who said:

> Not only it is impossible to organize a student exchange between the departments, but also within the study of Chemistry between the professors and the engineers. We are proud when we achieve certain integration between the departments of Chemistry, but this is nearly impossible to achieve between the department of Chemistry and Biology. (UNIZG minutes, 2004)

Similar to this and only a year later, comments regarding the lack of information about the mutual recognition of the ECTS credits within the UNIZG arrived from the Faculty of Organization and Informatics and this was summarized in the following sentence: "It is a regretful situation when it is recognized what Europe has to offer, but it is unrecognized what one's own University has to offer" (UNIZG minutes 2005, 27).

Besides these difficulties, other issues that are not necessarily associated with the very UNIZG but represent the issue of mobility are gradually appearing. First is the issue of legal status of incoming students and the unclarity as to registering their stay, and the second is the issue of their accommodation. The issue of accommodation capacities poses as a crucial question for the increase of the number of incoming students and professors. Seeing that the student associations are one of the most important actors in terms of mobility, negotiations are organized between the representatives of the UNIZG and these associations in order to discuss the issues of common lobbying for joining the Erasmus and Socrates, as well as the tendencies to simplify the procedures of receptions of students and accommodation for incoming students and professors. The issue of accommodation will mark the following period of discussions regarding the international mobility and it will often be presented as one of the prioritized problems in achieving mobility. Emphasizing the issue of accommodation and association with mobility will be characteristic for all other public universities in Croatia.

State of international mobility in the academic year of 2004-2005 is perhaps best described by statements made by Rector Mencer as a leading person of the UNIZG who is well acquainted with the current state and occurrences. She stated that mobility, as it is promoted via the Bologna Process is not actually a novelty and that it is not intensive at the UNIZG. She also claimed that criteria for the exchange of students and professors are going to be defined. This reveals that the mobility policy was on hold and that the issue of criteria appeared three years

after signing the Bologna Declaration. At this point, Proposal of the Strategic Plan for Internationalization of Studies at the UNIZG for the period from 2005 to 2010 was brought. This proposal starts with the strategic documents of Iskorak 2001 and International Mission and Policy (UNIZG 2002), which was accepted on July 10, 2002. It defines goals in terms of growth of mobility of students and professors and the establishment of programmes in foreign languages. Also, it encompasses short-term and medium-term measures that should help achieving these goals. They refer to defining the number of courses, modules and study programmes in foreign language. It is anticipated that the Office for International Cooperation would take charge of these activities, intensifying activities in the field of European exchange programmes and the special budget for enhancing mobility, networking and forming the international study programmes as well as building student dormitories for accommodating incoming students.

Furthermore, in the academic year of 2006-2007, the proposal of the Declaration of the Promotion of Inclusion in International Exchange Programmes was given, which was motivated by the reform of higher education within the Bologna Process. At the UNIZG, it is considered that it is necessary to take steps in terms of Croatia joining the European integration processes and that both international cooperation and exchange represent an important factor in this. As an important obstacle to achieving mobility, they stress that the administrative requirements for taking part in these programmes such as forming an Agency, Agency accreditations and membership were not fulfilled. In terms of funding, the position of the UNIZG is clear and it is emphasized that their funds are modest. Due to this reason, five points are stressed with the aim of achieving European standards:

> 1. inclusion into the European programmes of cooperation as quickly as possible, 2. adequate funding, 3. list of university programmes in foreign languages as well as of joint studies with foreign partners, 4. efficient recognition of acquired ECTS credits of Croatian students abroad and foreign students in Croatia, 5. adequate number of qualified administrative professionals at the University and its individual constituent units and their better connectivity, which implies strengthening of the university's Office for International Cooperation, and formation of adequate organization units at individual academies and faculties (UNIZG 2007, 2).

In addition to this, the UNIZG also defined some of their own goals through the Declaration. These goals mostly refer to acquiring the necessary documents such as EPS submitting a demand for publishing the Erasmus University Charter (EUC), number of outgoing students and professors (600 students and 150 professors in 2009-2010 and 1000 students and 250 professors in the academic year of 2010-2011), assuring accommodation capacities and

anticipated funding for these goals. What cannot be found in the very declaration, and is visible in the Senate's conference minutes, are the three reasons that brought about the need for this type of intervention. First one is the detected lagging behind the universities in the EU in terms of international cooperation, followed by the far reaching negative consequences due to the previous reason and finally, the potential for improvement, but with serious and organized effort. Problems that the UNIZG recognizes itself are the discrepancy of the ECTS credits with the European praxis, lack of scholarships and study programmes in foreign languages, problems with the degree supplements, common studies, etc. Within the Declaration, the Action plan with concrete measures was made for the levels of the Government, ministries and other state bodies, and the University and its constituent units. Action plan revealed that constituent units did not take measures to a greater extent in order to ensure the mobility implementation. Only 17 of constituent units had the catalogue of programmes and only several of them were in English language, 10 of them only had plans to make them, while 5 of them did not even have plans to make them. In addition to that, constituent units were not acquainted with the credits recognition upon return from mobility, and only 11 of them formed an office for international cooperation. Goals presented in the Declaration were operationalized through the Action plan.

The beginning of the academic year of 2007-2008 was marked by signing the bilateral contracts regarding international cooperation, but also by the expressed displeasure with the level of student mobility and with the desire that every student spent at least one semester abroad during his/her study, even though it was not obligatory. The need for developing programmes in foreign languages was emphasized once more. Also, representatives of the UNIZG initiated the discussion at the Rectors' Conference associated with the international mobility and preparation for entering programmes of international mobility. What came as an unpleasant surprise to the leadership of the UNIZG was postponing entry into the Erasmus Programme, i.e. the complete LLP of the EC, but also the implementation of a pilot programme based on the principles of the Erasmus Programme. Entry was postponed for the academic year of 2009-2010. In exchange for that pilot program, exchange with the universities of Austria was enabled. Prevailing opinion of the UNIZG was that by withdrawing, the University was brought into an unenviable position, especially because the bilateral contracts were already signed and because 60 bilateral agreements were already signed in a short period of time with European universities and 230 students had already signed up for mobility. It is perceived as undermining the international credibility of the

UNIZG. Main conclusion was that the University would request the Ministry to take steps in order for it to enter the Erasmus Programme as an equal partner in the academic year of 2009-2010. They perceive the MSES as the main culprit for the unjustified delay of mobility. As their argument, they point out that the Erasmus Programme has been legally and politically opened for Croatia since 2004, but that up to that point, adequate measures were not taken in order to achieve their entry. However, the unjustification of such demands was pointed out by Expert 6:

*Regarding some pressure for entry, the pressure was applied very emphatically primarily by the University of Zagreb, I do not recall other universities advocating the need to join to this extent or so emphatically… However, I find that a part of this pressure was somewhat perhaps emerging from the inadequate understanding of these significantly comprehensive and demanding institutional conditions.*

This Expert emphasizes the potential background of this:

*My impression is that this was a somewhat political or policy confrontation of the Ministry and the University of Zagreb that perhaps persists due to inadequately good cooperation or understanding in certain issue, and therefore, somehow this story about the mobility and the Programme caused additional irritation, I think that the cause is simply a longer, inadequately good cooperation.*

Amongst the conclusions of UNIZG, the demand for mobility funding is emphasized in case the Ministry did not manage to ensure entry into the international programs in order to further strengthen the international position of universities in Croatia. Finally, for the current year, the MSES and the AMEUP secured 146 scholarships and 40 of them were assigned to the UNIZG. In spite of that effort, according to the Rector Bjeliš at the conference of the ESCC, mobility remains critically and worrisomely small.

Interestingly, the internal mobility remains a problem. At the same conference, Rector Bjeliš said that it was necessary to work on internal mobility because it would allow them to fulfill what is stated in the statute and the law, which is that students are free to compose around 20% of their study. At the end of the academic year of 2007-2008, there was no significant internal or international mobility at the UNIZG.

Next academic year brought the requested pilot project that opened 155 places for students, 20 for scientific-educational (academic) staff and 2 for administrative staff in total for all

universities, with the MSES covering 1/3 of the costs. This mobility could be achieved in France, Austria and Slovakia. What is emphasized here is the opinion that the negotiations regarding mobility should be conducted via its constituent units in order to avoid overlapping of the vacant spots. Once more, this merely stresses the issue of functioning and the issue of communication connectivity of the UNIZG. The issue of administration, and associated with the international mobility, was recognized by Expert 6, who claimed that:

*It is truly the issue at the University of Zagreb, since it is actually this enormous and it requires a lot of communication and every other management to somehow deal with all those levels of capacities and operative solutions of support to mobility at all faculties.*

When it comes to joining the Erasmus Programme, Rector Bjeliš presented his opinion regarding the loneliness of the UNIZG in terms of its readiness to join that program while other universities claimed not to have sufficient absorption capacities to draw funds, which forced the UNIZG to turn to alternative solutions. He stated that the mobility was modest and that in Croatia, all doors to mobility remained closed. Such thoughts were confirmed at the Rectors' Conference where it was determined that there were discrepancies between the attitude of the UNIZG and other universities. However, a compromise solution was brought, i.e. the voting did not refer to the issue of Croatia's joining the Erasmus Programme but they concluded that there were two dominant opinions. According to one, other public universities think that it is possible to postpone the decision of joining the Erasmus Programme for the following year. On the other hand, the UNIZG finds that postponing will cause negative consequences to the educational system and internationalization, especially in those institutions that spent a substantial amount of time preparing for joining the Erasmus Programme, which is the case with the UNIZG. Not joining the Erasmus Programme was once again compensated for by ensuring a certain number of mobilities for students (60 mobilities) and the UNIZG decided to provide with the additional funds to students to alleviate their stay abroad. Seeing that the academic years do not concur with the calendar years, i.e. budgetary years on a national level, within which we speak about mobilities, it is a bit difficult to speak about the number of mobilities for individual academic year. In the minutes of the Senate, it was stated that in 2009, the number of mobilities was increased by four times in comparison to the previous year of 2008. In spite of such increase, it should be stated that the mobility still remains modest, which is also noticed by the professors of the UNIZG. Statements that mobility was one of the leading ideas that caused Croatia to accept

the Bologna Process started appearing, but that it was not achieved to a more significant degree and that it still depends on the possibilities of parents of individual students.

New problem of mobility arises on the internal plan. Namely, in addition to encountering the problem of horizontal mobility between the components in terms of elective courses, the UNIZG also encountered a problem of horizontal mobility in terms of study continuation. Most of the students resume their graduate study on the same constituent unit where they completed the undergraduate study. This does not achieve goals of the Bologna Process, according to which, mobility should, in addition to the international, also have a component of interdisciplinarity.

Work on mobility, particularly the incoming mobility, resumed in the academic year of 2009-2010 through isolating funds for establishing 50 study programmes in foreign languages, and 162 applications were submitted. Decision about the funding was brought in an interesting fashion and can be interpreted in two different ways. Namely, the UNIZG decided to approve funds to every constituent with the purpose of establishing one course, and then decided to establish criteria of assigning funds for the remaining quota of courses. On one hand, this enables balanced development of constituent units and secures courses in foreign languages on every constituent, which increases the possibility of incoming mobility. On the other hand, it is clear that no attention is given to the quality of these courses and that there are no criteria according to which it could be decided what propositions deserve to be funded. Mixing these two approaches reveals the unsystematic development and deficit of a quality vision. Rulebook on International Exchange brought in March 2010 confirms this assumption, because it proves that any previous mobility was conducted without a defined frame that would include the entire UNIZG. In this calendar year, there was an additional increase of approved mobilities by the AMEUP, and a decision to join the Erasmus Programme was brought, which had been the aim of the UNIZG for the past several years.

Despite the previously mentioned efforts and achievements, in the academic year or 2010-2011, during a discussion regarding mobility, dissatisfaction with what had been achieved once again surfaced. It was claimed that progress in terms of mobility within universities and within Croatia was lacking. On the other hand, the issue of international mobility was declared an area where progress was being made. This reveals the persistence of problem that was also addressed by Rector Bjeliš in 2008 at the conference of the ESCC of Croatian Parliament. The issue of this internal mobility was also addressed in the new draft of

guidelines called Development and Transformation of the UNIZG. As one of the goals, it lists work on assurance and alleviation of horizontal and vertical mobility of students with the purpose of achieving their needs and interests. Additionally, there is also a part that is dedicated to internationalization of the University, which emphasized the importance of work conducted on the increase of mobility and reaching European standards when it comes to student mobility, class internationalization and visiting professors.

However, existence of long-term problems regarding internal mobility did not cause bigger involvement of the leadership of the UNIZG, but they remained exclusively focused on the issue of international mobility. Rector Bjeliš states that even though there has been an increase of funds in terms of international mobility, it still does not meet the actual needs of students and that their capacities exceed them. He also claimed that it can be expected that the outgoing mobility will grow up to 2000 during the upcoming period of one to two years, and the incoming will increase to 1000 students (Školske novine 2010). Similar goals were repeated at the conference of the Senate, with the addition of emphasizing that by 2020, aim is to increase mobility to 20% of the students (3000 students), and that their desire is to increase that percentage up to 40%. The critique of the MSES remains present because of the late entry into the LLP, according to the leadership of the UNIZG. They consider the negative indicators of mobility to be precisely like that due to the delay with the process and that Croatia is the negative exception in reference to the EU member states that joined in 2004 and in reference to the candidates for membership. Finally, the entry to the Erasmus Programme revealed a constraint for the UNIZG in the form of approved funding by the AMEUP. Namely, funds for 401 students were approved, which is less than expected at the UNIZG.

By the end of the academic year, the question of internal mobility and the need for greater cooperation is traditionally repeated. The stress is placed on the need for mobility between various study programmes. Unlike the international mobility, here we can see the lack of external financial support for assuring mobility, which causes the lack of concrete changes. The question of mobility was not given a significant position on the agenda of the UNIZG during the 2011-2012, but the question of internal mobility, associated with the study structure, became a part of the agenda in 2012-2013. During that period, a lengthy discussion regarding switching from the 3+2 system to the integrated study is occurring. One of the arguments for preserving the 3+2 system is the horizontal mobility, despite the fact that it is, as visible in the system development, at an extremely low level. During that discussion, it is stated that 824 students (12.28%) of the graduate study of the UNIZG had previously

completed the undergraduate study at one of the constituent units or at some other institution in Croatia or abroad. Associated with that, similar are the complaints of the ASHE audit (2013a), which points to the fact that assigned procedures such as achieving ECTS credits on other constituents of the UNIZG are not implemented in practice, despite being publically defined with the Rulebook on Studying at the Undergraduate and Graduate Study Programmes at the UNIZG. At the UNIZG, such objections are discarded and they consider that recognition is clearly defined with an individual study programme of individual constituents. The issue of internal mobility is most certainly difficult also due to the additional criteria for students completing compatible studies at other institutions (constituent units of the UNIZG, other universities, polytechnics or schools of professional higher education). The UNIZG finds it to be justified and necessary for such students to take supplemental exams, supplemental semester or a supplemental year, with the addition of taking their grade average from the previous level of education into consideration.

In terms of the Erasmus Programme, 669 Erasmus agreements were signed, but the number of mobilities at the UNIZG is assigned by the AMEUP. The issue of signing interinstitutional agreements is another area that had not been clearly defined by 2013 when the decision about the procedure for their signing was brought. According to this Decision, interinstitutional agreements negotiated by one of the constituents are signed by the dean, and if these agreements are negotiated by two or more constituents, then they are signed by the rector or the vice rector with the written consent of the dean and the decision about acquiring obligations from the contract. Revising of the existing and signing of new bilateral agreements was announced for 2013. State of the mobility policy in 2013 was detected in the document Development and Transformation of the UNIZG (UNIZG 2013, 4) where it is stated:

> The University resumed with internationalization, quick increase of outgoing and incoming mobility of students and professors and the increase of study contents in foreign languages, mostly in English language. However, if we exclude several encouraging examples and initiatives, more significant progress in rationalization of the entire university study system did not occur.

International mobility is marked as an area in which the UNIZG is still significantly lagging behind the European universities of its rank and size. The problem of increase of mobility is emphasized once more, i.e. it had been said that the number of students included in the Erasmus mobility would double and that the financial capacities of the UNIZG for the needs of mobility would increase. However, it should be stated that by 2013, the UNIZG mostly

offered additional support to students joining the Erasmus mobility, but that additional mobility through their own funding was not assured and that according to the part about the implementation in the document Development and Transformation of the UNIZG, it was clearly visible that the financial support would resume exclusively in this form. Furthermore, the same document refers to the issue of internal mobility; it states that it is necessary to maintain structure through three levels and that the first should encompass 180 or 240 credits and that every deviation should be clearly explained. This problematics reveals clear connectivity between the internal mobility and the structure of study. Mobility increase was achieved between the undergraduate and graduate level and in 2011, as stated in the document, 9% of the students completing the undergraduate study at one of the constituent units had enrolled the graduate study at another constituent, but it was still considered a low percentage (UNIZG 2013, 26). Also, the EUA – Institutional Evaluation Programme report (EUA 2011, 14) lists permanent presence of the issue of internal mobility where students "repeatedly mentioned that it was easier to arrange a study period at a foreign university than at another UNIZG faculty."

#### 5.2.2. University of Split

During 2001, the UNIST signed several contracts about the international cooperation with foreign universities. Prior to 2006-2007, there were not any discussions regarding mobility or international cooperation at the Senate's conferences. During this academic year, they expressed the need to compose a more quality legal framework that would regulate the issues of student mobility, and they also initiated the organization of class in foreign language. They brought the decision that all constituent units were obligated to organize minimally one course in English language in the academic year of 2007-2008, which would be available to students from that constituent, other constituents and students from other Croatian or international universities. For the purpose of this, funds belonging to the UNIST for developmental programmes would be secured. Commission for Science, International and Inter-University Cooperation was formed in the next academic year and its assignment was to consider international cooperation and propose decisions regarding assignment of funds for international cooperation of the UNIST. The issue of courses in foreign language returned to the agenda in the academic year of 2008-2009. It was stated that it was necessary to join the trends of the internationalization of higher education more actively and better organized and that one of the prerequisites for that would be introducing English language to the study programmes. Constituent units should be oriented towards the Erasmus Programme, but also have other funds of the EU in mind. In that same year, Erasmus coordinators were appointed

on the level of the University, while the components were in charge of appointing coordinators on their own level. The first strategic document regarding mobility and internationalization was the EPS in 2009. Within the EPS, the support to mobility was expressed and the UNIST was bound to incite the development of this policy. Further systematization of mobility occurred in 2010-2011, when the Decision on Rights and Obligations of Students and Components of the University in Programmes of Student Mobility. Through only three items, this Decision aims to regulate the basics associated with the rights and obligations of incoming and outgoing students and cannot be considered a more significant step towards the systematization of mobility policy. Only later in that same academic year, Rulebook on Mobility was brought, which dwelled on the issue of mobility in a more extensive fashion and was active for two years before the new Rulebook on Mobility was brought. The first strategy of the UNIST was brought after the observed period and prior to 2015, there was not a single strategic document within which the mobility policy could be considered, except the previously mentioned EPS.

### 5.2.3. Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek

Position of international cooperation and mobility at the UNIOS becomes clear through the programme presentation of Srećko Jelinić, candidate for position of Rector in 2001. He defined their current state as early beginnings, depending on pure enthusiasm of the individual and individual constituent units and individual's study visits. Importance of such exchange was also emphasized by Rector Kralik, who sees the staff exchange as a prerequisite for improving the efficacy of studying. Report of Rector Kralik 2001-2002 reveals that the Strategy of Development was brought by the Office for International and Inter-university Cooperation for the period of 2002-2005 and that the activities during this period would be focused on establishing a more intensive cooperation between the constituent units. Reports of the following years mostly listed signed contracts and cooperation with foreign universities, but did not contain data regarding achieved mobilities. This changes in the Report of 2008-2009, when the Programme of Bilateral Mobility in Higher Education was initiated by the MSES and the AMEUP. The topic of mobility was not more significantly included in the conferences of Senate of the UNIOS in the several following years. In 2002-2003, Rector Kralik stated that the changes of structure and activities with the aim of approaching the modern European structure of a university had been initiated. Aim of such activities was also achieving bigger mobility of students. In this view, constituent units are achieving individual cooperation with the universities in the US and Hungary. Associated with this, it was stated that these contracts regarding cooperation are suggestions of these

constituent units, but have the support and stimulation of the UNIOS, just like any other activity of this type. During the academic year of 2004-2005, Rector Kralik clearly said that the UNIOS was prepared for changes and achieving mobility. However, in this period, mobility at the UNIOS is mostly based on individual and short exchanges, i.e. visits.

On the other hand, systematic work on internal mobility begins in 2006-2007. Elective courses available for students from different constituent units were presented for the first time and each of the thirteen constituents proposed one course for summer and winter semester. This initiated the formation of a base of elective courses from various scientific areas, and the main aim of this action was, as stated, encouraging mobility of students within the UNIOS as an important segment of the Bologna Process. However, progress was not achieved in this sense over the following years. Activities were mostly bound for the same, repetitive principle of action, i.e. each year, the constituent units are implementing one elective course in every semester that was available for students of other constituents.

Similar to the UNIRI but unlike the UNIZG, the UNIOS had calmly received the news in 2008-2009 regarding the delay of entering the LLP and the application of the substitutional funding directed towards the mobility with the universities of Austria, at least according to the minutes of the Senate's conferences. In this case, it was listed that priority would be given to mobilities at higher educational institutions in Austria, which was the only choice. Following that the agreements were made with the Alpen Adria University of Klagenfurt, Karl-Franzens University of Graz and BOKU University of Vienna. The minute reveals that, unlike the UNIZG, there are no information regarding the interest of students for mobility and that they had to encourage them to apply for it. As a condition for joining the Erasmus Programme, the EPS was signed that same year, through which the UNIOS accepts all obligations and principles contained within that statement, after which the UNIOS was assigned the EUC for the period from academic year of 2009-2010 to 2013-2014. Interesting fact is that the topic of mobility presented at the Senate during the several following years is mostly referring to the reports associated with the AMEUP assigned funds within the Erasmus Programme and the number of achieved mobilities.

The next policy action was conducted in the academic year of 2010-2011 by bringing the Rulebook on the Erasmus Programme of International Exchange that directs the implementation of the Erasmus Programme and the principles of incoming and outgoing mobility. The Commission for the Erasmus Mobility Programme was also named. This action

indicates a narrow perception of mobility exclusively through the Erasmus Programme and the rulebook as well as the commission were created for this sole purpose while there are no more general regulations or bodies that would encompass activities outside this Programme.

Somewhat unsystematic approach to mobility is visible through the number of signed agreements and achieved mobilities. Namely, the UNIOS had signed 71 Erasmus bilateral contract with the partner institutions by the academic year of 2011-2012, and the number of outgoing students was between 30 and 50, depending on the individual academic year. Authors of the evaluation study warned about the non-systematic approach and the need for revising the signed agreements, seeing that most of them were not realized. According to them only 20% of signed agreements at universities are used for mobility (Baketa, Brajdić Vuković and Klasnić, 2016). In that same year, first clearer strategic goals regarding mobility are brought and it was concluded that by the end of 2015-2016, a portion of students of the UNIOS included into the Erasmus Programme should be 2%, and by 2020 that it should be 3%. According to the words of Vice Rector Žagar, mobility up to that point was on the level of information about mobility from the national level, which is 0.3%. As the main obstacle, he emphasizes inadequate exchange programmes and the financial aspect. In spite of that, he announces the expected increase of mobility of 50% per year during the following several years or to be more concrete, by 10% for each of the following years in a period of a decade, after which the growth should be by 7% and in concordance with the increase on the EU level (Latinović 2012). These aims were determined by the Strategy of the UNIOS in 2011-2020 (UNIOS 2011). In addition to that, as primary vision of the mobility development is participation in the Erasmus Programme. Strategy anticipates strengthening of the academic and administrative capacities necessary for the implementation of the mobility programmes, increase of financial support for the Erasmus student mobility (implying additional financial support to those participating the programme), expansion of the Erasmus network of partner higher educational institutions, balancing the procedure of recognition of period of mobility and transfer of the ECTS credits, establishment of a university database of international student mobility, increase of number of courses and study programmes in foreign languages, assuring student rights for foreign students, acquiring documents necessary for Europass mobility, increase of availability of information regarding the possibilities of studying at the UNIOS, intensive promotion of the Erasmus Programme and the regulation of the period of Erasmus mobility with the purpose of academic advancement for professors. The problem of non-systematic contract signing through the network expansion of partner institutions is once

again emphasized, because one of the goals is the increase of contracts by 20% each academic year, which is not associated with a clearer strategic development of the university. Furthermore, not even after two years of participating in the Erasmus outgoing activities, procedures and criteria of recognizing the period of mobility remain undefined and this became one of the goals. Work reports from the moment of joining the Erasmus Programme to 2013-2014 refer to the issue of mobility in a mostly descriptive fashion, by demonstrating the number of mobilities, distribution according to states and gender, but the critical review in terms of established goals is lacking.

The problem with establishing goals associated with the increase of mobility percentage, as in the case of the UNIOS, followed by the other universities in Croatia, is that all of them primarily and predominantly rely on the mobilities achieved through the Erasmus Programme. Universities do not determine how much they would increase the number of outgoing mobilities, but it strictly depends on the distribution of funds, which is controlled by the AMEUP. This approach to mobility is understandable if the financial capacities of the universities in Croatia are taken into account, but it also reveals an unsystematic and unrealistic approach to the issue of mobility. Setting goals that do not depend on the very actions of the university and by not providing additional funding through other sources for this purpose are clear indicators that consideration of long-term policy goals is at a very low level.

The topic of mobility in the observed period of time did not get a more significant position on the agenda of the Senate's conferences at the UNIOS. Similar to the UNIRI, actions were mostly reactive rather than proactive. They did not advocate earlier entry into the LLP, unlike the UNIZG, and there is no negative reaction towards the delay of entry. This attitude was confirmed at the Rectors' Conference when all the universities, with the exception of the UNIZG, were prepared for the option of delay. In addition to that, IDE Mobil (IDE 2008) manual reveals that preparedness for participation the Erasmus Programme, based on self-evaluation, was 40%.

#### 5.2.4. University of Rijeka

Discussion associated with the mobility and international cooperation is noted in the minutes of the Senate of the UNIRI in the academic year of 2002-2003. Fragmentation of the University and the communication system between the University and its constituent units is presented as a particular issue. They emphasize the commitment of the UNIRI to the exchange programmes of students, professors and the administrative staff, but they also state

that these activities would be more progressive if the Republic of Croatia would join the LLP and that the UNIRI would support every attempt of achieving this as soon as possible. Its Rector Rukavina advocates previously mentioned attempts as well, and he stressed the need to conduct every activity in order to include Croatia more intensively into the mobility programmes. Vice rector Kalogjera emphasizes the importance of the ECTS system for the mobility of students and professors. At the time, Kalogjera said that the current state at the UNIRI suggested that mobilities would be successfully realized, but he also emphasized the issue of deficit of accommodating capacities (Šestan 2003). During the year, universities received a memo from the MSES, which requested demonstration of preparedness for joining the Socrates and Erasmus Programmes. It implied response in terms of a completely organized system of ECTS credits, infrastructure for accepting foreign students, developed information package and degree supplement as well as study programmes in English language. The UNIRI concluded that its constituent units should resume with their attempts of reaching preparedness for achieving mobility starting with the academic year of 2005-2006. However, only several constituents expressed interest, which brought about a conclusion that there is a need for composing a strategic plan in order to include the UNIRI into the mobility programmes in the following two years. Therefore, activities in the TEMPUS programmes were taken as preparations for joining the LLP.

Insisting on joining the mobility programmes resumed during the following academic year. Rector Rukavina displayed the understanding of the system approach to mobility within the Bologna Process. He emphasized the first phase of the Bologna Process, which included introducing two educational cycles and the system of ECTS credits as prerequisites for mobility. Also, he warned about the isolation in which Croatia was currently at the moment and requested its equal participation in these programmes (Marinković Škomrlj 2005).

UNIRI was not spared of the internal mobility issue and this question was pointed out during the discussion regarding the Rulebook on Studying. A clear warning was that it was necessary to work on adaptation in the process of studying and the mobility, which became the basic aim of the reform of higher education. Even though the UNIRI is a smaller university than the UNIZG and more interconnected, it encountered a similar problem regarding the internal mobility, which is a reflection of an institutional form.

Even though the UNIRI chose the academic year of 2005-2006 to be its deadline for ensuring preparedness to join the mobility programmes, their activities in this area visibly revealed that

the prerequisites were not achieved and that the internationalization policies are not accompanied by adequate activities. At the beginning of the academic year of 2005-2006, they started working on information packages in English language, draft contracts for foreign students were being prepared, contact persons for foreign students at individual components remained unnamed, and individual components still did not have web-sites in English language, which were basic sources of information for foreign students. Slowness in this segment is obvious in the fact that draft contracts regarding the status of guest student, guest professor and transfer of students were only accepted in the next academic year. This principle of functioning is also visible in terms of programmes in English language. Namely, in 2007-2008, it was announced that Croatia would join the Erasmus Programme at the beginning of 2009, which meant that programmes in English language should be prepared before that period. Same year, the Strategy of the UNIRI 2007-2013 was brought (UNIRI 2007). It emphasized the importance of mobility and joining the mobility programmes, and it also established goals to achieve at least 3% of the professors and 3% of the students of the University joining the exchange programmes and mobility. In addition to placing an emphasis on international mobility, they also discussed the issue of internal mobility. Within this goal, their aim was to achieve mobility of at least 20% of professors and 10% of students per year. As main barriers, they emphasized the issue of mobility recognition, barriers between professions, lack of proactive policy of internal mobility and weak financial instruments. Reports on Strategy Implementation (UNIRI 2007; 2008; 2009; 2010; 2011; 2012) were published accordingly. Internal mobility was characterized as exceptionally low. It was detected that the degree of integration as well as compatibility of study programmes and schedule presented an obstacle towards achieving mobility. It was stated that the programmes were closed within the constituent units, and establishing of programmes that would include courses from various constituents seemed fairly problematic. Report of 2012 explicitly listed that the defined goal in terms of internal mobility at the majority of components was not achieved in spite of the conducted measures and promotion of mobility, and the main reason to that were the limited personnel capacities. In addition to that, one of the goals of the Strategy was the increase of the number of studies in one of the world languages to 10, but according to the reports, not even a single study programme in a foreign language was conducted at the UNIRI during this period. However, in 2009, there were 360 courses in foreign languages, but only a smaller number of these courses was actually realized. Increase of the number of courses resumed during the upcoming years, but the small number of study programmes that had at least one third of their courses in foreign language remained.

Furthermore, starting with the Report of 2009, achievement of the defined goal of 3% was being monitored. Based on available data, it was visible that during the following years, mobility through the Erasmus Programme was growing, but also that CEEPUS Programme was achieving a significant number of mobilities that lasted shorter. Also, the Erasmus Programme revealed a higher growth of number of bilateral contracts than the increase of mobility, which in this case pointed towards a non-systematic approach and piling of the unused contracts. What is noticeable in the UNIRI is the continuous monitoring of the development of mobility policy through these reports, as well as the responsibility of the constituent units and head office towards monitoring of these and other indicators. Year after year, the increase of availability of information and indicators is noticed.

In the meantime, visit of the Vice Rector Ivan Šimunović of the UNIZG was organized where he gave a lecture about improving the international exchange to vice deans for international cooperation and ECTS coordinator of the UNIRI and he also informed them about how to prepare for mobility programmes. Unlike the UNIZG, the information regarding the delay of joining the Erasmus Programme was not, as visible in the minutes of the Senate's conference, received negatively at the UNIRI. The announcement that the MSES would provide the means for a certain number of students and professors was accompanied by an instruction for the constituent units to contact foreign universities to make sure they are prepared to receive students and professors of the UNIRI and an internal competition was held to acquire information regarding the interest of students and professors for mobility. This example reveals, once more, lack of a more systematic work on mobility and preparedness to participate in the announced programmes. While the UNIZG had already prepared international agreements with the universities in Europe, the UNIRI did not have a more structural approach to this problematics. After the AMEUP approved funding for mobility in July 2008, it was announced that students would not be able to apply for mobility during the winter semester, but only professors and the administrative staff, since the students would not be able to conduct all the necessary prerequisites in such a short period of time. The next academic year brought the topic of mobility on the Senate's agenda. Discussion regarding this point reveals that the web-sites of the University and its constituent units were still not made in English language and that the common information package still did not exist. Also, they warned that it was necessary to compose study programmes on a graduate level, as well as work on courses and studies in English language. The lack of accommodating capacities for foreign students was noticed as one of the main obstacles to mobility. This obstacle brought

about the idea to compose a network of private lessors. In addition to that, one of the comments was directed at the need to introduce mobility within Croatia as a priority over the international mobility. Finally, the UNIRI concluded that it would be necessary to consider the need to bring the Rulebook on Mobility, which would regulate the activities in this segment.

Indicator of weakly developed mobility is also visible based on statements of Rector Lučin who, when asked if the mobility would strive soon, replied that it was bound to happen, adding that the UNIRI had the resources necessary to achieve mobility of professors, but that the mobility of students was not yet achieved. He emphasized that this also referred to both the internal and external mobility. Lučin identified the main obstacles – student accommodation and inadequate number of programmes and modules in foreign languages (Marinković Škomrlj 2009). Similar ideas were presented by the Vice Rector Prijić-Samardžija who emphasized the fact that students had given the worst grades to mobility and employability and that she was aware that additional efforts would be necessary in this segment (Lilek 2011). The very control of mobility was not achieved through a regulation, but it was decided at the UNIRI in 2009-2010 that the Instruction on Mobility for components, Erasmus coordinators and students of the UNIRI would be brought. Main issues such as accommodation capacities and the need to intensively start organizing studies in English language were once again emphasized. The first problem did not rest in the authority of the University and it demanded significant financial means, which meant that the University could not be expected to solve this issue independently, while the second problem demanded effort of both the university and its employees and at the same time presented an indicator of engagement in terms of mobility.

The UNIRI is aware of the means invested in Croatia's participation in the LLP, which is used as an argument for the increased work on intensifying the outgoing mobility, but also for the preparation for the incoming mobility that Croatia joined during the academic year of 2011-2012. By the end of the academic year of 2009-2010, the Rector warned that it would be necessary to conduct intensive preparations for the Erasmus during the following year and announced the possibility of reconstruction of the Office for International Cooperation. Based on this example, it is possible to see the reactive actions regarding mobility at the UNIRI, seeing that the participation in the Erasmus Programme was enabled a year ago, despite the fact that it had been announced several years prior to that and yet preparations and reconstruction were not conducted on time. Similar modus operandi was conducted during the

following academic year. At the end of 2010-2011, it was announced that incoming students are being expected during the following year and that it was necessary to work on providing them with accommodation, courses in English language and additional activities. In addition to problems of international mobility not being solved, issues of internal mobility still exist. By conducting their own research, which is mentioned in the minutes of the Senate's conference, they found that 25% of the institutions of the UNIRI considered that the three cycles increased horizontal mobility. However, students thought that this was one of the biggest problems, which was confirmed by the Rector who pointed out that the mobility remained weak due to the application of the Rulebook on Studying, which disabled both internal and external mobility. Measures for Improvement of Internal Mobility were brought, and their implementation was based on the principles of flexibility and voluntarism. In other words, constituent units may act in terms of their own capacities and possibilities. The issue of incoming mobility, which was prioritized over the years along with the issue of accommodation, was not adequately solved before the beginning of the following academic year. The UNIRI offered 68 spots for foreign students, but only two beds at the student dorm were arranged to be available all year round and a temporary stay with a discount was arranged with one of the hostels. Web-pages of the constituent units were still not rearranged in English language, and the Office for International Cooperation was still not established on the level of the UNIRI.

The entire mobility of the UNIRI functioned based on the Instruction that was brought several years earlier, and the Rulebook on Mobility was brought in January 2012, i.e. two and a half years after joining the Erasmus Programme and beginning of mobility within that Programme, while any previous mobility was not regulated with this type of rulebook. In its activities in the area of international mobility, the UNIRI stood out and it was also recognized by Expert 6, who stated:

*The fact that the University of Rijeka is somewhat smaller allowed it to be more manageable, and they experienced a certain lucky circumstance, as it seems to me, perhaps it was both the people and the processes, but they emerged. We accidentally mentioned professor Lučin, there are a lot of wonderful people at the UNIRI, professionals. Somehow, the administrative teams were pretty harmonious, shared a vision, they were durable. Therefore, what we have always perceived… and what I see now is that this is the University, regarding the understanding of the strategic development, surely, that developed the most and has been working on this issue the most.*

The same Expert added:

*This dedication, not only to the strategic development, which includes communicating these values, visions to the constituent units and so on, has created a perhaps higher level of consciousness and better platform, therefore, this is definitely an example to follow.*

Reactive effect on the changes in terms of mobility was revealed during the academic year of 2012-2013, when measures were brought with the aim to encourage students to mobility and when they expressed the need to compose an action plan for assuring student mobility, grade recognition and transfer of ECTS credits. Statements of Rector Lučin remain associated with the repetitive issues over the course of years as he stated that the international mobility had grown, but strictly within the financial frames enabled through the Erasmus Programme, while internal mobility remained unsatisfactory. In this view, as one of the main problems, he emphasized the structure of study programmes.

The issue of mobility at the UNIRI is followed by the same problem year after year, which causes actions to be mostly reactive. Documents associated with mobility are mostly issued retrospectively, several years after the beginning of an activity, while removing obstacles and solving issues are transferred from one guidelines into the other, which causes them to remain present for years. The change primarily occurred on the plan of international mobility and it occurred specifically due to the funds of the Erasmus Programme. On the other hand, internal mobility, over which the University has exclusive jurisdiction, still remains undeveloped.

#### 5.2.5. Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

The issue of mobility was non-existent at the Senate's conferences during the first two academic years of its existence (2007-2008 and 2008-2009). Just like at the UNIZD, the issue of recognizing mobilities of other universities in Croatia occurs and they point out that this issue should be solved by contracts but that it demands an urgent solution. Furthermore, the issue of elective courses within the UNIPU is observed as an issue that should be resolved through the informatic system as well as respecting one's selection and interdisciplinarity.

Data located in the minutes reveal that its internal organization structure regarding mobility was not set before the University entered the Erasmus Programme. Namely, in the academic year of 2009-2010, the UNIPU joins the Programme, but the network of coordinators was not yet established on every department, which should serve as a link between the professors, students and the Office for International Cooperation. However, this issue only became a part of the agenda at that point. The mobility itself was not regulated with an adequate rulebook.

Consideration and the need to introduce a rulebook were on the agenda in 2010-2011, when the Rulebook on International Exchange was brought. However, only a year after, significant changes were introduced to the document and it was necessary to bring a completely new rulebook. Development Strategy of the UNIPU (UNIPU 2011) was brought in June 2011. The issue of mobility became prioritized and problems faced at the UNIPU in this policy were also emphasized. As one of the biggest problems associated with mobility, they emphasize lack of information about recognition of acquired qualifications. Furthermore, international mobility was recognized as an important strategic interest, as well as allowing the mobility of students within the University through choosing courses of various study programmes. The issue of international mobility is associated with encouraging and helping students and the staff during application, participating and returning from mobility, administrative assistance to foreign students, translating the web-page to foreign languages, keeping records about mobility. Activities presented in the Development Strategy reveal that the mobility policy and its entire system is actually still in the initial phase that demands efforts in building the infrastructure and informing.

Other items on the agenda of the Senate's minutes associated with mobility are mostly reports stating that mobility is increasing in terms of outgoing and incoming students. However, the analytical approach, which would reveal if the established goals are being achieved and which steps it is necessary to take in order to improve this policy, is lacking.

#### 5.2.6. University of Zadar

The discussions about mobility started in the academic year of 2004-2005 at the conferences of the Senate of the UNIZD. Lack of accommodation capacities for the incoming students was emphasized as one of the main problems, along with the fact that they did not know how many mobilities to expect or during which period. The issue of accommodation, similar to other universities, was defined as one of the main problems, while the issues regarding class content were less considered. Furthermore, expansion of bilateral cooperation was based on the agreements between universities or between departments. This reveals an inherited way of functioning, acquired from the UNIST, whose part the UNIZD was until the moment of its independent establishment, which contradicts the integrated organization of the new-founded university. At the end of 2005, document called Developmental Determinants of the UNIZD for the period from 2006 to 2010 (UNIZD 2005) was brought. Determinants were somewhat associated with student exchange (mobility was not used as a term) and were connected to the issue of securing accommodation and meals for the arriving students. This developmental

document did not bring a significant, or even minimal, focus towards the mobility policy to the UNIZD.

Unlike the bigger universities, the UNIZD stressed out the importance of connecting bilaterally with the other universities in Croatia. Primarily, they expressed the intention of contacting the UNIZG and UNIRI in order to compose bilateral agreements that would allow student and professor exchange between the universities. Due to the lack of capacities in terms of teaching personnel and discussions associated with this topic, it could be concluded that the main motive of these activities was securing associate lecturers. This was also confirmed by the discussion of Rector Magaš who stated that the mobility between universities in Croatia was necessary, but in a true sense of professor exchange, and that this mobility should be well coordinated instead of unplanned and spontaneous (Sviličić 2005). The issue of student mobility raised question regarding the course choices because they thought that it was possible to secure a partial selection of elective courses from other departments within the UNIZD, but the issue of organizing mandatory courses still remained a common issue of all departments.

The issue of accommodating students was in the center of attention at the UNIZD in 2006-2007. Namely, there was an interpretation that it was a custom that guest student had secured accommodation because they paid tuition on their own university. It was considered that the obligation was to secure the same conditions that foreign universities offered to Croatian students, and they also considered the option of giving scholarships to foreign students to attract them to studying at the UNIZD. In addition to the accommodation issue, they also reconsidered the issue of mobility regulation. So far, mobilities were conducted without a contract and the tendency was to introduce contracts so that they would be able to monitor the whereabouts of students and especially of the teaching personnel. In accordance to the national plans associated with the entry into the Erasmus Programme, they brought the EPS in the academic year of 2007-2008. However, the vagueness of the policy of international cooperation, which contains mobility, was obvious. Namely, the UNIZD was the only university that still did not define what underwent the domain of international cooperation and it was necessary to organize a meeting of all departments and the Office for International Cooperation with the aim of achieving agreement in terms of this question. Unpreparedness of the UNIZD for joining the mobility programmes was visible in the fact that they were rejected from the assigning of the EUC in the year 2008-2009. Explanation to this was focused on the fact that the measures conducted in terms of mobility of students and professors at the UNIZD

were mostly in the phase of planning and that they did not prove readiness and capabilities for organizing academic mobility and practice in concordance to the Erasmus quality standards. Critiques were accepted at the UNIZD and they concluded that it was necessary to reply to the demands of the EU. Senate published a recommendation that the departments that signed the Study agreements needed to acknowledge the courses of student's choice and review its content before the contract signing.

In 2009-2010, participation in the Erasmus Programme was not assured, but the UNIZD received the EUC and the invitation of the University of Graz for joining the consortium of the Erasmus Mundus project JointEUSEE. This project was presented as an important item associated with mobility and construction of the university programmes that would later attract foreign students. Even though the UNIZD had eventually joined the consortium, the relating discussion was marked by an absurd issue. Namely, part of the teaching personnel did not like the intention of Croatia being mentioned as a country of Western Balkan in this project because they thought it to be a wrong classification seeing that Croatia was a state candidate for joining the EU and they could not accept that regardless of what this made them gain or lose.

In the middle of 2011, the Strategy of the UNIZD of 2011-2017 (UNIZG 2011) was adopted where the issue of mobility was given a part within the chapter associated with the international cooperation and integration into the EHEA. Once again, the basic barrier to achieving mobility was the lack of space for accommodating students and professors, along with the lack of space for organizing class. Besides that, the UNIZD recognized a certain skepticism of students and professors regarding joining the mobility programmes due to the lack of knowledge about the process and due to the inadequate financial aid. The aim was to approach the rate of mobility of 15% of students by 2017. On an annual level, the aim was to increase the outgoing mobility of students by 15% in comparison to the present state, and incoming by 10%. Furthermore, the UNIZD also intended to use other mobility programmes in addition to the Erasmus in order to achieve goals in this area. In terms of courses in foreign language, their aim was to have courses valued at 30 credits per semester in each scientific area. Other than these defined goals, there were no concrete steps that would be taken in order for them to be achieved. As stated, first achieved mobilities were organized before the strategic documents were composed, which caused the UNIZD to act flexible. From 2009 to 2011, documents necessary for recognizing and assuring mobilities were accepted, Office for Academic Recognition and Recognition of the Study Abroad was established, as well as the

Commission for Academic Recognition and the Recognition of Study Abroad. However, the Rulebook on Mobility was not brought in the period between 2001 and 2013, but this area became regulated only in the beginning of 2014.

The issue of regulating the international mobility was solved through the Procedures for Departments, which offered instructions regarding the implementation of mobility and recognition of study abroad in terms of ECTS credits and grades. However, some departments expressed their opinion on the Procedures and some did not. Their suggestions were added to the final document. Even though the idea was also to use this document to solve the issue of mobility between departments and universities in Croatia, they were unsuccessful and the reason to this was, as stated, the complexity of this issue. Leadership of the UNIZD thought that there were not any formal constraints of mobility and that this was not a significant problem. According to the Vice Rector Proroković, basic issue was lack of interest in students and professors to join mobility. On the other hand, they emphasized student transfer from one study programme to another as a positive trend (Mlađen 2011).

#### 5.2.7. University of Dubrovnik

Considering mobility as an important aspect begins in the academic year of 2005-2006 at the UNIDU. At the time, it was emphasized that it was necessary to introduce studies in English language in order to attract foreign students. In addition to that, the UNIDU established cooperation with individual universities in Italy and Germany, within which they achieved small scale mobility. Statements of Rector Milković regarding mobility indicate the predominant state at that point. He claimed that the entire reform was being conducted in order to increase mobility, but that it was difficult to expect too much during such a short period of time. Perhaps a more significant insight is located in the claim that there was no mobility within the university or between universities (Aksić 2007). This confirms that at the UNIDU, just like at any other university in Croatia, mobility merely remained as an idea or a tendency, but it was not implemented in practice. He emphasized the importance of agreements with other universities in Croatia in order to determine which universities mutually recognized courses and degrees (Lilek 2007). This aspect was presented as an additional challenge for the universities because, according to him, the situation in Croatia was such that there was not any mobility within the university itself. In this sense, this confirmed the practice of smaller universities that, as a part of mobility policy, gravitated towards bigger universities in Croatia. When the UNIDU was established, a document called Vision and Strategy of Development of the UNIDU (UNIDU 2005) was brought. At that

point, as one of the basic characteristics of the UNIDU, the documents lists assurance of mobility to students and professors, but it did not contain any additional information regarding achieving mobility or more concrete goals.

