

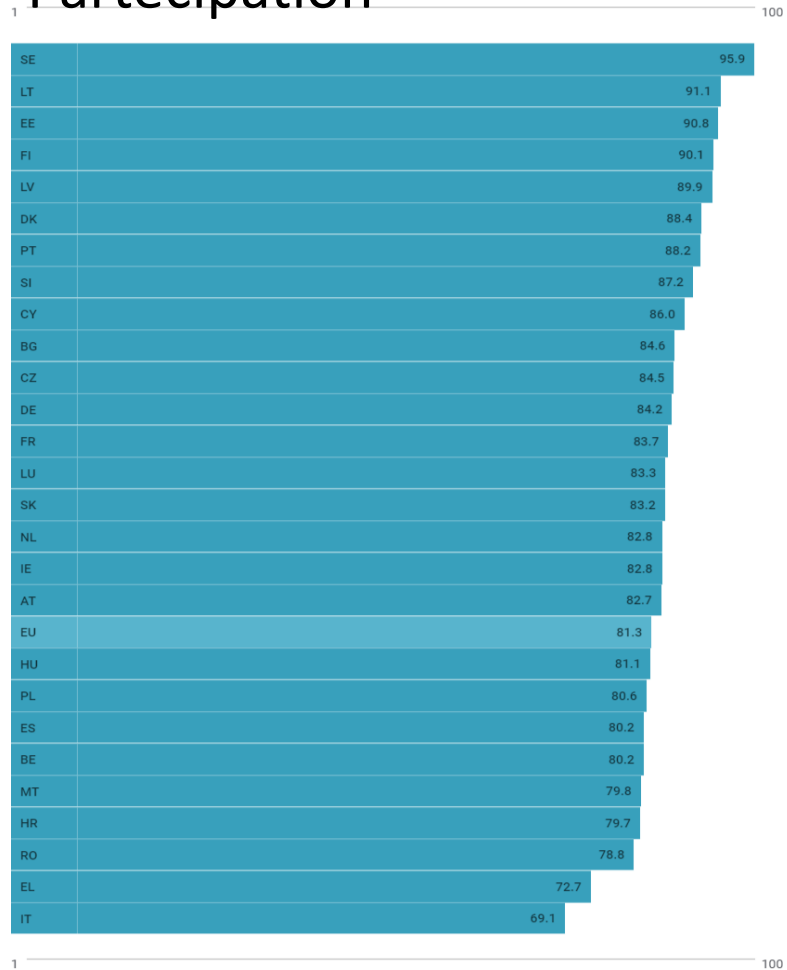


**The different impacts of the COVID-19
pandemic on the work and family
responsibilities of women and men**

Pasquale Tridico

European index of Gender Inequality

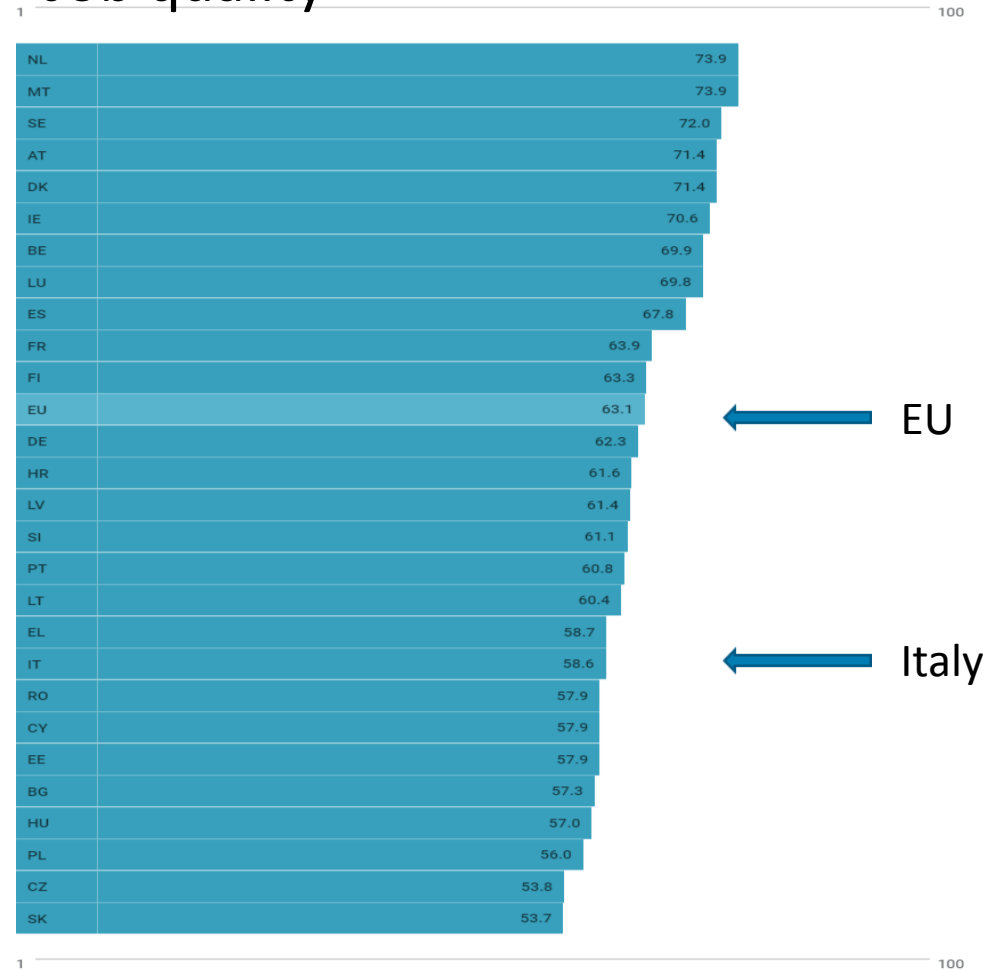
Partecipazione



EU →

Italy →

Job quality



← EU

← Italy

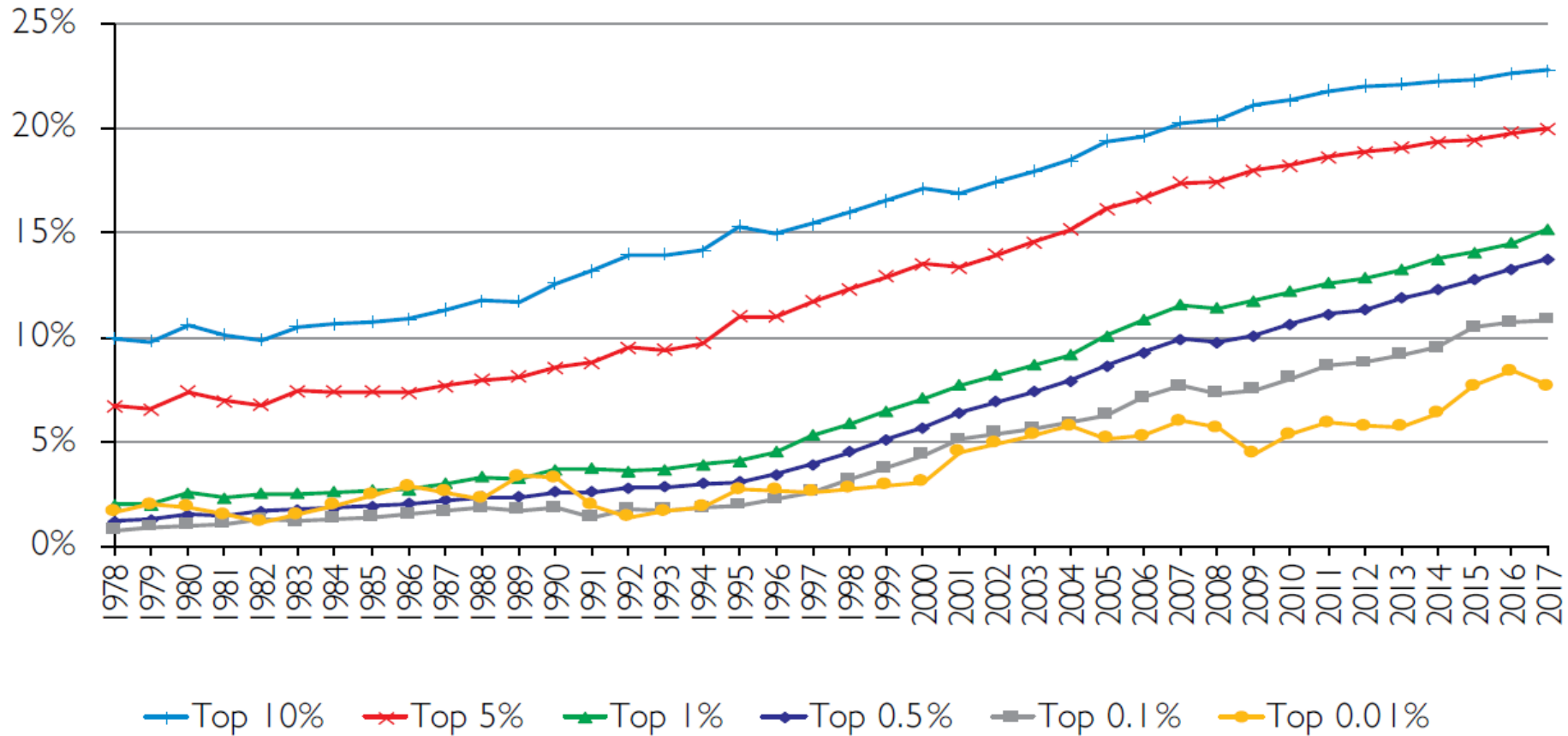
Gender Wage Gap trend: 1985 2015 (Rapporto annuale INPS 2019)

PENALIZZAZIONE DI GENERE ANNI 1985-2015

	Non condizionato		Condizionato
	Annuali	Settimanali	Settimanali
1985	-0,277	-0,234	-0,269
1995	-0,297	-0,221	-0,228
2005	-0,289	-0,184	-0,194
2015	-0,281	-0,168	-0,154

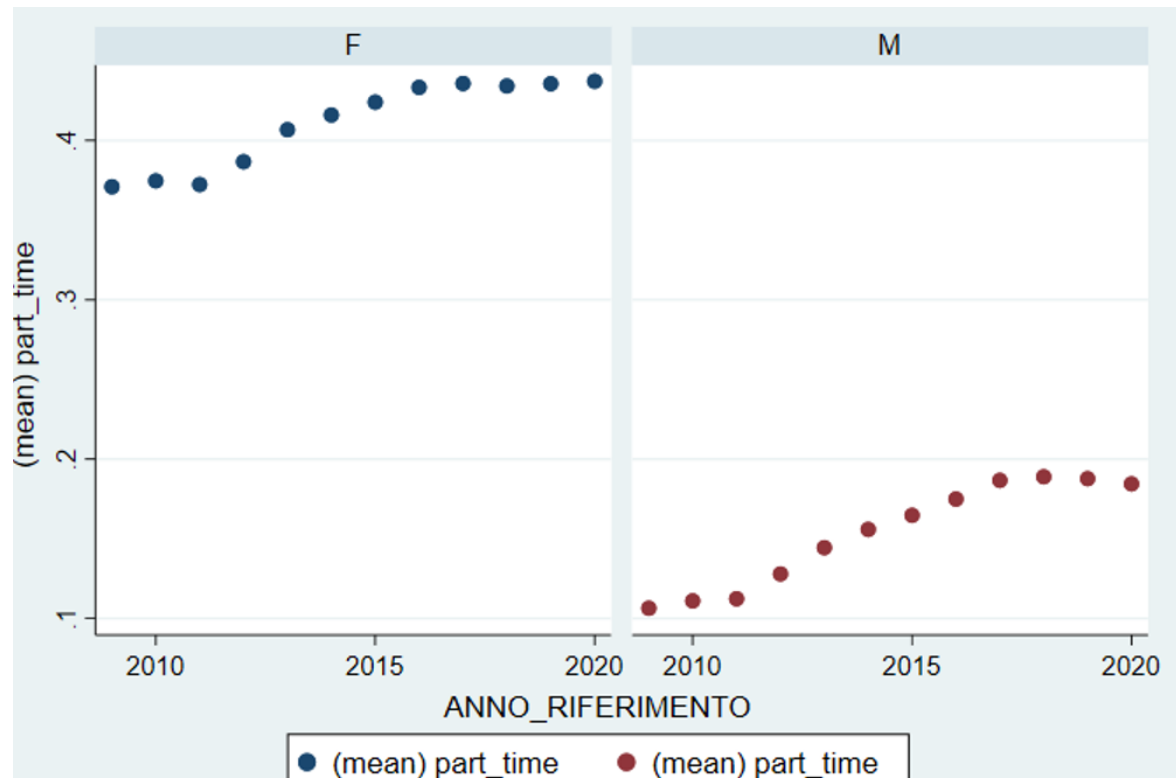
- Since 1985 the yearly unconditional gender wage gap has remained almost stable and equal to 28%, while the weekly unconditional gender wage gap has decreased from 23% to 17%.
- Once individual and job features are taken into account (age, part-time, job qualification, sector, province, firm size) the gap reduces but gender differences remain substantial.
- This implies that even taking into account sectoral and geographical segregation, part-time use and firm size, women earn significant lower wages.

Percentage of women at the top of the labour earnings distribution: 1978 - 2017



Part Time: Over time dynamics

Percentage of women and men on part-time contracts.

