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**UKRAINIAN HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE TIME OF ARMED
CONFLICT**
Perspectives of crisis management

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Abstract

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Higher education of Ukraine did not stay immune to political and economic turbulence the country has been undergoing since 2014. As a result of the political turmoil, Ukrainian higher education suffered a massive decline in student population and a halt in the education process for some institutions. In the process of military actions in eastern Ukraine and annexation of Crimea, 18 state universities, two private universities and 11 research institutions were evacuated. The educational infrastructure of Donetsk and Luhansk regions suffered major infrastructural, financial and organizational losses. Limited understanding of the impacts the armed conflict had on the higher education institutions in Ukraine guided this research. Therefore, the aim of the study is to identify how the Ukrainian higher education institutions have been impacted by and have been coping with the crisis. The study focuses attempts to elicit the impacts that disrupt the functions of the Ukrainian crisis-affected universities and crisis management practices that have been used by these institutions to cope with the crisis.

This study used a qualitative research design. The researcher selected five conflict-affected higher education institutions as a research site using a purposive sampling technique. The participants of the research were sampled using the expert and snowball sampling techniques. The data was collected with the help of the qualitative semi-structured interviews and the secondary data analysis. The research findings revealed the armed conflict negatively impacted the universities' human resources, educational and research infrastructure, organizational operations and institutional legitimacy. The institutional crisis management capacity has been undermined and delayed as a result of the lack of a national and university evacuation plans, inconsistent and weak communication efforts and untrained self-appointed crisis personnel. Additionally, the efforts of the crisis teams were subverted by the self-proclaimed Donetsk National Republic and Luhansk National Republic governing and security institutions.

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List of abbreviations

DNR – Donetsk National Republic
DonDNTU – Donetsk National Technical University
DonNACEA – Donbass National Academy of Civil Engineering and Agriculture
DonNU – Vasul Stus’ Donetsk National University
DU - Displaced Universities
HE - Higher Education
HEI- Higher Education Institution
IDP- Internally Displaced Person
LNAU – Luhansk National Agrarian University
LNR - Luhansk National Republic
MESU - Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine

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“One of the most difficult things is to make people understand that higher education [in crisis] is not a luxury but one of the most strategic investment” (PEER, n.d.).

Chapter I - Introduction

For many decades’ universities across the world have been leading or facilitating political movements, and we cannot deny that a significant amount of the higher education systems have been or currently are operating in the time of crisis. Violent conflicts have played a profound role in exacerbating the crisis in higher education. In the last decade, the spreading national and international conflicts in the Middle East, Africa, Eastern Europe, Latin America, the Balkans and Southeast Asia have caused many challenges for higher education systems, namely infrastructural destruction, human loss, vast population displacement, psychological damage (UNESCO, 2010; INEE, 2011; Milton & Barakat, 2015; Barakat & Milton, 2016; Milton, 2017). According to the Institute for Economics and Peace’s (IEP’s), which studied 162 countries, only 11 countries were conflict-free in 2014 (IEP, 2014). Whether due to conflict and war or other causes, such as natural disasters, terrorist attacks, academic institutions face similar security concerns and losses. Ukraine’s higher education system during an armed conflict in the East has undergone many transformations. A total of 18 public higher education institutions have been displaced from the occupied territories of Ukraine. By now almost all of them resumed their operation, struggling to survive on scarce resources. Little is known regarding the impact of a violent armed conflict on these institutions and the mechanisms they have been utilizing to cope with the constant disruptive changes. Therefore, the study aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the impact of the armed conflict on the displaced higher education institutions and identify crisis management mechanisms that allowed the higher education institutions to survive and cope with the ongoing crisis caused by the conflict.

1.1. Background information on Ukraine

To understand the subject of Ukrainian conflict-affected institutions, one also needs to know the conditions in which the higher education has been operating, and the events that led to the collapse of the state.

Ukraine is one of the former Soviet republics, which gained its independence in 1991. Since then Ukraine has undergone a transition period from a planned to market economy. The population of Ukraine is 45.5 million, the number has been decreasing since 1991 due to the declining fertility rates and a large migration of Ukrainians to the West during the 90s (UNESCO-CEPES, 2006). The migration has been spurred by the uneven economic growth and failure to introduce structural economic reforms and combat corruption. The current per capita gross domestic product (GDP) of Ukraine is the fifth lowest among the former Soviet republics (OECD, 2017).

However, Ukraine's expenditures on education are one of the highest among the developed countries, around 6% of the GDP. It is 1% higher than the average spending of the OECD countries (CEDOS, 2015). The GDP expenditure on education equals to that of or above the developed countries, such as the US, Canada, Switzerland, Finland, Sweden. While the spending on education is indeed high, it should be noted that Ukraine funds a ramified and dispersed education sector, the supply of which does not correspond with the demand. Of the total education spending, 36,8% is allocated to higher education. Due to the economic struggles of Ukraine and attempts to optimize the state spending, the higher education sector has undergone cuts of 5% since 2011 (CEDOS, 2016).

Ukraine has undergone few historical periods that marked the development in the higher education sector. The government adopted a set of laws that shaped a legal ground of the higher education system. Constitution of Ukraine that was enacted in 1996 had the greatest steering power which helped to control the decision-making process of the state. The Ukrainian Constitution guarantees equal access to education and rights to obtain free higher education (Verkhovna Rada, 1996). In the same year, Ukraine adopted 'Law of Ukraine on Education' and in 2002 adopted 'Law on Higher Education.' These laws built a legal ground for the higher education in Ukraine and defined "the main directions of Ukrainian state policy for higher education" (Stepko, 2006, p.1).

An essential step in Ukraine's higher education advancement occurred after the historical Revolution of Dignity in 2014. The revolution created necessary conditions for transformation. The people of Ukraine demanded a total reformation of the public sector, moving away from the Soviet past. Ukraine has a strong civic engagement, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have a considerable strong lobbying power which enabled implementation of a new 'Law on Higher Education' enacted in 2014 (MESU, 2014). The law challenges the state power and numerous old academic traditions, such as giving more autonomy to universities, curbing the immunity of leadership of higher education institutions, establishing internal and external quality assurance procedures (British Council, 2015). It also has many prospects, positively influencing university autonomy, accountability, transparency, quality assurance and enabling quick reaction to the international cooperation (Knutson & Kushnarenko, 2015).

Indeed, the ramifications of the Revolution of Dignity in 2014 brought some advancement for the stagnant post-Soviet higher education system. Nonetheless, a short-lived 'silver lining' of the revolution followed the political and economic turbulence, caused by the annexation of Crimea and the armed conflict in the East. Suffice to say, higher education of Ukraine did not stay immune during this turbulent time. Ukrainian higher education institutions suffered a massive decline in student population and a halt in the education process for some institutions.

1.2. Statement of research problem

The events in the East developed in a rapid fashion, after the pro-Russian protesters seized the regional administrative buildings in Donetsk, the Ukrainian government began military counter operations. These events gave a birth to self-proclaimed separatist groups of 'Donetsk National Republic' (DNR) and 'Luhansk National Republic' (LNR) in May 2014 (Szpak, 2017). The nature of the conflict in eastern Ukraine has been a subject for discussions due to a lack of available facts regarding the number of casualties and parties involved in the conflict. In this study, the events in the East are characterized as armed conflict. This perspective is supported by works of Kovalov (2014), Szpak (2017), and OSCE (n.d.), who name number of criteria that classify the events in eastern Ukraine as armed conflict. These primarily are: prolonged nature of hostilities, organization of separatist groups, armament of the separatist groups and number of victims involved.

As a direct result of the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine and annexation of Crimea, 18 public higher education institutions, 2 private universities and 11 research institutes have been evacuated from the rebel-held territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. The displaced universities suffered a period of cutbacks, as economic austerity and defense spending became government's' priority. Around 40 thousand of students and more than 3.5 thousand of research and teaching staff were forced to leave the occupied territories (CISID, n.d.). Currently, Ukraine has 1.5 million internally displaced people (IDPs), who moved from the occupied territories (Kvit, 2015). In total, the educational infrastructure of Donetsk and Luhansk regions suffered losses of \$4.9 billion (Euromaidan Press, 2017).

The universities suffered heavy material, infrastructural and institutional losses, being deprived of any adequate service delivery capacity and competent managerial and technical personnel support. The physical destruction of the university campuses has been devastating. Shelling raged over the universities' premises during the first months of occupation of the eastern Ukrainian territories by the self-proclaimed rebel groups in 2014. The Luhansk National University has been under the series of attacks ten times before the university administration vacated the campus. Shortly after terrorists occupied the territory of Donetsk, the students and professors from Donetsk National University gathered in protest in the capital city of Kyiv and demanded the Ministry of Education and Science (MESU) to relocate the university functioning in the conflict-affected area.

The actions to relocate the universities from the occupied territories were not executed immediately, due to a non-existent national evacuation plan, which could have address such problem more swiftly. After many demands and requests to the MESU to take decisive action, the government evacuated the universities. The first eastern university was transferred to the central Ukrainian city of Vinnytsia, and so followed other evacuations months after (Euromaidan Press, 2017).

The process of evacuation, as well as the lobbying to ease the legislative requirements for the conflict-affected universities, were orchestrated by a number of stakeholders (i.e., university rectors, managers, Ministry officials, foreign donors). The government, as well as the universities found themselves in the absence of information and approaches that ensure their preparedness to crisis events, such as an armed conflict. While many of the crisis consequences were difficult if not impossible to plan for or predict (i.e., total displacement), some efforts have been better initiated to avoid certain impacts (i.e., forfeiting university database with study plans and curricula).

The exact fate of the abandoned campuses is unknown, but many academics who remain in touch with their relatives on the occupied territories state that almost each of their home universities has ‘an eponymous twin’ on the territory controlled by the so-called ‘LNR’ (Luhansk National Republic) and ‘DNR’ (Donetsk National Republic). The illegal twin universities use the property, stolen resources, and award diplomas, despite not being recognized by neither Ukrainian nor Russian authorities (Donetsk Law Institute of MFA, 2016).

Currently, all of the displaced universities have resumed their education process in various locations, where they found a ‘temporary home,’ albeit struggling to survive on the scarce resources and shattered reputation. The conflict in eastern Ukraine certainly played a crucial role in the destabilization of these institutions. However, the lack of an existing evacuation plan played an essential role in forfeiting not only the premises and assets of these universities, but also losing a share of university academic staff and students. In most of the displaced universities, the enrolment rate has drastically dropped, where universities were able to retain only one-fourth of their student population and academic staff.

There are many issues the displaced institutions needed to solve, some of the most pressing ones are: rebuilding universities’ organizational structure and management, finding the educational and scientific equipment, information and communication technology (ICT), office furniture, accommodation for students and staff. In addition, these institutions need to amend the legal system of Ukraine to create more responsive regulations for higher education institutions operating in the time of conflict. Lastly, the conflict-affected institutions needed to provide sufficient counselling for the displaced students and staff, who were deprived of their basic constitutional rights. The operation of the displaced universities in the conditions of the armed conflict becomes almost impossible, while the universities currently do not own the essential equipment and are struggling to equip all the classrooms with basic infrastructure. The losses were unusually heavy for the universities of applied universities, who lost their laboratory facilities for natural and engineering sciences. Likewise, there is a lack of resources for the research activities and limited access to library resources.

1.3. Literature gap

Literature has been mostly silent about the role of higher education in crisis-affected and fragile contexts. Little is known about the functioning of such systems especially amidst an armed conflict. Besides, the scientific publication on higher education and crisis management could be argued as being dominated by the publications produced mostly in the English-speaking parts of the developed world, such as the US, UK, Australia and Europe. These higher education systems, on relative terms, have been operating under democratic and mostly stable political systems where armed conflicts and war have been rare occurrences. The higher education research produced in the politically stable countries positively contributes to the overall discourse on crisis management in higher education. Nonetheless, it adds to the so-called 'geographic gap' in research, where there is an overrepresentation of particular cases from the Anglo-Saxon context, and underrepresentation of less-dominant environments (CERG, 2008). The oversaturation of the western literature on crisis management creates a one-dimensional image of the crises faced by the higher education institutions and the solutions that are proposed to resolve a crisis.

Such evidence is not representative of the realities in a significant proportion of the world, and we need to address different types of crises and approaches to managing it. For example, the higher education systems of a number of countries in the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, Eastern Europe and other parts of the developing world are facing challenges of political crises and full-fledged wars (Barakat & Milton, 2015; Milton & Barakat, 2016; Milton, 2018), and the consequences suffered by the higher education systems in those countries vary significantly from those encountered in the moderately stable contexts. Against this background, it becomes relevant to investigate higher education systems affected by violent conflicts to offer an alternative view to crisis management, taking Ukraine as a case study.

Given the frequent occurrences of the global conflicts and the adversity of the consequences crises entail for higher education, a vast body of research on this problem would be expected. Conversely, such research remains perversely scarce and provides little if no significance in studying the issue of crisis management from the perspective of higher education. For example, similar accounts of displaced universities in crisis environments exist, such as the displaced Belarusian university that was shut down due to its opposition to dictatorship or the Jamiya project, which assists Syrian displaced academics and students in receiving education through online learning platforms (Mikhailov, 2009; BBC News, 2013; Jamiya Project, n.d.). Mostly such cases either go unrecorded or exist in foreign languages making it challenging for researchers to narrow the academic and empirical gaps, and provide a useful comparative analysis of higher education systems in crisis around the world. Also, there is a lack of focus on the management of the crisis in higher education.

Literature that deals with higher education in crisis is still in its infancy stage. For many years, the researchers have ignored the significance of studying crisis management and contingency planning of academic institutions (Beggan, 2011). A significant proportion of literature about the topic is non-empirical, serving mainly two purposes: informing about higher education systems in crisis and recommending action to address the issue with more priority. The informing literature mainly: 1) raises awareness about specific emergency response programs (Barakat and Milton, 2015; Hommel et al., 2015); 2) reviews trends concerning research on higher education and crisis topic (Tebbe, 2009; Thaler-Carter, 2009); 3) introduces emerging issues regarding, for example, collaboration of HEIs and industry, as well as, e-learning during crisis events (Anderson, 2006; Kavacova and Vackova, 2014; Thayaparan et al., 2014).

As mentioned before, the issue of higher education in crisis-affected contexts is not new by itself. The primary research gap lies in the lack of its instrumentality. The available literature mainly exists in the form of memoirs, chronicles, journals and book chapters which are descriptive accounts of history, and which fail to present any critical empirical evidence on crisis management and recovery of higher education systems in conflict-affected areas (Rudy, 1996; Storz, 2012; Irish, 2015; Mikhailov, 2009; Steinacher & Barmettler, 2013; Milton & Barakat, 2016). The existing literature lacks scientific rigor, being void of any theoretical or analytical approach or adequate scientific methodology (Krohn, 1993; Dounaev, 2007; Kryvoi, 2011). The literature on the topic also provides a generic view of the challenges faced by the universities in crisis, with no specific emphasis given to the aspects of crisis prevention, sector resilience and crisis management (Mikhailov, 2009; Steinacher & Barmettler, 2013; Dounaev, 2007; Kryvoi, 2011; Krohn, 1993). Hence, a study such as this, which delves into these aspects of a crisis-affected Ukrainian higher education institutions, becomes essential.

The emerging body of research usually emphasizes the crisis contexts in which basic education is operating and even suggests policy interventions to prevent the expansion of primary education in conflict-affected societies (Zdziarski et al., 2007; Burrell, 2009; UNESCO, 2010a; UNESCO, 2010b; Sigsgaard, 2011; Justino, 2014). The ramifications of the crisis on higher education are widely unacknowledged, let alone the importance of HEIs in the crisis management (Garcia, 2015; Rasheed and Munoz, 2016; Rasheed and Munoz, 2016; Milton, 2018). Such irresponsible analysis of the impact of the crisis on the higher education systems hinders the recovery of the sector and fails to contribute to its sustainable development.

Some scholars have considered the reasons why higher education sector is often neglected both in peace and conflict research and crisis management field. Conflict and Education Research Group (2008) points out at the lack of sufficient and credible state-generated data regarding the impact of conflict and the conditions of the education systems during a conflict. A widespread view is that higher education

during a severe national conflict is viewed as a luxury, and is not a priority for the national and supranational governments, international humanitarian organizations (Tebbe, 2009; Barakat and Milton, 2015; Milton, 2016; Milton, 2018). In the time of crisis, the priorities involve most pressing issues, namely human safety, shelter, food, health, transportation and basic education.

The reasons for the limited study of crisis management in higher education, as pointed out by Garcia (2015) is because “major incidents are often studied as stand-alone, distinctive events with lessons pulled for specific purposes” (p. 2). The evidence is available in an anecdotal form of the individual cases, the methodologies of which are replicated multiple times in the study of similar crises (Sutherland, 2013). In addition, the crisis management framework and its use is practically non-existent in the field of higher education research, as it is mainly studied in the prism of business management (Brown, 1993; Crandall & Menefee, 1993; Spillan & W. Crandall, 2001; Howlett & Ramesh, 2003; Bridgman & Davis, 2004; Drennan & McConnell, 2007; Drennan et al., 2015). There are few influential studies, regarding crisis management in higher education, mostly deriving from the US context. The works by Zdziarski (2001) Zdziarski et al. (2007), Burrell (2009), Muffet-Willett (2010), Burrell and Heiselt (2012), Sutherland (2013), Garcia (2015), Cowan (2014), Houston (2017), have shaped the field of crisis management offering a new higher education perspective.

These studies have presented mostly the crisis management perspectives of individual universities during crisis of natural cause or of violent incidents. The literature regarding management of crisis by higher education institutions during violent armed conflict is practically unavailable. In her master’s thesis titled ‘Responsiveness of Higher Education Institutions in eastern Ukraine’, Gladushyna (2017) aimed at systematizing the crisis management practices utilized by leadership of two Ukrainian displaced universities. The research contributed significantly in filling in the gap regarding the crisis management process of the Ukrainian displaced universities, which I attempt to investigate. While her work adopts the crisis management perspective as well, the main focus is on the decision-making during crisis by the top leadership, and not on the impact of the conflict and the crisis management mechanisms per se.

1.4. Research aims, research questions and significance

The study aims explores the Ukrainian higher education institutions in the time of armed conflict, specifically, it looks at five displaced public higher education institutions which have been relocated from the occupied territories of Ukraine. Currently, almost all of them resumed their operation, struggling to survive on scarce resources. Little is known how the displaced universities are coping with the crisis and the constant disruptive changes brought by the conflict. Therefore, this research seeks to enhance the current body of literature and expand understanding of how

academic institutions can mitigate the destructive consequences of conflict, and crisis in general.

The study will be guided by the central research question:

- ❖ *How the Ukrainian displaced higher education institutions have been impacted by and are coping with the crisis?*

Under this guiding inquiry, the following sub-questions will be addressed:

- What have been the impacts of the armed conflict on the Ukrainian displaced higher education institutions?
- Which crisis management mechanisms are being used by the Ukrainian higher education institutions to cope with the crisis brought by an armed conflict?

The study adds additional perspective to the multi-disciplinary approach of crisis management. By applying a narrow lens of higher education on the study of crisis management, the research contributes to expanding of the literature on higher education in crisis and assists administrators in the academic field by systematizing a crisis management approach of five conflict-affected higher education institutions. This study can provide universities and policymakers with useful information for effective crisis planning and management in higher education. The study intends to contribute to reducing the literature and empirical gap, and further add to the development of the field of study by using the example of Ukrainian displaced universities, how institutions affected by crisis manage to adapt and stay resilient to disaster.

The study applies a crisis management framework in the higher education field, which has been mainly used in the context of the business management field in the past. The study deems it appropriate to apply a crisis management framework from the business field, due to the fact that universities as any other organization, are systems, which interact with and are affected by their external environment. Thus, higher education institutions require similar mechanisms that help them to cope with crisis.

The case of Ukraine makes for a unique study because there is hardly any nation that underwent a massive displacement of the higher education institutions. The study could have implications for the efforts of university managers and governments on formulating policies and strategies (both proactive and reactive), which could assist universities in better adjusting to disruptive continuous changes and future crises. Lastly, this study can be useful in reminding the practitioners, researchers, university administrators, policymakers about the unpredictability of crisis and the need to plan and prepare for management of any crisis event.

1.5. Structure of the thesis

The study contains six chapters. The first chapter introduces the context of the study, research problem, identifies gaps in the literature, research aims, significance, and guiding questions posed by the researcher. The second chapter discusses the key concepts in crisis and crisis management literature. It reviews important studies in the field of crisis management, which contribute to the analytical framework discussed in the next chapter. It also describes the models of crisis management applied in corporate and public sectors. The third chapter presents crisis and crisis management in higher education.

It analyses analytical tools and practice in crisis management in higher education. The studies discussed in this chapter address the analytical framework used to analyze the conflict-affected higher education institutions. It also provides a rationale for compiling an analytical framework based on insights from several theoretical and empirical studies. This section provides useful discussion about the impact of conflict in diverse geographical contexts, as well as reflects on the historical place of higher education during an armed conflict, war or other types of crisis. The fourth chapter identifies the methodological strategy and tools used to conduct the research. Detailed information on data collection and analysis is provided. The section also highlights the methodological limitations and ethical considerations. The fifth chapter presents the data analysis and discusses key findings of the empirical analysis. It starts by describing the profiles of the five case universities and the timeline of their crisis processes. The proceeding sub-sections answer the research questions, namely the impact of crisis on higher education institutions and the crisis management approaches used to cope with the crisis. Finally, chapter six provides a summary of findings, makes concluding remarks and highlights implications for practice and suggestions for future studies. The limitations of the study are discussed last.

“Effective planning is the best defensive strategy for mitigating the devastation and confusion caused by any disaster” (Beggan, 2011).

Chapter II - Conceptual foundations

This chapter introduces a synthesis of definitions and theories in the subject area of crisis management found in the corporate sector. Afterward, the analyses of available empirical and non-empirical literature regarding crisis management it completed. While it may be difficult to make sense of everything crisis entails, this section aims to have a better understanding of some of the analytical tools that are based on the causes, patterns, and consequences of the crisis. Some theoretical lenses will offer insights concerning crisis management and the barriers surrounding it. Theoretical perspectives will offer prescriptions for tackling the crisis discussed in this research. Furthermore, this section will provide a brief overview regarding the existing knowledge, trying to critically examine what themes have been studied, how it has been studied, and what contribution can be made to the thesis paper, an attempt to reduce the academic, empirical and theoretical gaps.

2.1. Conceptualization of crisis

The emerging subject area of crisis management is burgeoning, yet it is often challenging to appreciate it due to confusion concerning the concepts and meanings surrounding it. A vast amount of literature on crisis management fails to follow any general or publically agreed on definitions. Many authors perceive different definitions of crisis based on their professional and disciplinary backgrounds. Indeed, due to its complexity and ambiguity, the issue of crisis management has not received deserved attention.

The term ‘crisis’ is difficult for understanding as complexity and obscurity often shadow it. Generally, any crisis can be characterized as “unwanted, unexpected, unprecedented, and almost unmanageable events that cause widespread disbelief and uncertainty” (Boin, 2004, p. 167). The term appeared as a conceptual framework in the 1980s in the context of organizational management, and as a response to global natural disasters (Spillan, 2003; Asimakopoulou, 2007). Some of the earlier definitions identified crisis through a narrow business management perspective, as events or activities which, if escalated, can interfere with the normal operation of the business and can have detrimental consequences for its existence (Fink, 1986; Williams and Treadaway, 1992).

Kouzmin and Yarman (2004) point out that while crisis events feature similar characteristics, such as severe threat, destructive nature, and life-threatening environment, each crisis may differ in its level of threat. Kourzmin and Yarman (2004) and Christensen et al. (2016) pose an argument that one should always first

understand that crisis has a high degree of uncertainty and uniqueness, making it difficult to classify. Authors Drennan, McConnell and Stark (2015) agree with this argument, providing more dimensions to reconcile objective and subjectivity standpoints of the crisis definition. According to the authors, crisis can be understood by examining the following characteristics (Drennan et al., 2015):

- the speed of arrival;
- the degree of predictability;
- the extent of preparedness;
- the degree of intentionality to cause a crisis;
- the degree of complexity;
- the degree of politicization, and;
- the degree of persistence after the acute stage.

Rosenthal, Charles and 't Hart (1989) defined crisis in broader terms that can be applied beyond the business management perspective. In their view crisis is an event in which there is a perceived threat to organizations core values and functions, and which requires an immediate response. The primary advantage of this definition is that it can be used to interpret various crises and types of disruption, depending on their circumstances. Drennan et al. (2015) argue that perceived circumstances of crisis can be both objective and subjective, and the perception often depends on the person evaluating the circumstances. However, the authors view threats which are attributed to the crisis as more objective. Such could be threats to life, infrastructure, policy, economy, political reputation, and finances. Based on a long line of arguments, the authors propose a comprehensive definition of crisis that reconciles the past and contemporary perspectives. The following definition will be used as a backdrop for this research:

Crisis – a set of circumstances in which individuals, institutions or societies face threats beyond the norms of routine day-to-day functioning, but the significance and impact of these circumstances will vary according to individual perceptions (Drennan et al., 2015, p. 2).

The justification for using this definition relies on the fact that it recognizes both the complexity of the term as a phenomenon and myriad of perceptions of the circumstances that cause a crisis. Moreover, despite a plethora of perspectives and definitions of crisis, it seems academically appropriate to understand crisis based on the interpretation of a specific context and the consequences.

2.2. Classification of crisis

A deeper understanding of crisis as a phenomenon can be achieved by exploring some of its boundaries and classifications. Spillan (2000) classifies crisis into five

categories – organizational, internal, external, natural and technological threats (see Table 1).

Categories	Definitions	Crisis events
1. Organizational	These types of events have the potential to disrupt an organization's day-to-day operations.	Serious industrial accidents, product malfunctions, loss of key records due to fire, system breakdowns, or terrorist attacks
2. Internal threats	These crises often originate from operational crises and can result in negative public perceptions.	These consist of corporate espionage, management corruption, embezzlement, and theft. Some examples are employee, and product recalls, and employee violence in the work place.
3. External threats	These events refer to wrongful acts committed by an individuals or organization	Government investigation resulting in is an example. Miscommunication can create other problems. Consumer lawsuits, terrorist attacks, poor publicity about events such as boycotts, product sabotage, and negative media coverage can affect a company's profitability.
4. Natural disasters	These are caused by an act of God.	They include floods, tornadoes, and earthquakes.
5. Technology threats	These are events that have potential impact on the company's technology system and operations.	Computer systems breakdowns, invasion by hacker, virus or computer systems invasion by intruder.

