QUALIFIED MIGRATIONS INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE ITALIAN CASE

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Abstract: *In this short essay, I will try to contribute to analyze the question of qualified migrations from, to and within the European Union, not as a threat but as a very topical issue, emphasizing its positive and negative aspects. In times of high unemployment and quick social changes, the more legal migration represents a difficult cause to promote, the more it is important to manage it within a framework transparent, strictly objective and oriented to the interests of the EU citizens. Italy, as an immigration and an emigration country, represents a significant case history. Notwithstanding an evident shortage of skilled workers, from one side migrants' insertion is just replacing Italians in the deficit and less attractive sectors, following a spontaneous "subaltern placement model" that in any case ensures a benefit for the national budget equal to 2 billion euros in 2015. From the other side, the emigration of Italian graduates is increasing (even if its quantitative dimension is not easy to ascertain), contributing at lowering the unemployment rates but also producing an annual loss equal to 1% of GDP. In both cases, the real problem seems to consist in the absence of a strategy capable of attracting and enhancing skilled workers in various sectors and this happens because currently – notwithstanding the shortages - the productive sectors seem apparently "trapped in a poorly qualified balance" and are not so dynamic as to employ the new Italian graduates and take advantage from those arriving from abroad*.

Keywords: Migration, skilled workers, European Union, Italy

In a historical phase in which disinformation and fake news spread like wildfire when immigration is the topic of public discourse, the migration of highly qualified workers has also become a matter of controversy[1]: according to a recent "Pew

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[1] See: Benedetto Coccia, Franco Pittau (eds.), *Le migrazioni qualificate in Italia. Ricerche, statistiche, prospettive*, Roma, IDOS-Istituto di Studi Politici "S. Pio V", 2016; Benedetto Coccia, Antonio Ricci (eds.), *L'Europa dei talenti. Le migrazioni qualificate dentro e fuori l'Unione Europea*, Roma, IDOS-Istituto di Studi Politici "S. Pio V", 2019.

„Anuarul Institutului de Istorie «George Barițiu» din Cluj-Napoca. Series Historica", LIX, 2020, Supliment, 2, ***Lucrările conferinței internaționale online „ROMANIA-ITALIA-EUROPA. Evoluții istorice - Dinamici culturale - Relații internaționale", 16-18 septembrie 2020***, p. 97-108.

Research Center" survey (January 2019)[2] Italy is the country that is least favorable to the entry of highly qualified immigrants: over 50% of those interviewed declared themselves against and only 35% in favour. Much more open approaches were found, however, in the United Kingdom (85% of respondents favorable), in Germany (81%) and in France (68%). Anyhow the Italian society is not currently subject to particular "immigration stress": in 2018 it received an overall low quota of new entries (14% of the total) and therefore the "European refugee crisis" itself seems now to be out of place. As underlined by the European Commission in March 2019[3], it is time to debunk the persistent myth of a current migratory crisis.

Immigration management is in fact much more complex than what initially perceived by public opinion and then implemented by policy-makers through border closure policies. Yet in 2015, in the midst of the humanitarian refugee crisis, the former European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker recalled in the European Agenda on Migration 2015 (COM (2015) 240 final)[4] that the entry of highly qualified workers is fundamental in front of the economic and demographic challenges that the Old Continent is called to face in the long term. The European population is ageing and, in the absence of immigration, the workforce will fall by 17.5 million people over the next decade. Therefore, not only the sustainability of social protection systems, but also, more generally, the continental economy will increasingly depend on an effective integration of highly qualified migrants.

Within the EU, shortages of workforce have already been found in key sectors such as science, technology, engineering and health. By 2020 it is estimated a deficit of 756 thousand highly qualified professionals in telecommunications and about 1 million in the health sector including doctors, nurses, dentists, midwives and pharmacists. Unfortunately, these deficits cannot be filled by the 12 million long-term unemployed in the EU because, in more than half of the cases, they have a low level of skills.

Taking into consideration a EU labor market characterized by 3.8 million vacancies (Eurostat, III quarter 2018)[5], employers are struggling to find professionals with the needed skills, both for economic (the implementation of new technologies requires new professional skills) and demographic reasons (the ageing of the population has reduced the available workforce).

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[2] http://www.pewglobal.org/2019/01/22/majority-of-u-s-public-supports-high-skilled-immigration/.

[3] https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/20190306_managing-migration-factsheet-debunking-myths-about-migration_en.pdf.