In accordance with their own approach to mobility, the news regarding the estimation that the Republic of Croatia would not be able to refund the invested means for membership in the LLP by participating in the mobility programmes, which resulted with the delay of its entry, was received quite calmly. Approach to mobility and international mobility is visible through the Yearbooks of the University that the UNIDU publishes every year, whose significant portion is dedicated to activities of international cooperation. If we take the yearbooks before the academic year of 2008-2009 into consideration and the yearbooks composed afterwards when the UNIDU entered the Erasmus, differences in the approach are obvious. The first period emphasized bilateral agreements with various universities and the idea of forming common programmes in English language. However, after 2008-2009, these topics were more or less neglected and it remained unclear if these programmes were even realized (concretely, cooperation with the University of Coventry). Starting with 2008-2009, these records became focused on the mobility programmes and were emphasizing the importance of joining and increasing the mobility of professors and students. Within the yearbook, goals of the Action plan for 2009-2015 associated with this area are presented, and that is a part of the Strategy of International Development of the UNIDU (UNIDU 2009). Mobility was set as the strategic interest in the Strategy of International Development, and its activities included organization of course programmes, studies, modules and courses in foreign languages (English language being the priority), promotion of international programmes and the increase of mobility of students, educational and administrative staff. Aim of the UNIDU was the increase of outgoing and incoming mobility of students by 120% in this period (20% per year) and the increase of outgoing and incoming mobility of educational and administrative staff by 90% (15% per year). Also, they wanted to achieve that 2% of students, educational and administrative staff participate in the mobility programmes by 2011 and 3% of them by 2015. Available documents revealed that the aims in terms of data they wanted to achieve were pretty clear, but the activities which should achieve this were more principal and did not imply concrete steps that would lead to this desired increase. Similar to that, not even the annual reports included data regarding achieving these concrete goals or steps that were taken. This is why the Strategy of International Development remains more of a principal document and a wish list.

In addition to international mobilities, which they were unable to independently influence, the UNIDU attempted to make progress in terms of internal mobility during the academic year of 2009-2010. However, the issue of internal mobility did not occur as a consequence of independent desire for change in this sense, but we speak of the influence of economic crisis whose consequences required rationalization of costs, which led to considering merging courses and lists of same courses to different departments. As pointed out at the UNIDU, this particularly referred to elective courses through which the majority of internal mobility of students was achieved.

The question of mobility rulebook, just like at any other university in Croatia, did not receive too much attention during the first years of its implementation. In 2010-2011, at the UNIDU, they decided to bring Rulebook of International Exchange because the number of students interested in mobility was increasing and because they were expecting incoming mobility as well. When it comes to incoming mobility, lack of courses in English language still remained a problem and the stress was placed on the need to introduce such courses on all departments and studies. This is why all head directors were invited to, in cooperation with the professors, compose a list of courses that would be offered in English language or other foreign languages. According to the minutes of the Senate of the UNIDU, this issue was still present in June 2011, when the Report of the AMEUP was received. The AMEUP recommendations were mostly accepted, but they stated that some of them would not be easy to conduct, one of them being the idea of conducting one segment of class in English language. Regarding the Erasmus Programme, it was concluded that it was on a modest level at the UNIDU, but even as such, it represented a big step for the University. In spite of the modest exchange, it was concluded that the prerequisite for international cooperation was a student dormitory. The issue of accommodation capacities in this period was associated with the issue of mobility and emphasized as a necessity for achieving more significant mobility.

Academic year of 2011-2012 brought a more systematic contemplation regarding the mobility policy at the UNIDU. It was concluded that a large number of contracts about cooperation and mobility was signed, but that the students should be directed towards the institutions whose programmes were similar to those at the UNIDU. This contributes to the previously mentioned state of unsystematic signing and usage of bilateral agreements. This simultaneously raises question why these contracts of cooperation and mobility were signed with the institutions that did not have similar programs to the university at question. In addition to raising question of aimed mobility and systematic approach to signing contracts,

the UNIDU decided to make a change within the Rulebook of International Exchange in terms of the percentage of overlapping courses that is necessary for these courses to be recognized after students return from mobility. Necessary percentage of overlapping was set at 70% at the time.

During the discussions, the topic regarding conducting class in English language came into focus both over the course of previous years and in the academic year of 2012-2013. The modest number of incoming students did not result with class being conducted in English language, but for the courses where less than five students applied, consultative class was organized. Various approach to class for the incoming students resulted with the Decision on Composition of Syllabus and Class Conducted in English Language, which aimed to regulate these types of activities.

#### 5.2.8. Conclusion

In the area of mobility, it is clear that the main role regarding the international aspect of this sub-policy was played by the incentive arriving through the Bologna Process and continuous to that, entry into the Erasmus Programme. In addition to this, the role was also played by certain professors that encouraged mobility at their institutions. Therefore, Expert 6 emphasized:

*There were a lot of documents and rulebooks that emerged from those various Bologna demands and processes, I observe them as one package, while the other package refers to more active, perhaps more quality individuals at higher education institutions, the professors that experienced the mobility themselves.*

Pursuant to that, all universities, regarding the organization of international mobility and implementation of this policy, greatly depended on the financial means acquired through the Erasmus Programme. Therefore, both integrated and non-integrated universities, which had favorable actors' characteristics regarding beliefs (confrontation between the UNIZG and the MSES concerning the entry into the Erasmus Programme should be emphasized) had failed to achieve a more significant progress regarding international mobility due to the inadequate financial capacities (this was primarily the reason at non-integrated, bigger universities) and due to the lack of financial, personnel and accommodation capacities (main reason at integrated, smaller universities). However, since the financial means were allocated according to the size of the university, the UNIZG was able to achieve a more significant progress in this sense, and due to its capacities and the way of a more integrated functioning, the UNIRI

was pointed out. Therefore, Expert 6 also pointed out his vision of this sub-policy by answering the question on universities that stood out in terms of the international mobility, and claimed that:

*Even though my impression was, perhaps incorrect, that this was the University of Zagreb according to its size, followed by Rijeka, which always seems to be a pretty progressive university and a university that oriented to a quality process of strategic development to, perhaps, greatest extent, particularly, not only professor Lučin, but his entire team, I think that they have been conducting dedicated work in this matter.*

Regarding the internal mobility, smaller, more integrated universities were emphasized (primarily the UNIZD and the UNIDU), as well as the UNIRI from the other group of universities. These universities aimed to establish the eligibility of courses between the constituent units and increase the horizontal mobility within the university with a more systematic policies. The UNIZG emphasized the biggest issues in changing of this policy, which failed to achieve a more significant progress in this sub-policy during the entire observed period due to its non-integration. The issue of evaluation of the internal mobility was the lack of information, and at smaller universities, the lack of discussion on these issues at the Senate's conferences. The issue of policy change regarding both types of mobilities will be more thoroughly analyzed in the discussion.

## 5.3. Quality Assurance

In this chapter, I will be dwelling on the quality assurance at the universities and the establishment of the quality assurance system. Namely, prior to the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education of 2009, this issue was not concretely and clearly regulated. According to the Act on Higher Education Institutions of 1993 (Article 131), the National Council of Higher Education was in charge of providing opinions, suggestions and recommendations on quality assurance, while the evaluation procedures were under the authority of professional committees of the Ministry (Article 133). Based on evaluation, the NCHE would recommend the publication of credentials, expectation letter or denying the credentials (Article 134) to the Ministry, and the same legal solution remained after the amendments in the Act on Higher Education Institutions in 1996.

The Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act of 2003 established the NCHE[11], which proposes the criteria of evaluation of HEIs and study programmes to the Minister, and conducts their evaluation and proposes the publication of permits to the Minister (Article 7). Also, the NCHE also tends to quality development. However, this Act anticipated the establishment of the ASHE, which would conduct activities of evaluation of scientific functioning and higher education, and would also be in charge of establishing the national network of quality assurance in higher education and evaluation of systems of promotion and quality control that are being formed at higher education universities. Therefore, Havranek, Dodiković-Jurković and Petrobić (2013) stated that, according to this Act and its changes and supplements (OG 123/2003, 198/2003, 105/2004, 174/2004), the obligation of establishing the quality assurance system belonged to the HEIs within the universities, and that the polytechnics and schools of professional higher education were not obligatory. The authors thought that "the process of establishment was not successfully implemented due to the resistance of the participants and unrecognizability of the value of introducing the quality assurance system" (Havranek, Dodiković-Jurković and Petrobić 2013, 246). They also pointed out that, after that failure, the Ministry defined the establishment of the quality assurance system in the system of higher education in 2005 with the deadline set at the end of 2006.

Finally, by bringing the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education, the ASHE was completely in charge of the evaluation and the quality assurance system. The ASHE conducts the initial accreditation, reaccreditation, thematic evaluation and audits. Also, the ASHE publishes the certificate on the degree of development and efficacy of the inner quality assurance system after the conducted audit accordingly. The Act proscribes that the external quality assurance system and quality improvement is based on the national, European and international standards, while the internal system should be organized by the general act of every institution within the system of science and higher education. This Act binds all universities to establish units for quality assurance. Even though work on quality was conducted prior to this, this still assured the system establishment, which was confirmed by Expert 3 in the interview:

[11] The previos National Council for Higher Education (Nacionalno vijeće za visoku naobrazbu) was renamed and established as a new one (Nacionalno vijeće za visoko obrazovanje). The title of the Council remained the same in English.

*The development of the quality assurance system in 2009, when the Act was brought, meaning, we cannot state that nothing existed prior to that, it was not proscribed by act and regulations, but it was more inherent in the very system of education and in some procedures that the universities evaluated independently… But at the time, they did not have the internal quality assurance systems that were clearly defined and based on international standards.*

The same Expert added:

*Therefore, if I claim that the bringing of the Act caused the discussions regarding the quality assurance system, it does not mean that quality was neglected prior to that point, but that it was not systematized, in a sense, there was no raising awareness on the concept of quality assurance.*

Argument in this direction was also provided by Expert 8, who stated:

*But essential were these five years after the Act on Quality, that is the key, since it introduced a new image of higher education in regard to the previous one. I do not claim that matters were bad at the time, but it was quite, altogether, mixed, it was undefined.*

Researches concerning the systems of quality assurance are mostly constrained to individual universities or individual segments of this system and are mostly oriented towards the implementation. Therefore, it is possible to emphasize the following papers - *Implementation of System of Quality Management in a Higher Education Institution – project of students of the University Study Center for Professional Studies of the University of Split* (Buljan Barbača and Gojak 2011), *Quality Indicators of the Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek – Advantages, Disadvantages and Development Potentials* (Lončar-Vicković et al. 2011), *Manual for Quality as a Catalyzer of Development of Higher Education University: Example of the University of Zadar* (Ćubela Adorić and Đurđević 2012), *Bologna in Practice: A Contribution to the Development of Quality Assurance System at the University of Zadar, Systems of Quality Assurance at the Public Universities in Croatia* (Dodiković-Jurković et al. 2014) and the previously mentioned *Application of Quality Assurance System at the Higher Education Institutions in the Republic of Croatia – Development of the Quality Assurance System at the Higher Education Institutions* (Havranek, Dodiković-Jurković and Petrović 2013).

The last two papers contain useful information and are based on the data from the ASHE, where the authors are employed. Therefore, Dodiković-Jurković et. al. (2014) present the

results of the audit conducted at the public universities in the period between 2011 and 2013. The first university where the evaluation was conducted was the UNIDU and the last one was the UNIST. I would particularly emphasize the European Standards and Guidelines on Quality Assurance (ESG) 1.1. criterion, which refers to the quality policies and the procedures of the quality assurance system, since I am focusing precisely on the policy and procedures of quality assurance in my thesis. (Table 15). According to the ESG 1.1. criterion, the worst evaluated are the three non-integrated universities and within the total score, only the UNIRI and the UNIDU achieved the developed phase. In the overview of the development of quality assurance policy at each of the individual universities, I will also be referring to these results.

Table 15. The Results of the External Audit of Quality Assurance Systems of a Higher Education Institutions

| University | ESG 1.1. | ESG 1.2.1. | ESG 1.2.2. | ESG 1.3. | ESG 1.4. | ESG 1.5. | ESG 1.6. | ESG 1.7. | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UNIZG | I | D | I/D | D | D | D | I/D | D | I/D |
| UNIST | P/I | I | D | P/I | I/D | D | D | D | I/D |
| UNIOS | I | D | I/D | D | D | D | I/D | D | I/D |
| UNIRI | D | D | D | D | D | D/A | D | A | D |
| UNIPU | D | I | I | D | I/D | I/D | I/D | D | I/D |
| UNIZD | I/D | I/D | I/D | D | D | I/D | I/D | I/D | I/D |
| UNIDU | I/D | D | D | D | D | D | D | D | D |

P – Preparation, I – Initial, D – Developed, A – Advanced

Source: Adapted from Dodiković et al. (2014, 109).

However, the very existence of certain rules and procedures did not necessarily imply the functional quality assurance systems. In this sense, Expert 4 argued:

*The system is there, the body is there, as well as rulebook and guidebook on quality, everything is there in a way, the quality policy, everyone supports it, but there actually is no quality in conducting and assuring the quality. I do not claim that they are of poor quality, but the work on the quality assurance systems is neglected, causing it to somehow function in improvisation. That is the difference, are you functioning by improvising or programming. This implies clear cycles in which you planned something, the strategy for achieving certain set goals based on your mission, they are not merely formally enlisted without a concern for them, no one monitors if they are achieved or not achieved, but, we have a lot of such*

*strategies, but are placed on the backburner and nobody investigates if they are achieved or not.*

This is the reason why I will conduct a thorough overview of the way the quality assurance systems function at the public universities in the Republic of Croatia.

### 5.3.1. University of Zagreb

To a lesser extent, the issue of quality assurance occurred in the initial years of the observed period. The minutes of the Senate revealed that a university poll was being conducted regarding the successfulness of conducting class and it was established in 1998-1999. However, in 2001, this poll was not conducted on the level of the entire UNIZG, which confirmed that participation in this period was voluntary since only 19 out of 33 constituent units responded to the poll. Also, the Manual for Establishing the Quality Assurance System was composed within the Tempus project Development of Quality Assurance System in Higher Education in which four of the current public universities participated – the UNIST, UNIOS, UNIRI and the UNIZG, the latter being the holder. In addition to these universities, five of the European universities also participated in the project, as well as three European national institutions in charge of quality assurance.

Furthermore, the issue of quality is also associated with the issue of capacity and the warning was that new work positions were necessary to maintain the class quality. The issue of capacity and quality was emphasized during the determining the increased enrollment quotas. In the sense of quality assurance, document Iskorak 2001 (UNIZG 2002) is also significant. As a weak point, this document stressed the undeveloped quality assurance system and this topic holds a significant portion of the document. Quality assurance was recognized as an important step towards the integration of constituent units into the University and the EHEA. It is stated that the current quality assurance policy is inefficient and undeveloped, the resistance of the academic community towards the change of uninformedness and non-integration of the University is recognized, but also the lack of data acquisition, which could be used as a foundation for quality assurance. Therefore, in concordance, the set goal was creating culture and quality policy and the development and application of the general quality assurance system. This would include self-evaluation, indicators of quality, student evaluations of professors, etc., and strategic steps and measures were also defined in order to achieve the said goal. In the same year, the Committee for Quality Assurance was founded

and its goal was working on the development of the quality assurance network and culture of quality, regulating the work of the professors from the UNIZG at other HEIs, implementation of the inter evaluation of the university and systematization of the student poll on quality assurance.

This is how the regulation of work acquired attention by opening a series of studies at other universities. Namely, with regard to the human capacities and opening a series of studies at other universities, for which the UNIZG claims they were of questionable quality and yet its professors participated in conducting these studies, it was necessary to consider this issue. Therefore, it was necessary to decide where, what kind of studies and on what conditions could the professors of the UNIZG teach outside of the UNIZG, and then ensure to simultaneously maintain high and recognizable quality of their own studies. In agreement, the UNIZG thought that they assured quality of postgraduate programmes through a double evaluation. Namely, study programmes are first forwarded to the Committee for Scientific, Art and Professional work at the University, then to the Senate and then to the NCHE. They emphasize that this double approach is not implemented by other universities and that this was often the cause of non-quality proposals.

Furthermore, at the call of Rector Mencer, the UNIZG was visited by external evaluators and the University received the Report of the Salzburg Seminar in 2004. The discussion about the received report raised the issue of quality assurance and the need to develop inner criteria of quality. Vice Rector Vizek-Vidović stated that the establishment of the mechanisms of quality assurance could not be conducted through temporary committees and that it was necessary to professionalize this area. In the academic year of 2004-2005, the stress was placed on the importance of achieving quality with the purpose of joining the European integration processes of the Bologna Declaration. That year, the UNIZG acquired three projects of the Higher Education, Science and Technology Trust Fund (one project on the level of the UNIZG, one from the Faculty of Law and one from the Faculty of Organization and Informatics) for the needs of constructing the institutional mechanisms for improvement of quality. One of the suggestions regarding these project was to connect them somehow. The project applied by the UNIZG had the goal of organizing the entire system of offices for quality assurance, as predicted by the Statue, and establishing a uniquely organized university poll on quality of class. Next academic year, a decision was brought to conduct the student poll at the UNIZG in 2006 and that it was obligatory for all constituent units. The Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing asked to be exempted from the poll because they had

been conducting a poll three times a year for the need of foreign accreditation and they had the software for this purpose. This exemption was eventually approved, but the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing was bound to deliver the data enabling the comparison to the poll conducted by the UNIZG. As emphasized in the Senate's minute, this was the first poll in the history of the UNIZG conducted on all constituent units and with the same methodology. Furthermore, Rector Bjeliš stated that he hoped that this student poll would become a regular practice. In 2006, the Office for Quality Management was established, and the Committee for Quality Assurance was renamed into the Office for Quality Management.

In terms of the student poll for 2006-2007, there was a suggestion to conduct it individually for every semester instead of annually as it had been conducted in the previous year. In addition to that, the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing and the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture suggested conducting the poll online, but not all constituent units were prepared for that. Online poll was initiated in 2007-2008, and the constituent units that were not incorporated into the Higher Education Institutions Information System conducted the poll through the classic pen and paper method.

Transition to the more systematic conducting of the quality assurance was made in the academic year of 2007-2008, when the Activity Plan in the field of quality assurance was brought for this academic year. The emphasized main field of activity of this plan were improvement of the formal-legal and organization environment, development of human potentials, institutional (self)evaluation and institutional research, evaluation of class processes and class outcomes and measures for improving quality. This reveals that, at this point, there was not a rulebook on the system of quality management, that there were no committees for quality management at the constituent units, there was not a rulebook on evaluating class quality or manual of quality. Therefore it was emphasized that these were the goals that needed to be achieved, and that it was necessary to systematically plan the financial means for quality management on the level of the University. In addition to that, goals were also pointed out in other areas. This emphasized the need for work positions, establishment of network in the field of quality assurance and for informing the personnel and students about the processes and importance of quality assurance.

Motives for systematization of quality assurance can be recognized in the statements of Vice Rector Pinter. She stated that the establishment of the quality assurance system is the basic assumption for joining the EHEA and that the Bologna Process assumes regular evaluation,

which is the prerequisite for international degree recognition. With set goals in mind, there was a public discussion in 2010 about the proposal of Rulebook on the System of Management of Education Quality of the UNIZG. Pinter emphasized that the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education prescribed that it was necessary to establish the quality assurance systems and that this was the goal of the Rulebook. The Rulebook was not accepted until January 2011. In the meantime, the term quality management was rejected and the term quality assurance was introduced, however, the Committee for Quality Assurance was still functional at that point. The Committee was working on establishing the Rulebook and its accompanying Manual, as well as on the Rulebook on Evaluating the Study Programmes of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies. Also, the conclusion at the UNIZG was that they were only at the very beginning of establishing a comprehensive and efficient quality assurance system. The UNIZG pointed out that the implementation of the Bologna Process placed the emphasis on the need for introducing and maintaining the criteria of quality and that it was necessary to improve conditions and capacities in order to achieve that goal, particularly in the environment where predispositions for achieving excellence according to the international standards were possible. According to the UNIZG, this was lacking since there was no systematic monitoring or investing. Furthermore, goal of the UNIZG was establishment of the quality assurance system in every field of activity, as well as the development of culture of quality. They observed the external and internal evaluations as mechanisms to achieve that goal, which would be used in decision making. Their plan was to also use resources rationally and to decrease the number of study programmes. Similarly, Vice Rector Divjak clearly explained the current state and pointed out that it was necessary to introduce standards of quality because they were non-existent in Croatia.

The still present non-systematicness in the quality assurance policy is visible through the fact that it was detected at the UNIZG that the results of the student poll were inadequately used at the constituent units, and particularly emphasized was the non-uniformity of practice associated with the usage of those results regarding the election into the scientific-educational and art-educational professions. In addition to that, the response of the students to the poll decreased since it was introduced in an online form and the suggestion was to return to the classic pen and paper method and that the poll was conducted cyclically over a period of three years, i.e. each year, 1/3 of the constituent units would conduct the poll. Interesting is the remark that, within those three years, every professor is positively evaluated if someone does not make a public complaint against him/her. Pursuant to that idea, the three year Plan of

Conducting the Student Poll for Evaluation of Professors' Work and the Plan of Conducting the Student Poll for Undergraduate, Graduate and Integrated Undergraduate and Graduate Study were composed, and the poll was reduced. Reduction of the poll was an attempt to increase the response of the students, and simultaneously, the Committee for Quality Assurance had an assignment to compose an efficient and comprehensive application of the poll results in decision making at the UNIZG. This suggests that the poll was mostly conducted without an actual purpose, and that the results were not used for decision making at the UNIZG with the aim of raising quality. It is necessary to emphasize that constant changing of the practice on poll conducting, comprehensiveness of the constituent units and poll's format disabled the longitudinal data monitoring, which actually contributed to losing of the true meaning of this type of quality assurance.

Furthermore, in 2011-2012, it is noticeable that the priority is still given to the composition of the Manual on Quality Assurance System, whose prioritized composition had been deemed as necessary in 2007-2008, while the Manual was brought in June 2012. Basic purpose of the manual is connecting the acquired experience and activities conducted at the UNIZG with the ESG within the EHEA. From 2010 to 2012, a document called the Development and Transformation of the UNIZG (2013) was being composed. It presented an overview of the current state of the quality assurance system. As the main reason for establishing the formal-administrative framework, it lists the influence of the establishment of the system of external evaluation both on European and national level, as well as the need for a clearer consideration of development. It also offers a personal overview suggesting that there is no balanced development at all constituent units, but that there is also an issue with authority in particular areas of the system. Also, the attitude was that the common parallel evaluations conducted by the ASHE at the same institution do not necessarily guarantee progress of quality, but introduce fatigue and too many administrative procedures.

In February 2012, the Audit Committee was named and its assignment was to deliver their own report. Also, the Activity Plan for the monitoring of the quality assurance system after the conducted audit was composed. The main goal of the audit was to determine the degree of development of the quality assurance system. They were guided by the ESG criteria and their grades were insignificantly different when compared to the audit of the ASHE. With the aim of raising quality, the audit was conducted at the UNIZG by the EUA, which was followed by the external evaluation of the quality assurance system conducted by the ASHE at the end of the 2012. During the preparation for the external evaluation, they particularly pointed out to

the first ESG criterion referring to the published documents such as the quality policy, missions, visions, strategies, etc. It was pointed out that, at the end of 2010, they had accepted the document Development and Transformation of the UNIZG – Initial Assumptions and that there were certain partial strategies. Also, the proposal of the Quality Policy was in composition. Therefore, in October 2012, a document called Quality Assurance Policy at the UNIZG was brought. As the foundation of the quality assurance system, it lists the adequate documents and the ESG standards, as well as examples of good practice. It also set the five basic principles, which encompassed the establishment of ways of work and standards, conducting activities of the quality assurance system in concordance to the strategic documents, development of the process of conducing academic and administrative activities, establishing the system of monitoring the indicators of quality improvement and the development of system in cooperation with all of its parts.

Emphasized conclusions of the external audit of quality assurance system of a higher education system conducted by the ASHE (2013) greatly confirms the findings acquired through this analysis. Therefore, the long tradition of the UNIZG and the big number of professors and students, which are considered a significant development capacity, were presented amongst the strong points of the UNIZG. Also, the recognizability of the culture of quality as an important element of functioning, awareness of the Administration regarding the importance of the quality assurance system and vision of it as an integrative element. On the other hand, lack of unique and comprehensive strategic document that would be the foundation for promotion of quality, the size and the institutional structure of the University causing the difficult development of unique procedures of quality assurance were recognized as weak points of the UNIZG. Such structure influences the procedure of document bringing and makes it long-lasting, while the documentation of the quality system is inconsistent and the development of the system is disproportionate amongst the constituent units. The Report emphasized that there is a formally established system, but that there are clear weak points such as the lack of obligatory implementation of the Manual for Establishing the Quality Assurance, discrepancy of the terminology and the lack of clearly defined goals and measurable indicators. Also, the emphasis is placed on the unsystematic professors' reports about the results of students' poll, prevention of the insight into the results of the poll to the persons in charge of quality assurance at the constituent units and the recommendation is to apply other methods of quality assurance of the personnel in addition to the student poll. Seeing that one of the recommendations of the Report is to bring measures for quality

promotion based on the results, the question is if the UNIZG even used these results or the process stopped at the point of insights into the results without conducting adequate measures (ASHE 2013a). Final grade given in the Report based on the ESG criteria is that the quality assurance system at the UNIZG is between the initial and developed phase. However, if we primarily take the 1.1. criterion, referring to the quality policy and the procedures of the quality assurance system, then the UNIZG is in the initial phase.

### 5.3.2. University of Split

In July 2002, the self-evaluation process of the constituent units was initiated and every one of them conducted the self-evaluation individually. During the next two academic years, there were no points and discussions at the Senate's conferences regarding the issue of quality assurance. This issue at the UNIST started to develop in 2004-2005, when the coordinator for promotion of quality in class and science was named, and the Committee for Monitoring Quality of Class and Science was established. Furthermore, in 2005-2006, the analysis of studying was conducted according to the new study programmes and the decision was to resume with monitoring of the results of the implementation of the Bologna Process, that the methodology of result analysis would be uniformed and that measures for improving the quality of study would be continuously implemented. Councils of the constituent units were obligatory to consider the results and deliver their conclusions. However, the discussion of such conclusions was not found. Furthermore, the analysis of successfulness of study was conducted in the next academic year (2006-2007) after the first year of applying the ECTS system, and the need to employ a person, who would be in charge of activities for quality promoting, was recognized. In the same year, the Center for Quality Improvement was established and, according to the Statue of the UNIST, all constituent units were obligatory to establish their own committees for improving quality by the end of June 2007. Even though the establishment was not recorded in the Senate's minutes, the Manual of Quality Assurance of the UNIST stated that the Center for Quality Improvement on the level of the University and the Committees for Improving Quality were founded at the Senate's conference on June 11, 2008, and that this point was taken as the starting point for the institutional development of quality. At the time, the first Rulebook on the Center and the Committees for Improving Quality that contained the mission, vision, goals and the area of work for the Center and the Committee.

In the beginning of the academic year of 2008-2009, the student poll on grading the class quality was conducted, but this was merely the pilot poll at one of the constituent units. It was

conducted in accordance to the Rulebook on the Procedure of Student Evaluation of Quality of Professors and Class, which was brought in October 2008. The progress was visible in terms of the discussions on the analysis of the polls on successfulness of studying. Therefore, the constituent units conducted discussions in 2009-2010 and delivered the conclusions to the Center for Improving Quality that then brought a common package of measures for improving the successfulness of studying. The conclusion was that there was a significant need to improve the successfulness of studying and that the constituent units should take the common package of measures into consideration. It remained noticeable that the UNIST was mostly focused on the analyses of the successfulness of studying and that it emphasized how it directly influences and represented the quality of the University. On the other hand, the Senate's conferences did not produce a systematic conducting of the polls on class quality by students, which would provide a feedback regarding the necessary improvements from the perspective of students. However, the dean of the Faculty of Law revealed that the student poll was conducted and that the heads of the constituent units were obligated to conduct interviews with professors that had obtained unsatisfactory grades.

Furthermore, the analysis of the successfulness of studying at the constituent units demonstrated that at some constituent units, big quotas caused the degradation of the quality level, that taking the exams and passing rate could not be the only criterion to grade the quality of studying, it was pointed out that there was an issue with the ratio of students and professors as well as adequate space and dislocation of certain constituent units. In this sense, the Action Plan was brought in 2010-2011, which contained the implementation of measures of active personnel policy in order to optimize the ratio of professors and students and the implementation of rationalization of study programmes. The Rulebook of the Center and Committees for Quality Improving, the Rulebook on Structure and Role of the Quality Assurance System and the Rulebook on the Procedure of Evaluating Study Programmes were brought during 2011-2012. In addition to that, the Manual of Quality Assurance was brought in October 2012 and the Policy of Quality Assurance was brought in January 2013 in concordance with the recommendations of the Audit Committee. The Manual on Quality Assurance therefore emphasizes that the student poll on evaluation of class is an important aspect of quality and that the response has been growing every year since its initial conducting. The Manual also lists procedures enhancing the development of quality, which include the analyses of successfulness of studying and enrollment and motivation of students,

student polls, teaching personnel polls, institutional audit of quality, analyses of successfulness, dissemination of results, etc.

The Self-evaluation Audit Report was published in April 2013, according to minutes, this report revealed that there was not a comprehensive strategy at the UNIST, but that it was being composed and that certain constituent units had their own strategies of development. Furthermore, most of the constituent units still do not have manuals of quality assurance, and some have still not brought the Rulebook on Structure and Role of the Quality Assurance System. It was also listed that there was no gradually defined procedure of conducting the activities of the quality assurance system and their supervision, as well as the thorough procedure of audit both on the level of the university and the constituent units. Also, they recognized the need for integration of the system for monitoring of class and success of the students on the level of the University and the development of the system for the personnel, administrative and financial monitoring. Associated with that, the ASHE conducted the audit and the UNIST was the worst graded university out of all seven public universities according to the ESG criteria (ASHE 2014). The UNIST was the only university that was in between the preparation and the initial phase in two criteria, one of them being the ESG 1.1. criterion referring to the quality policy and the procedures of the quality assurance system. On the level of the entire system, it was between the initial and developed phase. Weak activity of quality assurance, its functional non-integration and non-uniformity at the constituent units were emphasized as its main weak points. Also, there are no indicators regarding the system functioning and the quality policy was not defined at all constituent units. Student poll is the only foundation of quality assurance of professor's work between two elections, and the information about the system are not acquired systematically and are only partially processed at the level of the University. According to the Report, information that are acquired are used non-systematically for planning and improving the system.

### 5.3.3. Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek

In the first two years of the observed period, there are no significant discussions regarding the issue of quality assurance at the Senate's conferences. At the UNIOS, individual topics associated with the quality assurance were only occasionally discussed. The UNIOS conducted the analysis of the success of studying and difficulties associated with the lack of space and lacking equipment were pointed out. What needs to be noted is that the UNIOS, at that point, did not have numeric indicators such as average length of study and other. The issue of quality was emphasized as key issue for 2002 and it was stated that the UNIOS

became a member of the EUA by signing the Salamanca Convention, whose framework establishes the quality as the basis of the European higher education. The first step towards raising quality at the UNIOS was considered the introduction of the ECTS credits, and the issues occurring at the UNIOS were visible from the annual reports of the deans of the constituent units, where they emphasized significant lack of space and personnel. In mid of 2002, summary of self-evaluations was composed for the period from 1999 to 2002 and it was concluded in the minute that this summary was mostly of overview character.

At the end of 2002, consideration of the issue of quality assurance was initiated and Rector Kralik pointed out that it was necessary to compose and conduct a poll where students would grade the quality of class and professors. Associated with the acceptance of the Bologna Reform, it was stated that the quality in education was the primary task and that the aim of the UNIOS was to reach the level of quality European universities. However, the UNIOS did not manage to create its student poll and the poll of the UNIRI was emphasized as an example of good practice in 2003-2004, and the proposal was that it would be wise for the UNIOS to also conduct this poll, which was adopted by the Senate. The UNIRI conducted the poll in cooperation with the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb and it was conducted by Petar Bezinović, who was a professor at the UNIRI and an employee of the Institute. In the meantime, the UNIOS conducted the poll and the results were presented in February 2005. Gradual development of the system resumed in 2004-2005, when a decision regarding the foundation of the Committee for Class and Personnel Policy was brought. The Committee had the role of an expert-advisory body, it proposed measures for improving and assuring quality class, analysis preparation and reports for evaluating class.

In spite of the fact that the poll *Students' Perspective of Study* was conducted in 2004-2005, the UNIOS still had not composed a unique student poll. Therefore, in January 2006, there was a proposal of such poll and the form of the poll was accepted, but it was pointed out that this poll was temporary. Also, the UNIOS applied for the competition of the Higher Education, Science and Technology Trust Fund and their project called Establishing the Quality Assurance System of Education at the UNIOS was approved. Therefore, one of the goals of the project was composing a unique student poll. The non-systematicness of the poll conducting, which disables longitudinal result monitoring and the work on class quality, was also emphasized at this point. Due to this, the Committee and the Service for Improving and Assuring Quality of Higher Education were named, as well as committees for monitoring quality assurance of higher educations at the constituent units, and there was also a plan of

establishing the University Center for Improving and Assuring Quality of Education. The strategic plan of improving and assuring quality of education was composed and in September 2006, the Rulebook on Structure and Functioning of the Quality Assurance System was brought at the UNIOS. Improvement of the study quality was emphasized as the main goal of the Rulebook.

Furthermore, the analysis of the quality indicators was conducted based on available data for the period from 2001 to 2005, but it was pointed out that part of the data was incomplete and inadequate for processing, and that the data concerning the employment of students after their studies were nonexistent. This clearly revealed that the UNIOS had not achieved the main prerequisite for quality assurance in the previous period, which was monitoring the process and assuring the relevant indicators for improvement of quality. Therefore, in 2006-2007, it was re-emphasized that the quality assurance was amongst the main settings of the Bologna Process and that the idea was to demand responsibility through the autonomy of the institution and that the university was the bearer of this responsibility in the process of developing the internal culture of quality. The conclusion was that, for the purpose of this process, it was necessary to conduct researches and student and professor polls and a strategic plan was composed, which defined the structure, organization and leadership of the quality assurance system and pointed out the need for establishing units for quality assurance at the constituent units. In this sense, activity plan of the system of assuring and improving quality was composed for 2007-2008, which planned a unique student poll, monitoring of the indicators of quality, conducting a poll on students regarding the work, workshops, planning and monitoring the activities of the quality system, dissemination of information, coordination of participants of the system and additional education.

The poll conducted in 2007-2008 resulted with the demands of Rector Kralik to analyze indicators at the constituent units that would be placed on discussion and that the measures for improvement would be taken. She stated that, after three years of establishing the system, it was necessary to also define the ways of improving the system and connect them with the analyses and data that had been acquired in the previous period. Therefore, in the beginning of the academic year of 2008-2009, the Rector appealed to the deans to file reports on the measures that had been taken at the individual constituent units based on the conducted poll, which they partially did within the regular annual report on the work of constituent units presented at the Senate of the UNIOS. Since 2009-2010, the poll was being entirely conducted online and the tendency was to increase the number of evaluated courses and

students participating in the poll. Furthermore, the Office for Quality achieved cooperation with the CES and began acquiring data regarding the employment of students completing their studies at the UNIOS from them, which was used to complement the data acquired from the student services of the constituent units.

In December 2011, the Strategy of the UNIOS 2011-2020 (UNIOS 2011) was brought. It recognized the fact that the monitoring of class quality was insufficient and that the system of quality monitoring was not elaborated. The solution for further development of the system was seen in the anticipated foundation of a unique university center for monitoring the quality of education and establishment of units for monitoring the quality assurance at the constituent units. Also, the stress was placed on the fact that it was necessary to ensure spatial and financial conditions for the next period, as well as experts that would be working on the quality assurance system.

In addition to that, the UNIOS conducted the analysis of the implementation of the Bologna Process, but it was strictly directed at the successfulness of studying rather than at the institutional aspects of its implementation. However, the emphasis was placed on the problems regarding the personnel deficit and spatial issues that require work, and on further ensuring of the quality assurance system that, in this sense, required the establishment of a unique university center. Quality assurance was clearly presented as a foundation for the integration of the UNIOS into the EHEA. The idea of establishing a unique university center, which was announced in the previous years, was achieved in June 2012. The University Center for Improving and Assuring Quality of Higher Education was founded then and its goal was to improve and assure quality of education so that the UNIOS would become recognizable and competitive within the EHEA. The Manual for Quality was also composed that year.

Finally, it can be noticed that the student poll was being conducted during the last four years of the observed period and that the results were presented, but the minute did not reveal if there was a feedback or a reaction to the results of the student poll, i.e. achieved improvement and benefits remained questionable. During the presentation of the results of the poll in 2012-2013, the director of the Center for Improving and Assuring Quality of Higher Education pointed out that it was necessary to consider the benefit the UNIOS had achieved and what the future tendencies were. Findings presented in the Audit Report conducted by the ASHE (ASHE 2013b) concur with the findings of this research to a great extent. Therefore, the issue

of workload of the personnel was emphasized, which requires additional motivation for engaging into the processes of quality assurance, inconsistency and frequent change of the documentation on the system of quality, as well as the fact that not all constituent units were integrated into the system. Therefore, the system remains non-unified on the level of the university, certain constituent units do not have adequate documents and the procedures for assuring quality are not connected or structured. The Report also emphasized the incompleteness and the inconsistency of the documentation, as well as the unilaterality of the communication between the central level and the constituent units. Therefore, the Center acquires data from the constituent units but lacks the feedback. In terms of the student polls, interesting is the fact that the professors are not given results concerning their work unless they request it, the supplemental measures associated with the conducing of the poll are not defined and the student polls remain the only method of evaluating class. It should also be pointed out that the part on the dissemination of the results was improved in the process of additional monitoring. On the other side, positive notion was that there was an awareness regarding the importance of constructing the culture of quality and that the need of constant monitoring and improving was recognized. According to the Report, the entire system was between the initial and developed level, but the ESG 1.1. criterion, referring to the quality policy and the procedures of the quality assurance system, was on the initial level of development.

#### 5.3.4. University of Rijeka

In February 2001, the preparations for conducting the student poll were made. It was conducted by the University, but the Administration appealed to the deans and the employees of the constituent units, asking for their cooperation regarding the increase of the response and their participation in the costs of the poll implementation. Furthermore, at the Senate, there was a discussion regarding the Report of the special team of the Salzburg seminar, which emphasized the need for constant monitoring of quality. Due to this, the UNIRI decided to pay more attention to this topic at the discussions of the Senate. The conclusion was that, based on the analysis of the poll, an activity programme would be composed in order to improve class and to work on eliminating the weak points, and that the poll would be reconducted in two years. Also, the Rectors' conference and the NCHE recognized the importance of the poll called *Students' Perspective of Study* and decided that the same poll would be conducted at other universities. In addition to that, the Committee for Class Improvement at the UNIRI was established. In the beginning of 2002-2003, the foundation of the Office for Quality Promotion at the UNIRI was in preparation and it was presented as the

basic demand of the Bologna Declaration. The Office was founded in the beginning of 2003, and there was an announcement for forming work groups for promoting quality at the constituent units. In concordance to the emphasized demands of the Bologna Declaration, Vice Rector Lučin pointed out that the conclusion of the meeting of the Bologna Follow-up expert European group was that the network for quality improvement should be established by 2005. It was pointed out that the University needed to nurture quality, accept the criteria of quality, conduct self-evaluations and researches on students' opinions, in addition to constant improving. The UNIRI joined the Quality Culture Project organized by the EUA with the aim of creating the European model of quality assurance system. This made the UNIRI one of the 50 European universities included into the project, and the only one being from Croatia. Associated with the establishment of the Office for Quality Promotion is the announced foundation of the Committee for Quality Promotion in April 2003, whose members would be the representatives of all constituent units that would be team leaders for quality promotion at their constituent units. In November 2003, there was a meeting with the team leaders and they agreed that one of the first tasks would be the analysis of the cause of failure in studying at the UNIRI, and they also announced the analyses of studies from the students' and professors' perspective.

The issue of quality was built into the new Statue of the UNIRI brought in February 2004. At that point, the emphasis was placed on the fact that the incitement of the integrative processes was an important step towards the consideration of the development of the University. With regard to that, further activities were resumed in terms of the student poll, which was conducted only on certain years of study and not on the total student population. The issue was the small response to the poll so the director of the poll and the Office for Quality Promotion, Bezinović, concluded that there was no interest for participation in the monitoring of quality at the UNIRI, but that the results still had to be used to improve and promote the quality of class. Therefore, every constituent unit should have made an organization developmental plan that should determine the work areas that are necessary to change first, set the goals, deadlines, methods and activities for achieving goals, appoint the responsible people and determine the measurable indicators of achieving goals. Thus, Rector Rukavina emphasized the positive progress at the UNIRI and the quality as the basic demand of the Bologna Process. Hence he stated:

> The University of Rijeka has been working on quality systematically since 2001. We can confirm this by numerous data: we are the only university in Croatia that organized the system for quality promotion; our

> Statue binds us to compose the system for assuring and managing quality and our work in this sense is the most intensive in Croatia; we brought the Ethical Code and today we will accept the supplement of the Ethical Code, which regulates procedures and is the foundation for the construction of the quality system; constituent units should have built quality regulations in their Statues. (UNIRI minutes 2004, 2)

Similar was the statement of the Rector, where he emphasized that every constituent unit should develop its own organization unit for quality assurance, but that their work would be coordinated by the central University Center for Quality Improvement. He also announced further engagement into the systematic researches and the conducting of poll regarding professors' work, as well as establishment of the information system, which is the prerequisite for monitoring and evaluation of quality.

Withal, problems in the field of quality that the UNIRI encounters are also presented. They were presented by the director of the Trust Fund of the UNIRI, Prijić-Samaržija. It was detected that there was ignorance, inertia and resistance to change, that there was a predominant mechanism of non-confrontation and inadequate legal regulations. The key point of quality improving was detected in the systematic evaluation of teachers by the students and using the control mechanisms in terms of sanctions and rewards. In spite of some issues, the UNIRI became an example of good practice in its activities, which is confirmed by the interest of the UNIOS for conducting their poll *Students' Perspective of Study*. Sequel of work on establishing the quality assurance system was achieved through application of project Development of Organization System and Procedures for Quality Improvement of the UNIRI to the competition of the Higher Education, Science and Technology Trust Fund, where this project acquired the best grade.

Work on the development of the system was also announced in the academic year of 2005-2006. Assistant of rector for quality, Predrag Bezinović, presented the elaborated organization system containing clear authorities and responsibilities, and the work was also done on composition of the Rulebook on the System of Quality and Manual for Quality. The Activity Plan for Evaluation of Class in 2005-2006, presented at the end of 2005, anticipated the establishment of the Quality Center, accepting the Rulebook on the System of Quality, composition of the Manual for Quality, forming the Committee for Quality and quality teams at the constituent units, composition of institutional instruments for quality improvement and finally, the implementation of the self-evaluation and defining the development plans. In the beginning of 2006, the Center and the Committee were founded and the Rulebook was accepted. In April, teams at the constituent units were formed and the poll was conducted in

April and May of the same year. It examined the experience of students studying according to the Bologna Process and those studying according to the old system, and the main objection of students was associated with the overpopulation of the enrolled students that jeopardized the quality of process. In the beginning of 2006-2007, it was concluded that the development plan of the quality system at the University was successfully realized, but that it was also necessary to establish a sustainable quality assurance system. Namely, it was required to ensure funding and administrative-technical support in the upcoming period in order for this system to work. These goals were also set in the Strategy of the UNIRI 2007-2013 (UNIRI 2008). Quality was emphasized as the basic strategic value of the UNIRI and it also pointed out the importance of an integrated functioning of the quality assurance system.

The fact that the whole system was not entirely uniformed was visible in the presentation of the president of the Committee for Quality, who stated that, during 2006-2007, work was done on the systematic introduction of the evaluation and that the unique system of evaluation was applied at all constituent units except two. On the other hand, it was revealed that the number of students participating in the poll was increasing, which was a progress when compared to 2003, when concern regarding the small response was expressed. In 2008-2009, conditions for conducting the poll online were secured. The successfulness of quality assurance was confirmed by the Reports on conducting the strategy. In the first year of conducting the Strategy of the UNIRI 2007-2013, most of the constituent units achieved the set ratio of professors and students, all constituent units systematically controlled quality and cooperated with the central Committee for Quality within the University. In addition to that, it was pointed out that the Center for Quality Improvement took over the conducting of most evaluation activities at the constituent units. Progress in the same direction was marked in the Reports for the next years, even though a mild negative advance was recorded concerning the ratio of professors and students, but it was explained that this occurred due to the restrictive policy of employment on the national level. On the other hand, other activities intensified, such as composition of Manual for Quality in the academic year of 2008-2009, and presentation of project for 2010 – Successfulness of the Implementation of the Bologna Process and Implementation of the Manual for Quality of Study at the UNIRI, and the projects were concluded in April 2011. The Manual points out that the approach to building a quality assurance system and development of quality of culture is the prerequisite for successful integration into the EHEA. However, it was also emphasized that the Manual reflects the autonomy and the specific development and needs of the UNIRI, and is based on

the key documents of the University. Evaluation of class was conducted online, while a smaller number of constituent units still conducted the poll through printed forms. Results are used in cases of re-election of professors into the scientific-educational and art-educational professions, for self-evaluation and for defining the development plans. Positive attitude concerning the quality assurance system is seen both in the president of the Committee for Quality, Deluka Tibljaš, and the director of the Center for Quality Improvement, Bezinović. They presented the entire system and considered it to be best developed in Croatia. As the key point, they pointed out usage of data and feedbacks acquired through research for improving work with students.

