



## COLLOQUIUM SERIES

### European Doctoral School of Demography

**Wednesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> – 2 p.m.**

Aula Fanfani (Sapienza Università di Roma, Via del Castro Laurenziano 9, Roma -  
Facoltà di Economia, 5th floor)

**Prof. Letizia Mencarini**

(Bocconi University - Dondeña Centre for Research on Social Dynamics and Public Policy)

### *On the Role of Subjective Well-Being in Childbearing Behavior: Country-Specific or Universal?*

Abstract: Recent studies have suggested that in societies where childbearing is the result of an intended choice, a certain level of subjective well-being becomes a prerequisite for having children. Following this perspective but taking a broader view, we argue that, if the quest for happiness is an intrinsic precondition for fertility, this should be true in any contemporary developed society. To substantiate this argument, we incorporate subjective well-being as a determinant of fertility behavior using longitudinal data for Australia, Germany, Great Britain, Russia, Switzerland, and the United States of America. Results show that higher levels of subjective well-being are associated with higher probability to have children in all the six countries considered, leading to the conclusion that the quest for happiness before childbearing may be a universal fact in Western low fertility societies.