Solera, Cristina

Working Paper

Combining marriage and children with paid work: changes across cohorts in Italy and Great Britain

ISER Working Paper Series, No. 2008-22

Provided in Cooperation with:
Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER), University of Essex

Suggested Citation: Solera, Cristina (2008) : Combining marriage and children with paid work: changes across cohorts in Italy and Great Britain, ISER Working Paper Series, No. 2008-22, University of Essex, Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER), Colchester

This Version is available at:
https://hdl.handle.net/10419/92115

ISER Working Paper Series

Combining marriage and children with paid work: Changes across cohorts in Italy and Great Britain

Cristina Solera
University of Torino

No. 2008-22
July 2008

INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL & ECONOMIC RESEARCH

E·S·R·C ECONOMIC & SOCIAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

www.iser.essex.ac.uk

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

It is a well-established fact that over the last fifty years in all advanced countries women have increasingly entered the labour market and remained in it throughout the period of family formation. Yet most research on women's employment changes has been based on cross-sectional data. When longitudinal data have been used, the attention has typically concentrated on specific decades or specific birth cohorts, or in the case of comparison across cohorts, on single countries or on specific crucial phases in female life courses, namely the period around the birth of first child. By contrast, this paper compares two countries, Italy and Great Britain, and, by drawing on the BHPS and the ILFI up to 2005, it explicitly analyses changes across four subsequent birth cohorts (women born between 1935-44, 1945-54, 1955-64 and 1965-74) in the effect of marriage and children on women's movements between paid market work and unpaid family-care work. Moreover, the paper looks at a wide span of women's life courses (from the time they leave full-time education to their forties) in order also to capture exits from and re-entries into the labour market occurring at later ages and to see to what extent and for whom the timing of interruptions has been postponed from the period around marriage to the period around first or second childbirth, while the timing of re-entries has been anticipated.

My findings show that in both Italy and Great Britain women from younger cohorts are more attached to the labour market, but that the type and causes of such increasing attachment differ importantly. In Great Britain, women's employment has gradually expanded from exiting the labour market when marrying and re-entering at the end of childrearing, to exiting when having the first child and re-entering more often between births and more quickly after childbearing. Moreover, the employment of married women and mothers has become more accepted but, in turn, also more differentiated by education, social class and work experience. In Italy, women's employment has grown, but this growth has been mainly "compositional", that is, due to the fact that in younger cohorts more women have those characteristics that have always fostered their labour market participation, namely, high education and low family burdens. Indeed, c*eteris paribus*, in Italy the influence of education, marriage and children has remained fairly constant across cohorts. Moreover, compared to Great Britain, family responsibilities have a weaker effect: in Italy getting married seems to influence only the oldest and the youngest cohort while in all cohorts both the age and number of children have little effect on women's risk of leaving paid work. As underlined by previous studies, in Italy education appears more important than motherhood. Thus, Italian women are still polarised in an "opt-in opt-out" participation pattern: either they remain lifelong housewives, never entering paid work or interrupting it around marriage or childbirth without ever re-entering, or they remain lifelong workers, although discontinuous careers have slightly increased in the last decade. These findings are largely explained by differences between Italy and Great Britain in their cultural and institutional contexts, and in how they have changed from the 1950s to the 2000s.

Combining marriage and children with paid work: changes across cohorts in Italy and Great Britain

Cristina Solera

University of Torino

ABSTRACT

This paper compares Italy and Great Britain and uses event history data and methods to investigate changes across cohorts in the effect of family responsibilities on women's transitions in and out of paid work. My findings show that women's attachment to paid work has increased and that education and/or class has marked the divide, as predicted by human capital theory. However, the effects of marriage and motherhood are, *ceteris paribus*, stronger in a residualist-liberal welfare regime such as the British one. In Italy, where demand for labour is relatively low and gender role norms are quite traditional, reconciliation policies are weak but largely compensated by intergenerational and kinship solidarity, fewer women enter paid work, but when they do so, they interrupt less when becoming wives or mothers.

Keywords:
Women's employment, life course, transitions, work-family reconciliation, institutions

Contact:
Università degli Studi di Torino, Dipartimento di Scienze Sociali, Via S.Ottavio 50, 10124 Torino.
E-mail: cristina.solera@unito.it

Acknowledgements:
I am grateful to ECASS visitor scheme that has allowed me to spend one month (February 2007) at ISER and to start familiarise with the new releases of the BHPS and, in particular, with Dave Mare's work-life history files and with Chiara Pronzato's marital and fertility history files. I am also grateful to participants of the EQUALSOC midterm conference in Berlin (11-12 April 2008) who have given me useful feedbacks on an earlier draft.

1- INTRODUCTION

In the second half of the twentieth century, rates of women's employment have increased markedly in all the advanced countries. As much research shows, the main cause of this increase has been the behaviour of married women and mothers. Everywhere, work and family have become more compatible. Compared with their "mothers" and "grandmothers", women of younger generations have not only entered the labour market on a more massive scale, but they have also exited in much smaller numbers or shortened their family-care breaks. Several factors have contributed to this remarkable change. On the supply side, women have started to assume new roles, investing more in education and labour market careers and refusing the model of the full-time housewife. In particular, the expansion of female education has started from, and leads to, a change in attitudes and preferences through the contestation of dominant gender-role norms and a redefinition of gender identities, as manifested in the feminist movements of the 1960s-1980s. Higher investments in education have also increased the opportunity cost of not working or withdrawing from the labour force during the family formation phase (Blossfeld and Shavit 1993, Saraceno, 1993; Blossfeld 1995). In parallel, on the demand side, the growth in service sector employment has expanded women's labour market participation because it has created sheltered and family-friendly labour markets for women; although, at the same time, by still assuming that women are the main care providers, it has produced gender segregation (Gornick and Jacobs 1998; Mandel and Semyonov; 2006*):* Finally, on the institutional side, the incentives to part-time work and the development of maternity and parental leave programmes and of other parenting policies, especially in the field of child-care, have importantly affected the possibility to combine employment with family responsibilities (Gornick *et al.* 1997; Esping-Andersen 1999; Sainsbury 1994; Gustafsson 1995; Boje and Leira 2000, Uunk *et al.* 2005).

Although these trends have occurred everywhere, there is considerable variation across countries in the extent and for whom women's employment patterns have changed. This cross-country/cross-welfare regime variation has been widely documented and discussed**.** Yet, most of the evidence for it has been based on cross-sectional data. Few studies have used longitudinal analyses in order to explicitly explore changes across cohorts; or, when they do so, few have gone beyond single-country studies. Moreover, few studies have looked at the entire work career. Rather, the tendency has been to focus on specific crucial phases in female careers or on specific groups of women, namely on labour market transitions around childbearing (Dex et al., 1998; Saurel-Cubizolles et al 1999; Bratti et al. 2005; Vlasblom and Schippers 2006; Pronzato 2007*;)* and on

married women (Blossfeld and Drobnic, 2001). Finally, the explanations typically put forward in the literature have focused on one single or a few factors, either on preferences and human capital resources, on labour market structure and opportunities or on the welfare state (specific policies or its wider configuration).

This paper starts to fill this gap. It compares two countries, Italy and Great Britain, and, by drawing on the BHPS and the ILFI up to 2005, it uses event history data and methods to investigate changes across four subsequent birth cohorts (1935-44; 1945-54; 1955-64; 1965-74) in the incidence and determinants of women's transitions between paid market work and unpaid family-care work, from the time they leave full-time education until they are in their forties. This wider observational window allows one to gain better insight into the interplay between family and work careers; that is, to disentangle the different effects of marital status, age and number of children. In particular, it enables one to see to what extent and for whom the timing of interruptions has been postponed from the period around marriage to the period around childbirth and the timing of re-entries anticipated as soon as caring needs become lighter or income needs more urgent. Moreover, this paper tries to account for the differences observed across cohorts and across countries by using a "gendered institutional rational-action framework" that integrates the various economic and sociological theories and by examining the interplay between supply-side, demand-side, material, cultural and institutional factors.

The paper is organised as follows. Section 2 discusses various sociological and economic theories which focus on different factors affecting women's labour supply and which predict, more or less explicitly, different effects of family-related factors on women's employment transitions over the life course. Section 3 offers a descriptive reconstruction of how the potential *explanans* identified in the previous section have been concretely configured in Italy and Great Britain from the 1950s to 2000s, and it formulates hypotheses on their impact on changes across cohorts in the incidence, timing and correlates of women's labour market transitions over the family-life course. After a brief description of data, method and variables (section 4), section 5 distinguishes between five types of careers up to the age of 35 ("never worked", "continuous", "one break, no return", "one break, return" and "two or more breaks"), and it shows changes across cohorts in the overall distribution of these work histories and in their distribution by motherhood and education. Section 6 conducts multivariate and event-history analysis of movements between employment and housework (namely, first exit from and first re-entry into paid work) to determine whether and how, *ceteris paribus*, the effects of marriage and children have changed across cohorts. Section 7 concludes.

2- THE EFFECT OF FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES ON WOMEN'S LABOUR MARKET SUPPLY: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

There are various theoretical approaches that attempt to account for women's labour-market behaviour. Some focus on supply-side factors such as human capital resources and work orientations. Others analyse women's labour supply within the context of the household or of the social stratification system by looking at the effect of partner's resources or women's class position. Other theories focus more on the labour-market structure, opportunities and regulations. Yet others emphasise the institutional context that shapes women's choices by examining either specific policies or the overall welfare state or welfare regime. Finally, further approaches analyse the cultural sphere, either at a macro level, by considering institutionalised gender and care norms, or overall gender roles and work attitudes in the society; or at a micro level by looking at women's attitudes or at moral and social negotiated views with partners and within other social networks. These various theories point, more or less explicitly, to different factors affecting women's labour-market participation, and they predict different types of effects on women's employment transitions over family formation.

According to standard economic theory, women's labour market behaviour reflects their sex-role preferences, human capital investments, and an efficient beneficial division of labour within the couple (Becker 1975 1991; Polachek 1981). Education is seen as instrumental to acquiring goods and incomes, and labour market decisions are taken within the couple on the basis of women's market and domestic productivities relative to their husbands. The assumptions are well-known: instrumental rationality, perfect information, optimisation of time allocation between paid and unpaid work under budget constraints, partners as trading partners, the family as unitary with a joint utility function. Also family decisions are subject to calculations of cost-benefit type, and under the same assumptions. Thus Becker's economic theory argues that marriage is convenient if there is specialization, and that the demand for children increases as family income increases, whilst it decreases as the value of women's market time (measured in monetary terms), and so the relative cost of children, increases. Hence, according to human-capital theory, the increasing investment of women in education has reduced both the gain from marriage and the demand for children, whilst making it more convenient for women to invest in labour market careers**.** However, more than predicting the degree of compatibility between family and paid work and how such compatibility varies across time and space, standard economic theory seems to predict a constant effect of education and partner's income. Hence, *human-capital theory predicts that the higher a woman's*

educational level, the lower is her probability of leaving the labour market and the higher her probability of re-entering, with the strength of this effect depending on partner's educational and occupational resources, and with the trade-off between family and work resolved by postponing or reducing marriage and children.

Although preferences and constraints are key concepts, and although the optimal gender division of labour within the couple is considered to reflect both biological and social barriers, the mainstream economic approach is silent both on the origins and development of preferences and on the concrete set of opportunities and constraints that actors face. Preferences are treated as stable, and constraints as exogenously given. One may consequently say that, *within mainstream economic theory, the prediction concerning the effect of education and partner on women's labour supply is "additive"*: this effect is context-less and class-less, so that no interaction between the woman's own education and partner's resources, on the one hand, and the institutional and cultural context and the individual and family position in the stratification system, on the other, is conceptualised and measured.

The same predictions on similar theoretical assumptions derive from the Preference Theory developed by Hakim, although she adopts a different perspective and focus. More than budget constraints and monetary returns on education, Hakim emphasises the role of women's heterogeneous sex-role preferences and work orientations in shaping their family-employment careers, and she considers investments in education and part-time/fulltime employment to be the main signals of such preferences**.** Low-level education and part-time work, she argues, are voluntarily chosen by those women with more traditional attitudes and primarily devoted to the marriage career, whom she calls "grateful slaves". By contrast, "self-made women", who are primarily orientated towards market careers, choose high education, high commitment jobs and pursue a full-time, continuous life-course employment pattern similar to that of men. In her latest work, Hakim presents a three-fold typology of women's work preferences. In addition to the re-labelled "home-centred" and "work-centred" women, she introduces "the adaptive women". This third group is the largest in each country and the most diverse: it includes women who want to combine work and family, plus "drifters" and "unplanned careers". Unlike "home-centred" women, "adaptive women" prefer to work, but unlike the "work-centred" ones, they do not totally commit to their careers. This makes them the most responsive to employment and family policies, whose impact indeed differs between preference groups (Hakim 2000).

Hakim's theory has been attacked on many grounds. First of all, what she calls a "theory" seems to be more a classification of female types based on observed participation patterns. Indeed, Hakim

gives no explanation as to why women fall into a particular category, where their preferences come from, why they are socially patterned, and if and why they differ across countries. Instead, as in the conventional rational choice theory, she assumes that actors are long-term rational and that preferences are stable. Moreover, even though she recognises that preferences do not completely determine outcomes, she in fact uses information on labour market behaviour as a proxy for inferences about preferences, proposing in the end a "revealed preference" approach which is clearly tautological (Fagan and O'Reilly 1998a; Crompton and Harris 1998). Secondly, by offering an overly voluntarist and static account of women's employment patterns, Hakim's analysis also fails to recognise and explain differences across countries and across cohorts. As many sociologists and heterodox economists have pointed out, choices are always constrained, so that actors do not always have access to the same resources in pursuing their preferences. Also preferences are socially structured, being different across countries but also across classes, sexes and generations. Moreover, preferences can also change over the life course in response to life experiences and to new opportunities and constraints.

