



# Journal of International Mobility Moving for Education, Training and Research

Call for papers No. 5  
International mobility: *brain drain, brain gain?*  
Developments in situations and concepts

Submission of proposals by **27 February 2017**

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## Details

The Agence Erasmus+ France/ Education Formation is the French national agency in charge of the European Erasmus + programme for education and training.

Its interdisciplinary scientific journal, the Journal of International Mobility, publishes contributions on all dimensions of people's international mobility in the context of education and training in Europe and elsewhere in the world. It particularly aims to improve understanding of the conditions and impact of mobility, to encourage its consideration by the researchers and political decision-makers who have the authority to support it.

The agency is currently launching a call for papers for the fifth issue, on the following theme:

### **International mobility: brain drain, brain gain? Developments in situations and concepts**

Go, stay, come back, circulate.

People cross borders for many reasons: social, political, economic, personal ... Understanding the phenomenon of international migration is complex, as the situations are variable and the data limited. It's also complex because it is the subject of numerous debates, particularly concerning what since the 1960s has been called the brain drain: highly qualified people (researchers, scientists, engineers) migrating to industrialised countries, with the United States at the head of the list, and so, *a priori*, depriving their own countries of their potential to grow and develop (Vinokur, 2008). A game of musical chairs then ensues, where the poorest countries would be the losers in the race for the human resources.

Numerous studies since then have counterbalanced this concept of the migration of qualified people, and the negative consequences on their country of origin. The 1990s, then the 2000s, saw the birth of the concept of brain circulation, to demonstrate the multi-polarisation of exchanges, especially in science, as vectors of development in a space without borders, de-nationalised. The positive effects of migration for the country of origin are analysed in terms of capacity for innovation, transfer of money, and development. The external effects generated by these diasporae are therefore considered useful.

In this international circuit of migratory traffic, the mobility of studies remains a phenomenon not much examined; yet in 2012, 4.5 million students were enrolled in tertiary education in a country other than their own. Accordingly, these mobilities take on significance, especially as they are constantly increasing, the growth rate between 2000 and 2012 being an average of 7% per annum (OECD, 2014).

While institutions of higher, or even secondary, education are asked to become international, students, teachers and researchers see themselves as being encouraged to acquire experience abroad. What repercussions does this mobility have on the geographical choices of the career path? Will someone who studies or trains abroad be more tempted by expatriation? What data do we have to measure these incoming and outgoing flows? What is the place of student and academic mobility in the debate between *brain drain* and *brain gain*? How do these migrations develop? How are they perceived, in terms of the geographical and economic areas concerned?

In this call for papers, we are asking contributors to think about these questions by considering the debate from these following different points of view.

## 1- National contexts which show the patterns of migration

Migration of qualified people is the subject of many debates (economic, diplomatic, social) and creates national strategies: policies of attractiveness, retention, the encouragement of mobility, laws for certain immigrants, etc. The situations are diverse, and meet specific and changing contexts.

In a world which is inevitably global, it becomes a question of assessing the gains and losses inherent in this mobility of qualified people, and of acting in such a way that the brain circulation is truly effective, by allowing durable social and commercial links to be formed between expatriates and non-mobile people, and by balancing the departure of existing talent with the arrival of new candidates. Accordingly, the OECD (2016) observed developments in immigration policy and noted that several countries have 'eased their immigration policies to encourage temporary or permanent immigration of international students'. So our questions on the brain drain must also lead us to examine policies regarding attractiveness, retention and the effects these have.

In a number of African countries, changes in the realm of higher education, especially after countries become independent, and conditions of access to employment, as well as social and family identities, all shape students' mobility. Yesterday perceived as a loss for the economy of these countries, Marie Poinot (2014) points out that today, these migrations are seen as ways to 'get into world circulation', and so to 'change the image of the African continent in the world's eyes'<sup>1</sup>. In an article in the *Journal of International Mobility* No. 3, (2016), Hamidou Dia deals with the little-studied question of the return of Senegalese graduates to their country, and the investment they make in its economic space. For a long time, the African continent has been perceived as the main loser in migratory exchanges; however, how does the mobility of African students, academic staff and researchers benefits this continent today?

## 2- The relationship between mobility in studies or training and the pursuit (or not) of a career abroad

A French report by the *Institut Montaigne* (Kohler, 2010) on the expatriation of the French in higher education to the United States notes that 'the proportion of the doctors trained in France who take their post-doctoral degrees abroad represents 50-55% of the total number between 2004 and 2007. Among these young researchers, approximately 30% decide to go to a non-EU country - mainly the United States'. Of those, 20% stay in the United States or Canada to find employment.

In China and India, two of the greater exporters of students abroad, expatriations of those who have newly graduated, just as much as of academics and researchers, are considerable. In China, less than a quarter of students who left to study abroad returned to their country between 1978 and 2004; there have been, however, more returns since the 90s due to improvements in the economic situation and working conditions of academics in China, as well as in India (Altbach, 2009, p. 187).

In the OECD countries, international mobility is more important at the most advanced levels of education: 12% of students in master's programmes are international students, and 27% of students at the doctoral level (OECD, 2016).

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<sup>1</sup> Translations from French articles or reports into English are our translations.

The internationalisation of education and of the labour market inevitably means that a proportion of existing and new graduates will settle abroad in the quest for better opportunities, or to improve their CVs in the prospect of a future return.

In a study on the professional future of former Erasmus students from three Universities in France, Italy and the UK, Magali Ballatore (2013) noted how much the state of the national employment market can influence the departures of these young Erasmus graduates. In Italy, where the integration of young graduates can be slow because of a poor absorption of qualified workers, choosing to begin their careers in a foreign country, while waiting to return (or not) to their native country, may be more attractive. The stakes in these mobilities are differentiated, therefore, according to their geographical, social or economic contexts.

