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**Title**

The Italian brain drain : cream and milk / Mattia Cattaneo ; Paolo Malighetti ; Stefano Paleari

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**Abstract**

This study analyzes the scientific profiles of doctorate holders who migrate in search of better job opportunities as a response to the increased temporariness and uncertainty of employment in their native country. Analyzing the career trajectories of the population of research-active Italian doctorate holders in economics, finance, and business management who graduated in the years 2008–2010, we find that those who are more likely to move abroad are those with the relatively best and worst research performances before migrating. Instead, those remaining in Italy are found to be on average of good scientific quality. Further, we find that the best performers target cross-border reputable universities for more prestigious careers, while the relatively lower performers generally move internationally to non-research-oriented institutions simply to look for an occupation. Migrant doctorate holders with average research performances do not differ from those staying in their native country. Our results have important policy implications as they contradict the popular belief that only the cream of the talented brains flee Italy (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Cattaneo, Mattia, E-Mail:

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