Finally, in 2012, the UNIRI initiated self-evaluation of the quality of study as the basis for the announced ASHE audit. Results of the audit were delivered in terms of the Audit Report (ASHE 2013c). ASHE audit concurs to the findings of this research to a great extent. The emphasis is placed on the systematicness of work, constant monitoring and improvement in the area of quality assurance. This is how the continuity in the implementation of the procedures of evaluating the class quality and the usage of acquired results with the purpose of improving the process were noticed. Objections were directed at common changes of normative acts, which caused vagueness in obligations constituent units should take over and the differently defined indicators of quality within the Strategy and the audit. Complete evaluation of the quality assurance system in the Report demonstrates that the system is on the developed level, and the UNIRI was the only university that achieved the advanced phase and the transition from developed towards the advanced on certain ESG criteria. According to the ESG 1.1. criterion, which refers to the quality policy and the procedures of the quality assurance system, the UNIRI is on the developed level. This emphasizes the support of activities associated with the structure and development of the system and creating a positive environment. In addition to that, positive side is setting clear benchmarks and indicators on an annual level and publically available reports on strategy implementation. Suggestions for improvements are focused on verification of the reliability of data delivered by the constituent units for the needs of these reports and updating the documents and further harmonization of the system. Also, students are given regular feedbacks on the results of the student poll, the UNIRI invests in the development of human resources and the results of the evaluation of professors are mostly published on web-pages. On the same course was the activity plan for improving the system that was adopted in the phase of additional monitoring of the audit. The plan is thoroughly elaborated in agreement with every ESG criteria and the recommendation

of the Committee and it contains time frames for realization of activities. In addition to that, the three year plan of audit was adopted.

Involvement of the UNIRI in this area is emphasized by Expert 9, who claimed:

*The higher education institutions that had a quality strategic document are rare. For example, the University of Rijeka now has the second document that monitored, based on the brought indicators, actually monitored the realization of those strategic plans and was then used to compose those developmental policies. Therefore, I would say that this was somewhat of a lonely practice several years back, since what we noticed in our procedures of external evaluations, even if the strategic documents were brought, both at the universities and the polytechnics, is that this culture of monitoring was lacking, meaning the actual feedback that would be followed by the composition of policies based on the feedback and analyses.*

#### 5.3.5. Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

After the discussion at the constituent units in 2007-2008 at the UNIPU, the Rulebook on Managing Quality Assurance System was delivered to the Senate. The prevailing attitude was that managing was not an appropriate term, but there was an idea that this term arrived by the Ministry and that it should be used. The decision was that lingual solutions were to be considered, but the Rulebook on Managing Quality was accepted at the same conference. The UNIPU also conducted the student poll and it was pointed out that it could be considered meaningful only if the results were published, but this was not realized. Work report of the Main Committee for Quality and the Central Office for Quality revealed the existence of great capacity issues. Particularly emphasized was the lack of equipment. Interesting fact was that a computer was acquired only in 2011, and by the end of the academic year of 2011-2012, they did not secure a printer, scanner or a software for data processing. Issues regarding the non-uniformity and lack of seriousness upon conducing the evaluation of professors were also noted, and there were cases of professors refusing the evaluation and students not being allowed to conduct the evaluation. At the end of 2010, the Manual for Quality of the UNIPU was brought. However, particularly emphasized in this case is the authority of Rector Matijašić to independently decide on the potential alterations and supplements of the Manual that did not significantly change its content. Furthermore, during 2011, the audit was conducted and the analysis of efficiency of the quality system was published, as well as its influence to the quality of education. This analysis reveals that there are substantial differences in the amplitude of activities of the committee for the quality of the constituent units, that the practice was not uniformed and that certain procedures prescribed by the

Manual were not being conducted. The report produced a suggestion for adopting the Strategies of the Quality System that would interlace all the areas and define activities. However, this document was not brought during the observed period. The issue of the quality assurance system gained attention in the Development Strategy of the UNIPU for the period from 2010 to 2015 (UNIPU 2011). As one of the most important changes in the higher education system, it emphasized the establishment of the internal quality assurance system under the influence of the EHEA in the past ten years.

The report of the Main Committee for Quality and the Office for Quality of the UNIPU and the annual activity plan of the Office for Quality were regularly adopted. Reports were delivered by the Ministry and the ASHE. In the academic year of 2012-2013, the decision was brought that the student poll would only be conducted for the professors that needed it. New Rulebook on the System of Assuring and Improving Quality of the UNIPU was brought in the same academic year. It was noted that the new Rulebook was composed in a more concise and quality way and that it was in concordance to the law. The ASHE Audit was conducted in the same year and the Report (ASHE 2013d) was composed. The report of the ASHE agrees to the findings of this research, even though they were based on constrained data acquired from the minutes of the Senate's conferences and various reports. The Audit recognized the work overload of the personnel, as well as the inadequate internal communication regarding the quality assurance system. According to the Report, such communication caused low informedness of the employees about the quality assurance system and activities that were being conducted. Particular capacity issue was emphasized regarding the personnel employed on basis of employment contract in class and the external associate lecturers. Also, inconsistency of the documents from this area was noticed, as well as inadequate usage of the system for enhancing the integration and lack of funds for majority of planned activities. The entire system was placed between the initial and developed phase according to the ESG criteria. According to the ASHE, the ESG 1.1. criterion associated with the quality policy and the procedures of the quality assurance system was in the developed phase. This was primarily due to the fact that documents were brought in this area, but it should be stressed that their inconsistency on various levels is still emphasized.

#### 5.3.6. Universtiy of Zadar

During 2002-2003, there are no discussions at the UNIZD regarding the topics associated with the quality assurance, and the issue of existence of services such as the Office for Quality Promotion is raised in the next academic year. Seeing that certain members of the

Senate were uninformed regarding the content encompassing the range of the term of quality, Rector Magaš pointed out that the Ministry had decided that all universities should establish the Office for Quality Promotion. At the time, the UNIZD did not form the office just yet, since it was waiting for the approval of new work positions in order to establish it. The UNIZD conducted the student poll regarding the class, and the analysis was also conducted, which revealed that the ratio of professors and students was such that none of the constituent units would not pass the evaluation. They found the culprit for this situation in the Ministry, but they emphasized that they were unable to find adequate personnel even after the position had been approved. They also point out the issue with the spatial capacities. This influenced the class quality and it was stated that the class conditions according to the Bologna Process were nonexistent, but that they should behave as if it was possible.

The formal establishment of the quality assurance system began in 2004, when the decision on establishing the Office for Quality Promotion was brought, and in the beginning of 2005, the Committee for Quality Monitoring was established. However, according to the reaction of Rector Magaš in March 2006, when it was stressed that the Office had not done much, that he was not delivered with nothing more concrete and that he was expecting much more concrete steps in terms of the internal evaluation, it can be concluded that the role of the Office during the first two years of its existence was merely formal existence. Rector confirmed it by making a statement, where he emphasized that the UNIZD implemented only a smaller portion of measures of self-evaluation and the reasons to this were found in the inadequate number of offices and logistics. In the meantime, the Committee for Quality Promotion elaborated on the final version of the student poll and the evaluation of the courses from the first year was arranged. However, the evaluation was only conducted at the constituent units whose representatives attended the meeting of the Committee. At one of the constituent units, none of the personals who were supposed to conduct the student poll appeared. In addition, the informedness of the members of the Senate regarding the very poll and the procedure proved problematic. It is precisely these types of informal procedures that reveal that quality assurance, at that point, does not take a significant place amongst the priorities of the UNIZD.

At the end of 2006, the report of the Committee for Quality Promotion of Work pointed out the importance of student poll as a starting point, but the issue regarding personnel was also emphasized. Namely, the Office for Quality Promotion of Work employed only one person that was unable to conduct the student poll at all constituent units, while not all constituent units had the ECTS coordinators that could assist in conducting of the poll. Also, some

professors refused to cooperate in the process of conducting the poll, and some did not know what and how to manage the results of the poll. This brought about the reaction of the Administration and it was decided that the Committee was to deliver the notification to the heads of the constituent units that all the professors were obligatory to allow the evaluation. According to the words of Rector Proroković, the conducting of the student poll at the UNIZD had a constrained value and based on it, it was not possible to make serious decisions regarding the status of the professors, but it was considered motivating to the professors who were given a feedback. Introducing the student poll and the self-evaluation was characterized as the direct result of the demands of the Bologna Process at the UNIZD. This status was recognized by the students as well and the Students' Conference suggested establishing the Committee for Conducting the Internal Evaluation and Monitoring the Implementation of the Bologna Process, but this committee was established without including the part regarding the implementation monitoring into its title. They also initiated the issue of composition of the Manual for Quality. During the academic year of 2009-2010, the discussion regarding the Rulebook on the Quality Assurance System was initiated and it was brought at the end of 2009, as well as the conclusion on the need for composing the Manual. The issue that proved significant was naming of the Committee for Quality Improvement. There were issues with naming the students into the Committee due to the reason that the Rulebook was incomplete and it was necessary to make changes and supplements of the Rulebook.

Versatility and non-systematicness of the solution regarding the issue of quality assurance was recognized at the UNIZD and an initiative was instigated in 2010-2011 with the purpose of bringing common standards, measures and criteria of quality functioning of constituent units. Namely, the conclusion was that there were different perceptions and interpretations of quality, as well realization at the individual constituent units. Different phases of development were established at individual constituent units, some of them still did not have the acts and some did not name their committees. Common standards were identified as a priority issue since, as emphasized, nothing was conducted in the context of quality for a longer period of time. The manual was still not composed, and it was part of the legal obligation and it was necessary to bring it. Therefore, in 2011, there was an initiative for composing the quality policy and (sub)strategy of quality, and timeframes for constituent units were determined for constituent units that still had not composed acts associated with quality. This was also emphasized in the Strategy of the UNIZD 2011-2017 (UNIZD 2011). The Strategy did not state the quality as a separate goal, but it was integrated into the individual strategic goals, and

it also announced the composition of special strategy on quality before to the end of 2012. However, it was not brought within this period, or by the end of the observed period. The Development Strategy pointed out that the promotion of the European guidelines on quality assurance was conducted partially or with difficulties, meaning that monitoring and evaluating of study programmes was practically nonexistent while the work of the professors was being monitored exclusively through self-evaluation and student evaluation. The Strategy also stated that the Committee for Quality Improvement did not have clear authorities that would instigate change and the implementation of the procedures.

After the ASHE audit was announced for 2011, the UNIZD began conducting clear preparations and the activity plan for the entire academic year, with the goal of preparing for the audit, was brought. Interesting was the attitude of certain members of the Senate who thought that the audit was meaningless and that it should not be conducted by the university but that it was the task of institutions conducting the external evaluation. However, it was pointed out that the internal mechanism was required that would ensure functioning and that this was in concordance to the Rulebook on Quality Assurance. Also, the prevailing idea was that these documents should be taken into account, that they should not become its own purpose and that this was happening in terms of quality. The opinion of the president of the Committee for Quality Improving confirmed the fact that the audit announcement raised awareness regarding the need to improve the quality. She considered it a warning that it was necessary to work systematically on improving the quality. The non-systematic approach was complemented by the fact that there were members of the Committee who rarely or never attended the conferences and were unmotivated or incompetent for work.

Further work on the quality assurance system was marked by bringing the Quality Policy and accepting the Manual for Quality in the beginning of 2012. In addition to that, it was established that not all constituent units had the audit committees, and this was caused by the inadequate number of personnel for its establishment. Also, the committee of the Faculty of Economy functioned in the way that it was named when necessary, i.e. when the committee of the university requested it. Also, it was pointed out that the members of the Committee experienced the work overload and that they were neglecting their scientific and researching duties. Prior to the announced audit, the internal evaluation was conducted and the Report was published, which provided the additional information on the quality assurance policy at the UNIZD. It also presented the issues regarding the quality assurance, and it was emphasized that it was not always possible to reply to students' objections in the student poll since there

were no financial, spatial or personnel requirements for it. It was also stressed that there were no strategic documents and that some constituent units did not have committees for internal evaluation due to the small number of employees or due to the fact that this was left for the academic councils. Student evaluation of class was the only regular activity of the system that functioned properly. Also, the ASHE Audit (ASHE 2013d) also presented weak points in the systematic acquiring and usage of information with the purpose of quality assurance. It was also emphasized that the strategic documents were composed in different periods, which led to inconsistency and overlapping, and this was also the case between the two central bodies of the quality assurance system where clear authorities and responsibilities remained unknown. According to ASHE, the results of the student poll were not used systematically, the feedback informing depended on the individual constituent unit and it differed. On the other hand, it was pointed out that the need for systematic development of the culture of quality and usage of the system for enhancing integration was recognized. Finally, according to the ESG criteria, the entire system was between the initial and developed phase, and the ESG 1.1. criterion, referring to the quality policy and the procedures of the quality assurance system, was in the same phase.

#### 5.3.7. University of Dubrovnik

At the beginning of the UNIDU's functioning, there was a quality system that was transferred from the former Polytechnics of Dubrovnik, but it did not encompass the entire University. Therefore, one of the first tasks was introducing it to the remaining constituent units. Regarding the class quality at the UNIDU, already in the first year after its establishment did the issues occur and they were associated with the required teaching personnel. They only had 21% of the necessary personnel for the proposed study programmes according to the Bologna Process, which was why they decided to abjure the applied graduate studies, after which they merely had 34% of the necessary personnel, while the legal minimum was 50% of professors employed on basis of employment contract. This was followed by abjuring some of the undergraduate studies that raised the percentage to 46.49%. However, they managed to negotiate the permission to conduct these study programmes in spite of such coverage of personnel.

Activities of the Polytechnics at the time included analysis of the structure of students enrolled to the first year of study, passing rate from the first to the second year of study, study duration, evaluating the class activities by the students, self-evaluations of professors and the analysis of employment of graduated students. The proposal was to conduct the same analyses

at the UNIDU. Having that in mind, the poll was also conducted and the conclusion was to deliver individual results of the poll to every professor and to every head of the constituent units for the professors of that unit, discussion on the results of the poll was expected and interviews with the professors acquiring the lowest grades were conducted. In addition to that, the analysis of the successfulness of studying was conducted and in February 2006, there was a meeting with the heads of the constituent units to which the analyzed results refer. Also, during 2005-2006, the quality of class activities was examined in both semesters, and the Rector also pointed out that the professors who acquired bad grades consecutively for two years should no longer be a part of the university. However, followed by the poll of 2006-2007, it was pointed out that the biggest problem was the lack of sanctions for the worst graded professors and the lack of rewards for the best graded. At that point, Rector Milković stated that it was unnecessary to specially reward the best, but that the worst graded professors should be called in for an interview and if their results during the next year remain unchanged, thank them for their cooperation and end it. Same year, the self-evaluations of class activities were also conducted and the professors objected in terms of the spatial capacities, while the results of the analysis were delivered to the academic councils for a discussion. Also, after the NCHE adopted the documents for evaluating HEIs, the UNIDU concluded that it was necessary to collect and systemize the data according to the delivered parameters.

Conducting the poll on class quality amongst students also occurred in the next years, but there is no trace in the minutes about the feedback of the constituent unit towards the Senate about what was realized regarding the analysis and improving quality. However, certain non-systematicness of the procedure can be found. Namely, in the academic year of 2007-2008, it was pointed out that the polls were conducted without being announced, and the dissatisfaction of both the students and members of the Senate still existed in terms of publishing the results, as well as rewarding and sanctioning of the professors. Lack of systematic approach was pointed out by Rector Milković, who claimed that the information acquired through the poll was useful, but meaningless if the councils of the departments did not discuss them. Interesting insight was that the sanctions were also referring to the external associate lecturers and the recommendation was to end cooperation with those who had acquired bad results. On the other hand, negative grades for the rest of the professors influenced their election into the higher profession. Incite for the development of the quality assurance system was the bringing of the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher

Education in 2009. Therefore, the committee for the internal system of assuring and improving quality at the UNIDU was named. The establishment of the internal system brought a unique set of measures and activities in order to ensure the quality of work outcomes, and the domain of the Committee was to conduct procedures of evaluating and establishing quality, acquiring and processing data, work on inclusion and connection into the international associations and networks that dwell on quality assurance, etc. Self-evaluation of the work of the University's constituent units was also conducted as the preparation for the external evaluation of the ASHE and the NCHE, which took place every three years. Not all the professors responded, the Rector's claim was that 80% of them filled the questionnaire. In addition to this, it was pointed out that the UNIDU had somewhat more than 50% of their own personnel employed in 2008-2009, while the rest were the external associate lecturers. This was a mild progress when compared to the initial period of functioning and their goal was to achieve 70% occupancy with their own personnel.

The issue of the student poll once again gained significant attention at the Senate in 2009-2010. Namely, there was not enough time to modify the poll, so it remained the same as in the previous years, and the dissatisfied students even announced to boycott it in case changes remained unintroduced. Once again, the issues associated with the coverage of the poll, sanctions and rewards for the professors were emphasized, and it was also noticed that similar discussions were led each year when the issue of poll reached the agenda. Rector Milković thought that the results minimally differed year after year, but that three of the external associate lecturers had endured the cancellation of cooperation due to poor grades. On the other hand, mere interviews were conducted with the professors employed on basis of employment contract and they were instructed to improve their work. These, as well as and previously stated arguments, revealed that the UNIDU had issues with stricter sanctions for the professors employed on basis of employment contract due to the lack of human capacities and the stricter sanctions would only deepen the issues in this area. Associated with that is the comment of Rector Milković, who claimed that it was easier to react when it came to external associate lecturers, and more difficult when the professors employed on basis of employment contract were in question. Also, it was pointed out that it was not positive that the students pinpointed the unsatisfactory work of some professors and that nothing was done with the purpose of solving these issues at the constituent units. Furthermore, the summer semester of 2009-2010 did not bring any changes in the poll and the primary reason to this was the fact that the proposals for improvements did not arrive. This pointed out the non-acceptance of

culture of quality by the professors, and also that the actors responsible for the quality assurance were not adequately engaged in the matter or that there was no professional service that could fulfill those demands. The very system of quality was graded positively and in the developed phase by the ASHE, but it can be noticed that, in some areas, such as the student poll, this policy was not on that level. The non-systematic approach was once again revealed by the professors in 2010-2012 when completing the self-evaluation of class activities. Namely, great number of professors did not deliver the filled form even though it was the obligation of everyone conducting class. It was pointed out that there were no suggestions for improvement, which also revealed a great level of disinterest. This, once again, showed that the establishment of formal and non-formal procedures was in contradiction and that the formal demands were being ignored. Furthermore, this was confirmed by the poll regarding the quality of class activities where the emphasis was placed on the dissatisfaction due to the lack of reaction of the Administration to the bad results of certain professors over a longer period of time, which caused the students to deem the poll unnecessary. This is why the proposition was to form the Committee for Conducting and Processing the Poll and it was stressed that every head of the department should conduct an interview with a badly graded professors.

The Audit Report by the ASHE (2012) during 2010 and 2011 was delivered to the UNIDU. This made the UNIDU the first university in Croatia that was audited. The integration of the UNIDU and the support of the administration to the quality assurance system were pointed out as its advantages, but the work overload of the professors was noticed. It was stated that all the necessary documents for the functioning of the quality assurance system were brought and the awareness of the promotion of the culture of quality. The initial report determined that the tasks of the system were in the initial stage, that the implementation at the individual constituent units was remarkably different and that the procedure of planning the strategic goals was not clear. It was also concluded that the uniformity of the system was nonexistent, that the guidelines of the ESG were not implemented enough and that the responsibilities and authorities were vaguely defined. Even though progress was recorded in the period of supplemental monitoring according to the criterion ESG 1.1. referring to the policy quality and the procedures of the quality assurance system, the UNIDU was in the transition from the initial into the developed phase, and the entire quality assurance system was on the developed level. After the Audit Report was delivered, the UNIDU expressed its disagreement to it. They thought that they were more successful according to certain criteria, and the final report

of the ASHE revealed that their objections were accepted. The objection was also associated with the standard on information concerning the quality assurance system and the UNIDU claimed that all of its employees were well acquainted with the system and that it was implemented into all the acts. Although, according to the minutes of the Senate, concretely regarding the objections associated with the student poll and the steps that are not being taken in terms of quality assurance, it can be noticed that the culture of quality and the procedure information did not reach all employees. It is noticeable that the UNIDU made the biggest progress after the objection and after the period of additional monitoring. In addition to 1.1. criterion, the level for the 1.2. criterion was also raised, which had been in transition from the initial into developed phase, after which the designed level was developed, and for the 1.6. criterion, which was firstly in the initial and then in the developed phase.

Still, progress was visible in the academic year of 2011-2012 during the self-evaluation of class activities. For the first time since the self-evaluation had been initiated that all the professors filled the form. Furthermore, new form of the student poll regarding the quality of class activities was made, which had been the demand of the students and some of the members of the Senate for the past several years. Changes were also introduced regarding the procedures following the poll conducting. In addition to the interviews with the professors, it was necessary to compose an official report about the interview and deliver it to the Rectorate. Rector Milković clearly stated that it was not enough merely to determine the status of the situation, but that it was necessary to bring measures that would remove weak points and monitor results. The practice of cooperation cancellation for the external associate lecturers in case of bad grades was maintained and the novelty was that the indefinitely employed professors who acquired unsatisfactory grades consecutively for two years for a certain course could not hold the course in the next year. Student poll questioning the quality of work of the services of the university was also introduced. However, the new rector Vesna Vrtiprah referred to the issue of public publication of the results during the discussion about the results of the poll in the summer semester of 2012-2013, stating that if the decisions regarding the procedures ensuing the analysis were conducted at all constituent units, this topic would not continuously reach the agenda. Also, she pointed out that no one had delivered the written report on the interview with badly graded professors, which was emphasized as obligatory. Already in the following academic year, the old practice regarding the self-evaluation of class activities returned and not all of the professors delivered their forms. The student poll was conducted in the electronic form for the first time, and the issue

of objectivity of the poll was raised due to the small response (only 23% of the students filled the questionnaire). There was a proposal that the students were obligatory to participate in the poll and this proposal was accepted, meaning that, since 2013-2014, the students were obligatory to fill the questionnaire or they would not be able apply for their exams.

In 2012-2013, there was a review and an update of the Quality Policy brought at the beginning of the work of the UNIDU. It elaborated on the managing of quality, development of the system and quality of different areas and it is considered the basic document for composition of operative plans. It was pointed out that the maintaining and developing the quality assurance system was guided by their own initiative, influences of the market and international regulations. Finally, in May 2013, the Strategy of Quality Assurance was brought. This Strategy encompasses all relevant areas associated with the culture of quality, from the quality assurance systems and class quality to the human and spatial resources.

#### 5.3.8. Conclusion

The experts recognized the Bologna Process as the main incentive for introducing the quality assurance system. Therefore, Expert 3 emphasized:

*Well, the Bologna Process was definitely the incentive. Regardless of the fact that there was no systematized assurance before, there is always a difference between the quality assurance and the quality as such. Seeing that we are discussing the quality assurance systems, they were nonexistent in the regulations and as a concept present at the universities prior to the Bologna Process.*

Furthermore, Expert 4 pointed out that the incentive arrived externally:

*Therefore, most of the occurrences in higher education were actually brought about by the incentive from the European policies… Through their bodies, activities, projects and financing, the European Union actually directs the educational policies of its member states on the same course. Therefore, this influence, of the European policies in higher education, participation of, of course, all member states at these forums, workshops, conferences, and so on, actually gives and transfers, also through various documents and guidelines, that we know, the ESG standards of quality assurance – European standards and guidelines for quality assurance in higher education, these are all documents that were actually the foundation of building the quality assurance system in Croatia.*

This, as well as the overview of the complete development of quality policy at the universities, confirmed that the main impulse arrived from the European level, while the

systematization ensued the bringing of the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education in 2009. As it can be seen in Appendix F, there was the continuity of work conducted in this sub-policy at the UNIRI, periodical activities of other universities and late joining of the UNIST into the work on quality assurance. In addition to that, the UNIRI was emphasized according to the audit results conducted by the ASHE, which were presented earlier. There was a clear issue at the UNIST, UNIOS and UNIZG that is evident in the lack of joint policies and harmonization of the system on the level of the university and the reason to this was detected in the non-integration. On the other hand, the non-harmonization proved to be an issue also at the smaller universities, but they also emphasized the lack of human and financial capacities that would enable the change. Consideration and explanation of change will be thoroughly presented in the discussion.

## 5.4. Social Dimension

Representation of social dimension as a concept in higher education in Croatia, which also entails associated researches monitoring this sub-policy, is substantially scarce in the first half of the period observed in this thesis. The very concept of social dimension occurs somewhat later on the plan of the Bologna Process, which partially explains its later entry into the national context. Within the Bologna Process, social dimension of higher education implies "institutional measures contributing to equal chances upon study enrollment, during the study and upon its completion, with special emphasis placed on socially disadvantaged students" (Puzić, Doolan and Dolenec 2006, 245-246). This entails the issue of funding of people of lower socioeconomic status, but social dimension should also include other social factors such as disability or age. Constraint regarding the observing of the social dimension was pointed out by Expert 5 in the following claim:

*Two groups that could be included according to these criteria are the students with disabilities and students from the families of lower socioeconomic status. And then, in the Croatian context, students who are children of Croatian defenders… it was quite narrowed to these three groups that I had previously mentioned, the vulnerability is actually a lot wider and cumulative.*

Here, I would point out that the issue of children of defenders will be presented partially in the enrollment policy since it brought the most attention to the enrollment quotas. On the other hand, I will not be referring to this issue regarding the social dimension in more detail since it was not pointed out as a social issue and in this form was not under the authority of the deciding by the university.

In terms of social dimension, Puzić, Doolan and Dolenec (2006) offer a short review of normative context on a national level through which the social dimension is represented. They primarily point out the Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act (2003) according to which, institutions of higher education are obligatory to guarantee, pursuant to Article 77.2, equality to all applicants during the procedure of student selection regardless of race, skin color, gender, language, religion, political or any other beliefs, national or social background, assets, birth, social position, disability, sexual orientation and age. As stated by the authors, in terms of groups, this framework is wider than the one of the Bologna Process, but it only refers to the study enrollment, but not to the course and completion of study. In the empirical part, the authors are focused on the structure of students and their family background in terms of professional qualification of parents. Similarly, two researches, EUROSTUDENT IV in 2011 and EUROSTUDENT V in 2014, were conducted by the IDE in cooperation with the MSES, which produced national reports called *Social and Economic Image of Student Life in Croatia* (IDE 2011) and *Social and Economic Conditions of Student Life in Croatia* (IDE 2014). Previously mentioned authors and these two reports revealed a significant population of students at Croatian universities arriving from families of lower social status or individuals with health difficulties. It also revealed difficult access to individuals from families with less educated parents and to individuals over 21 years of age. Therefore, it is clear that measures and policies responsive to the existing situation are needed at universities, which raises question how the universities had precisely been developing and changing their policies within the social dimension.

Furthermore, it is necessary to emphasize the Tempus project called *Education for Equal Opportunities at Croatian Universities – EduQuality* (2010-2013), in which all public universities participated, with the exception of the UNIPU. This project was directed towards the policy of students with disabilities. Draft of the national document called *Ensuring Minimum Standards of Accessibility for Students with Disabilities in Higher Education in the Republic of Croatia* (EduQuality 2013) was composed within the previously presented project. This document identifies key issues, as well as the development of policies at public universities and current state. Authors of the document point out the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act, Anti-discrimination Act (OG 85/2008) and the National Strategy to Create Equal Opportunities for People with Disabilities 2007-2015 (OG 63/2007) as the legal framework on a national level in this area. Constitution and laws guarantee equality to citizens in a general way regardless of specific

differences, while the National Strategy only partially implies higher education in terms of assuring accessibility of universities and constituent units to students with disabilities expressed through the number of universities ensuring it. According to the data acquired from that national document, it is visible that the UNIZG, UNIRI and UNIOS have offices for students with disabilities, the UNIZD has the Student Advisory Center that takes care of students with disabilities, while the UNIDU appointed a coordinator for students with disabilities and the UNIPU has the Commission for Students with Disabilities (Table 16).

Table 16. Support for Student with Disabilities

| | Individualized adapted ways of taking entrance exams for candidates with disabilities | Enrollment advantage of candidates with disabilities | Peer support for students with disabilities | Office for Students with Disabilities | Student Advisory Center |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UNIZG | + | + | + | 2007 | On the level of individual constituent units |
| UNIST | - | + | - | - | Formed – without the work capacity |
| UNIOS | + | + | - | 2009 | - |
| UNIRI | + | + | + | 2010 | 2010 |
| UNIPU | - | - | - | 2012 | Formed – without the work capacity |
| UNIZD | - | - | + | 2011 | 2008 |
| UNIDU | + | + | - | 2011 | - |

Source: Based on data from Ensuring Minimum Standards of Accessibility for Students With Disabilities in Higher Education in the Republic of Croatia (EduQuality 2013).

Furthermore, it is emphasized that all the universities introduced constitutional regulations regarding prohibition of discrimination and rights of all students to study, which also includes students with disabilities.

When speaking about the issue of social dimension, it is necessary to stress particular goals within the performance-based agreements signed between the MSES and the universities in 2012. At that point, three-year agreements were made about the subvention of participation of regular students regarding costs of study for the academic years of 2012-2013, 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. Two of the listed elective goals were associated with the social dimension – alleviation of the access to study and study support for students of lower socioeconomic status and students with disabilities, as well as alleviation of access and study quality assurance for students over 25 years of age. Only two universities selected both of these goals, while the UNIST did not choose either one of them (Table 17).

Table 17. Social Criteria in Performance-Based Agreements

| | Alleviation of the access to study and study support for students of lower socioeconomic status and students with disabilities | Alleviation of access and study quality assurance for students over 25 years of age |
|---|---|---|
| UNIZG | + | - |
| UNIST | - | - |
| UNIOS | + | + |
| UNIRI | + | - |
| UNIPU | - | + |
| UNIZD | + | + |
| UNIDU | - | + |

### 5.4.1. University of Zagreb

In the initial years of the observed period, the social dimension did not receive greater attention at the UNIZG. Mostly discussed, to a lesser extent in comparison to other topics, are the issues of student meals and accommodation. Iskorak 2001 (UNIZG 2002) itself revealed how the UNIZG observes studies, and the lack of social dimension is here displayed. As an obstacle in the SWOT analysis, they detected studies being treated as a social rather than an educational category and this definition would later become a determinant towards the social dimension. This is why in the academic year of 2002-2003, the question of how the system is organized in general is being opened. At the time, Vice Rector Bjeliš thought that this was not neither system of public good or a system of private good, but rather a mixture that was neither efficient nor stimulating. This opened the question associating the topic of

scholarships and the social dimension, which caused Rector Mencer to express her favor towards resolving the issue of funding through loans and scholarships. General attitude was that the policy of the MSES was wrong and that it was actually assuming the role of the ministry of social welfare, meaning that the funds for the social benefit were flowing over at the expense of the entire university. The question of allocation of funds and the fairness of the system was on the agenda the following year as well. At the UNIZG, they thought that scholarships and loans should solve the problem of financing studies because in that case, it would not be problematic to set a realistic price of studies that was, according to their estimation, between 25 000 and 30 000 Croatian Kunas (HRK). At that time, only a portion of economic price was being paid. This is why at the UNIZG, they thought that education could not possibly be financed strictly out the state budget, but that new solutions needed to be just and available to everyone.

However, the question of scholarships that the UNIZG often emphasized as a solution that should secure a more fair system and make higher education available to everyone is often directed at the opposite criteria by the UNIZG itself. Namely, in the academic year of 2005-2006, during the awarding of scholarships by the MSES, the proposition of the UNIZG was that the only criterion should be the criterion of excellence. This approach of the UNIZG to scholarships would become extremely pronounced in the following years both in promotion and in their actions. In the course of that, in 2006-2007, Rector Bijeliš suggested that the universities should be in control of scholarships for excellence, while other scholarships should be under the authority of the Ministry. In addition to that, they supported negotiations between the Ministry and the banks regarding favorable loans. At the Senate, it was said that students needed to be stimulated because this was how they encouraged the best of them, that knowledge costs and that the students are aware that they had paid their education and had the right to ask for something in exchange. They suggested establishing a university foundation in which 2% of the scholarships would be transferred, which would then be used to fund the best students. Finally, Rectors' Collegium brought a unanimous decision to propose to the Senate that a foundation should be established where 3% of the income from the participations for the first year of the study would be transferred into the Foundation of Scholarships for Most Successful Students. The decision clearly revealed that it was not on the track of the social dimension but that its aim was to encourage excellence, but it should be stated that the issue of non-integration of the UNIZG surfaced during deciding about this conclusion. Namely, it was stated that the Senate did not have a footing for such decisions and that it could not

discuss incomes of the constituent units. As a solution to this problem, they offered signing of an agreement between the dean and the rector about allocating means for the Foundation. According to this agreement, the Foundation would begin functioning in 2007-2008 and, as previously mentioned, scholarships would be meant for the most successful regular students of that generation. In addition to that, the UNIZG would resume awarding additional one hundred of scholarships to the most successful regular students of all generations out of the regular budget (resources for these scholarships are provided by the MSES) of the University, with main criterion being excellence, and the subsidiary criterion being the social status of students. What needs to be emphasized, and clearly describes the politics of the UNIZG in terms of social dimension, is the existence of proposition that there should be two models, one being based on excellence and the other on social basis. However, the attitude of the leadership of the UNIZG was that social measures should be defined on the state level. Similar attitude was presented during the introduction of the system of linear scholarships when it was stated that the UNIZG chose to stimulate excellence.

In addition to raising the issue of scholarships, academic year of 2006-2007 also raised the issue of students with disabilities. During the earlier years, this group did not appear on the Senate's agenda, but in that year, this issue also appeared through the discussions regarding enrollment and direct enrollment was secured to students with disabilities with 60% or more physical impairment if they passed the threshold on the entrance exam, which was a decision brought on a national level. Besides that, the Proposition of Regulation of Organization and Activity was created for the Office for Students with Disabilities, and establishing of the Office was initiated. Office started working in 2007, but according to the available data in the Development Strategy of the Student Support System (UNIZG 2014), it was not capacitated enough and the systematic data acquisition about students with disabilities did not exist. More concretely, only students who achieved some of their rights or used support are recorded. In concordance with that, this Strategy recognizes that there are physical obstacles on the constituent units, inadequate sensibility and educations of professors, as well as issues with adapted lectures. The question of students with disabilities gained attention regarding scholarships, too. In 2007-2008, it was decided that within the frame of 100 scholarships assigned to best students by the UNIZG, at least two scholarships would be assigned to students with disabilities. However, estimation of the very Vice Rector Pinter suggests the conclusion that conditions for students with disabilities are nowhere near to being ideal. She stated that the situation at the constituent units is versatile, some of them being partially

adapted and some being completely unadapted. In 2008, the UNIZG brought the Instruction for Individualized Adapted Entrance Exam for Candidates with Disabilities that gives equality of opportunity to students with disabilities regarding university enrollment.

By establishing the Foundation for Awarding Scholarships to Talented Students in 2007-2008, 3% of the tuition fee income was taken and the income of this Foundation was 61 000 HRK. This amount was meant for funding regular students based on their success during their first year of study. Furthermore, on one side, Rector Bjeliš stated that nothing was done on a national level in terms of the loan system and financial support for students with social needs and that the number of scholarships remained low. On the other side, the UNIZG was exclusively oriented towards encouraging excellence and remained uninvolved in the issues of social needs of students of lower socioeconomic status.

Building the support system for students resumed in the academic year of 2009-2010, when one of the prioritized goals became the improvement of work of the Office for Students with Disabilities through enhancing human and material resources and connecting with the constituent units. However, the proposition of activities of the Office for Students with Disabilities was rejected at the Senate. Furthermore, another proposition was made to establish a foundation for assigning scholarships to students with the aim of assigning scholarships to regular students of lower socioeconomic status, those without parental support and for financing students from abroad with Croatian background that arrived at the UNIZG for the purpose of learning Croatian language and did not stay shorter than a semester in Croatia. Also, the mission of the Foundation was to provide financial support to talented, yet financially disadvantaged students, and it also entailed the support of improving educational process, achieving researching potentials and goals of the University and maintaining and spreading of knowledge on national heritage. It was visible that area it entailed was exceptionally heterogeneous and it did not only prioritize the support to students of lower socioeconomic status. Furthermore, it became active only in 2011 and according to the available data at the UNIZG web site before the July 1, 2013, not a single scholarship was assigned for students of lower socioeconomic status.

The academic year of 2010-2011 brought guidelines for equality of opportunities for studying of people with dyslexia and they were forwarded to all constituent units so that they would be implemented in the work of the individual units. Furthermore, a discussion was opened regarding the drafts of new laws, especially regarding the part associated with scholarships.

Main objection to the UNIZG was that there were not enough elements of social sensibility. Vice Rector Divjak responded to this by emphasizing that the UNIZG assigned around 200 scholarships per year and was led by the criteria of excellence, but that they gave attention to students of lower social status and to students with disabilities. She pointed out that the UNIZG was continuously working on improving conditions for students with disabilities through the Office for Students with Disabilities and coordinators for students with disabilities at constituent units and that individual units were working on improving conditions for this group of students. Based on previous development and this action, it is clear that the social dimension at the UNIZG was directed mostly at students with disabilities, and less or not at all at students of lower socioeconomic status. This was also expressed by Rector Bjeliš who stated that "it is not alright that the state shifts the responsibility and subvention of social sensibility onto the universities and other institutions of higher education and makes it their policy" (Rectors' Conference minutes 2012, 3). However, it should be stated that the situation was changing from the academic year of 2011-2012. Up to that point, 75 scholarships were assigned per year (with the exception of 2006-2007, when 67 scholarships were assigned), and from 2007-2008 to 2010-2011, 100 scholarships were assigned, including at least two that were designated for students with disabilities, while the social criteria was merely additional, in case the candidates were equal in terms of excellence. In the last two years of the observed period, there was a differentiation to categories of excellence, socioeconomic status and students with disabilities. In 2011-2012, 100 scholarships were assigned based on excellence, 65 based on socioeconomic status and 10 for students with disabilities. In 2012-2013, 100 scholarships were assigned based on excellence, 88 based on socioeconomic status and 12 for students with disabilities. In addition to this, when choosing its goals within the performance-based agreement, the UNIZG set its goal to alleviating access to the study and support while studying for student of lower socioeconomic status and students with disabilities. This is how the UNIZG, during the past two years of the observed period, took a bigger step towards strengthening of social dimension and change in relation to the previous policy within which it was considered that the social dimension should be under state care.

In the academic year of 2012-2013, an ASHE audit arrived, which objected to too slow support to students with visual impairment and to neglecting the policy towards students with disabilities. At the UNIZG, these objections were rejected and the system was improved so that in March 2013, a document called Ensuring Minimum Standards of Accessibility for

Students with Disabilities in Higher Education in the Republic of Croatia was adopted. In addition to this, the UNIZG emphasized constant improvement of service available to students with disabilities through the Office for Students with Disabilities, as well as existence of the act called the Policy of Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination.

Finally, in 2013, the UNIZG brought a strategic document called Development and Transformation of the UNIZG (UNIZG 2013) where improvement towards the social dimension was confirmed. It was stated that the UNIZG would insist on increasing the scholarships, subventions and development of the loan system on a national level and that these mechanisms would be individualized and primarily guided by social sensibility. In addition to that, importance of further efforts in improving the policy towards students with disabilities is recognized, as well as the need for systematic development of support for these students. Also, associated with the mobility policy, the UNIZG announced measures that should enable mobility to a greater number of students with disabilities, students of lower socioeconomic status and other under-represented groups of students.

#### 5.4.2. University of Split

In 2003-2004, there was a competition for assigning 8 scholarships according to the Rulebook on Scholarships and Awards of the UNIST. According to the available competitions (Stipendije Info web-site), it was clear that the only criterion for assigning scholarships at the UNIST was excellence, while the socioeconomic criterion was not even the secondary criterion as it was the case at the UNIZG.

In 2004-2005, Vice Rector Domazet joined the discussion about scholarships by referring to the, according to his words, growing commercialization of higher education. This is why he proposed that everyone should, if there are tuition fees, pay equally, and after that most successful students should be supported through the system of scholarships, student loans and awarding. Several years later, the idea was realized through bringing of the Rulebook on Student Loans of the UNIST. However, additional information about the functioning of this system of student loans were lacking over the course of the following years, and the very Rulebook was impossible to find on the web-page of the UNIST, while other similar rulebooks remain available.

It is interesting that one of the members of the Senate of the UNIST pointed to the fact that there was a big number of children lacking adequate parental care and arriving from children's homes and foster families, who finished high school and wished to continue their

education, but did not have that possibility. This is why he invited the constituent units of the UNIST to join a humanitarian aid or find a way to help these students. On the other side, I fail to encounter any mechanisms that were formally used within the UNIST to assist students of lower socioeconomic status. The idea of maintaining scholarships for the socially disadvantaged students on the state level was supported by the Rector Pavić at the Rectors' Conference in 2012-2013, but he also emphasized that awarding scholarships for excellent students should remain under the authority of universities because this allowed them to attract students who are important to them. It is indicative that the UNIST did not select either of the two offered elective goals during the signing of the performance-based agreement with the MSES, which are associated with the alleviation of study access and support for students of lower socioeconomic status and students with disabilities, as well as alleviation of access and study quality assurance for students over 25 years of age. In the observed period, the UNIST did not have a strategy of development or reports on rectors' work, therefore, there was not any elaboration of the social dimension in this sense.

### 5.4.3. Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek

During the first two years of the observed period, there are no discussions on issues regarding the social dimension at the UNIOS. According to the Senate's minutes in the next few years, the University awarded around 30 scholarships per year (30 scholarships were assigned in 2000-2001 and 2001-2002, 40 scholarships from 2002-2003 to 2005-2006 and then 30 in 2006-2007) to the most successful regular students, i.e. according to the criterion of excellence. These scholarships, their number and amounts, were approved by the competent Ministry. While assigning those scholarships, none of the criteria was associated with the socioeconomic status of the students. Over time, threshold regarding the necessary grade average was raised and it was emphasized that the scholarship was an award for the very best, for students that met the extraordinary criteria, and not for average students. When discussing scholarships, Rector Kralik emphasized a similar point. She stated that these scholarships were encouraging students' excellence, but that students could also compete for other scholarships where excellence was not a prerequisite. Starting with 2008-2009, 35 scholarships were assigned to the most successful regular students, 2 scholarships were assigned to students with disabilities and 3 to top athletes. Such practice of awarding scholarships resumed in the following years. In 2010-2011, 40 scholarships were provided and in 2011-2012, 50 scholarships, while the number of scholarships for students with disabilities did not grow. However, it is necessary to state that in 2011-2012, not even a single student with disabilities applied for a scholarship. The UNIOS had also brought the Strategy

of the University for the period of 2011-2020 (UNIOS 2011) and it expressed the need for increasing the number of scholarships, but it did not define the direction of this increase. Seeing that the total strategy dedicated minimal attention to topics of social dimension, it did not represent advancement in changes of this policy. Its smaller portion mentioned achievements associated with students with disabilities and those of lower socioeconomic status, but they did not take a position in the developmental vision of the University. The Strategy reflected on the social exclusion and social inclusion, but merely as concepts represented at the European level and the national level. However, the very goals of the UNIOS did not contain such topics.

The issue of students with disabilities was not considered at the Senate's conferences prior to the academic year of 2006-2007, when the decision regarding the direct enrollment and complete funding of people with 60% or more of physical impairment was brought on the national level, on condition that they passed the threshold on the entrance exam. Year after that, the Decision on Organization and Functioning of the Office for Students with Disabilities of the UNIOS was brought. Seeing that the UNIOS did not have any information regarding students with disabilities, the initial goal of the Office was to compose a registry of students with disabilities in order to monitor their needs and to adjust activities of the Office to their needs. Based on the data acquired by the student administration offices, an estimation about their number was made, but it was assumed that this number was even bigger because there had not been a regular system of monitoring prior to this. Therefore, in 2010-2011, cooperation between the Office for Students with Disabilities and the student administration offices was established in order to complete the evidence records upon enrollment, which would monitor the number of students with disabilities. Also, they established cooperation with associations in this region and the City of Osijek and worked on composing a brochure with the aim of informing students.

In 2005-2006, an idea occurred at the UNIOS regarding other ways of financing higher education through loans. This idea was given a more concrete shape in 2007-2008, when the initiative for student loans at the UNIOS was implemented and the supported model was composed according to the one that had been applied at the UNIRI. Reasons for selecting this approach before the scholarship system is that in this case, the University did not endure the risk of refunds and there was not a permanent drain from the budget as it was the case with scholarships, but subventions merely referred to the agreed interest rate. Also, they mentioned that this opened the possibility of study for everyone, and not only for the privileged.

Advances in the direction of strengthening of the social dimension at the UNIOS in terms of students of lower socioeconomic status occurred in the academic year of 2010-2011, when the Rulebook on Studies and Studying of that time determined that the Academic Council of module coordinators could implement a special Decision regarding the payment method and participation of regular students with low material status in paying participation of the costs of study, and in 2012-2013, this authority was transferred to the dean or vice rector. Finally, tendency towards improving the social dimension the UNIOS had also revealed by selecting goals in the performance-based agreement with the MSES and as one of the goals, they chose alleviation of access to study and study support for students of lower social-economic status and students with disabilities. Also, they composed a proposition of the Rulebook on Determining Students in the State of Social Need and their support at the UNIOS. Prior to that, there were no criteria according to which the UNIOS could monitor that. After that, a university database of students in the state of social need was supposed to be composed. In addition to that, the UNIOS had selected the second goal in the agreement that was within the frame of social dimension, and this was alleviation of access to study for students over 25 years of age.

