

ACADEMIC MOBILITY AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT OF ITALIAN STUDENTS

Abstract. *The present article deals with the main life priorities of Italian youth. It contains the review of such areas as: education, socio-political activity, employment and professional career. The emphasis is put on social and academic mobility of Italian students.*

Анотація. *У статті розглянуто основні життєві пріоритети італійських студентів. Вона містить огляд таких сфер життя італійської молоді як освіта, соціально-політична діяльність, працевлаштування і кар'єрний ріст. Її головна мета — дослідити соціальну та академічну мобільність італійських студентів.*

Key words: *international student mobility, mobility uptake, unconventional participation, conventional participation.*

Ключові слова: *міжнародна мобільність студентів, залучення мобільності, нетрадиційна участь, традиційна участь.*

Statement of the problem. Nowadays many students study abroad. Every year the number of such students increases rapidly. Modern universities must engage with internationalization of educational process, against an economic globalized background. Academic mobility of students is an element of the EU policy to encourage all Europeans to be mobile. On the one hand researchers believe that education itself can be viewed as a source of mobility, on the other hand they consider it a source of inequality. Moreover, not all employers seem to appreciate experience abroad [1]. Therefore, we find it interesting to explore the ethical value of academic mobility in at least one European country — Italy.

Analysis of recent research and publications. R. Breen, J. Goldthorpe, B. Bilecen, B. Van Mol, D. Cairns, R. Burt R, P. Hedström, P. Bearman and others investigate life values of Italian students. The issues of academic mobility and social involvement of Italian students have been explored by A.A. Allaste and G. Di Pietro, R. Huckfeldt and J. Sprague. These researchers investigate the notions of international student mobility, mobility uptake, conventional and unconventional participation of Italian students in political life. The works of all these researchers contain profuse theoretical information and practical knowledge which can introduce the main life priorities of Italian students.

Purpose of the research. The purpose of the paper is to assess the impact of academic mobility and social involvement of Italian students on their professional development and compare it to Ukrainian appropriate parameters.

The key findings. International student mobility (ISM) which refers to students spending some time abroad during their degree programme at a home institute is the most recognized element of Erasmus+, a major EU policy which celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2017. It is clearly popular with an increase in student uptake from 3.2 to 284.1 thousands from 1987/88 to 2014/2015 (EC 2009, EC 2017a). This trend is unlikely to reverse but will probably even intensify in the future. A communication adopted by the European Commission in 2017 on *Strengthening European Identity*

through Education and Culture sets the vision of building a European Education Area by 2025, which also aims to make mobility a reality for all (EC 2017b) [2].

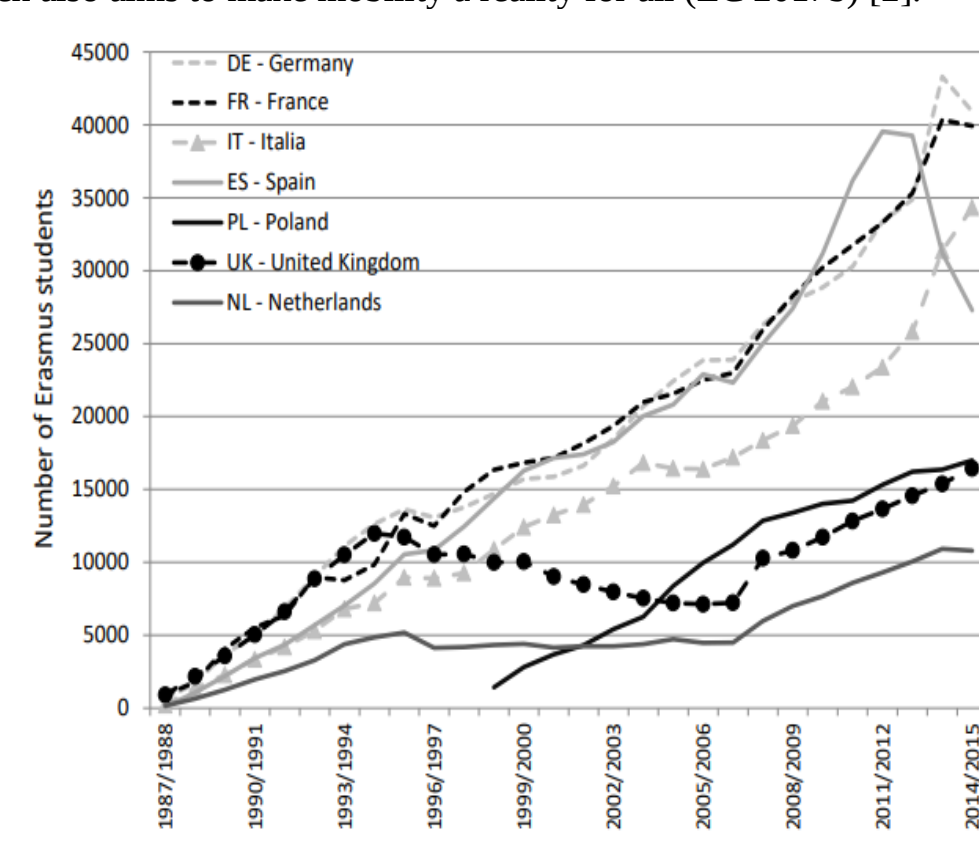


Fig. 1. Number of Erasmus students in some European countries [3]