Table 1. Classifications of definitions for the concept of crisis (Spillan, 2000)

The classification since then has been modified by Mitroff (2004) and includes - economic, human resource, informational, reputational, crisis of physical and natural causes and terrorism-related crisis. Hough and Spillan (2005) crisis classification framework later expanded Mitroff's by adding a dimension of the operational crisis. The context of higher education systems in crisis can be placed into the organizational or operational category as it deals with the events that interrupt universities' normal operations. Pearson and Clair (1998) list an array of organizational/operational crisis:

- Extortion
- Hostile takeover
- Product tampering
- Vehicular fatality
- Copyright infringement
- Environment spill
- Computer tampering
- Executive kidnapping
- Product/service boycott
- Work-related homicide
- Malicious rumors
- Natural disaster that destroys organizational information base
- Terrorist attack
- Plant explosion
- Sexual harassment
- Personnel assaults

The next classification should be addressed as a continuation of the previous, and together they create a roadmap for understanding tendencies in framing crisis types. Drennan et al. (2015) classify crisis as:

- *sudden* – sudden arrival, any epicenter is possible, e.g. terrorism, massacre;
- *fast-burning* – sudden arrival and low persistence after the acute stage, various epicenters can be affected, individual, institutional, societal, industrial, e.g. water contamination;
- *creeping* – gradual arrival, high predictability and low preparedness, various epicenters may be involved, e.g. climate change, ageing population;
- *long-shadow* – gradual arrival, high persistence after the acute stage, any epicenter may be affected, often societal, e.g. political demonstrations, riots, war;
- *agenda-setting* – high politicization, and high persistence after the acute stage, mostly individual, policy, institutional, societal and industrial epicenters are affected: mass shootings, budget shortcuts and employee layoffs;
- *mismanaged* – low preparedness and high politicization, any epicenter may be affected: poor management during crisis of an organization;
- *manufactured* – high intent to cause crisis, epicenter is likely to be policy or institutional, e.g. man-inflated or created threatening situation;
- *policy fiascos/disasters* – high predictability and high politicization, the epicenter mostly policy, but individual or institutional can be affected too, e.g. policy failure;
- *technological* – high complexity, epicenter is technological and can spread to policy, institutional and societal or cross-societal, e.g. critical IT failure, hacked system, damaging virus;
- *transboundary* - high complexity, epicenter can be cross-societal and also affect other epicenters, policy, institutional, societal and technological, in particular, e.g. pandemics, global financial meltdown;
- *mega* – high complexity and politicization, all epicenters affected, e.g. famine, genocide;
- *natural disasters* – usually of sudden arrival, some degree of predictability and preparedness, geophysical epicenter that spreads to others, e.g. earthquake, tsunami;
- *accidents* – little or no intention to cause failure, different degree of complexity, little or no predictability and preparedness, epicenters often involve technology, but can affect other epicenters, e.g. Chernobyl disaster;
- *emergencies* – sudden arrival, high predictability and preparedness, often affects individual and institutional epicenters, e.g. gas leakage, fire.

The typology offered by Pearson and Clair is useful as it offers a high level of scalability and measurement, and it can aid in the process of crisis identification and response. At the same time, it is viewed from the perspective of a somewhat stable system (i.e., the USA), where the crises are seen as stand-alone events like terrorist

attacks, corruption, natural disaster, kidnapping or bombings. While such events are devastating, they are also sudden and fast-burning and usually are resolved within a short period. Many systems around the world have been functioning under long-shadow crisis (i.e., armed conflicts, riots and full-fledged wars), which tend to arrive gradually and persist for an extended period after an acute stage. Therefore, a different crisis management approach is required to long-shadow crisis

Scholars emphasize that there is no one way of classifying a crisis because it can border across many categories (Spillan, 2001, Spillan, 2006; Coombs, 2012; Drennan et al., 2015). The mentioned typologies of crisis present only few views that offer some understanding into what threats any crisis might entail. This research with regard to the Ukrainian crisis-affected higher education institutions will focus on the long-shadow crisis, namely armed conflict in eastern Ukraine. Therefore, it would be useful to look into the approaches that exist with regard to prolonged types of crisis, and the impacts such crisis causes.

2.3. Impacts of crisis

The nature of consequences of the crisis depends on the nature of a threat itself and a response to it. The mechanics of crisis is often erratic and spontaneous, and the epicenter of crisis can include almost anyone, individuals, organizations, economies, societies. However, there is usually someone or something responsible for generating a crisis, and someone having to endure the consequences (Smith and Toft, 1998). The consequences of crisis as regarded by Boin (2004) are often “dysfunctional, undesirable, if not evil” (p. 173). Unlike the ambiguity of the concept of crisis, the consequences of the crisis are evidence-based and empirical. Boin and McConnell (2007) suggest that people have a strong desire to deal with the consequences of crisis due to a hard-wired need for safety, stability, and comfort. Thus, the administrative actions from the management perspective are often designed around fulfilling the basic human needs.

In Coombs’ (2007) understanding, a crisis can pose damage to organizations, stakeholders, industry and overall environment in three major ways: public safety threats, financial loss, and reputational loss. The consequences of the crisis for public safety are industrial accidents and natural disasters that may lead to injuries or death. Financial loss is another common consequence of crisis for organizations and individuals, as the crisis can tarnish infrastructure or, for example, halt the production of goods or services. Lastly, Coombs (2007) states that organizations’ reputation is often shaken by the crisis, and damaged reputation may also lead to a more financial loss. Therefore, these three consequences of crises are deeply interrelated.

While the previous research regarding the impacts of crisis has mostly implications for the private sector, Drennan, McConnell & Stark (2015) provide a coherent

conceptualization of the adverse impacts of crisis for public organizations. Some elements of the analytical framework will be adapted for this study, when analyzing the impacts of the armed conflict on the displaced higher education institutions in Ukraine.

Thus, the impacts of crisis constitute, but are not limited to, the following (Drennan et al., 2015):

- human costs – deaths, injuries;
- critical infrastructure costs – loss of buildings, loss of intellectual property access, library resources, classrooms, laboratories, office equipment;
- policy costs – failed policies;
- economic costs – job layoffs, revenue decline;
- political-symbolic costs – damaged organizational/governmental legitimacy; and
- personal costs – damaged reputation, physiological and psychological traumas.

While crisis brings destruction, suffering, and losses, some researchers also argue that it may potentially open space for opportunities. For example, organizational management researchers as Korac-Kakabadse, Kouzmin, and Kakabadse (2002) and Boin and Lagadec (2000) acknowledge that when one organization faces a financial crisis, it may serve as an opening for another organization to introduce its product on the market. As well as, when the crisis is manageable and treatable, organizations that endured crisis can come out stronger from experience by learning from their mistakes and planning strategically for the future.

On balance, researchers of crisis management in public sector see the crisis as an opportunity to open discussions about the broader safety problems, also introduce organizational change, improve planning and prevention efforts. Crisis can also transform policy frameworks, and review the institutional leadership to strive for effective and resilient leaders, managers, organizations, governments and societies (Drennan et al., 2015).

While the definitions and impacts of crisis may still be somewhat ambiguous, the study of crisis management processes is more tangible and empirical and filled with multiple theoretical and analytical frameworks. However, the actual tasks of implementation of crisis management approaches may pose some challenges. The next section will use the above-noted knowledge of the definitions, classifications, impacts of crisis to establish a shared understanding of the many possibilities and tactics that exist in coping with any types of crisis.

2.4. Crisis management perspectives

The database of recorded crisis events enables researchers to establish tools and tactics needed for tackling the insecurities of today's world. However, due to an unpredictable and sudden nature of crisis, it is difficult to avoid or eliminate the impacts of crisis entirely. Practitioners and researchers have studied the management of the crisis for multiple decades. And researchers in various fields were able to dissect the crisis scenarios into different phases and sets of operations to construct comprehensive crisis management plans.

Although crisis management activity is a more common phenomenon in a private sector, the research suggests that it is ignored for a variety of reasons (expenses, disbelief, unwillingness to plan) (Brown, 1993; Spillan, 2000; Spillan and Hough, 2003; Boudreaux, 2005). Spillan and Hough (2003) examined perceived importance of crisis planning in a survey of 162 small businesses in the United States, identifying that the occurrence of crisis event mainly initiates a concern about crisis planning. Also, crisis concerns are mostly generated from the previous crisis experiences, and not from the presence of crisis managers.

The concept of crisis management entails prediction, and elimination of destructive impacts of crisis that might pose threats to organization or individual's life. Pearson and Clair (1998) suggest that the effective crisis management entails reducing these threats before the onset of crisis by involving cooperation between key stakeholders that share a common understanding of the notion of crisis, impacts of crisis, and management approaches and roles and responsibilities that need to be taken. Spillan and Hough (2003), Whitman and Mattord (2003), Smits and Ezzat (2003) also argue that for effective crisis management, an organization needs to be able to identify the crisis type and the degree of intervention needed to avoid the costs.

In contrast, in Boin's (2004) view an effective management plan is such, where managers prepare their organizations for the crisis through preventive measures, and by developing personnel resilience mechanisms. Resilience is "the capacity to cope with the unanticipated dangers after they have become manifest, and learning to bounce back" (Boin, 2004). Resilience approach should be embedded in the organizational culture and cultivated from the start. Boin (2004) criticizes the fact that too much emphasis is given to prevention of 'routine crises' - those that occur frequently and organization know how to cope with them. However, the hidden manifestations of crisis are often unpredictable, for example the speed of arrival and their magnitude. Thus, organization need to focus on cultivating resilience, which precisely concerns with developing an internal capacity to deal with the unheard and unimagined types of crisis.

As the world is getting more technologically sophisticated and environmentally challenging, the crisis threats are progressing. While it is hard to think of and plan for the unthinkable, the viability of the systems depends on the versatile planning and response to the crisis. Therefore, crisis managers, need to learn to balance the

planning and prevention efforts with the development of organizational and individual resilience, which is often challenging.

The field of crisis management has been concerned with the development of many models to address various types of crisis. These models sometimes contain sub-phases or additional phases. For example, Fink (1986) proposed a four-stage model of a crisis life-cycle (see Figure 1 below): the prodromal crisis stage, the acute crisis stage, the chronic crisis stage and the resolution stage. The knowledge of crisis stages is important when crisis managers are considering a response, as each stage of crisis requires a different set of responses. In the first prodromal stage, the role of organizational managers and the governments is to proactively seek and identify any signs or symptoms of crisis. The acute stage is an evident sign or trigger which causes damage, and the consequences of this stage will depend on the effectiveness of the first stage. The chronic crisis stage refers to the lasting effects of a crisis that require immediate intervention. This stage involves plans and strategies to resolve the crisis. The final resolution stage of the Fink's (1986) model is where steps are taken to end the crisis.

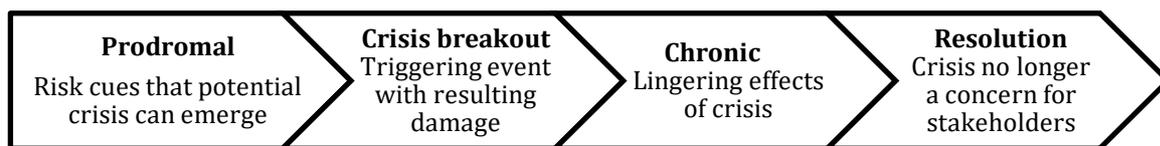


Figure 1. Fink's crisis life cycle (Source: Fink, 1986)

The model has been widely used and modified in many studies as the bases of the crisis management life-cycle. However, it has also received criticism for ignoring the cyclical or reoccurring nature of the crisis, whereby crisis is an event that organizations need to continuously learn from and plan for future crisis again (Boudreaux, 2005).

To Fink's four-stage model has be complemented by Mitroff (1994), who introduced a five-stage crisis management model: signal detection, probing, and prevention, damage containment, recovery, and learning (see Figure 2 below). The first stage of signal detection is much like the Fink's (1986) prodromal stage, where an assessment is made to elicit any signs of possible crisis. Probing and prevention is a second proactive stage in the Mitroff's model, where organizations analyze the information about past crisis events and their prevention methods. Unlike the first stage, the second stage of the model is not addressed in the Fink's model. The stages of damage containment and recovery are similar to Fink's (1986) acute, chronic, and recovery stages, where the triggers of crisis are identified and an attempt to contain the damage is made, and end the crisis. The Mitroff's (1994) learning stage supplements the Fink's model by incorporating the recurrent feature of crisis and urges organizations to draw lessons from the crisis.



Figure 2. Mitroff's five-stages of crisis management (Source: Mitroff, 1986)

González-Herrero and Pratt (1995; 1996) support the Mitroff's view of continuity of crisis by suggesting four phases of crisis: birth, growth, maturity, and decline. The model argues that crisis does not end at a decline, its effects can be lasting, leading to the birth of another crisis over the course of time. However, if the crisis management is enabled in crisis situations, organizations can change the longevity of an organization in the event of a disaster. Moreover, if the crisis management tools are deployed effectively, crisis life cycle may alter to the extent of being avoided entirely.

Coombs (1999) points out that the models introduced by and Fink (1986) and Mitroff (1994) are one of the most influential approaches to studying crisis management. Due to their minor differentiation, a three-stage model was introduced to synchronize the models of the crisis management cycle. Hence, the primary system of crisis management is classified into three stages: pre-crisis, crisis, post-crisis. The three-stage model is not attributed to any theorist.

The first stage of the model encompasses preventive and planning features of crisis management. The crisis stage involves crisis recognition, communication and reputation management. The post-crisis takes places when the crisis has been resolved and the channels of communication with the stakeholders are being renewed, during this stage an organization also evaluates the crisis and the lessons that can be drawn from it. This stage is crucial as post-crisis learning can provide clues and improve crisis management of other organizations too (Fink, 1986; Mitroff and Pauchnant, 1991; Coombs, 1996).

On balance, Hough and Spillan (2005) criticize that three-stage model of crisis management, emphasizing that it assumes that each crisis stage will include the processes of crisis analysis, crisis planning, and preparation, as well as evaluation of crisis after it occurred. The authors, therefore, propose a model that illustrates two possible scenarios when tackling crisis: reactive and proactive (see Figure 3 below). In the first scenario, the pre-planning step is avoided, and the decisions about planning are made on the spot. While in the proactive model some of the potential crisis consequences have been anticipated due to a pre-crisis stage involving vulnerability analysis. In the proactive model, the crisis is expected. Therefore, various responses are ready to be enacted for the crisis aversion. The author emphasizes that the last post-crisis management stage of evaluation of crisis plan and review of the risks need to be performed with attention and thoroughness so that

that organization can respond to another crisis with fewer costs (Hough and Spillan, 2005).

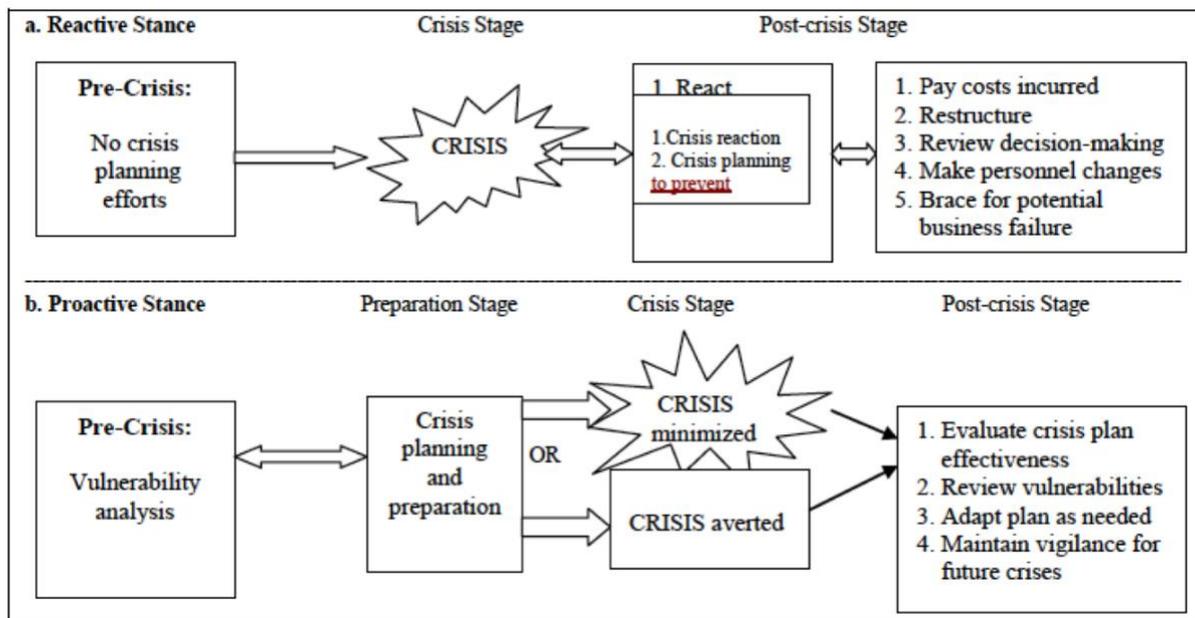


Figure 3. Crisis management process (Hough and Spillan, 2005)

As well as Spillan and Hough, Jaques (2007) stresses the importance of the crisis prevention and crisis preparedness in the overall process of crisis management. Besides, the author states that the crisis and its management are a continuum of interrelated events, and “the elements [of crisis management] should be seen as ‘clusters’ of related and integrated disciplines, not as ‘steps’ to be undertaken sequentially” (Jaques, 2007).

The life-cycle model should be viewed as a general framework which enables understanding of a complex crisis management approach. While the life-cycle model offers proper guidelines and a general framework for behavior before and during the crisis, it mainly addresses crisis managers and overlooks the chance of management and leadership failure, or insufficient resources of most organizations for crisis prevention training and emergency simulations. Crandall, Parnell, and Spillan (2013) attempt to address some of these problems, namely by assessing the political, organizational, communication and business aspects of an organization during crisis management.

According to Crandall et al. (2013), political problems may arise due to ideological differences, perceptions, and attitudes of various groups in the organization as to what a significant crisis is, what resources should be used available for its prevention. To address this problem, managers need to engage in negotiating, persuading and influencing employees regarding the importance of crisis preparedness and response. Organizational problems can be manifest through organizational culture. Organizations that do not introduce a culture of crisis prevention and management

through effective communication, face resistance and lack of acceptance of the crisis management efforts when the crisis is underway. Failing to appropriately address planning and communication strategies, discuss allocation of resources, staff, logistical support may lead to an escalation of the crisis. Crisis communication strategy should, therefore, be one of the strategic investments of organizations before and during the crisis. Organizational problems occur when organizations cease operating in the time of crisis. The authors suggest that organizations realize efforts to satisfy its clients (if possible) and stay 'alive' during the crisis to ensure viability in the future. The authors emphasize that the stages of preventing and preparing for a crisis, therefore, should be treated with priority to avoid escalation of crisis during response and recovery stages. Finally, Crandall et al. (2013) recognize that any response to crisis requires a lot of resources and coordinated efforts to develop necessary programs and competencies within an organization. However, ultimately each organization requires a crisis management procedure to prepare for potential crisis.

In conclusion, the above-noted crisis conceptualization and crisis management approaches mentioned make for an important analytical foundation that can be used to understand the context of conflict-affected higher education institutions. While the discussion of the impacts of crisis and crisis management tools stems mainly from the business management perspective, some important conclusions can be drawn for the study of public organizations, in particular higher education institutions in crisis.

Chapter III - Crisis and crisis management in higher education: Towards an analytical framework

The following chapter discusses the literature about the impact of crisis on higher education, with particular examples of impacts of armed conflicts on higher education institutions. The chapter presents literature thematically. First, the impacts of various types of crisis on the higher education institutions and their functions. Second, the chapter analyzes the studies about the crisis management approaches in higher education and the role of governments in responding to crisis. Third, the chapter presents the context of the Ukrainian crisis and discusses the role of key stakeholders in responding to the impacts of conflict on the Ukrainian displaced higher education institutions. Lastly, the analytical framework is compiled based on the empirical, analytical and theoretical considerations discussed in this and in the previous chapter.

Publications of mainly three types have been identified based on a thorough analysis of literature: historically-based, recommendation-based and empirically-based. The literature of historical or retrospective nature exists in the form of memoirs, chronicles, and book chapters, whereby its role is to describe the impact of war on higher education. The purpose of recommendation-based literature is mainly to inform about the importance of studying the issue of crisis management in the context of higher education, and recommend governments and higher education institutions to utilize crisis management approaches. The empirical literature on the topic is scarce and scientifically weak, lacking proper application of theoretical and analytical approaches or adequate scientific methodology.

3.1. Impacts of crisis on higher education

The higher education sector is without a doubt one the most severely affected areas during an armed conflict. The higher education's openness and primary function to interact with the society makes easily target to threats and attacks. The next sections discuss examples in which the higher education systems, academic populations and specific academic establishments were affected by war, conflict, violent attacks, political pressure, intellectual persecution, and more.

3.1.1. Historical overview

History of the last century demonstrates severe impacts of war on higher education institutions. Knowledge has been under attack when used in opposition to prevailing ideologies or as a tool to advance political and technological agendas. When Germany began spreading its political indoctrination, liberal intellectuals and academics feared for their lives. The period of Hitler's rule was characterized by the state suppression of liberal thinking of intellectuals, and most prominently,

persecution of Jewish academics. Over the next few years, there were around 12 thousand intellectuals prohibited from academic life and participation in social and cultural events (Krohn, 1993). The country suffered the most significant 'brain drain' in its history, forcing many scholars to seek refuge in Great Britain, France, Canada and the United States.

The book by Storz (2012) presents a perspective on the impact of war on higher education in Canada during the 1940s, stressing that the universities were "attuned to the vagaries and vicissitudes of off-campus turmoil" (p. 243). In the book, the author dwells on the topic of refugee professors during the anti-Semitic period and the humanitarian response that Canada provided during those times. The University of Toronto offered permanent positions to dozens of Jewish professors. The Canadian Society for the Protection of Science and Learning was established in that period to assist the persecuted Jewish academicians (Storz, 2012). However, the problem of displaced scholars was challenging to address entirely, due to the insecurities of the Canadian society, where the local intellectuals feared that refugee professors might intrude in the employment opportunities of the Canadians.

Varied perspectives in academia were shared among the US universities professors too. An event, however, that entered into history as an example of true academic solidarity and support of knowledge was the 'University in Exile' (The New School, n.d.). The director of the New School for Social Research in New York opened this institution as a way to avoid a massive 'brain waste' and to protest against the Nazi barbarism and anti-Semitism. Around 184 refugee professors were brought to the US through this initiative. The University in Exile started as a graduate faculty offering doctoral programs in philosophy and social sciences at the New School (The New School, n.d.; Steinacher & Barmettler, 2013).

In anticipation of grim consequences of the war for higher education, many nations took measures to mitigate the impacts of crisis. The former British Empire paid considerable attention to crisis planning. In the book 'University at War, 1914-1925', Irish (2015) mentions that the Committee for Imperial Defense developed a contingency plan in 1936 to mobilize the scientists and academics during the war. It was also commanded by the British government to create a central register of scientists, and the university leadership was to design a plan for mobilization of students in the case of war.

Similar activities occurred in the United States and France, where scientists and the governments realized that "defense research should be peacetime, not wartime, endeavor" (Irish, 2015, p. 11). For example, the US established the National Defense Committee in 1940 and France conducted communication between universities, researchers and the military which was administered by the National Centre for Applied Scientific Research. However, the wars not only dismantled universities and scattering academic communities around Europe and beyond, but they also did

much worse. The Wars changed the integrity of scholarly work, whereby academic knowledge was inappropriately used to destroy human lives. Brodhead (1992) in his book titled ‘Total War and Twentieth-Century Higher Learning’ states that universities in Germany, France, Great Britain and the US were involved in war-related research, which was used to invent weapons of mass destruction.

In his book ‘Colleges and Universities in World War II,’ Cardozier (1993) indicates that the universities in the US were able to survive and suffer fewer consequences during the war due to their elasticity and partnership with the government. For example, universities were creating training programs for the Army, Navy and Air Forces (Cardozie, 1993; Ponte, 2016).

The World War II impacted the financial conditions of universities severely, as well as, the academic side of education, changing its aims and academic culture. The universities mainly suffered losses in students’ enrolment, which resulted in heavy budget cuts and staff depletion (Cardozie, 1993). At the time, many universities were unable to finance maintenance of facilities, the toll was made on the reduction of courses and extracurricular activities. During both Wars, there was a threat to academic freedom, mainly resulting in harassment incidents, racial hostility, and criticism of curricula. Universities also participated in propaganda and protests and political manifestations when the wars were waged (Rudy, 1996).

3.1.2. Exploring the contemporary situation

Existing research on higher education and crisis mainly exists within the discourse of fragility and education, education in emergencies and conflict (CERG, 2008; Tebbe, 2009, Beggan, 2011; INEE, 2010; INEE, 2011; Justino, 2011; Eaker and Viars, 2014, Milton, 2017). While the literature on the crisis and higher education is predominantly scarce consisting of individual case studies, few influential reviews and bibliographies papers are available (Davies, 2008; Guskey, 2013; Garcia, 2015). Conflict and Education Research Group (CERG, 2008) conducted a desk literature review to map out the tendencies and the state-of-art research regarding the impact of fragile contexts on higher education and crisis. Other significant research primarily addresses the following areas:

- Humanitarian crisis and response for higher education systems functioning in the conditions of crisis (Spink, 2005; Lall, 2007);
- “Two faces” of higher education: conflicts can cause inequalities or fuel the conflict; experience of conflict can contribute to peacemaking and national development (Rasheed and Munoz, 2016, Barakat and Milton, 2016, Milton, 2017; Garrard and Lipsey, 2007);
- The destructive impact of crises and conflict on higher education provision (access to quality education (Miller-Gradvaux, 2009; Justino, 2010; Beggan, 2011; Milton, 2018);

- Importance of state in educational provision during the crisis (USAID, 2005; EFA-FTI, 2008).

The literature reviews play a significant role in establishing the context of the research on education and conflict, emergency, instability, and crisis, leading to a conclusion that much has been done to enrich and develop with the field of education and crisis. Conversely, there is no such review regarding the topic of higher education and crisis management specifically.

Crisis-affected environments differ by their nature and can be manifest in a range of impacts. The societies affected by armed conflicts leave the most painful and destructive footprint on the higher education systems. Several studies demonstrate physical and emotional damages to academic populations caused by armed conflicts (Miller-Grandvaux, 2009, Justino, 2010, UNESCO, 2010; Beggan, 2011; INEE, 2011; Brueck et al., 2013; Milton, 2018). Also, the consequences can be more tangible, such as destruction of institutional infrastructure, and indirect, such as displacement of population and 'brain drain' (Milton and Brakat, 2016). Regardless of location, many higher education systems share similarities with regard to impacts of conflict.

Conflict as one of the embodiments of crisis can affect higher education in many ways, destruction of physical infrastructure, loss of lives, weak institutional capacity, damaged reputation. The study by UNESCO Institute for Statistics discusses the implications of conflicts on schools and universities, such as the destruction of educational infrastructure, restriction of financial resources, the targeting of students and teachers, the aggravation of educational inequalities. The author also mentions devastating effects the conflicts have on the student's future access to the job market, salaries and the health risks in their adulthood (UNESCO, 2010).

