

## Academic Mobility: Exodus or Diaspora?

Rui Gomes<sup>1,a</sup>, João Teixeira Lopes<sup>2,b</sup>, Henrique Vaz<sup>3,c</sup>, Luísa Cerdeira<sup>4,d</sup>, Belmiro Cabrito<sup>5,e</sup>, Paulo Peixoto<sup>6,f</sup>, Maria Lourdes Machado-Taylor<sup>7,g</sup>, Dulce Magalhães<sup>8,h</sup>, Rui Brites<sup>9,i</sup>, Tomás Patrocínio<sup>10,j</sup>, Sílvia Silva<sup>11,k</sup>

<sup>1</sup>FCDEF-UC, Estádio Universitário - Pav. 3, 3040-156 Coimbra, Portugal

<sup>2</sup>FL-UP, Via Panorâmica, 4150-564 Porto, Portugal

<sup>3</sup>FPCE-UP, R. Alfredo Allen, 4200-135 Porto, Portugal

<sup>4</sup>IE-UL, Alameda da Universidade, 1649-013 Lisboa, Portugal

<sup>5</sup>IE-UL, Alameda da Universidade, 1649-013 Lisboa, Portugal

<sup>6</sup>FE-UC, Av. Dias da Silva, 165, 3004-512 Coimbra, Portugal

<sup>7</sup>CIPES, R. 1.º de Dezembro, 399, 4450-227 Matosinhos, Portugal

<sup>8</sup>FL-UP, Via Panorâmica, 4150-564 Porto, Portugal

<sup>9</sup>ISEG-UL, R. do Quelhas, 6, 1200-781 Lisboa, Portugal

<sup>10</sup>IE-UL, Alameda da Universidade, 1649-013 Lisboa, Portugal

<sup>11</sup>FCDEF-UC, Estádio Universitário - Pav. 3, 3040-156 Coimbra, Portugal

<sup>a</sup>[ramgomes@gmail.com](mailto:ramgomes@gmail.com), <sup>b</sup>[jteixeiralopes@gmail.com](mailto:jteixeiralopes@gmail.com), <sup>c</sup>[henrique@fpce.up.pt](mailto:henrique@fpce.up.pt),  
<sup>d</sup>[luisa.cerdeira@ie.ul.pt](mailto:luisa.cerdeira@ie.ul.pt), <sup>e</sup>[b.cabrito@ie.ul.pt](mailto:b.cabrito@ie.ul.pt), <sup>f</sup>[pp@fe.uc.pt](mailto:pp@fe.uc.pt), <sup>g</sup>[lmachado@cipes.up.pt](mailto:lmachado@cipes.up.pt),  
<sup>h</sup>[dulcegracamagalhaes@gmail.com](mailto:dulcegracamagalhaes@gmail.com), <sup>i</sup>[rui.brites52@gmail.com](mailto:rui.brites52@gmail.com),  
<sup>j</sup>[patrocinio.tomas@gmail.com](mailto:patrocinio.tomas@gmail.com), <sup>k</sup>[silvia.m.martins.silva@gmail.com](mailto:silvia.m.martins.silva@gmail.com)

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**Abstract.** Emigration of high-skilled professionals from less developed countries to developed countries leaves the sending countries economies with a reduced supply of skilled people. The resulting brain drain would limit the use of educational investment in the sending countries, creating conditions for their re-use by the more developed countries. Skilled emigration has been analyzed according to two contrasting models: the model of the exodus that stresses the idea that more skilled individuals are forced to the exile, allowing them to get a job and a remuneration corresponding to their training; the model of the Diaspora that stresses the mutual benefits of intercultural exchanges opened by the circulation of cosmopolitan elites.

This research aims to test the comprehensive power of each of these theses referencing to the mobility of highly qualified Portuguese professionals to Europe in the last decade. Portugal is one of the European countries where the drain is more accentuated in the last decade, estimated at 19,5%.

Articulating an extensive research with an in-depth analysis we seek to identify the subjectivity of the direct actors of emigration in some of its main working contexts. We use a mixed strategy which makes use of the questionnaire surveys that aims to characterize the push and pull factors present in the decision to emigrate, as well as

the effects of deskilling, reskilling and up-skilling resulting from migration; and, life stories and interviews with focus groups that will draft the life trajectories, the differential effects of socialization on the biographical dispositions and the strategies of improving the educational capital. Using a multiple case methodology we will describe and compare the circumstances, the modalities and the characteristics of the Portuguese student mobility of 1st, 2nd, or 3rd cycle that leads to insert primary or secondary segments of the employment system of the receiving European countries. We conclude that the factors perceived as crucial in the decision to migrate start with the economic crisis, the devaluation of local resources, the lack of career opportunities and the unemployment.