The importance of class and of its institutional embeddedness in structuring both attitudes and behaviours has been underlined by many authors. McRae for example, in reaction to Hakim's Preference Theory, emphasises the role of constraints by focusing on job availability, the cost and availability of childcare, and social class. In particular, it is class, within the same set of institutional and normative arrangements, that strongly explains women's ability to overcome constraints and act upon preferences (McRae 2003). Also Crompton shows that *the effect of motherhood on women's labour market attachment is class- but also institution-shaped*. Indeed, low-educated low-class women tend everywhere to reduce their working hours or withdraw from the labour market when they have young children, compared to women with high educations and belonging to advantaged occupational groups. Also everywhere, individuals of lower occupational status are more traditional in their gender attitudes. However, *class inequalities are stronger where policies in support of dual-earner families are weaker*. This suggests that social structure still matters and that "theories of individuation and 'choice' in respect of women's employment have the effect of systematically removing from critical examination the embedded practices and institutions that reproduce inequalities" (Crompton 2006, p.185)

The role of institutional arrangements is well-established in the empirical and theoretical literature, where the attention has concentrated either on typologies of gendered welfare state regimes (O' Connor 1996; Orloff 1993; Sainsbury 1994; Saraceno 1996) or on specific policy arrangements such as maternity and parental leaves, childcare provisions (Gornick and Meyers

2003; Uunk et al 2005) and tax systems (Gustafsson 1995). The former strand of analysis is dominated by sociologists, whilst the latter is more interdisciplinary, although the emphases of sociologists and economists might differ. Many feminist and institutional economists underline that policies change the relative advantage of paid work versus unpaid work, affecting women's labour supply decisions in three ways: affecting their net wage (substitution effect), their time to care (substitution effect), or their family income (income effect). Welfare state scholars instead show that social policies non only affect time availability and economic resources, as economic theories of the family argue (not only neoclassical theories but also bargaining theories), but also class stratification and gender stratification. Finally, feminist welfare state scholars emphasise that institutions not only design opportunities and constraints but also define normality models, making some choices more possible but also more desirable. Indeed, welfare states assume and produce different gender and breadwinner ideologies, and they institutionalise different norms concerning the correct form of gender relation, women's involvement in paid work, care standards, and children's needs (e.g: Pfau-Effinger, 2004).

Common to this large body of literature is the finding that *women's continuous attachment to paid work is encouraged by a large provision of high-quality and low-cost childcare services, by individualised types of tax systems, and by flexible and high wage compensated maternity and parental leaves.* By contrast, *generous family allowances and too long parental leaves may depress women's' labour supply*, the former heightening income effects (although extra sources of income may be used to buy extra-family care), the latter increasing women's human capital depreciation. An extensive supply of social services not only enables women to remain in paid work over family formation but it also provides employment for them. However, *there is consensus in the literature that what really matters is packages of policies rather than individual ones.* In More detail, cross-country welfare regime studies show that women' employment entry and duration in the labour market are highest in the Nordic countries, where both supply and demand are increased by the large provision of public services, where leaves are generous and extended to fathers, where policies encourage part-time and reduced-hours work, but temporarily. Moderate levels of female employment and discontinuous careers around childbirths with re-entries on a part-time basis are found in liberal countries, where women's employment has a quite long tradition but where decommodification and defamiliarization is lower and part-time constitutes a secondary entrapping labour market. In conservative and Mediterranean countries, where policies encourage mothers to stay at home and tertiarization is limited, women's employment is lowest and women tend either to have either continuous full-time employment or continuous non-employment, although in

Mediterranean countries total employment female rates and part-time rates are lower than in conservative countries.

In general, this "welfare state literature" shows that institutions matter and that they also mediate the effect of individual-level characteristics (such as education and class) and of the costs of employment interruptions, also *producing less or more heterogeneity in the female population* (Stier and Lewin-Epstein 2001, Geist 2005; del Boca and Pasqua 2005).

Institutions affecting women's employment patterns do not stop at the welfare state. Initially less investigated but now increasingly underlined, *employer practices and state labour market regulations are also crucial, particularly in the field of working hours and atypical contracts* (Bettio *et al* 1996; Cousins 1994; Del Boca 2002;Crompton 2006). Indeed, as much empirical research shows, there is a positive correlation between the level of part-time work and the level of female labour-force participation across countries. Part-time work, in fact, helps women to combine child rearing with employment, that is, to remain continuously in the labour market or to re-enter earlier. However, besides its diffusion, the effect of part-time work on women's labour-market transitions and future perspectives clearly depends also on its characteristics in terms of pay, skill-profile, protection, and career prospects. The effect of part-time work on women's employment also depends on the availability and nature of other women-friendly policies. If women cannot rely on good parenting policies, they may have to stop working when their children are young regardless of the quality and working hours of their jobs, unless they (and/or their partners) have relatively high incomes with which to purchase market care or unless they can count on intergenerational and kinship solidarity (Blossfeld and Hakim 1997; Fagan and O'Reilly 1998b; Del Boca 2002; Stier and Lewin-Epstein 2001).

Another dimension of labour-market regulation with a direct impact upon women's employment is the *regulation of working time arrangements. These are the policies that Bettio et al (1996) call "employee-friendly flexibility over the lifecycle*", which recognise that the working-time needs and preferences of women and men change over the life course according to the changing nature of care requirements, and to their own preferences between work, leisure, or education. There are basically three types of such policies: leave arrangements, especially maternity and parental; the possibility to reduce working hours when children are young; and standard hours of work and regularity or employee-chosen flexibility in working-time schedules (such as contracts for weekly or annualised hours). As for part-time work, the success of these lifecycle flexibility policies depends upon the nature of other types of policies. For example, the possibility of reducing working hours is successful in France and Sweden where child care services are numerous, cheap, and with

convenient opening hours, but this may not be the case in other countries where pre-school care is limited and school days are short.

In polemic with neoclassical economic theories, in particular with its assumption of atomistic passive agents who act only on the basis of instrumental rationality within given constraints, but also in response to increasing sociological theories of "individualisation" and "reflexive modernity", many feminist scholars (eg: Crompton 2006, Pfau-Effinger 2004) and some rational choice sociologists (eg: Boudon 2003) *argue that it is not just institutions that matter, so too does culture, and that the material, the institutional and the symbolic are closely intertwined. Culture shapes women's and couples' choices and experiences in many ways.* At a macro level, there are social norms on proper gender roles but also proper childcare, which, in rational choice terms, may affect both preferences and constraints through what Kreps calls intrinsic or extrinsic motivation (Kreps 1997). Social norms are also institutionalised, that is, produced and/or reinforced through what policies do and do not do. As the feminist welfare state literature has pointed out, these institutionalised norms are part of welfare regimes and welfare states, which, indeed, have been based and developed on different specific "breadwinner ideologies" (or "ideologies of domesticity") or, more widely, "gender contracts", "gender arrangements", "work-family systems". However, the doing gender perspective has emphasised that preferences and rationality are also socially and culturally created at a micro relational level through the development of moral and social (not individual) negotiated views with partners and within social networks (Duncan 2005; Coltrane 2000).

As will be clear from this brief review of the literature, many factors affect women's choices and outcomes in the labour market, and many different theories have been proposed in economics, sociology and demography. Human-capital or preference theories have focused on the supply-side, segmentation theories on the demand-side, whilst institutional theories have concentrated on the role of welfare state and labour market regulation and on their interplay with the material (social class) and the cultural (normative and moral frameworks as well as individual gender role and work attitudes). *In this study, I try to build a unified conceptual framework by amalgamating insights from these different theoretical approaches into what I label "a gendered institutional rational-action framework".* Indeed, by pointing to different factors affecting women's labour-market participation, these theories can be seen as complementary more than alternative, provided that unrealistic assumptions on perfect competition, perfect information, and only instrumental rationality are dropped. This framework incorporates both micro- and macro-factors and both agency and structure. The concept of constrained choices is indeed crucial: women's choices in the

labour market reflect their preferences and their human capital, but they are embedded in an entire set of social, economic and cultural arrangements. These arrangements not only define the opportunities and constraints of women's action, but they also influence women's preferences and their positive beliefs.

Hence, the extent to which and how marriage and motherhood have become more compatible with women's paid work will depend on which of the relevant micro and macro factors underlined in the literature have changed over time, and how they have done so. What has happened in Italy and Great Britain? Before presenting the empirical results on changes across cohorts in women's employment patterns, I shall describe the British and Italian normative and socio-institutional context, how they have changed from the 1950s to the beginning of the 2000s, and what I expect their impact to be on women's labour-market attachment.

3- THE DIFFERENT ITALIAN AND BRITISH CONTEXTS: HYPOTHESES

Italy and Great Britain differ greatly in their institutional systems, and in the way they have changed in the post-war decades. In Italy the institutional setting has changed very little from the Fordist welfare regime organised around the male breadwinner worker and the housewife woman. Indeed, male breadwinners were protected via relatively generous social insurance schemes and via strict labour market regulation. The aim was to guarantee a "family-wage" throughout a life-long secure career of the husband. At the same time, the family was considered to be the main provider of care and income support (Esping-Andersen 1990, 1999). This Fordist regulation arrived comparatively late in Italy, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, but it has also shown resistance to change. Until the mid-1990s there was very little official labour market de-regulation and welfare state reforms. In particular, finding a job was still a lengthy process, and part-time jobs and flexible working-time schedules were scarce. Only women working in the public sector, which had de-facto short full-time jobs , and those working in family firms, who scheduled their working time flexibly, could more easily combine work with family responsibilities. In the late 1990s, first the "legge Treu" and then the "legge Biagi" introduced more flexibility into the Italian labour market, allowing for a variety of atypical contracts. However, as underlined by many authors (Esping-Andersen and Regini 2000, Barbieri and Sherer 2007), this deregulation was only "partial and selective". It made no change to the regulation of permanent dependent jobs and was thus directed only at the "outsiders" (young

people and women) who increasingly entered the labour market on atypical contracts and with much less protection compared to previous cohorts.

Nor has the provision of child-care services for the under-3s increased since the reforms of the 1970s, rising from a national coverage of 6% in 1991 (Ruxton 1996) to 7.4% in 2000, albeit with great regional variation (from a maximum of 18.3% in Emilia-Romagna to a minimum of 1.9% in Calabria; DelBoca and Saraceno 2005). Moreover, in Italy the opening hours of the universal pre-primary school is still incompatible with full-time work. Maternity leave, which was first introduced at the beginning of the 1900s and then improved in 1971, and further in 2000,[1] is comparatively generous. Yet self-employed women and a-typical workers are still poorly protected. Women working in the informal economy are obviously excluded and cannot even rely on income transfers. Indeed, there has never been a universal child allowance in Italy, nor a general national minimum income scheme.

Also gender-role attitudes seem to have changed little in Italy. Or rather, the change has been almost entirely compositional and has primarily arisen from women. In a cross-country study on attitudes towards married women's employment based on the ISSP dataset, Treas and Widmer show that everywhere women tend to be more supportive of maternal employment than men, particularly when children are young. Yet Italy (together with Ireland) is the country in Europe with the largest gender gap (Treas and Widmer 2000). This suggests that women's preferences have started to change despite a negative normative climate and that this change has not led to a general attitudinal shift. Indeed, on using the same dataset, Scott finds that for Italian women differences across cohorts on the approval of maternal employment disappear when educational level is controlled for. The same occurs for Italian men when, besides education, the wife's work experience is controlled for (Scott 1999). In other words, Italians in younger cohorts show less traditional gender-role attitudes, at least as far as women's employment is concerned, because a higher percentage of them are well-educated or, in case of men, because a higher percentage are married to women who work.

Since little has changed in Italy regarding the general approval of maternal employment and in those institutional dimensions of importance for women's labour-market participation, *I expect to find a strong compositional effect in women's employment growth*. Without any significant improvements in support for the combination of work and family, the factors affecting women's exits should remain fairly constant across cohorts. Instead, it is women's preferences for non-

[1] The reform introduced in 2000 has extended the duration of non compulsory leave, transforming it into "parental leave" with the separate entitlement of fathers, with the mother not being able to take the entire leave, and with a bonus for fathers of 1 extra month if they take more than three months of their "quota", although only the first 6 months of the entire parental leave are paid.

domestic roles and their strategies and choices that have changed. Faced with an unfriendly set of opportunities and constraints, in order to work and improve their careers, women have had to invest more in education, to delay entry into marriage and motherhood, or to reduce fertility and marriage. *Education should prove to be, in both old and young cohorts, one of the strongest determinants of women's work histories*. Moreover, with only a partial and selective flexibilization concentrated on the early careers of young cohorts, *I expect to find that in Italy interruptions around childbirths have increased in the fourth cohort (women born between 1965-74) while re-entries after an interruption have remained fairly constant*.

In Great Britain, women typically do not stay in the labour market during the family formation phase: they tend to leave the labour market when they have a child and return to work, often on part-time basis, when the child begins school. Indeed, both in the post-war decades, with the Beveridge's concept of universalism, which was nevertheless biased towards men, and later under the Conservative governments of the 1980s and 1990s, with their liberal ideology of the privacy of the family and the efficiency of the free market, the welfare state's support for maternal employment was limited. Maternity leave, which was introduced in the second half of the 1970s, indubitably had a positive effect on women's' chances of remaining attached to the labour market around childbirth. Yet, since entitlement was based on the criterion of continuous employment with the same employer, women with short-term jobs in the secondary labour market did not qualify. Moreover, the leave lasted only 18 weeks and it provided a low-level compensation. Under Thatcher and Major, statutory maternity payment and rights (right to reinstatement and protection against unfair dismissal) were further differentiated on the basis of previous work histories. The most generous provision ("Statutory Maternity Pay") was based on the criterion of continuous employment with the same employer (five years if the woman was a part-time worker, and two years if she was a full-time employee) and consisted in 6 weeks of payments at 90% of the wage and for 12 weeks, at a flat rate of £39.25 in 1990/1 and of £60.20 in 2000. A lower flat rate was made available as a "Maternity Allowance" for 18 weeks to women with only 6 months continuous employment provided they had paid NI contributions. Although encouraged, supplementary payments by employers were scarce and concentrated in specific industries and occupations (Ringen 1997; EC 1972, 1988, 1998). In 1988, 60 per cent of pregnant women qualified for SMP and the right to reinstatement, and only 14 per cent of women, mainly in the public sector, received contractual maternity pay (McRae and Daniel 1991).

As many studies have shown (Joshi *et al*. 1996; McRae 1991 1993; McRae and Daniel 1991), gains from maternity leave and other family-friendly employment policies have been far from

uniform. This has been accompanied by insignificant improvements in the already scant provision of both public and private childcare services (Cohen 1990; Randall 2002; Ringen 1997), and with a progressive decline in the real value of the universal Child Benefit scheme, whose level was already much below the cost of child maintenance when it was first introduced in 1976. Hence, in both old and young cohorts, mothers wanting or needing to keep their jobs have had to rely on informal childcare arrangements (family members and child-minders) and/or to work part-time, often in the evenings or at night when children can be left with their fathers.