The study of Justino (2011) provides a well-elaborated hierarchy of the conflict effects on the supply of primary and higher education. The author argues that, (1) violent types of crisis frequently result in "the destruction of infrastructure and resources to maintain functioning education systems"; (2) cause displacements of populations, communities, and families; (3) have distributional effects on education systems, having to do with inequalities that arise from certain population movement restrictions (Justino, 2011). The findings state that the destruction and restriction of education, as one of the consequences of conflict, have detrimental implications for the education of young people, particularly concerning the career prospects and economic returns. Therefore, if education systems in conflict-affected areas are safeguarded and maintained, education can be the catalyst for recovery, stability, and reliance on the society.

The working paper of the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) highlights the need for more discourse and debate around conflicts' impact on higher education and higher education's role in conflict (INEE, 2011). The paper emphasizes that during conflict education as a whole is not the primary concern of

the governments, therefore, all levels of education may suffer from limited investment in education due to the funneling of economic resources into military operations or diverting of funds “to serve the personal interest of those in power” (INEE, 2011).

Milton and Barakat (2016) point out that conflicts are also inherently different regarding various contextual factors, i.e., economic development, political regime, level of destruction and violence. The study also provides categorization that is based on works of Collier et al. (2003) and other works of Milton and Barakat (2015) that may be useful in learning more about direct costs of civil wars and their debilitating impact on higher education. They stress that higher education during violent conflict faces four main challenges: physical destruction, population displacement, war-related conditions and low resilience of the sector.

Destruction of physical infrastructure is a pronounced feature of armed conflict. For example, during the post-invasion period in Iraq, 84% of higher education institutions were shattered, and the campuses in Afghanistan, Sierra Leone, and Libya were turned into military bases (Milton and Barakat, 2016). Displacement of academics, recruitment of students by armies, staff and students’ casualties are societal costs of conflict in higher education. In Afghanistan over 20 thousand of experts and scholars lost their lives during more than a decade of conflict (Milton and Barakat, 2016).

A Syrian case of massive population displacement is well-known to the world. As a result of the heavily armed conflict, there are over 200 thousand Syrian students who have been deprived of a right to study (Enab Baladi, 2016; Syria Deeply, 2017). There are projects designed to respond to the world’s education emergencies. The Institute of International Education (IIE) and the Catalyst Foundation for Universal Education designed the Platform for Education in Emergencies Response (PEER), which enables displaced and refugee students (mainly Syrian) to find ways to resume their education (PEER, n.d.). Another initiative worth mentioning is the Jamiya Project, which assists Syrian displaced academics and students in receiving education through blended online learning and providing in-person learning. The project aims to “create a replicable blueprint for future crises and for reconnecting displaced higher education networks, students, and academics in finding a solution to the gap in provision” (Jamiya Project, n.d.). The initiative works as a prototype of an exiled university, launching two significant projects. The first, Pilot SPOCS (Small Private Online Courses) in Jordan offers courses in Applied IT and Global Studies certified by the University of Gothenburg. The second, Jamiya VOCAPP, is a mobile application that assists Syrian refugee students with learning the academic language (Jamiya Project, n.d.; Webster, 2016).

Internal or international displacement of people is a typical tragic cost of conflict for higher education, the displacement of whole institutions is, however, not a universal

phenomenon. One of such examples is the European Humanities University, which is a Belarusian private university that was shut down by its president due to its opposition, an attempt to safeguard their autonomy. The university enabled their students to receive education in distance-learning (DL) format at first (Mikhailov, 2009; BBC News, 2013). The Belarusian authorities did not recognize the university's diploma, however, many western universities showed their solidarity with the EHU, by either recognizing their diplomas or allowing EHU students to do their Master's degrees in the European universities. Lithuania accepted the university. In 2005 the EHU was reopened and began its operation again in the following fall in Vilnius. The university received massive financial support from some major European and US donors. The funds enabled the university to receive teaching premises and cover its costs for BA and MA programs (Dounaev, 2007; Kryvoi, 2011).

In addition, some of the hidden consequences of conflict on higher education are war-inflicted traumas, death, erosion of quality, as mentioned previously, redirection of funding from higher education to military and other humanitarian sectors, decrease in student enrollment, shut-down of universities, and more (Justino, 2010; Babury and Hayward, 2013; Milton and Barakat, 2016). In counties like East Timor, Nicaragua, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lebanon, and Iraq, due to the fragility and low capacity of the countries to maintain and develop higher education institutions, multiple unaccredited diploma-mills with low quality started operating without the state's oversight (Bacevic, 2013; Milton and Barakat, 2016; Milton, 2018).

Students, faculty, administration often become subjects to violent attacks. A recent study by Bradford and Wilson (2013) which analyzed the attacks on educational institutions between the 1980s and 2010 in various regions globally, found that universities were targeted the most (41.2%). The regions where universities were most affected by violence were South Asia, Middle East, North Africa, Southeast Asia. Milton (2018) provides many examples where higher education institutions have been continuously a subject of violence and crisis around the world (see Table 2). The following table only presents a fraction of instances of higher education systems in conflict-affected environments, with the intention to remind about the prevalence and unprecedented impacts of conflict on higher education.

Location of conflicts	Casualties of conflicts
Cambodia, 1970s	Killing of students and academics for any sings of foreign learning
Burundi, 1972	Rebellion against educated ethnic group - 60 students killed
Colombia, 1999	Kidnapping and killings of university academics
Pakistan, 2004-2013	Attacks on universities
Iraq, 2006	Kidnapping and killing of 79 academics

Yemen, 2011	Armed conflict - 73 students and faculty killed
Syria, 2013	Bombing of University of Aleppo - 83 students and faculty
Gaza, 2014	Israeli army assault on Gaza - 421 students killed
Kenya, 2015	Attacks on university - 148 killed
Pakistan, 2016	Attacks on university - 20 killed
Nigeria ongoing	Boko Haram attacks on the university - hundreds killed

Table 2. Higher education systems in crisis. Location and number of casualties (Source: Milton, 2018)

Lastly, the resilience of higher education to conflicts, in many countries, has proven to be quite weak. Some argue that it is due to low prioritization of the sector and over-reliance of the institution on the state's funding and limited allocation to the sector thereof. Rose and Greeley, 2006 claim that higher education institutions require more complex aid during the time of crisis. In the case of Afghanistan and Sudan, the entire systems of higher education collapsed and ceased to operate for the time of conflict (IIEP, 2004; Babyesiza, 2013; Milton, 2018). The weak resilience and the reconstruction of the sector are not addressed by the international stakeholders as well. For example, the World Bank allocated only 12% of the total education loan budget to higher education systems affected by conflict (Buckland, 2005).

On the other hand, Milton (2018), while recognizing the devastating impacts of conflict on higher education also warns about blaming conflict for all the negative features. Conflict plays a crucial role in aggravating various impacts higher education institutions face, but also the management of the crisis, the response to the crisis, and the resilience of an organization need to be considered.

3.2. Crisis management approaches in higher education

The literature indicates that scholars have a relatively similar perception of crisis management approaches although there is a lack of commonly accepted framework for crisis management in higher education (Drennan et al., 2007; Zdziarski et al., 2007). The next sections will examine application of crisis management frameworks in the higher education context.

3.2.1. Crisis management at higher education institutions

The scarcity of literature that addresses crisis management in the higher education may suggest an inadequate attention given to this field. Unfortunately, the subject of higher education and crisis management and continuity management of higher

education institutions boasts only few case studies, which frequently adopt qualitative perspectives, and lack substantive evidence.

There are few influential studies mostly deriving from the US context that engage the subject of crisis management in higher education. The works by Zdziarski (2001) Zdziarski et al. (2007), Burrell (2009), Beggan (2011), Sutherland (2013), Garcia (2015), have shaped the field of crisis management offering a new higher education perspective.

The earliest dissertation by Zdziarski (2001) and a book ‘Campus Crisis Management: Comprehensive Guide to Planning, Prevention, Response, and Recovery’ by Zdziarski et al. (2007) certainly gave more importance to the study of crisis management of higher education institutions. The main contribution of this book is that it comprehensively evaluates crisis management in the higher education context and offers a domain-specific definition of crisis.

A crisis is an event, which is often sudden and unexpected, that disrupts the normal operations of the institution on its educational mission and threaten the wellbeing of personnel, property, financial resources, and/or reputation of the institution (Zdziarski et al., 2007, p.5).

The authors also introduce a useful analytical tool, namely the crisis matrix. The crisis matrix is a useful for assessing a crisis, identifying its impact on an academic institution and considering approaches to managing the crisis. The matrix comprises of three dimensions: levels of crisis (critical incident, campus emergency, disaster), types of crisis (environmental, facility, human), and intentionality of crisis (intentional, unintentional) (see Figure 4). Depending on these three dimensions universities are advised to design their crisis response. The matrix enables to determine types of issues that need to be addressed during the crisis and provide benchmarks for distributing tasks and allocating resources.

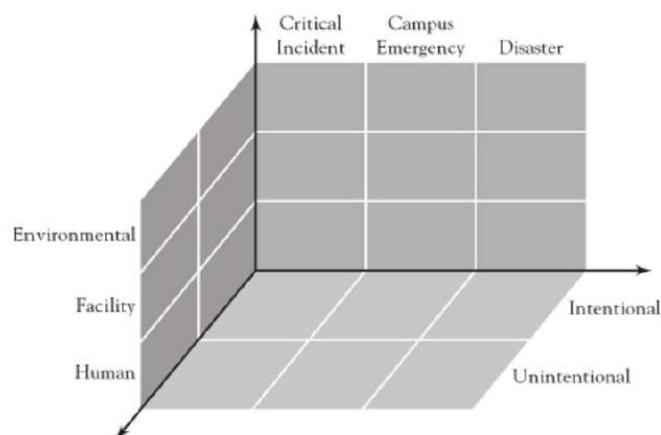


Figure 4. Zdziarski, Rollo, and Dunkel’s Crisis Matrix (Source: Zdziarski, et al., 2007)

The crisis matrix is used to assess the impact of the crisis and the areas in need of treatment. The authors suggest that after identifying the impacts areas of crisis, the academic institutions need to have appropriate processes and structures in place, for example, a contingency plan and a crisis management team to effectively respond to crisis (Zdziarski et al, 2007). The primary process of crisis management in universities resembles the approach of the private sector mentioned in Chapter 2, which is centered around the planning, prevention, response, recovery, and learning efforts of the institutions. The book also offers some practical guidelines for higher education institutions on how to plan for crisis. The higher education institutions are advised to comprise crisis teams, design crisis plans and protocols, crisis communication, and crisis training, and collaborate with outside agencies for better crisis response. The book emphasizes on the training for staff and students as the most effective preventive crisis response, as well as, collaboration with external stakeholders, which helps to distribute the responsibility and ease the burden of handling the crisis (Zdziarski et al., 2007).

The available literature on crisis management action plan stresses the importance of crisis management teams (Khalilzad, 2006; CERD; 2008; Davies, 2008; Beggan, 2011; Eaker and Viars, 2014; Gustafson, 2018). It is argued that a crisis management team should be assembled before crisis occurs in order to be able to respond effectively. Furthermore, the team needs to have precise knowledge regarding the roles during crisis and goals for each role. Organizations that form crisis teams are active during the prevention and response stages of the crisis, because each member has specific responsibilities and authority, and can work well under pressure. The literature mentions that a good crisis management team should possess the following skills to succeed: availability, knowledge of resources, team-player mindset, trainability, communication skills and assessment skills (Zdziarski et al, 2007; Eaker and Viars, 2014; Gustafson, 2018). When crisis team is unavailable or non-existent, it creates lack of understanding and limits crisis coordination.

The transfer of information with high speed in critical moments is crucial during a crisis management response of crisis management teams. Poor communication strategy may result in significant losses for the institutions, such loss of credibility and confidence of the target audiences in the institution (Thaler-Carter, 2009; Yacobi, 2008; Beggan, 2011). The crisis communication process follows a basic scheme - identifying institutions' target audiences, understanding their characteristics and channels of reaching them (Zdziarski et al., 2007). During a planning and prevention stage of the crisis, the crisis managers are in charge of designing a communication plan that can ensure a fast and consistent transfer of information to its audiences. Zdziarski et al. (2007) also points out the role of leadership in facilitating the efforts of crisis management. In his view, a good university leadership understands how to coordinate a crisis team, it recognizes the task, authorizes the use of resources and funding to resolve the crisis. However, it is

without a doubt that the university crisis can put the leadership under insurmountable pressure.

In connection with previous findings by Zdziarski, a significant study of crisis management through the higher education focus has been conducted by Beggan (2011). The study examined how an academic institution responds to a disaster. While his research centers on the impact of such disaster, as Hurricane Ike on one case university in the USA, the perspective employed in the study fits within a broader continuity planning and management perspectives in the higher education sector. The result suggests that an adequate response to the crisis requires preparedness of academic institutions and continuity planning. Based on the findings, the author confirmed the crisis management approach listed above in the book by Zdziarski et al. (2007).

Beggan (2011) identified five aspects that the case university prioritized to cope with a disaster: (1) prioritizing the recovery efforts; (2) addressing communication; (3) addressing financial concerns; (4) fostering administrative empowerment in the decision process; (5) devoting consideration to the development of alternative academic calendar. The study, therefore, is useful for this research as it can have useful implications for the management of crisis of the Ukrainian higher education institutions and their response efforts.

Another contemporary study by Eaker and Viars (2014) examined crisis response in higher education through a set of informational interviews with crisis managers and university administrators. Both an apparent strength and weakness of the study is in the use of a fictional case study, which utilizes a somewhat weak methodological approach, but at the same time provides useful guidance for academic institutions by providing experiences of real university crisis response managers. An evident advantage is, however, in the utilization of a renowned theoretical framework of the crisis management cycle: planning, prevention, response, recovery, learning.

Additionally, Borland (2017) argues that during crisis response, academic institutions understate the importance of human resilience. The author suggests that alongside institutional crisis, higher education institutions may face a personal crisis that entails grief, stress, and faith, which, if ignored, may lead to a failed response and recovery efforts of the institution. Similarly, the study by Gustafson (2018) acknowledges the importance of human factor during crisis management and addressing the issue of security and crisis management in much broader terms. The study examined the practices of sixteen security risk managers from Swedish universities. The findings show that the modeling of security needs to be addressed at the three levels of organizational culture, top management, faculty and student level. Borland (2017) and Gustafson (2018) suggest that faculty and staff need to engage in the planning process to form a culture of “security acceptance, awareness, and compliance” (p. 359).

3.2.2. The role of government in crisis management

Higher education systems affected by some form of crisis, such as conflict, war, natural disaster, terrorist attacks, require protection and mechanisms that would contribute to their recovery. The governments in the time of crisis can address some of the severe impacts of crisis on higher education institutions. The role of government and the level of its involvement in responding to crisis can be depend on the relationship of the higher education institutions and the state, and the capacity it possesses to respond to crisis. During crisis, the governments can carry out different function regarding the management of crisis at higher education institution. The government can provide legislative support to ease or weaken the standards and requirements that burden the functioning of the academic institutions in crisis. The governments can also provide financial assistance to cover the financial, infrastructural, social problems that are incurred by the higher education institutions functioning in the conditions of crisis. Regardless, the government plays a crucial role during crisis response of higher education institutions, a role that can even determine institutional continuity and its future.

However, the ability of government to effectively respond to crisis can be impaired by the severity of the environmental conditions in which the system is residing. Countries that find themselves in crisis situations, such as a prolonged armed conflict are regarded as 'fragile states'. Fragile states are "those where there is limited capacity and will on the part of the state to provide basic services to its population" (OECD-DAC, 2008). There are many conditions that interfere with the state's provision of assistance for higher education in crisis. The states affected by fragility caused by armed conflict may inhibit the following characteristics - poor governance, weak institutional and financial capacity, corruption, inequality, slow responsiveness and action (Tebbe, 2009). These characteristics may effectively prevent governments from responding the needs of the conflict-affected higher education sector.

When a state is in a fragile situation, its capacity is threatened, and so is the institutional capacity of educational establishments, due to the dependence of higher education on public funding (Rose and Greeley, 2006). One of the leading causes of the collapse of higher education during a crisis is low educational revenue, as well as low income from students' fees. Also, higher education as a sector is given less priority during the crisis, as it requires more financial, logistical and technological support, in addition to competent management structure (Rose and Greeley, 2006; Milton, 2015; Rasheed and Munoz, 2016). A study by Beggan (2011) examined how public policies and institutions react and respond to crisis, and how they perceive their success or failure during crisis instances. The results concluded that "inept leadership, lack of financial and structural resources, considerable communication breakdowns, and a lack of adequate planning at multiple levels of government compounded failures during these disasters in higher education" (Beggan, 2011).

3.3. Ukrainian higher education in crisis

The type of crisis referred to in this study is human-induced conflict. The word 'conflict' refers to a violent armed conflict that has negative consequences for the society (World Bank, 2005). Armed conflict can be defined regarding parties involved (i.e., government vs. armed forces), and casualties incurred. The conflict discussed in the study is an armed conflict in eastern Ukraine. The armed conflict in Ukraine or as some refer the War in Donbass has affected the eastern region of Ukraine, namely Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts. The conflict started with the protests that happened in the wake of the 2014 Ukrainian revolution commonly known as a 'Euromaidan revolution' or 'Revolution of dignity'. The demonstrations in eastern Ukraine happened after the illegal annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation. The conflict started the protests in March 2014 by the anti-government groups and rebel groups. The pro-Russian protests taking place in the east soon escalated into an armed conflict between the separatists of the self-proclaimed Donetsk and Luhansk National Republics (DNR and LNR), and the Ukrainian government (Kovalov, 2014). On April 14, the government of Ukraine officially announced the beginning of anti-terrorist operations in the east after the administrative buildings in Kharkiv, Luhansk, and Donetsk were captured. In the following month of May, the pro-Russian separatists held a referendum to declare the independence of DNR and LNR from Ukraine (CFR, 2018)

While the Russian government denies its involvement in the conflict, Ukraine and NATO observations missions have reported illegal supply of weapons and the presence of Russian soldiers and Russian citizens among the separatists. Multiple failed attempts have been made to negotiate with the separatists the terms of the ceasefire (i.e., Minsk Agreement) and the exchange of prisoners (BBC, 2015). Since the beginning of the conflict, significant losses have been born by both sides. The Global Conflict Tracker estimates over 22 thousand injured, 10 thousand killed (both soldiers and civilians) and 1.6 million of internally displaced people as a result of the armed conflict in Donbass (CFR, 2018). Additionally, according to UN statistics over 3.4 million people in Ukraine have been impacted by the humanitarian crisis and are in need of humanitarian aid (UNIAN, 2018).

In 2014 a new concept had emerged in Ukrainian higher education system – 'displaced higher education institutions'. The conflict in eastern Ukraine - Donbass, apart from causing human deaths and massive infrastructural damage in cities, has caused displacement of millions of people, unemployment, economic recession, political tensions and more. However, in the eyes of state, some issues seem more significant than others during an armed conflict, such as fighting for territorial integrity and responding to the humanitarian crisis. Thus, responding to other concerns like schooling, higher education, healthcare becomes more challenging. Since the beginning of hostilities in the Donbass region, 11 scientific institutions and 18 higher educational institutions have been displaced from the temporarily ceased

territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. The displaced institutions managed to resume the educational process and now continue to educate over 40 thousand students and employ about 3 thousand research and teaching staff (Higher Education Portal, 2016).

The higher education institutions that were evacuated in 2014 managed to survive due to several factors, one is the existence of their branch campuses or institutes that they could use as the starting point. More than half of the institutions transferred to their subunits, while others have acquired new infrastructure (e.g., Donetsk National University) or temporarily share the infrastructure with other universities (e.g., Luhansk National Agrarian University). While in most of the universities, the administrative and managerial units have moved to the controlled territory in Ukraine, still practically every institution has its double on the occupied territory. In some universities, more than 80% of staff and students remained on the occupied territory, and only about 10% moved (Dodonov, 2016). The displaced universities have been struggling with the same problems they faced at the beginning of their evacuation: insufficient provision of accommodation for students and staff, ‘brain drain’ of human resources, weak material and technical infrastructure, lack of funding, integration into local communities, and other bureaucratic concerns that hinder institutions’ development (Osvita.UA, 2017).

3.3.1. Stakeholders in crisis management

There are at least three significant stakeholders, which have been playing a key role in coordinating the crisis management response of the universities affected by the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine: Ministry of Education, Council of Rectors of Displaced Universities appointed by the Ministry, Coordination Center of Displaced Universities with the assistance of foreign donors. The latter two units emerged as a direct result of the evacuation of universities in the East.

(a) Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine

The higher education in Ukraine is organized in the form of hierarchical or top-down approach, where the Ministry of Education and Science embodies the top. The MESU controls the licensing, accreditation, admissions process, issue of diplomas, and funding of the universities. The new ‘Higher Education Law’ enacted in 2014 that grants a so-called autonomy to institutions of higher education is merely a formality due to the excessive centralization of higher education for many decades (Dodonov, 2016). In the time of emergency, universities expected clear directions and orders from the Ministry regarding their displacement, and most importantly they expected immediate legislative, social and financial support.

While the Ministry has handled some concerns about creating favorable legislative conditions for the universities, some university leaders criticize their approach as

reactive, overdue and lacking full understanding of the impact the armed conflict has had on the HEIs in eastern Ukraine. The legal framework in Ukraine was not ideally suited to deal with an armed conflict in Ukraine. The Ukrainian government has failed to create a national emergency plan. Therefore, the Ministry was incapable of preventing some of the harsh consequences the universities suffered as a result of displacement, such as loss of human resources, infrastructure and more.

Indeed, actions were employed by the government and the Ministry after the conflict broke out, aiming to preserve the higher education system of Donbass and help higher education institutions to recover from the crisis. The following are the primary legal provision that were adopted to assist conflict-affected higher education institutions in eastern Ukraine¹:

2014 Amendment: ‘Regarding the organization of the 2014/15 academic year in educational institutions located in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts’:

- Guarantees reinstatement of scholarships for students who renew their study at displaced universities
- Coordinates with displaced universities the data of the beginning of 2014/15 of the academic year
- Allows displaced universities to independently determine the conditions and procedure for admission process of applicants who live in the Donbass region
- Allows students from the Donbass region to temporarily enroll in other institutions in Ukraine and receive records of their education

2015 Amendment: ‘Concerning the Use of Illegal Documents of Terrorist Organizations for Studies in Higher Educational Institutions of Ukraine’:

- Informs the administration of higher educational institutions that admission of illegal documents issued or certified by the self-proclaimed ‘authority’ in Crimea and the occupied territory of Donbass region is contradictory to the legislation of Ukraine

2016 Order: ‘On the formation of the Council of Rectors of Higher Educational Institutions temporarily transferred from the area of the anti-terrorist operation

- Forms a temporary consultative and advisory body of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine - the Council of Rectors of Displaced higher education institutions

2016 Law: ‘On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine Regarding the Activities of Higher Educational Institutions, Scientific Institutions Displaced From Occupied Territories’:

¹ For comprehensive table of key legislative provisions on functioning of displaced higher education institutions see Appendix 3.

- Legally defines the displaced institutions as institutions of higher education,
- Prolongs and validates the accreditation certificates for temporarily displaced higher education institutions for the duration of the anti-terrorist operation, but not more than five years
- Allows the temporary displaced higher education institutions to retain a national status
- Regulates the work load of the scientific and pedagogical faculty in displaced higher educational institutions

2017 Amendment: ‘On the formation of the commission on monitoring activities displaced higher education institutions’:

- Encourages displaced universities to develop a strategy for development and reintegration
- Encourages to create of network consortia of displaced higher education institutions
- Urges to conduct monitoring of housing and public or communal property infrastructure that can be used for the needs of displaced higher education institutions
- Urges to create conditions for housing for faculty of displaced higher education institutions
- Urges to facilitate the updating of the material and technical base of the displaced higher education institutions

The above-stated legal provisions enable more stable functioning of the displaced higher education institutions, particularly the recommendations of the government to facilitate assistance to the displaced higher education institutions in providing housing and social benefits. However, most of these amendments have recommendatory functions and do not have verification mechanisms that would ensure the implementation of these legal provisions.

(b) Council of Rectors of Displaced Universities

The government of Ukraine approved a temporary advisory body, the Council of Rectors of Displaced Universities on January 26, 2016. The primary responsibilities of which were to protect the rights of the education process, while considering the complicated humanitarian, political and socio-economic situation that unveiled on the territories of Donetsk, Luhansk and Crimea regions occupied by territories (Osvita.UA, 2016). One of the primary objectives of the Council is to coordinate the activities of the displaced higher education institutions of Luhansk, Donetsk and Crimea regions of Ukraine, organize their functioning, education and research activities, and provide educational training and humanitarian aid. The Council of Rectors includes rectors of 18 displaced universities.

The bill to establish the Council of Rectors of Displaced Universities proposes to:

- define the status of the displaced universities;
- set standards for the number of students and scientific researchers enrolled in these universities;
- obtain and upgrade university property by obtaining additional funding;
- extend legitimacy of accreditation of educational programs; and
- determine contractual obligations and performance of the temporary displaced universities (Donetsk Law Institute of MFA, 2016).

By establishing the Council, the displaced universities have an opportunity to initiate discussions on the problems they are facing with representatives of public authorities and local governments, and study issues and disseminate good practices of organization of higher education process under strain conditions. The Council has been particularly effective with regard to amending proposals of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine on the improvement of education and research activities of displaced universities and streamlining material and technical resources of the displaced universities. The issues that Council has not be able to address to this day are mechanisms of social protection of faculty and students of the displaced universities (Ministry of Education and Science, 2016).

(c) Coordination Center of Displaced Universities

The Coordination Center of Displaced Universities is a public organization, which, as it states, aims to unite the efforts of the displaced universities for joint solutions (CISID, n.d.). The Center addresses the following priorities. It targets the issues of logistics by helping the displaced universities with acquiring buildings, dormitories, adequately equipped libraries, computer labs, laboratory equipment to create an appropriate learning environment.

The Center also addresses regulatory and legal framework concerning the displaced universities. It advocates for more lenient legal framework to make it possible for the acquisition of necessary resources or even funds by the displaced universities. Besides, the Center attempts to gather public information on the activities of the displaced universities, their problems, and achievements to address the low enrollment rate in these universities. Recently, the Center conducted a study of use of distance and online learning practice in the displaced universities. The study aimed to improve the practices of distance and blended learning, information and communication technologies in the education process and research activity of these universities. The research aimed to also improve the quality of higher education and provide greater access to education for citizens from temporarily occupied territories and internally displaced people (IDP).

The organization is also working with students of the displaced universities. It advocates for their rights with respect to scholarships, travel documents and more. Lastly, the Center works with research staff and students, who remained on the occupied territories due to various personal reasons to reintegrate them in the education activities of these universities.

