

# THE STATISTICAL MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT OF ACADEMIC AUTONOMY OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND REGIONS

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## Aksonova I. V. The Statistical Monitoring and Assessment of Academic Autonomy of the Higher Education in European Countries and Regions

The article is aimed at assessing and analyzing the level of academic autonomy of the higher education systems in the countries (regions) of Europe and determining the peculiarities of academic autonomy of universities of these countries based on the results of monitoring and research by the European University Association (EUA). The factors determining the academic autonomy have been considered. Based on the data of monitoring the status of the academic autonomy of the higher education systems in the countries (regions) of Europe, a list of indicators, measures, and weights of each measure by the indicator of academic autonomy has been provided and a comparative analysis of the education systems of specified countries (regions) according to these indicators has been carried out. The educational systems of the countries (regions) with different level of academic autonomy have been allocated and the basic characteristic of each system in this sphere has been presented. Prospects for further research in this direction is clustering of educational systems of countries (regions), including Ukraine by the level of autonomy, defining the representing country by each cluster, allocating advantages and disadvantages for each system, increasing and inhibiting the formation of autonomy of universities, with a view to a sound management of the process of autonomization of Ukrainian universities.

**Keywords:** university autonomy, academic autonomy, the European Association of Universities, factors of academic autonomy, indicator, measure of autonomy.

**Fig.:** 1. **Tbl.:** 4. **Bibl.:** 15.

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**Аксьонова І. В. Статистичний моніторинг та оцінювання академічної автономії вищої освіти європейських країн та регіонів**  
 Мета статті полягає в оцінці й аналізі рівня академічної автономії систем вищої освіти країн (регіонів) Європи та визначенні особливостей академічної автономії ВНЗ цих країн на підставі результатів моніторингу та досліджень Європейської асоціації університетів (European University Association – EUA). Розглянуто фактори, що обумовлюють академічну автономію. На підставі даних моніторингу стану академічної автономії систем вищої освіти країн (регіонів) Європи виділено перелік індикаторів, показників та вагу кожного показника за індикатором академічної автономії та проведено порівняльний аналіз освітніх систем даних країн (регіонів) за даними показниками. Виділено освітні системи країн (регіонів), що мають різний рівень академічної автономії, й надано основну характеристику кожній системі в даній сфері. Перспективами подальших досліджень у даному напрямі є проведення кластеризації освітніх систем країн (регіонів), включаючи Україну, за рівнем автономії, визначення за кожним кластером країни-репрезентанта, виділення для неї переваг і недоліків, що підвищують та стримують формування автономності ВНЗ, з метою обґрунтованого управління процесом автономізації українських університетів.

**Ключові слова:** університетська автономія, академічна автономія, Європейська асоціація університетів, фактори академічної автономії, індикатор, показник автономії.

**Рис.:** 1. **Табл.:** 4. **Бібл.:** 15.

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**Аксенова И. В. Статистический мониторинг и оценка академической автономии высшего образования европейских стран и регионов**  
 Цель статьи заключается в оценке и анализе уровня академической автономии систем высшего образования стран (регионов) Европы и в определении особенностей академической автономии вузов этих стран на основе результатов мониторинга и исследований Европейской ассоциации университетов (European University Association – EUA). Рассмотрены факторы, обуславливающие академическую автономию. На основе данных мониторинга состояния академической автономии систем высшего образования стран (регионов) Европы выделен перечень индикаторов, показателей и вес каждого показателя по индикатору академической автономии и проведен сравнительный анализ образовательных систем данных стран (регионов) по данным показателям. Выделены образовательные системы стран (регионов), имеющих различный уровень академической автономии, и представлена основная характеристика каждой системы в данной сфере. Перспективами дальнейших исследований в данном направлении является проведение кластеризации образовательных систем стран (регионов), включая Украину, по уровню автономии, определение по каждому кластеру страны-репрезентанта, выделение для нее преимуществ и недостатков, повышающих и сдерживающих формирование автономности вузов, с целью обоснованного управления процессом автономизации украинских университетов.