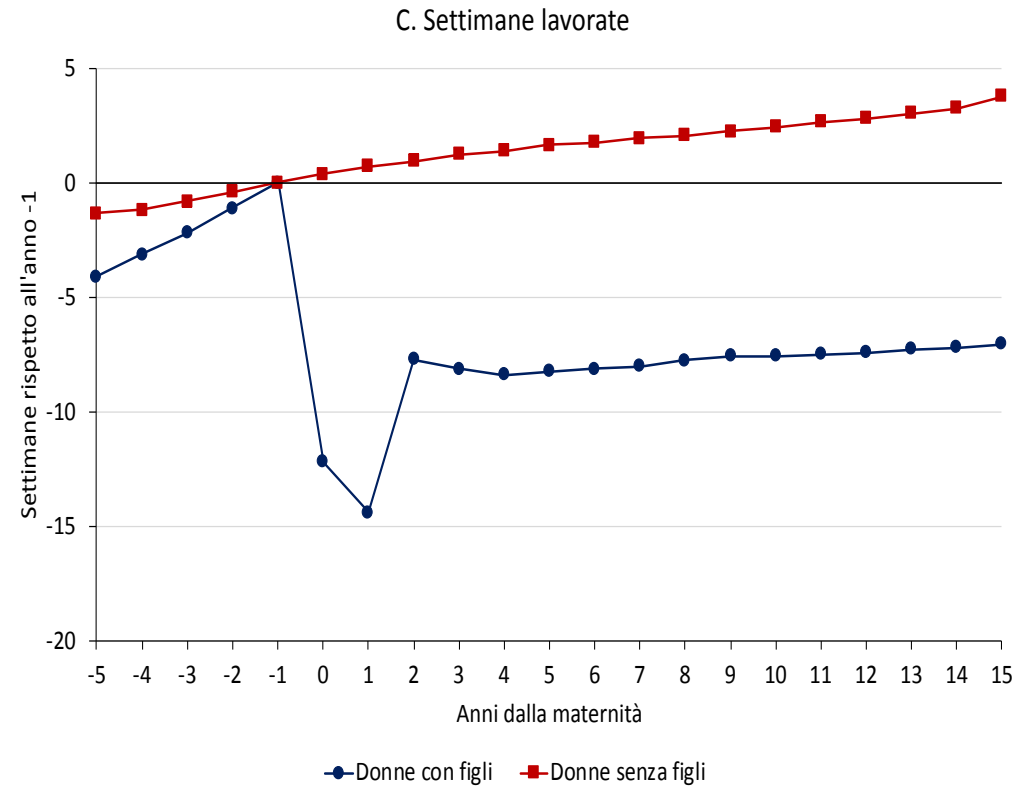
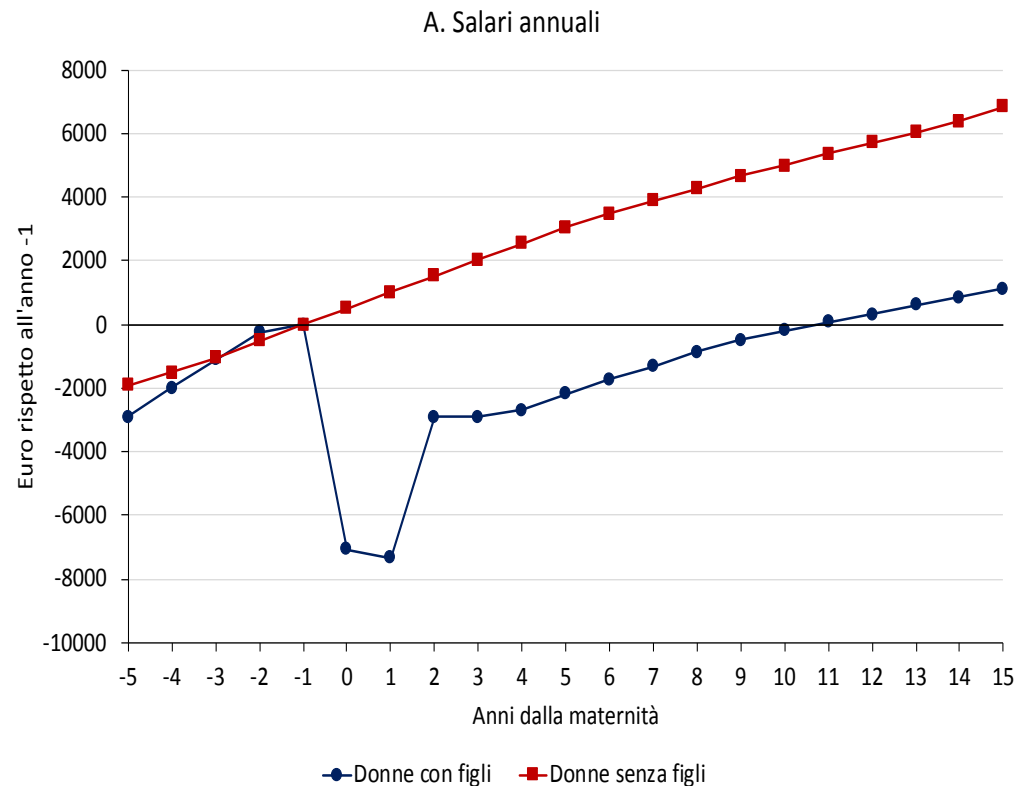


Fonte Dati Inps. Elaborazione Direzione Centrali Studi e Ricerche

Before the birth of the first child wages of women with and without children are identical... after they start to diverge

After 15 years since delivery:

- Yearly wages of mothers are of 5.700 € lower compared to those of women without children
- Mothers work 11 weeks less in a year compared to women without children



Figures show a relevant penalty arising with the first child birth. This penalty is never fully recovered.

The gendered impact of the COVID-19 crisis

The COVID-19 crisis, differently from previous recessions, has impacted women labour market outcomes more than those of their male counterparts.

In the first two trimesters of 2020 the ratio between female and male employment has decreased of about 2% compared to 2019 (Rilevazioni sulle Forze Lavoro, Istat).

If job losses were concentrated on young people (-10.4% between 15 and 24 years, -4.1% between 25 and 34 years compared to a national average of -2.4%), they even harsher on young women: the ratio of female to male employment decreased by almost 12% in the 15-24 age group; the same ratio between 25 and 24 fell by almost 5%.

Explanations of the gendered impact of the pandemic

Women segregation in specific sectors and type of contracts

Women are over-represented both in many of the service sectors, which were closed to fight the pandemic, and in non-standard precarious forms of employment, which were particularly hit by the crisis, with job losses and substantial earnings reductions.

Women represent: 61% of retail trade employees; 65% of workers on temporary contracts
30% of employed women are on part-time jobs

School closure

Occupational segregation does not explain the entire gender gap in employment rates. The presence of children and the division of childcare in the household is also crucial.

Another exclusive feature of the COVID-19 crisis is the massive effect on households with children due to the closures of schools and daycare centers. These households had to combine their work activity with the provision of time-intensive care to their children.

Explanations of the gendered impact of the pandemic

School closure

Given the strong role division between men and women that still attributes to the latter the bulk of domestic duties (see Eurostat, 2019; Bianchi et al. 2012), much of this work has been done by women with an increase in childcare and other responsibilities, which likely impacts working mothers the most.