[4] European Commission, *A European agenda on migration*, COM (2015) 240 final, Brussels, 13.5.2015.

[5] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tps00172/default/table?lang=en.

Member States are therefore called upon to consolidate their skills and, to cope with the immediate need for qualified manpower, also by committing themselves to find more and more immigrant workers. A goal that is not easy at all, considering that 68% of international migrants with a high education profile[6] prefer to settle in a non-European country. Globally, more dynamic economies (from China to the United States) lead the competition for talent. Even Japan, one of the most traditionally reluctant immigration countries, has recently changed its approach by providing incentives for highly qualified immigrants.

A "steeplechase": EU policies and highly qualified flows

In assessing the impact of current regulations, the European Commission estimates that, if regulated more efficiently, the entry of new highly qualified workers into the EU would bring about a gain of over 6 billion euros. Nevertheless, the EU labour market is currently having troubles in fully exploiting the talents of immigrants already present, thus wasting billions of euros every year (as reported by ENAR network in 2013 Hidden talents, wasted talents Report[7]).

Brain waste, that is the under-use of immigrant workers with respect to their level of education and skills, finds fertile ground when migration is dictated by conditions of necessity. There can be multiple contingent motivations, such as language barriers or adaptation difficulties, but the crux are the policies pursued by the institutions as well as is fundamental the access to the information necessary for the recognition of qualifications. To add complexity to the issue, it also raises the paradox that employers would prefer to check on-the-job skills rather than certified qualifications.

The same rules in force for obtaining a visa or residence permit can vary significantly from one Member State to another, making the recruitment of talents a sort of "steeplechase".

A "drop into the ocean": the experience of the EU Blue Card

Following Directive 2009/50/EC[8], a highly qualified worker can be admitted through the issuance of an EU Blue Card which provides for fast-track entry procedures, subject to the satisfaction of a series of common requirements among the Member States such as: i) a binding job offer (with a salary whose amount corresponds

[6] OECD, EU, *Recruiting Immigrant Workers: Europe 2016*, Paris, Oecd Publishing, 2016.

[7] European Network Against Racism, *Hidden talents, wasted talents*, Brussels, 2013.

[8] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32009L0050&from=EN.

to at least one and a half times the average annual gross salary in the Member State concerned), ii) a health insurance, iii) documents certifying the possession of the qualifications in the case of regulated professions. The title allows third-country nationals and their family members to enjoy the same treatment as nationals, in particular as regard the working conditions, social security and recognition of qualifications. In practice, however, the application of the Directive seems to be not very satisfactory. Between 2012, the effective year of full implementation, and 2017 were just over 90 thousand the EU Blue Cards overall issued within the Union and it is easy to deduce from the low number of renewals that many of the beneficiaries may have already left the EU. Of these 24,305 were released in 2017. Despite the constantly increasing trend, the numbers remain low, also because of the competition exercised by the parallel national systems is strong. Furthermore, the directive seems to work only in Germany where took place 84.5% of total releases issued across the EU in 2017.

The contribution of the EU Blue Cards represents literally a "drop into the ocean" compared to the global competition for talents that sees for example the United States per se accepting an average of 200 thousand a year.

In June 2016, the European Commission launched a comprehensive review proposal[9] aimed mainly at addressing the shortcomings of Directive 2009/50/EC and at extending its scope of application, also by including beneficiaries of international protection and non-EU family members of EU citizens. Specifically, the proposal provides for: i) more flexible admission conditions (providing for a lower salary threshold, a minimum duration of 6 months for the initial contract, simplified rules for new graduates and workers in occupations where there is a shortage of workforce and the equivalence between professional experience and formal qualifications); ii) generally faster and more flexible procedures (also through rapid procedures for ad hoc employer categories); iii) broader rights (through more flexible access to the labor market, also for autonomous workers, immediate family reunification, facilitated access to EU long-term residence permit); iv) easier travels within the EU; v) the abolition of parallel national regimes intended, like the EU Blue Card, for highly qualified workers.

Among the various measures, it deserves to be mentioned the objective of intervening to avoid the brain waste of skills and human capital at the expense of highly qualified beneficiaries of international protection and asylum seekers, hitherto excluded from access to the EU Blue Card. In perspective, the measure would facilitate the labor integration of this vulnerable group of migrants, even regardless of the eventual positive outcome of the asylum application.