Under New Labour both types of maternity leaves have been extended from 18 to 26 weeks, and then further to 52 weeks. Moreover, levels of payment have been increased, and parental and paternity leaves have been introduced, although the former is unpaid and the latter is paid at a flat rate. (Kilkey 2006). Moreover, in 1998 New Labour launched the National Childcare Strategy, an initiative for the development, expansion, implementation and sustainability of early-years and childcare services in Britain. However, as underlined by various studies (eg: Wincott 2006; Lewis 2003), aspirations to universal childcare have been pursued with certain clearly liberal features in line with a liberal-residualist welfare tradition. Indeed, demand-side subsidies have been the major plank in New Labour's policy through a system of tax-credits mainly aimed at lower- and middle-income working families which makes assistance for the cost of childcare dependent on parent's employment status. Moreover, on the supply-side, the main commitment has been to preschool services rather than to ones for 0-3 year-olds, and still on a part-time basis. The result is that in 2000 the provision of publicly funded childcare services for the under-3s still had only a 2% coverage rate, the same as at the beginning of the 1990s, or 34% if private services are included, against a share of 77% in publicly financed care for children aged 3 to 5 (Gornick and Meyers 2003, table 7.2; Del Boca and Saraceno 2005, table 5)

Therefore, the provision of childcare services for the under-3s is equally scant in the two countries analysed. Yet, unlike in Great Britain, in Italy a great deal of help is provided by the kinship network, so that mothers have more chances to pursue continuous work histories (Saraceno 2003). This help takes the form of monetary transfers, but especially of child-care services, which are not class-related. In the absence of this strong "family compensation", the scarce support for caring responsibilities provided by the British Welfare State has produced marked divisions among women. Indeed, it has an unequal impact upon mothers in low-paid jobs as opposed to those with better educations and higher incomes, who can afford to pay for private care, and upon lone mothers as opposed to married mothers, where the latter can at least rely on the partner. Hence, *compared to Italy, I expect Great Britain to show a stronger effect of children on women's movements in and out*

of paid work, a more marked effect of social class (also because the earnings distribution is more unequal in the UK), and a greater difference in the effect of motherhood between highly and poorly educated women.

If quitting the labour market for British women is often a choice constrained by the scarcity of maternity-parental leave and childcare support, it is also a relatively safe choice in that the flexible labour market allows for easier re-entry (even though it is risky in terms of downward mobility). Indeed, the British labour market has always been relatively unregulated. In particular, part-time work has never been prohibited either by statute law or by collective bargaining, so that it has been able to develop much earlier than in the rest of Europe. However, it is since the 1980s, when the Conservatives came to power, that deregulation and de-institutionalisation of the labour market have been strongly pursued in order to improve, it is argued, labour market outcomes such as unemployment rates, productivity growth and duration of unemployment. This deregulation and liberalisation have particularly concerned atypical employment and wage levels. Rather than the wholesale removal of employment protection, changes in employment law have brought about a partial removal focused especially on part-time work under 16 hours, casual work, and temporary work. As many studies have shown (Bruegel and Perrons 1998; Cousins 1994; Deakin and Wilkinson 1991; Barrell 1994), the outcomes have been rather negative. Whilst Thatcher's reforms succeeded in reducing union power and increasing the incentives to work, they did not improve the response of real wages to unemployment nor the transition out of unemployment, especially for men. Moreover, they produced growing wage polarisation and an expansion in the numbers of the working poor and of social-assistance poor which particularly affected women. This, as said, was accompanied by very few improvements in family policies. *I expect to see the consequences of these Thatcherian policies in my third and fourth cohort (which were in their family-formation phase in the 1980s and 1990s). In particular, I expect to find an increasing incidence of fragmentised careers, and an increasing differentiating effect of social stratification factors on women's transitions into and out of paid work.*

Thus, in Great Britain, as in Italy, "women-friendly" institutional arrangements changed little from the 1970s to the 1990s, whilst reforms in the late 1990s and early 2000s under New Labour are still too recent, and too underdeveloped for 0-3 year-old children, to have produced major changes in women's' risk of interruptions. Yet, compared to Italy, in Great Britain gender-role norms have changed more across cohorts. In the same study mentioned earlier, Scott (1999) showed that, in Great Britain, after controlling for education and women's labour force involvement, more recent cohorts still show a significant higher propensity to endorse work by mothers. This is the

case among both men and women. The same difference emerges when one looks at gender-role attitudes in general. On comparing the mean scores of the two age groups aged 16-45 and 46-98 across 5 ISSP items, Künzler has shown that Italy has one of the smallest gaps (2.78) whereas Great Britain has one of the largest (3.31) (Künzler 2002). *Since the employment of mothers has become more acceptable in society. and women have become less oriented towards a "marriage career", I expect that, across cohorts, they have generally reduced their exits or postponed them from the time at marriage to the time at childbirth, that they have increased their re-entry, and shortened their breaks regardless of their family and personal characteristics.* Yet, since the welfare state still does not adequately support women in resolving the conflict between family and work, the strategy to do so will depend on differences in education, social class and income, as well as on differences in preferences. *In other words, with the relaxing of the traditional "male breadwinner" norm, but without a parallel improvement in women- and parent-friendly policies, I expect to find that women's career paths have become more heterogeneous but also more polarised.*

Italy and Great Britain also differ greatly in the demand for labour. Great Britain experienced early and intense tertiarisation (in particular, towards part-time jobs), whilst in Italy the demand moved in favour of women only in the early 1970s, but it did not expand enough to absorb an increasing supply, especially in the South. *This helps explain the overall lower level of female employment in Italy (mainly due to a larger share of women who have never started to work), but also the higher incidence of continuous careers for those who do start, and of permanent exits for those who interrupt once they have started.*

4- DATA AND METHODS

For the analysis reported in this study I used individual-level longitudinal data from Great Britain and Italy in order to examine patterns of women's labour-market participation and the determinants of mobility between employment and housework at various stages of the family life course. The analysis was based on the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) and on the Italian Household Longitudinal Survey (ILFI) up to 2005. More precisely, for Great Britain I used the data on employment and occupational histories constructed by David Mare at the Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of Essex (Mare 2006). These data combine the retrospective labour-market histories collected in waves 1992 and 1993 with information on employment and occupational status collected in the following waves. I also used the retrospective lifetime

information on marital and fertility status collected in 1992, which has been recently updated to 2005 by Chiara Pronzato. Moreover, because I was interested in women's labour-force movements over the entire adult life course, my British sample was composed only of those women for whom the full life history was available. That is, those women who were interviewed in 1992 and 1993, when the retrospective employment, occupational and family questions in the BHPS were asked, but also in wave 1, when information on the mother's work experience was gathered. Women entering the survey later were excluded.

As already mentioned, my attention focused on a relatively long span of adult women's life courses and on the behaviour of four different cohorts of women (women born between 1934 and 1994; 1945-54; 1955-64; 1965-74) who entered the labour market and formed their families and careers in different decades, from the 1950s to the 1990s. More precisely, I opened my observational window at the time when women started their first jobs and closed it at age 40. However, only the first three cohorts could be entirely observed until they reached their forties. The last cohort could be observed from a minimum of 31 years (women born in 1974) to a maximum of 40 years (women born in 1965). In the regression analysis this problem of the shortest time of observation for the last cohort was overcome by controlling for duration in current labour market status and for number and age of children, but it still persisted in the descriptive figures on career patterns. For this reason, I looked at types of individual work history only until the age of 35, and, for the last cohort, only of women born between 1965 and 1970.

In order to analyse changes across cohorts in the relevance of different types of labour-market careers, I built a summary work-history variable based on the number of family-care breaks experienced by a woman by age 35. In particular, I distinguished between five career patterns: "Never Worked" for those women who had never had a job episode by age 35; "Continuous Participation" when a woman had never left employment to become a housewife while she might have stopped working for different reasons (unemployment, full-time student); "One break, no return", when a woman had withdrawn from the labour market and did not return before the age of 35; "One Break, with Return" when a woman had re-entered the labour market after a housework break without further interrupting her participation; "Two Breaks or more" for those women who had experienced several movements between employment and housework over their life courses.[2]

A woman may experience entry into and exit from employment more than once over her adult life course. Widening of the individual observational window to age 40 enables one to study repeated events and to see whether the factors affecting women's first exit and re-entry are the same

[2] A woman was defined 'employed' when she had a job, when she was on maternity leave or on other paid leaves, and, for Italy, when she was on "Cassa integrazione guadagni ordinaria" (Wages Guarantee Fund)?.

as those for the second. However, in Italy a very small percentage of women experience a housework break more than once. Thus, for comparative reasons, in this paper I focus only on the first transition out from and back into employment.

In order to study labour-market transitions, I used discrete-time hazard rate models by fitting simple logit regressions to the data. Thus, the dependent variable was the log-odds of the monthly conditional probability of making the transition over the observed life course. More precisely, when studying the transition out from employment, the dependent variable was the conditional probability of leaving employment within a particular month, given that the person had worked until that time and had never stopped to become housewife (although she may have had episodes of unemployment or other inactivity conditions such as training schemes). For the opposite transition, the dependent variable was the conditional probability of re-entering paid work, given the fact that the person had been a housewife until that time and had not returned to work (although she may have had episodes of unemployment or education).

Obviously, as the history of women proceeds, sample selection increases. Indeed, only women who have interrupted are at risk of making the transition back into paid work and, in the case of Italy, only women who have started to work are at risk of interrupting. In order to control for sample selection, I estimated a bivariate probit and ran the usual Heckman procedure, using as selection variables “mother’s work experience” and “father’s occupational score” for the study of the first transition out of paid work in Italy, “type of job” for the transition back in both countries (more precisely, “full-time part-time work” and “social class” for Italy, “full-time part-time” and “number of children” for Great Britain). Modelling unobserved heterogeneity in event history models is a very difficult undertaking because both the selection and regression equations are hazard rate models and many time-varying variables are included. I used a cruder method by running Heckman’s bivariate probit model with selection where the regression equation was the usual discrete time model for the transition out (or back into paid work), whereas the selection equation predicted, not whether a woman would make the transition into the first job (or out of the labour market, once she had started to work) in any given month, but whether or not, in each month, she would be out of the labour market doing full-time family care. In tables 2 to 5 I shall report coefficients uncorrected for sample selection, but I shall comment in the text whether Rho was significant and which coefficients were affected, speculating on the likely sources of such biases.

I instead did not control for endogeneity, although more than one explanatory variable may have suffered from it, including education and child and family status. However, I took what economists would consider a radical stand but which is common practice among sociologists: namely I did not

explicitly model or control for it. The main reason is that modelling endogeneity in event history analysis is a very complex undertaking that would have take me beyond the scope of my inquiry. An additional reason is that the risk of bias on account of endogeneity can be considerably reduced by including among the covariates most of the factors that may drive the correlation between endogenous covariates and the error term. My 'insurance policy' in this respect was that ILFI and BHPS data offer a very rich set of relevant covariates.[3]

More precisely, as explanatory variables, I included measures of women's human capital, labour-market position, and family situation. Most of these factors change over the life course of a person, so that they were introduced as time-varying covariates.

As human-capital and stratification factors I used measures of education, labour market experience, type of job (full-time vs part-time) and social class of current or last job. More precisely, *education* was measured in four categories: no qualification, lower-secondary schooling, upper-secondary schooling, and higher education.[4] However, since in Italy relatively few women exit and very few re-enter, I recoded educational level in two groups: low (up to lower-secondary level) and high (upper-secondary and tertiary). Moreover, in line with the arguments of many sociologists and with the theoretical framework chosen, I regarded education as capturing both instrumental and cognitive rationality. Indeed, education can also yield non monetary advantages because it offers women new forms of identity, social legitimation and autonomy, and because the opportunity to earn an independent wage gives them greater bargaining power within the family. That is, investments in education may be pursued instrumentally but also in compliance with a cultural model and a conception of welfare that gives (paid) work central importance. Such

[3] Like most retrospective longitudinal surveys, ILFI and BHPS do not measure women's beliefs, expectations, and attitudes. However, information on the working status of the mother can be used to proxy women's attitudes towards work. Previous studies using this variable have found that it has a positive significant effect on female participation (e.g Bernardi 1999): women whose mothers have worked are more likely to participate in the labour market, and also more likely to find a job. A common explanation for this finding is that growing up in a family where gender roles are less traditional (or at least a family where mother's work other than housework is a part of everyday "normal" life) transmits positive attitudes toward women's paid work, thereby reinforcing a female daughter's determination to pursue a labour-market career. At the same time the role that this variable can play should not be overemphasized. Attitudes are the outcome of a complex process of primary and secondary socialisation, and they may not only lag but also lead changes in women's behaviour. They are structured by cultural models, but also by existing options. Hence, in my models some heterogeneity in "tastes" was likely to remain unobserved.

[4] For Great Britain, lower-secondary schooling corresponds to GSCE O levels, upper-secondary schooling to GSCE A levels, whilst higher education corresponds to any further level of education, such as nursing, teaching, first or higher degrees. For Italy, the basic qualification corresponds to "Scuola elementare", lower-secondary schooling to "Scuola media", upper-secondary to "Diploma", and higher education to "Laurea" or above.

investments may also serve to overcome traditional gender role norms and legitimise attachment to paid work (Solera and Bettio 2007)

Type of time commitment in the labour market was measured by distinguishing between full-time and part-time jobs. Whilst in the ILFI all types of workers are asked about their time commitment, in the retrospective part of the BHPS the distinction between part-time and full-time is made only for employees. Thus, for Great Britain, I always coded self-employed women as full-time workers. Further, I measured *labour-market experience* by distinguishing between duration dependency and lagged duration dependency (Heckman and Borjas 1980). Duration dependency – that is, the time spent in current status – is measured monthly as a continuous variable. Lagged duration dependency – that is, the length of previous episodes – here refers to the duration of previous employment spells when women have their first housework episode, that is, when they are at risk of making the first transition from housework to employment. Finally, *social class* was coded with a collapsed 5 categories version of the EGP classification: service class (1+2), routine non-manual employees (3a+3b), petty bourgeoisie and farmers and smallholders (4a+4b+4c), skilled manual workers (5+6), unskilled manual workers and agricultural labourers (7a+7b). Since neither ILFI nor BHPS collect retrospective data on earnings or other sources of income, in my analysis social class was also meant to capture earnings differences, in conjunction with labour market experience and part-time. Moreover, since information neither on the characteristics of the partner nor on the personal and household income was collected retrospectively in the BHPS, in my models I did not control for the effect of husband's occupational and educational resources and for income effect. This means that, to some extent, women's own social class might capture, indirectly, also the effect of the partner's social class through the well-known patterns of homogamy.

In my models *I did not use measures of other relevant labour-market segmentation factors, such as the size of the firm, the labour market sector, and the type of contract,* because in the BHPS such information is available in the panel part of the survey, but not in the retrospective life-history part. In the Italian survey, this information is fully available, but I did not use it in order to make the results more comparable with Great Britain.

Women's labour market choices are strongly influenced by the family life cycle and the family's circumstances. Changes in marital status, in the number and age of children, in the situation of the partner change the demand for family care, both in terms of time and in terms of financial resources. In order to account for these family life influences, in my analysis I used the following variables. First, a set of time-varying dummy variables on the *age of the youngest child* that should have accounted for differences in the time-demand for care. The distinction was between four

states: not having children, being pregnant (with either the first, second, third, etc child), having the youngest child aged 0-3 or older than 3 years. Given the smaller sample size, especially for Italy, in the study of the transition back into paid work this distinction was reduced to three categories, with the months of pregnancy joined to those of the child under 3 years old. Second, in my models I included, in a continuous form, the *number of children*, which should have accounted for the greater demand of time but also for the greater financial needs of families with several children. Finally, changes in the effect of *marriage* were captured by a dummy equal to 1 in the months when the woman was part of a couple (married or cohabiting), 0 otherwise (single or separated, divorced, widowed). Information on *family income or on the partner* was not included since it was not available for all women or for the entire life course in both datasets.