Bianchi et al. (2012) show that married women spent almost twice as much time on household and childcare responsibilities than men. This holds true also for Northern European countries (Bernhardt et al., 2008) and even among couples with working women (Chesley, 2017).

Evidence from the US (Alon et al., 2020), Spain (Farré et al. 2020) and the UK (Sevilla and Smith 2020) shows that most of the extra work caused by the crisis has fallen disproportionately on women.

Del Boca et al. (2020), using survey data collected in April 2020, show similar findings also for Italy, where the amount of housework done by women does not seem to depend on their partners' working arrangements, while it does for men.

Explanations of the gendered impact of the pandemic

School closure

As a result of this unequal division, a number of papers provide evidence that women with young children were particularly affected by the crisis with greater declines in employment and work hours (see Collins et al., 2020; Couch et al., 2020b).

Italy

Mothers experience a larger penalty in terms of reduced labor market earnings compared to fathers, especially in the first four months of the health emergency.

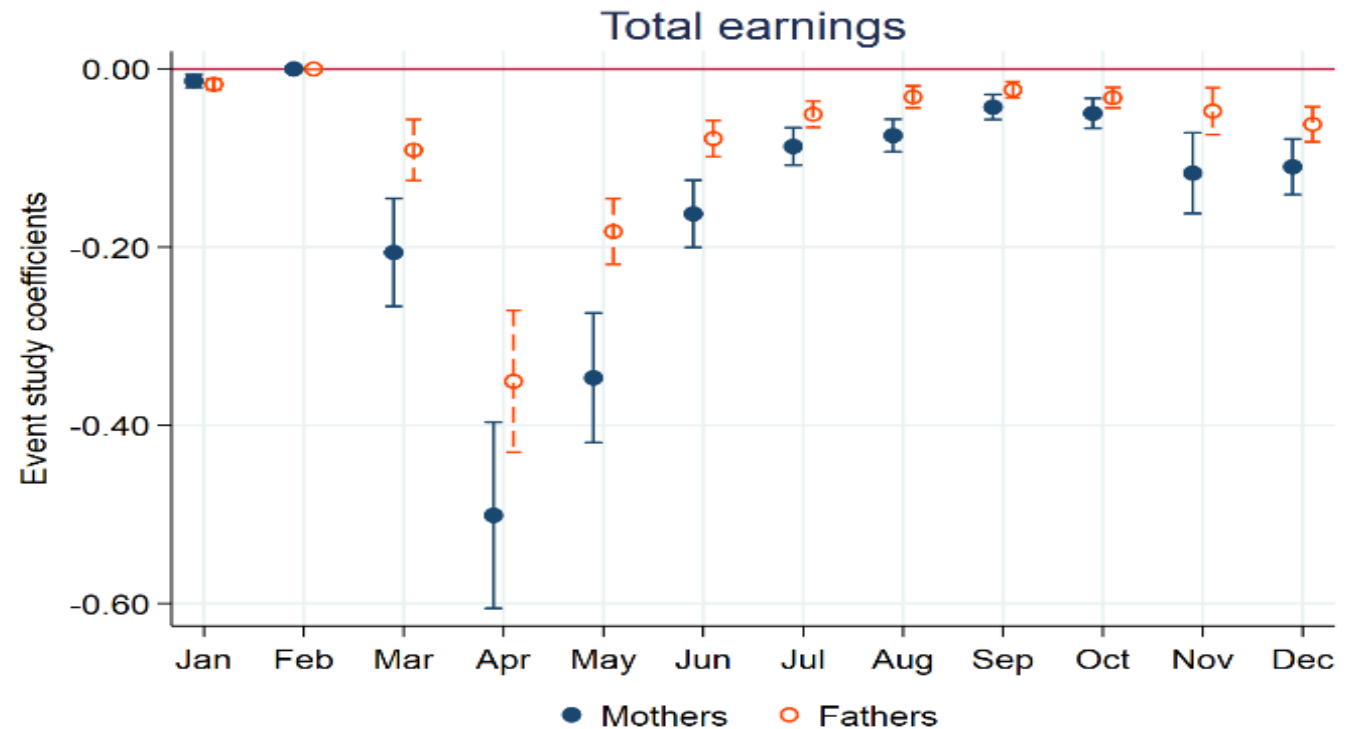
In addition, mothers of younger children experience a higher reduction in earnings compared to women with older children.

For fathers this difference is found only in March and April, but not in the remaining months of the year, suggesting that mothers of younger children have suffered more the effects of the pandemic.

The gendered impact of the pandemic

INPS administrative data, covering all employees in the private sector, given their granularity, allow to compare labor market outcomes of mothers and fathers before and after the pandemic, conditional on a number of observable individual, job and occupation characteristics

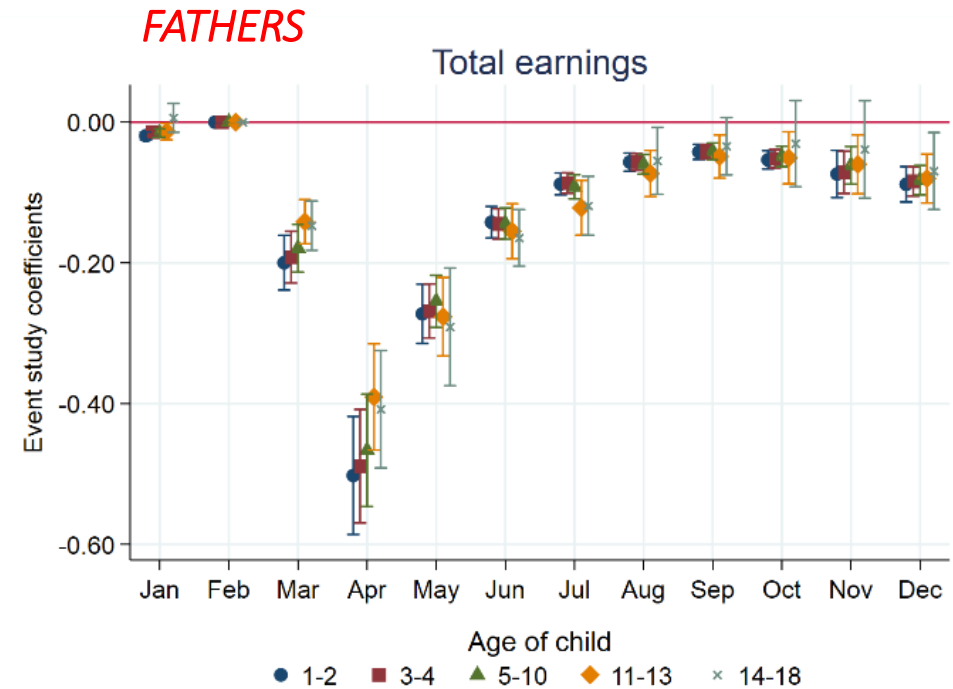
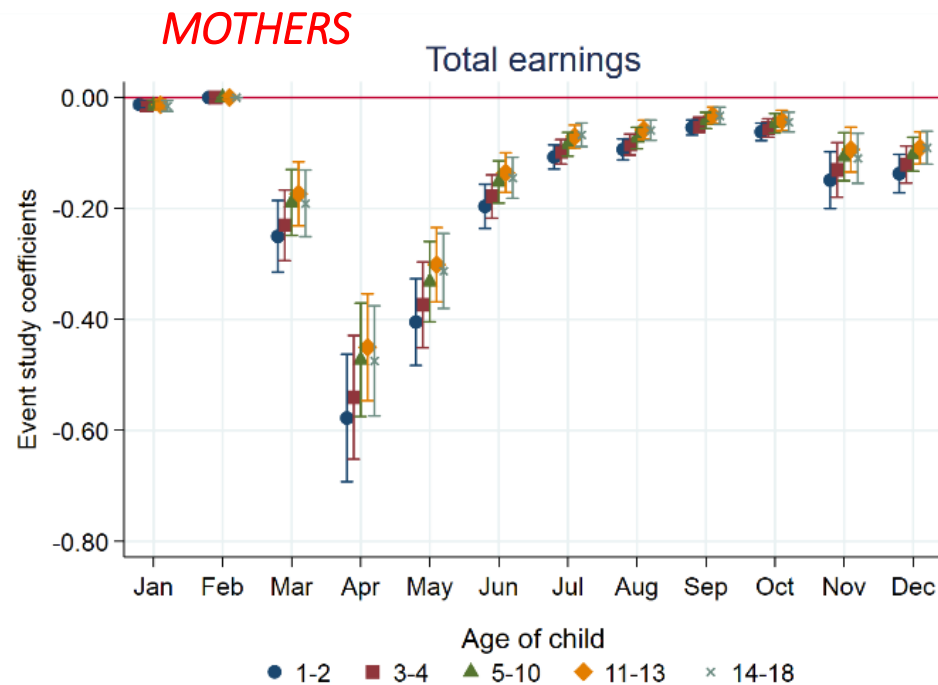
The figure shows striking differences between mothers and fathers, with the former experiencing a considerably larger penalty in terms of reduced labor market earnings than the latter, especially in the months between March and June. Differences become smaller during the summer but start to widen again in November and December, when most schools closed again.