#### 5.4.4. University of Rijeka

In 2001-2002, the UNIRI initiated work on establishing the Foundation of the UNIRI whose aim was to encourage university activities and assign scholarships to talented students. However, as its rector had pointed out at that time, in the process of establishing the foundation, enthusiasm was greater in people outside the university community than in people within it. Even though it was founded in 2001-2002, the Foundation was not operational for another year and a half because in the meantime, the statue and regulation were not accepted. As one of the goals of establishing the foundation, they mentioned awarding students with scholarships, but they only listed scholarships meant for the best students, i.e. according to the criterion of excellence. In 2004-2005, the director of the Foundation Prljić-Samaržija stated that the biggest proportion of funds would be distributed to students, also through scholarships, while in the next academic year, she stated that the Foundation would not be primarily oriented towards students but it would be oriented towards the total university community and its needs. Annual reports of the Foundation (Foundation of the UNIRI web-site) revealed that 100 000 HRK were spent in 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 on scholarships even though it was not mentioned how many scholarships and whom they were meant for, but the very Statute of the Foundation suggested that the support in form of scholarships was meant for top students. However, the reports for other years firstly revealed the decrease of

means for this type of scholarships, and later complete deficit of this item. In spite of this, the Foundation resumed its development year after year and in 2007-2008, it achieved the increase of the number of supporters, the number of users was increased by 30% and gathered funds were increased by 35% compared to the previous year. In 2011, within the Foundation, a campaign was initiated called *Vjetar u leđa* with the aim of acquiring means for scholarships and three foundation within this campaign were founded – *Maestral*, *Burin* and *Tramontana*. First foundation was meant for students of undergraduate, graduate and integrated studies, the second for postgraduate students and the third for junior scientists. Report of 2013 brings information that this campaign financed students of the UNIRI based on social criteria. Also, emphasized in the work of the Foundation was the development of social responsibility of students of the UNIRI through project activities and volunteering.

Among other things, the UNIRI also brought the Strategy of the UNIRI 2007-2013 (UNIRI 2008). However, even though the social dimension was mentioned as an important characteristic of sustainable development towards which the UNIRI strived, it was not mentioned amongst its goals. It was casually listed that some work would be done on study scholarships, but it was not addressed in a more significant fashion when compared to the other topics. Same situation was with the students with disabilities for whom they claimed to be opening the Office for Students with Disabilities and that they would be taken care of. However, neglecting this sub-policy remained visible in the annual reports regarding the implementation of the Strategy. This is how the scholarships occurred within the framework of the goal referring to the personal standard of all employees, which could not be considered the social dimension, but even within it, it was not realized, but it merely implied working on the system of subsidized home loans for the employees. Associated with the students with disabilities, the reports of 2010 still mentioned activities of the Office for Students with Disabilities such as informing, composition of database of students with disabilities, establishing the web-page, cooperation with associations, printing of promo materials, assisting in class and the analysis of constituent units in terms of architectonic barriers. However, the issue of relationship with the students with disabilities in the initial part of the observed period was significantly different.

Thus, according to this question within the social dimension, it is necessary to emphasize that in the beginning of the observed period, non-integration of the UNIRI is obvious because the very administration of the University did not have records about students with disabilities, but they requested individual constituent units to send them a list of admitted students. On the

other hand, the academic year of 2002-2003 was dedicated to persons with disabilities and this was why the rector emphasized that maximal involvement of constituent units and universities is necessary. As an example, a case from 2005-2006 can be isolated when there was a problem of enrollment of students with special needs. Namely, two students with special needs were not admitted to one of the constituent units even though they had achieved exceptional scores on their entrance exams. This treatment was deemed discriminatory by the rector and he requested that these students were admitted, and he demanded a thorough report about this case from the director of the constituent unit in question. By doing so, he proved that, in spite of the semi-integration of the University, he could take a stronger position regarding the enrollment of students. Involvement of the UNIRI in terms of assisting students with disabilities is also emphasized in the middle of 2007. At the Senate's conference, it was agreed that each of the constituent units would transfer 10 000 HRK to the association called *Znam* that gathered students with disabilities. In 2009-2010, it was announced that the Office for Students with Disabilities would be founded at the Campus and the tendency was to solve the issue of transportation of students with disability in a transparent fashion through the financing of the constituent units' incomes. Later in that academic year, the action plan for establishing of the Office for Students with Disabilities was brought. Finally in 2010-2011, project of establishing the Office for Students with Disabilities was initiated through defining the network of coordinators at the constituent units, action plan, formation of budget and connecting with associations involved with the students with disabilities. They also brought the Recommendations of the Office for Students with Disabilities about the adaption of class and exams to special needs of students with disabilities. There was an interesting decision by the dean of one of the constituent units regarding students with disabilities who chose to charge penalties to students who enrolled to the undergraduate studies for the sixth time, and the acquired means were donated to the Office for Students with Disabilities, while a part of them was spent on removing physical barriers.

In 2002-2003, the UNIRI starts implementing the idea that tuition fee should be associated with students' success, but the social dimension is not being discussed. In 2005-2006, attention is given to the idea regarding the need for university programme of loans because the state scholarships are inadequate to cover all costs. The UNIRI is the first university in Croatia that started actively working on developing this system. Aim of this loan programme was to encourage excellence, to ensure aid to socially disadvantaged students and to encourage education of the most deficit professions. This is how the Foundation for

Subvention of Interest Rates for Student Loans was founded, which was supported by the UNIRI, the City of Rijeka and the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County. Also, the MSES showed interest for this programme. The idea was to make the UNIRI the agent between the bank and students through subsidizing interest rates, and to offer guarantee of acquiring loans to most socially disadvantaged students. Financing of this Foundation would also be conducted via financial means that would be transferred by the constituent units, depending on the enrolled number of students. In the academic year of 2007-2008, this model of loans was presented to the Rectors' Conference that supported its work and they thought that it was necessary to develop a unique national model of student loans. The UNIRI announced that this loan system would be operational starting with the following academic year. Continuous work on the Foundation was resumed in 2008-2009 through monitoring of growth of interest rates and the UNIRI reacted to this by changing the Rulebook on Student Loans in the direction of greater subsidizing of interest rates, along with the extending the payment deadline in agreement with the bank. Pretty wide purpose for the financial means of this Foundation fully surfaced in 2010-2011, when the conversion of means was requested. It was suggested to use them to construct university accommodation pavilions. Also, the previously mentioned Rulebook on Student Loans clearly reveals that the criteria of excellence entailed the biggest number of points, while the socioeconomic status and especially students with disabilities were given a smaller number of points.

Each year, the UNIRI awards around 20 scholarships according to the decision of 1998, which states that students can acquire a minute portion of points in terms of the socioeconomic criterion, i.e. if the income per member of household of this student does not exceed the amount of net minimal salary in the Republic of Croatia in the last 6 months. Criteria of assigning scholarships remained the same over the course of years, while the number of scholarships somewhat increased. In this part, it can be added that two additional criteria were enlisted during the introduction of changes associated with the criteria and conditions of participation in the costs of study in the academic year of 2010-2011. One is the criterion of excellence, while the other is the social criterion. The latter was referring to the students who had, in the previous academic year, achieved a minimum of 80% of the ECTS credits, and are members of a household that meets the requirements according to the Decision on Social Service. Income requirement was associated with the total income acquired in respect with the number of family members. Work on improving the social dimension of study resumed in the following year as well. This was the first time that the

social dimension became one of the key moments of the Bologna Process and Measures on Improving the Social Dimension of Study were proposed. Basis for introducing these measures rested on the principles of the Bologna Process and the reform of higher education that emphasizes the social dimension, results of the EUROSTUDENT IV (IDE 2011) research that suggest the connection between the socioeconomic status and entry into the higher education and quitting the studies and the analysis of the scholarship system and loans in the Republic of Croatia, which clearly reveals that the meritocracy criterion is the predominant in assigning them. Furthermore, the Academic Council of the Foundation of the University thought that the criterion of student support based on the principle of meritocracy was more appropriate than the social criterion, which is why it was suggested, along with the previous reasons, to establish the Foundation of Solidarity that would refund costs of the ECTS credits to socially disadvantaged students, regardless of excellence, and the financial means would be assured from the portion of enrollment fees collected for loans and scholarships. Providing with the one-time non-refundable aid to students in case of extraordinary situations (death of a parent or discharge of both parents) was also anticipated. In addition to that, the Decision on Criteria and Conditions of Participation in Costs of Study was brought and the social criterion was implemented in it. According to this Decision, constituent units would handle costs of tuition fee for students of lower social status on condition that they had achieved 80% of the enrolled ECTS credits, while those who are below this limit would pay the lowest price in comparison to other universities in Croatia.

Concern for socially disadvantaged students and the promotion of the social dimension were emphasized as important determinants of the UNIRI, which was particularly pointed out in 2011-2012, when a public discussion was initiated regarding the Rulebook on Allocation of Funds of the UNIRI from the *Aleksandar Abramov Foundation* (Student foundation), within which one of the programmes was called Solidarity and its main principle was the social dimension. Role of this programme was to aid students of lower financial status, students without parents, those from socially disadvantaged families, families with more children, and support to student projects that strived to increase the standard of the socially disadvantaged students of the UNIRI. The University clearly pointed out the need to increase availability of higher education to students of lower socioeconomic status and under-represented groups. In that same year, within the Solidarity programme, there was a competition for scholarships and 21 students met the requirements that were set. The same practice was then resumed the following academic year.

In finality, it needs to be emphasized that Expert 5 also recognized active role of the UNIRI regarding this sub-policy and stated:

*I would think, if this referred to a certain institution, that it would be the University of Rijeka, since they seem highly propulsive in the view of addressing the issues of vulnerable groups when compared to other institutions.*

#### 5.4.5. Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

There was no mention of the topics from the area of social dimension during the observed period at the UNIPU. In addition to these topics not being represented on the agenda of the Senate, it was indicative that the Developmental Strategy of the UNIPU 2010-2015 did not give any attention to this policy and that groups encompassed by the social dimension only appeared in the part associated with the description of documents of the Bologna Process and legislation of the Republic of Croatia (UNIPU 2011). Aside that, only the vision mentioned that the UNIPU tended to social standard of students and as one of the strategic intentions was the previously mentioned establishment of new models of support for people with special needs, developmental disabilities, difficulties in communication and difficulties in social integration. However, during the observed period, it lacked the elaboration of this policy through particular documents or goals within the more general documents. Developmental Strategy revealed that the administrative structures of the UNIPU were aware of the existence of this sub-policy on the national and European level. However, changes in the approach to this policy did not exist and there was no involvement in order to change this. Annual Reports of University's activities were consulted with the aim of acquiring additional information, but they also did not contain any information regarding existence or development of the social dimension at the UNIPU. Accordingly, the performance-based agreement did not contain goals regarding students with disabilities or students of lower socioeconomic status, but it contained goals aiming to alleviate access and study quality assurance for students over 25 years of age.

#### 5.4.6. University of Zadar

During the observed period, the social dimension did not receive any attention at the Senate's conferences at the UNIZD. There was one reaction of the representative of students in 2005-2006 when the price for taking the exam was raised and he emphasized that his reaction had the purpose of protecting the socially disadvantaged students. Also, in 2006-2007, the Student Counselling Center was formed and the director of the Center suggested that the Rector had 4 spots in the Student's dormitory at their disposal, while the representatives of students

suggested that these 4 spots are to be assigned to students based on social status. However, the administration of the UNIZD requested that this remains the discretional matter of the rector. Furthermore, the strategic document called the Developmental Determinants of the UNIZD for the period of 2006-2010 (UNIZD 2005) did not offer consideration of topics entailed by the social dimension. Minimal progress was achieved by the Strategy of the UNIZD 2011-2017 (UNIZD 2011), which anticipated the expansion of the activities of the Student Counselling Center towards the students with disabilities, but even this document remained neglectful of the social dimension as an important policy that should be implemented in its functioning.

In 2012-2013, the issue of social dimension once again returned to the agenda of the Senate's conference, associated with the initiative towards the banks with the purpose of starting a scholarship programme. Also, they founded the Foundation for Assistance to Students of Lower Socioeconomic Status and the Rulebook on Allocation of Funds of the UNIZD from that Foundation. However, not even the financial means from this Foundation were distributed exclusively according to the socioeconomic status. Namely, the socioeconomic criteria in terms of the property census, cases of students without parents or students who are in worse social situation influenced by reasons of personal nature, were taken as the main and sole criterion only on the first year of undergraduate studies. Seeing that the scholarships were assigned on an annual basis, for each of the following years, the criterion of success was set in the form of achieving the minimum of 55 credits in each year of the study as a threshold of qualifying for scholarships. Within the performance-based agreement with the MSES, the UNIZD selected alleviation of access to study and the support for people with disabilities and students of lower socioeconomic status, as well as well as alleviation of access and study quality assurance for students over 25 years of age as its goals, which makes it one of the two public universities that selected both offered goals associated with the social dimension.

#### 5.4.7. University of Dubrovnik

As the rest of the smaller universities, the UNIDU did not place a stronger emphasis on the social dimension. After the presentation of the student loan model in 2007-2008, composed by the UNIRI, both the UNIDU and UNIOS were interested in the idea of applying that model from the academic year of 2009-2010. In concordance with that idea, they announced the Rulebook on Student Loans and signing agreements between the UNIDU, the Ministry, the City of Dubrovnik, Dubrovnik-Neretva County and the Students' Conference of the UNIDU, and the proposed model of student loans was accepted. However, more significant

elaboration or implementation of this idea was not noticed in the following years. Also, the announced Rulebook on Student Loans was not brought, which suggested that the UNIDU had resigned this idea.

In addition to that, there was an idea at the UNIDU of establishing the Foundation for Funding Students of Maritime Studies. However, it was not the initiative of the very University but in 2010-2011, mother of one of the students who had passed away, left a house in the probate proceedings after her death to be sold, with the acquired means to be invested into the Foundation. In 2012-2013, this house was sold and it was decided that the acquired means would be term deposit, and that the students of Maritime Studies would receive their scholarships from the incomes of annual interest rate on the term deposit, which would ensure the long-term scholarship payment. For this purpose, it was necessary to introduce a rulebook regarding management of the fund for students' scholarships and name a commission.

Finally, within the performance-based agreement with the MSES, the UNIDU chose alleviation of access and study quality assurance for students over 25 years of age as one of their goals.

#### 5.4.8. Conclusion

The certain neglect of the social dimension at the universities was noticed, and this conclusion is contributed by the observation of Expert 5 that the basis of this sub-policy

*are the spontaneous reactions of professors in the system to various groups of students by meeting their needs in a non-systematic way... There was a silence present regarding the data associated with the social profile of students, practically from the end of the 1980s until the mid-2000s in Croatia.*

Also, Expert 7 stated:

*I think that we are headed precisely in this one direction of excellence, excellence, excellence. We neglected the social segment, due to the fact that, perhaps we once again do not have an adequate segment of insight into this part of the population since this part of the population does not wish to be point out that they are in an unenviable situation of not being able to finance themselves.*

It is these types of preconditions (negligence of social dimension, individual involvement of professors, non-systematicness and emphasis of excellence before the social dimension), as well as late inclusion of the social dimension on the European level, that caused this sub-

policy to be exceptionally under-represented at the universities of the Republic of Croatia. However, according to the two tables (Table 16 and Table 17) pointed out at the beginning of this part, it is visible that only the UNIZG and the UNIRI stand out regarding this issue. However, the UNIZG only assured the student counselling center at some of its constituent units, and there was also the issue of providing the financial means of the certain constituent units for scholarships, which was the result of the non-integration. In addition to this, only at the end of the observed period did the UNIZG get more significantly involved in this area, which was confirmed by the change of policy core beliefs and less insisting on excellence and providing the scholarships for the students of lower socioeconomic status as well. Out of more integrated universities, the UNIZD was emphasized, but its involvement also occurred only at the end of the observed period. On the other hand, the UNIRI proved to be focused on this sub-policy during the entire observed period and had conducted systematic work on promoting it. Finally, the UNIPU and the UNIST did not demonstrate steps that would recognize the policy change in the area of social dimension. More detailed analysis will be presented in the discussion.

Finally, it is necessary to point out that other groups of students that were supposed to be encompassed by the social dimension were not mentioned in the context of development of this sub-policy on the level of the university. Therefore, the Romani were not mentioned and neither were the student parents, while the older students were given attention only when the performance based agreements were introduced.

## 5.5. Enrollment Policy

Investigating the enrollment policy of HEIs in the Republic of Croatia in terms of cognition and literature that I had acquired did not receive greater attention of the scientific community. Documents were mostly directed towards the analysis of quota and the job market, analysis of desirability of individual studies or monitoring development of quota and enrolled students. However, these analyses were more focused on the quantitative indicators and less on the analysis of enrollment policies at the HEIs, which includes universities. Regardless, this corpus of literature definitely contains a valuable insight into trends that were present in the policy of higher education in Croatia. This is why it is necessary to emphasize the work of Babić, Matković and Šošić (2007) in which they detected the growth of 82% in the number of students between 1990 and 2006, which was extremely concentrated in social sciences and amongst students who financed or co-financed their own study, while the number of students whose studies are completely publically financed was decreased. Simultaneously, the authors

emphasized that this type of growth was not followed by the adequate growth and development of infrastructure. Finally, they stress that the quota did not follow the trend of employability and demands of the job market, and the universities determined the quota with the aim of increasing the financial income. Attempt of compensating human capacities was made through hiring external associate lecturers arriving from other institutions (Bajo 2003), but it was not a quality solution of this issue because this did not create new capacities but it seemingly created prerequisites for conducting class. However, the financial means acquired by increasing the quotas of self-financed students were not, according to Expert 2, invested into the enhancing the capacities and the Expert 2 claimed:

*There was an increase in the number of those students that were proposed by the universities for self-financed enrollments. Of course, the universities kept those financial means for themselves… which was supposed to be later invested into the development, while the remains could be primarily directed towards the salaries. Therefore, greater intensity of increase of employment did not occur simultaneously here based on the increased workload, but more of a bigger compensation of the professors based on the increased workload, which was actually the legitimate reason why some higher education institutions that applied this criterion, such as the Economics and the Law, had about thirty percent bigger salaries than, let us say, the higher education institutions that did not apply this criterion.*

Similar vision was presented by Expert 1 that stated:

*The primary factor was to make profit, how to enroll as many students as possible, charge as much as tuition fees as possible and that way, how to say, acquire means for themselves.*

In addition to that, Babić, Matković and Šošić (2007) state that data regarding spatial and technical capacities are unavailable, which is in concordance with the availability of most indicators in the system of higher education in Croatia.

The issue of enrollment policy was discussed by Jokić and Ristić Dedić (2014). Their study presents data acquired through the project Analysis of Enrollment to Study Programmes of Higher Education in the Republic of Croatia based on the results of the state matura exams from 2010-2011 to 2013-2014. However, other than the enrollment analysis, the authors offered the overview of the number of enrollment spots on public universities from 1997-1998 to 2013-2014. Their analysis observes the number of enrollment spots according to the type of the study programme rather than according to institutions and because of this reason, it is impossible to conclude the total quotas for universities that have both university and

professional studies. Based on these data for public universities, it can be noticed that the quotas for university studies were constantly growing and that they were the highest in the academic year of 2008-2009, after which they are gradually dropping until the academic year of 2000-2001. According to the data of this study, the number of enrollments at the university studies in 2000-2001 was 18 132, at its peak the number was 24 167 spots and in 2012-2013, there were 23 265 spots. What these authors are also emphasizing is the incompleteness and unavailability of data, which resulted with omitting the certain academic years from their overview and the analysis.

Finally, activities on the national level were also of great importance to the enrollment policy. According to the changes of the Act on Higher Education Institutions in 1996, determining quotas was given to the HEIs and they enrolled a certain number of students in concordance to their own capacities. The issue of quotas, as emphasized by Babić, Matković and Šošić (2007), is formally in the hands of the senate of the university, which is also according to the current Act on Scientific Activity and Higher Education (2003), but it needs to be stated that when it came to the issue of enrollment policy, demands of individual constituent units were mostly accepted. Authors point out that

> during the past several years, enrollment quotas in the system of higher education in the Republic of Croatia greatly reflected the desires of the higher education institutions and not the demands of the job market for individual profiles of highly educated experts. Quotas are the results of decisions of the academic councils of the constituent units and their administrations and were formally, to this point, mostly just accepted from the senates of the universities. (Babić, Matković and Šošić 2007, 52)

This practice is also confirmed at the non-integrated universities in the findings of this research, which are presented in the next section. Similar confirmation arrived by Expert 1, who stated:

*Therefore, to my knowledge, it [the quota] is simply determined by some proposals by the constituent units, i.e. these study programmes, these study groups that propose and then, on some level of the university… on the level of the Senate, these quotes are discussed somewhere, after which they are brought and mostly approved.*

Enrollment policy is connected with the introduction of the state matura exams at the end of the four-year high school education whose role is primarily evaluation of the high school education. Introduction of the state matura exam was a strategic decision by the competent Ministry in 2002 and it had been experimentally conducted in 2008-2009. In addition to that, passed state matura exam was set as the prerequisite for being enrolled to the institutions of

higher education. The issue of the state matura exam was also discussed at the universities and the main topic of discussion was if this exam should and to what extent substitute for the entrance exams that were in practice at the time. In 2003, Analysis of Prerequisites for Introduction of the State Matura Exam from the Perspective of Higher Education (Bezinović and Ristić Dedić 2003) was conducted. It revealed that the most (88%) of the universities at the time were supportive of the state matura exam, and 64.9% of the universities were in favor of using the results of this state matura exam instead of the entrance exams, while 7.7% of them were against it. Smallest support arrived from art academies, medicine and veterinarian faculties. Pursuant to this, Expert 1 emphasized:

*What is important here is that this was the determination of the Ministry and their transition of the directive downward with the support of the Rectors' Conference. The discussions mostly occurred at the senates that were attended by the vice deans for class and this matter was easily harmonized. People nevertheless understood that it was better to have such exams than some kind of entrance exams that they maintained every year, in which some of them renounced the entrance exam profit and some did not, but in principle, as far as the faculties were concerned, they accepted it.*

Also, it is necessary to stress that a series of problems for universities and their enrollment policy was caused by the Act on the Rights of Croatian Defenders of the Homeland War and Members of their Families (OG 174/2004). Concretely, its Article 53 states that:

> Children of killed Croatian defenders of the Homeland War, children of imprisoned or missing Croatian defenders of the Homeland War, Croatian army war invalids of the Homeland War and children of Croatian army war invalids, Croatian defenders of the Homeland War, military volunteers and children of volunteers of the Homeland War gain a direct enrollment to high schools and universities if they pass the threshold, i.e. entrance exam, and if they meet the requirements of the capability exam and exams of giftedness in high schools and universities where the entrance examination is being conducted.

Based on this article, students were enrolled in 2004-2005, 2005-2006 and 2006-2007, and it was terminated by the decision of the Constitutional Court at the end of 2006. The topic of discussion at the universities was if the students enrolled based on this article should be enrolled to the existing quotas or outside those quotas, and due to that, certain universities were over-capacitated. It should be stated that, during this period, there was usually an unfilled quota on the level of the university, but some constituent units were much more overburdened than others and their quotas increased up to 100%.

After this, an agreement on the incentives for enrollment into the institutions of higher education in the academic year of 2007-2008 was signed, with the prerequisite of passing the threshold at the entrance exam. This agreement granted direct enrollment on the first year of studies (outside the regular quota) to the defenders of the Homeland War, Croatian army war invalids of the Homeland war, children of killed, imprisoned or missing defenders or Croatian war invalids of the Homeland War with 100% disability. This significantly decreased the population that achieved this right because it did not imply military volunteers and children of military volunteers of the Homeland War.

Setting of more concrete criteria for establishing quotas gained more precise guidelines in 2010 and in 2011. At the time, the Government of the Republic of Croatia brought the Directive on Monitoring, Analysis and Anticipating the Needs of the Job Market for Particular Professions and Composition and Taking into Consideration the Recommendations for Educational Enrollment Policy (OG 93/2010). Based on this Directive, the CES started composing the Propositions on the Educational Enrollment Policy and the policy of scholarships on an annual level. Also, document called Network of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programmes in the Republic of Croatia (2011) was brought by the NCHE. This document emphasizes criteria and guidelines for establishing HEIs and study programmes, but they can also be observed as a clear signal to the existing institutions and study programmes. The proscribed criteria with this document are – professor's workload, ratio of professors and students, coverage of class by the employed staff, space per student, needs of the job market according to the Recommendations for Educational Enrollment Policy and the scholarship policy of the CES, interest in the field of study on the level of the Republic of Croatia on the summer enrollment term, comparability to the existing study programmes, study programme in the area of special state concern, compatibility to the economic, social and cultural priorities of the Republic of Croatia, compatibility to the state and county developmental strategy, initial costs from the state budget, cost from the state budged per completed year of study, realization of programme in cooperation with other institutions, relationship between the number of students and the number of students finishing high schools in the region. Naturally, not all of these criteria refer to the existing studies, but as it will be revealed, ratios of professors and students, space per students, coverage of class by the employed staff and the consideration of the needs of the job market, are emphasized precisely for them. This means that for the first time, institutions of higher education were given clear criteria according to which they would form their enrollment quotas.

### 5.5.1. University of Zagreb

Decision making regarding quotas for every following academic year was regularly part of the agenda and the discussion about them can reveal the way they are formed at the UNIZG. While bringing the decision about the quotas in 2000-2001 for the next academic year, it was revealed that the policy of enrollment quotas was merely formally under the authority of the UNIZG. Namely, the constituent units established the quotas, which were then formally approved by the Senate and were sent to the competent Ministry. Similar modus operandi would be visible in the following years. In case of the increase of quota, this had to be approved by the Board for Class Organization with an explanation prior to delivering it to the Ministry. Proposed quotas mostly remain, as listed in one of the records, the same as in the previous year and the historical method is the main basis for defining them. Predominant opinion was that it is impossible to discuss the enrollment quotas according to the data of the Ministry regarding the number of unemployed and graduated people. This is why certain constituent units rejected such request of the Ministry since they thought that it was never accurately determined how many people of certain profession are needed in Croatia and that various colleges were opened that do not meet the prerequisites and yet have a large enrollment quota. When it came to using these data, similar was the attitude of the Council of Financial Support of the MST. The Council had concluded that this argumentation could not be used at the time and that an analysis of several years was necessary, as well as the analysis of strategies of economic development and development of higher education in order to make that possible. For the purpose of establishing criteria for directing the enrollment policy in the following years, the Board for Class proposed in 2001-2002 a composition of project regarding the realistic capacities of the constituent units and its opinion was that this project should be funded by the MST. This once again reveals that at that point, there were no clear criteria for determining quotas at the individual constituent units, and that their capacities remain unknown. Interesting is the opinion of one of the Senate members associated with the reduction of quotas requested by the Ministry. He claimed that this demand is not based on any kind of analysis and that changes require arguments that were not presented. The issue of such attitude was reflected in terms of the historical method of quota defining at the UNIZG during the following years, because it was also not based on analysis or arguments. This was confirmed by the very University. When one of the members of the Senate claimed that demands of the constituent units for the increase or reduction of quotas are not adequately transparent and lack arguments. Ideas of the Vice Rector Mencer speak about the enrollment policy at the UNIZG, and wider, where she claims

to be listening to the same discussion for eight years – nothing changed in that period. There is no detailed analysis of needs, there is no state strategy, and there is no university strategy. It is definitely necessary to develop a detailed strategy of the enrollment quota on the national level. (UNIZG minutes 2001, 5)

At the end of the 2001-2002, it was repeated that it was necessary to initiate the project regarding the enrollment policy and that it was high time for reconsidering the terms of capacities, quotas and study quality. Similar attitude was repeated by Mencer, when she became the Rector, who says that the University has been wondering what to do with the enrollment policy for years, whereas Vice Rector Jerolimov suggested that the issue of quotas must be dependent on the infrastructural capacities, which should be under the authority of the universities and its constituent units, instead of the Ministry. Lack of the systematic enrollment policy was once again emphasized by Vice Rector Jerolimov, who said that the process of quota bringing had become a type of habit and inertia. He thought that the constituent units did not bring decisions based on spatial or personnel capacities or economic state. Jerolimov pointed out the deficit of quality analysis of the job marker requirements and cooperation of the UNIZG with the economy. He recognized key issues and said that "it is difficult to bring drastic measures because we are lacking the analysis, and because of the organization scheme of the University" (Lilek 2003a, 14). This clearly describes the relationship of the University towards its constituent units as independent entities in enrollment policy. The beginning of the next academic year brought the discussion about the enrolled students, which raised the issue of quotas and the Board for Class once again proposed a thorough discussion regarding the enrollment policy and the composition of project about realistic capacities, while Rector Mencer stated that the enrollment policy should be an urgent task of the Senate and requested that the deans make serious dedication to resolving this issue. Perhaps the most realistic description of the enrollment policy was given by Rector Mencer in the academic year of 2003-3004. Namely, she stated:

> For years it has been happening that one of the constituent units had more luck and more friends amongst the financiers than the other. University, therefore, does not determine the enrollment quotas according to strategy (because the state did not provide with the strategy of enrollment policy) or even need, but according to capacity in which we actually do not believe. (Lilek 2003b, 15)

Lack of change in terms of the enrollment policy is demonstrated by the repeated warning of the Board for Class organization about the need for a more thorough study about the realistic capacities of the constituent units. It states that this project will be planned if the Ministry provides the funds. For the first time, during the analysis of enrollment in 2003-2004, Vice

Rector Jerolimov announced the analysis of the enrollment data by the CBS and the National Council on Competitiveness for the purpose of future discussions on enrollment policy. However, the enrollment quotas for 2004-2005 were already brought as in previous years so this analysis was left in the perspective for the upcoming decisions. However, when determining the quotas for 2005-2006, Jerolimov pointed out that the UNIZG could not discuss concrete quotas on any basis and that is impossible to evaluate the adequateness of quotas on individual constituent units. Therefore, the quotas were once again determined based on the historical method. In the next academic year, Jerolimov suggested that constituent units, when proposing the quotas, need to take their spatial, personnel and material capacities into consideration and should introduce quotas of students they can educate. Non-systematicness of the enrollment quota emerges from the fact presented by Rector Mencer, which is that the MSES never initiates systematic conversations regarding the enrollment policies and that the constituent units cannot tend to social needs. One of the more important moments in this sense was the memo of the State Secretary for Education Slobodan Uzelac in which the Ministry assumed merely giving consent while the senates of the universities would be in charge of determining the study capacities, enrollment policy, standards of studying and the supervision over obeying them. In addition to that, they warned about the unsustainability of the current practice, according to which, constituent units enrolled students outside their capacities. Associated with that memo, fear was expressed at the UNIZG about the MSES abandoning conversations and influence on the enrollment quota, while merely few years ago, the UNIZG had fought for greater autonomy for independent defining of quotas. Additionally, enrollments of children of war veterans after the academic year of 2005-2006, which will be presented later, had a positive influence at the UNIZG and it resulted with reviving the need for discussion about the enrollment policy and the systematization of criteria. In 2007, Rector Bjeliš invited the deans of the constituent units to elaborate the criteria of the enrollment policy and he stated that they should primarily work according to their capacities, followed by the needs of the job market. He also thinks that it is an illusion that the state will soon offer response regarding the required number of experts from certain professions, but that the autonomous task of the university is to propose the quotas and tend to them. However, such approach remains unelaborated, which was confirmed by Vice Rector Pinter who emphasizes that the quotas should be compatible to the course programmes, capacities, educational personnel and job marker requirements, but that she remains unconvinced that these criteria are being applied because the enrollment quotas stay the same. The situation regarding the enrollment quota remains the same in 2007-2008, and Rector Bjeliš thought that the main

question to which the university was not getting a reply is the question of quotas. This status was is confirmed by Vice Rector Pinter who explained that the quotas mostly remained on the level from previous year and that the changes in this sense are minimal. Surprising is the opinion of Rector Bjeliš who explained the issue of quotas as "the current state that has been inherited for years and is the result of behavior of State and ministries from the era of previous State" (Šimeg 2008, 3). He found a culprit in retraction of state funding from individual constituent units and opening the possibilities of study for personal and social needs. Due to the weaker control, the quotas were overwhelmed by several hundreds of students. He considered that the solution of this spiral was in the financial aid to the constituent units that were oriented towards tuitions. This obvious problem was addressed by Bjeliš at the conference of the ESCC of Croatian Parliament in July 2008. He stated that this is a process that could not be solved merely by reducing the quotas on one constituent unit and increasing it on the other. As a particular problem, which reveals the type of management at the UNIZG, was the relationship with the constituent units and he stated:

> We can hardly convince them, and the university still works with this method of convincing, I do not think that this is the worst method since there are no, so to say, more developed operations with the Ministry or the Government. It is hard to convince further constituent units to radically reduce their quotas if it is inherited for them. (ESCC 2008, 7/1/MM)

This type of enrollment policy resumed its course in 2008-2009. At that time, during the analysis of the enrolled students, it was emphasized that certain constituent units enrolled students outside of the assigned quotas and the University requested an explanation from them. This clearly reveals that certain constituent units acted independently and that the enrollment policy as such was not systemized on the level of the University. Certain criteria for determining quotas appeared in 2010-2011. It was stated that the main criterion should be the capacity of the individual constituent unit, followed by the job marker requirements and then financial indicators. However, these criteria remain incomplete and the quotas were mostly in concurrence with the ones of the previous year, i.e. insignificantly smaller. Estimation of such enrollment policy was also given by the Dean of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing, Vedran Mornar, who pointed out that students were, up to that point, enrolled according to the internal estimations and that they never made thorough analysis regarding the employability of students upon their completion of studies. Furthermore, Rector Bjeliš said that the University was not the only one responsible for the policy planning, but that this process should include the state and society in general. He also

thought that the UNIZG was aware which professions were overwhelming at the University and which were lacking, but that the decisions of increasing or reducing could be brought only based on the economic strategy of development and that the state should know which professions were going to be required in the following period. Somewhat clearer criteria were set for the enrollment quotas in 2011-2012. It was stated that the required prerequisite were valid permits, then that the data regarding the employability of experts and the needs for the individual programmes should be taken into account and quotas should be adjusted in concordance with that data or it should be clearly explained why this was not done. Also, human resources should be consulted, according to which, the ratio of students and permanently employed teaching personnel should not be over 30:1, followed by spatial capacities, positive student evaluations of the study programme and the relationship between the number of full-time and part-time students. These criteria can be found in the Rulebook on the Procedure of Evaluation of Study Programmes of Undergraduate, Graduate, Integrated Undergraduate and Graduate and Professional Studies of the UNIZG composed according to the Act on Assuring Quality in Science and Higher Education (OG 45/2009) and the Rulebook on Permit Content and Prerequisites for Issuing the Permit for Conducting Services of Higher Education, Study Programme and Reaccreditation of Higher Education Institutions (OG 24/2010). However, quotas remained on the level of the ones from the previous year. Actually, they remained practically identical, as stated in the Senate's minutes. In addition to that

> around ten constituent units delivered their explanations containing information regarding the needs, capacities and human resources, which was associated with the criteria that the Senate had adopted, while the units that had the unfavorable situation concerning the access criteria did not do that. (UNIZG minutes 2011, 5)

Therefore, in spite of the brought criteria on the level of the UNIZG, most of the constituent units still ignored them, which clearly demonstrated that the UNIZG did not actually have complete integration over the enrollment policy. Some of the constituent units had the ratio of 70:1, and the indicator that the administration did not consider this criterion to be important arrived from the Vice Rector Pinter, who stated that

> pursuant to Article 6 of the Rulebook on Permit Issuing, the ratio between the total number of permanently employed professors and total number of enrolled students should not exceed 30:1 – naturally, we do not literally maintain that ration, however, it is definitely considered a good guideline. (UNIZG minutes 2011, 6)

In the next academic year, it was stated that in the addition to the previously mentioned criteria, it was necessary to have positive results of the external reaccreditation of the constituent unit, if such procedures were conducted. In spite of that, some of the units once again failed to deliver their explanations regarding the quotas and were warned to discuss this item on their councils in order to avoid admitting quotas from the last year by inertia.

Particular issue was the justification of the enrollment quotas to studies for self-financed full-time students. Namely, this raised the issue of class quality, but eventually, it was concluded that the constituent units of the UNIZG were capable of guaranteeing the quality of their class and studies in spite of the increased quotas, unlike the various polytechnics studies. As one of the arguments, they stated that it was good for the individual to study at a quality study, if they had enough means, willingness and capabilities for this. For the academic year of 2001-2002, the increase of quota by 61 spots was suggested at the studies with the support of the Ministry, but the UNIZG thought that it was a too minor issue to create problems unnecessarily. However, the UNIZG confessed to having too many part-time students, who, even though they were not burdensome for the Ministry, were considered to be complicating the regular class. According to the UNIZG and the discussion in 2001, the Ministry should give consent only to the quotas of students studying with the support of the Ministry and it was one of the points of disagreement between these two actors. Rector Jeren refered to the decision of the Constitutional Court and pointed out that, according to it, HEIs define the quotas in all cases, with the exceptions of the quotas that have the support of the Ministry. On the other hand, the Ministry's position was that the students who finance their own studies also have the support of the state through funding of the student standard, which makes their study cost of the state, implying that the consent of the minister is required for determining the enrollment quotas. Second suggestion of the Ministry was the idea of approving the complete quota for the universities, while the division of the quota within the university to the individual constituent units would be under the authority of the very university. However, this approach remained nothing more than an idea. In spite of such attitude of the Ministry, the UNIZG maintained their opinion that the minister is in charge only about the quotas of full-time students financed by the Ministry. In accordance with that, and based on the demand of the Ministry for reducing the quotas, it was concluded that the quotas of full-time students with the support of the Ministry should be reduced since they are under the authority of the very Ministry. Position of the University was confirmed by the Council for Financial Support of the MST. Reduction of quotas was eventually executed in a way that the individual

constituent units offered to reduce the quotas of students studying with the support of the Ministry, which would meet the demand of the Minister, but would at the same time increase the number of students enrolling to self-financed full-time studies. Seeing that the decision on quotas of 2001-2002 was brought relatively late, in June, because they had been waiting for the confirmation from the Ministry, the Senate brought the decision to determine all future quotas in the winter semester of the current year. In the following academic year, the discussion regarding quotas reached the agenda of the Senate in January. At that time, they once again confirmed that the University itself did not actually determine quotas, but that it was done by the individual constituent units. It was decided to completely respect the propositions of the constituent units and to rely on their soundness. However, it should be taken into the account that some constituent units did not respect recommendations for not increasing the number of spots, which varied from 5 to 58. In addition to that, at the UNIZG they were aware that enrollment quotas were brought

> without the completely defined criteria (and these criteria should be the possibility of employment and the ability of the constituent unit to maintain quality class), that the quotas were increased without the systematic concern for the quality of the University, and that as long as they were lacking reasonable argument for well-founded enrollment policy, changes were pointless. (UNIZG minutes 2002b, 7)

That year the confrontation with the Minister resumed and he claimed that he should also approve quotas for the students participating in their own costs of study. This is why the quotas, in spite of the Senate's decision, were not confirmed by the MST until June of that year. Slight increase of around 70 spots was made, also the Faculty of Economics requested the increase of quota of self-financed full-time students by 300 spots after the entrance exam. This request was denied, but only because it arrived after the entrance exam had already been conducted. However, they left the possibility of discussing this matter for autumn. This issue of quota increase occurred at the Faculty of Economics in the beginning of 2002-2003, when they once again requested the increase of 300 spots, while their primary argument was that many candidates passed the threshold of the entrance exam, but were not enrolled to the Faculty due to the lack of spots. They thought that these candidates were then diverted to less quality institutions and were becoming the prey of the educational engineering. Their request was denied, while other constituent units did not have any greater demands for increase. Complete increase was by 269 spots. However, the number of spots with the support of the Ministry and spots for foreign citizens were reduced, while the spots for self-financed full-time students were increased. This signified the trend in which the UNIZG reduced the quotas

financed by the Ministry, but increased the quotas for self-financed full-time students. This trend was confirmed in the discussion during the academic year of 2003-2004 and was called illogical by the Board for Class Organization. In spite of that, this trend also resumed in the decision regarding the quotas for the next academic year. Smaller number of spots was converted after the entrance exams and those were mostly the vacant spots for foreign citizens that were converted into spots for self-financed full-time students. In that same academic year, they resigned other approvals of quota increase after the conducted entrance exams, especially after the Board of the MSES stated that they did not recommend additional approval and increase of enrollment quotas, based on bad practice during the previous several years. Furthermore, at the UNIZG, they noticed that a transfer of quotas occurred every year and that the number of students enrolled outside of the quota was not equal at all constituent units. In 2004-2005, predominant opinion was that the change of structure of enrolled students was necessary, but it was also emphasized that this should not be used as the argument for the reduction of quotas, i.e. the problem was in the increase of quota for deficit professions at the cost of reducing quotas for other professions. At the same time, previously mentioned practice resumed. When the question of educative possibilities of individual constituent units was raised, they announced that this issue, belonging concretely to the Faculty of Law, would be solved by renting a bigger auditorium of enough capacity for the entire first year. Seeing that this would not be funded by the state, costs would be paid from the tuition fees and by reducing the quota of students financed by the Ministry and increasing the quota of students who financed themselves. The issue of large quotas that did not concur with the personnel and spatial capacities particularly emerged in 2005-2006, when the MSES brought a decision on enrolling children of war veterans on condition that they passed the threshold of the entrance exam, which additionally burdened the University. In the course of these events, the Act that made this possible was graded on its constitutionality. The issue that opened a real dilemma was the question if the UNIZG and its constituent units could agree to such enrollments. Namely, if they agreed to admit students outside of the regular quota they brought, it would mean that they were admitting that they had capacities for additional students, which would imply that they did not need additional funding, and it they did not agree to that, it would imply breaking of the law. One of the arguments suggested that this decision damaged the quality of class because the quotas were limited by the personnel and special capacities and that the increase of funding would not solve the issue of deficit of professors or space in such a short period of time. This argument could be taken as invalid if it was clear that the enrollment policy of the UNIZG, up to that point, was not based on the capacity analysis but

exclusively on the historical method with the constant expression of need for systematization of such approach, even though it was never actually realized. In 2006-2007, they resumed with the enrollments of children of veterans according to the same legislative and in that year, 2037 students were enrolled compared to 1355 students enrolled in the previous year. In spite of that, the UNIZG still had vacant spots, but the greater issue was the allocation of those students. They were not distributed equally, which meant that some constituent units were more burdened by the increased quotas. At the end of 2006, the Constitutional Court removed the article in question, which solved this problem. In the meantime, the issue of overstepping quotas or demands for their increase were still coming from the constituent units. In 2010-2011, the Faculty of Economy (as the greatest exception of this year) requested the increase of quota by 160 spots for full-time students and 700 spots for part-time students, while prior to that, they still had not been meeting the mentioned prerequisite regarding the portion of professors and students. It is interesting that the Faculty of Economy referred to the previously quoted statement of Vice Rector Pinter regarding the ratio of professors and students and they emphasized that these criteria were merely indicative and that they could not be fulfilled at once, but that they should be strived towards. Finally, the proposition of the Faculty of Economy was accepted, which proved that informal acting could be more efficient than the formally brought regulations. However, it was proven in the very next academic year that such unsystematic policy would not be tolerated and the ASHE issued a recommendation of prohibiting the Faculty of Economy from enrolling students to undergraduate studies in the next two years. At the meetings with the representatives of the MSES and the ASHE, they agreed to compose an action plan that would gradually reduce quotas at the Faculty of Economy and enrollment was not prohibited completely. Still, this action by the ASHE proved that, if the UNIZG refused to insist on quality and systematic enrollment policy, the constituent units that bypassed rules would be penalized. This attitude was confirmed through the procedure of external evaluation of quality assurance system and reaccreditation of institutions. It was necessary to take the criteria listed by the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (2009) into consideration. In concurrence with that, in 2012-2013, it was established that the quota for the Faculty of Economy would be 15% smaller and that the dislocated studies would be dismissed. Reduction of quota also occurred on other constituent units, most of them belonging to the social and humanistic area. Additionally, enrollment analysis at the UNIZG confirmed the existence of studies with exceptionally low occupancy. It was suggested that studies with occupancy below 50% conduct analysis with the aim of discovering the cause of such situation. Prior to this recommendation, minutes of

the Senate did not reveal similar reactions. The practice of quota reduction as it had been conducted at the Faculty of Economy was resumed during establishing quotas for the next academic year. With the aim of securing more beneficial ratio of professors and students, quotas were either reduced or its increase on other constituent units was denied.

Next, in 2001-2002, the question of justification of entrance exams and student quality was raised and they started discussing about what the state matura exam could bring. The existing entrance exam procedure was based on the evaluation of high school achievements, achievements on the entrance exam and the testing of special capabilities. Also, Vice Rector Jerolimov thought that the issue of unification and standardization of entrance exams should be the subject of agreement of the very constituent units and universities rather than of the MST. Similarly, in 2002-2003, the discussion regarding the state matura exam was partially occurring, therefore the Dean of the Faculty of Law expressed relatively positive attitude, but with a certain dose of caution. Similar is the course of Vice Rector Jerolimov who observed the state matura exam as the solution to the issue of student quality, as well as prevention of corruption. After that, there was no discussion about the state matura exam at the Senate's conferences until 2007-2008. Then it was emphasized that the state matura must demonstrate the competences pupil possesses upon graduating from high school and that it was not correct that it would replace the entrance exam, but that it could be a part of the classification procedure, which was also not obligatory. This issue was also the subject of discussion in the following period at the UNIZG. The Senate offered different opinions regarding the role of the state matura exam in the enrollment to HEIs. There were constituent units that did not object to eliminating the entrance exams and relying on the results of the state matura exams, units that supported the combined approach and a smaller number of those units that thought the entrance exams were the most quality way of candidate selection. Internal survey was conducted at the UNIZG regarding the opinion of the constituent units about this question. Even though it was not published, the data about 5% of the units being reserved regarding substituting entrance exam with the state matura exam was presented. In order to meet the requests of the constituent units, the UNIZG expressed their opinion that the state matura exam would be acceptable solution if it presented parameters that are acceptable to the constituent units. This is how the constituent units themselves chose the subjects taken into consideration during the evaluation of the state matura exams, if they would accept higher or lower level of passed subjects, factors used for comparing candidates with different completed levels and they maintained the possibility of testing special capabilities. In this

sense, Rector Bjeliš pointed out that the Statute of the University did not list the prerequisites for enrollment to the University, but that this was in the statue of the constituent units and that such freedom should be maintained. This attitude was partly responsible for the confrontation with the MSES because the State Secretary of Education, Radovan Fuchs, announced that the state could make the state matura exam prerequisite for being enrolled to HEIs, while the UNIZG perceived this as interfering with the autonomy of universities and constituent units. Second confrontation regarding this issue was between Rector Bjeliš and Minister Primorac. Namely, Rector Bjeliš held a grudge against his statements where he had identified the state matura exam as the potential for preventing corruption at universities.