Italy represents a typical Western European country, with Erasmus mobilities accounting for 56% (2018). *Figure 1* shows the increase in Erasmus uptake since its creation for seven EU countries with more than 10,000 students participating in Erasmus in 2014/15. Italy has the third highest number of students taking part in Erasmus across all European countries.

However, according to B. Bilecen, C. Van Mol (2017), Italian employers value experience abroad, with about one third of interviewed employers in Italy agreeing that studying abroad is important. As a consequence studying abroad could serve three purposes particularly for Italian students: first, it might help students to distinguish themselves from their fellow students; second, it could improve language skills and third, it is valued by the employers [4].

Students' decision to go abroad should also depend on the expected benefits associated with mobility. As shown in *Picture 1* mobility uptake for first degree graduates in Italy is 5.9%. Only 22% of all Italian mobile students study languages abroad to improve language skills. The predominant part of Italian mobile students graduate in social science subjects (71%). However, still almost 30% of all Italian mobile students graduate in a technical science subject (like architecture, engineering, physics etc.). Once the focus is on postgraduates, almost 40% of all mobile students study technical sciences (23% of those being engineering). However mobile students are underrepresented in education and agriculture subjects.

		Italy							
		First degree graduates				Postgraduates			
		Total	% of all enrolled	% mobility uptake	% of all mobile students	Total	% of all enrolled	% mobility uptake	% of all mobile students
Social sciences	Languages	4,648	8.2	16.0	22.4	3,902	11.6	19.3	17.3
	Social Sciences	18,229	32.3	7.6	41.8	12,810	38.0	13.8	40.6
	Law	3,841	6.8	4.7	5.5	1,703	5.1	9.5	3.7
	Education	1,421	2.5	3.7	1.6	798	2.4	3.3	0.6
	ALL	28,139	50.0	8.4	71.3	19,213	57.0	14.1	62.3
Technical sciences	Architecture	2,461	4.4	8.3	6.2	1,431	4.3	15.7	5.2
	Agriculture	1,115	2.0	5.1	1.7	773	2.3	11.6	2.1
	Engineering	5,853	10.4	4.8	8.4	6,528	19.4	15.0	22.6
	Physical + Mineral	4,100	7.3	3.8	4.8	2,895	8.6	9.2	6.1
	Medicine	14,722	26.1	1.7	7.6	2,897	8.6	2.6	1.8
	ALL	28,251	50.1	3.4	28.7	14,524	43.0	11.3	37.7
Total		56,390	100.0	5.9	100.0	33,737	100.0	12.9	100.0

Pic. 1. Sample size, percent enrolled, percent mobility uptake and percent of all mobile students by subject area, graduate program [5]

According to the IZA Institute of Labor Economics, Italian mobile graduates are 11 percentage points more likely than non-mobile students to have completed or be enrolled in postgraduate degree programs three years after graduation. This suggests that mobility programs foster uptake of further study. Furthermore, mobility does not significantly affect the short-term employability of Italian graduates. In contrast, three to four years after graduation, the Italian postgraduates can benefit from slightly higher employment compared to their non-mobile counterparts [6].

We can assume that to ISM enhances students' job related competencies and employability. Thus, it has a positive effect on Italian labour market, which is a social outcome of ISM. Proactive schooling prepares students for their roles as citizens. The survey of young Italian scholars showed that roughly 4.7% was attributed to educational traits. As hypothesized, students with higher levels of civic knowledge showed greater levels of likelihood of future political participation [7].

Social and political engagement plays an important role in guiding Italian youth social and political participation. Hereto, the influence of the peer group and parents is fundamental [8].

These forms of participation propensity are characterized by the increasing rates of self-determined involvement and protest acts, while there is a reduction in conventional participation and, in particular, in party membership. Italian scholars identified two features of students' participation: conventional and unconventional.

Conventional participation (registration of political parties, participation in election campaigns) is connected with greater influence of kin ties, traditional channels of information and trust (especially towards political institutions). Unconventional participation (strikes, petitions, participation in a referendum, parades, critical consumerism) is composed of acts of protest and self-directed involvement. Both dynamics seem to be spread not only among university students, but also among young

people. The analysis shows, in particular, how these two aspects of participation exhibit similar traits, as both are associated with a greater propensity to use new media and to structure extensive and heterogeneous ego-networks.

