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Abstracts  
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Edited by Gregory T. Papanikos

**Gerardo Pastore**

Assistant Professor, University of Pisa, Italy

&

**Gabriele Tomei**

Associate Professor, University of Pisa, Italy

## **Knowledge Society and High-Skilled Migration: Lights and Shadows of the Italian case in the Time of Crisis**

The economic and financial crisis has led to an upswing in migration from the Mediterranean countries of Europe towards its central and northern development hubs (Ricucci, 2017). This overall increase in migration also includes increased numbers of so-called skilled migrants, consisting mainly, though not exclusively, of young people moving within Europe for study or specialisation, or seeking employment that matches their skills profile. In the era of the 'global competition for talents' (Cerna, 2016), the so-called 'brain circulation' (Gaillard & Gaillard, 1997; Boeri et al., 2015) is one of the most relevant leverages to improve development both in the origin and in the destination countries. In the Southern Europe states, despite the public discourse on the process toward the Knowledge Society and the Knowledge-based economy, post-2008 economic crisis weakened the structural conditions and the institutional tools that should support this form of mobility. This increased the traditional gaps of this area and transformed the positive effects of the high-skilled circulation into a new form of 'brain drain' (Triandafyllidou and Gropas, 2014; Recchi et al., 2016).

The paper presents some paradoxical aspects within the Italian route towards the Knowledge Society and it proposes a critical analysis of the implementation process of its theoretical background. The case of the increasing number of highly-skilled youths that are leaving Italy in order to seek insertion in more dynamic knowledge-based economies constitutes a special focus and a topical entry-point for the discussion.

How economic crisis influenced high-skilled youth emigration? What are the repercussions of these processes on the Italian society, culture, economy and politic?

Using secondary-data analysis of national statistics and institutional analysis of the transformations in Academic policy, the paper unveils the process of cumulative influences between national R&D public expenditures cuts, University reforms, transformation of knowledge-based labour market and new flows of young high-skilled emigrations. Against the backdrop of this discussion of the controversial aspects of the Italian case, the paper proposes some possible general strategies to overcome the paradoxes of the Knowledge Society in the actuality of the Southern European countries.