[9]https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/docs_autres_institutions/commission_europeenne/com/2016/0378/COM_COM(2016)0378_EN.pdf.

The prospects of "budding talents": international students

According to Eurostat database in 2017 there were over half a million (530,113) new study permits issued in the EU as a whole, of which 33.9% of the total in the United Kingdom, 14.9% in France, 9.2% in Germany, 7.5% in Spain and 6.5% in Poland. The most significant increases in the 2008-2017 period occurred especially in the new Member States: in Malta and Slovenia the flows increased by 7 times, Poland 6 times, Latvia 5 times, Slovakia 4 times, etc. Despite a few cases going against the trend (such as Italy and Greece, one third less for each), the described framework demonstrates a progressive internationalization of the European university system.

The majority of international students, after completing their studies in one of the EU member countries, in the light of the opportunities offered, mostly prefer to leave: according to the OECD[10], over around 1 million international students the percentage of those who decide to remain in the EU varies between 16.4% and 29.1%.

According to Eurostat data, in the decade 2008-2017, more than half a million (513,529) study-to-work conversion practices were completed in the EU. Of the 50,659 conversions recorded in 2017, one third belongs to France (32.2%), followed by Germany (23.8%) and the United Kingdom (12.0%).

In Italy the conversion practices carried out in the 2008-2017 decade were just 1,684, of which 182 in 2017. National data are conditioned by the fact that the conversion can only take place within the quotas established by the eventual Flow Decrees.

Finally with the Directive 2016/801/EU[11] it was intended, in particular, to improve: i) the effectiveness of procedural guarantees (terms for processing of applications and obligation to justify the refusal), ii) the scope of the mobility clauses (in reference to students admitted to an EU country interested in continuing their studies in a different Member State), iii) the right to a job search period of at least 9 months after completing their studies.

The EU "mobile migrants" at high risk of deskilling

[10] Reinhard Weisser, *The impact of international students and post-graduation internal mobility: an analysis of student mobility and retention rates*, Paris, OECD, 2016.

[11] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32016L0801&from=EN.

At the beginning of 2017, according to Eurostat, 16.9 million EU citizens work or live in another Member State and 2 million are cross-border commuters, either workers or students crossing borders on a daily or weekly basis. The recent and prolonged eurozone crisis seems to have played a further stimulating role especially in the southern countries of the EU, more affected by the austerity measures and the progressive dismantling of technical scientific infrastructures (a *deja-vu* of what happened over the 90s of last century in Central and Eastern European countries).

It is not uncommon, especially in post-communist Europe, that the young generations who first fed the so-called "internal brain flight"[12] (or the flight from the public to the private sector) subsequently proposed themselves as intra-EU migrants in search of salaries appropriate to their qualifications.

The scholars, who highlight the limited possibilities of economic and social development in the countries of origin deriving from the departure of their "brains", contrast with the school of those who instead emphasize the positive aspects: the "return skills", the financial and social remittances, the socio-economic contacts and the scientific collaborations gained, the contribution to raising the level of competitiveness and, finally, the same impossibility for the countries of departure to fully exploit the potential of their own "brains"[13].

A 2018 study[14] by the European Commission notes that between 2004 and 2016 the number of highly qualified EU migrants almost tripled, reaching almost 3 million in 2016 (Isced 5-8). Additional 3.6 million EU migrants are mid-qualified workers (Isced 3-4).

About a third of the highly qualified EU mobile workers have entered professional, scientific and technical activities (12.0%), healthcare (11.0%) and education (10.6%); the remaining part: construction (12.7%), manufacturing (11.9%), wholesale and retail trade (9.5%), etc. Summing up, it stands out the prevalence of sectors that tend to be little or nothing qualified.

The need to accept a condition of deskilling or brain waste on the part of a growing number of highly qualified young EU mobile migrants must be analysed considering the difficulties of accumulating wealth that is experiencing almost an entire generation, which must face not only unemployment risks, but also a growing

[12] Lisa Francovich, *Le migrazioni intellettuali in Europa e in Italia*, in *Atti del convegno: Migrazioni, scenari per il XXI secolo. Roma, 12-14 luglio 2000*, Roma, Agenzia Romana per il Giubileo, 2000, pp. 621-680.

[13] European Migration Network, *Attracting Highly Qualified and Qualified Third-Country Nationals*, Brussels, 2013.