Self-directed participation or voluntary action has deep roots in Italy, springing from a long historical and cultural tradition that is still visible in the continuing presence in the country. It is characterized by internal differences both in cultural orientation such as whether young people are Catholic or socialist and in the specific form each organization takes. Self-directed participation is characterized by greater confidence in self and in others while protest action is opposed to institutional trust, regardless of whether it is political or social.

The results confirm the emergence of a greater predisposition toward self-determined participation. Indirect participation in political debates is a high-competence activity that is often cited, in contrast to the rarer and rarer conventional participation.

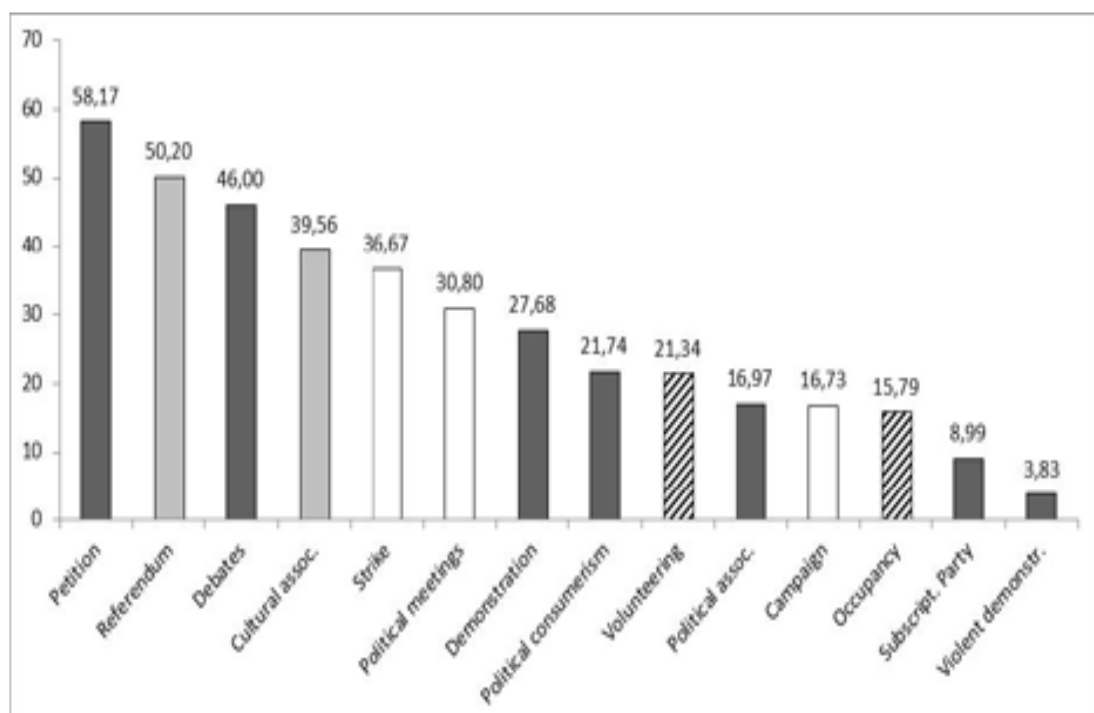


Fig. 2: Types of political participation widespread among Italian students

Note: White bars refer the tendency to form associations, the two-colored bars indicate action of «invisible» participation. Activities of conventional political participation are in grey, while dark bars refer to unconventional, self-directed actions [9]

Conclusion. Italy has the third highest number of students taking part in Erasmus across all European countries. Italian students make one of the largest group studying abroad. Most employers in Italy appreciate student mobility if compared with other European countries. Additionally, student mobilities create a complex international group, which becomes a temporary social group abroad. Then, they return to their homeland with better communicative skills and bring change to their own universities. In other words, they can become catalysts for social skills development, which is vital in becoming useful citizens. Therefore, we may conclude that student mobility can have not only educational but also social outcomes.

Italian researches identified two forms of social activities Italian youth can be engaged: conventional and unconventional. Unconventional participation is very popular and is spread not only among students, but also among young people at all. It is associated with a greater propensity to use new media and to structure extensive and heterogeneous ego-networks.

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GENERATION Z ON UKRAINIAN LABOUR MARKET

Abstract. *The author analyzes the economic and business activity of the young population aged 15–25 on the labor market of Ukraine. Negative trends in the youth employment have been revealed. The changes in the cultural environment and their influence on the employment of young people are analyzed.*

Анотація. *У цій статті проведено аналіз економічної та ділової активності молодого населення віком від 15 до 25 на ринку праці України. Виявлено негативні тенденції на ринку зайнятості молоді України. Проаналізовано зміни культурного середовища та їх вплив на зайнятість молоді.*

Key words: *youth, business activity, youth employment, labor market, cultural framework.*