administrative measures intended to give the government direct control over international education, which it previously could not influence through traditional methods (i.e., by cutting public subsidies).

Continuous Attacks on Academic Freedom

This legislative amendment is the most recent policy initiative targeting academic freedom in the country. Previously, the Hungarian government has employed similar tactics in order to diminish the influence of public universities in the country. In 2014, another amendment to the national higher education law gave the prime minister the power to appoint chancellors with executive financial responsibilities at public universities. As a result, the power of rectors has been relegated solely to the academic sphere. This arrangement was reinforced by a 2015 amendment to the higher education law, which delegates strategic planning for medium- and long-term goals to university-level advisory bodies mainly comprised of representatives of the national government. The official rationale behind these amendments was to improve the efficiency of publicly funded universities. However, such policies have in fact reduced institutional autonomy and allowed the government to have direct control over university operations.

Academic Freedom in Illiberal States

These developments were unthinkable just a decade ago. Following the fall of the communist regime in 1989, Hungary has witnessed a relatively fast and successful transition toward democracy, being among the first Eastern Bloc countries to gain full membership to the European Union (EU). In 2014, ten years after the EU accession, Prime Minister Viktor Orban declared that in order to protect Hungary's national sovereignty, he planned to abandon liberal democracy in order to establish an "illiberal state" modeled after the realities of Russia and Turkey. According to The Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index, which measures indicators such as the quality of political participation and political culture, since 2011 Hungary has become an ever clearer "flawed democracy."

Severe assaults on academic freedom have taken place in Russia and Turkey. In Russia, the European University at St. Petersburg (EUSP) has had its educational license revoked after a complaint by politician Vitaly Milonov triggered 11 unannounced inspections from regulatory agencies that uncovered 120 licensing violations, only one of which has not been resolved. Incidentally, Vitaly Milonov is the architect of the ill-famed law banning "gay propaganda" and EUSP is home to the biggest gender studies center in the country. In Turkey, Scholars at Risk reports that almost 6,000 academic and administrative personnel have been dismissed from universities by authorities, based on suspicions that they were involved in the 2016 failed coup attempt.

Conclusion

Attacks on academic freedom in democratic countries are both a powerful indicator and a consequence of democratic decline. The protection of academic freedom represents an important societal tool for inclusiveness and guards against power abuses. Countries such as Hungary have witnessed firsthand the devastating effects of authoritarian regimes. Teaching freely and researching freely ensure that history is not forgotten, and that the checks and balances necessary for a working democracy are maintained. Academic freedom is important not only for the wellbeing of universities, but also for the wellbeing of the countries and regions in which they operate. ■

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Ukraine: Endemic Higher Education Corruption

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Recent articles in the *Wall Street Journal* and *The Times of London* raise the alarm: international students enrolled at US and UK universities cheat more frequently than their domestic counterparts. Why does this happen? Using Ukrainian higher education as an example of an endemically corrupt academic environment, we try to answer this question by exploring some determinants of student academic misconduct, and provide insights on groups of students who are more likely to engage in either monetary or nonmonetary corruption. Our findings might help American and European universities hosting international students to adjust their policies and procedures with regard to academic integrity.

Why Ukraine?

In Ukraine, as in most post-Soviet countries, corruption in higher education is not an exception, but rather a growing

trend. According to the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index, Ukraine ranks very low among the 15 post-Soviet states on the global survey. There are no public institutions free from corruption in Ukraine. Education, healthcare, and the police are the most corrupt sectors, according to surveys conducted by the European Research Association in 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2011, and by a survey conducted by the US Agency for International Development in 2015.

Cheating Students in Lviv

In our recent representative study conducted among 600 students at public universities in Lviv—one of the least corrupt cities in the country—we found all kinds of monetary and nonmonetary forms of corruption involving students. 47.8 percent of students have experience with bribing; 94.5 percent of students admit that they cheat during exams and tests; 92.8 percent write papers by copying and pasting without acknowledging their sources; 64.2 percent download papers from internet and submit them as their own; 40.4 percent purchase papers from ghostwriters; and 37.5 percent ask faculty for preferential treatment. They do it with different frequencies—"seldom," "sometimes," "often," or "systematically"—but they do it nonetheless. Why? The reasons vary. It might be the necessity of having a part-time job, which leaves no time for studying and/or attending classes (classroom attendance is obligatory at Ukrainian universities). It might be related to subjects deemed "unnecessary," like sports. Some students confirm that they are pursuing a university degree as a mere credential, without regard to how they obtain it. Good marks are also important for receiving a state scholarship: this might be another reason for bribing a faculty member.

Who Cheats More?