The center managed to raise awareness on the issue of the Ukrainian displaced universities by organizing a documentary movie project – ‘Displaced Universities’. The documentary movies demonstrate struggles of at that time fourteen universities, which were relocated as a result of the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine (Displaced Universities, 2016).

Also, by engaging in the legal framework of Ukraine, the organization has promoted the introduction of new admissions criteria for the students of the displaced universities. As a result, during the last admission campaign, more than 1000 young people have enrolled in Ukrainian displaced universities, due to two laws that were passed by the Ukrainian parliament. The law 4350 enables Ukrainian students from the occupied areas to enroll in the universities on the Donbass territory and the displaced universities around Ukraine by internal examination without the external independent testing certificates (Verkhovna Rada, 2016). Another law 4718, “On amendments to some legislative acts of Ukraine regarding the activities of the displaced universities...”, attempts to address logistical issues, provide dormitories and housing for internally displaced academic staff and students, providing social and economic benefits to employees of the displaced universities and review legal documents to streamline the reporting procedures for licensing and accreditation of displaced universities (Verkhovna Rada, 2016).

3.5. The analytical framework: A roadmap to empirical analysis

Public higher education institutions, namely universities, may face considerable challenges when faced with crisis. Partly it is due to their dependence on the state, lack of administrative, academic and financial autonomy, and bureaucratic and collegial nature. It is not unusual for universities to rely on or wait for directions from the state when a viable decision needs to be implemented. Such dependence makes it problematic for universities to pull resources when necessary, thus delaying the response to a problem. Additionally, public universities usually operate with tight physical and human resources hindering crisis preparedness and response.

When discussing crisis and crisis management it is important to understand that, as argued by Weick (1976), Stam and Baldrige (1971) and Sporn (1996), there are distinctive features that make academic institutions different from business organizations. Foremost, it is the ambivalence of their goals, lack of agreeable standards for achieving results, and ambiguous decision-making process. Secondly,

universities comprise of a set of diverse processes that are performed by a myriad of stakeholders with different goals, making a management process of universities a challenging task. The governing and management process of the universities may be also challenged by the autonomous structures, which can cause a conflict of expertise. Last, universities unlike corporate organizations are more susceptible to the changes in the environment, political, social or technological changes.

Therefore, institutional culture of universities differs from that of business organizations, where the crisis management issue is addressed more frequently. Corporate organizations, unlike universities, have more specific goals and objectives, their primary focus is on the profit, and their task and routines are mundane and well-orchestrated, and the decision-making process usually involves a limited number of managers and administrators (Baldrige, 1977; Birnbaum, 1988; Sporn, 1996). These characteristics force business organizations to be more alert to any danger and make them more adapted to respond to the crisis more effectively.

Despite the distinctions made above, it is also reasonable to argue that the approach to crisis and crisis management significantly shares common features in both higher education institutions and business organizations. Some of these similarities relate to addressing the issues of planning and prevention, response, recovery, and learning steps that help business organizations and academic institutions to avert crisis or minimize the impacts. The similarity also extends to the efforts of higher education institutions and business organizations to ensure the continuity of operations and functions they fulfill. Based on the commonality identified in the literature review this study has adapted the crisis management framework that has been developed in the field of management and later applied in empirical studies that were set in the context of higher education (see section 2.4.)

However, when considering the impacts of crisis on higher education, it becomes necessary to also consider their fundamental and distinctive functions. The functions of higher education institutions can be impacted by any crisis within the external environment in which such higher education institution operates. The functions of higher education institutions that may come under the pressure can be defined as follows:

Carnegie Commission, 1973:

- 1) education of the student and provision of conducive environment: - general education, specialized academic and occupational preparation, academic socialization, campus environment, personal support, holding operation;
- 2) advancing human capability in society: research, service, sorting talent, training in vocational, pre-professional and professional skills;
- 3) education justice for the post-secondary age group: lifelong learning education, development of appropriate special programs, financial support;

- 4) pure learning: support of personnel with facilities for advancement of learning and scholarship;
- 5) provision of freedom, opportunities, reasonable rules of conduct.

Ivan Pacheco, 2013:

- 1) knowledge: production, transmission, preservation (research, teaching, storage and recovery);
- 2) social change (social mobility, economic development, providing a space for social criticism, sorting talent);
- 3) development (economic, cultural, political: developing human capital, applied research, preservation of knowledge, training and selecting of future leaders);
- 4) service (outreach, non-formal education).

However, in the context of this study, and as a widely conceived interpretation among researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers in higher education, the functions of higher education institutions are broadly categorized into three: teaching and learning, research, and societal engagement. These functions provide the lens through which the impacts of crisis in the displaced Ukrainian higher education institutions is empirically analyzed.

To determine the impact of the crisis and consider the mechanisms of responding to the crisis at the displaced universities in Ukraine, this study compiled an analytical framework based on an extensive review of literature. To explore the first research question posed by the researcher: *What are the impacts of the armed conflict on the displaced universities in Ukraine?* The following impact areas were identified from the literature review as follows:

- Smith and Tombs (2000): crisis of management, crisis of communication, operational crisis, crisis of legitimation;
- Sutherland (2013): human resources and personal costs, critical infrastructure, teaching and research;
- Drennan et al. (2015): human costs, infrastructural costs, policy costs, operational costs, economic costs, political-symbolic costs, personal costs;
- Barakat and Milton (2015), Milton and Barakat (2016) and Milton (2018): human capacity, physical destruction, research infrastructure, war-related (erosion of quality, decreasing enrollment, shutdown of institutions), low-resilience of sector (poor financial support of HEIs), psycho-social damage;
- Gladushyna (2017): human resources, students, infrastructure, leadership, organizational culture, study process, partnerships, funding, societal engagement.

After careful consideration of the various impact areas suggested in the literature, this research, therefore, adopts the following impact areas that hinder institutions' primary functions and decision-making power.

Impact of conflict on higher education institutions' primary functions (teaching, learning, research, social service):

- Impact on human resources
- Impact on infrastructure
- Impact on operations
- Impact on legitimacy

Impact on human resources: This impact area regards the displacement of academic populations, enrollment and retention of students and faculty, as well as physical, psychological and social damage incurred by the students and employees of the five case displaced institutions.

Impact on infrastructure: This impact area is concerned with losses of material, facility, information and communication infrastructure incurred by the displaced higher education institutions as a result of conflict. For example, loss of campus buildings, educational and research infrastructure, student housing, etc.

Impact on operations: This impact area concerns specifically the teaching and learning and research functions of the university. For example, organization of study process, facilitation of research activities, training of staff, student activities, structural reorganization, etc.

Impact on legitimacy: This impact area is related to the ability of higher education institutions to attract students, partnerships, and maintain quality of services.

The next two impact areas related to the decision-making power of the displaced higher education institutions in crisis. Smith and Tombs (2000) state that the response of institutions to crisis may be hindered by the quality and availability of good decisions, as the conditions of crisis may impact their decision-making power and disrupt communication. In her thesis Gladushyna (2017) also mentions the crisis of leadership and communication of the state of crisis to students and employees. This provides reasons to include the following dimensions as the indirect impact of conflict on the higher education institutions. However, due to their interconnectedness with the crisis management phases, these impact areas will be analyzed as part of the overall crisis management efforts by the displaced higher education institutions.

- Crisis of leadership and management
- Crisis of communication

Crisis of leadership and management: This area is concerned with the conflict's impact on the decision-making power of the university administration and management, their ability to take initiative and fulfill their roles and responsibilities.

Crisis of communication: This area concerns with the impact of crisis on the ability of university leadership and management to notify the target academic groups about the conflict, the state of university and how the university is answering the needs of the target groups. Communication breakdowns and other communication irregularities, such as miscommunication, communication sabotage will be monitored.

To answer the second research question: *What mechanisms were deployed by the displaced Ukrainian universities to recover from the crisis?* The following crisis evaluation frameworks were considered. The following works have been widely cited and applied in other studies to mainly investigate the crisis management of public organizations and higher education institutions (Burrell, 2009; Sutherland, 2013; Garcia, 2015).

- Fink's (1986) four stage model: the prodromal crisis stage, the acute crisis stage, the chronic stage, the resolution stage;
- Mitroff's (1994) five stage model: signal detection, probing and prevention, damage containment, recovery, learning;
- Spillan (2000), Hough and Spillan's (2005) crisis model: 1) reactive: no crisis planning efforts, crisis reaction and planning to prevent crisis, pay costs incurred, restructure, review decision-making, make personnel changes, brace for potential failure; 2) proactive: vulnerability analysis, crisis planning and preparation, crisis minimized or avoided, evaluate crisis plan effectiveness, review vulnerabilities, adapt plan as needed, maintain vigilance for future crises;
- Zdziarski, Dunkel, Rollo, & Assoc. (2007) crisis matrix: planning, prevention, response, and recovery, learning;
- Drennan et al. (2015) crisis management framework: prevention, preparation, response, recovery, learning.

Therefore, by combining the crisis management approaches from higher education and business organizations, this study compiles a crisis management framework for empirically analyzing the impact areas of the case displaced universities. The framework is composed of three phases of crisis management. A short description of these phases is presented as follows:

- a) **Planning.** This process usually entails designing of contingency plans, guidelines that explain the types of crises and possible responses, as well as, roles and responsibilities of those directly involved in responding to the crisis.

University leadership, administration, faculty, staff, and students need to be informed through various media about the existence of such plan.

- b) **Prevention.** The process involves actions that need to be taken by the university administration or those in the roles responsible for reducing the likelihood of crisis or the consequences of the crisis when it occurred. Universities identify resources that can be utilized for such event.
- c) **Response.** If contingency plans are in place, this step involves a review of such plans, training of staff how to respond to the crisis, as well as educating students how to act in the situation of crisis. During the response, universities enact emergency systems (if available), operationally deploy resources, and use communication systems to notify those affected by the crisis. Communication effort operational deployment of resources, communications.

Although a comprehensive crisis management, as the literature indicates, also includes the steps of recovery and learning², this study excludes these steps from its empirical analysis since the crisis under investigation is ongoing, and sufficient data on these two phases is currently unavailable, making a meaningful analysis a challenge. In addition, in the Gladyszyna’s (2017) study demonstrated a weak preparedness of two displaced universities to crisis and the non-existence of any intentional crisis management processes and structures before the crisis had occurred. Hence, this research will mainly consider the response stage of the crisis where key decisions are implemented to minimize the crisis.

Other two stages that will not be considered in this study are recovery and learning. The literature suggests that the recovery phase broadly covers the period in which organizations focus on returning to a state of normalcy. During this phase, efforts are streamlined to renew the operation process of an institution, purchasing equipment, searching for donors. The learning phase, on the other hand, is the last phase where organizations review their pre-crisis policies and response measures to learn what functioned well and what failed, update existing plans and debrief crisis responders, which constitutes a critical piece of the crisis response process.

The table below is a summary of analytical framework that guided the development of interview questions and enabled better understanding of the conflict through multiple dimensions. While the framework certainly offers direction to pursue, other themes identified by the interviews, which are not noted in the framework, will be also pursued.

IMPACT DIMENSIONS	Planning and Prevention	Response
Human resources <i>Enrolled staff and student</i>		

² See Appendix 4

<i>Psychological & physical trauma</i>		
Infrastructure <i>Campus building (s)</i> <i>Classrooms</i> <i>Research facility, etc.</i>		
Operations <i>Teaching environment</i> <i>Learning environment</i> <i>Research environment</i>		
Legitimacy <i>Admissions</i> <i>Partnerships</i> <i>Public image</i>		
Crisis of management <i>Governance</i> <i>University safety policies</i> <i>Crisis management teams</i>		
Crisis of communication <i>Institutional communication strategy</i> <i>Informing students and faculty</i>		

Table 3. Summary of the analytical framework.

Chapter IV - Research design and methodology

This research intends to investigate the conflict-affected higher education in Ukraine, specifically the research focuses on the impact of the armed conflict on the functioning of higher education institutions and management tools that have been adopted by the universities to cope with the consequences of the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine. This chapter encapsulates the methods used by the researcher to answer two research questions it posited: Question 1: What have been the impacts of the armed conflict on the Ukrainian higher education? and Question 2: What mechanisms have been used by the displaced Ukrainian universities to cope with the crisis? The literature review indicated that the topic of conflict-affected higher education, as well as the study of crisis management through the higher education prism, have been receiving more spotlight worldwide, yet remain in an infancy stage. These studies remain mostly descriptive and single-case, lacking scientific rigor, more substantial representation and more thorough analysis of problems higher education institutions face when affected by crisis and in particular, by armed conflict. The armed conflict in eastern Ukraine forced 18 universities to relocate to safer territories. This presented an opportunity to record a unique phenomenon of a massive institutional displacement and obstacles that arise along the process. Therefore, by studying the experience of five public higher education institutions and obtaining the multiple-stakeholder views, the study ought to significantly contribute to the research of higher education affected by crisis and possibly help reevaluate the safety and security management at the institutional and national levels.

This Chapter four outlines the research strategy, provides the research tools used to collect data, describes site and sample selection process, and data analysis process. Additionally, the researcher elicits some limitations, mainly discussing the issues of reliability, validity, and generalizability, as well as ethical considerations.

4.1. Research strategy

The research intends to use a qualitative research methods design. According to Creswell (2005) and Silverman and Marvasti (2008), the qualitative design is appropriate, as it provides an appropriate method to analyze in-depth information on the process, its nature and implications. Also, the qualitative study design relies on the viewpoints of participants, asking open-ended questions, collecting verbal data, describing and analyzing themes, and conducting the analysis of documents (Babbie, 1999; Balnaves & Caputi, 2001; Walliman, 2011; Neuman 2007). The reason for using this particular approach in studying the conflict-affected higher education institutions in eastern Ukraine is due to its complex and multidimensional nature that can be elicited via interaction with a university environment, and the stakeholders, such as the university administration, middle management, staff and

students who have been involved in the management of the consequences of the armed conflict and/or impacted by the armed conflict.

Creswell (2005) and Mertens (1998) consider philosophical views that researcher uses to interpret their understanding of the world: positivist, critical and interpretive/constructivist. The study will use interpretive/constructivist perspective as it relies on the social interaction to understand the phenomenon and the context in which it is positioned. This belief is based on “the ontological assumption associated with interpretative/constructivism that multiple realities exist that are time and context-dependent, they will choose to carry out the study using qualitative methods so that they can gain an understanding of the constructions held by the people in that context” (Mertens, 1998, p. 161). Thus, the perception of various university stakeholders will be considered in the process of establishing the impact of the armed conflict on higher education institutions and the management tools that were utilized to cope with the crisis.

This study uses a qualitative case study strategy to explore this phenomenon in-depth. The case study according to Creswell (2009) is an appropriate strategy when: “the researcher explores in depth a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals.” Besides, according to Yin (2003), a case study investigates “a contemporary phenomenon in a real-life context, and it addresses a description of the case and the themes that emerge from studying it.” Thus, this strategy allows consolidating the experiences of the Ukrainian universities impacted by the armed conflict to understand and provide some emerging characteristics of higher education systems in crisis and establish patterns, if such are found, regarding the management tools utilized by the universities in crisis situations. The perspectives of diverse stakeholders and the compilation and examination of data from different sources was gathered to understand the problem comprehensively. Studying the higher education systems in crisis involves a diverse experience, attitudes, and perceptions of the displaced population of students, staff, and administrators, for who the experience has been traumatizing and confusing, therefore, the research requires more personal approach and qualitative method allows for that (Creswell, 2009).

4.2. Data collection: site and sample selection

Purposive sampling was used to select the universities for the multiple case study. This method is “a non-probability sample that is selected based on characteristics of a population and the objective of the study” (ThoughtCo., 2018). It is a purposive sampling because only the universities that were relocated as a result of the armed conflict were considered for this research. All eighteen universities were contacted and invited to participate in this research. The administration of six universities contacted the researcher expressing their interest in the study. The researcher would also like to acknowledge the use of informal communication methods in contacting

the participants. The use of social network, such as Facebook was particularly effective in establishing effective communication with the participants. The sample size of five displaced universities was considered appropriate, manageable and one that would ensure fair representation of the displaced universities and allow for generalizability, as well as help avoid oversaturation of data. Universities of different types, of different sizes and from different regions were selected to “gain greater insights into a phenomenon by looking at it from all angles” and to ensure maximum variation in the purposive sampling, (CIRT, n.d.). The sixth university was eliminated due to the similar characteristics with another university regarding its profile and size. The research uses five case universities from a total of 18 displaced public universities in the country³. The following universities were selected for the site visit and data collection:

- V. Stus Donetsk National University located in Vinnytsia
- V. Dahl East-Ukrainian National University located in Severodonetsk
- Luhansk National Agrarian University located in Kharkiv
- Donbass National Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture located in Kramatorsk
- Donetsk National Technical University located in Pokrovsk

In this study, case institutions are public entities owned by the government. The five case institutions belong to the category of national universities⁴. Specific profile, size, as well as critical figures (i.e., the number of staff, number of students, number of faculties) of the institutions will be provided in the following chapter. The study relies on two data collection methods: interviews and secondary data (e.g., Ministry Decree, University Statements). Interviews are an appropriate method in this qualitative research because they allow for collecting in-depth information and obtain insights into complex phenomena (Biggam, 2011). The interviews allow both verbal and non-verbal information to be collected, which adds more integrity and authenticity to the data that is being collected. This research used semi-structured interviews, which were audiotaped and transcribed at the participants’ permission. The semi-structured interviews provide some structure for the interviewee and a direction to pursue, however, they also allow for clarification, expansion or narrowing of the questions discussed as need be. The questions of the interviews are structured based on the research questions: impact of the armed conflict and crisis management tools. This method, however, has few limitations, for instance, the account of information can be filtered through interviewees’ lens, and therefore could be affected by personal abilities and perceptions, which could hinder researcher’s attempts to grasp the phenomenon.

³ For complete list of all 18 displaced higher education institutions see Appendix 2.

⁴ National higher education institution - a status that is granted to an institution for its distinguished achievements of the national development.

This thesis adopts a triangulation method which entails the use of one or more methods of data collection to “explain more fully the richness and complexity of human behavior by studying it from more than one standpoint” (Cohen and Manion, 1995, p.106). The collection of secondary data was performed through analyses of higher education proclamations, national higher education policies, strategic plans, performance reports, institutional plans, meeting minutes, legislative documents, statistical reports and other relevant documents. The limitation of such approach is that some of the relevant documents may not be publicly accessible. The study is complemented by the use of non-participant/complete observation to verify the consistency of obtained information through interviews and focus groups. As mentioned previously, five displaced universities were selected for this research through the purposeful sampling technique.

This research employed a combination of convenience, expert sampling, and snowball sampling to select the interviewees. The data of the study was collected in April-May of 2018. This included 25 in-person interviews lasting 30-45 minutes, which were conducted with the top management, faculty and students from the displaced universities. The Chart 1 provides detailed statistics on the number of interviewees and their variability.

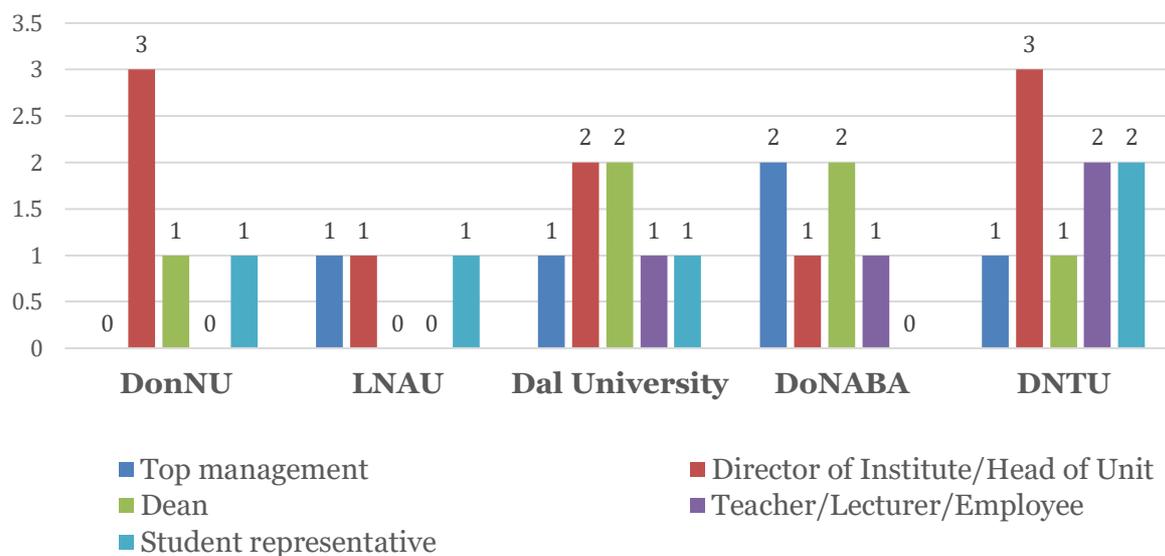


Chart 1. Interview statistics at five displaced universities

An interview protocol was used to ask questions and record answers during the interviews. The protocol contained instructions for the interview to follow to use consistent procedures at all interviews⁵. The questions consisting of beginning warm-up questions and followed by content-specific ones. A thank-you statement was issued to all the participants of the research to acknowledge their time and effort.

⁵ For interview guide see Appendix 1.

The researcher used a field log to record the agenda of each site visit and the proceedings of the day. Details regarding the researcher's observations were also recorded in a field diary chronologically, including descriptive and reflective observation).

4.3. Data analysis procedures

The data analysis involves interpretations and sense-making out of text, audio, or image. The objective of the data analysis is to understand the data in-depth and to be able to interpret it and represent it verbally and graphically. Some researchers like Creswell (2009) and Schatzman and Strauss (1973) believe that proper qualitative research involves classification and organization of ideas for better understanding. Researchers use codes and indexes to explain and interpret the information they gather.

This study analyzed data based on 25 semi-structured interviews, site observations and document analysis. The interviews were audiotapes and transcribed. In addition, a conceptual framework was used to generate categories, themes and help in the process of coding the data and making interpretation. Creswell (2009) suggests researchers approach data by first looking at the specific ideas or issues to the general understanding of the problem. He suggests a hierarchical approach, constructing meaning from the bottom to the top. The research used the following analysis framework as a guiding process in data analysis of this qualitative research.

The following steps need to be followed for a thorough analysis:

- a) Organize and prepare. This step involves doing the groundwork that is necessary to start the data analysis. In this research after collecting the interviews, the researcher will transcribe them, scan them for any irregularities and clarifications, type the site visit notes, observations and arrange the data into different categories and types.
- b) Read through the data. This step is necessary to understand the value of data and start the process of organization of ideas and themes. The researcher will identify the ideas that are reoccurring. An overall depth and credibility of information can also be spotted at this stage.
- c) Begin coding. The step of coding is a crucial step in idea organization and attaching meaning to data, and labeling it appropriately, and in line with the framework. Since the studied issue is relatively new, the conceptual framework may also have some limitations in covering all aspects of the issue. Therefore, when designing codes, the researcher will also allow for the codes to emerge organically. Creswell (2009) suggests in the case of novelty of the

subject a new codebook be developed by a researcher during the data analysis. Various coding platforms are offered to assist in data coding.

- d) Making interpretations. In this step, the researcher will attempt to elicit meaning after coding the data. The meaning will be derived based on the interviews, focus group discussions, and using conceptual framework and literature review.

Before visiting a site, the researcher informed the university and other stakeholders about the recording of the observational data. It is advised by Creswell (2009) to use observational protocol to record additional information. The author also suggests using dividing the observational information into descriptive account (which can be a description of physical setting, portraits of participants), and reflective information (which are the researcher's feelings, perceptions, ideas based on the tone and intonation and more). The above-mentioned technique was used in this research. Also, demographic information was collected, such as the time, place and date of the site visit.

4.4. Limitations and potential challenges

It is without a doubt that the validity and reliability are paramount in conducting any research, without a proof of its validity and reliability the work can be widely discredited and thrown to no use. It is quite difficult to proof both in social science, but only with an accurate and unbiased description of reality, can an author earn a reader's trust. The validity of one's work can be only measured by the validity of the information available. However, if such information proves to be distorted and biased, it is, therefore, the author's responsibility to account for the use of the discredited sources. Hence, this study will strive to provide an honest, unbiased, objective portrayal of Ukrainian displaced universities to the extent possible. While designing the interview questions, the author took into account the core principles of research design, to extract the most truthful answers from its respondents. To do so, the questions were designed in clear, fair, objective, and sensitive manner.

The reliability of the paper can be ensured by incorporating the variety of research techniques, interviews, document analysis, observations. The research used prior review of documents as a supporting tool for cross-checking the data gathered through interviews and contributing to research validity and reliability. The reliability can also be enhanced by careful guidance of the author's supervisors, who possess professional knowledge in the matter. Gibbs (2007), for example, also suggests thoroughly checking the transcripts of the interviews for any mistakes, as well as, making sure there are no problems with the coding of the interviews.

There could be some potential limitations to the study. The main limitation is that the study is only representative of 18 displaced universities in Ukraine, and therefore

cannot be a generalization of crisis management and organizational recovery mechanisms in Europe or beyond. In addition, the institutions that have been evacuated by the government are public universities, the information on the private universities is unavailable. Another limitation which was also described in the gap is the lack of available literature in dealing with public organizations, specifically in dealing with HEIs, however useful insights can be drawn from the analysis of crisis management strategies in the private sector. Lastly, due to the fact that most countries, where higher education systems are engulfed in armed conflict, are not English speaking, it is difficult to be absolutely confident that the study of similar nature has not been conducted prior.

4.5. Ethical considerations

When conducting research, it is essential to respect the participants and the site for research. There are often ethical issues that arise when collecting data and analyzing it. It is essential for a researcher to appreciate the opportunity one is given by avoiding putting vulnerable populations at risk and discomfort. Researching the displaced universities is challenging, because the issue is sensitive for the participants. The researcher bears the responsibility to make sure that the research answers all ethical norms. Before the researcher's site visit, an informed consent form sent to participants to sign before they are engaged in the research. The form informed the interviewees about the purpose of research and its benefits, emphasizing on the fact that the participants' rights would be protected during the data collection and analysis processes. All participant names remained anonymous in this research.

Chapter V - Data analysis and findings

This chapter presents the empirical analysis of the primary and secondary data gathered from the site visit, and presents and discusses the main findings. The objective of this chapter is to answer the research questions posed at the outset of the study. The chapter begins with a brief description of the profiles of the five case universities. The main section of the chapter is dedicated to analyzing the findings of the empirical analysis with respect to the impacts of the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine on these five displaced universities and what crisis management mechanisms they used to respond to the crisis instigated by the armed conflict. The findings from this chapter provide the basis for drawing conclusion and implications of the study.

5.1. Brief profiles of the case displaced universities

In this section, the study presents brief descriptive account of the general profiles of the five case universities. This background information is crucial for understanding the specific context in which the empirical analysis of each university is conducted.

