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"The aim of this project is to analyze the effects of in utero and at birth exposure to different types of shocks of WWII on long-run labour and health outcomes. The project will rely on a link of individual INPS data with detailed information on the intensity of exposure to WWII conflict, Nazi massacres and famine episodes disaggregated by month and municipality/province of birth. The project will exploit the unexpected and sudden variation in the war intensity due to the armistice in Italy in September 1943, in a difference-in-differences estimation and provide the long-run causal effect of WWII intensity on labour and health outcomes. The availability of the universe of Italian workers will allow estimating the overall long-run economic impact of the WWII on the cohorts affected in-utero.

Investigating the long-run impact of adverse prenatal conditions is of particular importance. From a policy maker perspective pregnancy is a relatively short and well determined time period in which providing protection to pregnant mothers is found to be cost-effective in mitigating the intergenerational transmission of health inequalities and socio-economic disadvantage.

According to fetal programming hypothesis, and confirmed by the recent literature on early life shocks, many health complications deriving from adversities underwent in utero materialize only later in life. Precisely, in their early life individuals develop a latent vulnerability which eventually turns into health disadvantages. As a natural consequence, one may search for the implication of these findings on labour outcomes. In particular, an interesting question to answer would refer not only to the static differences between those exposed vs those not affected by the shock, but also to the dynamics with which the heterogeneity shows up. Is it that the exposed individuals are originally disadvantaged from the first moment they show up on the labour market, or conversely are there more likely to develop career disruptions later in life? Put differently, it will be interesting to evaluate to what extent the war impact is heterogeneous when increasing the time lag between the shock exposure and the outcome realization."