**Ключевые слова:** университетская автономия, академическая автономия, Европейская ассоциация университетов, факторы академической автономии, индикатор, показатель автономии.

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In the modern world universities play an important role in the development of interstate cooperation in the field of education, science, culture, social and economic relations. National higher education systems are very sensitive to changes in the external environment. Thus, the development of technologies affected the institutional functioning of higher education institutions (HEIs) making them intro-

duce elements and principles of market relations into their management, which allowed HEIs to become more flexible and adapt to the needs of the surrounding world. Expectations from modern universities are constantly increasing: consumers of educational services prefer to receive quality education, employers expect graduates to possess competencies necessary in the current labor market, the state

considers universities as their social partners. Under such conditions, universities become the organizations in which principles of market management are combined with academic values. The analysis presented in the article testifies to the fact that governance of an HEI is increasingly becoming a matter of its own concern, and the degree of institutional autonomy of a higher education system depends on the degree of development of HEIs' rights.

In the modern practice of both the national and foreign higher education systems, there are discussions concerning the concepts and content of university autonomy and academic freedom. According to the provisions of the Lima Declaration [3], academic freedom is defined as the freedom of members of the academic community in the pursuit, development and transmission of knowledge through research, study, discussion, documentation, production, creation, teaching, lecturing, and writing.

At the same time, in comparison with the concept of academic freedom, the term "autonomy" of HEIs, which is understood to mean a complex characteristic that reflects an autonomous and independent activity of universities in terms of granted freedoms, is becoming widespread. That is, the content of the concept "academic autonomy" is broader than that of the category "academic freedom". So, it can be noted that autonomy of an HEI is considered more often as its external self-identification, while academic freedom – as the leading principle of the internal organization of its activities.

Problems and tendencies in the development of professional education, directions of reforming the system of higher education, prospects for the autonomization of universities, methods and approaches to monitoring indicators of HEI autonomy and assessing its degree are considered in works of many scientists, including A. F. Pavlenko [4], M. V. Martynenko [8], M. R. Terovanesov, A. M. Terovanesov [12], L. V. Lebedeva, A. S. Mytrofanova [5], A. V. Salo [10], I. V. Stankevych [11], I. V. Aksonova [1], V. S. Ambarchyan [2], Ya. V. Lisun [6], O. V. Lynovytska [7], V. M. Moklyak [9]. At the same time, there remain urgent the issues of studying and clarifying the essence, dimensions and degrees of autonomy of higher education systems in terms of organi-

zational, financial, staffing and scientific and educational activities; specification of indicators for assessment of the degree of autonomy by the four basic dimensions: organizational autonomy, financial autonomy, staffing autonomy, academic autonomy.

The aim of the article is to evaluate and analyze the degree of academic autonomy of higher education systems in countries and regions of Europe and reveal special features of autonomy of HEIs functioning on these territories based on the results of the monitoring and studies of the European University Association (EUA).

As the analysis of the existing studies shows, academic autonomy reflects the effectiveness of academic freedom and is determined by the factors presented in Fig. 1.

The monitoring and analysis of institutional autonomy of HEIs in European countries in general as well as academic autonomy in particular is carried out by the European Association of Universities (EUA) and involves 47 European countries (regions). The EUA promotes the system and integral development of universities and offers a number of tools for diagnosing the degree of autonomy of higher education systems.

The methodology developed by the EUA to assess the degree of autonomy of HEIs comprises four dimensions corresponding to the basic aspects of university autonomy: organizational; financial; staffing; academic one [13]. Each dimension of university autonomy contains a relevant system of indicators and restrictions, the values of which are determined by the expert method with consideration for weighting factors.

Let us examine in more detail the composition of a set of indicators of academic autonomy and analyze its state in accordance with the EUA methodology considering each individual indicator. For the analysis, 26 European countries were selected (29 higher education systems, since in some countries higher education systems are different in certain regions, in particular, Belgium – Flanders and Wallonia, Germany – Brandenburg, Hesse, North Rhine). *Tbl. 1* shows the list of academic autonomy indicators, a set of restrictions for each indicator, and the score assigned by the experts to each restriction characterizing the indicator [15].