Fonte De Paola e Lattanzio, 2021, dati INPS

The impact of the pandemic on log monthly earnings of mothers and fathers by child's age

Five different child's age groups, broadly corresponding to different school orders (1-2, 3-4, 5-10, 11-13 and 14-18 years old)

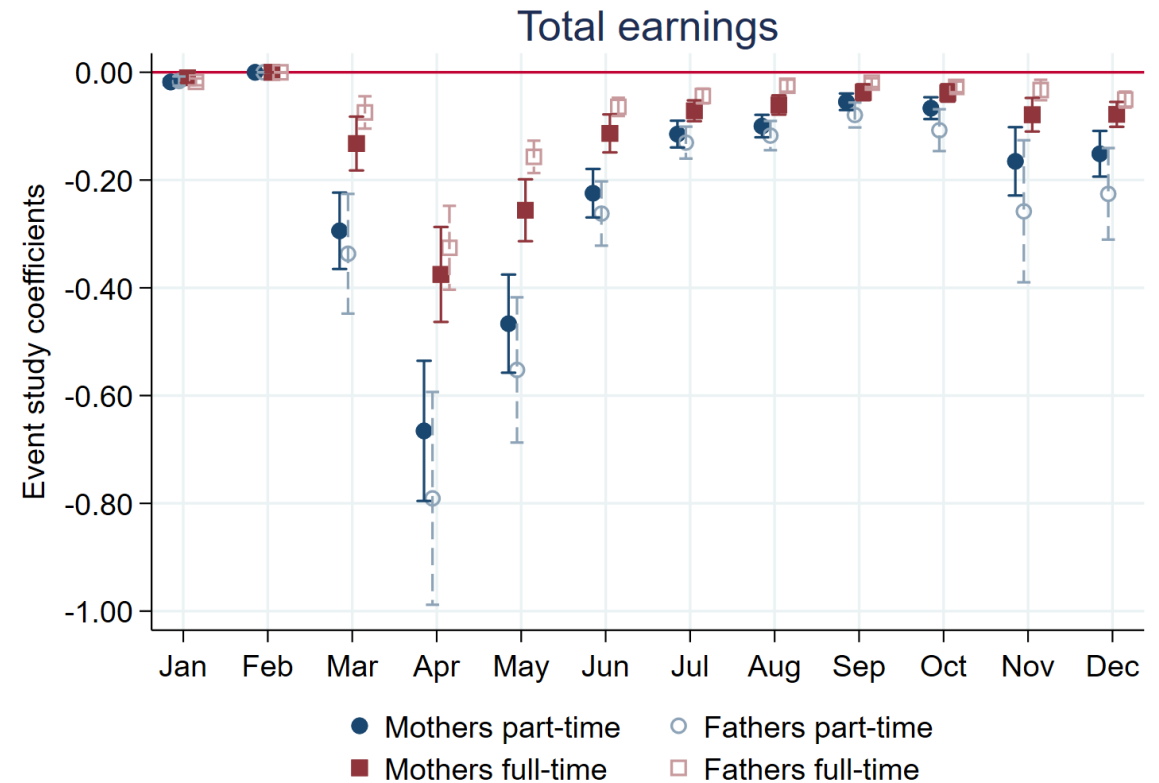


Fonte De Paola e Lattanzio, 2021, INPS data

Part-time and Full-time contracts

Part-time fathers exhibit larger penalties than part-time mothers, likely due to their stronger selection into part-time: fathers with part-time contracts are 7 percent, while mothers on part-time contracts are 46 percent.

Interestingly, this also suggests that the overall penalty for mothers partly stems from compositional effects, being mothers on part-time contracts almost half of the total number of mothers in the labor market. It must be noted, though, that even among full-time workers, mothers pay larger earnings penalties than fathers