Another important time-varying variable typically included in women's labour supply models is *age*, which is mainly used as an indicator of family responsibilities. By directly measuring marital and childbearing history and also employment and occupational history, I instead did not include age.

As is well known , *regional differentiation* is very strong in Italy. I therefore used a three-category variable distinguishing between North, Centre and the South in Italy, and between England, Wales and Scotland in Great Britain.

Neither the BHPS nor the ILFI contain attitudinal questions. However, as mentioned in note 4, a proxy for gender identity, or at least for work attitudes, can be drawn from the variable on the *work experience of a woman's mother.* This is a time-constant variable defined differently in the two datasets. In Italy it is coded 1 if the woman's mother has ever been employed, 0 otherwise. In Great Britain instead it is coded 1 if the mother's woman was not employed when the woman was 14 years old. At a first sight this distinction appears important. Yet, it becomes less of a problem if one considers the different patterns of labour market participation by British and Italian women, also in the cohorts of the mothers of mine women.

Table 1 shows the overall sample sizes and gives descriptive statistics of the different variables, by country and by cohort.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for the independent variables, by country and by cohort

ITALY	1935-44	1945-54	1955-64	1965-74
WOMEN WHO HAVE STARTED TO WORK BY AGE 40				
Median age first job	17.9	18.1	19.4	20.6
Educational level at first job (%)				
- primary	53.9	31.6	10.2	3.8
- lower-secondary	22.1	27.6	32.5	30.3
- upper-secondary	17.3	27.7	42.9	46.4
- tertiary	6.6	13.1	14.3	19.4
Class at first job(%)				
- service class	14.4	23.3	27.1	25.3
- routine non manual workers	23.2	30	32.9	39.7
- petty bourgeoisie	16.4	9.3	9.2	8.4
- skilled manual workers	4.1	5.0	3.4	3.6
- unskilled manual workers	41.7	32.3	27.4	22.9
Time first job (%)				
- part-time	4.8	6.5	11.3	15.8
Mother's work experience first job (%)*:*				
-never worked	57.1	55.6	53.2	38.7
Geographical region first job (%)				
- North	56.9	53.8	48.3	51.7
- Centre	19.4	20.5	22.8	19.3
- South	23.6	26.5	28.8	28.9
Median duration in months of employment when exiting to housework	94	81	79	71.5
Median age when exiting to housework	25.3	23.7	24.9	25.9
Median duration in months of housework when re-entering employment	62.5	60	57	25.5
Median age when re-entering employment	30.4	29.3	30.7	28.4
Marital status by age 35(%):				
-never married	11.3	10.2	13.7	32.9
Number of children by age 35 (%)				
-none	17.6	15.5	23.2	44.7
- 1	23.4	28.2	28.6	27.3
- 2+	59.0	56.2	48.2	27.9
(N women who have started to work by age 40)	(560)	(760)	(802)	(851)
(N women experiencing transition out)	(224)	(261)	(238)	(156)

(N women experiencing transition back)	(66)	(95)	(83)	(58)

GREAT BRITAIN

WOMEN WHO HAVE STARTED TO WORK BY AGE 40				
Median age first job	15.3	16.1	16.7	17.3
Educational level at first job (%)				
- primary	47.5	30.6	15.8	7.0
- lower-secondary	27.1	35.6	43.2	48.2
- upper-secondary	4.7	6.3	10.1	17.5
- tertiary	20.6	27.4	30.9	27.2
Class at first job(%)				
- service class	10.2	13.3	15.8	11.3
- routine non manual workers	56.6	61.7	55.1	52.4
- petty bourgeoisie	0.3	0.1	0.8	1.1
- skilled manual workers	8.9	11.7	8.4	11.7
- unskilled manual workers	23.9	13.2	19.7	23.3
Time first job (%)				
- part-time	1.1	2.0	6.4	15.3
Mother's work experience (%)*:*				
- Not working	61.4	48.3	39.3	36.9
Geographical region at first job (%)				
- England	73.7	76.5	76.6	77.6
- Wales	18.1	14.5	12.7	11.4
- Scotland	8.1	8.9	10.6	10.9
Median duration in months of employment when exiting to housework	83	83	88	68
Median age when exiting to housework	22.8	23.8	24.7	23.2
Median duration in months of housework when re-entering employment	*72*	*63*	*42.5*	*25*
Median age when re-entering employment	29.5	29.3	29.4	26.4
Marital status by age 35(%):				
-never married	6.6	6.6	10.9	19.6
Number of children by age 35 (%)				
-none	14.5	14.4	18.5	23.8
- 1	15.1	17.8	18.1	17.6
- 2+	70.5	67.7	63.4	58.5
(N women who have started to work by age 40)	(553)	(792)	(783)	(456)
(N women experiencing transition out)	(433)	(595)	(491)	(205)
(N women experiencing transition back)	(351)	(491)	(432)	(195)

5- COHORT, MOTHERHOOD AND TYPES OF WORK HISTORIES: DESCRIPTIVE EVIDENCE

Figures 1a and 1b show how the distribution of types of labour-market careers from first job to age 35 has changed across cohorts in Italy and Great Britain respectively. It is evident that continuous careers have increased in both countries. However, in Great Britain the increases are sharper and they have mainly derived from a decline in the "one break, return" type of work history but also, at the same time, from an increase in the "2 or more breaks" type of career. Indeed, and in line with other studies (Joshi and Hinde 1993; Joshi et al 1996), in Great Britain the norm in the oldest cohort was to interrupt when getting married or having children and to return when all the children were grown up. Women in younger cohorts have increased their attachment to the labour market by interrupting less or by reducing their time out (re-entering more often between births and more quickly after child-bearing), but they have also become more polarised.

By contrast in Italy, women in younger cohorts have increased their continuity to a lesser extent (an increase of 24% compared to 120% in Great Britain), and this increase has mainly derived from a decline in the share of women never starting to work over their life courses. As expected, the biggest change has occurred with the second cohort, that is, with women who built their families and careers in the 1970s when labour demand and family policies became more women-friendly and when women's investments in education increased. But, as in the past, once women start to work, they differ little in their employment patterns: either they never stop working or, if they do stop, they never re-start. Continuous participation was and still is by far the most typical pattern. Thus, Italy can be described as having an "opt in-opt out" participation pattern.

Differences across cohorts in the incidence of continuous and discontinuous careers may be due to compositional differences in the "tempo" and "quantum" of fertility. Consequently, Figures 2a and 2b show the distribution of types of work histories by cohort and motherhood, whilst Figures 3a and 3b do so by cohort and number of children. As expected, motherhood appears to have a stronger effect on British women's work careers than on Italian ones, with a percentage reduction of around 50% in Italy against 68-82% in Great Britain. It also emerges that less has changed across cohorts in Italy than in Great Britain. In Italy, indeed, continuity is the most typical pattern both among mothers and non-mothers, the gap being of around 30 percentage absolute points in all cohorts and with only, as expected, a slight increase in the last cohort. If one focuses only on mothers and distinguishes between those who, by age 35, have had only one child and those who

have had two or more children, one again finds that in Italy having more children has relatively little impact on women's chances of pursuing a continuous career, although this impact was lower in the oldest cohort than in the following three, and especially in the last cohort.

In Great Britain, by contrast, in all cohorts a low share of mothers pursue continuous careers, although this share has increased across cohorts and its gap with non-mothers has reduced. Discontinuous careers are particularly widespread among mothers with more than one child, whose gap with respect to one-child mothers has increased across cohorts. Indeed, as pointed out earlier, in the youngest cohorts mothers have increased their labour market attachment, either by never interrupting at first child (one out of two one-child mothers has a continuous career in the 1965-70 birth cohort) or by re-entering quicker (nearly one out of four two-children women experiences a continuous career while one out of two experiences two or more breaks)