In 2010-2011, the Faculty of Medicine brought the decision of reintroducing the entrance exam (i.e. knowledge exam, since they rejected the title of entrance exam) in the following year. They were supportive of the concept of the state matura exam, but the previously mentioned procedure requested their students to know content of individual subjects that were relevant for the study of medicine. In addition to this, a series of constituent units changed their enrollment prerequisites in terms of levels and elective subjects. Additional knowledge exams were maintained by the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Studies and one of the departments of the Academy of Fine Arts. However, the Working Group for the State Matura Exam of the UNIZG raised an issue to which extent could the University leave the issues of determining the threshold and the levels taken into consideration to the constituent units. They thought that the UNIZG, as the elite university, should define the level below which the constituent units could not go. At the Senate, an opinion was expressed that, due to the rating of the University, all constituent units should request the higher level in obligatory subjects. In line with that, recommendations to the constituent units were made, according to which, they should request a higher level in obligatory subjects whenever possible, consider the possibility of percentage threshold of the solved state matura exam for individual subjects as the enrollment prerequisite, consider the change of the prerequisite according to which any elective subject was to be equally valued regardless of the weekly number of hours or years of teaching in schools and deem subjects that were more represented in the number of hours and were longer in duration as more valuable. According to the minutes, majority of the constituent units responded to these demands and accepted them fully or partially. Analysis of all constituent units was conducted and changes were introduced. It was concluded that the UNIZG is profiled as the elite university and therefore, should be submitted to more rigorous criteria. This caused some

constituent units to fear of not filling their quotas in case of stricter criteria. The fear proved to be unjustified because the UNIZG achieved a high percentage of occupancy – 93%. However, the analysis of the following academic year revealed that four technical constituent units had maintained the lower level in Mathematics, and three units had been accepting the lower level in all three obligatory subjects of the state matura. The Senate thought that this issue should still be monitored, but that it was also necessary to analyze the correlation between the successfulness in studying and the enrollment criteria. The University recognized that the state matura was getting a bigger role in the process of enrollment to university, but that there were less and less instruments for evaluating the quality of high school education, which meant that it was necessary to strengthen certain elements of the state matura exam so that it would respond to the demands of the university. Finally, Rector Bjeliš expressed his doubt in the concept of the state matura being the long term solution because the universities were not obliged to accept its results as the results of the entrance exam.

### 5.5.2. University of Split

Seeing that the data from the UNIST is limited, overview in this case is not as rich with information. However, it is possible to offer a shorter overview of the development of the enrollment policy. Namely, it is visible that, in 2001, they concluded that it was necessary to increase quotas for self-financed full-time students if this did not negatively influence the quality of study and pursuant to the plan for the enrollment to the first year of study accepted at the Senate, they requested the approval of the quotas from the MST. For the academic year of 2002-2003, quotas were increased and this was justified by planning to open new studies and by including the Higher Maritime School into the composition of the UNIST. The minutes show that the UNIST established quotas for part-time students independently and that they needed to request consent by the Ministry strictly for the full-time students. The University understood that they needed to cover the surrounding areas in order to assure big occupancy of their quota so they organized a presentation of the University in the surrounding six cities. They also communicated with the principals of high schools and conducted surveys in some of the cities in order to determine the interest in studies. In spite of that, the quotas were not filled in a satisfactory way so they were warned to establish quotas for the following year in a more realistic fashion. They recognized that there was a big competition in higher education and that it was necessary to prepare a marketing approach to attract students. In 2003-2004, the quotas were reduced, new studies were included and regional presentation of the University were conducted. The increase of the number of students was achieved after the MST decided to merge the studies of the Polytechnic of Split with the UNIST. Furthermore,

for enrollment in 2004-2005, the constituent units were supposed to propose the enrollment plan containing the enrollment quotas based on the available capacities (space, equipment, personnel, and success of study). In addition to facing the issue of quota occupancy, the UNIST was faced with the issue of student quality. Namely, they thought that the majority of quality candidates chose to attend the UNIZG and that they should be working on maintaining these students on the studies in Split, but that they should also attract quality students from other parts of Croatia. Additionally, the student enrollment according to the Act on the Rights of Croatian Defenders of the Homeland War and Members of their Families caused inability of individual constituent units to organize class due to the spatial capacity and personnel resources. This is why Rector Pavić made a request at the Rectors' Conference that the Ministry funded 10 000 HRK per every student enrolled according to that act. Vice Rector Zanchi requested that the Ministry limited the number of students enrolled via that act and later expressed his hope towards the Senate that the Ministry would pay 7000 HRK per student. Eventually, the Ministry approved smaller funds per student, and in the end of 2006, this act was abolished.

The enrollment plan of 2007-2008 presented the data of the CES and they were supposed to be one of the reference points while composing the enrollment policy at the UNIST. However, enrollment results at the UNIST were not satisfactory and they suggested organizing a special thematic conference regarding this issue. Particularly unfavorable were the results for the Math and Physics study and it was concluded that the stimulating measures should be conducted. It was decided that all students who were being enrolled to the first year of undergraduate study of Math and Physics for the first time would be entitled to state scholarship from the quota of these scholarships of the UNIST. They suggested to the Student Center in Split that these students were given accommodation in student dormitory during the first academic year of their study. Same conclusions were present after the enrollment analysis of 2008-2009. At that time, they also stated that, during the composition of quota proposals, they would have actual needs of the job market in mind and would consult with the CES. They confirmed that the enrollment to the study of Math and Physics were unsatisfactory and that it was necessary to persist with the stimulating measures. To individual constituent units, unrealistic were the demands in terms of capacity that requested that the ratio of students and professors was 1:30 and that the spatial capacities regarding students and square meters were assured according to the document Network of Higher

Education Institutions and Study Programmes (2011). Dean of the Faculty of Law suggested that this was impossible to accomplish.

In the academic year of 2007-2008, the project of the state matura was presented at the UNIST and it was deemed a useful instrument both in evaluating high school education and in selection of quality pupils for higher education. In 2008-2009, they brought a decision where the UNIST accepted the state matura exam as the prerequisite of enrollment and substitution for the entrance exam to a certain extent.

### 5.5.3. Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek

At the UNIOS, the Senate's conference regarding quotas for the academic year of 2001-2002 was attended by Minister Kraljević. After the quotas had been proposed, he stated that the UNIOS should reduce them and he also presented information from the CES saying for which professions there were over 500 unemployed at the time. Representatives of individual constituent units to which these unemployment data were referring found these information irrelevant because they were collected on the level of the entire state and not only on the part where the University was situated. It should be pointed out that the universities are oriented to the entire population of high school students and that there was not a way to control enrollments of students from other parts of the country. This fact was also mentioned by Expert 2 in the interview:

*Market of higher education is national, which means that there are specific patterns that those who cannot study locally or there are those who are daily migrants from neighboring counties and others, who encounter specific difficulties, those who cannot afford to live elsewhere… Top students head for Zagreb, anywhere [any constituent unit], second echelon are other universities, the third echelon are the higher education institutions, i.e. schools of professional higher education.*

In spite of that, the Minister accepted the presented arguments and gave consent to the increase of quotas in comparison to the previous academic year. He noticed that the UNIOS did not conduct more thorough discussions regarding the enrollment policy in the academic year of 2001-2002. It can be pointed out that Rector Kralik stated that the Faculty of Law should monitor their enrollment quotas and that they should not admit a big number of students in the next year. Aside that, the Faculty of Economy demanded an increase of number of spots for students that participated in their own costs of study and part-time students because the MST reduced funding and this was their way of compensating for those

funds. Rector recognized where these decisions could lead and she stated that the quality of class should be kept in mind and that they should not allow overcrowded lecture rooms. She also suggested the analysis at these constituent units in order to establish their actual possibilities. However, this type of practice was later achieved, yet partially. In 2003-2004, there was a demand from the Faculty of Engineering to reduce the number of students studying with the support of the Ministry, and increase the number of part-time students. In addition to that, in 2003-2004, there was a complete increase of quotas on a number of constituent units and the Ministry reacted by requesting the explanation about such actions. Increases were achieved due to the establishment of new studies and this explanation was eventually accepted. Indicator that the requested quotas were not realistic was that 869 spots remained vacant after the enrollment. Therefore, Rector Kralik pointed out that it was necessary to have actual needs in mind in the future and set quotas accordingly. However, this did not prevent the already established practice of quota increase, mostly for the students that funded their own studies in some way. This is how the Faculty of Economy increased the quota by 100 spots in 2004-2005 for the university studies (20 for full-time students with the support of the Ministry, 50 for full-time self-financed students and 30 for the part-time students) and by 140 for the professional studies (20 for full-time students with the support of the Ministry, 40 for full-time self-financed students and 80 for part-time students), Higher Teacher Education and Training School increased its quota by 20 spots for full-time self-financed students, Faculty of Electrical Engineering by 20 spots (10 for full-time students with the support of the Ministry and 10 for full-time self-financed students). This is how the total quota for 2004-2005 was 4 794, but it was reduced for the following year to 3981. However, it subsequently grew by 654 spots for the students that had the right to direct enrollment according to the decision of the Ministry. In this initial period, there was a practice at the UNIOS that the representatives of individual constituent units reported to the Senate about the conducted enrollments and quota occupancy, but the analysis that would demonstrate what this meant for the UNIOS was lacking.

In addition to that, they enrolled students according to the Act on the Rights of Croatian Defenders of the Homeland War and Members of their Families. The issue of student enrollment according to this Act effected the UNIOS as well. According to the minutes, it was stressed that there were spatial, personnel and material issues and that they were unable to secure quality class. The system became overburdened and Rector Kralik clearly stated at the Rectors' Conference that universities were autonomous in defining the enrollment criteria.

This should, of course, be followed by criteria that would clearly reveal how to determine quotas at the universities, but this was an issue that was not systematically and clearly solved. Inconsistency of the UNIOS was revealed in the overview of numbers of students enrolled according to the Act on the Rights of Croatian Defenders of the Homeland War and Members of their Families. Namely, in 2004-2005, it was stated that 635 of them were enrolled and in 2005-2006, 720 of them. However, the analysis presented in 2006-2007 revealed that, during the past two years, (analysis referred to 2003-2004 and 2004-2005), 185 students had been enrolled according to this specific category, which constituted 2% of total number of spots. In addition to that, the rector stated that this was not a large number of students that would influence the organization and quality of class. In addition to revealing inconsistency in quantitative data used at the UNIOS, this also changed the previously presented opinion that enrollment of students according to this Act brought about ineffective class. This suggested unsystematic enrollment policy in which qualitative indicators and capacities were neglected instead of used to conduct evaluation of effective and quality class.

Increase of quotas was addressed at the Senate and it was concluded that the number of students had been growing from 1999-2000 to 2005-2006 due to the increase of number of study programmes and students' interests by 87% in the last 5 years. Quotas for 2006-2007 were, as claimed by Vice Rector Žagara, coordinated with the capacities, but the Faculty of Electrical Engineering emphasized that it would be necessary to check with the CES which professions were required and adjust the number of enrollment spots accordingly. What needs to be pointed out is the fact that the criteria in terms of capacities and quotas were not established anywhere and neither was the way these two are coordinated. During 2007-2008 and 2008-2009, there were not any important discussions regarding the enrollment policy, mostly the quotas were determined and reports on enrollments and occupancy of quotas were provided. During the determining of quotas for 2010-2011, it was established that they remained mostly within the boundaries of those of previous year, with the exception of the Faculty of Economy, which reduced its quotas by 11%, and the Faculty of Law, which reduced them by 10%. Explanation arriving from both of the constituent units was that there was a saturation on the job market and that the reduction of quotas would alleviate class organization. The Faculty of Law announced that the reduction of quotas would become their permanent policy. Change in the direction of consulting the job market data resumed in 2010-2011, where the Office for Quality initiated the communication with the CES, which brought the Recommendation for Educational Enrollment Policy and the Scholarship Policy. At the

UNIOS, these recommendations are observed as tools that would contribute to coordination with the needs of the job market and they detected which educational programmes required the number of enrolled and funded students. Also, during the explanation of quotas at the UNIOS, they stated that they keep students' interest in individual study programmes in mind. Even though the Faculty of Economy partially reduced quotas in the past several years, according to their representative in the Senate, this reduction amounted to 47% from 2008 to 2011, they were also included into the enrollment prohibition by the ASHE. Rector Kralik deemed this decision unacceptable, and she suggested shutting down the dislocated studies in order to improve the ratio of professors and students, and an action plans that would continuously lead to the reduction of enrollment quota. In addition to that, according to Vice Rector Žagar, the UNIOS had, aside from reducing quotas at the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Economy and coordinating with the job market needs, worked on increasing quotas for the deficit studies. Vice Dean thought that it is necessary to monitor the employment of individual higher education profiles and use these data for organizing future enrollment quotas.

Topic of the state matura was first considered in 2007-2008. Already then had the Vice Rector Žagar expressed his support to the constituent units in introducing the state matura, both as indicator of the level of knowledge and competences upon completing high school and as a prerequisite for being enrolled to HEIs. In the next academic year, constituent units of the UNIOS initiated discussion regarding this topic on their councils and brought a decision stating that the results of the state matura exam would be used to rank candidates upon enrollment. Constituent units brought the decision regarding the wanted levels for obligatory subjects and evaluation of success for elective subjects. This University was the first one that brought decisions associated with the usage of the state matura exam during enrollment. However, in 2012-2013, there was a hint that certain constituent units started introducing additional knowledge exams and one of the members of the Senate warned that this was not a good trend.

#### 5.5.4. University of Rijeka

Enrollment policy at the UNIRI was similar to the one at the UNIZG at the beginning of the observed period. Concretely, constituent units proposed the quotas to the Senate, which were then approved, and the discrepancies when compared to the previous year were negligible. The historical method of determining quotas could also be recognized at the UNIRI. The minutes revealed that there was awareness about pilling of the quotas and the warning was

issued to all universities by the Government and the Ministry, which was presented by Rector Rukavina. Seeing that smaller number of spots was approved for the UNIRI by the Ministry than it had originally been requested, the Senate proposed that the constituent units should reduce their quotas by a certain number of spots, which they accepted. The Faculty of Economy was the only one that requested that the number of spots by which they were supposed to reduce their quota was to be shared between them and the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management, but this eventually was not accepted. Application of the historical method for establishing quotas was resumed in 2001-2002, when the constituent units mostly mirrored quotas from the previous year. This time, the Senate did not discuss the issue of quotas, but this was due to the reason that the MST had requested quotas to be sent earlier and the quotas proposed by the constituent units were sent. In spite of that, additionally adjusted was the quota for the economy study at the Faculty of Economics and Tourism, which was the only institution that had significantly increased their quotas compared to the previous year. Quotas for the next year followed this pattern. Significant increase was requested by the Faculty of Economy, Faculty of Economics and Tourism and the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management. The latter two increased their quotas because of opening of the dislocated studies in other towns. The Faculty of Economy explained that they had been reducing the quotas of students studying with the support of the Ministry and students that financed themselves in the last two years and that they merely requested a minimal increase. Already at that point, the issue of quality began emerging, as well as the University's request for explanation of those demands and confirmations that these constituent units had the equipment, personnel and spatial potential for quality class for this number of students. Also, it was emphasized that it was necessary to investigate where the means acquired through tuition fees were invested. The UNIRI announced founding of a board that would consider and discuss the enrollment quotas and give the final proposition of quotas to the Senate. The issue of these three constituent units was recognized by other members of the Senate and it was stated that out of total of 5500 spots at the UNIRI, around 3000 belonged to the economic faculties, and that the investing of the acquired means and the quality of class at the dislocated studies were questionable. Also, they stated that such quotas did not reflect the reputation and honor of the UNIRI because it promoted quality. Rector Rukavina stated that the study organization in numerous places presented the undermining of the UNIRI's foundations. In addition to that, certain members of the Senate, belonging to the technical sciences, thought that this type of enrollment policy was a consequence of the political obstruction of development of higher education and legislation and that it should be the reflection of realistic

needs of the society. While the faculties of economy at the UNIRI were mostly guided by the students' interest and profit, there was also the example of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Studies which, among others, had studies of Psychology, English language and Informatics. According to interest, they could receive up to 500 full-time and 500 part-time students, but they did not have enough space or personnel for such an endeavor. Vice Rector Lučin played an important role by promoting the transfer from the model of state management to the model of state supervision, by suggesting a strategic discussion regarding the further development of the UNIRI and taking a stance in terms of opening new institutions of higher education.

The practice after enrollments was to conduct a report regarding the number of enrolled students and occupancy of individual studies, but the discussion and analysis at the conferences of the Senate regarding how to achieve progress in this area was lacking. This was recognized by the members of the Senate and in 2001-2002, there was a proposition of conducting an analysis because it was obvious that there had been a discrepancy between the enrollment quota and the realistic requirements for a number of years. Lack of guidelines in the area on the national level was detected as the inability to create a more systematic enrollment policy, so the Senate of the UNIRI in 2003-2004 suggested that the MSES should compose a long-term enrollment policy of higher education in the Republic of Croatia. However, the UNIRI insisted on clear explanations regarding the increase of quotas and meeting the requirements of class quality by its constituent units. They requested information whether the dislocated studies met the quality requirements regarding the number of teaching and other staff, if they had the necessary equipment and space. On the other hand, the thematic conference of the Senate regarding the enrollment policy that had been announced a year ago was not held, and the individual members of the Senate warned about this omission. This was followed by the UNIRI forming a Commission for Enrollment Quotas whose assignment was to consider and adjust the enrollment quota propositions by the constituent units in 2005-2006. In the year prior to the beginning of its work, 2004-2005, there was a smaller increase of the enrollment quotas after the entrance exams due to the same number of points on the ranking list, great interest in the studies or the conversion of quotas for foreign citizens into the self-financed full-time students. In that same year, the University also enrolled students according to the Act on the Rights of Croatian Defenders of the Homeland War and Members of their Families. The issue regarding the quota for this group of students for the following academic year the UNIRI was considered to be the decision of the Ministry

and not the Senate, however, they thought that it could cause problems when it came to enrollment to some of the more attractive studies. Next year, at the recommendation of the Rector's conference, they attempted to alleviate the distribution of students in the way that they set a higher threshold on the entrance exams to more attractive studies. At that point, Vice Rector Lučin thought that this Act violated the Constitution and that the approach to education should be completely based on knowledge, while this entailed discrimination of citizens.

The issue of the remaining quotas in 2005-2005 was solved in the way that the Rector's Collegium suggested reduced enrollment quotas, after which the deans established the number of enrollment spots per study programmes during a 15 minute recess. State of the enrollment policy was such that a smaller number of quotas (3 spots) was transferred from the constituent units that remained vacant to the Faculty of Medicine, and Vice Rector Lučin emphasized that it was necessary to start considering the enrollment policy at the UNIRI. Some of the constituent units of the UNIRI eliminated entrance exams without prior discussion at the Senate and the Rectors' Conference concluded in 2005-2006 that all universities should conduct entrance exams. However, at that point, the enrollment competition at the UNIRI had already been prepared so they decided not to implement these changes. In the academic year of 2006-2007, the demands from the Faculty of Economy regarding the increase of the quotas for dislocated studies resumed, but the UNIRI found a solution to this problem in the way that if they opened new dislocated studies or increase their quota, the quota would be reduced by that number at the Faculty of Economy. Quotas at other constituent units remained within the numbers from the previous year, which suggested that at this point, the application of the historical method of defining quotas resumed. Also, after the enrollment, they concluded that some studies did not manage to fill their quotas so the conversion of the enrollment quotas was suggested (which had been established as regular practice in the past), but also there was a request that the deans of these constituent units conduct analysis of applications and enrollments in the future. Progress regarding the support of certain professions, with the aim of filling quotas in these areas, occurred in 2007-2008. At the time, Decision on Strategic Profiles was brought by the UNIRI, which left the possibility of changes regarding support to certain study profiles from one year into the next with the aim of encouraging studying at the deficit studies and at those of smaller interest. For the following year, most of the constituent units suggested quotas based on the previous year. The only differences are in the quota of the Faculty of Engineering that opened a new undergraduate study and the Faculty of Civil

Engineering, which was the only faculty that reduced its quota. Report on enrollments presented a high percentage of occupancy, while the unoccupied spots were transferred to the constituent units, in concordance to their needs and capacities. In the next academic year, it was revealed that individual constituent units monitored the needs of the job market, which caused the Faculty of Medicine to remove quotas for certain studies. Rector Lučin commended the Faculty of Medicine on this act and warned that the UNIRI should tend to the employment of students and monitor the needs of the job market. Also, after the enrollment, they resumed the conversion of the quota within the UNIRI without the total increase of quota at the very University. The practice of independent reduction of quotas resumed in 2010-2011, when it was done by the Faculty of Economy and the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management, however, the latter faculty increased the quota of the part-time students and reduced the quota of full-time students financed by the Ministry. Great surprise at the UNIRI was caused by a sudden decline of enrolled students in 2010-2011, which was 20% lower than in the previous year. Having that in mind, they concluded that they required a more aggressive marketing and the promotion of study programmes or change of programme in terms of raising attractiveness. Constituent units were suggested to analyze samples and propose a plan of measures for the increase of the number of students. Finally, the Academic Council of the Center for Studies proposed measures. They referred to the

> competitiveness of the price of study at the market being the reduction of price of part-time studies, increase of quota and reduction of price of study for foreign students, reduction of the system of student participation for full-time students, development of the system of scholarships (talented, social criteria), better conditions and promotion of system of student loans and offering special advantages within the price of accommodation, meals, transportation and other elements of student standard. (UNIRI minutes 2010, 21-22)

In addition to that, they thought that it was necessary to offer more attractive and quality study programmes, increase the internal mobility and flexibility of programme, new programmes adapted to the job market, recognition of informal competences acquired through extracurricular activities, distance learning, not introducing a threshold on the state matura exam for the deficit programmes, work in media and marketing, work on web-pages, cooperation with the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County in defining measures of maintaining and funding students, etc. Furthermore, the UNIRI had recognized the work of the CES that published document *Recommendations for Educational Enrollment Policy and the Scholarship Policy*, which was observed by the UNIRI as a relevant framework for anticipating trends and enrollment policy planning. Rector Lučin stated that all enrollment quotas should be brought by the Senate. Despite the reduction of quota, both the Faculty of

Economy and the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management were included into the decision of the ASHE regarding the prohibition of enrollment, but Rector Lučin's attitude was that they should not act restrictively but rather gradually reduce the quotas. This idea was presented at the Rector's conference in January 2012 and this was eventually arranged with the ASHE and the Ministry through action plans. At this point, Lučin warned that the reduction should not result with students leaving to private institutions that lack capacities and are not validated. This is why the Faculty of Economy cancelled the dislocated studies in Bjelovar and Karlovac, and also reduced quotas for the programmes in Rijeka. In addition to that, they also suggested 380 enrollment spots for undergraduate studies in 2012-2013, 170 of them being full-time, 200 part-time and 10 foreign, because, as they claimed, part-time students were 4 times more beneficial than full-time students. Finally, aim of the Faculty of Economy in the next three years was to reduce the total number of students from 4000 to 1600. Capacities in the enrollment policies were taken into the account and were emphasized in the process of quota increase, which caused an increase at the Psychology study because they obtained better spatial and personnel capacities.

Interesting fact is that the results of the entrance exams and candidates' list are not published simultaneously, which means that the candidates taking entrance exams at more than one constituent unit cannot select the study that suits them the most.

In 2004-2005, the UNIRI decided to establish contact with high schools from three counties that gravitate towards Rijeka and they requested information regarding interest for a presentation and survey for graduates regarding interest for individual studies. Furthermore, in 2006-2007, Quality Center of the UNIRI conducted a survey amongst graduates in the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County and researched interest for studies at the UNIRI. According to the record of one of the conferences, graduates were interested in studies that the UNIRI did not have, so the rector asked the deans to start working on opening new programmes.

In 2002-2003, information regarding the procedure of introducing the state matura by the MST and the Ministry of Education and Sport was presented at the Senate. Petar Bezinović, who was a professor at the UNIRI, was named the leader of the team. He announced that HEIs would receive a questionnaire with the purpose of obtaining information regarding the content expected of the future students, and later he conducted this research at the UNIRI. Already then did he, on several occasions, announce that the state matura exam should replace the entrance exam in the system of higher education. Discussion about the state matura was

once again in focus from 2007-2008. At the time, the Senate recommended to all constituent units of the UNIRI to make the state matura exam a basic prerequisite for study enrollment, without entrance exams or any other additional exams on specific knowledge. In spite of that, additional knowledge exams were maintained in some programmes. Furthermore, in 2010-2011, the Faculty of Medicine, encouraged by the return of the entrance exams at the Faculty of Medicine of the UNIZG, suggested the possibility of also returning the entrance exams due to the reason that all medicinal faculties in Croatia acted in harmony. In the next academic year, there was also a discussion regarding the state matura and evaluation was offered that stated that the first generation of students enrolled via state matura exam was less quality than the previous generations and that additional discussion on state matura was necessary. Also, they stated that the purpose of the state matura exam was not exclusively enrollment to universities but evaluation of high schools. Year later, they took it one step further and concluded that it was not merely evaluation of schools but rather of private instructions.

#### 5.5.5. Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

Since its very beginning, similar to the UNIDU, the UNIPU experienced problems with filling the quotas. Quotas were not filled in 2007-2008 and 2008-2009. It was emphasized that an adequate quota did not exist and that it was necessary to conduct a thorough analysis of what caused such state. However, the proposition was to base enrollment quotas on the previous year, but with minimal changes. Decision on quotas revealed that the UNIPU cared about the opinion of the Rectors' Conference and the Ministry, which made them leave enough space for corrections if one of the two bodies suggested it. In 2009-2010, there was an increase of students who applied, which briefly stopped the negative trend. In addition to that, there was a demand for the increase of quotas at individual constituent units for part-time students and self-financed full-time students. The explanations of demands were that they had enough spatial capacity and that this would not exceed the total enrollment quota at the UNIPU. For the next academic year, there were no changes in quotas, which confirmed that the dominant method of establishing quotas was the historical method. However, in 2010-2011, there was a decline in the number of enrolled students and the detected reasons at the UNIPU to this were the introduction of the state matura exam and the negative newspaper inscriptions about the UNIPU. The historical method of establishing quotas resumed in 2011-2012, and the UNIPU regularly published a call for enrollment to certain studies that still lacked a permit, but they stated that these studies would not begin with work before they acquire their permit from the Ministry. Even though the quotas did not grow at the UNIPU, there was an accreditation recommendation by the ASHE in 2011-2012 for the Department of Economics and Tourism.

It stated that the class quality was disturbed due to the lack of full-time employed professors elected into the scientific-educational professions and that the ratio of full-time employed professors and enrolled students was 1:35 instead of the assigned 1:30. The ASHE gave them a deadline of three years to remove these flaws and the Department announced an objection after the conducted analysis. However, the Senate later brought the decision that the quota of the Department of Economics and Tourism would be reduced pursuant to the decision of the Academic Council of the Faculty and that this was the first step towards meeting the demands of the ASHE. It should be noticed that this Department made up for a big portion of the total quota at the UNIPU. Total quota at the UNIPU in 2012-2013 was 1082 spots, 752 of them belonging to the Department of Economics and Tourism. The quota was once again increased in the following year and amounted to 1141 spots at the UNIPU. This increase mostly occurred due to the tendency of achieving one of the goals from the performance-based agreement that referred to the increase of availability of higher education to people over 25 years of age, therefore, the quota of 36 spots was introduced for this group.

In terms of promotion, in 2009-2010, the Department of Economics and Tourism at the UNIPU conducted a series of independent promotional activities with the aim of animating high school students, unlike the UNIDU, where such activities were conducted on the level of the university.

During the presentation of the state matura exam, the UNIPU requested including the provision that high school students attending schools for national minorities could choose the language of that minority. They brought the decision on the state matura exam as the foundation for enrollment to the UNIPU and it was decided to start with the minimal necessary level requested from the constituent units during the evaluation of the state matura. Associated with that, they pointed out the need to define criteria for composing the rank lists for enrollment. Constituent units delivered their propositions. Therefore, criteria differed on individual units, two of them maintained additional capability testing (Music Pedagogy and Classical Harmonics) and one maintained the additional interview with the candidates (Maritime Science). Additional changes were introduced in 2012-2013, when the Department of Educational Science requested additional knowledge exam through the interview and this proposition was accepted. There were also smaller changes at individual departments regarding the ratio of percentages between the subjects.

### 5.5.6. University of Zadar

After its founding, the UNIZD resumed with the same level of quotas they had while they were under the jurisdiction of the UNIST. It should be stated that, during the foundation of the independent university, the question of available personnel at the UNIZD arose. They emphasized that the interest of the candidates should not be taken as the most important element, but that it should be the personnel possibilities of the University, which caused them to suggest composing a proposal of enrollment plan. Also, they did not conduct analysis or surveys amongst students, which would help establish the quality and quotas. The increase of number of students without the increase of personnel would cause a decreased quality of class. The conclusion was that for the year of 2003-2004, they could not do much, but that they needed the analysis and a more realistic establishment of the quotas. Surprising is the fact that the minutes of the Senate for 2003-2004 did not contain items associated with the enrollment policy and that there was no discussion regarding the enrollment of students to the first year of study. During the discussion in the next academic year, there was a question regarding quotas for full-time students that had the support of the Ministry and self-financed full-time students. The opinion of Rector Magaš was that, through such funding, the Ministry guaranteed the number of students, while the quotas self-financed full-time students were determined according to the possibilities of the department. On the other hand, it was emphasized that everything depended on the interest and that it was impossible to enroll self-financed students (full-time and part-time) if the interest remained small. There was no information about ways of establishing the potentials of the departments, according to which their capacities would be evaluated. Finally, during that year, the discriminatory item suggesting that high school students who completed four-year high schools, with the exception of gymnasium of economics, had to take an additional part of the entrance exam for the study of Philosophy, was abolished.

In the academic year of 2005-2006, students were enrolled according to the Act on the Rights of Croatian Defenders of the Homeland War and Members of their Families. One of the suggestions at the Senate was that the students with this privilege were enrolled automatically before the others so that they would be able to see how many vacant spots remained in the end. This decision, which would disable enrollment based on knowledge, was not accepted. The enrollment according to this Act caused problems at the UNIZD due to the lack of personnel. This was a problem that could not be solved in a short period of time, unlike the issue of equipment and space. Therefore, Rector Magaš emphasized at the Rectors' Conference that the number of students had been doubled in the past five years, but that the

remaining problem was the personnel. This was the reason why they gave a recommendation not to exceed the quotas and that the threshold on entrance exams should be raised. Enrollment plan for 2007-2008 remained on the level of the previous year, suggesting that the UNIZD was also applying the historical method in defining quotas. The biggest part of the discussion belonged to the ways of enrolling children of defenders. They discussed if they should compose segregated lists or enroll outside the quota or place all students on a single list, which would allow them to remain within a unique quota. Finally, they left the possibility of supplementing and changing pursuant to the decision of the two competent ministries – for defenders and for education. In 2008-2009, it was decided that some of the double major programmes would not be enrolling, but that they would be enrolling exclusively as single major programmes, which would reduce the quota with the aim of improving the quality of study. However, the UNIZD thought that the state should be clear about how many of each professions was necessary, which would serve as orientation for the universities. Lack of clear criteria for establishing quotas was obvious in 2010-2011. At the time, Vice Rector Proroković explained that the future enrollment policy should consider employability, needs of the society and the job market. It was clear that the enrollment policy of the UNIZD was not conducted according to external indicators, but rather according to internal capacities of the very University, but those criteria were never explained in a clear fashion. The beginning of taking employability into account was in 2012-2013, when they rejected to open a dislocated study because the administration of the University thought that a big number of people of that profession was recorded by the CES and that the existing quotas should be reduced instead of opening new studies.

When it comes to the state matura, Rector Magaš stated in 2004-2005 that it would be gradually introduced as the basic prerequisite for enrollment to the University and that it was possible that entrance exams would be eliminated in the next year. Of course, they could not achieve this, seeing that this national project was at its very initial phase and it was introduced several years later. In 2007-2008, a presentation of the project of the state matura was organized at the UNIZD, and the position of the UNIZD was somewhat different than in 2003-3004. Namely, Vice Rector Proroković explained that the extent to which the state matura would be accepted would depend on individual constituent units. Therefore, it would be possible that they brought different decisions and that additional knowledge exams would be possible on individual units. Year after that, a decision regarding accepting the state matura as a foundation for ranking candidates for the first year enrollment was brought. It was

decided that the state matura would be evaluated in regard to the grades of relevant subjects in ratio of 70:30, even though the recommendation of the ASHE was that this ration amounted to 60:40.

### 5.5.7. University of Dubrovnik

From the very beginning, it was obvious that there was a flexibility regarding quotas at the UNIDU. Namely, on the level of the University, it was important that the quota approved by the Ministry was not exceeded, but the possibility of internal conversion of spots remained if there was a different interest in individual studies. Also, the UNIDU was prepared not to open certain studies if the number of applicants for them was low. This was the case with the Engineering study and it was decided not to open the second enrollment round but to offer the applicants enrollment to a similar study. In determining the quotas for 2005-2006, at the UNIDU they were guided by the instructions of the Ministry and Rectors' Conference and the capacity remained constrained on the level the quotas from last year, with the exception of quotas for new studies. However, in the end, the quota was reduced because the quotas for part-time students were eliminated for individual studies. With the aim of filling the quotas, the UNIDU promoted itself in high schools, worked on promotive materials and dissemination. During the enrollment of 2005-2006, there was an example which revealed that at that point, there was no systematic monitoring of enrollment policy and that the estimates of leaderships at the UNIDU were arbitrary. Concretely, in that year, they started enrolling students according to the Act on the Rights of Croatian Defenders of the Homeland War and Members of their Families, they announced problems and the fact that the number of enrolled students would be 5% higher than the original quota. However, after the two enrollment rounds, 550 students were enrolled, and the capacity was 775 spots, which brought about the third enrollment round that introduced 18 more students. The vacancy of quotas that became a trend at the UNIDU caused demands of the Senate for a more aggressive marketing approach. Furthermore, the quotas on the level of the University were once again reduced in the following year and the number of applied and enrolled students was significantly smaller than in the previous year. Minutes revealed that the UNIDU considered the reasons that caused this situation – decrease in the number of students in high schools in Dubrovnik, opening of new studies in other parts of Croatia, decreased interest for certain studies at the UNIDU, etc. Some Senate members stated that the issue of the reduced number of students is the biggest strategic problem at the UNIDU. On the other and, the story presented to the public differs. Namely, Rector Milković suggested at the Rectors' Conference that due to the constrains of their own space and due to the consultation with high schools and the CES, they

enrolled a limited number of students according to the Act on the Rights of Croatian Defenders of the Homeland War and Members of their Families. Issues regarding constrained capacities were certainly not a constraining factor because they enrolled 470 students in 2006-2007, and the quota was 725 spots. This continued the trend of drastic decline of enrolled students at the UNIDU, and the conclusions were that they should further put additional efforts into the promotion and establishment of studies in foreign language in order to attract foreign students, introduce new and quality personnel and publish scientific papers. The administration of the UNIDU thought that they were the only university in Croatia conducting promotional activities, while others merely organized university fairs and nothing else. In addition to that, Rector Milković announced closing of certain studies and opening new ones. The UNIDU emphasized that it was necessary to establish enrollment quotas in a more realistic way and, in concurrence with Rector's statements, work on opening of new programmes. According to the opinion of the Senate, old programmes and old studies were the main obstacle towards the increase of the number of students. Aside that, the studies that could enroll more students reduced their quota in order to secure quality study. Also, one of the detected problems was the aggressive promotion of private HEIs. The aim of the UNIDU was for it to be recognized as a small, but quality university. If that was not achieved, they thought that not even this promotion could help them.

For the next academic year, they additionally reduced the capacities on the level of the University to 650 spots, but there was a decline of enrolled students once again, and in the end, they enrolled 431 students. It was decided that, during the enrollment application process, they would conduct a survey and discover how the candidates acquired information about the study. With the aim of attracting a bigger number of candidates, a meeting was organized with the principles of high schools of the Dubrovnik-Neretva County. Conclusion was that such meetings should become a practice and that the process of proposing new programmes at the UNIDU should include individual agreements with principles with the aim of securing continuity after entering the higher education. Additionally, they proposed to compose a strategy that would stop the decline of enrolled students, but according to the available documents, this strategy was never developed. Quotas for the following year remained the same as in previous year, and 455 students were enrolled. This number was somewhat bigger than the last year, but the reason to this was opening of a new study. It was emphasized that the decline of students also intensified since the professional studies were shut down and that it was impossible to expect an increase of total number of students without

re-introducing these studies. Once again, it was stated that the following items were necessary: analysis, developmental enrollment strategy of the University, promotional activities, composition of new programmes, uplifting the level of the study and activities regarding mobility. However, the UNIDU faced issues with maintaining the existing studies. Namely, in 2008-2009, professional council of the Department of Economy and Business Economy suggested that it was better not to enroll students to two programmes because of the lack of their own personnel for quality realization of those programmes. New programmes were introduced, but the capacity on the level of the UNIDU was reduced to 537 spots, until they finally enrolled 450 students. Such trend influenced the proposition regarding the correction of quotas and objections of members of the Senate regarding vacant spots that were left on certain studies every year. Corrections were made at the Maritime studies and the Department of Economy and Business Economy, while on others, they remained mostly the same. However, they were later changed to a certain extent and the final quota was 526. Additionally, they stressed the importance of continuous analysis of state after the enrollment and the realistic changes of the enrollment quotas. Downward trend of the enrolled students resumed in 2010-2011, when only 389 students were enrolled. Rector once again repeated that it was necessary to seriously reevaluate the structure of students the UNIDU wanted to enroll, which educational programmes they wanted to offer and which should be closed. In that direction, the quotas on the level of the UNIDU were reduced to 463 spots. Enrollment analysis was conducted at the Senate's conference, they pointed out that in the academic year of 2010-2011, 50% less students were enrolled than in the first year of work of the University. Analysis of both structure and interest of high school pupils in Dubrovnik was suggested, as well as re-evaluation of educational programmes, increase of marketing activities, consideration of attractiveness of programmes and future needs of the job market. Rector Milković pointed out that there was s developmental strategy of the University, but that its realization was questionable. The UNIDU saw lack of student dormitory as one of the reasons to this situation, as well as constant struggle for the necessary teaching personnel, infrastructure and new programmes. Trend of lack of enrollment to certain studies resumed in 2011-2012 with the Textile Restauration study, and the number of potential students was additionally reduced. Reasons to this were that the foreign partners quit the study and the limited needs of the job market for this profile. The number of enrolled students was once again reduced and 346 students were enrolled. Traditionally, professional councils of the department were warned to consider the results and propose measure for the increase. Rector pointed out that it was worrisome that this downward trend was not stopped and he even felt

that some subjective and negative articles in the newspapers diverted students from enrolling. Potential for the increase of the number of students was seen in the new studies in the field of humanistic science and art. Leadership of the UNIDU was particularly worried by the decline of students at their institution, while the number of students in that same year increased at other universities in Croatia. They also turned their promotional activities in the direction of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but lack of student dormitory and high prices in Dubrovnik were emphasized as demotivating factors. Rektor Milković stated that there were logical reasons for this decline of students such as geographical position, inability to open all studies that students wished to study, inability of switching to study in English language without a thorough preparation, big number of newly founded HEIs in the surroundings, etc. He thought that the image of the UNIDU should be built on quality and excellence in areas where it could make a step further. In the sense of raising attractiveness of study and introducing studies in English language was the vision of new Rector Vrtiprah in the end of 2011-2012. Finally, in 2012-2013, quotas were increased and 486 spots were opened, and 434 students were enrolled, which represents the increase of the number of students after a long period of decline.

The state matura exam was on the agenda of the Senate at the UNIDU in the academic year of 2007-2008, when a presentation was held by the representative of the Ministry. The University immediately consented to having the state matura as the prerequisite of enrollment, and they also recommended that the results of the state matura exam were accompanied by the average of grades achieved in high school. Also, they gave their consent to using the results of the state matura exam instead of the entrance exams, but they also wanted to leave the possibility of additionally testing specific knowledge, competences and skills not encompassed by the state matura but that were of high importance to some studies. Indicative solution was applied associated with the required level requested at the state matura exam at the UNIDU. Namely, due to the constant decline of number of students, but also due to the fact that less students from gymnasiums aimed to attend the UNIDU, demands were decreased. Economics and Trading High School sent a memo in which they asked that the UNIDU considered the change of levels of obligatory subjects from higher to lower. Due to the previously listed reasons, the UNIDU concluded that it was impossible to maintain the higher level so they adapted to the situation and requested the basic level at the state matura exam for all obligatory subjects as a prerequisite for being enrolled to the University. They also considered the recommendation of the ASHE, which recommended that 60% of the

prerequisite belonged to the subjects of the state matura exam, and 40% additional prerequisites specific for individual departments. The decision regarding this issue was left to the individual departments and Rector Milković concluded that there was no need for unification. In spite of the decision to lower the requested level, Media and Culture Study maintained the higher level of enrollment for 2010-2011 for all obligatory subjects of the state matura exam, which caused objections from specialized schools. This caused the main secretary Ivušić to state that some of the studies had too high a level, which resulted with almost losing students at those studies. Rector stated that he did not understand why the Communicology department chose such an approach, and that if the other departments had done the same, the real question would have been how many students would even get enrolled to the UNIDU. In the next year, levels of obligatory subjects of the state matura exam were also lowered for the Media and Culture Study. This type of criteria in the following years resulted with professors complaining about the inadequate pre-knowledge of their students and their quality.

#### 5.5.8. Conclusion

The noticeable fact in enrollment policy is the domination of the historical method of determining quotas according to which, they are based mostly on the quotas from the previous year and there are no clear discussions and arguments about the necessity of these quotas. Expert 1 also recognized this:

*Historical basis dominates because I practically doubt that someone somewhere is planning, in the way that they are examining the developmental needs of, let us say, the community or region or country. During this process, it is evaluated how many students we can bring forth with our internal capacities.*

Also, Expert 2 emphasized that there was no objective indicator of capacity, but that it was done according to the internal evaluations and evaluations of social needs:

*There were no capacities, they were not formed as a category. The enrollment was conducted according to the needs and we always succeeded to form the quotas in the sense that it was necessary, if nothing else, because higher educated individuals were required, but the reason was always concretely found, some sort of an example, a moment, that would justify the increase in some area.*

Regarding the disabling the change, particularly emphasized here was the non-integration at the UNIZG, and then at the UNIOS. Namely, certain constituent units ignored the decisions

of the Senate and enrolled students outside the anticipated quotas and also decided independently on the quotas. In addition to this, the UNIZG also disagreed with the Ministry regarding the policy core beliefs, which was visible through the confrontation about the quota determination with Minister Kraljević. At the more integrated universities, the impossibility to develop the enrollment policy was emphasized due to the fact that they were lacking in personnel and therefore were not able to open new studies and attract new students. In this sense, the UNIRI was pointed out, which established the decision making on the level of the university and applied clear pressure to the constituent units in order to prevent the autonomous deciding and acting. On the other hand, the UNIRI did not emphasize the issue of insufficient personnel or financial capacities during the opening of new studies or confrontations regarding the policy core beliefs with the MSES. By their procedures, establishment of bodies, decisions and the way of establishing the quotas and constraining the constituent units, the UNIRI achieved the most in the application of the enrollment policy. Therefore, it was revealed that the combination of the organizational structure and actors' characteristics was crucial item for the change.

## 5.6. Tuition Fees

The relationship of the universities in Croatia and tuition fees is mostly associated through two aspects. Namely, as visible in the later overview, there is not a clear calculation of the cost of study on which the tuition fees could be based, which maintains the issue of disagreement in discussions about this topic. On one side, the universities claim that set tuition fees are not the full cost of the study, which is, according to them, several times higher. On the other hand, they do not take steps to calculate the real cost of study, but consider that to be the task of the Ministry. In this sense, Expert 7 also stated that

*Croatia has attempted to determine the costs of study, and in principle, it was reduced to a single and simple calculation of costs per student, that should roughly reflect an average tuition fee… once observing the costs per students in the system of higher education, there are no or very little regularities… the system is exceptionally variable, unpredictable, inclined to annual fluctuations and actually very difficult to predict, it is impossible to predict what would happen in a year or two.*

Second aspect is the question of who is supposed to pay the tuition fee and the opinion of the majority of universities is that students should cover their own costs. Namely, there were categories of full-time self-financed students funded by the state, full-time self-financed and part-time students. The first category was completely exempted from paying, while the

second two categories were paying tuition fees. The research revealed that the leaderships of the universities were promoting the model according to which, everyone was supposed to pay tuition fees, and the exemption from paying was observed as an incentive for the successful students and a quicker completion of studies. In addition to that, the issue of tuition fees is associated with the enrollment quotas. I discuss this topic in the chapter on Enrollment policy 5.5., where I presented how the universities reduced quotas for full-time students funded by the state and increased the quotas of full-time self-financed students. This was also demonstrated by Matković (2009), who clearly stated that the growth of the number of students was based precisely on the increase of students covering the costs of their own studies. Such decisions were based on the Act on Higher Education Institutions of 1993, when the constituent units were enabled to determine the enrollment quotas with tuition fees. Therefore, Matković pointed out that in the academic year of 1993-1994, 11.8% of students had been paying the tuition fees for their study, and that this percentage in 2004-2005 grew up to 56.6%. On the other hand, Matković emphasized that the portion of students whose tuition fees were covered by the Ministry decreased, which was also recognized in the part on Enrollment policy (5.5.). After the Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act of 2003, universities formally gained the authority regarding tuition fees. Doolan, Dolenec and Domazet (2012, 92) point out:

> For maximal amounts of tuition fees at the under-graduate programmes, there are no constraints or stricter regulation by the state, or the criteria of their implementation. However, amounts and criteria are basically arranged in cooperation of the universities, represented by the Rectors' Conference and the Ministry of Science, Education and Spots, and are later determined by the senates of the universities.

