

## **New Mothers' Labour Force Participation in Italy: The Role of Job Characteristics**

**Massimiliano Bratti, Emilia Del Bono, Daniela Vuri**

In this paper we use newly available individual-level data from the Longitudinal Survey of Italian Households to investigate the factors affecting female labour force participation after the birth of the first child. We focus on the effects of pre-marital job characteristics and find that working without a contract has a negative effect on new mothers' participation, while working in the public sector or in a large private firm increases the probability of participation after childbearing. We suggest that these effects could be at least partly attributed to differences in the level of job protection and employment stability enjoyed by workers. This implies that in Italy women with highly protected and stable jobs find it easier to combine career and family, while those who are less sheltered by the legislation are more likely to withdraw from the labour force after becoming mothers.

JEL Classification: J13, J21, J23, O17, C3

Keywords: childbirth, employment, informal sector, job protection, private, public