Fig. 1a: Types of work histories up to age 35 in Italy

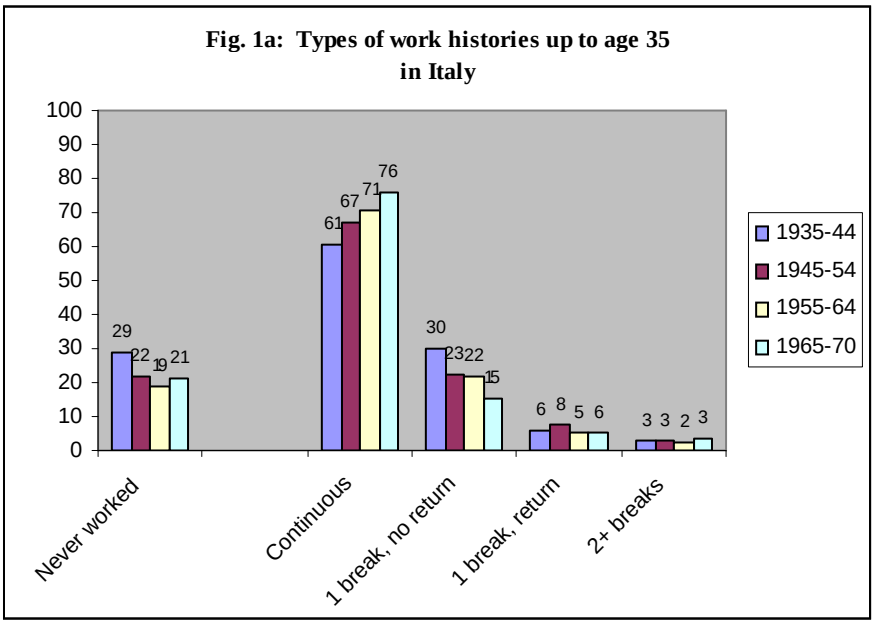


Fig. 1b: Types of work histories up to age 35 in Great Britain

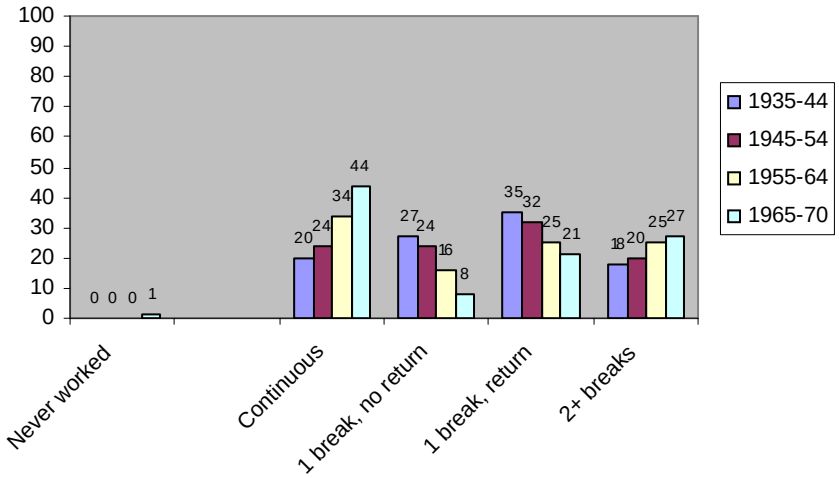


Fig 2a: Types of work histories up to age 35, by motherhood in Italy

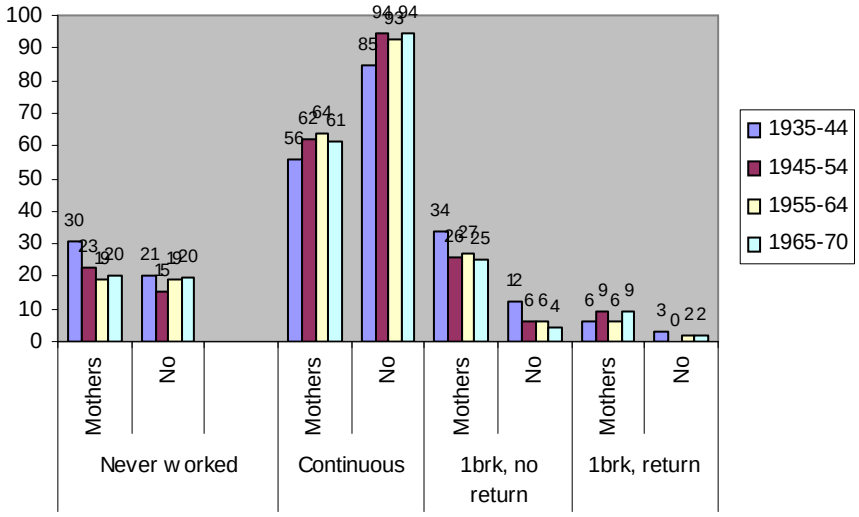


Fig 2b: Types of work histories up to age 35, by motherhood in Great Britain

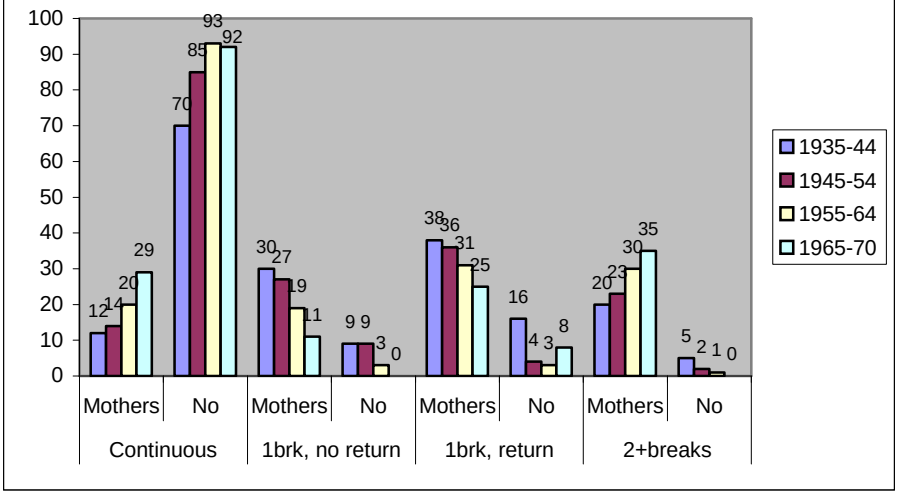
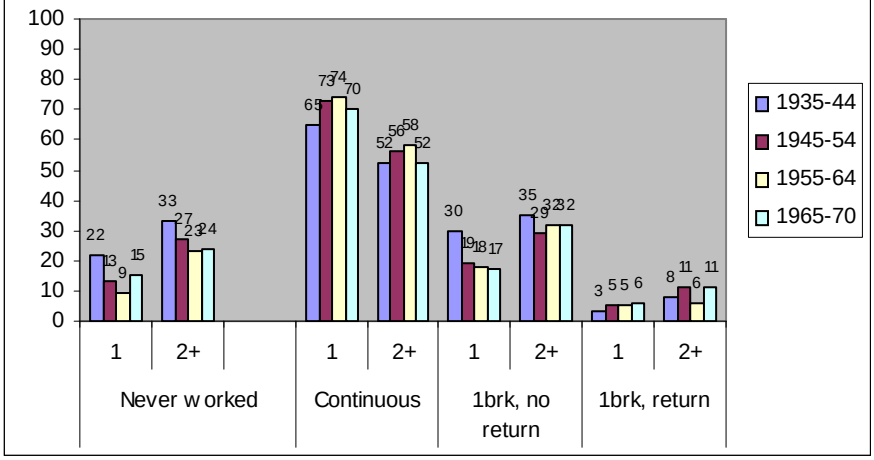
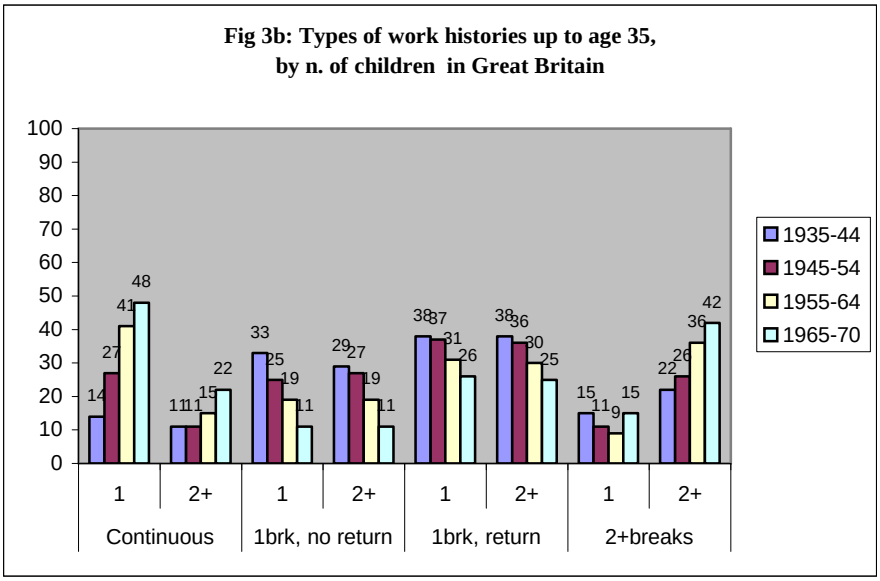


Fig 3a: Types of work histories up to age 35, by n. of children in Italy





As well-known, education is a strong discriminator of women's labour market behaviour. Figures 4a and 4b show the distribution of women's work histories by cohort, education and motherhood in Italy. Figures 4c and 4d do the same for Great Britain.

The findings for Italy yield two insights. The first is rather as expected: education favours continuity and, in line with previous studies (Addabo 1999; Bettio and Villa 2000), it seems that in Italy women's labour supply respond much more to education than to motherhood. Indeed motherhood has a strong influence on work history continuity only at low levels of education, apart from the oldest cohort, where for both highly and poorly educated mothers the gap with non-mothers is 25 absolute percentage points. However, childless Italian women tend to be considerably more continuous than mothers among the less educated, whereas the impact of motherhood almost halves among women with intermediate or higher levels of education. The second insight is that there is little difference between cohorts in the distribution of mothers' work histories both at low and high levels of education, which lends support to Schizzerotto and Solera's finding that the increase in female participation in Italy in the post-war decades hides a strong compositional effect (Schizzerotto *et al* 1995; Solera 2004). Only among the low educated does the impact of motherhood increase from the first to the second cohort, whilst among the most educated it decreases to increase again in the last cohort. This is the expected effect of Italian labour market deregulation.

In Great Britain, by contrast, women's labour supply seems to respond more to motherhood than to education, although the impact of children is, as expected, stronger among the least educated, at least from the second cohort onwards. Moreover, in Great Britain polarisation has increased over

time: whilst nearly 90% of mothers in the oldest cohort interrupted regardless of their level of education, in the last cohort 80% of the low-educated had discontinuous careers against 58% of the most educated.

Fig 4a: Types of work histories up to age 35, by motherhood in Italy, low-educated women

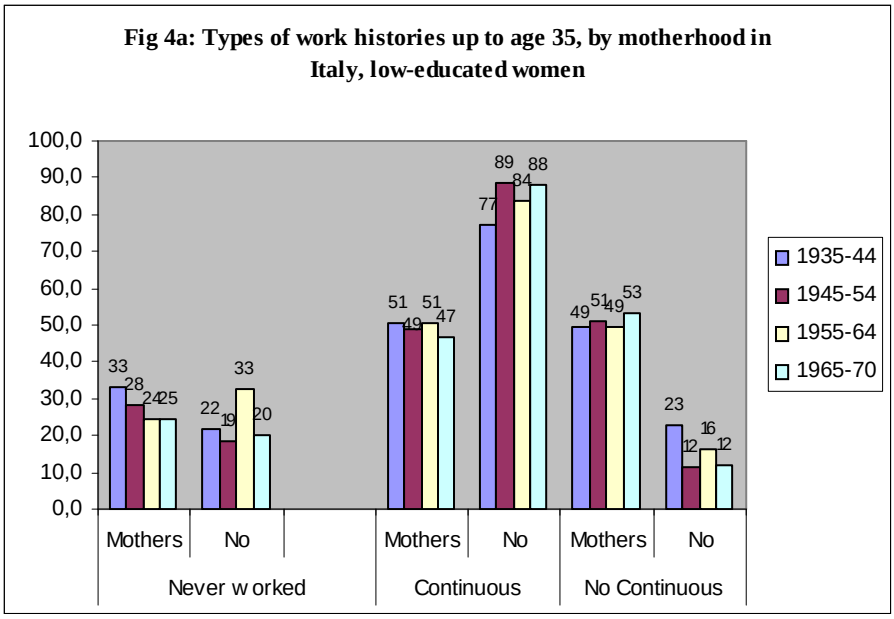
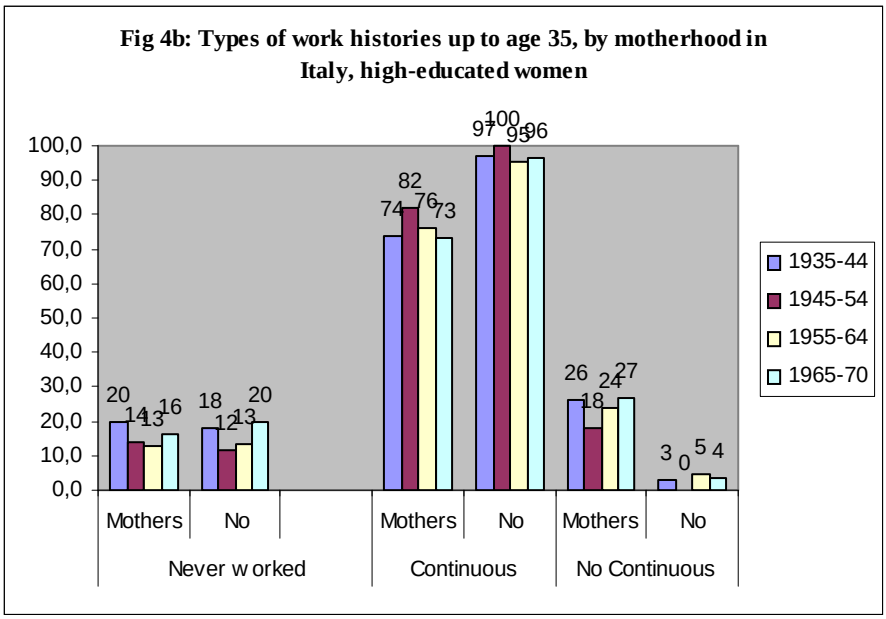
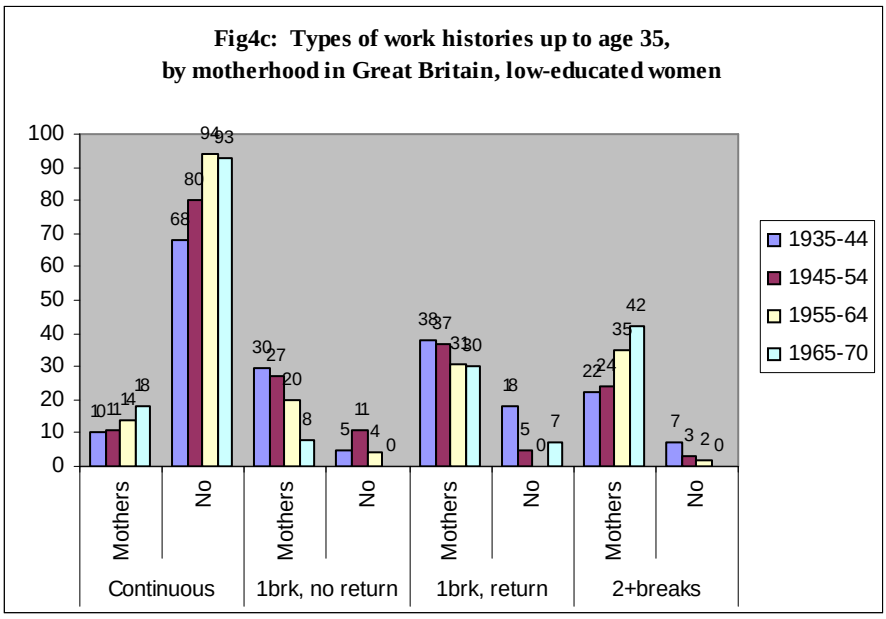
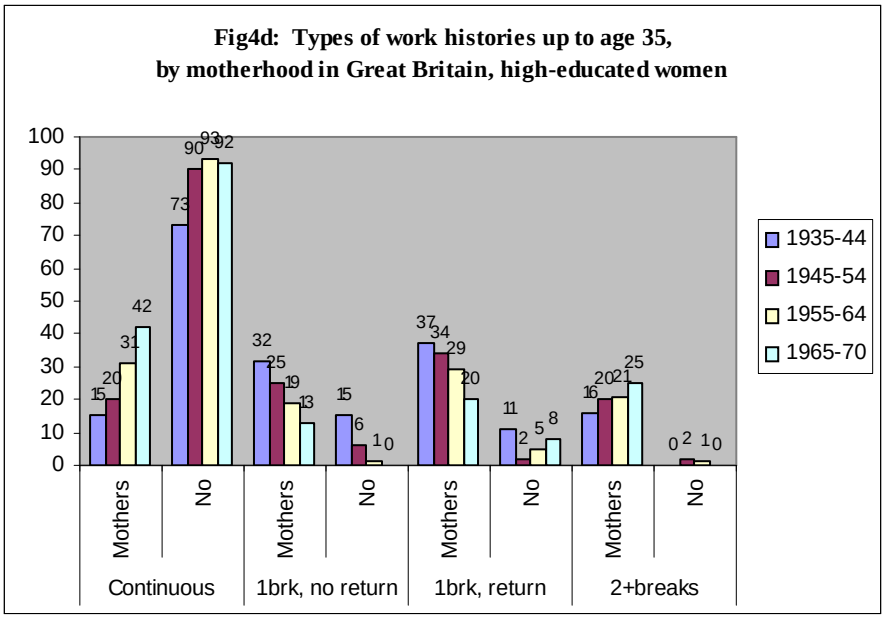


Fig 4b: Types of work histories up to age 35, by motherhood in Italy, high-educated women







6- HAS THE TRADE-OFF BETWEEN EMPLOYMENT AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILTIES CHANGED? EVIDENCE ON WOMEN'S TRANSITIONS IN AND OUT OF PAID WORK

The first transition out from paid work

Table 2 shows models on Italian women's transition rates from employment to housework for all cohorts together, and then cohort by cohort. Highlighted in bold are the effects for the second, third and fourth cohorts, which differ significantly from the effects for the first cohort. Table 3 does the

same for Great Britain.

As expected, in Italy the increasing entry and attachment to the labour market across cohorts observed in figure 1a seem basically due to a compositional change. This is evident from the first column, where the cohort coefficients are insignificant once they are controlled for important individual characteristics. This is also evident in the following four columns, since the factors that keep women in the labour market are fairly constant across cohorts.

As Bernardi (1999) and Bison *et al*. (1996) also show, and in line with both human capital theory and social stratification theories, education and class importantly distinguish between women who leave the labour market and those who have continuous careers. The higher the level of a woman's education, the less likely she is to interrupt employment. Moreover, if she works in the service class, her risk of interrupting is lower than that of working women in the other classes. Such effects do not change across cohorts except for the last cohort, when the gap between high- and low-educated women slightly increases. These findings confirm institutional theories, and in particular the argument that institutions mediate the effect of individual-level characteristics**.** Indeed, given an unfriendly set of opportunities and constraints which, as seen earlier, has improved little since the 1970s reforms, it seems that women have had to acquire the characteristics that have always fostered their labour market attachment, such as education, in order to work and improve their careers. Education becomes particularly important for the fourth cohort, when women had to undertake the Italian route to flexibilisation, that is, "selective and partial" deregulation concentrated only on the early careers of young cohorts, and an "unprotected" deregulation with few guarantees in terms of both income and stability.

Over time, also the gap between southern and central-northern Italian women has increased (Villa 2004). However, this regional effect disappears in all cohorts when controlling for sample selection, which suggests that there are unmeasured factors affecting both first job entry and first exit, once entered, and that such unmeasured factors have a different "weight" in the two regions. As outlined in section 4, in the model I did not measure micro preferences (only partly captured by "mother's work experience" but used as selection variable) and macro constraints in terms of job opportunities, work-family reconciliation supports, and gender role norms. Moreover, information on the partner was also missing. Since Rho is positive (but significant only for the third and fourth cohort), it is implausible that Rho captures preferences, or social policies and gender role norms: these, indeed, should work in the opposite direction, encouraging entries and discouraging exits, or *viceversa*. More plausibly the positive sign of Rho reflects a mix of demand factors and family pressures. As suggested by attitudinal studies, women have become more work-oriented over time,

but because of the stagnant economic situation and the consequent worsening of employment opportunities during the 1980s and 1990s, especially in the South, women also encountered more difficulties in finding a job, or a good one, and in keeping it. Faced with this negative economic situation, many women have probably been induced to work more out of need than out of strong preference – that is, in response to low or unsure family incomes – or they have entered less well-paid or less fulfilling jobs. These women are thus also ready to leave their jobs when income needs become less urgent or domestic and care work more demanding.[5]

Not only the effect of education and class but also the effect of family responsibilities has changed little in Italy, at least compared to Great Britain (table 3). Indeed, in both countries, pregnancy and the presence of a young child increase the risk of leaving the labour market. However, as expected, they have a weaker effect in Italy than in Great Britain. Moreover, in Great Britain the marriage effect gets weaker across cohorts and the typical time of exiting shifts from marriage to childbirths. At the same time, the proportion among married women of continuous careers increases. In Italy, by contrast, the marriage effect was negative in the oldest cohort, suggesting that those women who started to work (70% by age 35, see fig 1a) and those few who interrupted (40% by age 35, see fig 1a) tended to interrupt before getting married, probably in view of marriage. Then the effect of marriage disappears in the second and third cohorts, to become positive in the last cohort, when polarisation generally increases. Finally, compared to Great Britain, in Italy not only the age of the youngest child but also the number of children matter less. Indeed, as described in the third section, women in Italy enjoy much better protection during pregnancy and after childbirth (if they are in the formal economy) and can more frequently rely on the help of the "extended family" to solve their childcare needs.

