

Destination of the PhDs: Determinants of International Mobility of UK PhD Graduates

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Abstract : This paper adopts a comparative approach to examining the determinants of international mobility of German, Italian and British researchers who completed their doctoral education in the UK. Structured sampling and data collection techniques have been developed in order to retrieve information on participants from publicly available sources. This systematically collected data was supplemented with an on-line survey which captures participants' job trajectories, including movements between positions, institutions and countries. In total, data on 949 German, Italian and British PhDs was collected. Logistic regression was employed to identify factors associated with one's probability of moving outside the UK after his or her graduation. The predictor variables included factors associated with one's PhD (field of study, ranking of the university which awarded the PhD degree) and family factors (having a child, nationality of the partner). Then, 9 constrained models were estimated to test the effect each variable has on probability of going to a specific destination, being English-speaking country, non-English speaking country or returning to the home country. The results show that females, arts and humanities graduates, and respondents with a partner from the UK are less mobile than their counterparts. The effect of the ranking of the university differed in two groups. The UK graduates from higher ranked universities were more likely to move abroad than to stay in the UK after their graduation. In contrast, non-UK natives from the same universities were less likely to be internationally mobile than non-UK natives from lower ranked universities. The nationality of the partner was the most important predictor of the specific destination choices. Graduates with partner from the home county were more likely to return home and those with a partner from the third country least likely to return.

Keywords : doctoral graduates, international mobility, nationality, UK

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