Thursday 23rd May 2019
12:00 – 14:00
Meeting Room – Third floor, Via Verdi 26
Trento

Nicoletta Balbo

Fertility Drain or Fertility Gain?
The Effect of Emigration on Fertility in Italian Provinces during the Great Recession

Abstract:
The present paper aims at uncovering whether the sharp increase in out-migration from Italy during the years of the Great Recession (2009-2014) had any impact on Italian fertility. Specifically, we investigate how self-selection into out-migration of people emigrating from Italy during the recent economic crisis affected fertility in the area of origin of emigrants. We exploit the richness of the Administrative Registry of Italians Residing Abroad (AIRE), that collects information about all Italian citizens moving their residence abroad, as well as the Italian birth records at the province level. Using an instrumental variable approach, that allows to overcome the endogeneity issues in the fertility-migration relationship, we find a positive impact of emigration on fertility at the Italian province level. This result suggests that emigrants are selected among those individuals who have a lower risk of having children. Such positive effect of out-migration on fertility in the area of origin could partially counteract the negative effect of increasing unemployment on fertility, thereby leading to an underestimation of the effect of the economic crisis on fertility.