As is evident from the descriptive figures in the previous section, in Great Britain younger cohorts, and particularly the last cohort, are less likely to leave the labour market. However, if they do leave, they are more likely to return. These changes across cohorts in exit and entry rates seem explainable not only by changes in the composition of the female population. Indeed, in Great Britain the cohort coefficients are significant after controlling for important individual

[5] This is particularly true of the last cohort, for which Rho is 0.32 (p. 0.004) against 0.24 (p. 0.08) in the third cohort and 0.10 (p. 0.57) and –0.11 (p. 0.57) in the first two cohorts. Indeed, since many women in the youngest cohort can be observed only up to 30-35 years old instead of 40 as in previous cohorts, estimates for the last cohort capture only certain types of women. Over a period such as the last decades, where entry into stable jobs has been difficult and lengthy, and where motherhood has been postponed, those women entering paid work and motherhood relatively early, around their 30s, are probably more "family-centred" and/or have accepted more unstable or less fulfilling jobs. Thus, they tend more frequently and more quickly to enter paid work but also to exit from it.

characteristics (table 3, first column).

As many studies argue, the main change has been brought about by married women and mothers. Indeed, as just noted, the effect of marriage on exits from the labour market gets weaker; while the effect of children, and particularly of pregnancy, gets stronger. Thus, the timing of employment interruptions has changed: whilst women from the older cohort typically stopped working when they got married, in the younger cohorts women tend to withdraw later, when they have their first child. This suggests that social norms have changed over time. In the past only single women without children were accepted to work. Women with household and childcare responsibilities typically interrupted employment and fewer of them re-started work. Also as a consequence of changes in women's orientations and choices, in more recent times the employment of married women and mothers has become more acceptable. Women in younger cohorts tend to work regardless of their family status and, when they have children, they tend to exit less or later, or to return into paid work faster and on a greater scale. This is also evident from the changing effect of the number of children: While in the oldest cohorts having more children was a strong disincentive to exit, if the woman had not exited earlier, in the youngest cohorts this "income needs inhibition" diminishes. This signals, on the one hand, a relaxation of income pressures, on the other hand, an increase in women's labour market attachment: women try to keep paid work as long as possible, some of them exiting at the second child and not at the first, when caring needs and work-family reconciliation probably become too onerous. However, also the labour-market participation of younger cohorts remains strongly affected by the family-life cycle. In a context where gender norms, although changed, still assign the main responsibilities of family care to women and where statutory maternity payments and rights and support to childcare have remained poor and uneven, many women are not protected and leave paid work before the child is born or when the child is young..

As evident from the descriptive figures, over time British women have become more attached to paid work but also more heterogeneous in the incidence and timing of their exits and re-entries. Indeed, for the older cohort, housework interruption was mainly driven by family-related factors. Education, labour-market experience and position mattered little. Only women working part-time, and women from the petty bourgeoisie showed a significantly lower propensity to exit. Subsequently, as the employment of married women and mothers became more accepted, individual characteristics began to differentiate to a greater extent: in younger cohorts the time spent in employment and the social class also started to play a role. As is expected, class differences became more accentuated with the last cohort, which built its families and careers under the Conservative's

Table 2: Estimated rate of women's first transition from employment to housework IN ITALY by BIRTH COHORT (Discrete time hazard rate models)

	All	1935-44	1945-54	1955-64	1965-74
Baseline birth cohort: 1935-1944					
- 1945-1954	-0.04				
- 1955-1964	0.02				
- 1965-1974	-0.06				
Duration in employment	-0.001*	0.001	-0.000	**-0.02***	**-0.002**
Education: up to lower-secondary					
-upper-secondary or tertiary	-0.64***	-0.34*	-0.60***	-0.66***	**-0.92*** **
Baseline social class: Service					
- routine non manual workers	1.14***	1.02***	1.27***	1.19***	1.14***
- petty bourgeoisie	0.85***	0.30	**1.23*** **	**1.01*** **	0.70*
- skilled manual workers	1.02***	0.91**	1.36***	0.89**	0.63*
- unskilled manual workers	1.18***	1.01***	1.50***	1.08***	1.02***
Baseline time: full-time					
- part-time	-0.19	-1.19**	**-0.04**	**-0.28**	**0.17**
Baseline Region: :North					
- Centre	0.04	0.01	0.07	0.01	0.31
- South	0.20**	-0.42*	**-0.04**	**0.45*** **	**0.91*** **
Baseline: mother did not work					
-mother worked	-0.06	0.09	-0.04	-0.13	-0.13
Baseline marital status: not in couple					
- married/cohabiting	-0.10	-1.15*	**-0.26**	**0.07**	**0.85*** **
Baseline child status: no children					
- pregnant	1.97***	2.57***	2.15***	**1.67*** **	**1.65*** **
- youngest child aged 0-3	1.03***	1.71***	**0.84****	**0.86*** **	**0.62***
- youngest child aged 3+	0.15	0.24	0.10	0.13	-0.07
Number of children	-0.23***	-0.25**	-0.26*	-0.07	-0.03
Constant	-7.07***	-6.77***	-7.28***	-7.06***	-7.61***
LOG-LIKELIHOOD	-5842.7	-1425.5	-1716.7	-1628.8	-1007.7
NUMBER OF MONTHS-PERSONS	438654	90973	130896	128091	88694
NUMBER OF WOMEN	2886	541	733	783	830
NUMBER OF TRANSITIONS	879	224	261	238	156

Notes: estimates using option « cluster »
* p< .10; ** p< .05 ***p< .01*
In Bold = coefficients of second , third and fourth cohort that are different from the first cohort at least at .10 probability level.
Source: ILFI; up to 2005

de-regulation of the 1980s and 1990s. Instead, in contrast to human-capital predictions, women with different educational levels do not show significant differences in their job-leaving rates except in the last cohort. Only if one omits class from the model does education become significant. Evidently in the UK education itself does not guarantee employment continuity. Rather, British women who, to use Hakim's term, are not "home-centred", but in more structural terms are anyway

constrained by the context, need to have spent a long time in the labour market and to have reached relatively good positions if they are to enjoy some maternity protection and/or sufficient incomes to purchase care.

Table 3: Estimated rate of women's first transition from employment to housework IN GREAT BRITAIN by BIRTH COHORT (Discrete time hazard rate models)

	All	**1935-44**	**1945-54**	**1955-64**	**1965-74**
Baseline birth cohort: 1935-1944					
- 1945-1954	-0.18**				
- 1955-1964	-0.41***				
- 1965-1974	-0.65***				
Duration in employment	-0.003***	-0.000	**-0.002*** **	**-0.005*** **	**-0.007*** **
Education: up to lower-secondary					
-upper-secondary or tertiary	-0.16***	-0.11	-0.13	-0.13	-0.34**
Baseline social class: Service					
- routine non manual workers	0.52**	0.16	**0.46*** **	**0.65*** **	**0.65*** **
- petty bourgeoisie	-0.35	-1.30**	-0.60	-0.48	**1.18*** **
- skilled manual workers	0.64***	0.30*	0.48***	**0.76*** **	**1.02*** **
- unskilled manual workers	0.63***	0.21	**0.57*** **	**0.92*** **	**1.01*** **
Baseline time: full-time					
- part-time	-0.19	-0.71***	**-0.08**	**-0.29** **	**0.13**
Baseline Region: :England					
- Wales	0.05	-0.10	**0.15**	0.06	0.19
- Scotland	0.02	0.54***	**0.03**	**-0.21**	**-0.44**
Baseline: mother did not work					
-mother worked	-0.12**	-0.20**	**0.02**	-0.13	-0.21
Baseline marital status: not in couple					
- married/cohabiting	0.68***	0.84***	0.79***	0.71***	**0.32**
Baseline child status: no children					
- pregnant	4.18***	3.77***	**4.28*** **	**4.40*** **	**4.65*** **
- youngest child aged 0-3	3.15***	2.82***	3.06***	3.30***	**4.00*** **
- youngest child aged 3+	1.70***	0.42	**1.94*** **	**2.57*** **	**1.56** **
Number of children	-0.88***	-1.45***	-1.42***	**-0.57*** **	**-0.29** **
Constant	-6.76***	-6.36***	-7.12***	-7.47***	-7.77***
LOG-LIKELIHOOD	-7260.1	-1784.4	-2291.9	-2103.8	-946.2
NUMBER OF MONTHS-PERSONS	313069	64116	95789	100707	52457
NUMBER OF WOMEN	2514	538	765	761	450
NUMBER OF TRANSITIONS	1724	433	595	491	205

Notes: estimates using option « cluster »
* p< .10; ** p< .05 ***p< .01
In Bold = coefficients of second , third and fourth cohort that are different from the first cohort at least at .10 probability level.
Source: BHPS; up to 2005

Unlike in Great Britain, in Italy the differences in exit rates between highly and poorly educated women are greater and still persist when controlling for class. As Bettio and Villa (2000) and Boeri

et al (2005) show, Italy records one of the highest gaps in participation between poorly and highly educated women. Whereas in "deregulated" Britain women can get a new job relatively easily, in "rigid" Italy women's future work careers and their possibilities of combining them with children depend strongly on initial conditions, particularly on the education that they received and the type of job with which they begin. Education, in fact, exerts a strong and direct influence on first occupational attainment (Schizzerotto and Cobalti 1998). Moreover, in a context of relatively poor job opportunities, low mobility chances (Pisati and Schizzerotto 1999 2003) and poor universalistic reconciliation policies, in Italy education offers competitive advantages. In particular, it eases the access not only to many good occupations and to the career ladder but also to many family-convenient jobs like those in the public sector. Jobs in the pubic sector have traditionally offered shorter hours, or lower pressure to work long hours, a more flexible schedule, greater tolerance of absenteeism and better opportunities to take unpaid or paid leave without penalties on re-entry. Thus, as argued by Solera and Bettio (2007), they offer reconciliation returns over and above strictly monetary ones. Moreover, as again argued by Solera and Bettio (2007), education in Italy also affords the kind of "legitimacy to work" that women may need to overcome pressure to give priority to the family in social contexts where traditional norms are still strong and demand for labour relatively weak, especially in the South.

By contrast, in Great Britain the association between education and first occupational attainment is, by international standards, weak. Given the high career mobility in Britain, this association strengthens as the person's career develops (Heath and Cheung 1998; Breen 2004). Yet only those persons with a continuous type of participation enjoy career development. As just noted, in a liberal–residualist welfare regime like the British one, also highly educated women in not good jobs risk exiting the labour market with downward mobility at re-entry (McRae 1993; Jacobs 1999; Davies and Joshi 2002; Elliott *et al*. 2001)

Interestingly, whilst education and social class influence Italian women's likelihood of stopping work, the time spent in employment does not matter. This further reinforces the role of education and social class. A woman who is not self-employed or in the service class risks, in relative terms, exiting from the labour market regardless of how long she has been employed. This is again different from what happens in Great Britain, where labour market experience does matter for the second cohort onwards.

The first transition back into paid work

Contrary to the case of the first transition out of paid work, in Italy changes across cohorts in re-entry rates are not entirely compositional (table 4, first column). However, if separate models by cohorts are run (second to fifth column), one sees that in all cohorts very few factors drive women back into paid work and that, over time, only the effects of South, mother's work experience and number of children have significantly changed. Without controlling for sample selection, women from the South have a higher propensity to exit and a lower propensity to re-enter the labour market compared to those living in the central-northern part of Italy. Controlling for sample selection, women from the South have, as mentioned, the same propensity to exit but still a lower propensity to re-enter.[6] Indeed, as already noted, in the South of Italy employment prospects are much worse and gender norms more traditional, so that women might be discouraged from working. It might also be that, in view of these perceived constraints, women who start to work (52% in the oldest cohort and 64% in the youngest, against 80% and 92%, respectively, in the Centre-North of Italy), and anyway decide to interrupt (25% in the oldest cohort and 34% in the youngest, against 44% and 19% in the Centre-North of Italy[7]), are a very selective group: they are probably women who have entered paid work out of necessity and/or with strong family orientations, and are therefore women that do not intend to re-enter the labour market or can take the risk of permanent exclusion from it.

Moreover, women in younger cohorts seem more affected by the behaviours of their mothers. This suggests that, in younger cohorts, preferences (at least those captured by mothers' work experiences) start to differentiate work histories later, also during family formation: they not only count at the very beginning, in the decision on how much invest in education and on whether

[6] Indeed, unlike for the first transition out of paid work (estimated jointly with the transition into first job), a bivariate probit model with selection for the first transition back into paid work (estimated jointly with the first transition out of paid work) was only slightly significant for the second cohort. Estimates obtained with uncorrected probit and corrected probit were fairly similar, apart from the negative effect of marriage, which became insignificant once the sample selection was controlled for. This reinforces the interpretation given in terms of family income or partner's education and labour market position for the unobserved captured by Rho and by the changing effect of region in the Heckman bivarite probit for the first transition out. Or it signals that there are unmeasured characteristics, which may be linked, as said, to women's own preferences and types of job or to their partners' profile and family income, which do not make separated and divorced women more likely to reenter than married women.

[7] If only women who have become mothers by age 35 are considered, in order to make comparison across cohorts more meaningful, the shares of interruptions become: in the South 26% for the oldest cohort and 48% for the youngest; in the Centre-North 50% for the oldest cohort versus 33% for the youngest (my own calculations not shown in the figures in the paper).

starting to work in the first place, as was also in the case of previous cohorts (see Solera 2005); but they also matter later, in the decision on whether to return having interrupted. Finally, in younger cohorts, the pressure to re-enter in response to increasing income needs when having more children seems to diminish.

Whilst both family and social stratification factors affect a woman's exit from the labour market, her re-entry is independent of the social class of her last job and of her level of education. It is also independent of the type of job and the time previously spent in employment. Yet, as in Great Britain and as for any transition that is "second", this may be partly a sample selection effect of having reduced the variability of these factors. And in Italy the selection is stronger not only because fewer women start to work and interrupt less once they have started, but also because finding a new job is more difficult. Thus, women who anyway decide to interrupt are a very selective group: typically with a low-level of education, mainly working in informal or low-grade regular employment, and/or with a strong preference for the "marriage career". After these women have interrupted, only few circumstances seem to foster or inhibit their return to paid work: as said, number of children and region, but also divorce. In Italy, women who have exited the labour market tend to re-enter when they get separated or divorced. Plausibly, this is largely due to the prevalent demographic profile of separated or divorced women. Until recently in Italy, separation and divorce were largely middle and upper class phenomena. That is, they concerned women who were relatively well educated and with a high earnings potential (Barbagli and Saraceno 1998). However, the positive effect of separation on re-entry may also be a welfare system effect. Indeed, apart from general family allowances where the woman is an employee and has a low income, Italy does not provide any specific income support for single mothers. Nor does it have any general national minimum income scheme, and, as seen, it gives weak support to childcare. Thus, in the absence of a husband's support, and without any significant welfare state income and reconciliation support, divorced women may actually need to work. As explained in note 7, this difference between married and divorced women disappears when control for sample selection is performed with the Heckman procedure, although Rho is not significant. Evidently, among those women who decide to withdraw from employment, there are many that decide to re-enter out of necessity after divorce but also during marriage.