Furthermore, this was also established by Expert 7 in the interview by stating:

*The tuition fees were often left to, quotation marks, the Rectors' Conference, and this was, more or less, the only practice used by the, of course, the Ministry of Science in cooperation with them, in order to determine an average tuition fee, while the universities had the right to establish some of the models they thought were adequate for them.*

Therefore, in spite of the formal authority of the senate in making these decisions autonomously, they are more often, as visible in the research, a result of agreements at the Rectors' Conference and recommendation of the Ministry.

It is necessary to point out some important decisions on the national level, which influenced activities of the universities in terms of this issue. The beginning of 2003-2004 was marked

by the decision of Minister Flego to increase tuition fees by 60%, i.e. maximal amount was set, but the universities and the constituent units were free to choose a smaller amount of their tuition fees. Finally, the MST had revoked the decision on the increase of tuition fees, which caused problems at the universities, and they dealt with this issue differently. Furthermore, there was not a significant increase of tuition fees in the observed period. Namely, universities increased tuition fees by 10% for the academic year of 2005-2006, and there were intentions of increasing tuition fees by 10% for each of the following five years at the Rectors' Conference. However, this decision was dropped due to the pressure of students. Differentiation in the tuition fee policy started in the academic year 2007-2008, when the UNIZG made an independent action of introducing the linear system of tuition fees based on paying for the non-acquired ECTS credits, which later spread to the other universities in more or less similar modalities. Doolan, Dolenec and Domazet (2012) state that the increase of tuition fees occurred at the UNIST, UNIZD and UNIZG in the period from 2005 to 2009. According to the senates' conferences, it is visible in this research that there was a one-time increase at the UNIST and UNIZG by introducing the linear model, but that this increase differed at the individual constituent units. At the UNIZD, only the previously mentioned increase of 2005-2006 was marked, and of 2010-2011 for one of the studies, while other tuition fees remained on the level of other universities.

The issue of tuition fees was amongst the most emphasized student questions during the initiation of protests and blockades of 2009. Namely, student protests and blockades were organized at the individual constituents of the UNIZG, UNIRI, UNIST, UNIOS, UNIPU and UNIZD and these events were regarded as the most important in terms of the student activism in Croatia and in terms of the student influence on the higher education policies. As the main motives, students pointed out the commercialization of education and neoliberal approach, and incentive arrived externally as a part of the global student movement. Without presenting an in-depth analysis of the motives of this protest and blockade, it is necessary to emphasize that the main demand of the students was complete public funding of higher education, which eventually resulted with exemption from paying for all students who enrolled to higher education for the first time. However, the penalization of students who did not acquire a certain number of ECTS credits and tuition fees for those students who were beneath a certain limit of ECTS credits was also introduced. It is necessary to point out that the student movement was advocating the total absence of penalization and that this solution was not in accordance to their demands.

Complete funding of full-time students of the graduate studies from the state budget was announced prior to the student protests of 2008-2009 and it was initiated that year, when the enrollment of the first generation of students of graduate studies according to the Bologna Process was expected. Two years later, in 2010-2011, it was decided that the full-time students of the first year of the undergraduate studies would not have to pay tuition fees. Therefore, due to the protests and blockade, the MSES brought a decision that all students enrolling to the academic year of 2010-2011 would be exempted from paying, but that further exemptions would depend on success. This nullified the differentiating of the full-time students funded by the state and full-time self-financed students, which resulted in forming a single category of full-time students. During those years, there was a significantly chaotic situation in which the students of graduate studies, including the students of fourth, fifth and sixth year of integrated studies and the students of the first year of undergraduate studies, were exempted from paying tuition fees, while the students of second and third year of undergraduate studies were paying tuition fees.

Eventually, performance based agreements were signed for a three year period encompassing the academic years of 2012-2013, 2013-2014 and 2014-2015.They abolished tuition fees so that all full-time students were enrolled to universities without paying and resumed studying without pay as long as they regularly fulfilled their obligations, which was 55 credits in a year, and the cost of their tuition fees was covered by the state budget. The cases of students who did not fulfill their obligations regularly, and were studying full-time, were left to the individual universities in deciding which of the models would be applied and how these students would pay for the non-acquired ECTS credits. However, these performance based agreements clearly stated that this model should not consequentially increase the total income by charging students who lost the right to subvention. Applied models differed at individual universities, and according to the available information, only the UNIPU did not implement the linear model of charging tuition fees. By signing the pilot performance based agreements, the total quota of the university should not exceed 5% per year. In addition to that, these agreements also defined goals and if these goals were achieved, the Ministry would transfer additional 10% to the agreed financial means necessary for funding the subvention.[12]

In terms of the terminology, it should be pointed out that the term tuition fees was used at the beginning of the observed period. However, due to the fact that these amounts did not cover complete costs of the study, term tuition participation was later introduced.

[12] System of Tuition Fees after the introduction of performance based agreements in Appendix G

### 5.6.1. University of Zagreb

The issue of tuition fees at the UNIZG is often associated with the calculation of the real cost of study per student and this issue was also on discussion in 2001, and an information was acquired by Minister Kraljević that the national project would be introduced that should result in this calculation. At the UNIZG, they claimed that they had proposed this calculation in 1998. In addition to that, the UNIZG confronted the Minister regarding the disagreement about the enrollment of students who funded their own studies. Namely, the Minister's approach to the problem was that, even though the students bore the costs of their study, they are still entitled to the support of the state through funding of the student standard. This disagreement is also described in the part on Enrollment policy (5.5.). However, the UNIZG thought that it could determine quotas for students covering their own costs of study, which was confirmed by the Science and Higher Education Funding Council, which gave a verdict that the MST was to determine the amount of tuition fees and the number of students studying with the support of the state and the fact that this referred only to this group of students. Additionally, the Council made the decision of maintaining tuition fees on the same level as the last year. This decision was met with the opposition of the representatives of the Faculty of Medicine, who thought that it was wrong to determine the cost of self-financed study outside the constituent units and that their proposed increase was merely approaching the economic (real) cost, but was still far from it. According to Bjeliš, the representative of the Faculty of Science, the cost of study could be calculated by dividing the total income of the faculty by the number of students, but that even then, the cost would surpass the assumed cost self-financed study stated in the Minister's memo that had arrived at the UNIZG. The association with the enrollment policy is visible here, because Bjeliš claimed that it did not matter then if a certain study programme enrolled 100 or 150 students at the cost of the Ministry because the financial means were not assigned per student but approximately. The UNIZG thought that allocated means by the Ministry covered only 30-40% of the real cost and that the decision regarding the remainder should be brought by the individual student providing the financial means. This issue was subject of discussion in the following academic year (2001-2002), when an opinion was expressed that the system was unjust, inefficient and imbalanced because there were two categories of students – those who studied with the support of the state and those who covered their own costs of study, but that the tuition fees they were paying were not the real cost of the study. Therefore, the issue of cost calculation was repeated as the crucial issue for every constituent unit and study. Financial status of individual constituents was described by the statement of the representative of the Faculty of

Law, who claimed that had there not been for the tuition fees of the self-financed students, the faculty would have not had the equipment.

The issue of non-integration of the UNIZG became obvious in 2002-2003, when Minister Flego brought the decision of increasing tuition fees by 60%, i.e. maximal amount was set, but the universities and the constituent units were free to choose a smaller amount of their tuition fees. At the time, individual members of the Senate were requesting a common decision regarding the increase on the level of the University, but the UNIZG left this decision to the constituent units. The attitude concerning tuition fees and quotas was presented by the representative of the Faculty of Pharmacy and Biochemistry, who thought that if there were 100 interested candidates for enrollment to studies who were prepared to pay the full price of the study, there was no reason not to enroll them and that the tuition fees should be paid by students who did not enter the quota funded by the Ministry due to the lack of knowledge. He was against meeting the demands of the students regarding decreasing the tuition fees, and Rector Mencer informed that a decision was brought at the Rectors' Conference, which was suggesting to the Minister not to change the decision on the tuition fees. Rector thought that it was impossible to maintain standard just by funding from the state budget, and that the participation was introduced everywhere in Europe. She saw the solution to paying tuition fees through the system of loans and scholarships. Similar ideas were presented by the Vice Rector Bjeliš. He thought that on every two students funded by the state, one was enrolled that covered the costs of their own study and that the tuition fee covered 30% of the cost, which implied that every student participated in the costs of study just by 10%. According to him, this made the MST perform the role of the ministry of social welfare at the expense of the university and constituent units that were not interesting in the market sense.

The MST eventually revoked the decision regarding the increase of tuition fees, which caused problems at universities, but they dealt with them in a different fashion. At the UNIZG, particularly stressed was the question of legal relationship of the students and individual constituent units because individual agreements were concluded between them upon enrollment that could not be changed according to the decision of the Ministry. They claimed that this depended exclusively on the HEIs since they were supposed to make agreement annexes with each of their students and it was considered that the Government should offer a compensation to the HEIs in the amount that was supposed to be acquired by tuition fees. This topic was resumed at the beginning of the next academic year. At the UNIZG, they were

aware that the University was unable to change the decision and that the constituent units would have to return the paid-in financial means. The Faculty of Law suggested that the Government of the Republic of Croatia should compensate for the financial means to the students instead of having constituent units change thousands of agreements. In regard to this, they insisted on a common decision, unlike the beginning of this topic when the decision on the increase was left to the constituent units. Budak from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Studies exempted himself from this discussion because he had, in the previous discussion concerning the increase, insisted on a common attitude, but that at the time, it was stated that each of the constituent units should acquire as much financial means as they required. On the other hand, Lovrinović, representative of the Faculty of Economy, thought that, by returning the financial means, constituent units would confess to fooling the public and that the cost of study was not correct, while Labar from the Faculty of Medicine, thought that everyone should be held responsible independently because that was how the decisions were brought. Finally, Rector Mencer concluded that the Senate could not bring a common decision and that it would be best that the deans solved this issue with the Ministry.

Inability to bring a decision was confirmed by Mencer in the newspaper, when she stated:

> We do not have a university because we do not have a rector that justly negotiates the budget for each fragment (constituent unit) – this is why it is called the fragmented university – according to organization and financing, and according to class and projects. (Lilek 2004, 26)

The conclusion was that the retroactive changes of the MST on the amount of tuition fees were legally unfounded, unethical and that they caused unnecessary antagonism between the students and the University. According to the UNIZG, the Government should have revoked the decision and found a way to neutralize its consequences, which was confirmed by Rector Mencer. She also confirmed that some of the constituent units of the UNIZG could easily return the money, while some deemed it impossible and that there was no consensus at the UNIZG if the higher education should be public or private good. Furthermore, she thought that the current tuition fees were not real, but that they were three to four times higher and that it was unsustainable that the higher education should be funded exclusively from the budget. She also stated that the full cost of study could not be suddenly assigned. Therefore, she was for the increase in the cost of study, but also for the system of scholarships and loans. However, she pointed out the unethical spirit of certain deans who over capacitated themselves with quotas because they gained merely 30% of the means necessary for normal functioning. Even sharper in the conviction of such practice was Vice Rector Jerolimov, who

thought that such constituent units enrolled a big number of students for which they lacked capacities, earned on tuition fees and sent a bad message about the seriousness of attending class and quality of work.

In the academic year of 2003-2004, it was decided at the UNIZG that they should remind the Ministry to establish the amount of the tuition fees for the following year on time and that it should initiate the project of determining the cost of study. Thusly, an opinion was expressed that it remained unclear how someone could not calculate the cost of study, and in order for the UNIZG to bring serious decisions, it was required that the Ministry brought them first. However, in 2004-2005, the issue of cost of study reappeared in the context of transition to the Bologna Process and the five year duration of study, on which members of the Senate had different opinions. Some thought that financial solutions were necessary because they were the only way of composing new programmes, some thought that there were no real criteria for the calculation of the cost of study and some emphasized that there were foundations for the calculation, which were the costs of study, but that there was no unique methodology in Croatia that would determine the type of costs included into the costs of study. Vice Rector Hunjak stated that a calculation of costs of study was necessary on the national level per student and for every HEI, which should be composed by the Ministry because the universities did not have information on investing into the student standard. He also pointed out an opinion that the Bologna system brought 30% of increase of costs and presented an idea that all students somehow participated in their costs of study. This is how the representative of the Faculty of Law, associated with the transition to the Bologna Process and the obligatory attendance in class, stated that they would have to rent a bigger lecture hall and seeing that this would not be funded by the state, they would have to fund it through tuition fees in the way of reducing the quota funded by the Ministry and increasing the quota of self-financed students. Finally, Vice Rector Jerolimov emphasized that they had requested an increase of financial means from the Ministry due to the issues caused by the new system such as the increase of the number of students, lack of space and personnel, but that the Ministry deemed their demands unreal.

Similarly, the opinion of the representative of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Studies, Jerneić, was that the issue of tuition fees was under the authority of the Senate and the autonomous right of the university and that they could differ within Croatia at different universities and studies. However, Rector Mencer disagreed by stating that the financial autonomy implied that the university itself determined its own budget, but that it should

remain within certain constraints of the system in which higher education was considered a public good. Furthermore, Vice Rector Hunjak pointed out the issue of lack of information regarding the capacity of higher education and consequentially, the real cost of study, and he also emphasized that the costs not covered by the state should be compensated for by the participation of students. At the Senate, the decision was brought that the tuition fees were higher by 10% in the first year of study, but that the final decision would still be brought by the MSES. Beginning of 2005-2006 was marked by objections of the Students' Conference whose representatives claimed that the individual constituent units also raised tuition fees on the other years of study by 10% and they requested that these amounts were returned to previous state. The UNIZG explained that the agreements for self-financed students contained the possibility of change of the amount of the tuition fee every year, but that the system of paying the tuition fees could not be referred as such because this entailed merely a portion of costs of study and that it was not fair that the increased costs applied only to first year students. Final decision was that the overpaid amounts were refunded to all students who did not have agreements containing the possibility of tuition fee increase and if the decisions concerning the increase were brought after the Decision of the Senate regarding the 10% increase for the first year of study. In addition to this, once again at the conference of the Senate was emphasized that the universities were autonomous in determining the tuition fees, but that could accept the recommendations of the Council of Financing and the Rectors' Conference. Bjeliš, candidate for position of Rector at the time, stated that the current system was not socially and economically efficient and that the tuition fees covered around 20% of the total expenses for studies. His opinion was supported by Vice Rector Hunjak, who suggested that the equity should be achieved in the way that there were no exceptions, at least not in the partial participation in the cost of study. However, current Rector Mencer rejected the possibility of change in regard to the existing state due to the possible issues with students, and she also rejected the proposition of the Rectors' Conference on increasing the tuition fees for the first year by 10%. Subsequently, the Council of Financing of the UNIZG established that there were no elements for the increase of tuition fees in that fashion, but that it was necessary to distribute the tuition fees equally to all students along with the initiation of the system of scholarships and student loans. Senate supported that proposition.

The system of tuition fees was, once again, criticized by Bjeliš in 2006-2007, but this time as the Rector. He considered it to be irrational, but also that it was senseless to intervene with a bad system and that it should be changed completely instead. His vision of higher education

as public good implied assuring conditions for studying to students of all social categories, but not covering all costs. According to him, the system was absurd because half of the students were not burdened with fees, while the other half paid for their costs and this covered around 20% of the costs out of students' sources, which is near the top on the European scale. He saw the solution through the system of social and loan support. However, it is questionable based on what did Rector Bjeliš make the calculations, while Expert 7 emphasized:

*The universities were not capable of making the calculation, simply put. The whole situation with Rector Bjeliš, the current rector and the previous rectors, was nothing more than bidding, I will not call it a joke, but somewhat of a bidding that was not based on quality calculation and quality insight into the trend of these costs.*

In the beginning of 2007, a new model of tuition fees for the UNIZG was presented. The linear system, according to which, portion of the students (best ranked according to the entrance procedure) would be freed of paying, while students beneath that threshold would pay linearly, depending on their position on the list. Also, this model implied elaboration for higher years of the study and the formation of foundation where 2% of the income from tuition fees would be transferred and used to fund the most successful students (which is presented in the part on Social dimension 5.4.). Finally, it was concluded that it was necessary to find a bank in cooperation with the MSES, which would offer loans with beneficial interest rates, and find a better solution for funding the social categories. Rector Bjeliš thought that this system was a progress that contributed to the development of the system and stimulated success. Dean of the Faculty of Economy, Tipurić, who worked on the model, claimed that it should be implemented immediately and not be under the illusion that 0% of the increase of the tuition fees could be the goal. According to him, the increase was necessary, but he found that the UNIZG could take over a part of the social role through the Foundation. Rector Bjeliš pointed out that he had insisted on initiating an overall approach to the issue, but it did not happen. Due to this, the UNIZG chose to take independent steps. Tuition fees were observed as incentives towards more successful studying, which would indirectly reduce costs as a whole and that the income from tuition fees was necessary to function. This brought about the increase of tuition fees for the part-time studies, which surpassed the maximal participation or was equal to it. This was pointed out by Jerneić because prior to this, it maximally amounted to half of the tuition fee of the regular study. Rector Bjeliš thought that the UNIZG was autonomous in making the decision regarding tuition fees and that the real cost of study could

be calculated by dividing the income of the constituent unit by the number of students, while the initial cost of study, according to some deeper indicators, remained neglected. This model caused disagreement by the former Vice Rector Jerolimov who thought that such changes should not be conducted quickly and that the decision made by the entire academic community was necessary. Finally, most of the constituent units accepted and implemented this model and they introduced three categories of full-time students – students exempted from paying, students who paid linearly and those who paid the maximal tuition fees. It is necessary to have in mind that the Students' Conference insisted that the first category should not be under 30-35% and the last should not surpass 20% of the total number of students per year. According to the minute of the Senate, most of the maximal tuition fees coincided with the previous ones, even with some discrepancies, and some of the constituents kept the old system. For the students of higher years, the suggestion was to rank according to the number of ECTS credits that were not acquired and the successfulness of study in terms of grade average. Eventually, the decision was brought that they would calculate the cost of an ECTS credit and that the students would, upon enrollment to the next year, pay the value of non-acquired credits, which was additionally arranged in regard to the acquired credits. Main explanation to this entire system at the UNIZG was observed through mutual incitement that was initiated by the reduction of the state budgetary means, which caused the universities to turn towards the tuition fees. According to the UNIZG, this caused the increase of the number of students, which was not in concordance to the capacities or the needs of the job market. This is how these two tendencies incited one another because, as they claimed, the constituent units did not cover all costs through the tuition fees, which still made them increase the number of students. Eventually, this brought the quality of study into question.

During the proposing of the linear model, Rector Bjeliš emphasized the work on social category, however, after the Rector's Collegium of the UNIZG had accepted the model, their conclusion was that they should suggest to the Ministry and the Rectors' Conference finding a system of support to the students of individual social categories and the systems of loans. In addition to that, the prevailing opinion at the UNIZG was that by nuancing the tuition fees for various studies would balance the interest for individual studies, and encourage more successful and efficient studying. In the beginning of 2007-2008, the attitude of the UNIZG was that the incomes from the participations of students should be minimal and the Rector was satisfied that one portion of the income was acquired from other sources, but he was concerned about the increase of tuition fees at the postgraduate doctoral studies. Therefore,

the UNIZG thought that they should be minimized. However, during the enrollment, there was a need to correct participations at the undergraduate and graduate studies, which caused 10 out of 33 constituent units to increase the tuition fees. Additionally, Vice Rector Pinter stated that there were demands from the Faculty of Economy, Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Political Science for an increase, but that this only referred to somewhat bigger increase and only for students who were less excellent. However, only several days later at the Rectors' Conference, Rector Bjeliš pointed out that there was big pressure from those three faculties concerning the increase of tuition fees by more than 50%. However, the recommendation of the Rectors' Conference was that the tuition fees and quotas should remain the same for the academic year of 2008-2009. During the announcement of complete public funding of tuition fees for full-time students of graduate studies, Rector Bjeliš stated that this was impossible to achieve without the system of control that would incite responsibility and success. He also pointed out that tuition fees could not be avoided, but that they had to be equal for everyone. According to him, the system should be based on two principles – favoring and stimulating successfulness and the social element. At the UNIZG, they chose to request a written elaboration of the announcement that would guarantee financial means. The Ministry did not provide with the said written elaboration of the announcement and the suggestion at the UNIZG was that they should place an annotation into the call for the students that they would pay the participation upon enrollment and would get a refund when the Ministry delivered the adequate amount to the University. In the end, agreements were signed with the Ministry regarding the funding of graduate studies.

At the thematic conference of the ESCC of the Croatian Parliament held on July 10, 2008, Rector Bjeliš referred to the changes at the UNIZG. He claimed that the new system was used in an attempt to convince themselves that the tuition fees should not be an additional income of the constituents, even though he admitted that this was the predominant case, but that they should be a mechanism that brought stronger responsibility towards the studies, i.e. stimulation of the success of studying. When the student protests and the blockade at the Faculty of the Humanities and Social Studies, and at some other constituent units, were initiated in April 2009, Rector Bjeliš claimed that their cause rested in the fact that some of the constituent units, including the Faculty of Humanities and Social Studies, did not accept the new linear model. This is why he stated that he did not want to be held responsible and that he was not responsible for students at the Faculty who were self-funded and were excellent students. However, it should be emphasized that the protests and the blockade also

occurred at other constituent units that introduced the linear model, as well as at other universities. However, in April 2009, at the Rector's Collegium, the conclusion was that the increased funding from the state funding should be used to compensate for the income from the tuition fees and that, according to the new system of studying and participation, students should not be a part of the funding and that social categories should be covered.

Rector Bjeliš presented his vision of the tuition fee system at the Rectors' Conference in November 2009, when he pointed out:

> The tuition fee system in the Republic of Croatia and at some universities had grown in the way that could not assist the development of the system. It had grown in a series of clumsy, historically inaccurate steps, and it introduced strong tensions into the universities, particularly the strongly structured ones, to such extent that this problem had to be resolved. (Rectors' Conference minutes 2009, 4)

Due to the blockades and protests, the MSES had brought the decision that all the students enrolling to the academic year of 2010-2011 would be enrolled without paying the tuition fee, but would still depend on the fulfilling of their obligations, which was included into the new proposals of acts on university and higher education, but they were never brought. Compensation of financial means would be ensured with an agreement between the university and the Government of the Republic of Croatia, and the university or individual constituent unit could charge the tuition fee only for special study programmes that were not the essential part of this agreement. This proposal was also discussed at the UNIZG. The prevailing opinion was that studying without the tuition fees would not be possible, with the addition of lack of trust towards the Ministry and the Government regarding the payment of financial means. The question of determining the amount of money paid-in per student was also raised. They were equally dissatisfied with determining the amount of participation of students in tuition fees on higher years, which only contained the criterion of acquired ECTS credits and they also stated that the UNIZG had already had an established system that encompassed both the ECTS credits and the success of students. This is how the final agreement contained the obligation of determining the participation on higher years through the passing rate and success in studying. According to the minutes of the Senate, the issue of finances was solved in the way that the Ministry paid in the tuition fees by having the Senate's decision on quotas and tuition fees in mind. The non-integration of the UNIZG was also evident in the fact that the individual constituent units were free to compose their own models of students' participation in the costs of study on higher years, but in concordance with the model that had been accepted at the Senate in 2007. In spite of that, the UNIZG decided that all students of

the first year should sign agreements which bounded them to cover the cost of their tuition fees in case the Ministry did not do it for them. Rector Bjeliš did not consider this an act of distrust towards the state, but that due the debt of the Ministry, they could not play the trust card. However, the fact that a certain distrust was present in the system was confirmed by Expert 7, who, regarding the tuition fees and the finances, stated:

*Perhaps another interesting fact is that the system is set in a way that nobody trusts anybody. Constituent units do not trust the university, in quotation marks. The university does not trust the constituent units. The university, along with the constituent units, does not trust the Ministry. The Ministry does not trust them. Well, precisely this distrust is the result of the disintegrated system.*

In the beginning of 2010-2011, repeated negotiations ensued regarding the funding of the graduate studies, and the attitude of Rector Bjeliš and the UNIZG was that the enrollment to the graduate studies without the students' participations in costs of study was inadequate and not good for the system. This is how Bjeliš stated that these were ad hoc solutions that exempted some categories of students from paying, primarily implying the students of the graduate studies, and starting with this year, the students of the first year of undergraduate studies. This is why the dean of the Faculty of Law, Potočnjak, thought that this was a pretty complicated situation in which the Ministry funded the first year of the undergraduate studies and the graduate studies. Also, he pointed out that the non-systematicness of the funding emerged from the politics and not from the constituent units and universities. In the discussion on the strategic document Development and Transformation of the UNIZG during 2010, the emphasis was placed on the particular progress made in the system of student participation in costs of study and that the principle of responsibility was established, according to which, the tuition fee depended on the passing rate and the success of individual students.

However, at the UNIZG, they considered that the requirements for alteration of the current system were not prepared, and also that such practice demolished the concept of the UNIZG, which promoted the evaluation of students and development of responsibility towards the study and that this decision placed an emphasis on the less successful students. The UNIZG once again requested the introduction of clause stating that, if the Ministry did not fulfil its obligation, the University would charge the students with the tuition fees. However, this proposition was not accepted by the Ministry. According to Rector Bjeliš, the situation in

which the MSES compensated for the tuition fees did not exist anywhere in the world, especially not at the graduate studies. His opinion was that this did not treat education as public good, that issues were not being solved and that everything remained the same, i.e. that the development of the university was not enabled because the budget stayed the same. He claimed that the decision of Minister Primorac in 2008, when the tuition fees at the graduate studies had been revoked, damaged the entire system and especially the constituent units of the UNIZG.

Similar attitude in terms of the issue of tuition fee subventions at the undergraduate studies, and during the discussions on new acts in the field of higher education, was expressed by Vice Rector Divjak and the representative of the Faculty of Law, Potočnjak. They were doubtful of the assurance of funds and Potočnjak observed it as an election promise and a potential threat of quota reduction, which would, according to him, leave space for privatization of higher education. Vice Rector Divjak pointed out that they were neglectful of the need for calculating the real costs of study. Response of the Ministry was requested regarding the covering of costs of study for the undergraduate level of 2011-2012 and the Senate concluded that the students would not pay the tuition fee participation, but that they would sign agreements stating that they would be obliged to do that upon enrollment if the Government of the Republic of Croatia did not cover the costs of study and transferred those financial means by the end of the January 2012.

In the end of the academic year of 2010-2011, Rector Bjeliš stated at the thematic conference of the ESCC of the Croatian Parliament that such policy towards tuition fees represented an ad hoc policy of neutralizing dissatisfaction and introduced chaos and suspense. In spite of that, the agreement on funding of student participation was finally signed with the Ministry in July and it referred to the students of first year of undergraduate and integrated studies, and graduate studies and the fourth, fifth and sixth year of integrated studies. However, the MSES only covered the first year of undergraduate and integrated studies, while the students attending other years achieved that right pursuant to acts of the universities and constituent units, which all had different practice. In 2011-2012, proposals of three constituent units were rejected concerning the enrollment quotas and participations in tuition fees because they either increased the maximal participation or changed the model of participation. The listed reason for rejecting the demand for the increase of participation was that other constituent units could demand the same.

In the beginning of 2011-2012, Rector Bjeliš still thought that the current system was not functional and that it was necessary to explain to students that student participations in tuition fees would have to be refunded. However, during the discussion on initiating the performance based agreements, their opinion was that there could be no options if the financial means were not secured equal to the subvention of tuition fees for the undergraduate and graduate studies and the remainder subsidized by the state. Therefore, according to the Vice Rector Divjak, one of the phases of negotiations with the Ministry was also associated with the tuition fee subventions for the students of first and second level of study. Consequently, the proposal of the Ministry was the participation subvention per student for those who acquired 56 or 58 credits in the previous year, while the university would decide on the model for the rest. The UNIZG advocated that there should not be a unique solution at the national level regarding the participation paying when the threshold of 56 credits was not achieved. In addition to that, the UNIZG also demanded the differentiation of the study level within the very amount per student, but did not have the support of other universities. Also, the threshold of 56 credits was not acceptable to the Students' Conference because the courses were seldom valued at 4 credits.

At the Rectors' Conference in July 2012, Rector Bjeliš stated that this was the third year of subsidizing the first enrollment to first year of study and that he was personally supportive of that. Even though it is necessary to point out that his previous statements reveal strong criticism of such solutions. In addition to that, he also claimed that the Government enabled subventions for successful students who had acquired 55 and more credits, but that they were located below, in the uncovered area, and that a model of tuition fees was required that would resolve the situation. According to him, this system did not provide the financial means for development of study and improvement of work conditions and forced universities towards cheaper, social studies. Bjeliš thought that this aided students who were less successful and that it was not fair that the state shifted responsibility of social sensibility to the universities.

On the level of the university, the threshold was set at 55 credits, and it was decided that it was necessary to introduce a unique model of determining the participation for students who did not acquire that many credits. Also, this model should keep the success of students in terms of grade average in mind. Therefore, the decision was that the students who had acquired from 30 to 54 credits would pay per non-acquired credit, the cost of the credit would depend on the particular field and students acquiring under 30 credits would pay the maximal participation. This did not refer to the students with the disability of 60% or more of physical

impairment, they achieved the right to subvention if they had acquired minimally 30 credits. Also, excellent students could not pay more than the maximally determined amount paid by the full-time students, i.e. those who acquired less than 30 credits. Eventually, this type of solution regarding tuition fees forced the UNIZG to convert the portion in finances for material costs and vice versa, and the Alignment Foundation was formed. Namely, regarding the conducted simulation, it was established that 13 constituent units would achieve smaller income from the tuition fees according to the new model. However, discrepancies were once again present and four constituent units requested the deviation from the university model of participation in the costs of study of full-time students of higher years, which was enabled only during the transitional period in one of the academic years. Subsequently, four more constituent units requested the same, and two of the demands were accepted.

### 5.6.2. University of Split

Even though the minutes of the Senate of the UNIST contain little information about this issue, it is possible to emphasize some that refer to the type of policy it implemented regarding tuition fees. In 2002-2003, the decision on the amount of tuition fees was made based on the decision of the Ministry. They were increased pursuant to that decision. However, after the decision of the Minister to decrease tuition fees and the abolishment of the decision on the increase by maximally 60%, the UNIST decreased the tuition fees in concordance with that. Therefore, the new amounts were in accordance to other universities for this academic year and they depended on the field of study. It was concluded that they would arrange the refund of the paid tuition fees with the MST and that they would be refunded by the end of the calendar year. They were also insisting that these funds should be refunded from the state budget.

For 2005-2006, tuition fees for full-time students were increased by 10%, which was also the case at other universities, and the amounts depended on the field of study. For part-time students, they were up to 60% of the tuition fees paid by the full-time students if the study was being conducted in the main residence of the HEI, 70% if conducted on a location that is 60 kilometers away from this residence, and more if the study was at a greater distance.

The issue of tuition fees was criticized by Vice Rector Domazet who claimed that higher education was a public good and should remain like that, but that it should also be on the job market. He saw the danger in the growing entry of tuition fees and their uncontrolled spreading. He particularly stressed that their purpose was unknown and asked the question of why the specific amounts were determined. In addition to that, the Senate established that the

constituent units were free to independently decide if they would, for the academic year of 2005-2006, charge the full-time self-financed students and part-time students enrolled in 2004-2005, upon their enrollment to a higher year, the tuition according to the price determined for the enrollment to the first year of study in the academic year of 2005-2006 or according to the price that was present when they were enrolling to the first year. Associated with that, there was also a decision that, for the academic year 2006-2007, the cost of tuition fee for all students of the UNIST would be determined by the Senate. In the process of determining the tuition fees for the academic year of 2006-2007, Rector Pavić informed that the Council for Financing Scientific Activity and Higher Education concluded that the system was sub-financed, but that the tuition fees for that year should remain the same. The Council also concluded that a system of scholarships and loans would be established for the academic year of 2007-2008, which would alleviate the increase of tuition fees and the increase of the number of students paying tuition fees. However, this eventually was not accomplished and the tuition fees for that year stayed on the same level. Tuition fees also remained the same for the academic year of 2008-2009. Regarding students of graduate studies for 2008-2009, it was concluded that the decision would be made after the comparison of opinions of all universities at the Rectors' Conference and the documents of the Ministry regarding the fee to HEIs for subsidized graduate studies. The UNIST advocated that the costs of study covered by the Ministry matched the amounts of tuition fees of students enrolling to studies for the first time and that these funds were paid in the shortest time possible. The conclusion was that the rector should be given the authority to sign the agreements, which would end the differentiation of full-time students studying with the support of the Ministry and self-financed students at the graduate studies and fourth year of integrated studies. Also, the UNIST and its constituents were obliged not to charge the full-time students the tuition fees on condition that the Ministry paid the portion of tuition fee for those students, which was, according to the minutes of the Senate, higher than at other universities. In 2009-2010, the tuition fees for undergraduate students remained the same as in the last year, as did the regulation of tuition fees for the graduate studies, seeing that they were subsidized by the Ministry. After the beginning of student protests at the UNIST, they accepted the conclusion that they would not be changing decisions associated with the tuition fees in 2009-2010, but that they left the possibility of additional discussions and changes. Also, the assignment of the Rector was to attempt to, during the negotiations with the Ministry regarding the tuition fee subventions for the graduate studies, arrange a compensation as big as possible for the UNIST for not charging the tuition fees.

During the next academic year, Rector Pavić informed the Senate that the Rectors' Conference had basically accepted the proposal of the Ministry associated with the model of tuition fee subvention for full-time students of undergraduate studies enrolling to the first year of study for the first time in 2010-2011. The established tuition fees also applied to the part-time students who were paying proportionally to the percentage of acquired ECTS credits in regard to these tuition fees. Full-time students acquiring less than 42 credits would have to pay the total tuition fee, and proportionally if they acquired between 42 and 59 credits. Therefore, full-time students would not pay the tuition fee if the Ministry subsidized for the 50% of the amount that constituent units would charge the students. The same model was accepted in 2011-2012. It is necessary to emphasize here that the amounts listed by the UNIST were bigger per fields than at the other universities.

For the full-time students of graduate studies of 2010-2011, it was established that, if the Ministry did not provide the subventions, the first 25% of the rank list would be freed from paying the tuition fee, the following 50% would pay half of the amount of the tuition fee and the last 25% would pay the full amount. The ranking criteria were left to the constituent units. In addition to that, the students of Mathematics and Physics did not have to pay the tuition fees and neither did the students at studies with five or less enrolled students in the generation. However, the Ministry eventually approved the tuition fee subventions at the graduate studies for the full-time students.

Seeing that there were constant changes in the funding system, Rector Pavić stated at the Rectors' Conference that the funding of the graduate studies could go in the direction of loans, scholarships or liner model, according to which, the amount of the tuition fee depended on the acquired ECTS credits, i.e. if the student acquired between 41 and 52 credits. However, eventually for the academic year of 2011-2012 for graduate studies at the UNIST, the same model applying to the undergraduate studies was accepted. Also, Committee for Composition of Model of Paying Tuition Fees was founded in the following academic years for students enrolling for the first time in 2011-2012 to graduate studies.

The last model was brought in July 2012 for students enrolling to the studies for the first time in 2012-2013, 2013-2014 and 2014-2015, with the bottom line being set at 42 credits and upper at 54 credits. Students that acquired 55 and more credits were entitled to a subvention, those who had less than 42 credits paid the full tuition fee, which was once again bigger than at other universities, and students in between paid per non-acquired ECTS credits. Also, part-

time students paid the full amount of the tuition fees, regardless of the acquired ECTS credits. It is necessary to emphasize an opinion of the head of the Faculty of Medical Studies, who thought that this decision on abolishing the tuition fees would influence the financial construction of the study.

### 5.6.3. Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek

In 2001, at the UNIOS, the proposal was to change the principle of paying tuition fees in the way that it was determined according to the rank list upon the entrance exam and the success in studying. The proposed system was not linear, but gradual, i.e. there were clusters of ranked students that would pay a certain percentage of the tuition fee. The proposal arrived from the dean of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and he announced that students would be enrolling to this constituent unit in the academic year of 2001-2002 based on it. The Senate accepted this way of enrollment at that constituent unit as a pilot project. However, this model was not later considered until 2007-2008.

In the beginning of 2002-2003, an increase of 60% of tuition fees was considered at the UNIOS, which was enabled by Minister Flego as maximal increase and this was greeted by objections of the Students' Conference. As justification of the increase of tuition fees and based on the decision of the MST, the UNIOS listed the fact that the constituent units were unable to cover the costs of class and that this increase only referred to a smaller number of students, i.e. students enrolling the first year in the academic year of 2003-2004. This would exempt the most qualified students from paying, and in the following years, students who completed their studies with very good success or better and those who passed all of their exams regardless of grade average would also be exempted from paying. This would, according to the Administration of the UNIOS, encourage excellence and faster studying. Associated with this, dean of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering stated that their constituent units had been using the previously mentioned gradual model for the last several years and that they created new rank lists every year based on the passed exams and grades, which stimulated excellence and faster completion of studies. After the decision of the Government of the Republic of Croatia arrived about abolishing the decision on the amount of tuition fee, which was brought by the Minister, the UNIOS decided to refund the overpaid financial means to the students and according to the minutes of the Senate, there were no objections in terms of this decision. In the beginning of 2003-2004, Rector Kralik pointed out that there were no additional discussions regarding the amount of tuition fees, but that the constituent

units fulfilled their obligations. She also hoped that the MST would assist the constituent units in terms of the financial situation.

The issue of the amount of tuition fees was not considered prior to June 2005, when Rector Kralik informed that the Rectors' Conference agreed on the increase of tuition fees by 10% and that the UNIOS would have new tuition fees for the academic year of 2005-2006. Therefore, the tuition fees were increased like at other universities and were dependent on the field of study. For part-time students, the tuition fee did not exceed the 60% of the tuition fee determined for the full-time students if conducted in the main residence of the university, 70% if conducted on a location that is 60 kilometers away from the residence, while greater distances implied greater tuition fees. Already in the following year the individual constituent units demanded an increase of 35%, but Rector Kralik informed that the amount of tuition fees would be conciliated at the Rectors' Conference. Her opinion was that the tuition fees should remain the same as in the previous year, but that they could be increased maximally by 10%, therefore, the Senate accepted this increase for the students enrolling to the first year of 2006-2007. Objections of the representative of the Students' Conference regarding the potential increases brought the proposal that it was necessary to assure other sources of funding tuition fees, even through the system of loans. There was also a comment that the State did not have enough financial means to fund the tuition fees. Eventually the issue of increase of tuition fees for 2006-2007 was solved in the way that Minister Primorac stated that there would not be any increase, which was later confirmed by the same decision at the Senate. Also, tuition fees of 2007-2008 remained the same, and during 2006-2007, there were no discussions on tuition fees other than the decision that confirmed tuition fees from the last year.

In May 2008, there was a discussion about introducing the linear model of charging tuition fees. It should be stated that year prior to this one, the UNIZG independently started applying the linear model. The conclusion of the UNIOS was that this model could be applied in the academic year of 2009-2010 only after all bodies of authority had considered this model and the Senate brought the final decision on the matter.

It is interesting to mention that there were no discussions at the Senate regarding the decision of the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Ministry on subsidizing tuition fees for graduate studies, but there were only reports of persons from the Administration about

allocation and distribution of funds. Aside that, tuitions for undergraduate studies remained the same as before, depending on the field of science to which the study belonged.

In 2009-2010, Vice Rector Žagar informed that the Government of the Republic of Croatia had brought the decision on subsidizing costs of study for full-time students who enrolled to the undergraduate studies in 2010-2011 for the first time. He announced that the students acquiring 60 credits would keep the subvention, students within the range of 42 and 59 credits would pay linearly per credit and those below 42 credits would pay the full amount of the tuition fee. Rector Kralik found this model acceptable and thought that every student should be able to acquire 42 credits. However, the Decision on the Linear Model of Study at the UNIOS clearly revealed that the determination of the bottom line was left to each of the constituent units and that it was between 42 and 54 credits. This decision introduced the linear model of study at the UNIOS. The issue of graduate studies had not been resolved yet and the UNIOS thought that the Ministry would not provide enough financial funds to cover all costs. Therefore, dean of the Faculty of Economy, Turkalj, thought that it was difficult to believe that the graduate studies could be free for students, but that the introduction of model applied at the UNIZG, which implied signing of the agreements that obliged students to pay their tuition fees if the Ministry did not, would bring about civil lawsuits by students. This option was rejected by Rector Kralik, too. When the idea of performance based agreements that abolished tuition fees was presented in 2010-2011, and within the discussion regarding the new act proposals in higher education, dean of the Faculty of Law, Bojanić, thought that these agreements did not guarantee an expression of public interest and that the calculation of student tuition participations was voluntary.

Subventions of graduate studies of full-time students resumed in 2011-2012. In the previous year, the contract on subvention was signed, along with the contract on subvention for students enrolling to the undergraduate studies for the first time. There were no objections at the Senate regarding this and the consent was unanimous for Rector Kralik to sign the contract on subvention. In the academic year of 2011-2012, there was the final proposal of the decision of the Government of the Republic of Croatia regarding the full subvention of costs for full-time students within the performance based agreements for the period of three academic years. This proposal assured subventions for all students enrolling to the first year of undergraduate studies for the first time, and in the upcoming years, to those who acquired minimally 55 credits. For students with the disability of 60% or more of physical impairment, the set limit was minimally 30 credits for achieving the cost subvention, with the funds being

paid-in the way that the total number of full-time students, determined by the enrollment quota of full-time students, would be multiplied with the amount determined by the Ministry. It was pointed out that the discussion would be conducted about the models of participation in costs of study for students that did not acquire sufficient number of credits and that this would firstly be discussed at the Rectors' Conference. At the Rectors' Conference, Rector Kralik supported the common solution of the tuition fee model, but she also warned that there was a reduction of material funds, which jeopardized functioning of universities. Then she presented the decision of the Rectors' Conference at the Senate of the UNIOS, according to which, the senates of universities would independently define the model of participation in costs of study for students who acquired 54 credits and less, while the students who acquired more than 54 credits would have subsidized tuition fees. At the meeting with the deans of the constituent units, they accepted the model, according to which, the full amount of the tuition fee for every study was determined. Previously mentioned amount of the tuition fee remained the same as in previous years. Having that it mind, it was decided that the students who acquired between 24 and 54 credits and who fulfilled the assigned prerequisites for enrollment to a higher year of studies would pay based on the linear model per non-acquired ECTS credit. This would be conducted in the way that the bottom line (24) would be deducted from the total number of credits (60) and then the total amount of the tuition fee would be divided by 36. Finally, the number of non-acquired credits would be multiplied by this amount in order to calculate the financial burden for individual student. Also, part-time students were obliged to pay the full cost of the study. This decision ended the linear model that was accepted in May 2010.

#### 5.6.4. University of Rijeka

Similar to the UNIZG, the UNIRI also insisted on establishing the cost of study of student's education at the beginning of the observed period in order to assure funding of the programme and they pointed out that the current tuition fee covered only a portion of the cost of study. Therefore, at the conference of the ESCC of the Croatian Parliament held in December 2001, Rector Rukavina and the President of the Board Simonić signed a statement that confirmed these tendencies and stated that the tuition fees should not lead to decreasing the state funding of education but should be used to contribute to development of HEIs. Furthermore, after the decision of Minister Flego in 2002-2003 regarding the maximal increase of tuition fees by 60% for the next academic year, there was a reaction of the Students' Conference at the UNIRI. They agreed with the UNIRI that the tuition fees were too high, but they also stated that the Minister left the possibility of reducing them because they were set as maximal amounts. However, constituent units did not decrease the tuition fees. According to some

members of the Senate, the issue of cost of study was very relative and it should be observed in association with the social status, success and the cost of individual studies, as well as the fact that tuition fees were not as high as in some other states. Seeing that the Ministry had requested the refund of tuition fees and the fact that students had complained about disregarding of that Decision, the conclusion of the UNIRI was that they were entitled to a refund of difference of financial means and the Vice Rector Kalogjera requested that refund to students from the deans. This was also confirmed by the vice Rector Lučin as he stated that some of them had already refunded the difference, while some had been reducing the final installments for students who chose that method of payment.

The issue of tuition fees once again appeared on the agenda in the academic year of 2004-2005, when Vice Rector Kalogjera stated that the tuition fees would be established by the Minister and that they would probably be increased by 10%. However, the main secretary warned about the new the Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act, according to which, the tuition fees were determined by the senates of the universities. Pursuant to the conclusion of the Rectors' Conference and the Ministry, the Senate of the UNIRI made a decision to increase the tuition fees by 10% for the academic year of 2005-2006. Thereby, the tuition fee for part-time students should not exceed the 60% of the maximal amount of the participations of full-time students if the study was being conducted in the main residence of the HEI, i.e. 70% if conducted on a location that is 60 kilometers away from the residence, while greater distances implied higher tuition fees. The decision for 2006-2007 did not imply the increase of tuition fees and the Students' Conference expressed their satisfaction with this decision of the Senate. In addition to the decision regarding tuition fees, there was no supplemental discussion about this issue. At 2006-2007 Rectors' Conference held in March 2007, Rectors Dujanić of the UNIPU and Rukavina of the UNIRI both emphasized that the tuition fees should stay the same and that they should be equal at all universities. Also, they thought that prior to every change, a detailed analysis of the cost of education should be conducted, which was a foundation to establishing the amount of the tuition fees. It should be pointed out that this opinion was expressed within the presentation concerning the introduction of the linear system of tuition fees at the UNIZG. Pursuant to opinion of Rector Rukavina, there was a decision at the UNIRI, according to which the tuition fees for 2007-2008 remained the same. In addition to that, the Committee for Tuition Fees was also named and its role was the preparation of proposal for tuition fees for the academic year of 2008-2009.

