

## Country Focus: Migration of Italian nationals during the crisis

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### Background

In 2013, the EUI's Global Governance Programme launched an e-survey to gather new qualitative data on high-skill emigration from five EU Member States hard hit by the crisis: Greece, Italy, Ireland, Portugal and Spain. The e-survey was launched in collaboration with Real Elcano Institute, Trinity College Dublin and the Technical University of Lisbon. It was launched simultaneously in five languages (English, Greek, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish) and ran between 21<sup>st</sup> May and 18<sup>th</sup> August 2013.

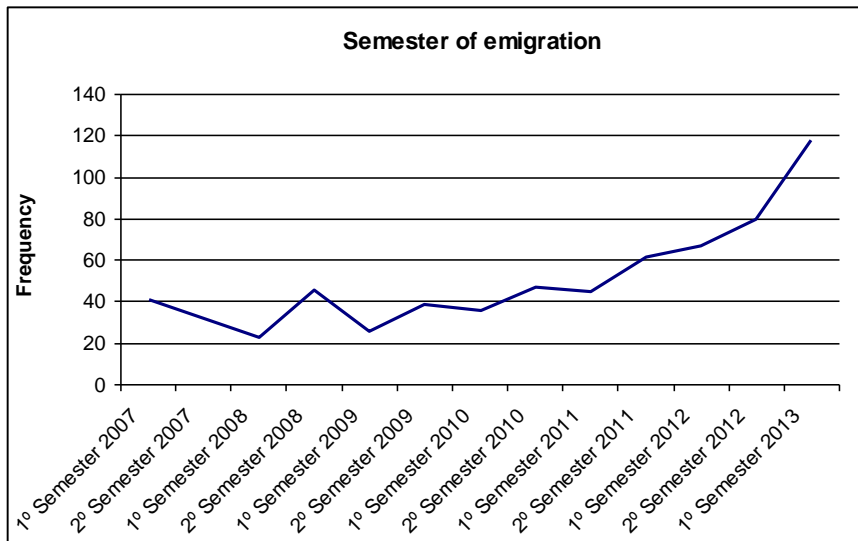
In this report we focus on the Italian respondents. While not representative of all those who have left Italy since the outbreak of the crisis, the material we collected through this e-survey presents new insights into the socio-demographic profile, family situation, educational and professional background of Italian nationals who have left their country in recent years. We also present information about their destinations, their experiences in the destination countries, particularly with regards to their employment, as well as their intentions to settle in the destination country, return to the country of origin, or migrate further. The e-survey also included four open questions providing rich additional qualitative information.

Out of a total of 6,750 valid responses, 901 were from Italian nationals. This report provides some results from our initial analysis of the Italian data, focusing on those who left the country after 2007.

### The main characteristics of our Italian dataset

- ✓ 76% male, 23% female
- ✓ 36% under 30 years old; 50% between 31 and 45 years of age
- ✓ 88% hold a **higher education degree**
- ✓ 55% have a partner or spouse, and of these 76% hold a higher education degree

**Figure 1. Date of departure from Italy (2007-2013)**



- ✓ Main **countries of destination in the EU**: UK, Germany, Belgium, France followed by Spain, Ireland, Austria and Finland (in order of importance).
- ✓ Main **countries of destination outside the EU**: Switzerland, USA, China, Canada and Brazil (in order of importance).
- ✓ 60% were **employed prior to leaving**; of these, 51% held a long term contract, 34% held a short-term contract while 15% had no employment contract

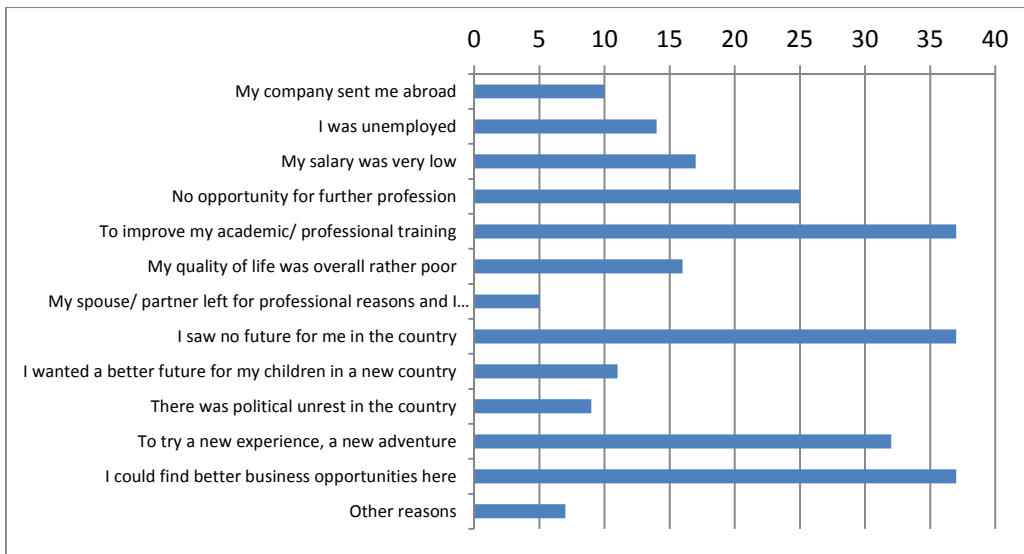
### **First results**

A combination of push and pull factors seems to have driven the decision to migrate. In fact, the three most significant reasons for leaving were the motivation to **improve their academic and professional situation**, a sense of **not having a future in Italy**, and the belief that they would be able to **find better professional opportunities in their country of destination**.