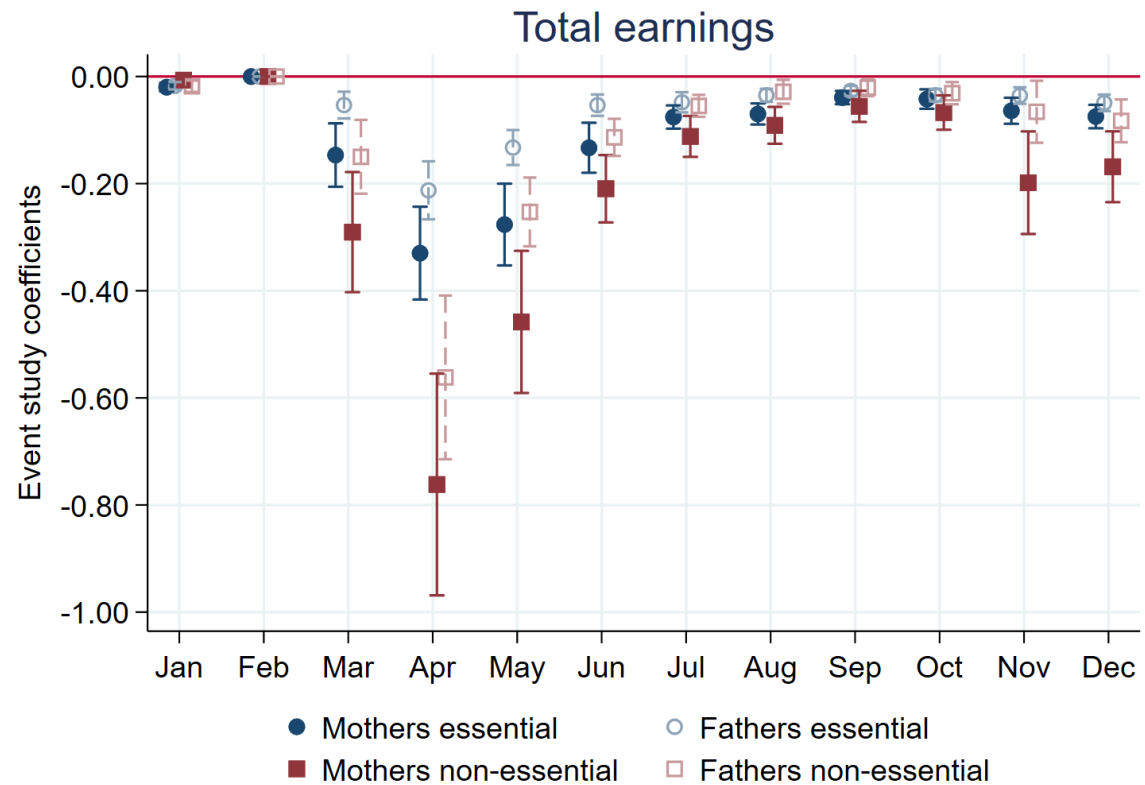
Fonte De Paola e Lattanzio, 2021, dati INPS

The impact of the pandemic on log monthly earnings of mothers and fathers by sector (essential vs non-essential activities)

Mothers in non-essential activities (those that were forced to shut down during the first pandemic wave) have suffered larger earnings penalties than fathers.

Women were over-represented in these sectors, which had a stronger reduction in labor demand than continuing businesses.

However, the differences between mothers and fathers are relatively large also in essential activities.



Fonte De Paola e Lattanzio, 2021, dati INPS

Family policy during the pandemic

Impact of COVID-19 likely related to parental support policy

For families w/ children < 12, Italy introduced:

- a “**COVID-19 leave**” with an allowance equal to 50% of the salary
- a lump-sum **baby-sitting bonus**

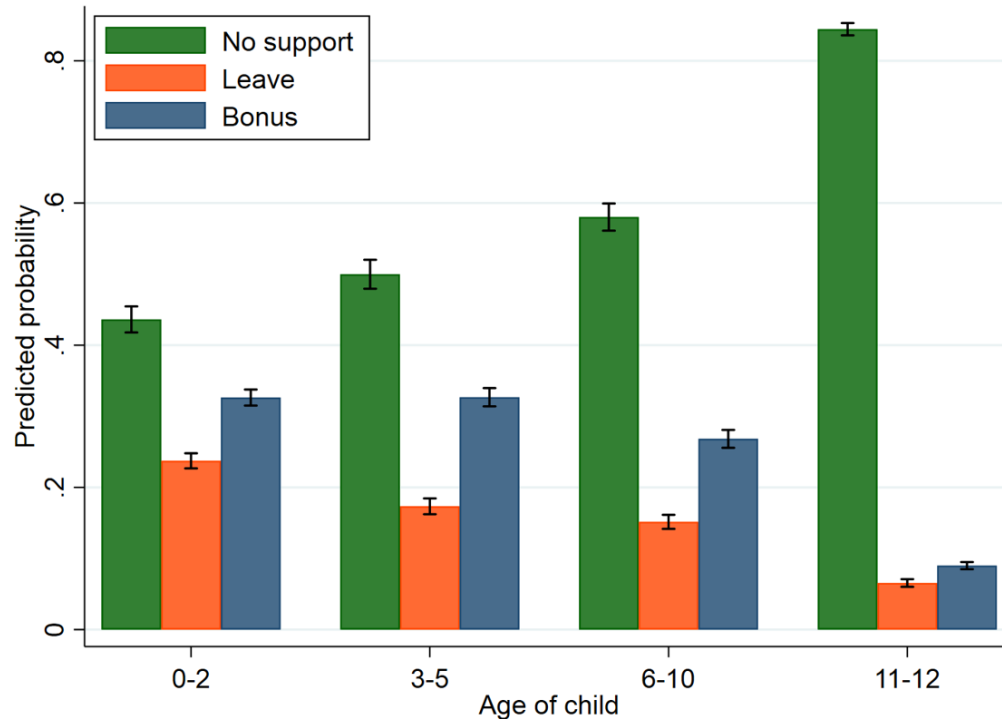
During the year 2020, about 300,000 parents took advantage of the Covid-19 leave. The bonus for child-care services was instead used by about 712,000 families. About 10 percent of families obtaining support has benefited both of the Covid-19 leave and of the Baby-sitting bonus, using them in different periods.

37 percent of the Covid-19 leave demands were related to children under the age of 3, 25 percent of requests were for children aged between 3 and 5, the remaining 38 percent were in part related to children aged between 6 to 10 (30.5 percent) and in part in favor of children aged between 11 and 12 (7.5 percent).

As regards the demand for the Baby-sitting bonus, 13 percent of requests were in favor of children under the age of 3. 32 percent and 45 percent of the requests concerned children aged 3-5 and 6-10, respectively. Finally, 7 percent of requests were for minors aged 11-12.

Family policy during the pandemic

Take-up by child's age



To understand the characteristics of mothers who took advantage of these forms of support compared to those who did not benefit of them, we need to identify mothers with at least a child below the age of 12 in 2020. To this purpose, we use data on the applications for maternity leave of mothers working in the private sector at the time of delivery

