

Geographical Mobility and Reproductive Choices of Italian Men

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ABSTRACT

In addition to women's increased educational attainment and institutional settings, also changed orientations toward family to achieve full life-satisfaction have been underlined to explain low fertility rates. Since Southern and Northern Italy differ for the institutional and economic setting, cultural orientations regarding the importance of family as well as fertility rates, also for Italy it seems reasonable to suppose that the latter are caused by both 'structural' and 'cultural' factors. We argue that South-to-North migrations could be an interpretative key of geographical differences in the timing and number of childbirths. In fact, migrants are socialized to different familiar behaviours, although they share with Northerners the same institutional and economic setting. We use data from the Italian Households Longitudinal Survey and apply event history models to Italian men's transition to parenthood. Our results show that North–South differences in the transition to the first child are largely explained by different levels and patterns of female labour market participation, while preferences could have a crucial impact in the transition to the second child, where migrants and Southerners are equally much faster than Northerners. We think that these results contribute to both the literature about fertility determinants and long-term consequences of migrations.

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