5.1.1. Case university 1: Vasyl Stus Donetsk National University

Vasyl Stus Donetsk National University (DonNU) is a comprehensive state higher education institution established in 1937 in Donetsk. The structure of the university currently includes: 9 faculties, 2 educational and consulting centers, the department of international education of foreign students. The university provides programs 41 bachelor's and 52 master's degree programs in natural sciences, humanities, and economics and finance (DonNU official website, 2018). The university used to be one of the largest Ukrainian universities in total enrolment of students. Due to the military conflict in eastern Ukraine the university was temporarily evacuated to Vinnytsia in central region of Ukraine. Before the university was evacuated, the student population amounted more than 15.000 students and about a thousand faculty members. After the relocation, the current student demographic is about 5.000, and 500 teaching and professorial faculty (Osvita.UA, n.d.).

Before relocation DonNU had a robust material and technical infrastructure to carry out educational activities. It included campuses for students and scientific and pedagogical staff, laboratories and specialized offices, technical and computer support. In Donetsk, the university had 11 teaching and laboratory buildings. The university possessed 5 sports halls and a swimming pool, and each university building had a buffet or a dining hall (DonNU official website, 2018). In September 2014, DonNU educational infrastructure in Donetsk were seized by the terrorist groups of DNR. After relocation, the university was deprived of its own accommodation and educational and research facilities. The university actively

engages partners to rebuild its infrastructure, and has plans to construct a full-fledged university campus with accommodation for students and teachers in Vinnytsia (Education in Ukraine, n.d.). With the help of humanitarian assistance, the university received computers, sports equipment, equipment for hard sciences, introduced cloud technologies for work and distance learning.

Timeline	Evacuation events
End of August 2014	University temporarily stopped the educational process
Beginning of September 2014	Illegal Ministry of DNR ordered re-subordination of the university, a new pro-Russian rector appointed
Mid-September 2014	Evacuation process started after the university infrastructure captured by the rebel group
September 2014	University initiative group conducted negotiations with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine in secret
End of September 2014	Ministry ordered displacement and operation of DonNU in Vinnytsia
October 2014	DonNU started the process of displacement
Beginning of November 2014	University started the educational process in a new location

5.1.2. Case university 2: Luhansk National Agrarian University

Luhansk National Agrarian University (LNAU) is a specialized state higher educational institution, established in 1921 in Luhansk. The university offers study programs of narrow specialization, such as agronomy, mechanical engineering, veterinary and other. Before the evacuation of the university to Kharkiv, the university enrolled over 20 thousand students and 400 faculty members. Currently the population of students is around 3 thousand and 100 teaching and professorial staff (LNAU official website, 2018). The structure of the university included 10 faculties before evacuation, and the university now has 8 functioning faculties. The university was unable to recover any facility from the occupied territories (Osvita.UA, n.d.). The university's infrastructure currently comprises of five units located in the territory of Luhansk and Donetsk regions. However, it mainly carries out its educational and research activities on basis of three agricultural universities of Kharkiv. The research is also carried out on the basis of research institutions, laboratories, and veterinary clinics of Kharkiv region. In 2016 the university became a full member of Kharkiv university consortium, which enabled LNAU to get a free access to scientific libraries, as well as, scientific and methodological resources of scientists and leading researchers from Kharkiv universities (LNAU official website, 2018).

Timeline	Evacuation events
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Mid-May 2014	University temporarily stopped the educational process
September 2014	University rector and his followers decided to side with the illegal LNR government
Mid-October 2014	University infrastructure captured by the rebel group
Mid-October 2014	University initiative group conducted negotiations with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine in secret
Mid-October 2014	Ministry of Agricultural Policy of Ukraine ordered displacement and operation of LNAU in Kharkiv
Beginning of November 2014	University started the educational process in a new location
2015	University is re-subordinated from the Ministry of Agricultural Policy under the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine
July 2015	Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine decided to deprive the university of public funding – decision repealed
End of February 2018	Luhansk governor proposes gradual transfer of the university to the Luhansk region

5.1.3. Case university 3: Volodymyr Dal East-Ukrainian National University

Volodymyr Dal East-Ukrainian National University (V. Dal EUNU) is a comprehensive state higher educational institution of Ukraine, established in 1920 in Luhansk. In the past, the university specialized in machine-building. Currently, the university provides training in 92 bachelors' and 93 master's degree programs in natural sciences, hard sciences, humanities, and economics (V. Dal EUNU official website, 2018). Before the displacement the total number of students enrolled at EUNU was over 13 thousand, and around a thousand of faculty members. After the evacuation, the university enrolls some 7 thousand students and provides working place for over 600 teaching and professorial staff. The structure of the university included 13 faculties before evacuation, and currently there are 7 functioning faculties (Education in Ukraine, n.d.). The infrastructure of the EUNU before displacement consisted 110 branch offices, 40 research laboratories, a scientific library, 18 educational complexes, 6 dormitories, a publishing house, a business center, and other structural units (V. Dal EUNU official website, 2018). In September 2014, the university was temporarily transferred to the city of Severodonetsk, where the educational process was restored on the basis of its separate structural subdivision (i.e., Severodonetsk Technological Institute). The evacuation of higher education to Severodonetsk intensified the further development of distance education.

Timeline	Evacuation events
End of May 2014	University temporarily stopped the educational process

Beginning of June 2014	University infrastructure captured by the rebel group
Mid-July 2014	Some university staff still conduct the admissions campaign in Luhansk
August 2014	University admission shuts down and employees flee from Luhansk
End of August 2014	University administration conducts an emergency council where it was decided to continue the admissions process in the branch campus in Severodonetsk and conduct educational process in remote mode
Beginning of October 2014	Ministry ordered displacement and operation of V. Dahl EUNU in Severodonetsk
Beginning of October 2014	University started the educational process in a new location

5.1.4. Case university 4: Donbass National Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture

Donbass National Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture is a specialized public higher education institutions that was established in 1947 in Makiivka (periphery of Donetsk) (DonNACEA official website, 2018). It prepares specialists in construction and architecture. The academy offers bachelor's and master's degree programs in architecture, urban planning, industrial and civil construction, urban management, construction of roads and airfields, economy and management for construction (Osvita.UA, n.d.). Before the academy's evacuation, it enrolled around 5 thousand students and 800 faculty members. The academy's student enrollment after relocation dropped to some 400 students and 60 teaching and professorial staff. The organizational structure of the academy comprised of 7 faculties, which decreased to 5 after evacuation. The academy was the last one evacuated during the military conflict in the East due to leaderships' position to support the illegal authorities. In December 2014, the DonNACEA was evacuated to Kramatosk. The academy was unable to retrieve any infrastructure.

Timeline	Evacuation events
End of August 2014	University rector and his followers decided to side with the illegal DNR government
Beginning of October 2014	University administration decided to start the educational process despite the Ministry's order not to commence
Mid-October 2014	University initiative group conducted negotiations with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine in secret
November 2014	Initiative group tasked to find a location and new leadership for DonNACEA
Beginning of December 2014	Ministry ordered displacement and operation of DonNACEA in Kramatorsk
Beginning of February 2015	University started the educational process in a new location

5.1.5. Case university 5: Donetsk National Technical University

Donetsk National Technical University (DonNTU) is a public technical higher education institutions established in 1921 in Donetsk (DonNTU official website, 2018). DonNTU provides training in 28 bachelors and 47 master's degree programs (Higher education, n.d.). Before the evacuation, the university enrolled around 18 thousand students and 2 thousand faculty members. Currently, the university's student population is 4 thousand students and 400 teaching and professorial staff. The structure of the university before evacuation included 9 faculties, currently is comprises of 5 faculties, and 2 technical schools. In 2014, DonNTU was transferred to Krasnoarmeysk (now Pokrovsk) to its structural unit - the industrial institute. The University conducts the educational and scientific activities utilizing the infrastructure of its structural subunit.

Timeline	Evacuation events
End of May 2014	University rector notified students and staff the university was not shutting down but operating in remote mode
Mid-August 2014	Projectile fired into the office of the vice-rector who got injured, university driver killed in the courtyard of the University
End of August 2014	University temporarily stopped the educational process
September 2014	University started the education process in Donetsk while negotiating its transfer to their branch in Krasnoarmiysk (now Pokrovsk)
Beginning of October 2014	Ministry ordered displacement and operation of DonNTU in Krasnoarmiysk (now Pokrovsk)
Beginning of November 2014	University started the educational process in a new location

5.2. Impact of armed conflict on displaced higher education institutions

The impact of crisis on higher education depends on the threat an educational institution is exposed to. With regard to impact of the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine, it disrupted the mission of more than dozens of higher education institutions, and threatened the wellbeing of people, financial resources and institutional legitimacy. The data that has been collected as a result of twenty-five in-person interviews identified the following areas of crisis impact on conflict-affected higher education in Ukraine: human resources, infrastructure, operation and legitimacy. The financial impact has been also identified as a common concern among the displaced universities.

5.2.1. Impact on human resources

The crisis of human resources is one of the most pressing issues for displaced universities. The issues of human resources had a drastic impact on the functioning

of displaced universities. The above-reported challenges faced by university employees and students, from physical threats to domestic and social problems have created conditions for effective 'brain drain'. On the one hand, majority of displaced universities reported retrieving over two-thirds of population of faculty and students. On the other hand, a significant portion the population began disintegrating due to unfavorable working, study and living conditions. As evidence the interviewees stated the following:

Our university has a very strong corporate culture and, as a result, many students and teachers have moved with the university to Vinnitsa. Originally 7,000 students moved, but then around two thousand left or were dismissed during the initial period. Many students and teachers found opportunities somewhere else in Ukraine (Director of center, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

The professorial staff started leaving. We must understand that they are strong personalities and respect that. Here, they think, they have less opportunity to develop (Deputy director, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

At first two-thirds of teachers came here, but because people had little or no personal finances, many teachers went to other universities, where they found better conditions (Dean, DonNTU, 20/04/2018).

On average, the displaced universities retrieved two-thirds of the students and staff (see Chart 1). In the universities where the enrollment was lower, has been caused by delayed evacuation or sabotage from the efforts by the university administration that stayed on the occupied territories. As one of the interviewees from DonNACEA explained:

Very few moved to Kramatork from Makiyivka, about 10% of teachers and 5% of students. Now we have about 55 teachers and 600 students. Then in our university we had 5000 students and about 450 teachers. We have representatives of many departments now (Top management, DonNACEA, 19/04/2018).

And there were not even employees. Only 92 employees moved from Lugansk, and the first year we had about 1000 students. The students in Lugansk were not allowed to leave. We trained only the studies from Luhansk, because it will late to open an admissions campaign (Top management, LNAU, 17/04/2018).

About 4000 students and over 300 employees confirmed the desire to continue their education and work in DonNTU through online registration (Top management, DonNTU, 20/04/2018).

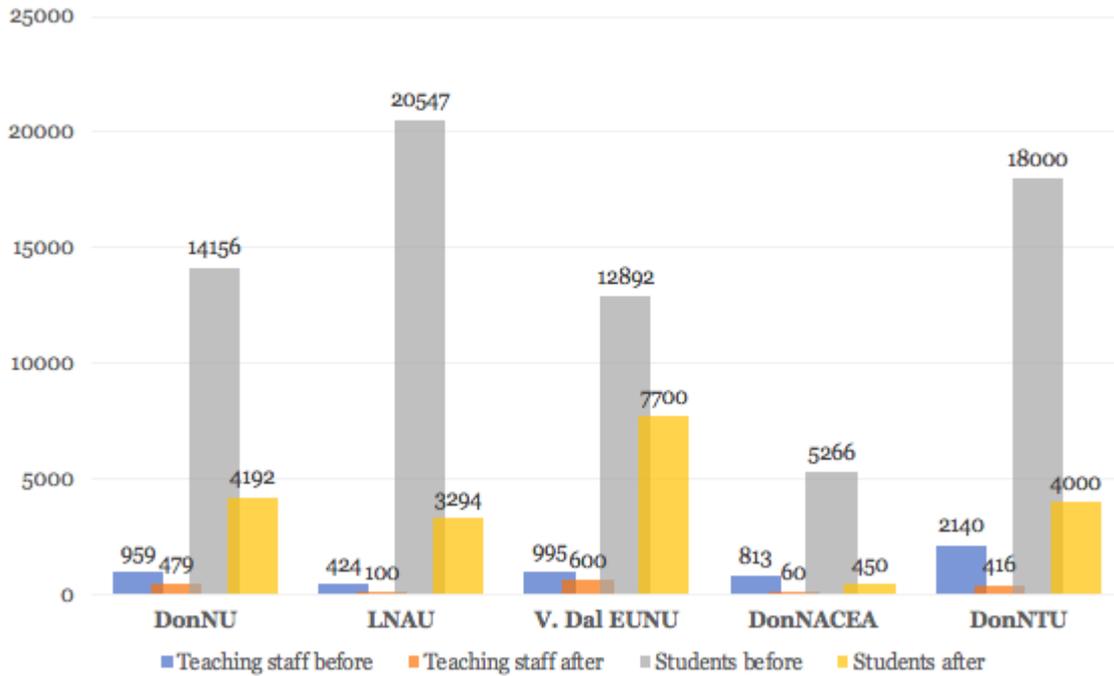


Chart 2. Retention of staff and students at five displaced universities (Source: Displaced Universities, 2017)

Furthermore, the armed conflict in the East took its toll on students and faculties' physical, psychological, social and domestic state. In the conditions of illegal occupation of Donetsk and Luhansk, exile of the Ukrainian administrative and security structures, and support by many university leaders of the pro-Russian side, no one could guarantee and protect the safety of the employees and students in the prime of conflict. Staff and students from the selected universities, frequently mentioned being exposed to physical threats prior and in the process of the displacement. It was dangerous to announce one's position publically in support of evacuation, in fear of being thrown to jail or into the basement⁶. For example, the interviewee from DonNU described the situation as such:

The university staff volunteered to help out the employees and staff who were captured by the DNR terrorists. Some people were blacklisted by the DNR people and could not take their personal documents from the city (Top management, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

LNR created a situation in which it did not support even basic rights, not to mention the right to education. We were denied the right to life, the right to privacy, private property (Dean, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

In June and July when anti-terrorist battles intensified and more military and civilians' casualties were reported daily, university employees and students started fleeing the cities. However, even that experience was challenging due to constant

⁶ To be thrown into the basement - a practice administered during the interrogations by the LNR and DNR rebel groups on the occupied land. Victims reported being physically assaulted and literally kept in the basement for many days as a form of punishment.

shelling and bombing on the front line. The interviewee from Dal East-Ukrainian National University reflected on the situation as follows:

I traveled along the line of the front where the shelling was taking place and I was worried about my life. I was able to take the laptop and the University seal with me, although it was unclear whether I would be allowed to cross the border with it (Dean, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

Those who for personal reasons were unable to leave, hid in the home basements trying to survive the bombing. A faculty member from Luhansk National University stated the situation was further complicated by water and electricity shortage and a ban imposed by the LNR and DNR people to forbid men aged 17-45 to leave the cities (Faculty, LNAU, 17/04/2018).

A student who studied at my faculty and went out of the basement where they were hiding from the shelling and told me that he did not do his assignments. I told him to forget about the task and hide in a basement. I was very scared for his life (Dean, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

Having acquired a status of internally displaced persons (IDP) after the universities were evacuated, the employees and students required moral and psychological support. Students left their homes with nothing but enough money to get them to the location of evacuated institutions.

At first, the most important thing was to meet our students, hug them and feed them. They came with nothing, no documents or clothes. Later, to deal with such psychological traumas, we established a Center for Social-Psychological Rehabilitation of the IDPs (Top management, LNAU, 17/04/2018).

The increase of internally displaced individuals in Ukraine led to establishment of certain social protection systems which caused a lot of social changes and created challenges for displaced students and university employees. For example, a middle management interviewee reflected on the following social issues:

We have many social problems, for example, social workers constantly check us and our place of residence. We also do not have right as internal refugees to participate in local city elects and claim private property for our university. Also, we face discrimination and prejudice in the community we transferred to. It is not uncommon to hear some call you a 'separatist' (Dean, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

In addition to social constraints created by the conflict, the determining factor in the well-being and safety of people is the security of the domestic resources. Domestic issues, such as void of personal finances, problems with finding affordable or any housing for displaced individuals have prevented them from effectively developing and integrating in the local communities and educational activities of university.

Domestic and financial problems faced by staff and students one of the leading causes for “brain drain” experienced by most of the displaced institutions.

We have a leakage of personnel, a lot of talented scientists and teacher leave for other universities, because they are no longer able to rent an apartment, pay extra money for moving, and in addition, support their relatives. The conditions were not created for people to function normally in a crisis situation. Almost 40-50% of our salary goes to housing, food and clothes. Some faculty share housing together with students. And there are no clear prospects for the future. It certainly reduces the enthusiasm with which people work (Director of institute, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

The most difficult was the organization of domestic life. Some people could not decide to come, because when there is a huge demand for housing in the city, the prices increase, and not everyone can afford it. As a consequence, we have a reduction of staff, and it affects the quality of education and the regional significance of the university too. The teaching staff we lost, were substituted with local teachers (Deputy director, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

These social and domestic problems, in my opinion, still drag us and they prevent people to fully develop. There is a constant turnover of staff, because people struggle financially. If offered good conditions, people would stay to work here. Because of domestic problems it is hard to engage in real science (Dean, DonNTU, 20/04/2018).

Concurrently, the need to constantly react to psychological, social and domestic problems has contributed to constitution of personal resilience. Multiple interviewees alluded to personal growth and increased adaptability to critical situations:

We have overcome a lot, and we have received the greatest experience of management of crisis. Everyone at his own place reconstructed everything from scratch. The skills of crisis management will be useful to us in our new life, because now we are prepared to work out new mechanisms, build new relationships and resolving conflicts (Director of center, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

Overall, the impact of conflict on human resources of the displaced universities has resulted in poor enrollment of students and shortage of qualified personnel. Having perceived physical, psychological and social challenges, students and employees could not cope with the unfair increase of rental prices and low living conditions. The Ukrainian government and the universities were unable to secure proper living conditions, thus, leaving no choice to seek opportunities elsewhere.

5.2.2. Impact on infrastructure

The seizing of infrastructure has been considered the first major impact of conflict on viability of higher education institutions in eastern Ukraine. The armed groups have captured the main study and laboratory buildings, as well as, student dormitories. The classrooms and housing became makeshift outposts, storage, accommodation or

headquarters for pro-Russian rebel groups. The interviewees from three universities reported a similar situation:

On September 16, 2014, the infrastructure of the DonNU has been seized by the rebel groups, including two dormitories which were used for terrorists as a housing 21 university cars captured by DNR people (Top management, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

There was a takeover of buildings and dormitories by armed people (Top management, LNAU, 17/04/2018).

The University was occupied by the military people because it was situated very conveniently not far away from the building of the Security Service of Ukraine. We also had a five-story building and in the end of May armed people came to the door and told our students empty the building in 30 minutes (Dean, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

Two out of five universities under study were able to effectively evacuate to their branch campuses or functional units on the Ukraine-controlled territory (i.e. V. Dahl EUNU and DonNTU). Since universities in the first years of the evacuation reduced by more than half in size, the infrastructure available in the branch campuses was sufficient for certain educational activities and basic research, however, as the universities started expanding more resources were required at some. The interviewees from the above-mentioned universities reported on the impact of conflict on the infrastructure in the following way:

We were lucky, because we had an institute branch here in Severodonetsk and there were already faculties that were preparing and educating students in the same disciplines we did in Luhansk, so they only needed to expand their size and the rest was duplicated. However, there are not enough laboratories, and auditoriums to carry out educational activities. We do not have enough scientific equipment. This is something we cannot solve yet and try to use the infrastructure of our partners. The humanitarian faculties also struggle with limited facility, especially in terms of library resources (Top management, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

We evacuated to our subunit - an industrial institute, because there was a material base and other training infrastructure. This equipment, which remained in Donetsk, was old and out of date and was not widely used. In Pokrovsk we acquired new modern equipment. This equipment is used for students and faculty for research and education. Overall, we have three buildings with a yard and the two dormitories for students and staff as well (Dean, DonNTU, 20/04/2018).

Other three universities were tasked to find available infrastructure for rental or purchase. For example, the LNAU was evacuated to Khrarkiv, where they shared the infrastructure with three local agrarian universities. The robust infrastructure has helped the institution to provide educational training and conduct research activities, however, lack of own infrastructure has limited the institution's opportunities for foreign investment and created numerous organizational problems.

If we had our own building, we could be eligible for international support. I have been fighting for our own infrastructure for three years, but there are legislative issues that forbid us to obtain such ownership rights. Currently, we don't have money to pay the service fees and do the renovations in the building. We have an agreement with three rectors of agrarian universities, who allowed us to use their equipment. We are now using their material and technical resources. We pay for auditorium rentals though. I agreed that our University would be included in the Kharkiv University Consortium, so that we could use the library resources as well (Top management, LNAU, 17/04/2017).

The two universities acquired infrastructure that has not been used for educational purposes before, DonNU acquired a former crystal factory and DonNACEA - a warehouse. The infrastructure needed major renovations and capital investments to obtain necessary facility, to comply with the standards of education and research in the country. One of causes for inability to improve the facility initially after displacement was the ban issued by the government, forbidding state organizations to purchase any infrastructure and furniture in the time of war. All universities have partially restored the material and technical infrastructure with the help of humanitarian assistance. However, the major issue still remains, neither of the institutions own a student housing, which hurts their enrollment prospects.

We were able to restore material and technical infrastructure at about 10-15%. This is solely due to humanitarian assistance. Here in Vinnitsa our laboratory facilities are restored only for training of first and second year students, but not more. The money we get from self-paying students is all spent on covering infrastructure we rent (Director of institute, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

Now we have five functional faculties equipped with necessary office supplies. The students received new and modern equipment. For the educational and scientific process. But there still a lack of laboratory equipment, but sometimes the absence it forces our students to master theory better (Dean, DonNACEA, 19/04/2018).

Accommodation become a “stumbling block” for most displaced universities with regard to students and employees organizing their domestic lives. Some universities, namely DonNU and LNAU to this have not obtained student housing. While smaller higher education institutions, such as DonNACEA whose number of students is less than a thousand received a housing infrastructure from the government this year. The remaining two universities, V. Dahl EUNU and DonNTU have been using the housing infrastructure of their branch campuses. The following are the reports of interviewees from five universities about the impact of conflict on accommodation:

We were faced with the problem of providing student housing. Our students live in the dormitories of other local universities. They were provided practically with nothing, we had to buy beds for our students and bed linen in order to ensure they have basic living conditions. This situation is still dragging on, it has not been solved yet. I do not

understand why we cannot use, for example, empty hotels that are available in the city (Director of center, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

About 534 students and 37 teachers live in six hostels of six universities in Kharkiv. Students do not live free of charge and pay the same amount as non-displaced students. The biggest problem with these hostels is that they are not in good conditions (Top management, LNAU, 17/04/2018).

We moved to Severodonetsk, because there was our branch and two dormitories with available rooms. Of course, this is not comparable to what accommodation we had in Lugansk (Dean, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018)

We had a problem with the student dormitories. This year the Ministry handed over to us a dormitory, which we need to renovate (Top management, DonNACEA, 19/04/2018)

We were helped by various companies to rent their hostels for discounted price. Our affiliate institute had additional two dormitories which we share (Head of department, DonNTU, 20/04/2018).

Limited or non-existent educational, administrative, technical equipment compelled university employees to donate and share the facilities that were retrieved from the former campuses or homes. Some interviewees recall the situation as follows:

We came here when there was nothing. It was very hard, because we did not have basic working supplies, such as computers, tables, chairs. We restored it ourselves at first (Director of center, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

All faculty sat in one room. We did not have any equipment and we used our own computers at work (Top management, DonNACEA, 19/04/2018).

Initially, we brought printers, laptops and other technology from home to organize working conditions (Dean, DonNTU, 20/04/2018).

The process of displacement, as mentioned previously was more reactive and spontaneous, than planned and proactive. The lack of a systematic evacuation plan, uncoordinated and unorganized actions of many universities resulted in tight possibilities of the universities for retrieval of any scientific and methodical documentation, financial and statistical reports, archives or personal records of students. The process of restoring the legal, organizational, statistical, regulatory and other critical documentation became a complex, protracted bureaucratic process. The interviewee from LNAU stated that the lack of documentation still complicates the functioning of the university:

In order to coordinate actions with the State Treasury, approve a staff list, estimate the income and expenditure, amend the Statute, it was necessary to provide numerous documents, such as statements on the opening of accounts, documents with samples of

signatures and seals, and various certificates, copies of copies, which we did not have. The transfer of the university was carried out without the transfer of documents, personal files, or archives of documents. We did not even have documents on study curricula or training load. I corresponded with all the officials and asked for help to provide us with some kind of material support, but they refused (Top management, LNAU, 17/04/2018).

The loss of documentation was, however, less significant at three universities. The V. Dahl EUNU and DonNU were actively using online platforms, where critical communicational, operational and legislative data were achieved.

The fact that many of our processes were automated and actively used the electronic cloud system to store information played a big role. We saved a lot of documentation. Later the access to our database was blocked by those who stayed on the territory of Donetsk (Director of center, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

When we arrived here, we began to restore the documentation. Some people left Luhansk and removed hard disks with information. Also for ten years we have been developing online learning platform, so many study documents were stored there (Dean, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

In some situations, the employees risked lives and in secret transferred documentation before the information about official evacuation was announced. In secret and under a lot of scrutiny some faculty managed to retrieve university documentation. The evacuation of documentation was dangerous, since the illegal authorities ordered to detain the “unfaithful” faculty members and conduct checks on them. For evidence, the staff of DonNU and DonNTU reported the following:

There was a dean who pretended that he was throwing away garbage from his office. Later that evening he collected the documents in the garbage chute, so that later he could transfer them to Vinnitsa. He brought this documentation home, scanned and then placed it back at his office. And until the dean had enough documentation, he did not leave. As soon as he had what he needed, he took it all away and transferred to Vinnitsa (Executive staff, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

It was not safe to take out anything, because they checked bags. We sat in the evening and made scanned copies of our curriculum, educational documentation which we sealed and downloaded the entire database and evacuated it. We really arrived prepared (Dean, DonNTU, 20/04/2018).

5.2.3. Impact on operations

The operational crisis is a frequently mentioned area of impact. Operational crisis threatens core values and vital functions of an educational institutions, and it interrupts the day-to-day operations. The conflict in the East caused operational crisis to 18 public universities, which as a result of the evacuation needed to restore

the educational and research activities. The impact of conflict on the operations of institutions is intertwined with the infrastructural damaged that prevented the displaced universities to run the operations within a short time. The chronology of the start of operational crisis of five displaced universities under this study varies. Some continued functioning throughout the summer despite the terrorist activities taking place nearby, but most shut down the universities hastily to protect students' safety and release them from studies in advance.