In Great Britain, by contrast, divorce does not seem to drive women back to work (table 5). This may be due to the different welfare system. British single mothers who do not work can rely, like any other person without earnings, on means-tested benefits. These are relatively ungenerous. However, for a woman who has experienced human capital depreciation by interrupting her labour

market career, entering the labour market may not pay off. Indeed, by leaving income support, a mother loses entitlement to free school meals and milk for her child, and to the full coverage of housing costs and interest on mortgage payments, although this "poverty trap" has been reduced under New Labour. In addition, if she has a young child, she needs to find childcare arrangements and to pay for them (Solera 2001).

In contrast with what happens for the first transition out of paid work, in Great Britain factors affecting transitions back into the labour market have changed little across cohorts. Re-entry into the labour market by the oldest cohort was affected by childbearing responsibilities, region, social class, and work attitudes. Education, time spent out, and previous labour-market experience seemed not to matter. Most of these effects do not change in subsequent cohorts. Thus the probability of re-entering still does not differ significantly for number of children, level of education, and type of job, although this, again, might be partly due to a sample selection effect.[8] Yet, unlike in the oldest cohorts, regional differences in re-entry rates disappear in the second and third cohorts, to appear again in the youngest cohort (but with an opposite sign, that is, with a higher tendency to re-enter in Wales than in England and Scotland). Moreover, unlike in oldest cohorts, class starts to weigh more in the last cohort, and previous labour market experience start to matter. As just noted, the same emergence, in younger cohorts, of a duration dependency effect and the same strengthening of the class effect is evident for the transition out. This is in line with human-capital arguments. The more time a woman spends in the labour market, the less rational it is for her to leave it. Indeed, the more she works, the more she accumulates work experience and other resources that increase her career prospects and the rewards, and, in turn, increase the opportunity-cost of quitting her jobs. However, in addition to classic human-capital arguments, the type of institutional protection available may play a role. Indeed, in Great Britain, as seen, only women who have worked continuously for the same employer are entitled to Statutory Maternity Pay and more frequently receive supplementary benefits from their employer. Moreover, behind the negative duration dependency there may also be a process of "doing gender". A woman who spends a long time as a housewife may be less disposed to re-start working not only because of her previous preference for the marriage career, as human-capital and theorists *à la* Hakim would say, but also because of a process of identification with her

[8] Unlike Italy, in the case of Great Britain the Heckman control for sample selection (using as selection variables "part-time full-time" and "number of children", variables that indeed affect the chances of interrupting paid work but not of re-entering it, once interrupted) is significant in all cohorts with a Rho of roughly –0.28 ($p. < 0.05$). However estimates do not change substantially apart from the effect of marriage, which in the probit corrected for sample selection remains significant only in the last cohort. This again suggests that unmeasured factors linked to family income and partner's characteristics have a weight.

new current situation or because of expectations that others (the partner, children, mother, etc) have placed in her role. In Janet Finch's words (1993), she may follow her moral career.

Table 4: Estimated rate of women's first transition from housework to employment IN ITALY by BIRTH COHORT (Discrete time hazard rate models)

	All	**1935-44**	**1945-54**	**1955-64**	**1965-74**
Baseline birth cohort: 1935-1944					
- 1945-1954	0.30*				
- 1955-1964	0.35**				
- 1965-1974	0.99***				
Duration in housework	-0.01***	-0.01***	-0.01***	-0.005**	-0.003
Previous labour market experience	-0.003**	-0.005*	-0.002	-0.002	-0.001
Education: up to lower-secondary					
-upper-secondary or tertiary	-0.24	-0.59	-0.05	-0.35	-0.13
Baseline social class last job: Service					
- routine non manual workers	-0.21	-0.13	-0.90**	-0.11	-0.19
- petty bourgeoisie	0.09	0.20	-0.16	0.14	-0.46
- skilled manual workers	-0.71*	0.33	**-1.63****	--	0.38
- unskilled manual workers	-0.29	-0.15	-0.31	-0.40	-0.96
Baseline time last job: full-time					
- part-time	0.04	0.08	0.48	-0.26	0.09
Baseline Region: North					
- Centre	-0.09	0.44*	**-0.30**	0.20	**-0.99****
- South	-1.04***	-0.15	**-2.01*****	-0.58*	**-1.41*****
Baseline: mother did not work					
-mother worked	0.14	-0.21	-0.28	**0.56****	**1.06*****
Baseline marital status: not in couple					
- married/cohabiting	-0.87***	-1.11**	-1.56***	-0.59*	-0.71*
Baseline child status: no children					
- pregnant o youngest child aged 0-3	-0.28	-0.25	0.49	**-1.33*****	0.45
- youngest child aged 3+	0.37*	0.44	1.15*	-0.29	0.69
Number of children	0.18***	0.45***	0.36***	**0.07**	**-0.35***
Constant	-4.46***	-4.66***	-3.86***	-4.01***	-3.75***
LOG-LIKELIHOOD	-1941.1	-430.5	-597.7	-533.1	-329.6
NUMBER OF MONTHS-PERSONS	105402	29234	34059	29137	11550
NUMBER OF WOMEN	912	220	263	251	167
NUMBER OF TRANSITIONS	302	66	95	83	58

Notes: estimates using option « cluster »
* p< .10; ** p< .05 ***p< .01
In Bold = coefficients of second , third and fourth cohort that are different from the first cohort at least at .10 probability level.
Source: ILFI; up to 2005

Table 5: Estimated rate of women's first transition from housework to employment IN GREAT BRITAIN by BIRTH COHORT (Discrete time hazard rate models)

	All	1935-44	1945-54	1955-64	1965-74
Baseline birth cohort: 1935-1944					
- 1945-1954	0.13*				
- 1955-1964	0.37***				
- 1965-1974	0.86***				
Duration in housework	-0.002**	-0.002	-0.003*	-0.003*	0.002
Previous labour market experience	0.002**	0.000	-0.000	**0.003*** **	**0.005****
Education: up to lower-secondary					
-upper-secondary or tertiary	0.05	0.03	-0.007	0.13	-0.06
Baseline social class last job: Service					
- routine non manual workers	-0.26***	-0.35*	-0.26*	**-0.004**	-0.69***
- petty bourgeoisie	-0.21	0.40*	**-0.89**	**-0.77**	-0.15
- skilled manual workers	-0.45***	-0.68**	-0.45**	**0.07**	**-1.10*****
- unskilled manual workers	-0.34***	-0.19	-0.37*	-0.36*	-0.57*
Baseline time last job: full-time					
- part-time	0.02	-0.02	0.22	-0.003	0.02
Baseline Region: :England					
- Wales	-0.13*	-0.44***	**-0.10**	**-0.12**	**0.68*****
- Scotland	0.06	-0.04	0.18	-0.09	0.25
Baseline: mother did not work					
-mother worked	0.13**	0.19*	0.06	0.06	0.27*
Baseline marital status: not in couple					
- married/cohabiting	0.41***	0.16	0.29(*)	0.37**	0.52**
Baseline child status: no children					
- pregnant o youngest child aged 0-3	-0.71***	-0.87***	-0.57**	-0.59**	-0.99**
- youngest child aged 3+	-0.02	-0.09	0.24	0.07	-0.60
Number of children	0.04	0.04	-0.02	0.10*	0.03
Constant	-4.65***	-4.20***	-4.21***	-4.62***	-3.58***
LOG-LIKELIHOOD	-7717.5	-1937.1	-2653.8	-2205.3	-914.5
NUMBER OF MONTHS-PERSONS	137582	41645	50277	34822	10838
NUMBER OF WOMEN	1784	434	587	519	244
NUMBER OF TRANSITIONS	1469	351	491	432	195

Notes: estimates using option « cluster »
* p< .10; ** p< .05 ***p< .01*
In Bold = coefficients of second , third and fourth cohort that are different from the first cohort at least at .10 probability level.
Source: BHPS; up to 2005

7- SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

Since the Second World War, women's employment has increased markedly in all the advanced countries. Indeed, not only have women entered the labour market on a much larger scale, but they have also reduced their exit rates, or they have shortened their family-care breaks. This increase has mainly been due to the behaviour of married women and mothers, although differences across countries are still marked. In this study I have compared Italy and Great Britain and, unlike most previous studies, which have typically focused on transitions around childbirths and on single cohorts or single countries, I have used longitudinal data to explicitly address changes across cohorts in the effect of family responsibilities on women's movements in and out of paid work over a relatively long span of their life course, from first job up to age 40.

What emerges from the foregoing analysis is that, everywhere, women's attachment to paid work has increased, and everywhere, as predicted by human capital theory, education and/or class have marked and still mark the divide. However, in line with structural, culturalist and institutional approaches, it also emerges that the effects of marriage and motherhood are, *ceteris paribus*, different across countries, suggesting that they are shaped by the macro context..

In Great Britain women in the oldest cohort used to withdraw from paid work when they got married or had children and to re-enter when all children were grown up. The post-war cultural norm of incompatibility between the roles of wife-mother and paid worker and the parallel male-breadwinner welfare state prevented most women from continuous labour market participation. At the same time, an already developed service economy (and, in particular, a part-time economy) and an already relatively deregulated labour market, gave women easy entries and re-entries into the labour market. Hence, in Great Britain, women in the oldest cohort withdrew from the labour market regardless of their level of education, their occupational class and their labour market experience. Human capital investments and work orientations came to matter later in the decision on whether and when to re-enter paid work.

As the marriage bar has declined, gender role attitudes have become less traditional – and maternity leave was introduced in 1978 – women have become more attached to the labour market but also more differentiated. They have reduced exits or reduced time out by postponing their exits from the time around marriage to the time around childbirths and by re-entering more rapidly after childbearing and more often between births. At the same time, without a parallel substantive improvement in women- and parent-friendly policies (at least until New Labour came to power) and

with a worsening of the conditions and the terms of the labour market (especially under Thatcher), women's career paths have become more polarised. Indeed, in Great Britain, marriage and fertility have become more compatible with employment, but a large number of women still interrupt when they are pregnant and when the child is young. The flexibility of the labour market enables them to regain a job relatively easily. However, especially if low educated, women are likely to get low-paid jobs in the secondary labour market and to further weaken their human-capital resources: that is, they pay a high price in terms of career opportunities, job satisfaction, and often poverty.

Also in Italy, women's attachment to the labour market has increased across cohorts. But it has done so in a different way. In Great Britain, where even in the post-war decades nearly all women had some work experience over their life courses, this has occurred through a reduction in discontinuous careers or in the duration of employment breaks. Instead, in Italy, where in the 1950s and 1960s about one out of four women did not enter the labour market at all, women in younger cohorts show a higher attachment to paid work mainly because they enter the labour market more often, and do so even when job opportunities are scarce, as in the South. Moreover, when they start to work, Italian women tend more to have continuous careers. In Italy, the biggest change has occurred between the first and second cohort, those of women who were in their twenties during the 1970s, when labour demand and family policies became more women-friendly. But, as in the past, once women start to work, they differ little in the employment paths that they follow over their adult life course: either they never stop working or, if they stop to take care of their families, they never re-start. Continuous participation has been by far the most typical pattern. Moreover, unlike in Great Britain, factors affecting women's movements out of the labour market have remained quite constant across cohorts. In particular education was and still is the main factor discriminating women's labour supply. This suggests that, in order to increase their participation in the labour market and to improve the length and the quality of their careers, women have had to become well educated. But not only this. With no significant improvements in de-familiarising social policies, in women-friendly flexibilisation labour market policies, and in general employment and occupational prospects, in order to keep attached to the labour market women have also had to reduce their marriage and fertility, as cross-country comparative figures on marriage and fertility rates reveal.

Again, differences in the institutional contexts contribute to explaining the different impact exerted by motherhood on Italian and British women's transitions in and out of paid work. In Italy, women's labour supply responds much more to education than to motherhood: having children has a strong influence on work history continuity only at low levels of education, and the effect of education, *ceteris paribus*, remains constant across the first three cohorts, and slightly increases in

the fourth cohort. Also constant is the effect of number of children, while the effect of the age of youngest child decreases. In general, and as expected, Italian women's work histories are less affected by family responsibilities than are those of British women. Evidently, given an equally scarce provision of childcare services but a stronger "intergenerational and kinship" compensation, the chances of women in Italy of enjoying a full-time continuous career are much higher. Moreover, given the higher "rigidity" of the labour market and the "partial and selective" deregulation of the past decade, Italian women know that if they exit, they are at high risk of not being able to re-enter, when desired or necessary. Differences across countries in the impact of motherhood are also, partly, a selection effect: compared to Great Britain, in Italy more women are permanently excluded from the labour market, but those who – despite still relatively traditional gender norms and a relatively low demand for labour – gain access to it are generally more educated and more "motivated" and "legitimated" to work.

This comparison between Italy and Great Britain enables some interesting policy conclusions to be drawn. In both countries, family policies fail to provide adequate support for the combination of work and family. This has negative effects at both the individual and societal level. In Italy, where this lack combines with strong labour-market regulation or a "partial and selective" deregulation producing an "insider-outsider" divide, with uncertain employment opportunities, with relatively traditional gender role norms and with a "strong family" (which, on the one hand, acts as a support for childcare needs so that daughters or daughters-in-law can stay in the labour market, but on the other inhibits tertiarization and increases the expected cost of children, see Bettio and Villa 1998), the outcome is the well-known low fertility-low participation equilibrium. In Great Britain, where inadequate family policy reforms have gone together with strong wage de-regulation and with weak training policies, at least under the late 1990s, the outcome is, at the aggregate level, a low-skill, cheap-labour equilibrium, and at the individual level, the risk of poverty and of fragmented careers. The extent to which continuous or discontinuous careers reflect women's own preferences more, as Hakim argues, or macro constraints more, as many feminists counter-argue, remains an open question, which would require different kinds of data to be properly addressed. However, and in line with many welfare regime studies, by comparing across both time and space this study suggests that institutions and culture do matter, because they define opportunities and constraints but also structure preferences.

REFERENCES

Addabbo, T. 1999. Labour Supply and Employment Probabilities in Italy: A Gender Analysis in a Regional Perspective. *Economia e Lavoro* 33(3-4):189-207.