Some groups of students are more prone than others to using various cheating techniques. One of these groups is students living in dormitories. These students are probably the best informed about possible cheating tools, and faculty members are ready to ignore and/or accept such behaviour. These students have to spend more time solving everyday problems such as shopping, cooking, and cleaning, compared to students who live with their parents; hence, they have less time for studies. Moreover, in Ukrainian dormitories, not all students can afford the privacy to live alone and study. Improving the students' living conditions to the level of, for example, the dormitories of US universities, which typically offer food on site, or creating more space for studying at the universities, might be possible remedies. Cheating students are also typically from small towns and villages with insufficient standards in secondary school education, such as not enough, and often underpaid, teachers, or less developed infrastructure. Investing in improving schools in small towns and villages, and making secondary school teaching more attractive might be other possible tools to mitigate corruption. Recent PISA results suggest that students attending schools where teachers are motivated and supportive, have better morale and achieve better results in certain subjects, even after accounting for socioeconomic characteristics.

The second group that is more likely to use various cheating techniques are students who do not complete their homework. Some need to have a job in order to pay for their living expenses, because the support they receive from their family and/or from the state is not sufficient. If they were to receive additional financial support, this would probably reduce corruption. Often, students who do not invest personal effort into their studies by engaging in their homework and additional reading compensate for this by cheating their way through the system. Fostering a culture of academic engagement might also contribute to mitigating corruption.

In Ukraine, as in most post-Soviet countries, corruption in higher education is not an exception, but rather a growing trend.

The third group are students with a low academic performance before entering the university, as well as students who are underachievers during their university studies. Such students often consider university studies to be a path for getting a formal credential rather than an education—one of the logical consequences of the massification of higher education. Developing the system of vocational training and making it attractive—for instance on the model of the German system of vocational training, which combines school attendance and employment—might be one option to mitigate corruption.

We did not find statistically significant relationships between participation in NGOs (our measure of social activism), types of educational funding (state stipend or self-financing) or students' (family) wealth, and types of academic dishonesty. However, our enquiry on the effects of anticorruption interventions among students showed that those campaigns might have opposite outcomes than intended, promoting corruption and academic dishonesty by convincing young people that cheating is widespread, and/

or introducing them to new cheating techniques. Learning about the dissemination of corruption might augment its acceptance.

What Can Be Done?

While it is almost impossible to eliminate corruption in endemically corrupt environments, corruption can be mitigated. Anticorruption policies should, however, be smart enough not to make things worse. Anticorruption policies stipulating zero tolerance of corruption, targeting the needs of specific groups, and showing the negative results of academic dishonesty over a long-term perspective—such as the direct and indirect damage to human lives—are likely to have more success. ■

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The Vicious Circle of Quality in Ethiopian Higher Education

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Context

The Ethiopian higher education sector has been undergoing rapid expansion in the last 15 years. Over this period, the number of public universities has grown from just two to 35 (among which two are universities of science and technology), compared to three private ones, and the number of undergraduate students has surged from a little over thirty thousand to 729,028 (in the 2014–2015 academic year), putting the gross enrollment ratio at 10.2 percent. The government of Ethiopia is now building 11 new public universities during the second phase of the country's Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP II). This is a massive undertaking with many implications, in particular an urgent need for qualified teaching staff.

In order to have sufficient numbers of qualified teaching staff for the planned universities, the ministry of education invited students graduating from bachelor's programs to sit for a qualifying examination at the end of the 2014–2015 academic year. Those successfully passing the examination—which was tailored to each major—could be hired as university teachers at the rank of graduate assistants in their respective fields.

While this procedure is an improvement over the practice in previous years of hiring graduate assistants solely based on grades and English language proficiency, the results were less than ideal: a sweeping majority of the candidates failed the test. These results indicate the seriousness of the challenge Ethiopia faces in the coming period: to simultaneously expand access to higher education and improve the quality of the education delivered.

What Numbers Tell Us

A quick look at some of the data from this exercise yields some striking results and worrying observations. Close to 10,000 students graduating from 32 universities across the country took the centrally prepared examination, which was offered in 14 fields of study. Eligibility was based on expressed interest and minimum requirements of a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.75 for men and 2.5 for women. Ultimately, 716 candidates were selected and offered a job, among which 30 percent were women—conceivably in line with the objective of increasing the share of female academic staff to 25 percent by the end of the Fifth Education Sector Development Program (ESDP V), in 2020.

While the maximum possible score was 100, only one person scored more than 80 (81, to be exact), followed by 28 candidates who scored between 70 and 79. The overall average score was 57.8, with no significant gender difference (59.3 for men and 54.3 for women).

A score of 57.8 in one's major must be viewed at best as a mediocre result. Disturbingly, 127 of the selected candidates (or close to one-fifth) scored a failing result (less than 50 percent score means failure according to the education policy of the country). Here, there is a considerable gender gap: 12.9 percent for men as opposed to 29.7 percent for women. Of course, it is also important to note that this is a result from a small sample of the highest scorers in the respective fields, representing just about 7 percent of those who took the examination. One can imagine the results of the remaining 93 percent of those who sat for the examination, or even worse, for those who reach the cutoff point to qualify for the examination in the first place.

These are deeply distressing numbers. Not only is the average result of the new generation of university teachers unquestionably mediocre, but a sizable proportion actually failed the qualifying examination in their own major subject. This has grave implications for their skills as teachers and their standing as role models for their students.

The Quality Crisis

Low caliber university teachers are one major input in the vicious circle of feeble quality in Ethiopian higher educa-