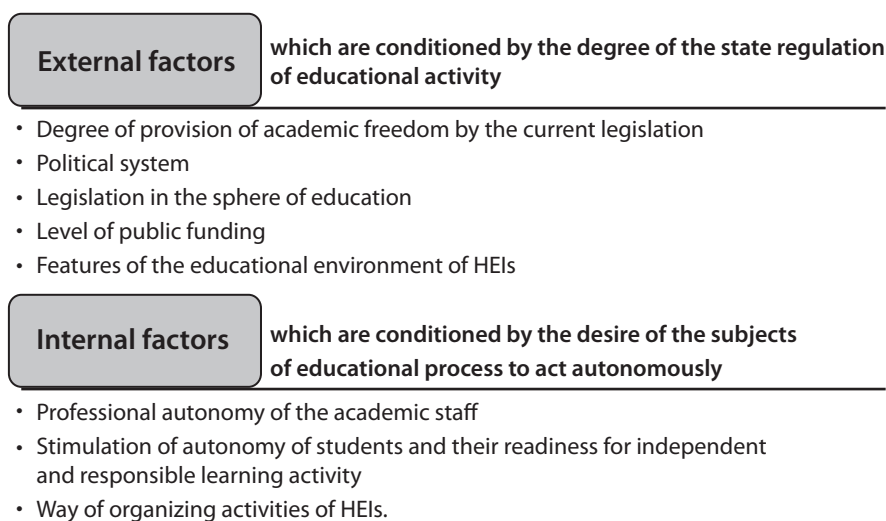


Fig. 1. Factors determining academic freedom

Table 1

## List of restrictions for indicators of academic autonomy

Restrictions foreach indicator	Non-weighted score
1	2
<b>1. Overall studentnumbers</b>	
HEIs decide independently on the number of study places	100
HEIs decide on the number of fee-paying students (studying on a contractual basis), while the number of state-funded study places is determined by an external authority (or HEIs negotiate it with an external authority)	60
An external authority decides on the number of study places	40
Free admission	0
<b>2. The admission procedure</b>	
<i>2.1. Admissions procedures at Bachelor level</i>	
Admission criteria are set by HEIs	100
Admission criteria are co-regulated by HEIs and an external authority	60
Admission criteria are entirely regulated by an external authority	0
<i>2.2. Admission procedures at Master level</i>	
Admission criteria are set by HEIs	100
Admission criteria are co-regulated by HEIs and an external authority	60
Admission criteria are entirely regulated by an external authority	0
<b>3. Introductionand termination of degree programs</b>	
<i>3.1. Introduction and termination of programsat Bachelor level</i>	
HEIs can open programs without prior accreditation	100
A minority of new programs must be submitted to prior accreditation	60
All new programs/courses must be submitted to prior accreditation to be funded	40
All new programs/courses must be submitted to prior accreditation	0
Other restrictions	80
<i>3.2. Introduction of programs at Master level</i>	
HEIs can open programs without prior accreditation	100
A minority of new programs must be submitted to prior accreditation	60
All new programs/courses must be submitted to prior accreditation to be funded	40
All new programs/courses must be submitted to prior accreditation	0
Other restrictions	80
<i>3.3. Introduction of programs at doctoral level</i>	
HEIs can open programs without prior accreditation	100
A minority of new programs must be submitted to prior accreditation	60
All new programs/courses must be submitted to prior accreditation to be funded(only some HEIs or academic units can open new degree programs)	40
All new programs/courses must be submitted to prior accreditation	0
Other restrictions	80
<i>3.4. Termination of degree programs</i>	
HEIs can terminate degree programs independently	100
The termination of degree programs requires negotiation between HEIs and an external authority	60
The termination of degree programs occurs on the initiative of an external authority	0
Other restrictions	40
<b>4. Language of instruction</b>	
<i>4.1. Language of instruction at Bachelor level</i>	
HEIs can only offer degree programs/courses in the national language	0
HEIs can choose the language of instruction for all programs	100