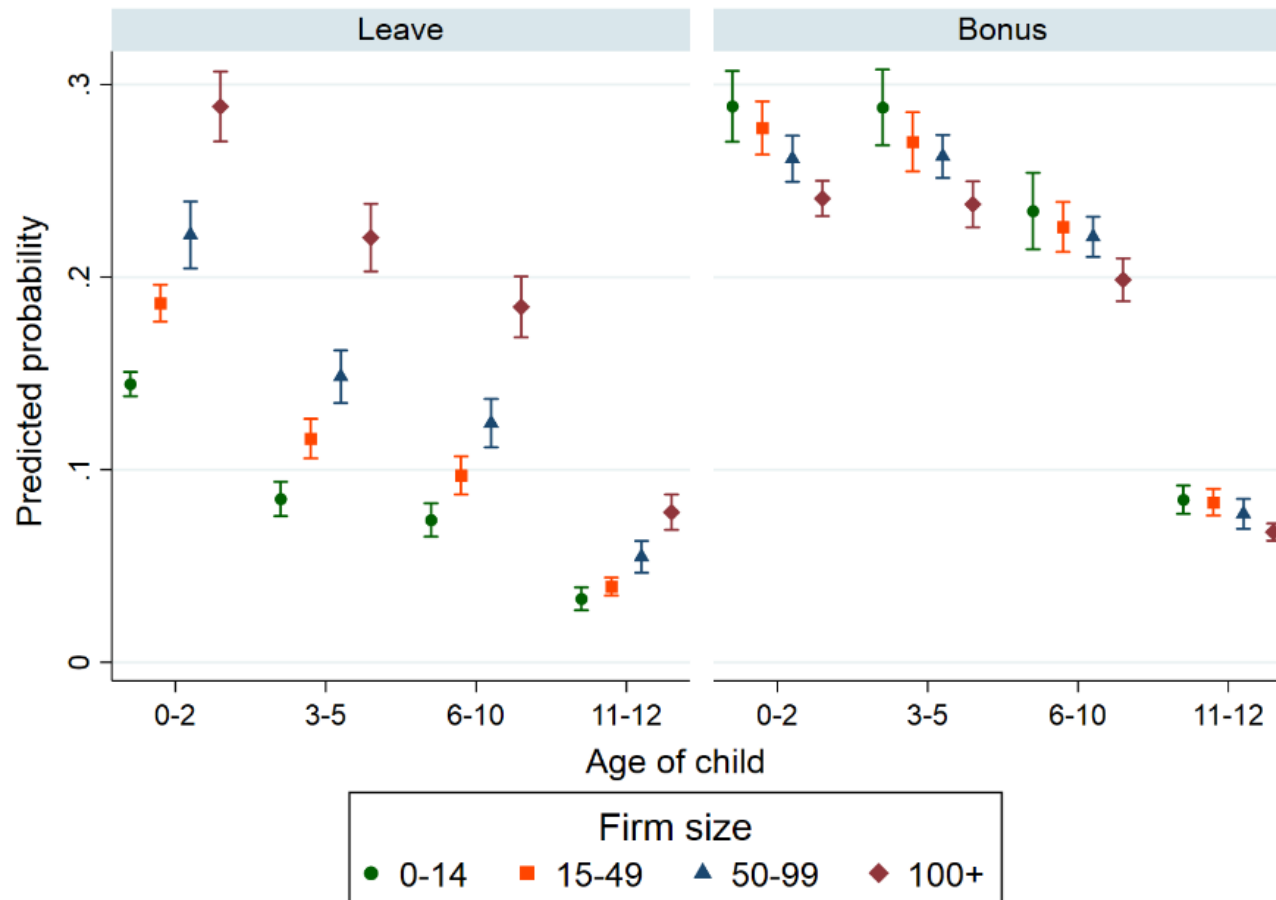
Multinomial logit model, controlling for experience, age, # children, occupation, contract type, region

