
In the economic and social aftermath of the 2008 crisis there has been an important and growing new wave of highly qualified Portuguese emigration comprising scientists. No or very few public policies have been designed to reverse this phenomenon, risking the consequences of brain drain. International literature argues that professional reasons are central to scientists’ decision to migrate, even after the 2008 crisis. Spending some time in a foreign country to study, research, or teach, is perceived as a common step in an individual academic trajectory and an advantage for a successful professional career in academia. It is also encouraged by European Union policies. Twelve individual portraits of Portuguese scientists living in central Europe reveal how important other factors are to the migration decision-making process. These factors include the economic crisis, student mobility programmes, and the current Portuguese scientific system revision.