



La seconda transizione demografica in Italia

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**UN NUOVO INIZIO? FECONdità
E DINAMICHE FAMILIARI IN ITALIA**

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Carlo F. Dondena Center
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The Second Demographic Transition

- Lesthaeghe and Van de Kaa argued that *a new pattern was emerging in the '60s*
 - value change, progressive independence of individuals, secularization, educational expansion and women's empowerment, urbanization
 - the family ceased to be as central as it had previously been: cohabitation replaces marriage, fertility postponement, out-of-wedlock childbearing, increasing marital separation
- Initial prediction of **convergence** with the new demographic behaviour across all Western countries but...
- it appeared early clear that convergence was a long way off for **Southern Europe**.



Specificity or delay?

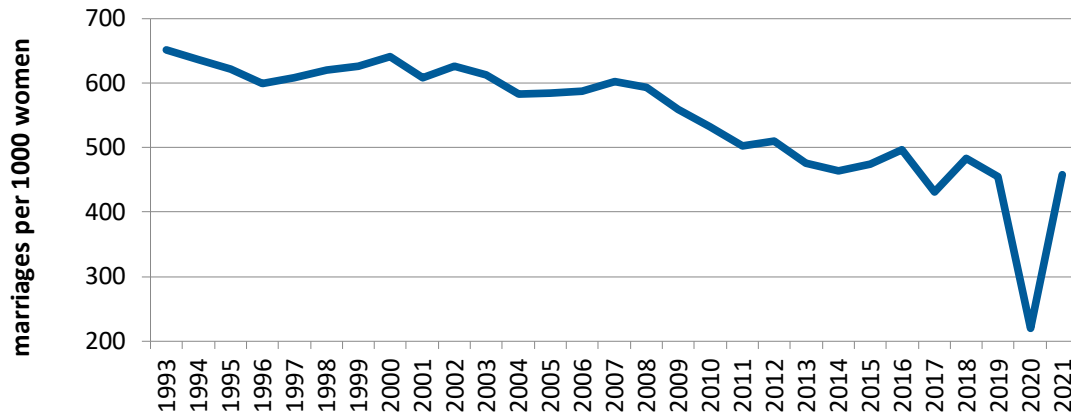
- Italy is often given as an argument against SDT trends
 - Due to the specificities of the Mediterranean (Italian) model
 - weak social protection and strong family ties
 - traditional values orientation
 - some scholars suggested that the adoption of “innovative” family behaviours may not materialize in Italy, or at least remain at lower levels.
- Our aim was to contest the widely held view that Italy is a homogeneous family-oriented country



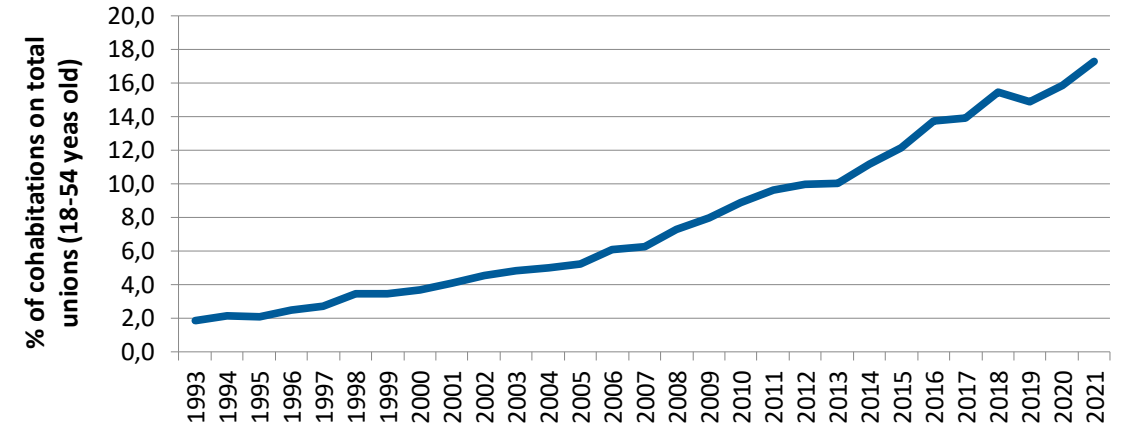
We contest the widely held view that Italy is a homogeneous family-oriented country

Trends in family behaviours: Italy, 1993-2021, own elaboration on Istat data, various sources