1	2
HEIs can choose the language of instruction for certain programs or the number of degree programs/courses taught in a foreign language is limited by an external authority	83
The number of degree programs/courses taught in a foreign language is limited by an external authority	50
HEIs can choose the language of instruction only if the program is also offered in the national language	83
HEIs can choose the language of instruction but will not receive public funding for foreign-language programs	67
<b>4.2. Language of instruction at Master level</b>	
HEIs can only offer degree programs/courses in the national language	0
HEIs can choose the language of instruction for all programs	100
HEIs can choose the language of instruction for certain programs or the number of degree programs/courses taught in a foreign language is limited by an external authority	83
The number of degree programs/courses taught in a foreign language is limited by an external authority	50
HEIs can choose the language of instruction only if the program is also offered in the national language	83
HEIs can choose the language of instruction but will not receive public funding for foreign-language programs	67
<b>5. Selection of quality assurance mechanisms</b>	
HEIs can select quality assurance mechanisms freely according to their needs	100
HEIs cannot select quality assurance mechanisms	0
<b>6. Selection of quality assurance providers</b>	
HEIs can choose the quality assurance agency freely according to their needs (including agencies from other countries)	100
HEIs can only select between national quality assurance agencies	80
HEIs cannot choose the quality assurance agency	0
<b>7. Capacity to design content of degree programs</b>	
HEIs can freely design the content of programs and courses	100
Authorities specify some content of programs or courses	60
Authorities specify all content of programs or courses	0
Other restrictions	40

Analyzing the composition of the set of academic autonomy indicators and the score for each restriction for the individual indicator (see Tbl. 1, [6; 14]), it is appropriate to single out the following degrees of academic autonomy (Tbl. 2).

If a restriction for any indicator of academic autonomy has a value of more than 60%, then it is considered an advantage of the HEI in the overall autonomy of the higher education system of a country (region), and if its value is less than 60%, then it presents a disadvantage. Thus, it is possible to identify the factors that affect autonomy of higher education systems in each country (region).

Based on the EUA information [15], there conducted a comparative analysis of countries (regions) of Europe in

terms of indicators/restrictions of academic autonomy, the results of which are presented in Tbl. 3.

Let's make a detailed analysis of the degree of development of each academic autonomy indicator for higher education systems of European countries [14] based on the data presented in Tbl. 3.

1. *Capacity to decide on the number of university students.*

In Europe there used the following models for deciding on the overall number of students (see Tbl. 1):

- ✦ independent decision of HEIs on the number of first-year students;

Table 2

Degrees of academic autonomy

Degree of academic autonomy	Score, %	Cluster
State control (low autonomy)	0–40	Low – L
Semi-autonomy (a medium low autonomy)	41–60	Medium low – ML
Semi-dependence (a medium high autonomy)	61–80	Medium high – MH
Independence (high autonomy)	81–100	High – H

Table 3

Comparative analysis of higher education systems in countries and regions of Europe in terms of indicators/restrictions of academic autonomy