Only 14% of our respondents cited unemployment as one of their core reasons for deciding to leave the country.

**Table 1. Main reasons for leaving Italy (%)**

Note: multiple reasons could be ticked by the respondents



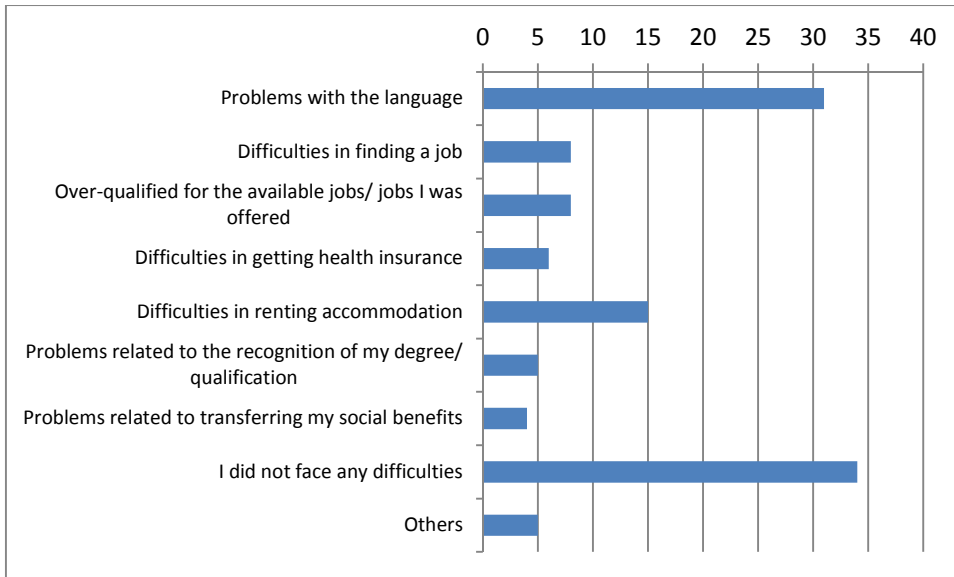
77% of our respondents declared they were **employed** in their country of residence and of these approximately 63% declared they were **satisfied / very satisfied with the income** they were earning.

The **core areas** in which they are employed are education and research, engineering, the service sector, and in information technology.

Knowledge of the language of the receiving society is important. It determines both how easy or hard the migration experience is, and it also drives people's choices in the country they choose to migrate to.

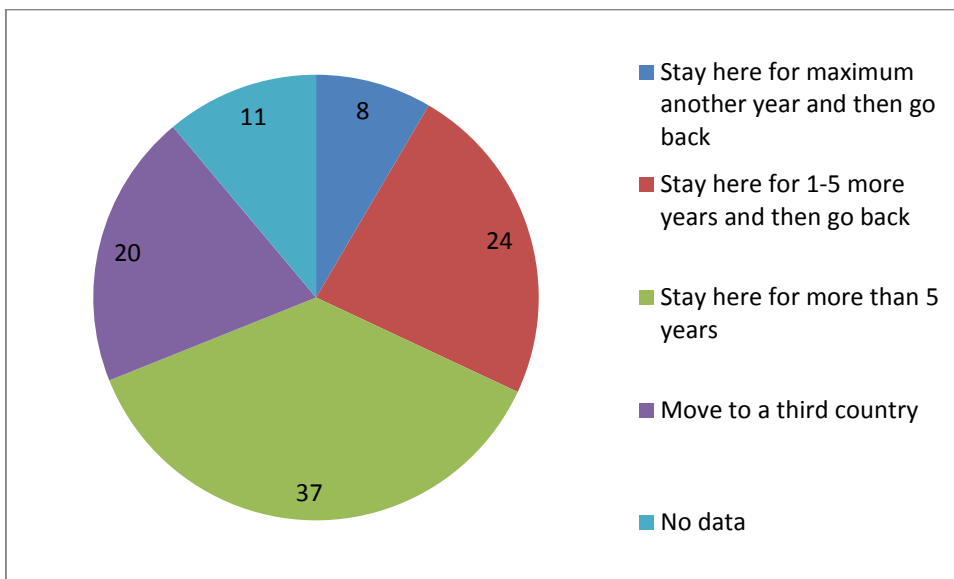
**Table 2. Difficulties faced while settling into their new country of residence (%)**

Note: multiple reasons could be ticked by the respondents



52% of our respondents had never previously emigrated. However, their current migration project has a long term perspective since 24% expressed a desire to stay in their current country of residence for up to five years, a further 37% expressed a desire to stay there longer and another 20% wished to further move to another country.

**Figure 2. Future plans (%)**



The respondents who declared an intention to further migrate to another country underlined that their main reasons were professional.

Australia, Canada and China are the top three preferred future destinations for the job opportunities they felt would be available to them there.

Within the EU, Germany, France and the UK were identified as future preferred destinations. Germany along with Switzerland were frequently identified as preferred future destinations mainly for their potential employment opportunities in addition to their proximity to Italy.

Finally, our preliminary analysis of the comments and responses provided to the open question of our survey suggest that the following factors are **significant drivers of out-migration from Italy**:

- ✓ Desire to pursue more **rewarding job opportunities**
- ✓ Decision to pursue further **academic training and graduate studies**
- ✓ Disappointment with the **lack of meritocracy in Italy**
- ✓ **Disappointment with the lack of support for young professionals and academics**
- ✓ **Lack of funding for, and of interest in, research and innovation**
- ✓ Discouragement with the **lack of job opportunities** and/or **career development prospects as well as an overall sense of having ‘no future’ in Italy due to the consequences of the crisis**