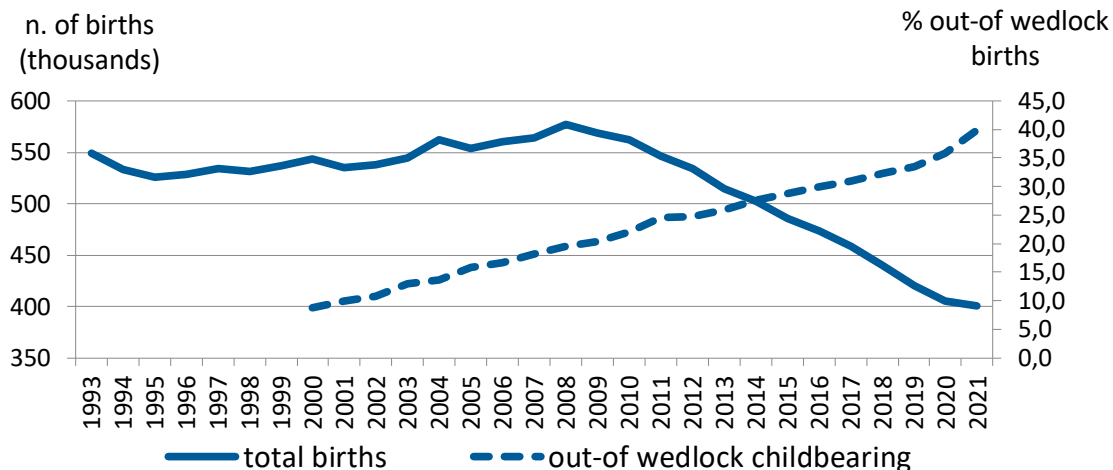
Marriages



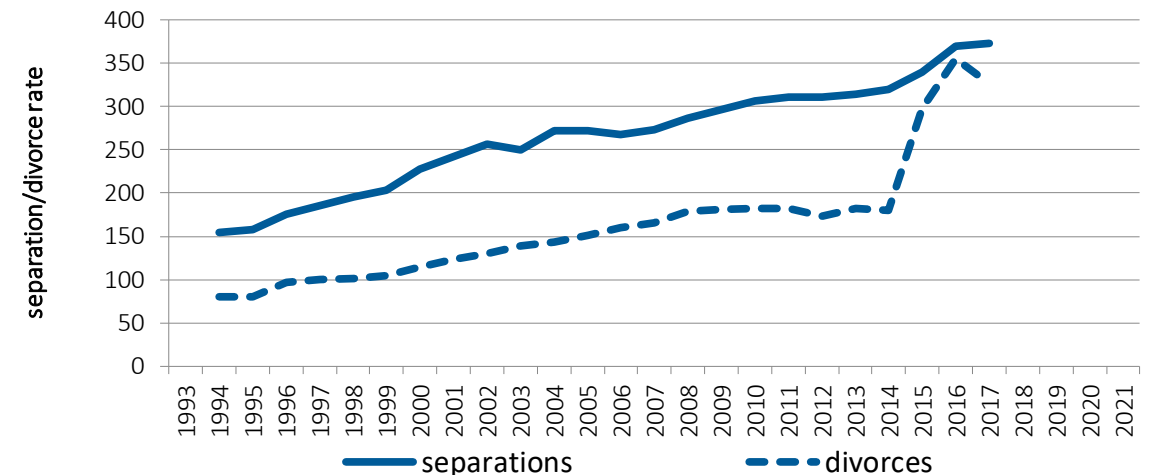
Cohabitations



Births and out-of-wedlock births



Marital dissolutions



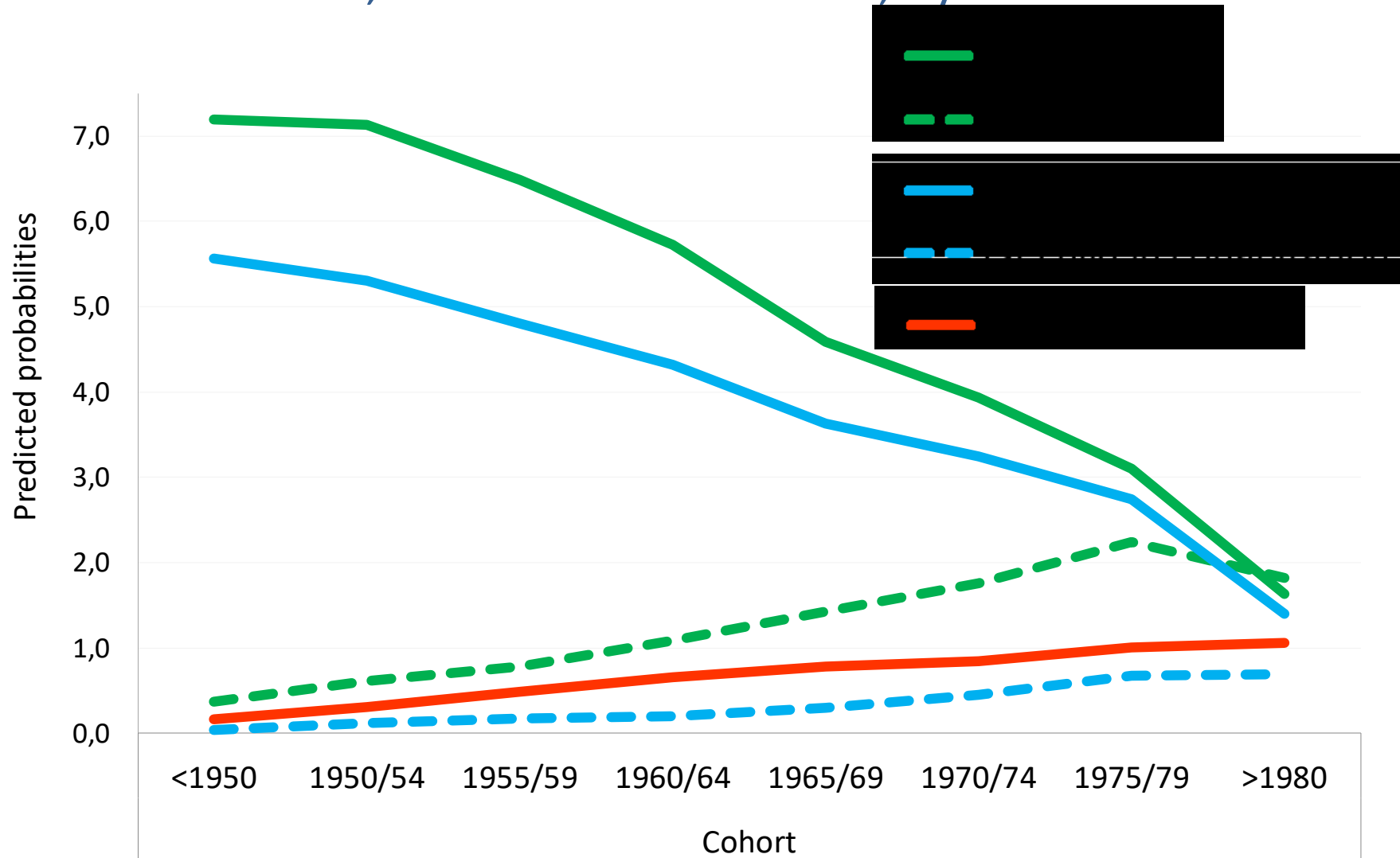


What we have done

- These macro trends suggest that Italian family behaviours are changing substantially...
- ...but they might mask **compositional changes** in the population over time.
- **Event history models** to predict probabilities of
 - entering marriage or cohabitation
 - having the first child in marriage or in cohabitation
 - dissolving a marital union
- **Controlling for**: cohort of birth, gender, area of residence, educational level, parental separation, parental education, mother's occupational status



- Estimated **probabilities** of marriage, cohabitation, first child in marriage and in cohabitation, and union dissolution, by birth cohort



Looking across cohorts, the trends are clear:

- marriage is being replaced by cohabitation;
- non-marital childbearing is on the increase;
- union dissolution is increasing



The role of **education** across generations

- Among women, those with higher education have a higher **risk of cohabitation** than those with medium and low education, both in the older (<1960; 1960-69) and younger (>1970) generations.
Differences are less marked, but present also for men.
- As for **having the first child within a cohabiting union**, we see a peak among the highest educated in the oldest cohort (<1960), but nowadays the probability is higher for both the low and high-educated
- When considering **marital dissolution**, the educational gradient is found for the oldest cohorts (<1960), but for the youngest ones it disappeared (for women) or even reversed (for men)



The role of **geographical differences** across generations

- In the South, both men and women have a much lower **probability of cohabiting** compared to those in the Centre and the North. Across cohorts the probability of cohabiting has increased, but sharply in the North
- Similarly, **out-of-wedlock childbearing** was – and still is – higher in Northern regions
- **Union dissolution** diffused first in Northern regions, but for the youngest cohorts, geographical differences are much smaller, a sign of a strong increase in union dissolution exactly in the South.



To sum up

- Italian demographic landscape is undergoing a revolution in family formation and dissolution patterns: **Italy is not immune to the SDT**
 - although some geographical differences still remain, Italy is not a homogeneous country, and in some Northern regions SDT is at an advanced stage.
- The new family behaviours were initiated by the Italian “social vanguard”, and then **progressed to other social groups**.
- SDT behaviours in Italy might gain ground in the next years, boosting family complexity (i.e., non-traditional family forms)
 - This state of affairs solicits considerations about individual well-being, intergenerational relationships, and social support networks.
- ***Can the Italian institutional context cope with these new developments?***



Thanks for your attention

and thanks to the



group

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