Indicators	Higher education systems by countries																												
	Austria	Flanders (Belgium)	Wallonia (Belgium)	Croatia	Denmark	Estonia	Finland	France	Brandenburg (Germany)	Hesse (Germany)	North Rhine (Germany)	Hungary	Iceland	Ireland	Italy	Latvia	Lithuania	Luxembourg	The Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Portugal	Slovakia	Slovenia	Spain	Serbia	Sweden	Switzerland	United Kingdom
1. Overall student numbers	0	0	0	60	60	100	60	0	60	60	60	60	60	100	100	60	60	100	0	100	60	60	60	60	60	40	100	0	100
2.1. Admissions procedures at Bachelor level	0	0	0	60	60	100	100	0	60	60	60	100	100	100	100	60	60	100	100	60	100	100	100	100	60	60	60	0	100
2.2. Admission procedures at Master level	60	60	0	60	60	100	100	100	100	100	100	60	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	60	100	100	100	60	100	100	60	0	100
3.1. Introduction of programs at Bachelor level	80/100	0	0	40	80	80	80	40	80	80	0	0	80	100	0	80	0	100	40	100	100	0	0	0	40	0	80/100	100	100
3.2. Introduction of programs at Master level	80/100	0	0	40	80	80	80	40	80	80	0	0	80	100	0	80	0	100	40	100	100	0	0	0	40	0	80/100	100	100
3.3. Introduction of programs at Doctoral level	80/100	80/100	0	0	100	80	80	0	100	100	100	0	80	100	0	100	0	100	100	100	100	0	0	0	0	0	80/100	100	100
3.4. Termination of degree programs	60	100	100	100	100	100	60	100	60	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
4.1. Language of instruction at Bachelor level	100	83	83	67	100	100	100	0	100	100	100	100	83	100	100	67/83	83	100	100	100	100	100	100	83	100	67	100	100	100
4.2. Language of instruction at Master level	100	83	83	67	100	100	100	83	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	67/83	83	100	100	100	100	100	100	83	100	67	100	100	100
5. Selection of quality assurance mechanisms	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	100	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Selection of quality assurance providers	100	0	0	0	0	100	100	0	100	100	100	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	0
7. Capacity to design content of degree programs	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	60	60	60	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100



- ✦ the split model, when the state establishes the number of students to be admitted to state-funded places, and universities decide on the number of fee-paying students, or the cooperative model, in which the plan for admission of first-year students is determined on the basis of negotiations between the state and HEIs;
- ✦ the number of study places is only decided by state authorities;
- ✦ the free admission model, when the decision on the number of study places is not regulated at any level.

According to the data featured in Table 3, universities independently determine the number of first-year students in Estonia, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden and the UK. These countries represent a minority of countries where decisions on recruitment are freely made. The intermediate or cooperative model, which implies negotiations between HEIs and state authorities, is observed in higher education systems of most European countries (in 15 higher education systems). Some higher education systems apply the split model, according to which state authorities decide on the number of state-funded places, and HEIs determine the number of self-funded study places. This model is used in Croatia, Hungary, Latvia and Lithuania and allows universities of these countries to influence the overall number of students. The situation with the number of students that is determined exclusively by the state is observed only in the higher education system of Serbia. Finally, six higher education systems implement the model of free admission based solely on the completion of secondary education.

#### 2. Capacity to select students.

All higher education systems require candidates to have a secondary education qualification or pass examinations in certain disciplines. In most cases this is the main criteria for admission to HEIs to acquire higher education. Admission criteria are usually specified in the national legislation.

Models of admission can be divided into three groups:

- ✦ admission criteria are established by the university;
- ✦ admission criteria are developed jointly by the university and an external authority;
- ✦ admission is fully regulated by an external authority.

The conducted analysis (see Tbl. 3) demonstrates that in European higher education systems there basically coexist, both at Bachelor and Master levels, the opposite models: the criteria for admission to an HEI are established either by the university itself or jointly with an external authority. Only in Austria, Flanders, France, Hungary, Lithuania, Slovenia (at Bachelor level) and in Wallonia and Switzerland (at Bachelor and Master levels) admission criteria are fully regulated by an external authority.

The most common model of admission at Bachelor level is the one when the admission criteria are developed and regulated by the university and an external authority. At the same time, there observed a change in the admission

model at Master level, when the criteria are set by a HEI itself, which gives universities more freedom to recruit students.

#### 3. Capacity to open and terminate academic programs.

In general, the introduction of a new academic program requires a certain approval of the relevant ministry or another government agency. However, specific procedures for the introduction of new academic programs at Bachelor, Master and doctoral levels in European higher education systems are characterized by five main restrictions (see Tbl. 1). The analysis of the data presented in Table 3 shows that in 15 higher education systems out of 29 HEIs have a high degree of independence in introducing new programs, and in 14 of them – a low one. A higher autonomy is observed in the higher education systems in opening programs at doctoral level, but, in general, the rules for opening new master and doctoral programs do not significantly differ from the regulation of opening programs at Bachelor level.

