THE NETWORKS AT TIMES OF ECONOMIC CRISIS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION: THE ROLE OF FAMILY WORKERS.

Isabella Santini¹

ABSTRACT.

The family workers are persons who help, without monetary remuneration, another member of the family to run a business and therefore they fit fully in what Bourdieu (1986) called “the [households] actual or potential resources, linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships which help to reduce people social exclusion”, a significant nonmaterial dimension of poverty (Sen, 2000). A previous paper (Guagnano and Santini, 2015) highlighted the main characteristics of family workers in the European Union and the role played within households as a tool to alleviate poverty. The aim of this paper is to evaluate if, to what extent and how the role of family worker is affected by times of crisis in the European Union and more specifically across countries. The analysis is based on EU-SILC surveys data. The paper shows that in the European Union, except only for a limited number of countries, the role of family worker within family business seems to have strengthened during the recent time of economic crisis, in favour of a more active and less occasional contribution.

Classification JEL: D10, J24, J82, A13
Keywords: family workers, European Union, poverty.

¹Department of Methods and Models for Economics Territory and Finance (MEMOTEF), - via del Castro Laurenziano, 9 - 00161 ROME - ITALY (e-mail: Isabella.Santini@uniroma1.it). A preliminary version of the paper was presented at the 7th Annual Conference in Political Economy (IIPPE), Lisbon, September 7–9, 2016. The author would like to thank participants of the session for the stimulating discussion.