Barbagli, M. and Saraceno, C. 1998. *Separarsi in Italia*. Bologna: Il Mulino.

Barbieri, P. and Scherer S. 2007. Vite svendute. Uno sguardo analitico sulla costruzione sociale delle prossime generazioni di esclusi. *Polis*, 3, pp. 341-362,

Barrell, R. (ed.). 1994. *The UK Labour Market: Comparative Aspects and Institutional Developments*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Becker, G. S. 1975. *Human Capital: a Theoretical and Empirical Analysis with Special Reference to Education*. New York: NBER.

Becker, G. S. 1991. *A Treatise on the Family*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Bernardi, F. 1999. *Donne tra famiglia e carriera. Strategia di coppia e vincoli sociali*. Milano: Franco Angeli.

Bettio, F. 1988. Women, the state and the family in Italy: problems of female participation in historical perspective. In: *Women and Recession.* ed. J. Rubery. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Bettio, F., J. Rubery, and M. Smith. 1996. Gender, Flexibility and New Employment Relations in the European Union. *Paper presented to the European Seminar on "Women and Work"*. Torino: ILO

Bettio, F., and P. Villa. 1998. A Mediterranean perspective on the breakdown of the relationship between participation and fertility. *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 22: 137-171.

———. 2000. To What Extent does it Pay to be Better Educated? Education and the Work Market for Women in Italy. In: *Gender Inequalities in Southern Europe : Women, Work, and Welfare in the 1990s* , ed. Gonzalez MJ, Jurado T, Naldini M, London: Frank Cass.

Bison, I., M. Pisati, and A. Schizzerotto. 1996. Disuguaglianze di genere e storie lavorative. In: *Genere: la Costruzione Sociale del Femminile e Maschile.* eds S. Piccone Stella, and C. Saraceno. Bologna: Il Mulino

Blossfeld, Hans-Peter and Y. Shavit. 1993. *Persistent Inequality: Changing Educational Attainment in Thirteen Countries*. Boulder, Colo: Westview Press.

Blossfeld, H. P. (eds). 1995. *The New Role of Women: Family Formation in Modern Societies*. Westview Press: Boulder, Colo.

Blossfeld, H. P. and C. Hakim, (eds). 1997. *Between Equalization and Marginalization. Women Working Part-Time in Europe and the United States of America.* Oxford: Oxford University Press

Blossfeld H-P, Drobnic S. (eds) 2001. *Careers of Couples in Contemporary Societies : from Male Breadwinner to Dual Earner Families.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

T. Boeri, D. Del Boca e C. Pissarides (ed.). 2005. *Women at Work. An Economic Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Boudon, R . 2003. Beyond Rational Choice Theory. *Annual Review of Sociology* 29:1-21.

Boje T.B., Leira A. (eds). 2000. *Gender, Welfare State and the Market*. London, Routdlege

Bratti, M., Del Bono, E. and Vuri, D. 2005. 'New Mothers' Labour Force Participation in Italy: The Role of Job Characteristics', *Labour* 19 (Special Issue): 79-121.

Breen, R (ed.). 2004. *Social Mobility in Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bruegel, I., and I. Perrons. 1998. Deregulation and women's employment: the diverse experience of women in Britain. *Feminist Economics* 4: 103-25.

Cohen, B. 1990. *Caring for Children. The 1990 Report*. London: Family Policy Study Centre.

Coltrane, S. 2000. Research on household labor: modelling and measuring the social embeddedness of routine family work. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 62, pp.1209-1233.

Cousins, C. 1994. A comparison of the labour market position of women in Spain and the UK with reference to the "flexible" labour debate. *Work, Employment and Society* : 45-67.

Crompton, R. and F. Harris. 1998. Explaining Women's Employment Patterns: "Orientations to Work" Revisited. *British Journal of Sociology* 49(1):118-49.

Crompton R 2006. *Employment and the Family*. Cambridge*:* Cambridge University Press

Davies, H. and H. Joshi. 2002. Women's Incomes Over a Synthetic Lifetime. In: *The Gender Dimension of Social Change. The Contribution of Dynamic Research to the Study of Women's Life Courses* , eds Elisabetta Ruspini and Angela Dale. Bristol: The Policy Press

Deakin, S., and F. Wilkinson. 1991. Social policy and economic efficiency: the deregulation of the labour market in Britain. *Critical Social Policy* 33: 40-61.

Del Boca, D. 2002. The Effect of Child Care and Part Time Opportunities on Participation and Fertility Decisions in Italy. *Journal of Population Economics* 15(3):549-73.

Del Boca D. and Pasqua S. 2005, "Labour Supply and Fertility in Europe and the U.S.", in *Women at Work. An Economic Perspective*, T. Boeri, D. Del Boca e C. Pissarides (ed.), Oxford: Oxford University Press

Del Boca D. and Saraceno C. 2005. Le donne in Italia tra famiglia e lavoro. *Economia e lavoro*, 4, p.125-140

Dex Shirley, Heather Joshi, Susan Macran, and Andrew McCulloch. 1998. "Women's Employment Transitions Around Childbearing." *Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics* 60(1): pp. 79-100.

Duncan, S. 2005 . Mothering, class and rationality. *Sociological Review*, 53(1), 50-76

EC (European Commission). 1972. *Social Protection in the Member States of the Community*. Luxembourg: EC.

———. 1988. *Social Protection in the Member States of the Community*. Luxembourg: EC.

———. 1998. *Social Protection in the Member States of the Community*. Luxembourg: EC.

Elliott, J., A. Dale, and M. Egerton. 2001. The Influence of Qualifications on Women's Work Histories, Employment Status and Earnings at Age 33. *European Sociological Review* 17(2):145-68.

Esping -Andersen, G. 1990. *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Princeton: Princeton U P.

———. 1999. *Social Foundations of Postindustrial Economies*. Oxford: Oxford U P.

Esping-Andersen, G. and M. Regini (eds.). 2000. *Why De-regulate Labour Markets?* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fagan, C., and J. O'Reilly. 1998a. Conceptualising part-time work: the value of an integrated comparative perspective . In: *Part-time Prospects: International Comparison of Part-time Work in Europe, North America and the Pacific Rim.* eds. C. Fagan, and J. O'Reilly. London: Routledge.

———. (eds.). 1998b. *Part-time Prospects: International Comparison of Part-time work in Europe, North America and the Pacific Rim*. London: Routledge.

Finch, J. 1993. *Negotiating Family Responsibilities*. London, New York: Tavistock, Routledge

Geist C. 2005. The Welfare State and the Home: Regime Difference in the Domestic Division of Labour. *European Sociological Review*. 21:23–41.

Gornick, J. C., M. K. Meyers, and K. E. Ross. 1997. Supporting the employment of mothers: policy variation across fourteen welfare states. *Journal of European Social Policy* 1: 45-70.

Gornick, Janet C. and Marcia K. Meyers. 2003. *Families That Work: Policies for Reconciling Parenthood and Employment*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation

Gornick, Janet and Jerry Jacobs. 1998. Gender, the Welfare State and Public Employment: A Comparative Study of Seven Industrialized Countries. *American Sociological Review* 63: 688-710.

Gustafsson, S. 1995. Public policies and women's labour force participation: a comparison of Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands. In: *Investment in Women's Human Capital* . ed. T. P. Schultz. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Hakim, C. 2000. *Work-Lifestyle Choices in the 21st Century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Heath, A., and Cheung. 1998. Education and occupation in Britain. In: *From School to Work: a Comparative Study of Educational Qualifications and Occupational Destinations.* eds. Y. Shavit, and W. Müller. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Heckman and Borjas. 1980. *Economica*, 47.

Jacobs, S. 1999. Trends in women's career patterns and in gender occupational mobility in Britain. *Gender, work and Organization* 6: 32-46.

Joshi, H., and P. R. A. Hinde. 1993. Employment after childbearing in post-war Britain: cohort-study. Evidence on contrasts within and across generations. *European Sociological Review* 9, no. 3.

Joshi, H., S Macran, and S. Dex. 1996. Employment after childbearing and women's subsequent labour force participation: evidence from the British 1958 birth cohort. *Journal of Population Economics* 9: 325-48.

Kilkey, M. 2006. New Labour and reconciling work and family life: Making it fathers' business? *Social Policy & Society*, 5(2),167-175.

Kreps, D. M. 1997. Intrinsic Motivation and Extrinsic Incentives. *The American Economic Review* 87(2):359-64.

Künzler, J. 2002. Paths Towards a Modernization of Gender Relations, Policies, and Family Building. In: *Family Life and Family Policies in Europe*, vol. 2, eds F.-X. Kaufmann, A. Kuijsten, H. Schulze, and K. P. Strohmeier. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. 2003 'Developing Early Years Childcare in England, 1997-2002: the Choices for (Working) Mothers' , *Social Policy and Administration*, 37 (3): 219-238 .

Maré, D. 2006. Constructing Consistent Work-life Histories: A guide for users of the British Household Panel Survey. *ISER working papers 2006-39*, Institute for Social and Economic Research, revised

Mandel, H. and Semyonov, M. 2006*:* A Welfare State Paradox: State Interventions and Woman's Employment Opportunities in 22 Countries. *American Journal of Sociology* 111 (6): 1910-1949.

McRae, S. 1991. Occupational change over childbirth. *Sociology* 25, no. 4: 589-606.

———. 1993. Returning to work after childbirth: opportunities and inequalities. *European Sociological Review* 9, no. 2.

McRae, S., and W. Daniel. 1991. *Maternity Rights: The Experience of Women and Employers* . London: Policy Studies Institute.

McRae S. 2003. Constraints and choices in mothers' employment careers. *British Journal of Sociology* 53 3 317-38

O' Connor, J. S. 1996. From Women in the Welfare State to Gendering Welfare State Regimes. *Special Issue of Current*

Sociology 44, no. 2.

Orloff, A. 1993. Gender and social rights of citizenship: the comparative analysis of gender relations and welfare states. *American Sociological Review* 58: 303-28.

Pfau-Effinger, B. 2004. Socio-Historical Paths of the Male Breadwinner Model –An Explanation of Cross-National Differences. *British Journal of Sociology* 55(3): 377–99.

Pisati, M. and A. Schizzerotto. 2003. The Italian Mobility Regime: 1985-1997. In: *National Patterns of Social Mobility, 1970-1999: Divergence or Convergence?*, ed R. Breen. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. 1999. Pochi Promossi, Nessun Bocciato. La Mobilità Di Carriera in Italia in Prospettiva Comparata e Longitudinale. *Stato e Mercato* 56:249-79.

Polachek, S. 1981. Occupational self-selection: a human capital approach to sex differences in occupational structure. *Reviews of Economics and Statistics* 63: 60-69.

Pronzato C. 2007. Return to Work after Childbirth: does Parental Leave Matter in Europe? *ISER working papers* 2007-30, Institute for Social and Economic Research.

Randall, V. 2002. Child Care in Britain, or, How Do You Restructure Nothing. In: *Child Care Policy at the Crossroads. Gender and Welfare State Restructuring*, eds S. M. and R. Mahon. New York: Routledge.

Ringen, S. 1997. Great Britain. In: *Family Change and Family Policies in Great Britain, Canada, New Zealand and the United States*, eds S. Kamerman and A. Kahn. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Ruxton, S. 1996. *Children in Europe*. London: NHC Action for Children.

Sainsbury, D., (ed.). 1994. *Gendering Welfare States*. London: Sage.

Saraceno, C. 1993. Elementi per un'analisi delle trasformazioni di genere nella società contemporanea e delle loro conseguenze sociali. *Rassegna Italiana di Sociologia* 1:19-56.

———. 1996. Family change, family policies and the restructuring of welfare. *Paper presented to the conference "Beyond 2000. The New Social Policy Agenda"*, OECD, Parigi, 12-13 November.

———. 2003. *Mutamenti della Famiglia e Politiche Sociali in Italia*. Bologna: Il Mulino

Saurel- Cubizolles, J., P. Romito, V. Escriba-Agüir, N. Lelong, R. Mas Pons, and Ancel. P. 1999. Returning to work after childbirth in France, Italy, and Spain. *European Sociological Review* 15, no. 2: 179-94.

Schizzerotto, A., and A. Cobalti. 1998. Occupational returns to education in contemporary Italy. In: *From School to Work: a Comparative Study of Educational Qualifications and Occupational Destinations.* eds. Y. Shavit, and W. Müller. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Schizzerotto, A, I. Bison, and A. Zoppè 1995. Disparità di genere nella partecipazione al mondo del lavoro e nella durata delle carriere. *Polis* 9, no. 1: 91-112.

Scott, J. 1999. European Attitudes Towards Maternal Employment. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* 19(9-10-11):151-86.

Solera, C. 2001. Income Transfers and Support for Mothers' Employment: The Link to Family Poverty Risks. In: *Child Well-Being, Child Poverty and Child Policy in Modern Nations. What Do We Know?* eds Vleminckx, K. and Smeeding, T. Bristol: The Policy Press.

———. 2004. *Changes across Cohorts in Women's Work Histories: to What Extent are they due to a Compositional Effect? A Comparison of Italy and Great Britain*. IUE Working Paper n. 09

———. 2005. *Women's Employment over the Life Course: Changes Across Cohorts in Italy and Great Britain.* Tesi di

dottorato. Fiesole: Istituto Universitario Europeo

Solera, C. and Bettio, F. 2007. Women's work Histories in Italy: Education as Investment in Reconciliation and Legitimacy? *DemoSoc Working Paper*, n.19, Pompeu Fabra

H. Stier, N. Lewin-Epstein, and M. Braun. 2001. Welfare regimes, family-supportive policies, and women's employment along the life-course. *American Journal of Sociology* 106(6), pp. 1731-1760.

Uunk, W., Kalmijn, M. and Muffels, R. 2005. The Impact of Young Children on Women's Labour Supply. A Reassessment of Institutional Effects in Europe. *Acta Sociologica* 48(1): 41–62.

Wincott, D. 2006. Paradoxes of New Labour Social Policy: Toward Universal Child Care in Europe's "Most Liberal" Welfare Regime? *Social Politics*, 13(2), 286-312

Scott, J.. 1999. European Attitudes Towards Maternal Employment. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* 19(9-10-11):151-86.

Stier, H. and Lewin-Epstein, N. 2001. Welfare Regimes, Family-Supportive Policies, and Women's Employment Along the Life-Course. *American Journal of Sociology* 106(6):1731-60.

Treas, J. and Widmer, E. D. 2000. Married Women's Employment Over the Life Course: Attitudes in Cross-National Perspective. *Social Forces* 78(4):1409-36.

Villa, P. 2004. La diffusione del modello di famiglia a doppia partecipazione nei paesi europei e in Italia. *Inchiesta*. n.146: pp. 6-20.

Vlasblom Jan Dirk and Joop Schippers. 2006. Changing dynamics in female employment around childbirth: Evidence from Germany, the Netherlands and the UK. *Work, Employment & Society* . 20: pp. 329-347.