[14] European Commission, Icf, *Study on the movement of skilled labour. Final report*, Luxembourg, 2018.

job instability, a relatively higher cost of living than the salary and, in general, a great insecurity towards the future[15].

A typical case of "brain waste": qualified migrations to Italy

As reported in February 2019 by a joint report by the Ministry of Labor, Istat, Inps, Inail and Anpal[16]: "to reach the employment rate of the EU-15 average (in 2017 equal to 67.9%, against 58.0% of Italy) our country should have about 3.8 million additional employees. The Italian employment gap concerns mainly skilled jobs and specific sectors such as healthcare, education and public administration".

Out of 5,144,440 foreign residents (EU and non-EU), already registered at the end of 2017[17], the number of foreign workers is substantial and slightly increasing. They were 2,423,000 at the end of 2017, with an incidence of 10.5% the total of the employees. Several times it has been pointed out that their insertion is marked by the replacement of Italians in the deficit and less attractive sectors, following a spontaneous "subaltern placement model"[18].

For almost two-thirds (62.8% in 2017) these are unskilled or working-class professions, while just 7.2% perform qualified roles. As a result, immigrants are often over-educated with respect to the tasks performed (34.7% against 23.0% of Italians), while 1 in 14 is underemployed or works part-time. Their salary is 22.9% lower than that of Italians engaged in similar jobs and, among other things, seniority is of little help in obtaining professional recognition.

During the years the followed the 2008 economic crisis, immigrants played a role of "social safety net" for the benefit of Italians. From 2008 to 2017, their unemployment rate increased by 5.8 points compared to 4.2 points for Italians, (while the final rates in 2017 are, respectively, 14.3% and 10.8%). In addition, thanks to the age differential, the benefits that they provide to the pension system are relevant. In the light of what has been described above, Italy therefore proposes itself as a typical case of brain waste, a waste of qualitative resources that unfortunately is evident also to the detriment of young Italians.

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[15] Anna Trindafyllidou, Ruby Gropas, *"Voting with Their Feet": Highly Skilled Emigrants from Southern Europe*, SAGE Publications, 2014.

[16] Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali, Istat, Inps, Inail e Anpal, *Il mercato del lavoro 2018, verso una lettura integrata*, Roma, 2019.

[17] IDOS, Confronti, *Dossier Statistico Immigrazione 2018*, Roma, IDOS, 2018.

[18] The expression derives from the concept of "subaltern integration" developed in 2005. See: Maurizio Ambrosini, Rosangela Lodigiani, Sara Zandrini, *L'integrazione subalterna. Peruviani, Eritrei e Filippini nel mercato del lavoro milanese*, Milano, Fondazione Cariplo per le iniziative e lo studio sulla multietnicità, 1995.

Due to the peculiar conditions of the Italian labour market, neither before the crisis nor (understandably) during the crisis or even after the crisis the influx of skilled workers from abroad has taken off. The residence permits issued to highly qualified workers (EU Blue Card holders according to Article 27 quater of the Immigration Consolidation Act, but also special cases of qualified workers according to Article 27 and Article 27 ter, researchers and reunified family members) increased from 2,500 in 2009 to just 6,000 in the two-year period 2011-2012, while in the following five years the number fell to just over 5,000. In particular, it struggles to take off the EU Blue Card (just 301 new releases in 2017).

In light of the data reported, the real problem seems to consist in the absence of a strategy capable of attracting skilled workers in various sectors and this happens because these sectors are not so dynamic as to employ the new Italian recruits and complete them with those arriving from abroad.

So far the Italian policy-makers seem to have been satisfied to accept the advantages that the current migration situation ensures (according to the most qualified estimates[19], the benefit for the national budget was more than 2 billion euros in 2015). But an exporting country like Italy, facing global competition, should not be satisfied with this temporary advantage without setting qualitative goals, starting from the full exploitation of the skills of resident immigrants.

The "new emigration": official data and effective consistency

According to the OECD[20], Italy has risen to the eighth place in the world among the countries of emigration. The main destinations remain the traditional ones, but the growth rates confirm a certain atomization towards new destinations (such as the countries of Central and Eastern Europe or the Scandinavian countries).

As regard data related to cancellations to abroad from the population register (Istat), the latest consolidated data for 2017 indicate 114,559 expatriates and 42,369 repatriations. Provisional data for 2018 suggest a further growth of movements in both directions (120 thousand expatriates vs. 47 thousand repatriations)[21].