Back then the university was partially operating, we organized the enrolment campaign in summer. In the end of August, the university was not operating, although the Ukrainian flag had been hanging on the university's main building, later the flag has been taken down. From September 15, we have not left for work. On November 3, we re-opened the educational process in a new location (Director of institute, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

In June, the university was still functioning. As of November 3, we had already started to work on the new location (Top management, LNAU, 17/04/2018).

In the end of May, the decision has been made by our administration to stop the education process of the University, because it needed to guarantee students and teachers safety to pursue education, and there was no such opportunity. I was responsible for the enrollment campaign. We held the campaign in July, and soon it became too dangerous to continue. I called head our branch unit in Severodonetsk and we agreed to continue admissions there (Dean, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

The interviewees from DonNU and V. Dal EUNU noted that the availability of distance education⁷ and online learning tools⁸ as an alternative to traditional classroom learning during crisis has become a significant factor in restoring the operations of the university. When the conflict occurred, these institutions were able to retrieve educational material, initiate academic continuity, and retain students and employees, due to existing distance learning platforms that were in active use before the conflict took broke out.

It became a big advantage for us that the university has been trying to introduce the distance learning and online learning in practice. We even tried to accreditate and obtain licenses for some of our courses to become a number one institution in Ukraine that provides distance education. We had that practice in place to better perform the communication with some of the university's branches. Besides, it became a tremendous advantage for us during the evacuation, because we could actually retrieve the documents. We were able to collect a lot of information from our own computers and other people's and renew a lot of information after the

⁷ Distance education - "delivery of education through the use of mail correspondence, CD-ROMS, or video-taped lectures" (Houston, 2017).

⁸ Online learning tools - educational software that are supported by the Internet and "act as platforms for online education courses to be delivered to students anywhere, anytime using various means...computers, smartphones, etc." (Houston, 2017).

displacement (Dean, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

In 2014 and 2015 the educational process was conducted in a remote mode. We determined the rules of work and I was responsible for distance learning. We worked with the platform Moodle. We saved a lot of information, and it allowed us to retain students and teachers, because we could quickly restore the educational process (Director of institute, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

To retain the students and faculty, the universities were allowed to extend the recruitment. The process of restoring operational continuity included renewing the students' study place, restoring students' documentation, conducting promotion campaign and enrolling new students. The interviewed university representatives reported that in the first year of the evacuation, the institutions had to undergo numerous formal procedures to verify students' identity, reinstate the staff, renew study plans, and create working schedule to launch the educational process. Therefore, the university provided flexible schedules for students and teachers, until everything was reinstated and back to normal. During the first academic term, many universities organized a so-called "rotation mode", where teaching faculty and students traveled to displaced universities periodically, and conducted lectures and seminars with students for two weeks. This solution also became practical because of shortage of faculty the universities experienced in the beginning. One interviewee stated the following:

First semester we organized training for teachers and students in a "rotation mode". Students from one faculty came and teaching faculty worked with them for two or three weeks. It was convenient to have such process at first, as we had a limited number of seats in the student dormitories and auditoriums, and the availability of teachers, who had to teach in many specialties, was sparse. We compiled a list of hours for faculties and for one semester, students came two times for two weeks, and then we held examination (Dean, DonNTU, 20/04/2018).

The "rotation study mode" was a necessity in the condition of war, where students and staff had to travel long distances and drive through checkpoints in order to get to the university. However, some staff reported study mode having problems with regard to security. Certain students and faculty were manipulating the scheme by attending both the evacuated university and a "twin" occupied university. For example, in the first year after displacement, the DonNU's security service conducted ongoing monitoring and invited staff and students for questioning. The student interviewee remembers the events as such:

At first it was difficult to understand who was transferring from Donetsk to Vinnytsia, because there were students who even studied for few semesters here and there. Students tried to manipulate and resort to lies, but now it's settled because the university administration requires students to be present during academic year (Student representative, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

The number of staff and students the displaced institutions were able to retain was reflected in the number of faculties and departments the universities reinstated. The inevitable process of reorganization of numerous institutional structures took place. Due to the fact the number of reinstated representatives from the faculties and departments was uneven, the universities needed to merge some departments and faculties, and re-assign staff, where there was a shortage of qualified personnel. The interviewee from V. Dahl EUNU reports on the organizational accordingly:

There was reorganization of both departments and units due to a shortage of staff and a decrease in faculties. Because we moved to our branch campus, there was a duplication of departments, and those were merged. The study unit was faced with challenges because they didn't know how to handle representative from not 2 but 9 faculties after displacement. The Institute of Economics and Institute of Marketing, as well as the Department of Finance and the Department of Banking were merged (Director of institute, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

On average, the universities retrieved more than half of faculties. Although, the number varies significantly as some universities (see Chart 2).

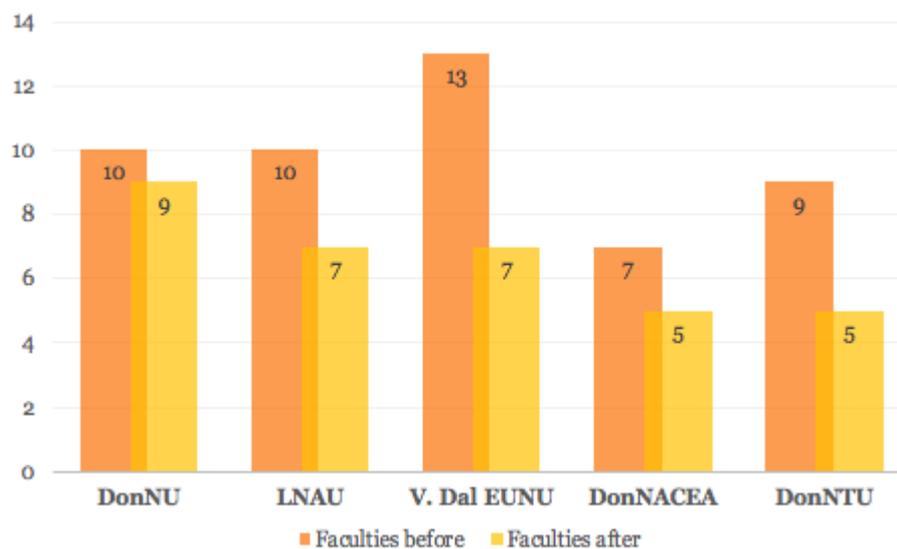


Chart 3. Number of faculties at the displaced universities before/after (Source: Interview transcript, 2018)

The process of reorganization and merging was necessary survival strategy by the displaced universities to fill the vacuum of knowledge and qualified personnel that emerged as a result of conflict. To ensure academic and scientific continuity in the shortest time, the universities promoted the faculty and staff, who lacked prior administrative and managerial experience. Such decision, although understandable, delayed the reinstatement of educational process owing to problems with staff incompetence, miscommunication, weak organizational dynamics and more.

A lot of staff who had administrative and managerial experience stayed in Donetsk. There I worked as a deputy dean, and when I moved to Vinnytsia I became a dean. I

was the only one who responded to the offer. I did not have much managerial experience, although I did have communications with most colleagues. Honestly, I was overwhelmed with bureaucratic issues. The weakness of our faculty was that all the key administration remained in Donetsk, including the dean. And the faculties that moved with the deans had easier transition period, because they had good relationships and common beliefs (Dean, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

All the people who evacuated never held leading positions, and it was a disaster when they needed to take over the supervisory duties. They could not even clearly articulate their thoughts and propose some specific tasks for the university and its development. They used to be ordinary teachers in Luhansk, but here the situation allowed to promote them to deans or deputy deans and it turns out it was not a good idea (Top management, LNAU, 17/04/2018).

We did not have a single dean who was previously a dean or deputy dean, and not a single rector or vice-rector. Everyone knew the work from the other side. As a teacher who became a dean I need to know where to get the information from to comprise the curriculum, for example. We traveled to other universities to learn the experience, look at how they organize educational process and structure the curricula. Surely, at first we made many mistakes. But eventually we rebuilt the educational process (Top management, DonNACEA, 19/04/2018).

On the other hand, the interviewees reported the eventual promotion of many faculty provided an opportunity for young scientists and teaching staff to grow and open the potential of the faculty, that would have been overlooked otherwise. Furthermore, the interviewees agreed that the knowledge vacuum cleaned the universities from the Soviet past and updated the universities with progressive and open-minded ideas.

There was a good cleaning of staff, because many who had Soviet views remained there, and progressive minds - moved here (Dean, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

Our University in Lugansk was always Soviet and slightly old in opinion, and they had some strange connections. I tried to break everything here and rebuild according to the trends of today and according to the students' need (Top management, LNAU, 17/04/2018).

Qualitatively those teachers who worked in science and were good teachers, almost all of them came here. The makeup of the university here is clearly progressive and forward-looking (Head of department, DNTU, 20/04/2018).

The interviewees reported that due to a “cleansing of human resources”, the universities changed their organizational culture, where more attention is paid to issues, such as the innovative forms of study process, scientific research and international activity.

Our university has changed because there are many new teachers, learning has become more interactive, interesting new approaches appeared. Our department is

trying to stimulate students to such methods that are innovative and European (Student representative, DNU, 16/04/2018).

For us, it is also clear that this conflict has a great potential for opportunities for us. We have changed the curricula and approaches to learning, because the skills that the student needs are changing, and the university cannot stay the same. Now, a lot of attention has been paid to various organizations in this region and there are a lot of opportunities for both teachers and students. (Dean, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

Ironically, the conflict has also opened new opportunities for student development. The student interviewees from five universities noticed that the crisis has stimulated them for self-mobilization and activism. In addition, the government has allocated social quotas for the students from the displaced universities with regard to student programs, seminars, conferences, internships and more opportunities.

5.3.4. Impact on legitimacy

The reputation of a public organization is probably the least thought of consequence of crisis, yet one that causes the most harm to organizations' viability over prolonged period. The armed conflict in eastern Ukraine that scattered 18 public universities across Ukraine away from the reliable and sufficient infrastructure, shattered their reputation that has been challenging to recover. The conflict and evacuation have had severe impact on the universities' enrollment prospects, quality and quantity of entrants, partnerships opportunities, and created unfair conditions for competition in the regional higher education arena. Additionally, the protracted nature of the war has paused the reintegration question, and in turn, launched a process of institutional assimilation and loss of the regional significance and strategic importance.

The government tried to respond to the enrollment problem by: (1) allowing students from the uncontrolled territory of Donbass to enter the displaced universities without a national external examination; (2) assigning a fixed volume (quota) of government stipend places in all specialties and educational levels to displaced public higher education institutions. Nevertheless, the participant universities reported that the acquired displacement status created more stigma and prejudice against these institutions, particularly that of conflict, unsafety, separatism, and deteriorating quality and "brain drain". The government legislative and financial preferences not only failed to resolve the problem of enrollment quantity-wise, but in fact, helped to do the opposite - attract students from regions with lower scores, as the students with high scores are effectively recruited by prestigious big universities in Ukraine or abroad. The interviewees described the issues as follows:

Unfortunately, the composition of students desires better, because students have very low preparation. In Donetsk, we had formed a public image, where we had different generations of students studying at our universities. But here for this region we are

new, and if we raised the bar for admissions, we would be effectively knocked down by local competition. Of course, we need quality, and not quantity. But the best students do not come here. One more problem is the quality of students has not been the priority for our government, the Ministry transfers money for how many students you study and hours you teach. If we teach less students, this could mean laying off the teachers (Dean, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

There is a problem with the quality of students, because the best students are legally attracting⁹ the best universities and good students they do not always want to stay in Severodonetsk. This system is on the one hand justifiable, and on the other hand it makes the outflow of students, because they concentrate in big cities and there is no regional development. The student composition at our university is also affected by the fact that the territory of the Luhansk region, is largely agricultural and rural, and the quality of school education is also lower, so because of that our university may not receive students with a highest knowledge (Deputy director, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

There is a big problem with enrollment of students. The students come here either because of the fixed stipend coefficient or because they failed to enter a more competitive university because of lower scores. It's usually local students too. It is very difficult to attract students from nearby regions, because we have tough competition with powerful universities from Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhya, Dnipro (Head of department, DNTU, 20/04/2018).

The universities employed efforts to counter the problem of enrollment by changing their usual approach to admissions and introducing more proactive methods to attract students. For instances, V. Dahl EUNU created representative offices in the neighboring regions to establish communication with potential students and advertise the university. They report 10% of students are recruited via those offices and consulting centers. Since many embassies retracted the foreign students from conflict-affected universities, the EUNU plans to open a branch in Kyiv to recruit foreign students again. The LNAU has diversified their admissions approach by using marketing means more effectively and working with media to promote the university. In order to improve the quality of recruited students, DonNU plans to conduct tutoring sessions for struggling students.

The war also affected the partnership opportunities of the displaced universities, which have not been fully recovered to this day. Some universities mention that the partnerships exist at the expense of the opposite parties, due to financial incapacity to support them. It was also time-consuming and demanding to restore the communication between the international and local partners, as the universities split as a result of conflict. The government assisted displaced institutions by issuing a letter to embassies and existing international project partners clarifying the

⁹ Voucher systems – ‘money follows student’, s a new scheme introduced by the government to provide funding to those public universities that attract the highest achieving students.

legitimacy issue. Overall, the displaced universities have been proactively searching for and reinstating cooperation with international and local organization.

5.3. Crisis management approaches

The displaced institutions of higher education have lost almost everything: premises, documentation, libraries, equipment, laboratories. Among the main causes of such a loss are the lack of decisive actions and decisions on organized departure from the state, the betrayal of the former leadership and the transition to the self-proclaimed Ministry of Education of the DPR, the seizure of buildings by militants, opposition from the teachers remaining in the temporarily occupied territory. The lack of sufficient communication regarding the activities of the internally displaced universities also exhausted the trust of the students and scientific and pedagogical staff, who left universities looking for better opportunities.

5.3.1. Failure of crisis planning and prevention

There is a fresh memory of both the war and displacement or evacuation of higher education institutions in the relatively recent history of Ukraine. Since a significant portion of Ukraine served as a battlefield during the Second World War, there was a serious risk that the German troops could progress in the direction of Moscow. Therefore, the Soviet government commanded to evacuate enterprises and educational institutions to the far east of Russia in the 1940s to avoid potential threats in case the front line moved. For many recently displaced institutions in eastern Ukraine it is, therefore, their second evacuation (i.e., Donetsk National University, V. Dahl East-Ukrainian National University, Donetsk National Technical University). The process of transfer of higher education institutions was poorly facilitated, there was a shortage of facilities and accommodation and some of the institutions suspended their activities after evacuation, and new higher education institutions were rebuilt with the same names after the War (Dodonov, 2016). As interviewees confirmed:

This is generally a second evacuation of the university. The first evacuation was during the Second World War and our University was evacuated to the city of Kungur in the Perm region beyond the Urals in Russia. In fact, four years the university was in evacuation and did not carry out the educational process. The history of our university in the first evacuation remained a white spot – it is still unknown what happened to it. I raised this question many times. It is necessary to track this down, because this experience would have been useful to us (Director of center, DonNU, 16/4/2018).

During the World War II (1941-1945), the HEI was evacuated to Omsk. It became the basis for the present Omsk Technical University in Russia. After returning to Luhansk, the HEI was renewed almost from scratch. By 1960, it had been reorganized

several times by joining other educational institutions, enlarging and renaming, and that year it received the pre-war name Luhansk Machine-Building Institute (V. Dahl EUNU Website, 2017).

While the 1940s evacuations were unsuccessful, it would have been valuable to learn from mistakes of the past nonetheless. A record of a crisis memory is essential in preparing and preventing crisis as whole and/or mitigating some of its volatile consequences. Burrell and Heiselt (2012) point out that learning from the experiences of the past crisis can prevent future crisis. However, a failure to design even a basic action plan for crisis can create confusion, lack of clarity in how the university manages the crisis (Zdziarski et al., 2007). Unfortunately, the knowledge of previous evacuation was never recorded in a systematic way and exists as a mere statement of fact. Therefore, none of the institutions that have been displaced in 2014 had an existing crisis management plan. A view shared by all interviewees supports the claims in the literature:

There was no prior evacuation plan in place. Universities were confused, they didn't know how to act (Top management, LNAU, 17/4/2018).

Additionally, due to the rare incidence of crisis and high expenses for the emergency-prevention schemes, the government neglects to prioritize public security (Drennan et al., 2015). The interviewees frequently mentioned that the government failed to proactively facilitate the process of evacuation due to lack of preparation and planning.

There was no state policy that would be clear and understandable. And since all this time such program has not been developed, many processes fell apart. (Director of institute, management, DonNU, 16/4/2018).

While none of the universities mentioned being informed about a university emergency plan or have been participating in safety drills before the crisis occurred. In one article about the history of evacuation of Luhansk National Agrarian University, an event resembling planning and prevention stage of crisis management took place. The university management conducted a meeting with the university staff regarding the safety measures in time of war.

On May 20, 2014, the last staff meeting of LNAU took place. We were told about the history of war and the preparation of bomb shelters on our campus. The student group supervisors were instructed to inform students about the evacuation procedure in case the bombing begins (Article, LNAU, 2018).

The more severe the crisis is, the more actors get involved in the response to the situation on campus. Emergency personnel outside of the university premises, such as the city police or other local or regional emergency groups can play a key role during the crisis prevention and response (Zdziarski et al., 2007). Except if these

security structures cannot perform their duties due to destabilization as a result of the internal armed conflict occurring in the East.

5.3.2. Crisis of national security and administrative structures

The events that preceded evacuation of universities were marked by blood and violence. Between April - May 2014 the terrorist groups entered the cities of Donetsk and Luhansk, and the Ukrainian government was unable to prevent and respond to the initial threat. In May 2014 when the Security Service buildings in Luhansk and Donetsk were captured, the armed rebels carried out multiple attacks to seize other governmental infrastructure so as to establish their authority. The pro-Russian rebels hung their flags over the Ukrainian state universities and governmental building to emphasize on a newly established authority. The entrance of rebel groups into the cities and the capture of regional administration in Donetsk and Luhansk, marks the beginning of crisis for higher education institutions in the East, as the following statement suggests:

After the Girkin's gang was allowed to enter Donetsk and after the Russian forces together with mercenaries entered Donetsk and no-one did anything to stop them, it was clear we will need to be evacuated (Top management, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

On May 8, 2014, I went to work and noticed there was a DNR flag hanging over the university...these events unfolded too quickly, but we still did not understand that it was already the territory of the DNR, there were still illusions that it would be possible to work in the Ukrainian university and on the Ukrainian territory (Middle management, DonNACEA, 19/04/2018).

Meanwhile the self-proclaimed republics of LNR and DNR commenced the process of consolidation of their power - fighting off the Ukrainian military. The end of May and all months of summer 2014 caused severe casualties in the Ukrainian independent history. The major battles for Donetsk airport, Sloviansk, Kramatorsk, Debaltseve and Illovoysk left many terrified and resulted in massive humanitarian crisis, forcing millions to flee the Donbass region (Tuzhden News, 2017).

For some universities, this chaos and horror resulted in a pre-term shutdown of educational activities and escape of thousands of students and university staff to safer locations during the summer 2014. For others, it resulted in illegal seize of the university property (e.g. campuses, dormitories) and a forced evacuation of students. In a normal emergency scenario, the university administration could resort to local or regional emergency personnel. However, in the case of internal conflict and a hybrid war where the national security structures have been compromised, the universities had two options, to partner with the occupying authorities or realize the lack of reliable local security structures and look for the state emergency coordination. For example, the top management interviewee stated the following:

The local authorities supported the aggressor and it caused a big problem, because if it were an attack on the university, then one could turn to the police, the security service or the government's leadership in order to support and explain how to act. But in this case, this link of the regional level authority was absent, therefore, it was necessary to rely directly on the Ministry. Alas the Ministry also did not know how to act, therefore, indeed, the actions were spontaneous and reactive (Top management, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

In addition to dealing with crisis of security structures, the universities also experienced a crisis of governance bodies. After LNR and DNR proclaimed their secession from Ukraine in August, they established new governance bodies, for example establishment of Supreme Council, Supreme Court and ministries. The self-proclaimed Ministry of Education of DNR and LNR in September ordered all educational establishments in Luhansk and Donetsk to comply with the new authority. The document has been provided by one of the interviewees from DonNU, it reads as follows:

Order on re-subordination of educational institutions: In order to ensure the full functioning of the system of education and science of the Donetsk People's Republic, I order from September 1, 2014 to re-subordinate the institution of education and science of all levels, types and forms of property located on the territory of the Donetsk People's Republic (Minister of Education and Science of DNR, Kostenok, 2014).

To effectively influence the educational institutions and ensure their compliance, the self-proclaimed Ministries of DNR and LNR appointed pro-Russian leadership and management in the universities where they felt resistance and refusal to cooperate. For instance, the interviewees described the following situations unveil in the universities:

Two days before the seizure of the university, my former dean of the faculty released an appeal on our official website that he was quitting and that he was leaving Donetsk, because he was under pressure from DNR (Student, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

All members of the Academic Council were invited to an emergency meeting in August. I remember that the representatives of the DNR came with the armed people. The representatives of the so-called Ministry also came. They notified us who was appointed as a new Minister. A former teacher of the department of Political Science, who was fired from our university for corruption was appointed as a new rector. He reported that the university was moving to the Russian standards of education (Top management, DonNU, 16/07/2018).

In addition, there was a parallel academic council in Luhansk, which appointed a new rector and deans who collaborated with the LNR (Student, V. Dahl EUNU, 17/04/2018).

Furthermore, most of the interviewees reported being indoctrinated, pressured, intimidated and exposed to daily propaganda, which effectively contributed to the forthcoming institutional cleavage. The divide along the political and moral lines instigated daily arguments between faculty and students, creating unhealthy organizational environment in which academic continuity was no longer possible. A number of interviewees shared such statements as a proof:

People had different views and it turned out that our team split in half, some decided to leave their job and some decided to remain (Top management, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

We saw that the policy undertaken by the DNR authority was that of terror and force. They came to educational institutions and forced faculty and students to sign a statement that they supported the DNR government (Dean, DonNTU, 20/04/2018).

Direct involvement of educational establishments in the armed conflict and series of attacks on university leaders and faculty, encouraged those who refused to tolerate the new leadership to act. As a result, self-organized initiative groups emerged as a countering force, comprising of the university leadership, faculty and/or students. The initiative groups, in secret, notified the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine about the situation in Donbass and demanded a response. In September 2014, the Ministry discontinued funding for the state universities that remained on the occupied territories and publicly disowned them. In the following months, the university initiative groups in coordination with the Ministry organized displacement of the state higher education institutions to the territories with a functioning legal framework of Ukraine. The process of transfer became the 'last straw' that finalized the institutional divide. With each transferred university grew the number of duplicate (twin) universities on the occupied territories of Donetsk and Luhansk.

To this day it is unclear how these institutions finance themselves and in which manner they operate. Some claim the illegal universities have established cooperation with the Russian universities, allowing their students to receive dual diplomas, which can be recognized by Russian authorities. However, the majority of the interviewees stated that the diploma and the DNR and LNR educational establishments are not recognized by any country, including Russia:

Now everyone gets a diploma from the DNR and I do not know where they go with these diplomas, because they are not recognized anywhere. Russia did not recognize these republics formally (Director of center, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

In addition to the university's infrastructure, the organizational culture underwent transformation. It separated the faculty and students on supporters of the illegitimate pro-Russian authority and supporters of the evacuation of the universities by the Ukrainian government. The political position of the university leadership was particularly important during the crisis management process.

5.3.3. Crisis of the university leadership and management

In the process of displacement, the university leadership was directly threatened and exiled from the university if their politics was not reflective of the pro-Russian regime. On the other hand, in some universities, the leadership bluntly supported the rebel groups. In two of five universities, the rectors supported the pro-Russian side (i.e., Luhansk National Agrarian University and Donbass National Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture). These decisions were detrimental to the institutional integrity and facilitation of the evacuation process. At both universities, the leadership's support of terrorists resulted in a delayed evacuation - two-three months later than other universities. Furthermore, the position of the leadership made it challenging for the crisis management teams to influence the faculty and students' opinion regarding the evacuation. The leadership infiltrated the organizational culture with the false claims and promises. As a result, after their displacement, LNU and DonNACEA retrieved less than one-third of their teaching staff and students, in comparison with that of half in other three universities.

There was no prior evacuation of the university, because the rector sided with the LNR authorities and categorically banned students and teachers to leave this higher educational institution (Top management, LNAU, 17/04/2018).

The leadership in Makiivka took the side of the DNR, the rector of the university turned out to be a traitor. Our university was the last to be displaced and this is precisely because the leadership was against Ukraine. I think that the decisive factor why so few students and teachers moved with us was the leadership's position. The rector who served in his post for 25 years had a high degree of trust among everyone (Top management, DonNACEA, 19/04/2018).

In the displaced universities where the rectors stayed loyal to the Ukrainian position, most of the vice-rectors and other administrative and managerial staff stayed on the occupied territories. The decisions made by the higher authorities resulted in similar decisions made by employees, who required coordination in the process.

In some universities, the university rectors who moved to Ukraine-controlled territory declared their incapability of facilitating the crisis management processes due to health problems or senior age¹⁰. Support of pro-Russian side by many university administrators and managers, self-removal of some university leaders from the crisis management responsibilities, delayed the crisis response. The crash of leadership and managerial structures led to crash of roles and responsibilities. Since there was no authority to execute orders necessary in crisis response, the staff and faculty who were evacuating individually decided their own degree of responsibility.

¹⁰ It is important to note that in Ukrainian higher education for long time there has been a tradition of the 'everlasting rectors' who had a right to be re-elected for a number of consecutive terms. This tradition has been gradually disappearing with the introduction of the new Higher Education Law, introduced in 2014, which allows rectors to be re-elected twice for a period of five years.

One interviewee mentioned that his former leadership transferred the responsibility to him in a critical moment:

When something exploded in the building in front of the campus, we decided to close the admissions office. The former vice-rector gave me all the seals and left Luhansk. He told me that I somehow saw what to do. He said that everyone had left. I was the head of the admissions committee and he transferred the responsibilities to me? Everyone understood they had their own level of responsibility and there was no desire to assume responsibility that you do not own and force a person to do something that he refuses to do. There were no orders to do anything, everyone decided for himself (Dean, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

In a state of violent conflict and university crisis, employees were absolved of their primary responsibilities, everyone was at liberty to decide their actions. As the interviewed university representatives stated, dire urge to take action created self-organized initiative groups that took on the responsibilities as temporary crisis managers with a self-appointed temporary leadership. The interviewee from DonNTU noted that “it was a shame to take on all the work that the pro-rector had to do initially, but it needed to be done, nevertheless (Faculty, DonNTU, 20/04/2018).

5.3.4. Self-organized initiative groups (response phase)

The Ukrainian displacement process is characterized by many actors as rather ‘chaotic’, ‘unorganized’, ‘confusing’ and ‘uncoordinated’. A number interviewees stated that the displacement processes was rather reactive and self-organized by separate individuals and the crisis management teams were formed in the process and not before the crisis.