There should be noted countries whose higher education systems have the lowest degree of autonomy in opening programs at all levels. These include Belgium, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Serbia, where the state determines the academic sphere or educational activity of universities.

In such countries as Croatia, France, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Spain, new academic programs must be submitted to prior accreditation to receive public funding. If in introducing a program the university uses private funding (for example, as in the Netherlands), a voluntary accreditation is required, since it is considered to be a sign of a high quality of the program.

As concerns the termination and closure of educational programs, in the analyzed higher education systems (see Tbl. 3) there singled out two mechanisms: independent decision of HEIs on the termination of educational programs, which is characteristic for 26 of 29 countries; termination of programs on agreement with an external authority, which is observed only in three countries (Austria, Finland and Germany (Brandenburg)).

#### 4. Capacity to choose the language of instruction.

The freedom in choosing the language of instruction is important in the context of institutional strategies for the internationalization of HEIs.

As shown by the analysis of Tbl. 3, most European universities can freely choose the language of instruction. The exception is Iceland, Lithuania and France, where HEIs can choose the language of instruction only for some programs. It should be noted that France is the only country where there is a restriction on the offer of educational programs in a foreign language at Bachelor level: universities can offer programs only in the national language. In Flanders (Belgium) and Latvia universities can teach programs in a foreign language, but their number is limited by an external authority. In Croatia and Serbia teaching can be conducted in any language, but HEIs do not receive public funding for teaching programs in a foreign language. In Wallonia (Belgium) and Slovenia HEIs can choose a foreign language for teaching academic programs only if the programs are also offered in the national language.

*5. Capacity to select quality assurance mechanisms.*

The analysis of the capacity of universities to select appropriate quality assurance mechanisms indicates that only in Germany universities can freely select quality assurance mechanisms in accordance with their needs. In 26 higher education systems HEIs cannot select quality assurance mechanisms. However, in some countries positive changes in this direction take place. Thus, new systems of mandatory institutional accreditation have been established in Iceland and Switzerland; Flanders (Belgium), Denmark, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, the Netherlands and Sweden are in the process of preparing for changes in this direction.

*6. Capacity to select quality assurance providers.*

As regards the selection of a particular quality assurance agency, the higher education systems of the analyzed countries fall into two categories. In Austria, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary and Switzerland universities can use quality agencies on their own choice. They can also select an agency from other countries. In higher education systems in other countries and regions, universities are not able to select a specific quality agency. However, in a number of them, HEIs may seek additional suppliers of external quality assessments, other than the mandatory quality assurance.

Though quality assurance mechanisms are the most important strategic tools, the processes associated with them can be cumbersome and bureaucratic. Therefore, universities should be flexible in choosing the quality regime of the training and educational process.

*7. Capacity to design content of educational programs.*

The analysis of Tbl. 3 demonstrated that in a significant majority of higher education systems (26 higher education systems), universities can freely decide on the academic content of educational programs, except for such regulated professions as medicine.

Only in three countries (Italy, Latvia and Lithuania) universities should adhere to the “standard of academic education” and “professional standard”, i.e., some content of educational programs (basic set of disciplines, duration of practices) is regulated by an external authority. It should be noted that universities of these countries perceive this fact as a significant obstacle to diversification, innovation and increase of their competitiveness.

The analysis of the seven indicators of academic autonomy makes it possible to group the higher education systems of European countries (regions) by the degree of their academic autonomy and conduct their rating and ranking. According to the degrees of academic autonomy presented in Tbl. 2, all the higher education systems of the analyzed countries (regions) are characterized as presented in Tbl. 4. The comparative analysis of the countries’ higher education systems is based on the data on the monitoring of academic autonomy of European universities, which was conducted by the European Association of Universities in 2011–2012 and 2016–2017 [13–15].