Predicted probability at different child's age groups

Fonte Dati Inps. Elaborazione Direzione Centrali Studi e Ricerche

Family policy during the pandemic

Heterogeneity by firm size

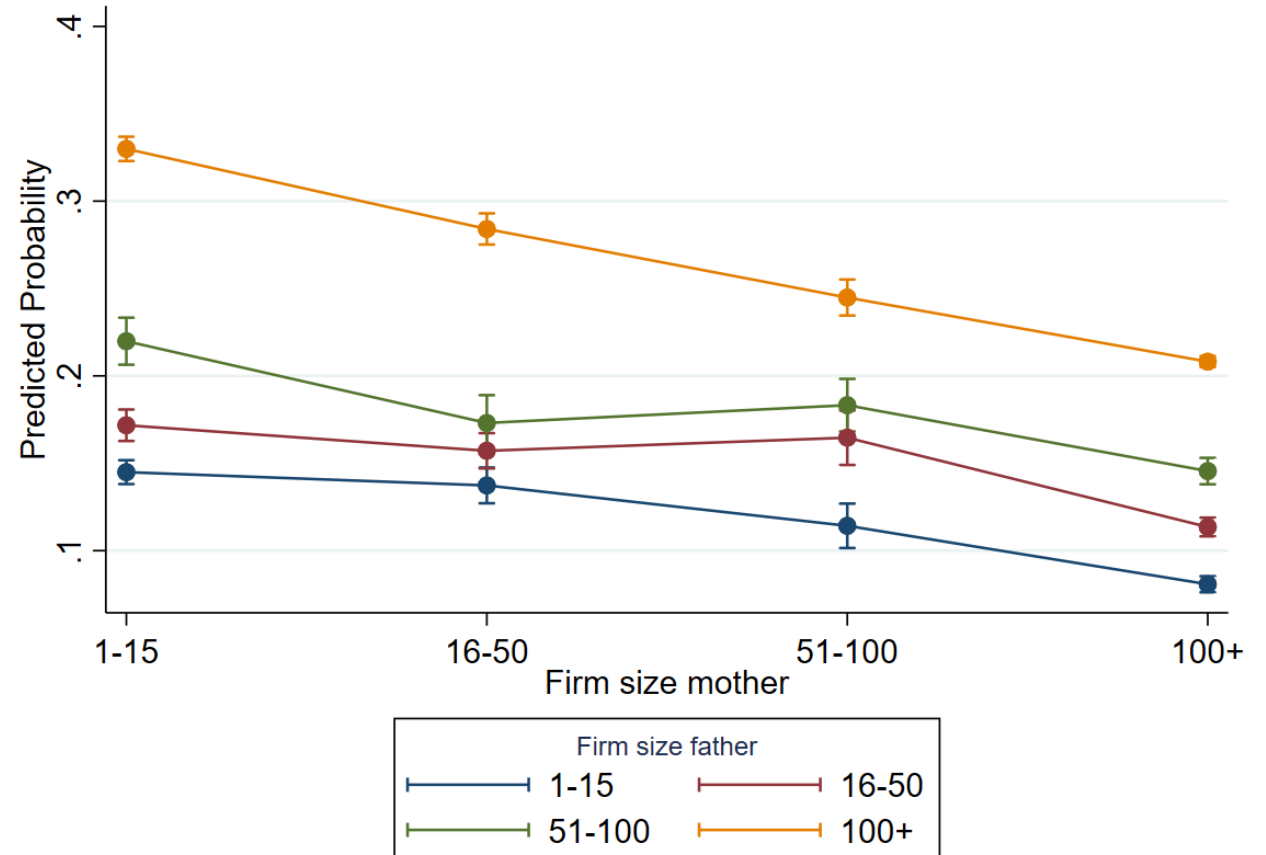


It is mainly employees of large companies that have opted for the leave

Fonte Dati Inps. Elaborazione Direzione Centrali Studi e Ricerche

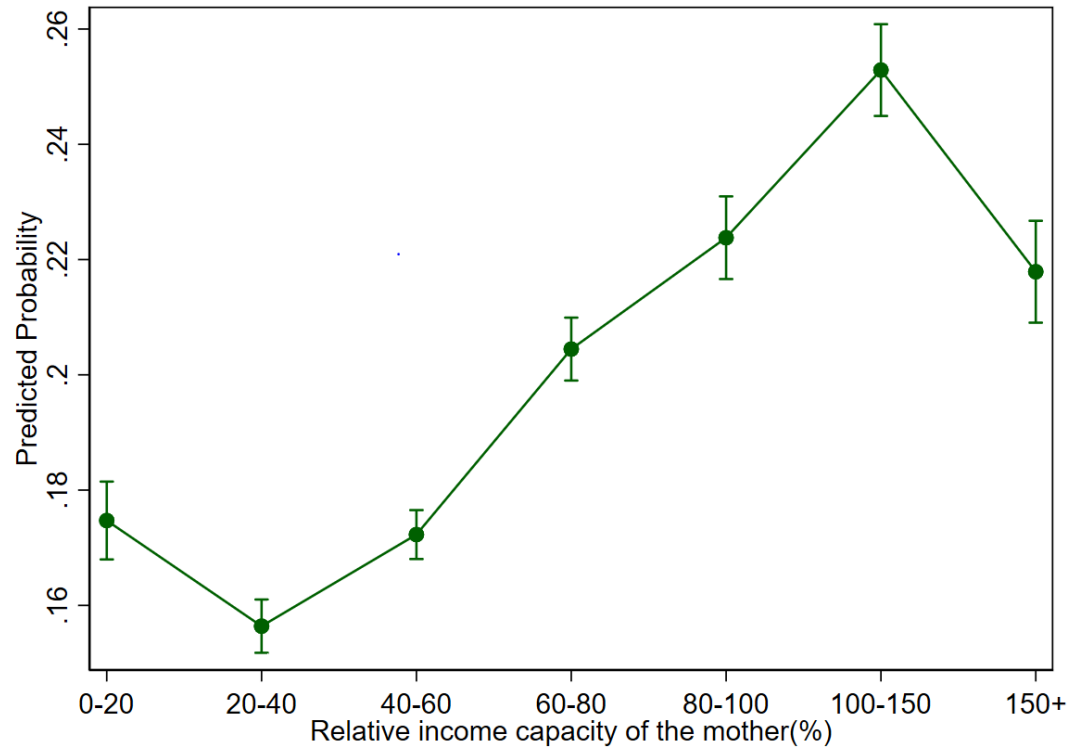
Fathers' use of COVID-19 leave

- What determines fathers' leave take-up?
- Estimate LPM of fathers' take-up on observables:
 - lower take-up probability when children are young (-0.9 pp)
 - lower (higher) take-up probability as own (partner's) income increases
 - +1 p.p. (+5 p.p.) *vis-à-vis* an increase of 10,000 euros in own (partner's) earnings
 - higher take-up if male child
 - positive (negative) correlation take-up w/ own (partner's) firm size



Fathers' use of COVID-19 leave
Own and partner's firm size

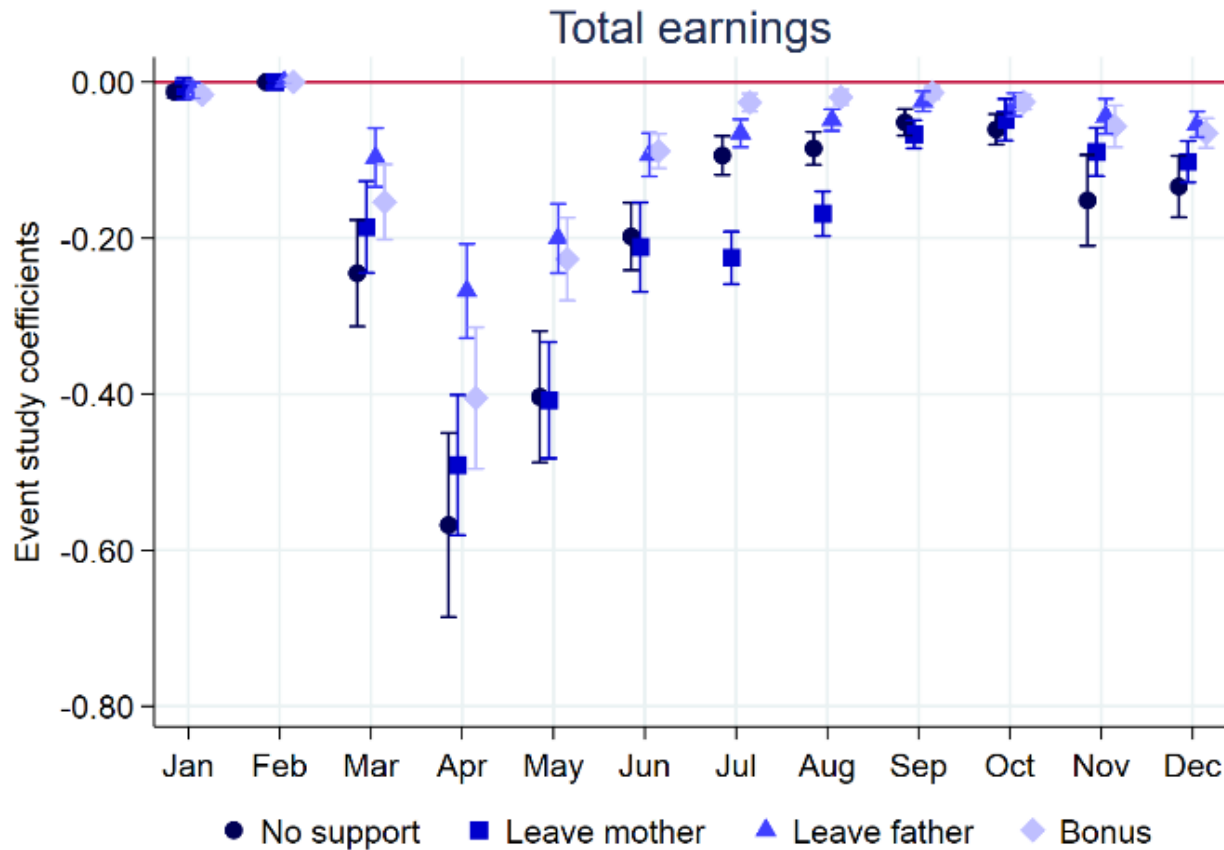
Fathers' use of COVID-19 leave



How does take-up varies in relation to ratio between mother's and father's income?
 When relative income capacity of mother increases, father's take-up increases
 Trend observed as long as ratio < 100

Fonte De Paola e Lattanzio, 2021, dati INPS

Connect the dots: labor market penalties and family policy



Fonte De Paola e Lattanzio, 2021, dati INPS

Labor market penalties have been less severe for mothers whose partners have used parental leaves, suggesting that where household chores are more equally shared between men and women, the latter are more insured against labor market shocks