Seeing that the first cycle of undergraduate studies was soon coming to an end, the issue of tuition fees at the graduate studies was raised. With regard to this topic, Rector Lučin stated that he thought that the graduate studies should not be additionally charged and that the assumption of the Bologna Process and European policies was that higher education was public good. He thought that this could not be placed on the market and that the only solution was that all students paid tuition fees, but participatively, i.e. not the full cost of the study. Additionally, Lučin thought that financial instruments should be ensued on different levels (state, university, local self-government), which would exempt students from paying tuition fees. During the process of determining the amounts of tuition fees for the academic year of 2008-2009, proposals for increase arrived and the Rector's Collegium of the UNIRI thought that the maximum increase could be by 6%, but that they should wait for the opinion of the Rectors' Conference. Main argument for the increase was that the tuition fees had been increased at the UNIRI just by 10% since 2001, and that at the graduate studies, according to the decision of the Ministry and conclusion of the Rectors' Conference, there were no students paying tuition fees. The decision of the Ministry referred to the full-time students of graduate studies and students of the fourth year of integrated studies. Also, they suggested changes regarding the tuition fees for part-time students, i.e. that they should pay 75% of the amount of the tuition fee for those attending the university in its place of residence and 100% for those outside the place of residence. It was emphasized that the decision of the Ministry would damage individual constituent units because they would be paid less per student than when students covered their own costs of study. However, the payment to the constituent units would be conducted in the way that a portion of the acquired means would be paid-in for covering the material costs, and one portion of it would be divided based on the number of enrolled students at the graduate and integrated studies, which would compensate for those who acquired less. In the beginning of 2008-2009, it was established that the situation at some constituent units improved in terms of the income of the tuition fees, but some of them acquired smaller income. The Faculty of Economy experienced the greatest loss in this case. It should be pointed out that this constituent unit enrolled the biggest number of students and such outcome was not a surprise.

However, in the next academic year (2008-2009) and with the beginning of student protests and blockades, Rector Lučin thought that revoking the tuition fees was not realistic and that the state could not secure financial means to cover the costs of study for all students. Therefore, according to him, tuition fees were required and everyone should pay them, even

though he did not consider them to be real tuition fees but rather participations in the tuition fees, which were in reality a lot higher. Tuition fees were observed as an instrument for increasing efficacy and the success in studying. On the other hand, he suggested that the state should compose a system of support to students who were successful in their studies and socially disadvantaged and that it should secure beneficial loans to those who were not as successful. He also stated that successful students should study free of charge, but not those students who prolonged their studies to seven or eight years. Therefore, he considered that the revoking of tuition fees would actually decrease the student standard, but that "the problem could be solved by inner redistribution of the budget, which was a difficult political decision we failed to bring" (Nađ and Šimeg 2009, 14). At the UNIRI, there was a demand from the representative of the Students' Conference for composing a model of tuition fees that would encourage competitiveness amongst students and the Committee was founded with the task of preparing new model of tuition fees. However, eventually it was decided that the amount of the tuition fee for enrolling to the undergraduate and graduate studies would remain the same as in the previous year.

With regard to the smaller income achieved by the individual constituent units, there was a disagreement with the model of distribution of funds for material costs by the Faculty of Economy. Therefore, it was decided to compose the Handbook on Financial Business that would define an optimal way of distributing funds.

After the announcement from the Ministry that, from 2010-2011, the enrollment to the first year of undergraduate studies would be enabled without participation, Rector Lučin stated at the Rectors' Conference in November 2009 that this raised the issue of how the unsuccessful students would be treated and if they could be charged in any way in this case. The UNIRI was in fear that this subvention of the tuition fees could cause the increase in the number of private HEIs and the decrease of quality in public universities. There was a discussion regarding the new way of subsidizing tuition fees and Rector Lučin informed that the starting point of this model was the assumption that the subsidized study lasted for five or six years, while the universities determined the criteria of successful studying on their own. They also thought that their Rulebook on Studying was a more quality starting point because it offered greater flexibility in case the students did not meet the prerequisites of participating in costs. Individual members of the Senate thought that studying without tuition fees had no legal foundation and they also raised an issue of systematicness and consideration of such proposal due to the lack of the Strategy of Development of the Republic of Croatia that would

determine what profession was required and to what extent, which could then be funded. Eventually, it was accepted that full-time students who, during the academic year of 2010-2011, enrolled to the first year of undergraduate and integrated studies for the first time, were not obliged to pay the tuition participation. In April 2010, the Government brought a decision on subvention that referred to the students who were successful in their studies year after year and acquired 55 credits or more. Those students who acquired less than 40 credits paid the participation according to the tuition fees established at their university, and those between 40 and 55 credits according to the linear model. Seeing that the criterion of excellence was not conciliated at the Rectors' Conference, each of the universities had to arrange that part. Therefore, one of the suggestions at the UNIRI was that the bottom line should be 42 credits, and the upper line 60 credits. The next one, that all students who acquired more than 50 credits and had an average above 4.0 were exempted from paying the participation. Finally, they made a decision that the condition for achieving further subvention was acquisition of 60 credits. Students who acquired less than 18 credits were obliged to pay the full amount, while those in between paid per non-acquired ECTS credit. In addition to the criteria and requirements of the participation in costs of study, two supplemental criteria were included – criterion of excellence and the social criterion. According to the criterion of excellence, students who achieved at least 85% of the ECTS credits and an average weighted grade between 75 and 100% were not obliged to pay for their studies but the constituent unit subsidized their costs. The social criterion implied achieving at least 80% of the ECTS credits and the fact that the student was a member of household that met the requirements of income of the Social Welfare Decision. Regarding this case, the Ministry would fund the tuition fees of full-time students. On the other hand, part-time students paid the amounts that were two times bigger than the ones the Ministry funded for the full-time students, while the amounts depended on the field of study. Hereby, part-time students Croatian defenders of the Homeland War, Croatian army war invalids, children of killed, imprisoned or missing defenders and children of 100% army war invalids from the first group could pay maximally 50% of the tuition fee. In terms of the graduate studies, the arrangement was that the funds were paid according to the model for undergraduate studies. The same amounts of participations remained for the academic year of 2011-2012 and the group of part-time students paying the maximal 50% of the tuition fee (defenders of the Homeland War and others) was complemented with the group of invalids with the disability of 60% or more of physical impairment.

During the discussion regarding the new acts proposals on higher education, at the thematic conference of the ESCC of the Croatian Parliament in July 2011, Rector Lučin stated that these acts defined higher education as public good through the subventions of study, but also that it was wrong to approach the graduate studies in the same fashion. In spite of that, agreements were signed on subventions for full-time students of the first year of undergraduate studies, integrated studies and the first year of graduate studies and fourth year of integrated studies for the academic year of 2011-2012.

During the academic year of 2011-2012, a discussion was initiated regarding the pilot project of the performance based agreements, which was exclusively associated with the model of cost subvention of full-time students and with the defining the strategic goals that determined the criteria of additional funding. Hereby the Ministry defined the threshold of the ECTS credits that students needed to achieve in order to acquire the right of subsidizing the studies and the UNIRI expected this to be set at 55 credits or more. In addition to that, Vice Rector Prijić-Samardžija pointed out that the social criterion was removed because the Aleksandar Abramov Foundation had been founded, which was meant for students of lower socioeconomic status. She also emphasized that the new system of performance based agreements abandoned the subsidizing of fourth, fifth and sixth year of studies. New agreements referred only to the first year of undergraduate studies, i.e. they did not refer to the higher years of study, because this was the prerequisite for conciliation of models of funding. Therefore, a decision was brought that the amounts of participation would remain the same as in the previous year and that the state subvention for full-time students was 50% of the participation. If the students acquired 30 credits or less, they were obliged to pay the full amount of participation, while those who remained between the necessary number of ECTS credits for achieving subvention (55 credits) and the bottom line of 30 credits would pay per non-acquired ECTS credit. The criterion of excellence remained and those who achieved at least 50 credits with substantial success (defined by the grade average) did not pay the participation but it was covered by the bearer of the study programme. An agreement was also signed for other full-time students (who resumed studies, not those who enrolled to the first year of study) on subsidizing costs and the Ministry funded those who had, in the previous year, acquired at least 55 credits. Finally, part-time students were obliged to pay the full amount of the participation, i.e. just like the full-time students acquiring less than 30 credits. In the beginning of 2012-2013, signing the performance based agreement was approved, and

during that year, it was confirmed that the same requirements and amounts also remained in the academic year 2013-2014.

### 5.6.5. Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

At the UNIPU, during the first year of its functioning, there was a demand for the increase of tuition fees from the Faculty of Economics and Business for full-time self-financed students, but this proposal did not encounter approval of individual members of the Senate and Rector Dujanić. The Rector warned that the Rectors' Conference was also against the increase of tuition fees, but the Faculty of Economics and Business warned that the determination of tuition fees was under the exclusive authority of the Senate. This proposal was not accepted and a decision was made regarding the amount of the tuition fee that was the same like at other universities and it differed according to the field of study. In addition to this, there was a possibility of correction in compliance with the tuition fees on a national level, i.e. with the decision of the Ministry and Rectors' Conference in case it differed from the decision of the UNIPU. Therefore, in the beginning of 2008-2009, the tuition fee for the part-time study of Croatian language and literature and Preschool education was increased with an explanation that some HEIs did not abide with the recommendation of the Ministry not to increase tuition fees, which caused a disproportion. Additionally, it was emphasized that the standardized Bologna Process was lacking, meaning that this solution would not put every student in the same position. This objection also referred to paying per ECTS credit because the opinion was that students should have subsidized years of study (for example, 3+2) and if they exceeded it, they were obliged to pay tuition fee. The UNIPU also made a suggestion, according to which, the Ministry would provide additional budgetary funds that would be used to compensate for the funds universities acquired through tuition fees, which was eventually accepted. The University was left to decide on the criterion of successfulness. Students proposed that this should be set at 18 credits, and the Rector suggested that this limit was to be set at 42 credits. He also warned that there were universities where the students who did not acquire 60 credits would be paying the participation, too. Eventually, a decision was made that the students would be paying the full participation, depending on the field of study, in case they did not acquire minimally 42 credits, and those who acquired more would still be entitled to subvention of the tuition fee. During the same year, the discussion was also conducted on the subventions of tuition fees for graduate studies, and the decision proposal was similar to the one accepted for the undergraduate studies. Tuition fees for 2011-2012 remained the same for the full-time students, yet they differed for the part-time students according to individual studies. They were the highest for the undergraduate study of Tourism

and the Department of Music. During 2011-2012, discussion about the performance based agreements governing the three-year subventions of tuition fees reached the agenda. For every enrolled full-time student, the Ministry would pay a certain amount just like for every successful student attending higher years, and this amount was the portion of the tuition fee usually paid by the students. Rectors' Conference supported the proposal that the students acquiring more than 55 credits were exempted from paying the tuition fee, while the tuition fee for students who acquired less would be defined by the senates of the universities independently. In the beginning of 2012-2013, the UNIPU made a decision to keep its old criteria, i.e. the bottom line was 42 credits and the students acquiring less were obliged to pay the tuition fees that remained within the amounts from previous years and depended on the field of study, those who acquired between 42 and 55 credits would pay the tuition fee within the amount the Ministry usually covered (portion in full amount, less than tuition fees for students under 42 credits) and those that acquired more than 55 credits would still be entitled to subvention of tuition fees.

#### 5.6.6. University of Zadar

During the first two years since the foundation of the UNIZD, there was no discussion on the matter of tuition fees, but the difficult financial status of the University was emphasized, along with the fact that they functioned based on funds obtained through tuition fees, which made the entire system dysfunctional. In 2004-2005, Vice Rector Uglešić claimed that he had attempted to establish the cost of study at the UNIZD, but that it was a complicated process because this was difficult to determine even on the state level. It was listed that they were still working on the calculation of the cost of study in cooperation with the ECTS coordinators and that calculations for individual fields would be made. Additionally, the Council of Financing of the UNIZD proposed to increase tuition fees by 20%, but the recommendation of the Rectors' Conference was to keep this increase at 10%. By keeping the difficult material status of citizens in mind, the proposal of the Rectors' Conference was accepted. During the determining of tuition fees for part-time students, it was stated that they should not disagree with the Ministry regarding the amount of tuition fees due to the fact that they were on the limit of having sufficient personnel, which might cause the Ministry to react in terms of personnel if they were contradicted on the tuition fee issue.

Rector Magaš thought that the universities should have bigger autonomy in determining the tuition fees, but that it was also necessary to change the existing system. Namely, he found that it would be necessary to either have everyone pay or no one. Also, he was supportive of

the increase of tuition fees by 10% for the academic year of 2006-2007, which he justified with the opinion of the Rectors' Conference that participations were being increased by 10% successively for several years because they had been the same during a longer period of time, while the costs grew. In addition to that, a decision was made that participations for tuition fees of the part-time students became equal to the tuition fees for full-time students. Students vetoed this decision, and during the voting on the 10% increase, they left the conference and disrupted the quorum. When this point of the agenda was resumed, the Rector informed that the Ministry was not supportive of the increase and that the biggest universities, the UNIZG and the UNIST, gave up on that increase due to the pressure of students. This is how the Senate made a decision about hibernating this idea about the increase of tuition fees. This turn of events motioned Rector Magaš to warn at the Rectors' Conference that the issue of tuition fees was sensitive and that it was necessary to be extremely cautious. At the same conference, Vice Rector Škara stated, during the discussion about the new model of charging tuition fees announced by the UNIZG, that the UNIZG should not be stopped from applying this model, but that it was necessary to question why the increase was requested, i.e. was its purpose raising quality or profit.

During the decision making on the amount of tuition fees for 2007-2008, the Rector informed the Senate that the Rectors' Conference decided to keep the tuition fees as they were and that only the UNIZG would change the model. Once again the importance of real cost of study was emphasized, and an opinion was expressed that the prerequisite for increasing the cost of tuition fees was the composition of scholarship system, which was a task of the MSES. Vice Rector Uglešić thought that the system was not fair, but that the State introduced two possibilities of studying due to the lack of funds – with the support of the Ministry and self-financed studying. In addition to that, it was emphasized that all universities agreed to keep tuition fees on the level of last year's, with the exception of the UNIZG. Also, the prevailing opinion at the UNIZD was that the decrease of tuition fees at that point would be unacceptable because it would reflect negatively to the class functioning. Minutes of the Senate's conferences of the following years offered less information on the issue of tuition fees. It can be stressed that the decision on subventions for the graduate studies for the academic year of 2008-2009 was unanimously accepted. In 2009, when the student blockade was organized and when the Ministry announced that from 2010-2011, all students enrolling to the first year of study would be subsidized, the UNIZD stated that there were no funds for such an endeavor and that this was in favor of students and at the expense of the universities.

When the copies of agreements for 2010-2011 were delivered at the UNIZD, they emphasized that they were referring to the first year of study, but that they were unsure if the subventions for the graduate studies would be resumed. Finally, at the end of the academic year of 2009-2010, they acquired information that the subvention of tuition fees for full-time students of graduate studies was approved. The Senate also accepted the decision on the subvention of students that would enroll to the first year of undergraduate studies in 2010-2011. The UNIZD made a decision that the prerequisite for continuance of subvention was acquisition of all 60 credits. Vice Rector Proroković thought that this was a good decision because it removed the inability of monitoring the situation and inconsistencies between the departments, and that this model did not leave space for second chances. She stated that in this case, the student that did not acquire a certain number of credits paid per an ECTS credit, and the full tuition fee year after that. The representatives of the Students' Conference suggested that the limit should be reduced to 52 or 54 credits. However, the final decision was that students required minimally 60 credits if they wanted to keep the right to studying without participation, and if they acquired less than 21 credits, they would be obliged to pay the full amount of the tuition fee and those who acquired more than 21 and less than 60 credits would pay per an ECTS credit.

In the next academic year, they began introducing changes in terms of subventions because the issue of performance based agreements had been opened. They were finally accepted in October 2012 and they allowed the Government of the Republic of Croatia the subventions of studies for students enrolling the undergraduate studies for the first time in the following three academic years. The prerequisite for keeping the tuition fee subvention was acquiring 55 credits and passing the prerequisite courses.

#### 5.6.7. University of Dubrovnik

According to the words of Rector Milković in the academic year of 2004-2005, big proportion of the income of the UNIDU comprised of tuition fees. In addition to that, the Rector informed that the Rectors' Conference agreed to bring decisions regarding the increase of tuition fees maximally by 10%. Having that in mind, the UNIDU decided on the tuition fees for the students enrolling to the first year in 2005-2006 and they were in concordance with tuition fees at other universities, but differed according to the field of study. Rector also pointed out that the Rectors' Conference had established continuous increase of tuition fees by 10% in the next five years, even though this was not accomplished later. Therefore, the Rector informed the Senate in 2005-2006 that at the Rectors' Conference, the decision was to

seek opinion of the Committee for Tuition and they agreed at the UNIDU to wait for that opinion. After the Ministry did not accept the recommendation of the Rectors' Conference on the increase of tuition fees for 2006-2007 and recommended that tuition fees remained the same, the UNIDU brought a decision in agreement with that. Aside that, at the Rectors' Conference, Rector Milković advocated the idea of informing the public about the real costs of study and that students should participate in their own education. According to him, differences between self-financed students and those studying with the funding from the state budget should be abolished and participations for everyone should be introduced. Next year, when the UNIZG announced the change of the tuition system in order to achieve increased income, Rector Milković stated at the Rectors' Conference that it was better if the tuition fees remained the same and that the proposal of the increase was not prepared well. Also, at the conference of the Senate, he pointed out that everyone at the Rectors' Conference, with the exception of the UNIZG, agreed that tuition fees for the academic year of 2007-2008 should stay the same. The Rector thought that it was necessary to first establish the real cost of study and, if there were justified reasons for a change, only then compose criteria for establishing the amount of the tuition fee. He pointed out that the real cost of study according to the individual scientific area was currently not determined and that it would be possible to see how much the state would contribute and how much the students would participate after this was established. This is why the decision was made to keep the tuition fees the same for the following year. In 2007-2008, the tuition fees were also determined based on the decision of the Rectors' Conference. Namely, firstly the Rector informed that the opinion of the Rectors' Conference was that all universities should linearly increase tuition fees maximally by 10% and this proposal was criticized by the students' representatives. Senate of the UNIDU basically supported the 10% increase. However, after the Rectors' Conference had decided to propose to the universities that they should keep the set amounts of tuition fees based on the level from last year, the UNIDU accepted it.

After the subvention of tuition fees by the state had been introduced in 2008-2009, the UNIDU noticed that their tuition fee incomes were halved and that this was the result of the Ministry's policy in terms of the issue of tuition fees for graduate studies. The decision was to keep the tuition fees at the UNIDU unchanged. During the student protests, the Rector pointed out that the demands referring to the free study were unclear and that such funds were not in the budget. He thought that revealing the real cost of study, which was three times bigger than the self-financed students were paying, was purposely kept from the public. Continuous to the

student protests, in 2009-2010, the Rector informed the Senate that the tuition fee for the first year of study would most likely not be charged from the following year, while the cost of study on higher years would depend on the success of the student. He pointed out that this would cause great loss of their income, which would be hard to compensate for from other sources. According to the Rector, the method of payment from the Ministry to the University, which would be unlike the ones used when students were paying, would make the situation more difficult. The proposal on subventions that arrived at the UNIDU was that everyone enrolling to the first year of undergraduate studies should be entitled to a subvention and in the next year, only the students acquiring 60 credits should be freed from participation, those who did not acquire 42 credits should pay the full tuition fee, while those in between should pay linearly. Full tuition fees, which were for the part-time studies, remained the same as in the last year and were dependent on the field of study. Representatives of the Students' Conference expressed their disagreement and they stated that they would propose a second bottom line in regard to 60 credits. On the other hand, the Rector thought that this solution was a compromise, that the UNIDU was making efforts in burdening the students as less as possible and that the real cost of study was much bigger. The main secretary of the UNIDU, Ivušić, expressed his doubt in this model by stating that it was questionable if the state would be able to fund it and that he did not understand why the students of graduate studies were even exempted from paying. According to him, they should have started with the undergraduate studies because students would resume their studying. Next year, however, the subventions for students on the first year of study started and the Ministry was paying the fixed amount per full-time student, and the participations were subsidized even for the full-time students of graduate studies. The UNIDU decided to make 45 credits the bottom line for the next year's enrollment, and that students who did not meet those prerequisites should pay for the non-acquired ECTS credits. For 2011-2012, a decision was made that equal tuition fees would be maintained. This was the amount that all part-time students would have to pay for one study year as well as the basis for calculating the costs of non-acquired ECTS credits. The only exception was the professional undergraduate study of nursing for part-time students and the part-time graduate study of Maritime, which had a higher tuition fee.

However, the cost of ECTS differed amongst the universities and Rector Milković thought that the issue of lack of funds should not be solved through tuition fees. Therefore, he thought that the value of an ECTS credit should not be left to the autonomy of the university. In spite of that, the UNIDU kept the same tuition fees for the academic year of 2012-2013. Finally,

during 2012-2013, the performance based agreement keeping the same criteria was accepted. The bottom line was 45 credits and the upper line was 55 credits, students who acquired 55 credits and more were entitled to a subvention, and those who acquired less than 45 credits would have to pay the product of the value of an ECTS credit and the number of non-acquired credits, but could not enroll the courses from the following year. Finally, students who acquired between 45 and 54 credits could enroll to a higher year and would have to pay the product of the value of an ECTS credit and the number of non-acquired credits. The basis for calculating the value of an ECTS credit was the subvention covered by the Ministry for the full-time students and it was divided by the total number of ECTS credits in a single academic year (60). In addition to that, part-time students paid the amount equal to the subvention covered by the Ministry for full-time students.

#### 5.6.8. Conclusion

The part on the Tuition fees shows that this policy at the universities is mostly based on the decisions of the Rectors' Conference and the MSES, even though this is the autonomous right of every university. However, the level of information based on which the prices of tuition fees would be formed is mostly low or nonexistent. It is noticeable that the amount of the tuition fees mostly stayed equal and that the only increase was by 10%, but also notable is the increase of tuition fees for part-time students (for a longer period of time, they were 50% of the amount for the full-time students, after which they were constrained to the maximal amount paid by the full-time students). Some universities demonstrated visible insisting on excellence and objections to the state tuition fee subventions (such objections particularly arrived from the UNIZG). The UNIZG stood out by the transition to the linear system of tuition fees in spite of the objections arriving from the MSES and the reservation of the other universities, but even in this sense, there were exceptions between the constituent units. According to the issue of functioning, the inability to jointly decide on particular issues associated with tuition fees or independent decisions of certain constituent units that were not in concordance with the attitude of the Senate was noticed at the UNIZG, which was the result of the non-integration. Particular cases at the UNIOS and the UNIST were also pointing to a non-integrated functioning in this sub-policy, but were not expressed to such an extent (introducing the gradual model at one of the constituent units of the UNIOS, independent determination of the tuition fee thresholds in 2010-2011 at the constituent units of the UNIOS, independent deciding on tuition fees at the UNIST until 2006-2007). In addition to this, these two universities and the UNIRI were pointed out by the joint decision on the level of individual university during the refund of tuition fees in 2003-2004 in regard to the

UNIZG. Therefore, the smallest prevention of change on tuition fees policy due to the non-integrated structure was visible at the UNIRI.

On the other hand, the more integrated universities mostly avoided confrontations with the MSES regarding this issue and adapted to the decisions of the Rectors' Conference and the MSES. Through several examples, it is visible that such functioning was the result of actors' characteristics. Namely, even though the disagreement in terms of the beliefs existed, these universities, due to the insufficient financial and personnel capacities and the lack of veto capacity, were unable to conduct changes or enter a confrontation regarding beliefs with the MSES (e.g. the UNIZD avoided the confrontation with the MSES regarding the tuition fees for part-time students since they thought that this might raise the issue of (in)sufficient personnel at this university, the UNIZD rejected the decrease of tuition fees due to the poor financial capacities, there was a concern regarding the financial capacities at the UNIDU during the introduction of subsidized tuition fees, but there was no resistance since they did not have the veto capacity, the constituent units of the UNIPU did not achieve the intention to decide independently on the tuition fees at the University).

## 6. DISCUSSION

In the analysis of policy changes presented in the previous part, it is necessary to first detect the type of change that had occurred. The very types of change tell us about the way the new rules and practices were introduced into these policies. When determining the type of change, the level of interpretation in each of these sub-policies should be taken into account, i.e. if the universities had the possibility of independent interpretation in applying the certain policy or not. On the other hand, political context is also important, according to which, Mahoney and Thelen (2009) observe if there are actors with strong veto possibilities in regard to the conductor of the policy, which would prevent the implementation, or if their veto possibilities were low. In the case of the universities, actors with veto possibilities potentially arrived from the very constituent units or the national level. According to the type of policy change, it is possible to see significant harmonization in terms of the structure and curriculum, mobility, enrollment policy and tuition fees. However, type of change is more focused on the final result of policy change and it dictates the type of change that is going to happen. On the other hand, I will explain the process of development of policy change and identify the main holders of change through the elaborated model of change, i.e. which factors enable or disable change.

Table 18. Type of Change at Public Universities in Croatia

| | Structure and curriculum | Mobility | Quality assurance | Social dimension | Enrollment policy | Tuition fees |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UNIZG | L | DI | L | L | DR | DI |
| UNIST | L | DI | NC | NC | DR | L |
| UNIOS | L | DI | L | C | DR | L |
| UNIRI | L | DI | DI | L | C | L |
| UNIPU | L | DI | L | NC | DR | L |
| UNIZD | L | DI | L | DI | DR | L |
| UNIDU | DI/L | DI | L | DR | DR | L |

L – Layering, DI – displacement, C – conversion, DR – Drift, NC – No change

Table 18 shows that the most common types of change in these cases are layering and displacement, and somewhat rarer are drift and particularly conversion. Reasons to this are

found in the fact that most of these sub-policies had a low degree of discretion in interpretation and there were already established frames within which the change was expected, therefore, the most common types of change were layering and displacement that anticipate the introduction of new rules.

Regarding the structure and curriculum, there were actors at all universities with sufficiently strong veto possibilities, to a smaller or greater extent, i.e. all of them were given the possibility to form new curricula and decide on the structure on the level of individual constituent units. This was eventually visible in the versatility of solutions at these universities. In addition to that, some of these universities experienced critiques that the old curricula were merely redesigned for new programmes. On the other hand, the UNIDU decided that all constituent units should acquire the 3+2 structure and that new programmes should be composed, but it was later pointed out that the old programmes and studies were the main obstacle for development. In terms of structure, it might be stated that the UNIDU experienced displacement and layering in regard to the curriculum change. The important factor for all these changes is that a low level of interpretation and variation in implementation was enabled. Namely, the change of structure and curriculum was legally given and there was no formal possibility of avoiding this change. More precisely, they were obliged to introduce the new curricula and structure, but within the universities the constituent units were mostly allowed to perform on their own.

The change in mobility was possible to generally recognize as displacement at all universities. Namely, there was a low level of interpretation due to the reason that the international mobility primarily depended on the external sources of financing and there were no internal actors that would object to the implementation of mobility. Regarding the internal mobility, there is a lack of information to analyze this issue, but visible change was noted at some more integrated universities and at the UNIRI.

At most of the universities, the enrollment policy was based on the historical method and the changes remained on the level of application of rules and their interpretation due to the environmental influences. Therefore, at the UNIZG, after the enrollment of children of war veterans and bringing the Rulebook on Credential Content and Prerequisites for Issuing the Credential in 2010, there were changes in determining the capacity and the University began to insist more on abiding by those rules. In time, the UNIOS, UNIST and UNIZD began recognizing and accepting the information arriving from the CES and there were adaptations

and reductions in the quotas. In addition to that, there were specific solutions. Due to the external demands regarding quality arriving in 2010, the UNIOS shut down the dislocated studies and therefore reduced the enrollment quotas, and the UNIZD rejected opening new dislocated studies. Particular external influence at the UNIDU was the decreased interest for enrollment to the University, and this caused the constant decline in the number of enrolled studies, which forced them to change the application of certain rules such as the requested level necessary for enrollment or the strategy of promotion. The promotion was also conducted by the two remaining smaller universities, the UNIZD and the UNIPU. On the other hand, there was a change in the application of rules at the UNIZG and they decided to use the state matura exams and increase the requested enrollment level in order to profile themselves as a university that encouraged excellence. Also, due to the external pressure of the ASHE, all universities that had faculties of economics were forced to reduce their quotas at these faculties, which could be considered a type of drift of the internal rules of functioning. The state matura exams replaced the entrance exams at all universities, which could be observed as an environmental influence, while the UNIRI had somewhat of a different position in this seeing that the team leader that managed the state matura project was a professor at the UNIRI. In this policy, the UNIRI differs in regard that the incentive for change did not arrive externally but it was internal and in 2002, the emphasis was placed on the importance of quality promotion and the reduction of quotas, and at the end of the observed period, it was insisted that all enrollment quotas were brought by the Senate. In the case of the enrollment policy, there were no clear rules on the national level for the bigger part of the observed period and there was a high level of discretion in interpretation, which universities and constituent units used to a great extent in determination of quotas. Regarding the strong veto possibilities, there was no active prevention of change by the veto actors, but there were rejections or ignoring the decisions by constituent units. At smaller universities, this is evident in the nonexistent analyses after the enrollment or in not conducting activities after the analyses and the vague criteria for determining the enrollment quotas. Criteria that were either missing or were not complied with were a problem at the bigger universities, as well as the constituent units that determined the unrealistic enrollment quotas. On the other hand, the UNIRI clearly demonstrated the stronger role of the Senate regarding the reduction of quotas at certain constituent units from the very beginning (the issue that was hard to deal with for the bigger universities), and also the establishment of clearer criteria and conducing analyses (issues that were hard to deal with for the smaller universities). These actions

significantly decreased the veto possibilities of certain constituent units, and the analysis and activity conducting strived to decrease the possibility of ignoring decisions.

In the case of the tuition fee policy, there was a low level of discretion in interpretation since there were no information for a clear calculation of the real cost of tuition fee, which prevented the universities from changing the amounts. Namely, even though it seemed that lack of information should enable lack of control, in this case, the inability to justify the increase of tuition fees towards the local community and students was preventing the universities from increasing their amounts. Additional, and probably the more important reason was that the tuition fee policy at the universities was mostly in concordance with the decisions on the national level and in communication with the MSES and the Rectors' Conference, which meant that there was clear influence that strived to prevent the increase of tuition fees. This was complimented by the emphasized pressures by the students, protests and blockades. The chapter on Tuition fees 5.6. presented the minutes of the Senate, which visibly show the abjuring from the increase of tuition fees due to the decision of the MSES, agreement at the Rectors' Conference and the student pressure, i.e. the universities had minimal space for increasing the tuition fees (even though this was compensated for through the increase of quotas of self-financed students). However, the UNIZG was pointed out, which independently introduced the linear model. Due to its size and influence, the UNIZG managed to disable the veto actors in preventing the change and introduced the new model. Other universities (except the UNIPU) introduced linear models gradually and with the participation by the MSES. For a certain period of time, there were two parallel ways of calculating the tuition fees, which is a clear characteristic of layering.

Regarding the quality assurance, the level of discretion in interpretation, in terms of the legal regulation in this area, in the initial part of the observed period, was high, but the demands for quality arrived through the very Bologna Process. Furthermore, by bringing the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education in 2009, the level of discretion was narrowed. On one hand, but in different ways, the UNIST and the UNIRI were pointed out, and on the other, the remaining universities. Namely, the quality assurance system at the UNIST remained significantly undeveloped during the observed period than it had been at other universities and it is impossible to claim that any changes occurred. Contrary to that, the UNIRI demonstrated clear insisting on continuous work on quality and rejecting the old practices and harmonization of system. Therefore, in the end, at the UNIRI, there was no significant heterogeneity amongst the constituent units regarding this issue, or the ignoring or

obstruction of work of the quality assurance system. On the other hand, it is possible to emphasize the UNIDU amongst the other universities that experienced layering. Namely, layering at the UNIDU occurred on the basis of the quality system that was constructed during the Polytechnic of Dubrovnik, which proved to be a good foundation for further development. At other universities, they emphasized the non-harmonized practices, non-participation of certain constituent units in activities such as the student poll, lack of implementation, etc. Such differences in the quality assurance policy emerged from maintaining the previous practices and uneven implementation of new rules on the level of the entire university.

In the case of the social dimension, there were no clearly directed legal solutions, except the general framework, and this policy did not receive a particular attention even though the Bologna Process, implying that the level of discretion in interpretation was high. In this case, it was relevant how much the very universities chose this sub-policy as an important policy topic. Therefore, at the UNIST and the UNIPU, there were no significant changes in the social dimension. In addition to them, the UNIDU and the UNIOS introduced minimal, yet emphasized, changes regarding the social dimension, which occurred at the UNIDU due to the external influences (establishing the trust fund) and there was a change in the interpretation of rules at the UNIOS within the existing system (introducing categories of scholarships for students with disabilities, one-time non-refundable aid, social criterion in participation in the costs of study). Both the UNIZG and the UNIRI had systems of assigning scholarships, based on which they upgraded the elements of social dimension, but in different volume, and the UNIRI stood out in terms of the construction of the system for persons with disabilities. Furthermore, the UNIZD rarely mentioned the topics of this area in the beginning, but at the end of the observed period, a series of changes was introduced and this rejected the previous way of functioning and introduced new rules and practices.

Sudden, paradigmatic change did not occur within either of these sub-policies. Changes occurred slowly and over a course of years and were actually the result of a series of small, incremental steps. Also, outcomes of changes were reversible since there was a possibility that, in case of distancing from the Bologna Process there would also be changes in certain sub-policies, and the reexamination of the Bologna Process was part of the agenda**.** In spite of the fact that the issue of tuition fees was currently solved in the way that they were subsidized for by the state, there were discussions on re-introducing the tuition fees into the system. After the presented types of change and the basic characteristics, it is necessary to determine

how the changes even occurred, i.e. it is necessary to apply the process tracing and establish which assumptions enabled or disabled changes and how.

The comparative overview of the process of development of higher education policies occurring at the universities of different institutional organization and the characteristics of actors provide insight into the explanations of policy change. Such overview was presented in the previous part for each individual sub-policy at all universities. Seeing that process tracing also implies the rejections of alternative explanation, it is first necessary to consider which of them could it be. It is possible to start with the assumption emerging from the classical institutionalism, according to which, institutions exclusively determine actors' actions and thus, the policy change, i.e. that change depends exclusively on the institutional organization, in this case, that the more integrated and younger universities would make decisions easier, which makes them suitable for policy change. On the other hand, less integrated universities and older universities would be resistant to policy change. On the other hand, it is possible to start with the assumption that the actors with stronger capacities and clearly directed strategic interests and beliefs would conduct policy changes regardless of the institutional environment they were in. From this point of view, the explanation of changes would not be associated with the level of integration of the university but with characteristics that enabled the actors to conduct the change in the direction of their focus, in regard to their strategic interests with the tools they were advocating. Finally, possible explanation is that the politics formed public policies and on this assumption, change of the party in power would also entail the change of higher education policy at the universities. Finally, through the research and process tracing, the explanation of policy change of higher education at Croatian public universities emerging from the model of policy change that I had presented, proved to be the most plausible. This explanation takes the level of integration into account, but with mediation of compatibility of actors' characteristics with the national and European context of higher education.

In this first part of the discussion, I will be focused on the rejecting of alternative explanation that demonstrates the weak points of the assumptions they were based upon, which leaves space for the explanation that emerges from the presented model of policy change. I will be applying the tests that are the essential part of process tracing – straw-in-the-wind, smoking-gun test, hoop test and the double-decisive test.

Main hypothesis – Policy change of higher education sub-policies at public universities in Croatia is associated with the level of integration and mediated through the compatibility of

actors' characteristics with the national and European institutional context of higher education.

Sub-hypothesis – Compatibility of actors' beliefs with the national context of higher education, compatibility of strategic interests of actors with the European institutional context of higher education and stronger capacity of actors that advocate changes contribute to the change of public policies.

Alternative hypotheses

Ha1 – Policy change of higher education sub-policies at public universities in Croatia emerges from the level of institutional integration of the universities.

Ha2 – Policy change of higher education sub-policies at public universities in Croatia emerges from the actors' characteristics – their capacities, beliefs and strategic interests.

Ha3 – Policy change of higher education sub-policies at public universities in Croatia emerges from the change of party in power, i.e. the politics determines policy change.

Initially, it is necessary to emphasize that all universities had coinciding strategic interests with the ones on the European level within the Bologna Process. This suggests the preparedness for policy change in the direction that had been promoted on the European level and in this sense, there were no obstacles to change. Essentially, the strategic interest proved to be an important assumption and the motor of change. Also, in the case of policy core beliefs, it is visible that only the UNIZG had significantly deviated and confronted the ones promoted on the national level by the MSES, and this confrontation was particularly emphasized in the issues of tuition fees, the entire issue of integration of the university and abolishing the legal personality, which reflected on all observed sub-policies.

Regarding the structure, it is visible that the formal adjustment had been made at all universities, but the unification of the first and the second level and the smallest versatility amongst the offered solutions was significantly evident at the more integrated universities. On the other hand, they demonstrated the notable inability of change through the development of new study programmes, harmonization of the ECTS credits and the student workload, monitoring the changes and supplements to the study programmes, and the UNIZD also pointed out that these study programmes according to the Bologna Process were actually unchanged old programmes. Such approach to change of study structure and curriculum actually refers to possibilities of more integrated universities conducting the formal

introduction of a harmonized structure of study (mostly 3+2, with smaller exceptions at the UNIZD and the UNIPU), but also that work on change was not enabled after the formal part. Actors' characteristics, i.e. their financial and human capacities, prevented the integrated universities from introducing the change. Due to the insufficient personnel, they dropped the certain study programmes or were unable to initiate new study programmes, the credentials for the applied studies were questionable and this prevented the introduction of change in terms of introducing the new curricula. Due to this, they were focused on the cooperation with bigger universities, but were also prevented from opening specialist studies and postgraduate doctoral studies, which is also visible in the number of those programmes at smaller universities.

When it comes to less integrated universities (UNIZG, UNIST, UNIOS and UNIRI), they had various solutions regarding the structure in common. On one hand, the UNIZG stands out in terms of a series of various solutions and the biggest number of integrated programmes, and on the other, the UNIRI has the most uniformed structure and the lowest number of integrated programmes. Therefore, it is noticeable here that not even the formal part of the transition to the two levels of study was not conducted in harmony at certain universities. This was particularly contributed by some constituent units such as the faculties of law or medicine, and at the UNIZG, there were others that chose to deviate regarding the structure. In this case, the disagreement regarding the secondary beliefs about the structure type appeared, which was particularly emphasized at the UNIZG when certain constituent units demanded the transition towards the integrated studies. On the other hand, out of all universities, only the UNIRI explicitly stated that it was necessary to have the integration of the university and harmonization in mind during the bringing of new structure, even though there were also some discrepancies at this university as well, but they were the smallest amongst this group of universities. Other issues characteristic for this group of universities were either the lack of a more active discussion on these topics, which was the case with the UNIOS and the UNIST, or recognizing that the old programmes were merely redesigned, as it was often the case at the UNIZG and somewhat rarer at the UNIRI. Finally, it was revealed that the UNIRI stood out regarding the strategic consideration about this issue, composition of database of reviewers and establishing the unique Accreditation Service. In the sense of human capacities, the UNIZG, the UNIRI and the UNIOS pointed out that they had fulfilled the necessary prerequisites for the change of structure. During this period, these three universities did not

state any issues during the opening of new studies, while the UNIST had to drop study programmes due to the lack of human capacities.

It is visible that the integrated universities passed the hoop test regarding the formal change of structure. This implies the importance of organizational structure as the necessary condition, however, once the hoop test is set, according to which, it is necessary to pass it associated with the policy change after the formal part, it is visible that the integrated universities failed to pass through it and that there were other factors that prevented the policy change, which included the financial and human capacities of actors. This established the integration as the necessary prerequisite for policy change. On the other hand, in the case of the less integrated universities, it was noticed that the organizational structure prevented the change. Therefore, status quo remains predominant at the UNIOS and the UNIST. Furthermore, the UNIZG demonstrated that the non-integration was a great obstacle for the formal change itself, and the later disagreements regarding beliefs did not contribute to policy change and it failed to pass even the first hoop test referring to the organizational structure and formal change. However, the minimal differences in the internal institutional structure, active work on policy changes, previously presented changes that happened after the formal establishment of structure, which were noted at the UNIRI, clearly revealed that there were favorable conditions for change. Such semi-integrated structure of the UNIRI alleviated the decision making and the formal change, and on the other side, strong financial and human capacities and beliefs harmonized with the ones on the national level allowed further work on policy change and absence of disabling the change. This is a clear example of the smoking-gun evidence according to which the change is achieved and both conditions (level of integration and actors' characteristics) necessary for achieving change are present.

In the sense of mobility, all university demonstrated great dependency on the external sources of financing this policy, i.e. they primarily relied on the mobility entailed by the Erasmus Programme. The universities that had the elaborated strategic documents (development or international strategies) set the mobility as an extremely important goal, but the change in this case was less associated with integration. Association with integration was expected in the agreement signing on international cooperation and internal mobility. However, the rulebooks on mobility of the four universities defined that the 'university' signed bilateral cooperation agreements, which included the UNIDU, UNIZG, UNIOS and the UNIRI, while at the UNIPU, only the 'institution' was listed as the signer, and the UNIZG and the UNIST left the possibility for the university or the constituent unit to do so. Still, the minutes of the

conferences revealed visible discrepancy regarding this issue, therefore the UNIZG stated that agreements could also be made by the departments. All universities emphasized the lack of capacities as the main issue regarding the international mobility – lack of accommodation capacities, insufficient financial means and human capacities. Also, in terms of the internal mobility of students, the integrated universities also enlisted great problems, but of smaller proportions, therefore this issue was not a common topic of discussion. On the other hand, certain policies pointed out less integrated universities such as the UNIRI by bringing the Measures for Improvement of Internal Mobility and by emphasizing the issue of integration as the cause of decreased mobility, or the UNIOS with the offer of s single elective course per each of the constituent units. Amongst the integrated universities, the UNIZD stood out by allowing the students to choose elective courses from different constituent units and the UNIDU that considered the offer of same courses at different departments, but the reason behind this was rationalization of costs. However, the UNIZG, as the most non-integrated university experienced difficulties regarding the change of mobility sub-policy since the constituent units did not take measures for assuring mobility, did not establish offices for international cooperation, etc., but on the other hand, it showed the highest level of preparedness for entering the Erasmus Programme and insisted on it in the period between 2007 and 2009. The UNIZG proved to be less successful regarding the internal mobility, which was more under the authority and the possibility of the very university, and issues regarding the change in this plan are constantly emphasized.

Mobility sub-policy showed that the structure itself or the very characteristics of actors could not bring significant change. In terms of international mobility, all universities were dependent on external financing, but they also revealed similar weak points regarding the accommodation capacities, which disabled the development of the mobility sub-policy at the universities with lower level of external financing. On the other hand, the case of the UNIZG demonstrated that the non-integration disabled change when bringing and implementing the decisions in this field even though the capacities were more favorable than at other universities, which was also confirmed by the IDE Mobil study (IDE 2008). This showed that other universities were primarily constrained by capacities, while the problem at the UNIZG was the non-integration and partially the capacities. Having this in mind, this policy revealed that it was not sufficient to secure merely one out of two conditions in order to achieve policy change. It was clear that the disabling of change occurred due to the lack of the second factor – at the UNIZG the reason was non-integration, and at other universities, this occurred due to

actors' characteristics. Therefore, the final conclusion in this case is that both of the conditions were necessary in order to change the sub-policy, which is a clear smoking-gun evidence according to which, the lack of combination of the two sufficient conditions caused the disabling of change. Namely, even though the change in this field was marked as displacement according to its type, it referred to rejecting old rules and applying new rules in regard to financing and joining the Erasmus Programme, but these changes remained associated with this Programme and had a constrained reach due to the nonexistence of the previously listed conditions. The issue of internal mobility represented an issue both at the integrated and less integrated universities, but substantially less was it emphasized at the integrated universities as an issue. This issue was difficult to consider due to the lack of data about the achieved internal mobilities, but the systematic approach was more visible at the integrated universities.

In the field of quality assurance, as visible primarily in Appendix F where the most important documents and establishments of certain bodies and offices at the universities are presented, the UNIRI was continuously working on adapting and changing this policy. On the other hand, the UNIST joined this policy fairly late and brought the key documents only at the end of the observed period. Other universities acted just periodically, and the particular activity was recorded in 2009, when the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education was brought and in 2012, and when the ASHE conducted an audit at most of the universities. The results of the audit showed that the UNIRI and the UNIDU were pointed out as the best graded (even though the explanation for the UNIDU was presented in the part referring to the Quality Assurance), while the UNIST proved to be the worst graded.. Also, the ESG 1.1. criterion referring to the quality policies and the procedures of the quality assurance system showed that the least integrated universities, the UNIZG, UNIST and UNIOS, acquired the lowest grade, and the UNIRI achieved good results, and it was less integrated than the UNIZD and the UNIDU. It should be emphasized that the integrated universities pointed out problems of various degree of development of system at certain constituent units, lack of a unique system, problems in communication, non-harmonization of documents, low informedness of the employees about the quality assurance system, i.e. problems characteristic for less integrated universities were pointed out. In the case of the UNIZG, UNIST and UNIOS, the main obstacle included lack of joint policies, non-harmonization and non-integration. In addition to that, certain decisions revealed that the very integration at the universities was not sufficient for change of the quality assurance policy – not bringing

measures and not delivering the deans' reports at the UNIDU, lack of joint standards and measures at the UNIZD, or the case of the UNIPU, when it was established that there were significant differences in the activities of committees for quality of certain constituent units and non-harmonization of practices. Regarding capacities, the ASHE emphasized human capacities at the UNIZG as a great advantage when grading the quality system, while the investing into human resources was emphasized as the strong point of the UNIRI. On the other hand, work overload of personnel was emphasized at the UNIOS, inability to conduct provisions of the quality assurance system due to the small number of professors employed on basis of employment contract that could not be sanctioned, the UNIZD did not have a sufficient number of professors, they had inadequate capacities for committee functioning and lack of personnel for forming committees at the constituent units, the UNIPU experienced the workload of personnel and total lack of basic equipment, which disabled the functioning of the quality assurance system. In this case, not even the declarative integrated universities succeeded in passing the hoop test regarding the integrated functioning, even though the UNIDU, as the most integrated university, proved to be somewhat more functional than the UNIZD and the UNIPU. Regarding the less integrated universities, only the UNIRI passed this test since it proved the unique functioning without developing different practices at certain constituent units or obstruction of process by appealing to the legal personality. On the other hand, only the UNIRI and the UNIZG passed the hoop test regarding the actors' characteristics, i.e. more particularly, regarding the human and financial capacities. Achieving the policy change regarding quality assurance at the UNIRI was confirmed by a clear smoking-gun indicator that it was necessary to ensure a combination of favorable organizational structure in order to achieve change, which enables functionality with its integration, as well as characteristics according to which, the compatibility of beliefs that were promoted on the national level was achieved, and the capacities for implementing the change.