Displacement was a self-organized process, we waited for some reaction from the Ministry. It was more chaotic and the process was hardly manageable; the university administration decided in the month of August 2014 that it was necessary to move somewhere (Director of institute, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

We had a group of like-minded people and I knew who to rely on. The conversations went not open, there were no appeals, we just approached the people and asked who supported evacuation (Top management, DonNACEA, 19/04/2018).

In many universities, there were initiative groups who acted simultaneously without each other knowing about it. The crisis teams were usually small, consisting of 5 to 10 people initially, and gradually expanding after certain mechanisms were established. The crisis teams were represented in some cases by the university leadership only, in other, by the management of the university, faculty and students. For example, at DonNU, some students and faculty were negotiating the crisis management plan in parallel with the university’s rector.

An initiative group was joined by students and teachers who collegially decided that the university should be transferred and suggested to create an online registration form for those who supported the transfer. Then it turned out that our rector was negotiating with the Ministry in Kyiv together with a group of initiative students, regarding which city to choose for the university evacuation (Director of center, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

Students' role during the crisis is often acknowledged as one of the driving forces that actively promoted the displacement of universities. The students' representative reminisced about his involvement in numerous undertakings:

On September 24, we planned a rally with the journalists' union. They helped to make a letter that we distributed to all media outlets. On September 23rd, we sat in a dormitory painting posters and then phoned the Minister of Education to dissuade us from the rally. The rally did not take place, but then everything happened quickly enough, so the rector informed us that we will be displaced to Vinnytsia (Student representative, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

We [students] wrote a letter to the Ministry, the Cabinet of Ministers, Prime Minister about the transfer of our university to a safe environment, where a study process can be conducted peacefully. We spread it around and needed it signed by as many people as possible (Students representative, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

5.3.5. Crisis management action plan (response phase)

To reiterate, there was no consecutive plan regarding the action of universities in case of institutional divide and armed conflict. For the displaced universities, the processes that took place were largely spontaneous and unpredictable.

The situation was very unorganized, because nobody could imagine what could happen and no one could understand how to act in such a situation. We were not ready and I think that in the future there should be an algorithm for such actions in the event of an armed conflict or some kind of terrorist acts. The team and leadership of any university should understand how to act (Top management, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

However, the initiative groups that emerged demonstrated an ability of universities to mobilize their actions within a short period of time. Since all public universities are owned and governed by the State, its actions needed to be negotiated and agreed with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine or other responsible Ministries. All universities on the occupied territories in August 2014 received an order from the Ministry not to start the educational process. While this decision was ignored by the administration that sided with the pro-Russian self-proclaimed authority, the coming months of Autumn 2014 were determining the future of these universities as a whole. The initiative groups contacted the Ministries responsible for coordination of these universities. As the government, itself was not prepared to deal with such a form of crisis, and there was no national evacuation plan to follow, the initial reaction of the Ministries was delayed and inconsistent. Lack of response from the Ukrainian

authorities propelled universities to facilitate the process. In line with a strong sentiment regarding inaction of the authorities, the interviewees expressed the following thoughts:

There were no clear plans for the transfer of the university. In order for the letter [order on displacement] to appear, it was necessary for the students to be in Kyiv and threaten to protest against the inaction of the Ministry of Education. The state withdrew from this process and presented this initiative to a group of people to engage in the evacuation process on their own (Top management, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

In the Ministry tried to move away from the topic of the universities in crisis, because this is an unpleasant topic, and because something needs to be done. But this kind of noise in the media made them accelerate their actions (Student representative, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

There was no state policy that would be clear and understandable. It was necessary to pursue a specific policy concerning the displacement of universities in advance, and they [Ministry] overslept this moment. Our past evacuation experience and the European experience of displaced universities should have used to build on that experience and create some kind of mechanism or algorithms that would pull us out of the crisis in the summer (Director of center, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

In some universities, the leadership organized academic councils before negotiating with the Ministry, so as to intensify the decision-making process and prepare a plan that would be put forward for Ministry's approval later. In fact, in East-Ukrainian V. Dahl EUNU, the evacuation of the institution occurred prior to the official statement from the Ministry.

At the end of August 2014, we had an academic council. Since the Ministry could not say anything, we agreed to conduct educational process in distance mode and move the university administration to Severodonetsk. Then we wrote several appeals to the Minister, who supported our proposal to some extent and an order was issued to transfer the University officially to Severodonetsk (Top management, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

After the first few universities were successfully evacuated (i.e., DonNU and V. Dahl EUNU) a model was created according to which other universities' displacement was conducted. The scheme was borrowed by other Ministries, such as the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agrarian Policy who had a few universities under subordination.

On October 20, 2014, we conducted a meeting in Kyiv with the Ministry of Agrarian Policy to negotiate the displacement university to a safe area in Kharkiv, where we could guarantee a conducive environment for students and teachers to continue their work. We created a working group that worked around the clock. Only three people

started restoring initially on restoring the educational process (Top management, LNU, 17/04/2018).

After finalizing the process of displacement, universities at a new location had to respond to a number of organizational and legislative issues. Before running the educational process, universities needed to create new documentation, make changes to the university legislation, register their location, open accounts at a State's Treasury and more. Since the Ministry blocked the flow of salaries and stipends during the illegal capture of the universities, most of the faculty and students have been deprived of a financial support from two to three months or even up to half a year.

During the process of displacement, we did not receive salary for 2-3 months. Same thing happened with the students, they did not get scholarships. We didn't have money to build the university in the new conditions. Only for the New Year we were paid wages, but summer and part of autumn wages were not refunded to us (Dean, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

It was just a catastrophe. We told people to come to a new location, but they did not get paid their salaries for so many months. We were not paid, because the official date set by the Ministry was November 3. We could not receive salary in October, for example, because this it was considered a non-working month. Although everything was done in October (Top management, DonNTU, 20/04/2018).

Although, the situation was not equal across all five displaced universities. An interviewee from eastern-Ukrainian V. Dahl EUNU reported no major delays:

In our university, there were no problems with the delay of the scholarship for our students or salary for the faculty. On September 1, everything was paid and we also received refunds for the holiday months of summer. Delay in paying was only for half a month or a month (Dean, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

In addition to personal financial struggles that made it challenging for people to execute their working tasks, some universities were sued for not returning pre-war debts or expenses that have been made by the twin universities on the occupied territory. As one interviewee stated:

We had to repay all pre-war debts to Naftogaz of Ukraine, to easing companies, to security firms. We were blamed for a debt of 6 million dollars and the Ukrainian courts have ordered us to pay them. But we do not have many self-paying students and we do not conduct any corporate activity to repay it all. In Lugansk, we had a huge farm and a huge amount of land that was being rented. Now it's hard to buy something for the university and we are even grateful for the printing paper (Top management, LNAU, 17/04/2018).

Dealing with financial constraints affected the process of retrieving staff and students. In some occasions, there were no more than five people to facilitate the organizational process. The universities started forming lists to assess prior students and staff enrollment. Communicating the decision on universities' displacement and their locations were the key tasks for the crisis management teams for the next few months.

5.2.6. Crisis communication (response phase)

As mentioned previously, the displaced universities and the government were unprepared to deal with the consequences of the armed conflict, hence, no crisis communication plan was initiated.

The biggest problem is the lack of any systematic plan regarding communication. Some universities reaction was faster, others more delayed, because some universities were displaced in August and some in December. There was no proper communication channel and the lack of clear announcements from university leaders before and in the process of displacement (Student representative, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

The most unfortunate situation happened in July, no one could understand what to do with the university students. From August to October, I had two phones and I received 3800 calls. Every week I wrote operative information from where the person called me. What he is looking for and who he is looking for. I established connection with some university rectors and passed on the information to them (Top management, LNAU, 17/04/2018).

Somewhat delayed and unsystematic flow of information is tied to countless factors taking place simultaneously - unpreparedness and lack of available plans, self-removal of administrators and managers from the coordinating responsibilities, lack of trained staff and faculty to handle the communication process, poor guidance by the government, and wrong assumptions that the university targeted audiences were informed by the media and other social networks.

Informing of students was conducted in very strange way. On a page in VKontakte (Russian social network) some faculty posted that the university is being displaced. This information has not been confirmed by anyone, nobody was informed officially. In fact, it was not clear what was happening, the university was moving to Severodonetsk but we were told that we will study remotely (Student representative, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

Crisis notification system could have been better. I learned the information about the displacement from my supervisor, but maybe someone did not receive such information. There was no cohesive communication. Word of mouth played a bigger role than the official communication (Student representative, DonNTU, 20/04/2018).

Since evacuation process was poorly communicated and valid information was not reaching people quickly enough, some universities' targeted audiences disenfranchised, and went to study or work elsewhere. The inconsistent information received by the students and staff only increased anxiety and undermined credibility of the institutions.

Our university lost a lot of specialists, professors and teaching staff, and students who left because they didn't know what to expect (Student representative, DonNTU, 20/04/2018).

All things considered, basic communication channels were gradually installed. Since targeted audiences differ in terms of their expertise, cultural norms, educational level, age, and background experience, specific messages needed to be designed to reach and resonate with each of these groups. Universities prioritized the largest audiences first (e.g. students) and smallest - last (e.g. partners, donors). Initially, the communication of students was unorganized and sporadic, some contacted them via personal contact or through social networks, but mostly the informing of students happened via phone mode.

In the phone mode, we called each student. The government besides providing a registration form on the website for those who wanted to move to Vinnytsia, provided nothing (Director of institute, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

In August, we began to ask what to do and where to go, but no one knew and did not understand what was happening. In September, a registration was opened so that people could register and confirm the move to Vinnitsa. Students say they waited for three months to be contacted and told what to do. Instructors and other staff were responsible for contacting the students to find out if they were coming back (Student representative, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

The students didn't have the information where the displaced university was located, we tried to inform students in September that the university is functioning in Severodonetsk. The students were informed by the heads of departments, group monitors. We communicated the information every possible way, through phones, emails... We collected information about the location of students and possible ways to communicate with them too (Dean, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

Although, some universities who were able to retrieve their website domains from the occupied territories posted information on the universities' websites about their displacement. For example, the faculty interviewees from Donetsk National Technical University stated that most of the employees in addition to being informed personally, received official confirmation on the displacement via the University's website. Some students remember reading the information in the news. Many media outlets cooperated with universities and became active in informing targeted audiences at their behest.

There was a campaign organized by students and then supported by media: “Save Alma Mater”- this initiative was organized to help the university find the campus they could be displaced to (Director of Institute, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

Due to close cooperation with Kharkiv media information about the new location of the university began to spread throughout Ukraine and abroad (Top management, LNAU, 17/04/2018).

Some universities in crisis were aided by an additional and effective communication channel. Exiled regional administration structures, such as the Department of Education and Science of Luhansk region enabled a toll-free hotline for targeted university audiences containing operative information regarding the status of Luhansk and Donetsk displaced Universities. One such former Department employee who now occupies a top management post at the Luhansk National Agrarian University, explained how she promoted a facilitation of a national hotline:

When I worked in Lugansk, I was in charge of all higher institutions and universities, then I came here to Kharkov and received information from my leadership, which also was hiding somewhere in the Luhansk region. I was instructed to collect information about the universities and coordinate their displacement. We set up two hot-lines for students from the occupied regions. I worked with three ministries because each university was subordinate to its own ministry. Most of the calls came from students of the agricultural university because they were transferred later. Due to the lack of electricity and active hostilities in the East, students and teachers, and parents were in the most difficult psychological state of confusion. Thus, they needed the safest and the most reliable information (Top management, LNAU, 17/04/2018).

Numerous circumstances impeded crisis communication in the most unpredictable ways. Interviewees reports having difficulty informing students and staff, and coordinating their actions with their superiors initially due to problems with electricity, transportation and mobile connection.

The rector called from Kyiv and said that we needed to prepare a letter, we sent it until the light was cut off, there was no possibility to connect via the Internet, no mobile communication and no communication channels worked in Luhansk (Dean, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

It was more challenging to organize official communication in cases where the university leadership supported the pro-Russian authority, since in these universities most of the staff and students supported and respected the decisions of the leadership. For example, at Donbass Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture stated that they communicated the information about displacement in secret:

We found out that we will move a little before December 1, I came to work and notified the students who I thought in person. We were the last university that got

displaced. The difficulty was that many universities were transferred with their rector, our case was different. Therefore, we could not officially inform people and we did everything in secret. We relied on our own contacts and informed students via personal encounters (Top management, DonNACEA, 19/04/2018).

Additionally, the process of communication was delayed and challenged by the universities that remained on the occupied territories. Interviewees mentioned being exposed to instances of propaganda, false claims, miscommunication, distortion of information, sabotage of displacement by the faculty from the separatist territories. As a result of many actions taken by the initiative crisis management groups were hindered by the fallible information provided to the students. In some instances, the universities who have not stopped their operation in Donetsk and Luhansk were made to believe that the legitimate university stayed and was not displaced anywhere.

I went to Lugansk to collect my documents. They started telling me that the university in Severodonetsk is a false university, that the legitimate university works in Lugansk and was never transferred. It was a tense situation when everyone was divided, we did not understand the situation, many conflicts began arising on a personal level with friends and colleagues (Assistant staff, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

The university faculty who stayed in Donetsk called us before the beginning of the educational process to let us know that the displacement of the University is a fake (Student representative, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

Being stormed by propaganda and allegations, the universities were compelled to inform students the relocation of their institutions and dismiss and refute the invalid information. To defend their legitimacy and establish credibility and trust with their target audiences, universities started clarifying what displacement meant legally.

When we contacted students, we tried to be quite effective, but also tolerant and correct, paying more attention not to politics, but to what kind of institution remained on the occupied territory, what kind of diploma students will receive. We needed to be very tolerant in order not to provoke conflicts, because we knew that credibility of our University was at stake (Assistant staff, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

For displaced universities the primary audiences, like students, staff and faculty, was prioritized in the communication process. Albeit the communication attempts were frequently undermined as a result of subversive actions undertaken by the pro-Russian universities, and many students became hostages of uninformed illusive situations.

5.3.7. Role of government in crisis management (response phase)

The government as whole was struck by the conflict in the East, and failed to prepare for and prevent crisis from happening. As the anti-terrorist actions commenced in the

East, the government's emergency funding was diverted to this cause. The universities that required urgent financial, logistical and technological support were deprioritized and put on hold. The Ukrainian government that has been frequently marked by corruption, inept governance and limited human and fiscal resources failed to adequately plan and respond timely to the university crisis in eastern Ukraine. As a former employee of Department of Education and Science under the Ministry of Education of Ukraine remarked:

The Ministry should have summoned an interdepartmental commission that would have constructed an evacuation plan for universities from Donbass at the state level. They should have notified the universities of the follow-up actions not in October or August, but in May. We were all helpless, all Ministries did not know what to do and our University mentality was also to sit and wait for a top-down instruction. Nobody wanted to make any decisions (Top management, LNAU, 17/04/2018).

One interviewee humored that the foreign governments took action to protect their citizens studying in Ukraine before the Ukrainian state realized that there was a problem that needed an initiating response.

Embassies of the countries representing our [foreign] students were very disturbed and tried to retract their citizens to avoid possible risks. The university could and responded to these letters and instructions as a public institution after letters from the Ministry came to release international students and finalize their examination in advance (Dean, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

Before the displacement of universities, leadership and faculty attempted to communicate their constant exposure to considerable threats and life-endangering situations. Their complaints and concerns were often ignored or layed off. In some extreme cases, during shelling and capture of infrastructure the universities had communication breakdowns due to power cutoffs and direct assaults.

The Ministry did not understand the difficulty of the situation and failed to establish hotlines. They did not understand that there was no connection in Luhansk and that the students did not understand where to go. I called the Ministry of Education and told them that only "Kyivstar" [sim provider] can reach Luhansk, thus they need to urgently enter the hotline with this provider. They laughed at me and told me to file my complaint via fax. It was absolutely unprofessional. Many of those people have already been dismissed. But I found support in the media and reported the importance of this issue and then the Ministry introduced the hotline, because I made this problem public (Top management, LNAU, 17/04/2018).

Combination of communication breakdowns, limited personnel and financial resources and over regulated bureaucratic procedures made the Ministry inflexible, insensitive and unable to perceive the risks the university employees were exposed while performing their duties. Here is an example of a faculty interviewee describing communication with the Ministry:

According to the Ministry the conditions for admissions campaign could not be violated and we were required to start the process on July 12. We appealed to the Ministry that we were threatened by armed people who demanded that we accepted the documents from July 1. The Ministries reiterated their position, that we could not violate the current legislation, so we had to start from July 12. The Ministry did not understand the seriousness of the situation and did not make any clear decisions. The institution that was supposed to be strong - was not strong at all (Dean, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

Everything was moving very slowly. It was necessary to change the accreditation to a new address. Therefore, we needed to make an amendment to the statute of our university and send it to the Ministry for signing. They have been signing it for 1 year and 8 months! For the Ministry, such procedures are a routine, but for us it was urgent, because without a new accreditation, we could not receive foreign investment. The Ministry really could not perceive the risks it was putting us in (Top management, DonNACEA, 19/04/2018).

Due to high degree of dependence on the state of the public higher education institutions in Ukraine, universities expected crisis management efforts to be coordinated by, agreed with and initiated by the state. The first such instructions appeared in late August 2014, when the decision has been made to halt the start of the academic year for institutions located in the occupied region. When the first displacement of universities took place, a resolution by the Cabinet of Ministers was passed to transfer all organizations and state enterprises to safe territory.

Since the displacement was a new phenomenon in the Ukrainian independent history, legal framework needed to be crafted. To ensure operation of the displaced universities, numerous legislative changes were required, starting from the displacement procedure itself. Meanwhile the displacement issue was being considered, the Ministry of Education and Science implemented two important yet conflicting decisions that managed to respond to the universities in crisis, and later harmed them. One of such decisions was an order issued by the Ministry on August 31, 2014 that allowed students from the occupied territories to temporarily enroll in other conflict-free Ukrainian universities. It allowed students to transfer, while preserving their study level, specialty, and a state stipend. As the students began enrolling, many problems appeared: students struggled to receive accommodation, study programs differed in content, accepting universities were ill-informed, thus, exhibited resistance. And since there was a limitation of student places at each university, displaced students had to undergo rounds of refusals.

Another crucial decision ordered by the government was a ban for public organizations to use public spending for purchasing any facility, such as office supplies. The ban was initiated to prevent the outflow of public money, meanwhile the displacement issue has been negotiated. Alas, the repeal of the ban was delayed

and the displaced universities could not purchase any supplies needed for creating a working environment and educational activities in a new place after displacement.

They could not buy anything, because the state decree came out, stating that due to war in the East, there is a saving of budgetary funds and all universities, depending on the situation, must not purchase material means, like furniture (Dean, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

Aside from finding a location for displacement and making infrastructure conducive for education process, the institutions required legislative support regarding a study process, namely retrieval of students, admissions of new entrants, student accommodation, accreditation procedures and other domestic issues. As countless interviewees stated, one of the most important legislations that allowed universities to survive was a permission to enroll first year students without a national examination certificate. Since many displaced students fled their regions without any documents, having no opportunity to prepare and take the national exams, based on this Ministry order such students could enroll at displaced universities based on their school certificates and internal university exams.

The violent conflict developed with great speed, making people evacuate in the times least expected. As the armed men captured the university's infrastructure, thousands of students that managed to flee the occupied territories often had difficulty retrieving their belongings and study documents. When this information was communicated to the Ministry, after some negotiations with the universities, certain documents, as little as a passport or other ID and a confirmation¹¹ from the Ministry that a student was enrolled in the past, allowed students to be re-established at same level of study.

To resolve the accommodation problem, which has been not been fully resolved till today, the Ministry issued a recommendation that 10% of total fund of places in state dormitories should be allocated to displaced students, allowing them to reside in these locations free of charge. The interviewees across all institutions point out that the recommendation is not a law that is 'set in stone,' there is no punishment for failure to comply with the recommendation. And so many students in most of cases are required to pay for their accommodation.

The letter has a recommendatory form. Well, you understand the difference between a recommendation and some kind of contractual relationship. It was not a formalized process with some agreement that obliges to assist the displaced individuals. Instead,

¹¹ EDEBO (Unified State Electronic Education Database) - collects documents and information about educational institutions in Ukraine. The database serves as a tool for preservation, protection and verification of personal data, in accordance with the requirements of the current legislation. Study documents of internally displaced students were retrieved from this platform and were used to renew students study places at displaced universities.

the letter had an advisory tone. And when we began to accommodate our students, it turned out that in reality it was 10%, but, for example, 3% or no places at all that were allocated for internally displaced students (Director of center, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

Most of the displaced universities were unable to retrieve most of their infrastructure, and currently are using much smaller rented or borrowed property, such facility conditions would have been deemed inappropriate for educational process and would deprive any institutions of public funding. However, in the conditions of war the Ministry passed a Law 4718 exempted the displaced universities from any licensing and accreditation procedures until the conflict in the East has been resolved.

Licenses and accreditation certificates of the temporarily displaced higher educational establishments for their implementation of educational activities in the field of higher education continue to operate until the return of the temporarily occupied territory to the general jurisdiction of Ukraine or [until] the date of completion of the antiterrorist operation (Verkhovna Rada, Law №4718, 2016).

Most of the above-mentioned initiatives had not been established for a significant time, as everyone hoped that universities will be returned to their territories in a matter of few months. When it became clear that the conflict in the East is attributing features of a frozen conflict, the leadership of the displaced universities decided to unite their efforts in demanding more active measures by the government. As a result, a Council of Rectors of Displaced Universities was established on January 26, 2016.

Only after the transfer the rectors decided to meet in Kiev and understand what they need to do and then it was decided to establish a Council of Rectors of Displaced Universities. There was no cohesion between rectors, everyone shouted their problems. The process of uniting the efforts of displaced universities took a year to implement (Top management, LNAU, 17/04/2018).

We appealed to the Verkhovna Rada (Ukrainian Parliament) and Lilia Grinevich (Minister of Education) to host a round table with rectors of displaced universities. It was voiced that universities financial support and organizational support. A lot needed to be done at the legislative level. The first year of functioning of displaced universities was very complicated, many aspects were not regulated by law, and the regulatory authorities demanded from us, at the same time, that we must comply with the legislation. Then, after a year, the council of rectors was already organized and it has taken actions to initiate the adoption of a law that regulated the activities of the displaced universities and in accordance with this law, it was already possible to act most systematically and together (Top management, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

The Council is an advisory body of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine. The Council was created to establish better communication between displaced universities and the Ministry, and lobby urgent issues faced by the universities. Due to their strong lobby a number of laws were amended and created more favorable conditions for these institutions. For example, the Council of Rectors helped to

implement the Law #4718 “On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine Regarding the Activities of Higher Educational Institutions, Scientific Institutions Displaced From Occupied Territories...”, which: (1) legally defines the displaced institutions; (2) regulates the validity of accreditation certificates; (3) sets the norms of the number of persons studying on one position of research and teaching faculty as coefficient of 0.8. The Law #6116 “On Amendments to the Law of Ukraine “On Higher Education” “on ensuring the right to higher education of persons whose place of residence is the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine””, which: (1) allows students from occupied territories to enroll in higher education institutions from specific regions of Ukraine (other than displaced institutions) based on the internal entrance examination; (2) provides study of Ukrainian language by persons whose place of residence is the temporarily occupied territory and who are admitted to study at one of the higher educational establishments located in the territories.

While these legislations have improved the conditions of functioning for the displaced universities, allowing them to benefit from the state allocation of funds, the money has not been sufficient to cover the major losses. The conditions under which these universities operate have only deteriorated after their relocation, as each of the institutions require much greater financial support to rebuild the physical infrastructure and restore their delivery capacity. An inadequate and uneven funding of a struggling higher education sector does not permit the displaced institutions to function fully, and provide its academics and students with appropriate facilities for teaching and research. The interviewees confirmed a deteriorating financial situation at displaced universities by describing the following:

I remind once again and the Ministry has pulled back from the solution of the problem of displaced universities and we have not received support here. Initially, we complained, wrote letters to the Ministry, because there was not enough money to organized educational activities (Director of institute, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

The ministry did not allocate any money to maintain and improve the state of dormitories (Top management, V. Dahl EUNU, 18/04/2018).

The Ministry did not give out a “penny” for our displacement. There was no water for several months in Pokrovsk and the first salary we received only on December 28 (Top management, DonNTU, 20/04/2018).

On balance, some interviewees mentioned the availability of financial assistance from the government. A monthly social stipend was provided in a form of 442 UAH (~ 15 EUR) to all internally displaced persons, which is approximately 10% of an average month salary in Ukraine. However, many problems existed in the way of obtaining a social support package from the state, which a number of interviewees regard as invasive and harsh:

As displaced persons, we are required to be checked once every six months, that we reside where we have registered, to receive the stipend. The inspectors come to your home without a notification. Sometimes they come during the working hours, when all staff and students are at the university. We have a lot of problems with that (Executive staff, DonNU, 16/04/2018).

The interviewees mentioned that in the initial stages of transfer, the infrastructural needs and purchases were crucial for their survival, therefore, some universities tried to receive immediate assistance from the international donor organizations.

Chapter VI - Conclusions

6.1. Summary of major findings

The Ukrainian higher education in the time of political and economic tensions and a full-fledged war in the Donbass region has suffered inevitable losses. The direct consequence of hostilities taking place in the East resulted in the evacuation of 18 public and two private universities, and 11 research institutes from the rebel-held territories. Additionally, some 40 thousand students and over 3 thousand of research and teaching faculty fled the occupied territories, adding to more than one million internally displaced persons around the country. Limited and non-empirical information on the experience of universities in crisis in Ukraine and worldwide, inspired this research. The study investigated the impact of conflict on higher education in Ukraine and identified crisis management tools that allowed displaced universities to survive and respond to the ongoing crisis. The study answered two primary research questions. A summary of the discussion is presented as follows:

- ❖ *What have been the impacts of the armed conflict on the displaced Ukrainian HEIs?*

The findings of the study about the first question revealed that five displaced universities that participated in this study were impacted by the armed conflict in the following areas: human resources, infrastructure, operations, and legitimacy. Concerning human resources, the sampled universities emphasized on the problem of staff and student retention, due to the unfavorable living and working conditions. On average the universities were able to retain less than two-thirds of academic staff and students. The regular propaganda, intimidation and physical assaults by the pro-Russian military groups have led to the physical and psychological distress of students and employees. The poor social conditions and low financial support of the internally displaced students and employees have led many to pursue opportunities in other cities of Ukraine or abroad.

The conflict had a crucial impact on the infrastructure of the displaced universities. The armed rebels have seized university campuses, dormitories, sports halls and used them for strategic military or personal purposes. All infrastructure, including educational and research facility, has remained on the occupied territory and the displaced universities were unable to retrieve it. Some universities evacuated to branch campuses or carried out their educational activities using the infrastructure of other universities. Those universities who had no option were offered to rent buildings that had no educational and research infrastructure. The main challenges pertaining to infrastructure were lack of adequate facilities essential for academic functions, such as the library, information and computer technology, laboratories, sports facilities, dormitories, lecture halls and other. Additionally, during the

transition period, the universities were in critical need of essential office and material supplies, necessary for routine operation.

