

The impact of internal migration on Italian fertility
Michael White^(*) - Anna Paterno^(**) - Giuseppe Gabrielli^(**)

The effect of place of residence and migration on fertility has been long-standing concern in population studies. This observation assumes a particular importance in Italy, a country that in 1990s is characterized by one of the lowest fertility rates in the world. The Italian peninsula, moreover, is characterized by persistent population redistribution processes within its territory.

Our primary objective in this paper, that is part of a larger project¹, is to analyse the impact of regional context and geographical mobility on fertility. Our approach allows us to test existing theories on this topic. We use data coming from the "Italian Households Panel" (ILFI), a prospective nationally representative survey covering around 10,000 adults, males and females, aged over 18 at interview and born between 1900 and 1983.

Considering the interviewed women, we examine the effect of age and cohort, as well as other individual traits, characteristics of the origin and potential destination, and the migratory event itself.

We conduct a first descriptive analysis to show the main characteristics and the reproductive behaviour of female migrants. Then, we employ OLS models to study cumulative fertility at the time of the survey; we estimate a limited dependent variable regression models to examine fertility along five years after migration; in the end, we conduct a full event history model to measure the fertility evolution of the women.

The descriptive analysis carried out will verify, first of all, the persistence of significant differences in the reproductive behaviour of women according to whether or not they have ever experienced a migratory event. Moreover, the regression analysis will show the effects of migration within and across cohort on short, medium and long term fertility and the existence of mechanisms of disruption and selection in the population.

^(*) Population Studies and Training Center, Brown University, Box 1836, 68 Waterman Street, Providence, 02912 RI – USA - Ph: +01 401 8631083; Fax: +01 401 8633351; e-mail: Michael_White@brown.edu

^(**) Dipartimento per lo Studio delle Società Mediterranee, Università di Bari, P.za C. Battisti, 1 - 70100 Bari - Italy - Ph: +39 080 5717110; Fax: +39 080 5717272;

e-mail: a.paterno@scienze politiche.uniba.it; giuseppe.gabrielli@tiscali.it

¹ This paper is included in a widespread project on "Explaining Very Low Fertility" in Italy coordinated by D. Kertzer, M. White (Brown University, Providence), L. Bernardi (Max Planck Institute, Rostock) and M. Barbagli (Cattaneo Institute, Bologna) NIH: R01HD048715 - NSF: BCS0418443. We are thankful for the support of the US National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and the US National Science Foundation, which jointly support this project.