Social dimension proved to be the least represented at the universities, but if the two tables from the beginning of the part on the Social dimension (Table 16 and Table 17) are taken into account, the UNIZG and the UNIRI stood out in this field. According to the document Ensuring Minimum Standards of Accessibility for Students with Disabilities in Higher Education in the Republic of Croatia (2013), these two universities were the only universities that assured the possibility of access to study, adapted exam taking and the course on peer support for students with disabilities and they established the Office for Students with

Disabilities and the Student Counselling Center. It should be pointed out that the UNIZG partially ensured a student counselling center since it functioned at smaller portion of the constituent units and the non-integration proved to be an obstacle here as well. This was recognized by Expert 5 who claims:

*The integration of the university is exceptionally important and I think that it is hardly achievable at the University of Zagreb due to the size of the university and due to these… common practices. Therefore, I think that a smaller, less integrated university, surely conducts some policies easier, that arrive from the university administration, at all of its departments, including the social dimension.*

Also, the UNIZG often advocated that the issue of social dimension should resolved on the national level, and not on the level of individual universities, which represented disagreement regarding the secondary beliefs. The UNIZG, as well as the UNIOS, focused on excellence to a great extent rather than on social dimension. Although, it should be pointed out that the UNIZG had made progress regarding the social dimension in the last two years of the observed period. On the other hand, in choosing the goals in the performance based agreements, there was an equal representativeness of both integrated and non-integrated universities regarding the goals associated with the social dimension. Through the minutes of the Senate and the strategic documents, the integrated universities did not show significant change of this policy in regard to the less integrated universities. The UNIZD became more active in this sense only at the end of the observed period and the UNIDU depended on the external influences as it did during the establishment of the Scholarship Trust Fund. Even though the UNIRI encountered issues regarding the social dimension, it still stood out according to its proactive approach though the establishment of the trust fund, foundation, pointing out the social dimension in the strategic documents, measures for improving the social dimension of study, and in the elaboration of the model of charging the tuition fees in 2010, it was the only university that introduced the social criterion. On the other hand, there were the UNIST and the UNIPU, which revealed, during the explanation of the change type, that actions in this sub-policy could be characterized as the absence of policy change. In this sense, the entire system was at its initial phase and was partially associated with the organizational structure and actors' characteristics. However, non-integration of the UNIZG was evident in this sub-policy through aggravating establishment of agreements of constituent units regarding the providing of their own financial means for scholarships and non-functioning of the student counselling center on the level of the entire university. Within the

social dimension, the UNIRI stood out due to the brought measures and decisions, and partially the UNIZD, but only at the end of the observed period. Even though it could not be established clearly that the policy change at these universities was directly incited by the level of integration and actors' characteristics, it is evident that, based on the examples of the UNIZG and the UNIOS, the beliefs, as well as the level of integration in the case of the UNIZG, were preventing the change. By accepting the policy core belief that it was necessary to nurture the social dimension, the UNIZG began developing this sub-policy more actively only in the end of the observed period. Seeing that there were no significant examples in these cases that would confirm the hoop or smoking-gun tests that bring solid evidences, these examples are pointed out as the straw-in-the-wind evidences that contribute less to the set hypothesis. It is shown here that there was a tendency towards the systematic development of policy at the UNIRI, accompanied by certain issues, in the social dimension during the entire period, but aggravating circumstances were visible for the development of the policy at the UNIZG that emerged due to the non-integration, as well as the insufficient representation of this topic at the integrated universities.

Enrollment policy is, as previously mentioned in the part referring to this sub-policy, marked by the historical method of determining quotas and lack of composition of clear criteria that would cause distancing from this method. However, the UNIZG is pointed out regarding this issue according to the institutional structure. Namely, in this case, it is exceptionally clear how the non-integration of the UNIZG actually influenced the lack of enrollment policy on the level of the University. Therefore, the constituent units independently decided on the quotas, decisions of the Senate were being ignored and the number of enrolled students exceeded the capacities. Also, the statements of the leading personnel in the observed period confirmed this issue and pointed to the fact that the University had no means of influencing the change. Similar situation regarding independent decision making by the constituent units and ignoring the Senate's decisions proved obvious at the UNIOS as well. Namely, in spite of the formal decisions, the overview of development of the enrollment policy at the UNIOS revealed the well-played practice in which, the constituent units increased the quotas of self-financed students, and only in 2010-2011 the quotas were reduced, once again based on the self-initiative of the constituent units. On the other hand, the constraining factor at the integrated universities regarding the change of enrollment policy was evidently the lack of capacities. The UNIDU constantly emphasized the lack of personnel that caused shutting down the studies and preventing the opening of new studies that would attract new students,

and the UNIPU experienced similar programmes and was forced to reduce the quotas at the Department of Economics and Tourism due to insufficient personnel. Also, these two universities dealt with the problem of lack of interest for enrolling to particular studies (the exception being the Department of Economics and Tourism at the UNIPU) and their enrollment policy was based on lowering the enrollment criteria in order to attract students. Unlike them, the UNIZD acquired a great interest of students, but due to the lack of personnel possibilities, as they pointed out, they were unable to enroll all students and they even raised the enrollment criteria in order to limit the number of students. While on one hand, the UNIZG and the UNIOS had the autonomous decision making by the constituent units, and on the other, integrated universities experienced problem of insufficient personnel, but the UNIRI stood out regarding this policy as well. Namely, as visible according to the type of change, only the UNIRI focused this type of policy towards conversion. In the case of the discussion on factors that enabled or disabled the change of enrollment policy, it is possible to emphasize a few at the UNIRI. Firstly, even though in the beginning of the observed period, there was a noticeable tendency of autonomous decision making by the constituent units, as it was the case at the UNIZG and the UNIOS, the influence and the authority of the Senate was noted at a rather early stage. In 2001, the Faculty of Economics had to accept the decision of the Senate regarding the reduction of quotas, and the decisions on constraining the quotas were on discussion in the next year, which pressured the constituent units. It was insisted on clear explanations for increasing quotas and meeting the requirements on class quality, information on conditions of quality at dislocated studies, internal redistribution of quotas, formation of the Committee for Enrollment Quotas, regulating the quotas at dislocated studies, bringing measures for increasing the number of students and the previously mentioned decisions that all enrollment quotas had to be brought by the Senate. In other words, noticeable was the clear conducting of this sub-policy from the level of the University, which was a clear indicator of functional integration. In addition to that, the discussions on the enrollment policy at the UNIRI were never associated with the issue of lack of personnel, and there were no significant disagreements with the national policy in the policy core beliefs. This actually ensured a consistent and functional enrollment policy for the UNIRI, thus achieving the most significant change. Namely, their enrollment policy was not disabled by the internal organizational structure nor the capacities.

It is necessary to emphasize the confrontation regarding the secondary beliefs occurring at all universities where the reduction of quota was requested at the faculties of economics by the

ASHE. However, the confrontation primarily referred to the concrete tool. On one hand, while the ASHE intended to implement the prohibition of enrollment for three years, the universities advocated action plans that would solve this issue gradually in order to avoid the drastic way. The state matura can be emphasized as the last issue within the enrollment policy. Namely, it was accepted at all universities without greater objections, but once again the issue of non-integration at the UNIZG was partially emphasized, where the certain constituent units began re-introducing the entrance exams and started ignoring the decisions of the Senate on raising the requested levels of knowledge on the state matura that were required for enrollment.

Special example was the UNIST for which there is not sufficient information to clearly establish if the disabling of development of enrollment policy occurred through non-integration or due to the actors' characteristics. However, it is visible that their problems in this area were the vacancies of quotas, decreased interest for particular studies and inability to define criteria for determining capacities. Seeing that these were permanent issues during the observed period, it is difficult to talk about a more significant change, despite the fact that there were minor changes according to which, this type, as previously explained, could be considered the drift.

Regarding the sub-policy of determining the tuition fees, the decision belonged to the university on a general level. However, there were cases where the importance of organizational structure of each of the universities surfaced, which proved that non-integration played an important role in this area. Even though, according to the type of change, the UNIZG was deemed as the only university that independently chose the change in contradiction to all other universities and the tuition fee policy promoted on the national level, this university encountered problems in the change of the tuition fee policy the most. Therefore, in 2003-2004, it was visible that the constituent units were independently bringing decisions regarding the increase and refund of tuition fees and that there was no tuition fee policy on the level of the University. In addition to that, due to its non-integration, the University itself did not have information about the capacities of the constituent units and was unable to compose further policies in this area. The existence of particular, short-term interest of the constituent units should not be neglected at this point, which obstructed the process due to their desire to achieve financial profit, however, they functioned within the institutional framework that was provided by a non-integrated university and they were, as interpreted within the historical institutionalism, constrained by the structure in their interests. In addition

to this, even when the University independently brought the decision regarding the transition to the linear model, some constituent units were not encompassed by this model. Also, Rector Bjeliš refused to bear responsibility regarding the issue of tuition fees at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Studies when the student protests broke out, thus demonstrating that aside from the responsibility, he also did not have the possibility of deciding in this policy. Explanation of such action could be found in the strong veto capacity of the UNIZG that allowed the University to act contrary to other actors, but also introduced constant disagreement with the MSES in terms of the policy core beliefs regarding the conducting of the tuition fee policy. At other, less integrated universities (UNIST, UNIRI and UNIOS), the decision was brought on the refund of tuition fees on the level of the university regarding the tuition fees in 2003-2004 without a greater discussion or objections and this issue was not left to the constituent units. However, the UNIRI remained alone in this kind of decision-making since other practices could be noticed at the UNIOS and the UNIST. Therefore, the UNIOS introduced the pilot project of the gradual model only at one constituent unit, without the later steps for introducing it to the rest of the University and leaving the constituent units to independently decide on the thresholds of tuition in 2010-2011. Furthermore, at the UNIST, the constituent units independently decided on the tuition fees for the students upon enrollment to higher years of study until 2006-2007, when the University took over. Amongst the more integrated universities, it is visible that the tuition fee policy was determined by capacities of the university and their beliefs. Therefore, the UNIZD avoided confrontation with the MSES and also enlisted the lack of personnel, which could have become the subject of dispute with the MSES in the case of confrontation regarding the tuition fees. Also, the UNIZD rejected the decrease of tuition fees due to weak financial capacities and it was emphasized that this would jeopardize the class. The same situation occurred at the UNIDU, where there was a concern regarding the financial capacities during the introduction of subsidized tuition fees, but stronger resistance lacked since they had no veto possibilities. There is a lack of information about this sub-policy at the UNIPU, but adjusting to the decisions of the MSES and the Rectors' Conference was visible, as well as rejecting the insisting of the Department of Economics and Tourism on exclusive deciding on the matter of tuition fees on the level of the University. This showed that certain constituent units (the biggest constituent unit at the UNIPU, in this case) did not have such influence as it was the case with the constituent units at the non-integrated universities. All this revealed that at the UNIRI, in regard to other less integrated universities, there were no significant internal obstructions and heterogeneity that emerged from the organizational structure. On the other

hand, there were no compromises, as it was the case at the integrated universities, emerging from the actors' characteristics – differences in beliefs and lack of capacities. However, due to its veto capacity, only the UNIZG chose to make an independent step regarding the tuition fees, but it was also encompassed by the changes occurring due to actions of the MSES.

If observing only the final outcome, then all universities changed the tuition fee policy. This was brought about by the fact that the tuition fee policy was under greater influence by the MSES since 2009, as well as student protests that pressured both the universities and the Ministry. Therefore, since 2009, subsidizing of tuition fees for students was gradually introduced. Finally, all universities, regardless of their integration and characteristics, conducted the change due to the introduction of performance based agreements. Also, most noticeable in this area were the confrontations regarding the policy core and the secondary beliefs between the universities and the MSES. Therefore, also noticeable was the objection to subsidizing the tuition fees and insisting on excellence (particularly from the UNIZG, followed by the UNIOS and the UNIRI), while in the end, they agreed to the solutions of the MSES regarding the subventions. However, eventually, the difference can be noticed in the solutions offered for the calculation of the ECTS credits and tuition fees for students that did not acquire the minimum of credits, which is presented and explained in more details in the part on the Tuition fees sub-policy (5.6.) and in Appendix G.

Regarding the tuition fee policy, it should be pointed out, as already mentioned in the discussion on the type of change, that the level of discretion in interpretation of this sub-policy by the university was low, that there was no basis for calculation of tuition fees and that the opinion of the MSES was accepted. Therefore, it is possible to recognize the straw-in-the-wind evidences in the case of the UNIRI, which pointed to the fact that the tuition fee policy was only conducted on the level of the University, that it was not obstructed due to the internal organization and actors' characteristics. However, as it was revealed on the example of the UNIZG, significant influence of actors is necessary in order to change policy independently in the cases of policy where there is a low level of discretion in interpretation.

If the alternative hypotheses are considered, it is necessary to start with the HA1 and HA2. Namely, the part that dwells on the university integration revealed that the most integrated were smaller universities the UNIDU, UNIZD and UNIPU, followed by the UNIRI, then by the UNIOS and the UNIST and finally, the UNIZG as the least integrated, i.e. non-integrated university. Based on the HA1, it can be concluded that the most significant changes in this

case should occur at the UNIDU, UNIZD and UNIPU, while the cases of no changes or negligible changes should occur at the less integrated or non-integrated universities. On the other hand, according to the actors' characteristics, all universities expressed strategic interests in agreement with those promoted on the European level. However, in the case of beliefs, it was revealed that the UNIZG often had disagreements and confrontations in regard to those represented on the national level (issue of tuition fee system, integration, vision of social dimension, entry into the mobility programme), the UNIST, UNIOS and UNIRI experienced minor disagreements regarding the secondary beliefs, while the smaller universities mostly expressed agreement with the beliefs on the national level. Finally, regarding the capacities, the UNIZG and the UNIRI stood out. Therefore, it is to be expected, according to the HA2, that the UNIZG would primarily achieve the policy change, followed by other universities with more distinctive characteristics.

Based on the presented developmental process of higher education policies at the universities and the previous discussion on the results of the research, it is possible to reject these two alternative hypotheses due to the fact that the insight into results clearly demonstrated that if these theses were observed separately and were applied to the presented process of policy change, they would fail to explain this process. Perhaps the sub-policiy of tuition fees can be considered an exception in which only the UNIZG achieved independent change towards a different model of tuition fees. However, if the entire process in the field of tuition fee policy at the UNIZG is observed more thoroughly, it becomes noticeable that there was a series of situations where the non-integration prevented the existence of tuition fee policy itself on the level of the UNIZG, as well as the change in this field. Even when the transition towards a different model was achieved, there were exceptions from it and eventually Rector Bjeliš refused to take responsibility for the events taking place at certain constituent units. Also, the UNIZG often succeeded in making progress due to its financial and human capacities, but in the end, the institutional structure disabled the change. Therefore, by focusing only on the actors' characteristics, it is impossible to explain the policy change in these cases. On the other hand, not even the very organizational structure, as an assumption of the classical institutionalism, enabled a consistent explanation. Namely, even though the integrated universities had the prerequisite for change in terms of the structure and functional connectivity, they failed to achieve a significant change due to the actors' characteristics. Therefore, the integrated universities did not stand out in terms of the policy change not even in one sub-policy. It is possible only to point out the UNIZD regarding the changes that

occurred at the end of the observed period in terms of the social dimension or the UNIDU in terms of the quality assurance. However, once the entire period is observed, as well as the way of functioning and decision making in this period, it becomes visible that the change was disabled by the actors' characteristics, as well as organizational structure in some cases. Namely, even though these universities were integrated, they also encountered tendencies that were characteristic of the non-integrated universities. Particular obstacle for change in these universities included both the human and financial capacities. Regarding the strategic interests, these universities were on the line with the context of higher education policies on the European level and did not experience more significant confrontations associated with beliefs on the national level, but were disabled by the lack of financial and human capacities, as well as lack of veto capacities for independent functioning.

Alternative hypothesis HA3 prioritizes politics in regard to policy. However, during the entire period, the governments of the center-left and the center-right interchanged (2001-2003 center-left government, 2003-2011 center-right government, 2011-2016 center-left government). Through the entire process I presented, it is visible that there were no key decisions by the MSES or the Government that were politically motivated and influenced the policy change in these sub-policies. This is evident through several indicators. Surely there were important decisions arriving from the level of the MSES, but they did not depend on the change of political option. Therefore, the decisions on tuition fee subventions, state matura, joining the mobility programmes, establishment of the ASHE, insisting on quality assurance, etc., were not changed after the change of political option. All of these solutions subsisted, with a potential elaboration on certain tools as it was the case of tuition fee subventions due to the change of the ministers. Also, politics could simply not change the legal framework and the universities played an important role in preventing the bringing of legal solution, which was confirmed by the durability of the current Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act that was brought in 2003 and active involvement of universities in discussion on act proposals. Furthermore, even if the proposed solutions could more significantly influence the higher education policies at the universities, they were rejected after the constitutional claims (case of integration, exempting the professional studies from the universities). Finally, by appealing to the constitutionally guaranteed autonomy, the universities mostly managed to sustain independent directing of higher education sub-policies. Due to these three factors – lack of discontinuity in the higher education policies of the MSES, continuity of the legal framework and the interventions of the Constitutional Court and the autonomy of the

university, it is impossible to state in this case that the changes on the political plan caused policy changes in the higher education policies at the universities.

Once the conclusions according to all presented sub-policies are summarized, the state is such that in the cases of three sub-policies (structure and curriculum, quality assurance and enrollment policy), it is possible to clearly conclude through the process tracing that the necessary prerequisite of policy change is the organizational structure that enables functioning (appropriate level of integration) and it that has to be mediated by the actors' characteristics. On the other hand, the mobility policy and the tuition fee policy proved to be the sub-policies that leave an exceptionally low level of discretion in interpretation and demand a significant effort of the actors in order to achieve change. Regarding mobility, all the universities lack the previously listed combination of the necessary conditions, and the lack of financial capacities for the mobility policy is also emphasized (except those implied by the Erasmus Programme), as well as the organizational structure in the case of the UNIZG. In the case of mobility, process tracing signifies clear disabling of change at the UNIZG due to non-integration, and at other universities due to the lack of capacities, which emphasized the importance of integration as an assumption of change and actors' characteristics as the second condition necessary for change. This can be considered the smoking-gun evidence since it is clear that the change is disabled due to the lack of the combination of conditions. On the other hand, in the case of the tuition fees, an isolated case is emphasized, where the veto capacity is present at the UNIZG, as well as the constant confrontation and disagreement in the policy core beliefs, which enabled functioning in direction opposite to the other actors. However, there are certain indications at the UNIRI that present the straw-in-the-wind evidences (tuition fee policy is conducted on the level of the University, it is not obstructed due to the internal organization and actors' characteristics). Finally, regarding the social dimension, there are indications that confirm this thesis. Namely, the UNIRI stands out according to its systematic development of policy in this area, but the entire social dimension was under-developed on the national level and the level of the university and there are straw-in-the-wind evidences that support the thesis. They are visible through certain cases of obstructing the social dimension at the UNIZG due to non-integration, and due to inability of smaller universities to conduct the change. This was also confirmed by Expert 4 who stated that

*The novelties arriving from the West did not interest them, this was the situation at the University of Zagreb. These newer universities were younger, the University of Rijeka for example, the University of Split is also younger, however, I would say that not even to this*

*day, I cannot understand if this is due to the mentality of people or something else, but this lack of order still and constantly in regard to a single university of Rijeka, is beyond comparison. Now, due to the lack of personnel, the warfare and the number of people that left from the University in Osijek due to the war and other reasons, a lot of time was necessary to gather the capacities for class in general, and this was probably the reason. The smaller universities, the integrated ones, could construct the systems easier and I believe they did so.*

By rejecting the alternative solutions and pointing to the smoking-gun evidences in four sub-policies of higher education and the straw-in-the-wind in the remaining two, it was clear that the policy change of higher education at the public universities in Croatia was associated with the level of integration and mediated by compatibility of actors' characteristics with the national and European context of higher education.

In order to explain the previous conclusion, it is necessary to return to the presented model. According to the presented data, particularly worrisome was the institutional organization. Namely, even when there were suitable actors' characteristics, it was not possible to conduct changes since the institutional non-integration was disabling bringing and conducting of decisions that would enable the policy change. Also, mere existence of an integrated structure did not prove to be a sufficient condition for change and it was necessary to fulfill the condition of compatibility of actors' characteristics with surrounding contexts. On the other hand, the example of the UNIRI revealed that the strive to establish integration, insisting on functional integration on the level of the University and the decreased influence of certain constituent units ensured foundation for changes.

Regarding actors' characteristics, it was shown that all the universities had strategic interests harmonized with the European institutional context of the Bologna Process. Even though the universities here did not vary, it is safe to assume that this was an important requirement for change. I base this conclusion on the fact that changes in these sub-policies only started occurring after the adjustment to the Bologna Process was initiated in Croatia. Namely, in the previous period, the higher education system and the universities proved to be inert and maintained the status quo, which is visible through the slow, incremental change that ensued the Bologna Process. Furthermore, importance of beliefs is visible in the disagreement and confrontation with the beliefs that were promoted on the national level and primarily through the competent Ministry. Seeing that beliefs refer to different levels (deep core beliefs to fundamental values, policy core beliefs to the subsystem of public policies and value priorities

on that level and secondary beliefs to tendency to particular tools), it was shown that the disagreements based on the level of policy core beliefs posed an obstacle for change, and that the secondary beliefs changed and harmonized with those on the national level in order to harmonize the direction and enable policy change. Deep core beliefs were not clearly expressed through the minutes and in the interviews, but it should be stated that the disagreements in fundamental values would bring the change itself into question. Finally, actors' capacities proved to be important for the possibility of implementing the policy change and their absence was often characterized as an important item in disabling the change. Both human and financial capacities proved to be important, depending on the case, and in the case of the UNIZG, their political and veto capacities were more than influential in specific sub-policies.

These actors' characteristics actually cover the question of actors in three different ways – directing the policy through the strategic interests, policy solutions through actors' beliefs and the possibilities of achieving through capacities. I find that this, as it was shown during the research, covers the key characteristics that direct and enable actors' actions in policy changing. This actually places the emphasis on three levels of characteristics and it is clear that non-harmonization of the ideological part expressed through the strategic interests would disable the change just as the strong confrontations in terms of belief or absence of capacities necessary for change would. Even though in this case the universities were harmonized regarding the strategic interests, this did not diminish their role in the process of policy change, but I observe them as the guiding principle that directs the change.

The model itself, as a clear example of the punctuated equilibrium model, proved to be capable of explaining the policy change in the situation in which, by introducing the Bologna Process, there was a breach of a rigid system of that time that strived to maintain the status quo. Contribution of the model is visible in the sense of successful explanation of policy change within the theory of historical institutionalism along with the interaction of institutional aspect and actors. Joining the structure-agent debate and shedding light on that relationship presents the most demanding part within the historical institutionalism. The main goal of this research was the improvement of model of policy change and conducting work on this topic through the basic assumptions of historical institutionalism, and this theoretical contribution was fulfilled. I find that it was evident that the institutional organization provides framework for actors' actions, but also that it is impossible to neglect their active role within the context of policy change. It can be concluded that, unlike papers by other authors I had

previously mentioned during the explanation of the policy change model, I successfully presented a model based on historical institutionalism that offers a plausible explanation of policy change through the combination of the institutional organization and actors' characteristics.

Contribution to literature and researching corpus is visible in the fact that, in spite of the lack of data on the higher education system, unsystematic record keeping and the closeness of the universities, a substantial amount of data was acquired by this research. Namely, even though the minutes of the Senate should be publically available, they were often not published or their shortened forms were published that contained only the final decisions. Also, the universities often did not have a unique database of such documents, which caused difficulties in the research. Lack of information about the system, which Filipić (2014) also pointed out in his book *The Anatomy of Destruction – Political Economy of Croatian System of Higher Education*, which was often emphasized by the universities, disabled the systematic work on change and enabled keeping the status quo. Exceptionally little was done in order to improve such items and to ensure important data for improvement of system, as well as for the researching approach to this issue. This also suggests the importance of a systematic data acquisition, both on the level of the Ministry and individual institutions. Also, through the overview of existing researches, it is visible that the literature focused on higher education encompassed either the national level or it was focused on the users of the system. Namely, dwelling on policies on the level of individual universities and the ways of their functioning was omitted. Therefore, this thesis also offers insight into one of the most important periods of higher education in the Republic of Croatia and includes all public universities of that period.

Therefore, this thesis presents a pioneer study regarding the approach and data analysis of higher education at the universities in the Republic of Croatia. It can be considered a pioneer both in the sense of its comprehensiveness and way of approaching the issue. In addition to that, it also presents an innovative approach in terms of the methodology since it combines different sources and it analytically dissolves them and re-assembles them through process tracing, which provides with an additional analytical and methodological dimension.

Seeing that the model showed the possibility of explaining policy change in higher education at the public universities in Croatia, it would be necessary and desirable to keep working on further application and model testing both in higher education and in other sectoral policies. It

is primarily necessary to recognize important institutional differences within the observed policy. Therefore, this can include differentiating the private and public institutions in education or health, family economies and bigger consortiums in agriculture, science institutes and universities in scientific politics, then the comparison of different national systems of public policies if the analysis level is raised. Also, it is necessary to detect particular sub-policies that would be monitored and organization actors. Associated with the supranational level, which is in this case recognized in terms of the European institutional context of the Bologna Process, the one that proved to be predominating should be detected and it should be seen if the institutional actors even share the strategic interests in terms of particular policy. National level, issue of beliefs and capacities remain within the explained and presented concepts. Finally, it is necessary to determine the time period in which the policy change is observed in regard to the importance of this concept within the approach.

Certainly, the research does not necessarily need to stay within the qualitative methods. However, I find that they should definitely be a part of this type of researches since they enable understanding the process and fine-grained insight into the problematics of change. On the other hand, the lack of quantitative indicators during the observed period proved to be a real issue in my research, which disabled the analysis that would cover all sub-policies at all universities during the observed time period.

The model certainly opens possibilities of additional suggestions and improvements within the framework of historical institutionalism. It is surely possible to work on the additional elaboration of capacities and in this area, I see the potential contribution in the sense of concept elaboration presented by Wu, Ramesh and Howlett (2015). Namely, the paper was published in the period when the research presented in this thesis was in its advanced phase and it was not possible to considerate this type of policy capacities forming. Previously mentioned approach is useful since it brings differentiating capacities on the level of individual, organizational and systematic level and towards the analytical, operational and political type of skills and competences. This acquires nine types of capacities, i.e. three on each of these levels. It surely opens possibilities of an even more structured approach to the issue of change and potentially enables simpler association of capacities of individuals within a certain institutions with those of the organizational level. In addition to this, the model is open for additional work on other parts, but at this point, I see this as the main potential contribution at this point.

# CONCLUSION

Seeing that the majority of conclusions and proposals for further work are already given in the discussion, this part will shortly summarize the main ideas of the thesis and the achieved goals. Namely, the entire thesis shows the complexity of researching the policy change and aims, by disassembling it to individual parts, to clarify the process of change that had been occurring at the public universities in Croatia from 2001 to 2013 in regard to the six sub-policies of higher education. Improvement and testing the model of policy change can be emphasized as the achieved final goal. This primarily refers to the positioning of the model of change within the theoretical assumptions of historical institutionalism, elaboration of the actors' characteristics and the structure-agent relationship. It was revealed that it is possible to compose a model that is based on the theoretical assumptions of historical institutionalism and, by pointing to the differences between the variants of the new institutionalism school, it was argued why some of the settings were epistemologically incompatible. Even within the historical institutionalism, it was demonstrated that there are clear differences between the approaches to policy change. Furthermore, actors' characteristics that include the strategic interests, beliefs and capacities were elaborated, and such elaboration enables clear monitoring of actors' characteristics on three levels – ideas in the sense of strategic interests used as guidelines in policies, tools and policy solutions they represent and the capacities that assure the prerequisite for working on policy change, which differentiates this thesis from the papers of other authors presented here. Finally, the specific structure-agent relationship is presented that points to the importance of the institutional structure, but also has the actors' actions within the punctuated equilibrium model in mind.

Aside the theoretical contribution, the thesis also proved to be significant regarding the approach of considering the higher education policies. The analysis of policy change was ensured in the six specific areas of higher education at the public universities in Croatia during the previously mentioned period and it acquired, analyzed and systematized even some data that were unavailable prior to this point. Also, the analysis was conducted on the level of the university and not on the national level or only for a certain institution, which was the prior principle. As previously mentioned in the discussion, this assured significant contribution to the corpus of literature associated with the higher education policies.

Finally, the methodological contribution was achieved in the sense of using the process tracing that, in addition to the directed content analysis, qualitative interviews and secondary sources, provided the complete image of policy change through the triangulation of acquired data. The presented model of policy change leaves the possibility of using the quantitative methods, but I find that, due to the specificities of process tracing, it is necessary to maintain the qualitative approach as the framework of the research. Reason to this is the need for understanding the process and the specificities of the contexts that are appearing, and these are the aspects that can be anticipated by the qualitative methods.

In addition to the theoretical and methodological contribution and the contribution to the corpus of literature, this thesis confirmed the importance of systematic and transparent data acquisition in the higher education, which can be applied in other sector policies. Lack of data proved to be an obstacle for the researching of the phenomenon and disabled additional insights into certain issues that were deemed important and interesting. Also, there was a certain non-transparency regarding the availability of data by the universities. This proved that the researchers are often prevented from conducting a complete analysis due to the rigidity of the institutions that disagree with the analytical approach to their issue, while simultaneously, they do not conduct more significant analyses of the state. On the other hand, the systematicness of data acquisition about the system would enable the monitoring of the process of implementation of certain policy, as well as decision making that are based on clear indicators. This problem precisely was emphasized by several experts during the interviews. Namely, they state that there is no clear foundation based on which the decisions are brought, and pursuant to that, they point out that the analyses are not conducted with the aim of examining if the set goals are achieved and finally, there is no possibility of making decisions based on the analysis with the aim of improving the policies. Due to these reasons, as well as the development of the system itself, it is necessary to systematically acquire data in the future and enable a transparent insight into the data to the researching community and the interested public.

Finally, I am aware of the possible criticisms that can be made regarding both the model and the selected theoretical and methodological approach. As previously stated, I find that there is space for improving this model and further elaboration of potential solutions of the certain parts of the model. I see the application of model in various sector policies within a state or through the comparative analysis of different national policies. Surely, the explanations emerging from the model will be significantly more precise if the availability of data for

certain observed area is higher. Therefore, in the case of this thesis, the circumstances regarding availability of materials should be taken into account and the importance of the research endeavor should be recognized since it was not simple nor easy.

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix A - List of Interviews

Interview with Expert 1. Conducted on April 14, 2016 in Zagreb. Expert in enrollment sub-policy.

Interview with Expert 2. Conducted on April 15, 2016 in Zagreb. Expert in enrollment and tuititon fee sub-policies.

Interview with Expert 3. Conducted on April 29, 2016 in Zagreb. Expert in quality assurance sub-policy.

Interview with Expert 4. Conducted on May 2, 2016 in Zagreb. Expert in quality assurance sub-policy.

Interview with Expert 5. Conducted on April 30, 2016 in Zagreb. Expert in social dimension sub-policy.

Interview with Expert 6. Conducted on May 10, 2016 in Zagreb. Expert in mobility sub-policy.

Interview with Expert 7. Conducted on May 13, 2016 in Zagreb. Expert in tuition fee sub-policy.

Interview with Expert 8. Conducted on May 3, 2016 in Zagreb. Expert in structure and curriculum sub-policy.

Interview with Expert 9. Conducted on May 3, 2016 in Zagreb. Expert in structure and curriculum sub-policy.

## Appendix B - Interview Guide – General Topics Covered in all Semi-Structured Interviews

Introduction – about myself and purpose of the study

Recognizing the main problems and time-span of the main activities in a certain sub-policy

Systematic and coherent development of a certain sub-policy at the universities

Do changes occur and what are the main incentives for policy change within a certain sub-policy at the universities?

Do some universities stand out regarding policy change and what are the main reasons for that?

Institutional organization of universities and policy change

Actors' characteristics and policy change

Role of the MSES in the process of change

Role of other actors in the process of change

Specific topics and problems within certain sub-policy

## Appendix C - Expenses from the State Budget for Regular Activity of the University and for Capital Investments and Construction

Expenses from the State budget for regular activity of the university and for capital investments and construction (including the financial means for paying off the installment loans) are available per university since 2005. These financial means do not include expenses for the construction of student dormitories and functioning of student centers. The calculations are based on the data available at the web-page of Ministry of Finance and presented in HRK.

| | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| UNIZG | 888 278 895 | 1 084 776 555 | 1 156 355 340 | 1 247 808 166 |
| UNIST | 182 655 362 | 257 823 619 | 254 883 751 | 296 471 183 |
| UNIOS | 136 797 304 | 199 781 090 | 216 985 220 | 247 421 741 |
| UNIRI | 169 895 705 | 224 181 286 | 217 624 564 | 247 608 953 |
| UNIPU | 314 205 | 409 283 | 38 608 166 | 38 882 955 |
| UNIZD | 50 958 886 | 74 422 263 | 71 706 809 | 79 831 003 |
| UNIDU | 37 592 248 | 44 500 731 | 46 455 848 | 56 527 758 |

| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UNIZG | 1 303 069 138 | 1 322 564 244 | 1 326 926 610 | 1 370 076 646 | 1 323 688 388 |
| UNIST | 307 723 458 | 315 658 994 | 296 140 037 | 362 187 268 | 347 269 066 |
| UNIOS | 258 625 352 | 271 417 843 | 266 569 661 | 302 712 082 | 300 424 093 |
| UNIRI | 281 699 303 | 329 530 788 | 318 828 079 | 349 833 370 | 326 726 594 |
| UNIPU | 40 364 075 | 43 652 812 | 44 570 908 | 51 545 107 | 47 216 328 |
| UNIZD | 86 861 418 | 91 072 867 | 93 039 350 | 98 844 725 | 95 880 111 |
| UNIDU | 50 991 722 | 52 398 372 | 46 264 546 | 58 740 102 | 55 610 413 |

## Appendix D - Number of Programmes per University According to ECTS Points

All tables are based on the data availalble at the web-page of Directory of study programmes (MOZVAG).

Single Major University Programmes

| | | Undergraduate | | | Graduate | | | Integrated | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ECTS | 180 | 210 | 240 | 120 | 90 | 60 | 300 | 360 |
| UNIZG | | 85 | 3 | 11 | 108 | 3 | 10 | 27 | 4 |
| UNIST | | 47 | - | 9 | 44 | - | 9 | 5 | 3 |
| UNIOS | | 29 | - | 3 | 40 | - | 3 | 4 | 1 |
| UNIRI | | 27 | - | 2 | 39 | - | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| UNIPU | | 10 | - | 4 | 8 | - | 2 | 1 | - |
| UNIZD | | 15 | - | - | 21 | - | - | 1 | - |
| UNIDU | | 11 | - | - | 9 | - | - | - | - |

Double Major University Programmes

| | | Undergraduate | | Graduate | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ECTS | 90 | 120 | 60 | 30 |
| UNIZG | | 35 | 5 | 24 | 6 |
| UNIST | | 7 | - | 7 | - |
| UNIOS | | 7 | - | 9 | - |
| UNIRI | | 9 | - | 9 | - |
| UNIPU | | 4 | - | 3 | - |
| UNIZD | | 17 | - | 20 | - |
| UNIDU | | - | - | - | - |

Postgraduate University Programmes

| | | Postgraduate Doctoral | Postgraduate Specialist | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ECTS | 180 | 36 | 60 | 90 | 115 | 120 | 122 | 124 | 139 |
| UNIZG | | 63 | 1 | 93 | 14 | - | 39 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| UNIST | | 18 | - | 1 | 2 | - | 2 | - | - | - |
| UNIOS | | 18 | - | 13 | 14 | 2 | - | - | - | - |
| UNIRI | | 18 | - | 25 | 6 | - | 4 | - | - | - |
| UNIPU | | 2 | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| UNIZD | | 5 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | -- |
| UNIDU | | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - |

Professional Programmes

| | | Undergraduate Professional | Short Professional | Specialist Professional Graduate | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ECTS | 180 | 150 | 120 | 60 |
| UNIZG | | 8 | 1 | 3 | - |
| UNIST | | 16 | - | 6 | 2 |
| UNIOS | | 7 | - | 2 | - |
| UNIRI | | 10 | - | 2 | - |
| UNIPU | | 2 | | | |
| UNIZD | | 2 | | | |
| UNIDU | | 3 | | 1 | |

## Appendix E- Outgoing Mobilities and Assigned Funds by the AMEUP within the Erasmus Programme

All tables are based on the data delivered on demand by AMEUP. Funds are expressed in Euros.

SMS - Student mobility for studies abroad, SMP - Student mobility of placement, STA - Staff mobility for teaching mobility agreement, STT - Staff mobility for training

Outgoing mobility 2009-2010 within the Erasmus Programme

| | SMS | SMP | STA | STT | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UNIZG | 126 | 0 | 10 | 13 | 149 |
| UNIST | 33 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 40 |
| UNIOS | 30 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 37 |
| UNIRI | 35 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 42 |

Outgoing mobility 2010-2011 within the Erasmus Programme

| | SMS | SMP | STA | STT | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UNIZG | 251 | 50 | 29 | 23 | 353 |
| UNIST | 59 | 9 | 7 | 9 | 84 |
| UNIOS | 37 | 9 | 7 | 6 | 59 |
| UNIRI | 41 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 54 |
| UNIPU | 3 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 10 |
| UNIZD | 15 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 22 |
| UNIDU | 8 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 14 |

Outgoing mobility 2011-2012 within the Erasmus Programme

| | SMS | SMP | STA | STT | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UNIZG | 354 | 114 | 35 | 38 | 541 |
| UNIST | 114 | 30 | 8 | 13 | 165 |
| UNIOS | 51 | 14 | 6 | 20 | 91 |
| UNIRI | 62 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 78 |
| UNIPU | 6 | 0 | 6 | 2 | 14 |
| UNIZD | 23 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 36 |
| UNIDU | 16 | 0 | 7 | 5 | 28 |

Outgoing mobility 2012-2013 within the Erasmus Programme

| | SMS | SMP | STA | STT | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UNIZG | 478 | 154 | 47 | 47 | 726 |
| UNIST | 164 | 27 | 17 | 27 | 235 |
| UNIOS | 47 | 13 | 16 | 25 | 101 |
| UNIRI | 92 | 8 | 8 | 11 | 119 |
| UNIPU | 11 | 0 | 8 | 6 | 25 |
| UNIZD | 36 | 4 | 7 | 4 | 51 |
| UNIDU | 12 | 2 | 10 | 7 | 31 |

Received Financial Resources within the Erasmus Programme per Academic Year in Euros

| | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| UNIZG | 200 670 | 479 445 | 1 208 292 | 1 550 925 |
| UNIST | 44 072 | 105 050 | 313 715 | 476 045 |
| UNIOS | 55 254 | 88 160 | 200 090 | 284 926 |
| UNIRI | 50 472 | 74 565 | 154 848 | 252 495 |
| UNIPU | - | 10 125 | 20 057 | 41 110 |
| UNIZD | - | 37 940 | 63 547 | 106 070 |
| UNIDU | - | 21 905 | 42 327 | 75 194 |

# Appendix F - Development of the Quality Assurance Systems at the Universities – Documents and Bodies

| | UNIZG | UNIST | UNIOS | UNIRI | UNIPU | UNIZD | UNIDU |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 00-01 | Manual for Establishing the Quality Assurance System | | | Conducted student poll | | | |
| 01-02 | Committee for Quality Assurance | | | | | | |
| 02-03 | | | | Office for Quality Promotion | | | |
| 03-04 | | | | Statute – improvement of quality as an obligation of the constituent units | | | |
| 04-05 | | | | | | Office for Quality Promotion | Quality policy |
| | | | | | | Office for Quality Promotion of Work | |
| | | | | | | Committee for Monitoring Quality | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 05-06 | Committee for Quality Management | | Unique university student poll | Center for Improving and Assuring Quality, | | | |
| | Office for Quality Management | | Office for Improving and Assuring Quality | Committee for Quality | | | |
| | Student Poll | | Committe for Improving and Assuring Quality | Rulebook on Quality Assurance | | | |
| 06-07 | | | Rulebook on Structure and Functioning of the Quality Assurance System | Student poll – unique system of evaluation | | | |
| | | | Guide through the System of Assuring and Impriving Quality | | | | |
| 07-08 | | | | | Rulebook on the System of Quality Management | | |
| | | | | | Office for Quality | | |
| | | | | | Committee for Quality | | |

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| 08-09 | | Center for Quality Improvement | | Manual for Quality of Study | | | Rulebook on Audit |
| | | Rulebook on the Center and the Committees for Improving Quality | | | | | |
| | | Rulebook on the Procedure of Student Evaluation of Quality of Professors and Class | | Rulebook on the System of Improving Quality | | | Audit Committee |
| | | Beginning of conducting a unique student poll | | | | | |
| 09-10 | | | | | | Rulebook on the Quality Assurance System | Manual of Quality |
| | | | | | | Committee for Quality Improvement | |
| 10-11 | Rulebook on the Quality Assurance System | | | | Rulebook on the System of Quality | | |
| | | | | | Manual of Quality | | |
| | | | | | Quality policy | | |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11-12 | Audit Committee | Quality Assurance Policy | Center for Improving and Assuring Quality of Higher Education | Quality Policy | | Quality Policy | Manual of Quality |
| | Manual of Quality Assurance | Rulebook on Structure and Role of the Quality Assurance System | Rulebook on Structure and Functioning of the Quality Assurance System | Manual for Quality of Study | | Manual of Quality | Quality Policy |
| | | Manual of Quality Assurance | | | | | |
| 12-13 | | Rulebook on Quality Assurance System | Manual of Quality | Rulebook on the System of Assuring and Improving Quality | Rulebook on the System of Assuring and Improving Quality | Rulebook on the Quality Assurance System | Office for Quality |
| | | Department of Quality | | | | | Strategy of Quality Assuring |

Appendix G - System of Tuition Fees After Signing the Performance Based Agreements for 2012-2013, 2013-2014 and 2014-2015.

| | Bottom line | Upper line | Basis for the ECTS calculation (max. participation in HRK) | Cost of an ECTS credit in HRK | Below the bottom line (HRK) | State subvention for full-time students | Part-time students |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UNIZG | 30 | 55 | 7200<br>8400<br>9600 | 120<br>140<br>160 | Max. participation | 3650 | Cannot exceed the maximal participations |
| UNIST | 42 | 55* | 7000<br>8000<br>10 000 | 116,67<br>133,33<br>166,66** | Max. participation | 3650 | Maximal participation |
| UNIOS | 24 | 55 | 5500<br>7370<br>9240 | 152,77<br>204,72<br>256,66 | Max. participation | 3650 | Maximal participation |
| UNIRI | 30 | 55*** | 5500<br>7370<br>9240 | 91,67<br>122,83<br>154 | Max. participation | 3650 | Maximal amount of the state subvention |

| | Bottom Line | Upper Line | Basis for the ECTS calculation (max. participation in HRK) | Cost of an ECTS credit in HRK | Below the bottom line (HRK) | State subvention for full-time students | Part-time students |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UNIPU | 42 | 55 | Do not pay per an ECTS credit. All in between pay the full amount of the state subvention. | | 5500<br>7370<br>9240 | 3650 | 3300<br>6000<br>9000<br>20 000<br>26 000 |
| UNIZD | - | 55 | 5500<br>7370<br>9240 | 92<br>123<br>154 | Everyone below 55 ECTS credits pay per unacquired ECTS credits | 3650 | Maximal participation |
| UNIDU | 45 | 55 | State subvention for full-time students | 60,83 | Pay the product of a single credit value and the number of unacquired credits. | 3650 | Maximal amount of the state subvention |

*UNIST – Do not pay the participation if they acquire minimally 55 credits in the previous academic year or if they did not pass a single exam or the final paper, if it is anticipated by the study programme of the final year

**UNIST – Value of an ECTS credit is added to the basis determined for students that acquired 54 credits, which amounts to, depending on the field, 700, 800 or 1000 HRK

***UNIRI – Special criterion of excellence – For students who acquired minimally 50 credits in the previous academic year and achieved the average grade of 4.5 (and/or average weighted

grade over 80% at the undergraduate studies and 90% at the graduate studies), costs of the mentioned participation are covered by the constituent unit/holder of the study programme.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Nikola Baketa was born on 27th October 1987 in Vukovar, Croatia. He finished undergraduate education at the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Political Science in 2010. The same year, he started the Master program in Political Science at Central European University in Budapest (specialized in Comparative politics) and Master program at Faculty of Political Science Zagreb (specialized in Public policy). He graduated at both universities (Theses titles: "The European Union's Conditionality Mechanism and Democratic Consolidation in the Post-Communist EU Candidate Countries" and "Europeanization of Adult Education – the Case Study of Croatia"). In March 2012, Nikola joined the NORGLOBAL research project "European Integration in Higher Education and Research in the Western Balkans" as a PhD student at the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Political Science.

Nikola was a research associate at the research projects "Impact Evaluation of Lifelong Learning Programme on Participating Education Institutions" and "GOOD Initiative: Towards Civic Education in Schools". He was teaching a teaching assistant at the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Political Science at the subjects Introduction in Public Policy and Europeanization of Public Policies. He also was employed as a Higher Education Policies Assistant in the Institute for the Development of Education and currently works at the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb.

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