**Table 4**

**Comparative analysis of the degree of academic autonomy of the higher education systems of European countries (regions) in 2011 and 2017**

Higher education system	2011			2017		
	Rank of the country	Score, %	Cluster	Rank of the country	Score, %	Cluster
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Austria	8	72	MH	12	72	MH
Flanders (Belgium)	–	–	–	28	35	L
Wallonia (Belgium)	–	–	–	29	32	L
Croatia	–	–	–	21	50	ML
Denmark	14	56	ML	11	75	MH
Estonia	4	92	H	1	98	H
Finland	5	90	H	2	90	H
France	20	37	L	27	37	L
Brandenburg (Germany)	10	67	MH	8	87	H
Hesse (Germany)	9	69	MH	6	88	H
North Rhine (Germany)	9	69	MH	6	88	H
Hungary	18	47	ML	16	58	ML
Iceland	6	89	H	10	78	MH
Ireland	1	100	H	3	89	H
Italy	13	57	ML	18	56	ML
Latvia	15	55	ML	23	45	ML
Lithuania	19	42	ML	26	42	ML
Luxembourg	7	74	MH	3	89	H

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The Netherlands	17	48	ML	22	48	ML
Norway	2	97	H	9	83	H
Poland	12	63	MH	14	68	MH
Portugal	16	54	ML	20	54	ML
Slovakia	14	56	ML	18	56	ML
Slovenia	–	–	–	25	44	ML
Spain	13	57	ML	17	57	ML
Serbia	–	–	–	23	46	ML
Sweden	11	66	MH	15	66	MH
Switzerland	8	72	MH	12	72	MH
United Kingdom	3	94	H	3	89	H

As shown by the analysis of Table 4, in 2011 in terms of the indicators of academic autonomy among the higher education systems of European countries (regions), there can be singled out six countries: Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Norway and the United Kingdom, which formed the top cluster. Universities of these countries had a high degree of autonomy. The leader in this cluster was Ireland (100% autonomy), whose universities could freely decide on all aspects of academic autonomy. In 2011 the cluster with a high degree of academic autonomy included 24% of Europe's higher education systems.

The group of higher education systems with the degree of academic autonomy below 40% in 2011 comprised 4% and included only France with its high degree of state control in higher education.

Over the past 5 years, European universities have made a significant step to enhance their independence. So, the degree of academic autonomy of 5 higher education systems in such countries as Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg has increased.

In 2017 a high degree of academic autonomy of HEIs is observed in Estonia (98%); Finland (90%); Ireland, Luxembourg and Britain (89%); Germany (87–88%); Norway (83%).

But, despite the tendency to increasing the degree of autonomy of higher education systems, in 2017 the largest weight (38%) have higher education systems in the countries where the degree academic autonomy is from 41% to 60%, i. e., belonging to the medium low cluster. It should be noted that the countries that have just begun implementing principles of autonomy in governance of their higher education systems (Slovenia, Serbia and Croatia) also have a degree of academic autonomy from 44 to 50%.

The countries in the medium low cluster are characterized by using mixed models, through which universities and external authorities interact.

## CONCLUSIONS

In general, higher education systems in European countries (regions) continue the process of increasing the degree of their academic autonomy. The analysis once again confirms the advisability of increasing the degree of univer-

sity autonomy that contributes to more flexible adaptation of HEIs to the needs of the modern labor market and preferences of other consumers of educational services, which increases the economic efficiency of university corporations.

University autonomy is recognized as an important prerequisite for the success of higher education systems in fulfilling their mission under conditions of building an innovation society. Prospects for further research in the field of assessing academic autonomy are clusterization of higher education systems of countries (regions), including Ukraine, in terms of autonomy; identification of a representative country for each cluster, determination for its higher education system of advantages and disadvantages that contribute to or restrain the formation of autonomy of universities for the purpose of sound management of the process of autonomization of Ukrainian universities. ■

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