In its *Erasmus Impact Study*, the European Commission (2014) also noted this relationship between the mobility of studies and mobility in employment: 'Five years after graduation, only 18% of the alumni who had participated in Erasmus actions had moved abroad for their work, compared to an even lower figure of 13% for the non-mobile alumni. However, 28% of Erasmus alumni had moved abroad 10 years after graduation'. (p.117)

Between the promotion of the internationalisation of education and training, and concerns for the consequent departures of students with a high level of education, how do countries develop their practices to take advantage of this internationalised scientific community? What are the motivations and perspectives of interested parties regarding this expatriation? What links do they maintain with their native countries at academic, scientific and economic level?

As new destinations for students and teachers-researchers, university hubs now take their place in the realm of international higher education. They are emerging in Asia, the Persian Gulf or even Morocco or Russia. How do these new destinations overturn the traditional circuits of student and academic mobility? What roles do they play in the migration and circulation of knowledge, both on a world scale and at regional level, where they often play a driving role?

### **3- Academic networks as vectors of development**

The paradigm of the brain drain has evolved into 'brain circulation', in just a few decades. The flow of human resources can not only be measured by the numbers of those entering or leaving a country; the virtual flows of ideas, knowledge and capital, amplified by the progress of digital technology, also come into play.

Denationalised, these flows complicate measurements; they demand closer analysis as well as an analysis of the nature of these new exchanges. The difficulty lies in the fact of the measurement: can this *brain gain* be evaluated?

In the field which interests us, scientific diasporae and alumni networks are particularly evoked. The doctoral and post-doctoral students, or even teachers and researchers working abroad, can form influential communities participating in the diplomacy of their countries of origin. At the scientific level, how do they interact with their non-expatriate counterparts? Do they encourage international publications, one of the key factors for a better visibility of higher education institutions in international rankings? Do they participate in the development of existing systems (in varied domains, such as education, health, governance, digital technology, etc)? Do they take

part in international aid programmes, such as the United Nations' TOKTEN<sup>2</sup>, or the MIDA<sup>3</sup> programme run by the International Organisation for Migration?

Elisabetta Lodigiani (2009) notes that 'Diasporas in fact can facilitate development, but cannot by themselves fundamentally change the prospects of a country'. Under what circumstances can these diasporas contribute to strengthening the capacities of these countries? How can countries capitalise *in fine* on these external movements?

Varying in geographical area and in social, political and economic conditions, mobility routes do not occur everywhere in the same manner, and describe different phenomena. The diversification and multi-polarisation of the people in mobility, as well as the frailty of the data, seem to indicate that it is necessary to broaden the empirical case studies, to perceive the phenomena in work which would allow these mobilities to be characterised from the angle of *brain gain* for their native countries (Docquier, 2007, p. 83-84).

The expected contributions would revolve around these axes and would rest on students' mobility at any level, as well as on the mobility of academics and researchers within the context of their training paths or their careers. The entire corpus would allow the analysis of, and distinguishing between, situations according to their contexts, from a synchronic and diachronic perspective. Contributors are asked to construct their articles by ensuring that they first examine the concepts of *brain drain* and *brain gain*, their origins, and their development, according to the contexts and the areas covered.

Scientists, professors and experts who have researched these subjects are invited to submit their contributions.

Expected articles can be:

- Current or completed works of research, presenting the methods applied and the tools which it was necessary to develop in order to carry out the work.
- The presentation of plans and experiments which could be transposed.
- In-depth articles on the issues raised.

### **Bibliography:**

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<sup>2</sup> Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals

<sup>3</sup> Migration for Development in Africa

European Commission (2014). *The Erasmus Impact Study. Effects of mobility on the skills and employability of students and the internationalisation of higher education institutions*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

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Poinsot, Marie (2014). « Brain drain versus brain gain ? », *Hommes et migrations*, 1307

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## How to submit your contribution

### **Timetable**

Please send your contribution (the complete article) by e-mail (Word document) to [revue@agence-erasmus.fr](mailto:revue@agence-erasmus.fr) by **27 February 2017**.

Each article will be anonymously examined by two Reading Committee members and all authors will receive a response. Four answers are possible, following the evaluation: article accepted; article accepted subject to minor modifications; major modifications requested; article rejected. The decision of the selection panel is final and no appeals will be considered.

Acceptable languages: French, English, German, Spanish, Italian.

Deadline for the submission of articles: 27 February 2017

Notification to authors: 15 May 2017

Publication: November 2017

### **Format of contributions**

Font: Times New Roman 12. Spacing: Multiple 1.15

Proposals should contain:

- the surname and first name of the author / authors (only the initial letters of the surname and first name should be in upper case);
- an explicit title, centred;
- a summary and its translation into English (approximately 1,500 characters, including spaces);
- 3 to 5 keywords;
- a short biography of the author(s) and its translation into English;
- all bibliographical references in the article.

The maximum number of characters (33,000) must include notes and spaces as well as the summary, keywords and bibliographical references.

### **Bibliographical and digital references:**

these should be given indicated at the end of the article, in alphabetical order.

### **Notes:**

these should appear at the bottom of the page with a cross-reference in the text. They should be typed in Times New Roman 10.

### **Quotations:**

Quotations (author or extract from interview) should be inserted into the text between quotation marks.

### **Format:**

Italics should be used to indicate any foreign words.

### **Artwork:**

Artwork or illustrations may be attached to the article. Images should be in JPEG format.