This is the maximum number of expatriates registered in the current decade, but also a real return to the past, that is, to the numerical levels of the early Seventies, when the expatriations exceeded 100 thousand units, but otherwise than now they were largely compensated by repatriations. According to the Register of Italians residing

[19] IDOS, Confronti 2017, *Dossier Statistico Immigrazione 2017*, Roma, IDOS, 2017, pp. 398-316.

[20] OECD, *International Migration Outlook 2018*, Paris, 2018.

[21] Norberto Lombardi, Franco Pittau, *Italiani all'estero: il punto, le nuove emigrazioni e le reti di sostegno,* in *Dossier Statistico Immigrazione 2018*, IDOS, Confronti (ed), Roma, IDOS, 2018, pp. 85-92.

Abroad (Aire), the stable presence of Italians abroad exceeded 5 million in 2017 (5,114,469). The most common reason for enrollment in the Aire is expatriation, which affects just over half of all members (2,656,822). If the number of new entrants to the Aire for expatriation differs relatively little from the annual number of cancellations to abroad from the population register detected by Istat (128.193 vs. 114.559 in 2017), the situation changes when we compare such data with the statistics on the new Italian subscribers of the population registers in various European countries.

A comparison with the national statistics of the top 5 destination countries showed an enormous underestimation of the number of Italians settled abroad due to the failure to cancel from the national population registers before leaving and/or to the late (eventual) non-registration in the Aire register. From our calculations[22] we can see how the real flow of expatriation (above all within the Schengen area) is 4 times higher than that recorded by Istat in the case of Spain, or 2.5 times in the case of Germany and the United Kingdom.

Taking the 2008-2017 decade into consideration, the cancellations from the Italian population registers for transfer to Germany amount to a total of about 115 thousand, but at the same period the Italians registered in German population registers are almost 400 thousand.

From the comparison between the various sources (national, international and main countries of settlement) - and following the example of the most recent studies - it is therefore possible to estimate a revaluation coefficient of Italian emigration that varies from a minimum of 2.5 times to a maximum of 3 times. Considering the approximately 114 thousand canceled to abroad in 2017, we can estimate a gap between 290 thousand and 350 thousand new expatriates per year, a flow quantitatively similar to what is happened in the immediate post-war period.

Half a million graduates among the new Italian emigrants between 2008 and 2017

The numerous sources of information all suffer from problems of incompleteness.

According to the Labor Force Survey over almost 1 million two hundred thousand Italians of working age (15-64 years) who habitually reside in another EU Member State, 30.6% are graduates (Isced 5-8); 36.3% received a secondary and post-secondary non tertiary education degree (Isced 3-4); and the remaining 32.0% refers to

[22] Paolo Attanasio, Antonio Ricci, *Come Saturno, l'Italia divora i propri figli? Le dimensioni reali, le motivazioni a partire e le narrazioni delle nuove migrazioni italiane in Europa*, in *L'Europa dei talenti. Le migrazioni qualificate dentro e fuori l'Unione Europea"*, B. Coccia (eds.), A. Ricci, Roma, IDOS-Istituto di Studi Politici San Pio V, 2019, pp. 46-69.

pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education (Isced 0-2). Overall, there are 359,000 "mobile" graduates, but it is not known how many actually perform highly qualified jobs and how many suffer from over-qualification.

Through appropriate in-depth analysis on a large representative sample, Istat[23] indicated the share of secondary school and university graduates compared to the number of people who had been canceled from the national population registers. University graduates from 3,500 in 2002 rose to around 28,000 in 2017 and holders of a secondary school diploma from 10,000 in 2002 to around 33,000 in 2017. The emigration of educated and presumably young people (altogether over 60,000 secondary school and university graduates), who would have left Italy just in 2017, is even more significant in a country like Italy, which is notoriously "poor" in providing new graduates. Cumulatively between 2002 and 2017 emigrated 193,426 university graduates and 258,189 secondary school graduates. Net of returns, the migratory balance shows a net loss of the Italian population in majority with a medium-high educational qualification.

Finally, the Istat Report on Knowledge 2018[24] reports that in 2016 graduates are 30.8% among Italians over 25 enrolled in the Aire during the year, and 37.4% among those who enroll from abroad (that means after having moved from a country to another). Once again this is an evidence of the high mobility of people qualified or along the course of higher education.