The other area impacted by the conflict is related to vital operations of the displaced universities. The conflict delayed the start of the educational process by few months and interrupted the routine university operations, such as student recruitment, teaching and learning and research activities. The active use of distance education and online learning tools of some universities before the conflict enabled more efficient and less disruptive transition and allowed these institutions to retrieve educational material to ensure quicker academic continuity after displacement. Due to the critical shortage of teaching faculty, some universities established a “rotation mode of study” in which students were provided lectures and seminars for two weeks twice in an academic semester. As a consequence of a decreased number of staff and students, all five displaced universities underwent a reorganization of institutional structures, by revising educational structures and re-allocating staff. The population displacement and humanitarian crisis created a severe vacuum of administrative and managerial knowledge and experience, to which the displaced universities responded by promoting less knowledgeable and experienced personnel. Such practices also made it possible for young staff to fill in those positions, which allowed for novelty and unconventional ideas to come forward, in contrast to the previously dominant Soviet style of administration of the academic organizations.

The last area analyzed in this study is the legitimacy of the public displaced universities. The findings indicate the conflict negatively impacted the universities’ enrollment, quality of applicants, partnerships opportunities, and created imbalanced competition. Interviewees also stated the universities are subject to social stigma associated with concerns for stability and security, quality, and opportunities at displaced universities. Finally, the conflict has displaced universities from their local communities into a new environment, to which the universities had to adapt. The interviewees reported the detachment from the home base and the community they used to serve, led to the assimilation process, causing universities to gradually lose their regional significance and the function they carried out on the former territories. In turn, it could pose challenges for the reintegration of these institutions to their home territories in the future.

❖ *Which crisis management mechanisms are being deployed by the Ukrainian universities to cope with the crisis?*

Answering the second research question, the study revealed the limitations and effective crisis management mechanisms utilized in the case universities. All case universities reported unavailability of crisis planning and prevention efforts. The universities were evacuated in the Second World War; however, the evacuations were not recorded, which made it impossible for universities to extract any experience for future learning. The case universities had no available crisis management plans to

facilitate the response efforts, resulting in inconsistent, unsystematic, uncoordinated and ambiguous actions taken by the different stakeholder groups. The findings also revealed the absence of a national evacuation plan and negligence by the Ukrainian government to prioritize security of universities and take preventive actions.

The efforts of the universities to respond to the crisis were subverted by the illegitimate self-proclaimed pro-Russian authorities, who occupied the national security and governing structures, which effectively eliminated any opportunity for the universities in crisis to acquire assistance. The study also found that most of the university leadership and management sided with the pro-Russian authority and it, sabotaged the evacuation efforts by those who acted in disagreement. Findings revealed that the pro-Russian position of the top leadership delayed the process of evacuation and decreased the number of employees and students the case universities were able to retain. Additionally, the respondents reported that during the time of crisis, many administrators and managers self-removed themselves from their positions and transferred the responsibilities to less experienced staff. On the other hand, the study showed the crisis management response at the case universities mainly comprised of the establishment of the informal crisis management teams, the successive decision-making by the universities and the government, enactment of crisis communication and the coming-in of humanitarian assistance. According to the findings, the self-organized crisis management teams negotiated with the government the displacement of universities and responded to numerous legislative and organizational challenges in the process, the most significant of which was retention of staff and students. The case universities also reported the lack of a clear and consistent crisis communication plan. Some of the frequently used communication mechanisms to coordinate the transfer of staff and students were the establishment of the national online registration forms and toll-free hotlines. Lastly, the displaced universities reported the effectiveness of informal communication channels, such as social media and news outlets in coordinating the actions and informing the target university audiences.

6.2. Concluding remarks

The armed conflict in eastern Ukraine affected the core missions and operations of the higher education institutions. The conflict-affected universities suffered significant loss of human resources, destruction of infrastructure, disruption of daily activities, and loss of legitimacy and reputation. While in many ways these challenges emerged as a result of the conflict, they were also aggravated by the lack of planning and prevention efforts of the government and the higher education institutions themselves.

Although the literature on crisis management emphasizes the need for crisis planning and prevention, crisis response, crisis learning, and recovery, to adequately respond to the crisis, the study concluded that the crisis management activities were

not prioritized appropriately at the displaced universities and by the Ukrainian government. Limited information on emergency planning and prevention and a lack of a written emergency policy led to poor crisis management procedures and uncoordinated response of the displaced universities (Mitroff, 2006). This, in turn, caused massive displacement of staff and faculty, drained the institutional resource capacity, deterred the education and research processes, and negatively impacted the quality of higher education.

While the case universities emphasized on their role to serve, protect and respond to the needs of the faculty, students and the university community, there was a significant lack of awareness how to protect these groups. The universities were unable to effectively communicate the information regarding the status of the displaced institutions and how the needs of the target audiences were addressed. On the other hand, the study concluded the importance of informal communication channels in informing the academic groups about the crisis. The use of informal communication channels enabled the students and faculty to exchange information quicker when official communication channels were unavailable or unsecured. The importance of information communication channels is consistent with the arguments noted by Ramadan (2017) and Houston (2017).

The crisis response in the time of conflict has been carried out by the self-organized crisis management teams, consisting of the university leadership, faculty, and/or students, who undertook the responsibility as a temporary decision-making body in the time of crisis. The emergence of such initiative groups emphasizes the importance and ability of the temporarily empowered administrators, faculty and students to mobilize themselves in a short time and cause effective change. However, lack of clearly assigned roles and responsibilities often led to miscommunication and unsystematic actions by the team members. The self-appointed crisis management teams have not been trained in crisis management response. Thus, the lack of knowledge, competence and prior experience constrained the speed of response and the quality of decision-making. Nevertheless, the proactiveness of these groups proved that the individuals when empowered could take initiatives, create activities and interventions that contribute to the crisis management effort.

However, many processes crisis responses were also performed by single individuals, and not as part of the group activities. The persons without any coordination in crucial times took decisive action, such as to demand the government to evacuate the universities, to launch the toll-free hotlines, to find safe ways to ensure continuity of the recruitment process or to even initiate the distance learning as a temporary study mode during the time of crisis. The individual proactive partly appeared as a lack of strong leadership. Therefore, the role of leadership in the crisis management response should be reinforced (Jenkins, 2008; Zdziarski et al., 2007; Seo et al., 2011).

The study also revealed good practices that determined the ability of some displaced universities to mitigate the consequences of the conflict on the displaced universities. Diverse practices have been observed among the interviewees of the displaced universities, which depended on the conditions and resources available to them. The study revealed that ability of universities to preserve important documentation, operational and academic information during a crisis is determined by the extent to which the universities integrated the use of the information and communication platforms in their day-to-day operations before evacuation. The use of distance education and online learning tools by the faculty and staff was equally crucial due to the shortage of physical resources that were crucial for launching the study process. Therefore, the institutional use of the ICT could be considered an alternative mechanism of providing education and training, conducting internal communication, and storing data. Another useful strategy identified by a case university was the establishment of the university consortiums and sharing of the library, academic and laboratory infrastructure. In this regard, the higher education institution was able to compensate for the loss of infrastructure necessary to carry out its primary functions, such as teaching, learning, and research. Therefore, analyzing the infrastructural deficit of the higher education institutions in crisis is very important.

A consequence of conflict that is often left unaddressed during the crisis is a psychological trauma of students and faculty. At one case university, however, a social rehabilitation center has been created to address the personal traumas and help social adaptation of the victims of the conflict. Such practices as this need to be supported by the national government (e.g., through national health systems) and addressed in the general framework of crisis response. Psychological and physical traumas experienced by the students and faculty also require diligent efforts to address these issues on campus. Additionally, higher education institutions that underwent a traumatic experience need significant time to recover from the experience and return to normal operations. A comprehensive crisis management approach also needs to adequately address psychological traumas of people and organizations affected by any crisis.

It is argued that the role of the state in managing of crisis should be that of a supervisor, external management force, that has the power to reorganize, merge or liquidate universities if they are struggling to survive on scarce resources (Bobyleva and Sidorova, 2015). During any crisis, it is vital for governments to use their resources strategically, especially at the time of an armed conflict or war.

The crisis management advisory structures were created in the absence of a legal framework that could address the issues of the displaced universities. The Coordinating Center for Displaced Universities enabled institutions to unite the efforts of the displaced universities to discuss common issues. The Center supported the development of the displaced universities by providing them with funding

opportunities and conducting an assessment of their needs. However, its lack of decision-making power limited the extent to which the Center could influence the implementation of critical legal decisions by the Ministry regarding the operation of these institutions. Also, to coordinate the activities of the displaced universities the Ministry of Education and Science has approved the establishment of the Council of Rectors of Displaced Universities. The Council has successfully lobbied the laws, which provided certain privileges for the students and faculty of the displaced universities. However, these laws still fail to address the issue of quality of these universities and clarify the mechanism for the provision of the state assistance about educational and research infrastructure of these institutions. Despite the limitations mentioned above, the practice of establishing national-level intermediary units can be seen as a useful approach in coordinating and supporting higher education institutions to cope with different types of crisis. This approach may also be useful in higher education systems characterized by tight government control and those that grant considerable autonomy to higher education institutions.

The conflict also created a broader concern of the university reintegration to its home territories. Some institutions that were relocated to their affiliates within the same area continue serving the community needs and fulfilling their strategic goals. However, for those institutions that have been displaced to more distant territories, the integration into a new context and social and cultural environment created many challenges. In a few years, the institutions that were detached from their community risk losing their regional identity and assimilating due to the enrollment of mainly local students. The absence of the displaced students from these universities will create a problem for the preservation of their regional self-determination.

6.3. Implications for policy and practice

Proper and adequate support of higher education in conflict-affected can ensure sustainable development and recovery from the trauma of the conflict-torn higher education institutions. A strategic legislative, administrative, technical, and financial support at the national level has been undermined by the efforts to counter terrorist in the East of Ukraine.

The higher education in the East was ignored by the government and the opportunity to streamline universities' resources by merging and re-organizing some institutions overlooked. In regard to the role of government in mitigating and responding to the consequences of crisis, it is highly essential to understand the need for providing not only financial but all-rounded support, including technical and expert assistance, legislative support, coordination, providing protection, and support in recovery, and reintegration of the universities in crisis. The governments need to understand that the universities in crisis have special needs, in contrast to those operating in normal conditions, and need to work to address these needs actively. This may also involve

in some circumstance prioritizing the needs of higher education institutions affected by the crisis, for instance in allocating financial resources.

Due to the lack of a national awareness about the consequences of conflict for higher education in Ukraine and the lack of appropriate response, the response to the crisis by the government was poorly facilitated. Therefore, the governments need to monitor the impacts of conflict on higher education institutions actively and collect sufficient and reliable data, based on the experience of the higher education institutions in crisis, and effectively seek evidence-based solutions to the crisis.

Based on the informed analysis of problematic areas of the crisis-affected academic institutions and awareness about effective responses initiated, the state should create a national evacuation plan to prevent and respond to a variety of risks and crises in the future. In addition to proactively planning the response to any emergency, the policy-makers should address all stages of crisis management, such as planning, prevention, response, recovery, and learning. The governments should prioritize the planning and prevention efforts to avoid or reduce the likelihood of risks. Besides, close and active cooperation between the authorities and key stakeholders is required, which should establish a shared understanding of a national evacuation plan, type of crises and the roles and responsibilities each party before, during and after the crisis.

The authorities could consider mandating the integration of crisis management practices in all Ukrainian higher education institutions. Regular educational sessions about the campus security and prevention of crisis should be conducted to educate academic stakeholder groups about the potential threats and rehearse the action steps that can be initiated during a response to the crisis.

Additionally, in the absence of an explicit state strategy for the further development of the crisis-affected higher education institutions, the displaced institutions, the reintegration strategy and a rescue plan of these educational centers and preservation of their identity should be given more priority by the government. Merging or liquidation of some struggling displaced institutions that cannot compete with local and other national higher educational establishments should be considered as an optimization and strengthening tool and a strategy to preserve the regional identities of these institutions by effectively combining their resources and missions.

Higher education institutions should record the current experience of crisis to assess the damage and extract useful strategies to learn how to prevent future crises. The university leadership and faculty should generate an institutional crisis management plan. The institutions should re-assess the limitations and good practices about the crisis response in higher education and narrowly focus on the contingency planning. Crisis management plan enables higher education institutions to prevent or mitigate

the consequences of crisis regarding their essential functions and operations. The crisis planning and prevention efforts of the universities should be considered with great importance. The revision of crisis management efforts of the academic institutions should be a routine part of the university operations.

The students and faculty should be educated about the crisis prevention in advance to avoid or reduce significant losses. Therefore, practitioners should deliver the training of staff to increase an effective response that is understood by the internal stakeholders. The universities should design a crisis management strategy that would be understandable and delivered to all target audiences. The institutions can harness a culture of crisis awareness, security, and prevention. Systematic work regarding leveraging this culture needs to be facilitated by the university administration.

6.4. Suggestions for future research

The application of the crisis management framework that has been previously utilized mainly through the business management perspective. The study of higher education institutions affected by conflict using the framework is, therefore, unique and presents significant contribution to the study of higher education. While borrowing the crisis management framework from the corporate management, the pointed out there is a need to always point out the difference of both sectors. Nonetheless, a more meaningful application of crisis management framework in higher education can be supported by other educational theories. For examples, further study can combine the crisis management framework with the institutional theory and look at the organizational culture impacted by crisis and mechanisms used in response to it. The resource-dependency theory can be also combined with the crisis management perspective by looking at what resources suffer from critical damage and what crisis mechanisms exist to answer this issue.

The contribution of this study to higher education field is also in pointing out that the higher education institutions due to their open nature can be critically impacted by crisis, thus, there is a need to reflect about the methods to protect and safeguard it. In addition, the study showed that the higher education institutions that suffer from conflict have urgent needs and, therefore, should to be treated with more attention and priority. Further research can focus on finding practical tools and practices that can be incorporated by the higher education institutions to increase their security and protection.

In addition, the study focused on examining the crisis impacts and management practices of the displaced higher education institutions only. The data used for the analysis and extraction of findings were collected based on the interviews with the top management, faculty, and students of the displaced universities. This thesis tries to provide a general understanding of the overall conflict ramifications for the higher education sector, and strategies that could be used by various stakeholders to cope

with such consequences. Therefore, future studies can focus on a more narrow approach, for example by investigating the impacts of the crisis on individual stakeholder groups, or by evaluating the crisis management mechanisms from the perspective of top management only.

Future studies can also investigate the perspectives of other stakeholders that helped to coordinate and steer the management efforts of the universities, such as the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine. The coordination efforts administered by the Ministry can also provide an insightful glimpse into the role of the government in managing crisis of public higher education institutions. It is also essential to analyze the legislative documents issued by the government to assist public higher education institutions in crisis, to understand their effectiveness and limitations in supporting the crisis-affected higher education system.

Also, researchers need to investigate more empirically the effects of violent conflict and war on the functioning of higher education institutions. Due to limited attention to the problem, the area receives less priority at the national and international arena. While the crisis management analytical framework used in this study provides a functional characterization of crisis management mechanisms, no unified and comprehensive framework exists to study the impacts of armed conflicts and wars on the function of higher education. Therefore, future research can focus on systematizing the experiences of conflict-affected higher education systems and generating a roadmap of impacts of conflicts for higher education.

Examining the reintegration problem of the higher education institutions evacuated due to a natural disaster or violent conflict can also offer useful insight for understanding the problem of war-torn higher education systems. The study revealed the great struggle of higher education institutions detached from the home communities in finding relevance and value in a new environment and fighting for preserving their identity. Also, the study hinted at the psychological trauma suffered by students and faculty as a result of the conflict and evacuation. Further studies can focus on investigating the effect of psychological traumas on the academic and professional performance of students and faculty, and how higher education institutions are responding to that problem. Lastly, it would be valuable to examine the humanitarian assistance for higher education during an armed conflict or any crisis. This could help provide a better understanding of the kind of help that is provided to these institutions and the areas that are being prioritized by the humanitarian organizations to aid higher education systems in crisis.

6.5. Limitations of the study

The main limitation of this study can be seen in the number of universities participating in this study. While five public displaced universities provide valuable insight regarding the state of higher education in crisis in Ukraine, this sample is too

small to be representative of other higher education systems affected by the similar emergency. Despite a limitation regarding generalizability, the research questions can guide similar study in different contexts on crisis-affected higher education systems.

Another limitation of the study can be related to participants of the research and their views on the experience. Although mainly expert interviewees and those involved in the process of managing the crisis were selected, the level of representation of top management representatives was different at five universities, in some cases higher than in others. Therefore, the views of particular target groups can be more dominant in certain sections than others' views. Finally, the process of making interpretations and analyzing the data is affected by the researcher' subjective judgment. The researcher compiled the analytical framework based on her understanding of the literature on crisis management and the impacts of conflicts on higher education.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview guide

Interview questions for faculty:

1. How and when did the crisis begin for the university? How did the conflict threaten the faculty?
2. Describe how the process of displacement process took place. How did the evacuation of faculty take place?
3. How was the decision made about the displacement of the university? How have the faculty been informed about the displacement of the university?
4. How was the educational process organized in the period of university's destabilization? What were the challenges? How is the educational process organized today?
5. How was the research activity organized in the period of university's destabilization? What were the challenges? How are research activities performed today?
6. What infrastructural losses did your university experience as a result of the crisis? What losses were the most acute for your university? What is the current state of infrastructure?
7. How did the crisis affect the reputation of your university? With regard to what it is most noticeable?
8. What was the main problem during in the process of displacement? What remains the main problem faced by the university?
9. What worked well, what could have been avoided or done better in coping with the crisis at your university?

Interview questions for students:

1. How and when did the crisis begin for the university? How did the conflict threaten the students?

2. Describe how the process of displacement process took place. How did the evacuation of students take place?
3. How was the decision made about the displacement of the university? How have the student been informed about the displacement of the university?
4. How was the educational process organized in the period of university's destabilization? What were the challenges? How is the educational process organized today?
5. What infrastructural losses did your university experience as a result of the crisis What losses were the most acute for your university? What is the current state of infrastructure?
6. What was the main problem during in the process of displacement? What remains the main problem faced by the university?
7. What worked well, what could have been avoided or done better in coping with the crisis at your university?

Interview questions for administration:

1. How and when did the crisis begin for the university? How did the conflict threaten the students?
2. Describe how the process of displacement process took place. How did the evacuation of students and faculty take place?
3. How was the decision made about the displacement of the university? How have the student and faculty been informed about the displacement of the university? Who informed them?
4. What challenges emerged in the process of evacuation of students and faculty?
5. What infrastructural losses did your university experience as a result of the crisis? What losses were the most acute for your university? What is the current state of infrastructure?
6. How did the crisis affect educational and scientific activities at your university?
7. How did the conflict affect the administrative functions of the university?
8. What was the main problem during in the process of displacement? What remains the main problem faced by the university?

9. What worked well, what could have been avoided or done better in coping with the crisis at your university?

Appendix 2: List of all displaced universities

1. Donetsk National University of Economics and Trade named after M. Tugan-Baranovsky
2. Vasul Stus Donetsk National University
3. Donetsk National Technical University
4. Donetsk Sergei Prokofiev State Music Academy
5. Donetsk State University of Management
6. Donetsk M. Gorky National Medical University
7. Donetsk Regional Institute of Postgraduate Education
8. Donetsk Law Institute of MIA of Ukraine
9. Gorlovka Institute of Foreign Languages
10. Donbass State Technical University
11. Luhansk Taras Shevchenko National University
12. Luhansk National Agricultural University
13. East Ukrainian Volodymyr Dahl National University
14. Lugansk State Medical University
15. Lugansk State Academy of Culture and Arts
16. Lugansk E. Didorenko State University of Internal Affairs
17. Donbass National Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture
18. Taurian V. Vernadskyi National University

Appendix 3: Key legislative provisions supporting the functioning of the displaced Ukrainian universities

Who issued	When issued	Title	Main points
Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine	August 27, 2014	Some issues of the organization of the 2014/15 academic year in educational institutions located in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scholarship students from the Donbass region who were unable to pass the examinations in 2013/2014 academic year are guaranteed scholarship for the next semester. - Heads of educational institutions located in the Donbass region in coordination with the MESU determine the date of the beginning of 2014/15 of the academic year. - Educational institutions independently determine the conditions and procedure for admission process of applicants who live in the Donbass region and were unable to undergo an external independent assessment. - Students from the Donbass region can temporarily enroll in other institutions in Ukraine and receive records of their education and be granted scholarship if applicable.
Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine	October 14, 2014	Regarding the organization of education at educational establishments of persons residing in temporarily occupied territory in Crimea and in the places carrying out an antiterrorist operation in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts	<p>“We emphasize that any statements and actions of terrorist organizations aimed at simulating the "educational process" are legally null and void. Similarly, they will not have and will in the future have no legal effect any "education documents" issued by the occupation structures of the Russian Federation and the self-proclaimed "authority" on the peninsula and, accordingly, by terrorists on the part of the territory temporarily controlled by Donetsk and Luhansk regions. There will be no "recognition", "nostrification", "exchange" of such "documents", etc. from the Ministry of Education and Science,</p>

			other bodies of state power of Ukraine and foreign countries.”
Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine	December 5, 2014	Heads of higher educational institutions regarding the implementation of the order	Regulations regarding students who transfer (renew) their education placement at displaced universities and documents they are required to submit
Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine	September 9, 2014	Some issues of access to education for foreign students in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts	Regulations regarding foreign student who transfer (renew) their education placement at displaced universities and documents they are required to submit.
Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine	October 21, 2015	Concerning the Use of Illegal Documents of Terrorist Organizations for Studies in Higher Educational Institutions of Ukraine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The MESU informed about the attempts by representatives of the so-called LNR and DNR to use illegal documents of terrorist organizations for studying in higher educational institutions of Ukraine. - Informed the administration of higher educational institutions that admission of such illegal documents issued or certified by the self-proclaimed "authority" in Crimea and part of the occupied territory of Donbass region tis contradictory to the legislation of Ukraine. - Informed the administration of higher education institutions to inform law enforcement officials of attempts to use such illegal documents issued by terrorist organizations.
Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine	January 26, 2016	Order on the formation of the Council of Rectors of Higher Educational Institutions temporarily transferred from the area of the anti-terrorist operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To form a temporary consultative and advisory body of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine - the Council of Rectors of higher educational establishments temporarily transferred from the area of the anti-terrorist operation - To approve the Regulations "On the Council of Rectors of Higher Educational Institutions Temporarily Moved from the Territory of the Anti-Terrorist Operation". - To approve the membership of the Council.

			- To ensure the organization and coordination of the work of the Council.
Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine	20 April 2016	Order to establish the Ministry for Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons of Ukraine	"Address the need to respond quickly to problems and threats stemming from the antiterrorist operation in certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts as well as from temporary occupation of Ukrainian territories. Existing institutions, whose activities target recovery and peacebuilding in eastern Ukraine as well as reintegration of occupied Ukrainian territories, were unable to fully perform their tasks and functions due to insufficient powers. Therefore, it was necessary to consider creation of a public authority responsible for shaping and implementation of public policy on recovery and peacebuilding in areas affected by the conflict and on reintegration of temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine."
Verkhovna Rada (Ukrainian Parliament)	November 3, 2016	The Law On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine Regarding the Activities of Higher Educational Institutions, Scientific Institutions Displaced From Occupied Territories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Legally defines the displaced institutions as institutions of higher education, which changed their location due to the fact that the state authorities temporarily do not exercise their powers -The validity of accreditation certificates for temporarily transferred higher education institutions is prolonged for the duration of the anti-terrorist operation, but not more than five years after the expiration of the relevant accreditation certificates -Temporary displaced higher education institutions retain national status - The norms of the number of persons studying on one position of scientific and pedagogical worker in temporarily displaced higher educational establishments, temporarily displaced by scientific institutions are determined by the Cabinet of

			Ministers of Ukraine with a coefficient of 0.8 from the established norms. The central executive authority in the field of education and science has the right to initiate the transfer of the rights of the founder of specialized vocational education institutions to transferring higher education institutions, displaced state-owned scientific institutions, with the consent of the parties, and reorganization of temporary-moving higher education institutions, temporarily displaced scientific institutions through merger or accession in accordance with the law in the manner prescribed by the Cabinet of Ministers
Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine	October 03, 2017	On the formation of the commission on monitoring activities displaced higher education institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To develop a strategy for the development of transferring institutions of higher education for 5 years of the issue of reintegration within the framework of the adopted law. - To create of network consortia of Donetsk Lugansk Donbass. -To conduct monitoring of housing and public or communal property buildings that can be used for the needs of displaced higher education institutions - To create conditions for housing for scientific and pedagogical workers of displaced institutions of higher education with the involvement of the Ukrainian social investment fund -To facilitate the updating of the material and technical base of the displaced institutions of higher education -To initiate amendments to paragraph 2, part 9, article 11 of the Law of Ukraine on the management of state-owned objects that will promote the efficient and rational use of state property and the provision of facilities for the transfer of higher education institutions -To strengthen the control over the granting of permits for studying according to individual schedules for students of full-time education

			<p>Provide weekly reports on student attendance</p> <p>-To introduce a system of verification of plagiarism and adherence to the principles of academic integrity in all displaced institutions of higher education</p> <p>Actively use the opportunity to participate in projects of the state fund of regional development</p>
Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine	June 19, 2017	Donbass-Ukraine and Crimea-Ukraine educational centers began to work.	<p>-Due to this Center, any entrant from the Crimea and an uncontrolled territory of the Donbas may enter Ukrainian universities by a simplified system - without the use of external testing. This is stated on the website of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine.</p> <p>- Donbass-Ukraine Centers operates on the territory of universities located in the territory of the Donetsk and Lugansk regions under the control of the Ukrainian authorities.</p> <p>- Students are assigned a fixed volume of government orders for all specialties and educational levels at displaced universities.</p>

Appendix 4: A comprehensive analytical framework of crisis management for use in higher education

IMPACT DIMENSIONS	Planning and Prevention	Response	Recovery	Learning
Human and personal crisis <i>Enrolled staff and student</i> <i>Psychological & physical trauma</i>				
Infrastructural crisis <i>Campus building (s)</i> <i>Classrooms</i> <i>Research facility, etc.</i>				
Operational crisis <i>Teaching environment</i> <i>Learning environment</i> <i>Research environment</i>				
Legitimacy/Reputation crisis <i>Admissions</i> <i>Partnerships</i> <i>Public image</i>				
Crisis of leadership and management <i>Governance</i> <i>University safety policies</i> <i>Crisis management teams</i>				
Crisis of communication <i>Institutional communication strategy</i> <i>Informing students and faculty</i>				