Applying to the aforementioned quantitative estimate - 290/350 thousand new expatriates in 2017 - the percentage coefficient of graduates expressed by the weighted average of Labor Force Survey, Istat and Aire data, the estimate of highly qualified Italian emigrant is equal to a range from 90 thousand to 108 thousand units. In the medium term, between 2008 and 2017, it would be at least half a million graduates who left Italy to seek their fortune abroad. Of these, at least one third no longer returned to Italy.

Even if emigration can also be seen, on the institutional side, as a safety valve to prevent potential social turmoil triggered by the unemployment of large sections of the population from arising[25], the annual loss to be attributed to the emigration of young Italians "under 40" would be, according to Confindustria[26] (the General Confederation

[23] Istat, *Rapporto annuale. La situazione del paese 2018*, Roma, 2018

[24] Istat, *Rapporto sulla conoscenza 2018*, Roma, 2018.

[25] Guido Tintori, Valentina Romei, *Emigration from Italy After the Crisis: The Shortcomings of the Brain Drain Narrative*, in *South-North Migration of EU Citizens in Times of Crisis*, Jean-Michel Lafleur, Mikolaj Stanek (eds.), Imiscoe Research Series, 2017, pp. 49-64.

[26] Confindustria, *Scenari economici*, Roma, 2017.

of Italian Industry), equal to 1% of GDP; according to the OECD[27] a public expenditure of at least 140 thousand dollars for each I level graduate that emigrates; 160 thousand dollars for each II level graduate; and 230 thousand dollars for a PhD holder.

These considerations would be incomplete if another element were not introduced. The loss suffered with departures is not compensated by the Italian emigrants who return, which account for a third or less of those who have left and are usually placed in more advanced age groups, but not even with the arrivals of non-Italian educated people coming from abroad, among which the share of individuals with a degree or a tertiary degree is lower than among Italians and in the most recent period has been reduced[28].

According to the OECD Indicators of Talent Attractiveness[29], in 2019 Italy is among the least attractive countries for highly qualified workers, not offering an environment that can generate a multiplier effect of economic and social development. The same migration policies, that are more favorable to them, turn out to be frustrated by long and complicated procedures.

The prospects of an Italian system apparently "trapped in a poorly qualified balance"[30]

The professional prospects of a graduate in Italy are undermined by two paradoxes: i) the blocking of the function of "social elevator" that should be exercised by the education, which nowadays very rarely allows an improvement of youth social condition. It does not help either the modest demand from the labor market, nor the systematic de-legitimization of the value of studying promoted by certain political and media areas, nor the inadequate public expenditure forecasts for research and development (in 2015 equal to 1.3% of GDP, against an EU average of 2.0%); ii) the widespread phenomenon of over-qualification (according to the OECD, 19% of working graduates are over-qualified and 35% are employed in a sector that is not consistent with their profile).

It can be understood, therefore, why 31% of the people who obtained a doctorate in an Italian university would not make the same choice and 71% believe that, only by

[27] OECD, *Education at a glance 2018*, Paris, 2018.

[28] Enrico Pugliese, *Quelli che se ne vanno, La nuova emigrazione italiana*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2018.

[29] Michele Tuccio, *Measuring and assessing talent attractiveness in OECD countries*, Paris, OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers no. 229, 2019.

[30] OECD, *Skills Strategy. Diagnostic Report. Italy 2017*, Paris, 2017, pp. 75-76.

leaving Italy, could they have better opportunities to establish themselves with the PhD achieved[31]. It seems to lack the prospects, not the quality: just to give an example, according to the OECD[32], Italy is the third EU country by number of scientific publications, after the United Kingdom (which is in sharp decline) and Germany, and the fifth worldwide.

In the medium-short term, however, the situation should radically change. According to the EU agency Cedefop[33], between 2016 and 2030 not only the workforce in Italy is destined to increase by 6.8%, but 95% of new jobs will involve highly qualified positions so as to fear the risk that demand will exceed offer.

At the light of all the analysis implemented, it would be appropriate as soon as possible to put again the question of new flows planning at the centre of the political agenda.

[31] Alma Laurea, *III Indagine. Profilo dei Dottori di ricerca 2017*, Bologna, 2018.

[32] Quoted in: Istat, *L'inserimento professionale dei dottori di ricerca*, Statistiche Report, Roma, 26 novembre 2018.

[33] Cedefop, Italy. *Skills forecast 2018*, Thessaloniki, 2018.