‘Economic inequalities between countries and the impact on youth and elderly respectively: a comparative case study focusing on Greece and Sweden’

Author’s name: Antonios Evangeliou

Supervisor(s) name: Malena Gustavson Gender Studies, LiU

Master’s Programme
Gender Studies – Intersectionality and Change

Master’s thesis 15 ECTS credits

ISNR: LIU-TEMA G/GSIC1-A—15/005—SE
Abstract

This thesis attempts to throw light on the underlying reasons behind the economic ambivalence between EU countries. In this sense, Greece and Sweden will be posted at the center of my research interest. For this purpose, Intersectionality theory as well as Neo liberalism and Neoclassical economics will be used in such a way that will assist me to disclose the deep causes of this inequality and to further examine how intersections of gender, age/generation and class are intertwined and affect the youth and elderly in both countries. Furthermore, both qualitative and quantitative data will be applied in a way that will enable me to compare and contrast the two social groups chosen. Having demonstrated that, I will move a step forward by narrowing down my research focus on how the youth in both countries react against this kind of social exclusion.

Keywords: Economic inequalities, countries, social impact, youth, elderly, Intersectionality, Neo liberalism, Neo classical economics
Acknowledgments

In principle I would like to thank Linkoping University and especially Gender Studies Department of Thematic Studies for supplying me with precious skills through Master’s Programme in Gender Studies – Intersectionality and Change. I hope that all this knowledge will be proved vital in my professional career. Furthermore, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Malena Gustavson for her continuous guidance contributing to the completion of my thesis. Without her valuable assistance it would be difficult to finish this dissertation. Additionally, my sincere thanks to the Head of Unit Dr. Wera Grahn and Senior Lecturer Pia Laskar for their tenacity and devotion to my study concerns. Last but not least, I would like to thank my family (parents and brother) for supporting me psychologically while writing my thesis and my fellow classmates for the interesting and productive discussions that we had. The exchange of views throughout this academic year led to the enrichment of my knowledge and to the expansion of my intellectual horizons.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table of contexts</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literary review - personal standpoint</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research design</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method and Materials</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Data collection</em></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Selection of groups and countries</em></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Delimitations of the study</em></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Scope of the study</em></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical considerations</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical framework</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intersectionality</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic theories</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Neo liberalism</em></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Neo-classical economic theory</em></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Overview of economic data between Greece and Sweden</em></td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Unemployment rates in overall population in Greece and Sweden</em></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Youth unemployment rates (18-27 years old) %</em></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Employment rates by gender (15-64 years old) %</em></td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Elderly population economic facts</em></td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Introduction**

As a result of the contemporary economic crisis in Europe more and more people come to the fore and underline the importance of an EU restart. A new model of Europe on the basis of equality is needed in order to avoid existing and dominant discriminatory feelings. Moreover, labor amidst the neoliberal capitalist model of ruling has become precarious (Federici 2006:4). Thereby, besides this surface approach my focus of interest will be based on the reasons why ‘vulnerable groups’ face economic and social inequalities and discrimination in general. For this reason, I will draw attention to two countries which precisely represent the division taking place in Europe. In this sense, Sweden and Greece both belong to the same alliance (called EU) that regulates social welfare. What can be outlined as a difference among them is that Greece also participates in the monetary union while Sweden has its own currency. Despite the fact that they both have neoliberal economic systems (with different economic history) Sweden is governed more independently than Greece, as the latter has been trying to apply major transforms in its economic sector under IMF’s and World Bank’s surveillance since 2008. What has been done so far is cuts in salaries, pensions and welfare benefits as well as a remarkable rise in taxation (Roumpakis 2012:215). In order to be more precise, the establishment of this union had as a scope to eliminate human rights discrimination and to bring up equality (Europa 2015). Instead, due to the economic crisis and its impact on society I really doubt if this aim was successfully completed (in the Greek case), where the Greek governments (and the EU institution) have done nothing in order to alleviate the social impact of the crisis (Roumpakis 2012:217). Consequently, socio-economic security decreased while social cohesion disappeared. As a result, it can be mentioned that Greece and Sweden, despite the fact that they belong to the same European alliance they have an unequal standard of living. A Greek journalist Kostas Karkagiannis (2014) in his article ‘The great threat for economy and growth’ underpins perfectly the reasons for the economic inequality in the European continent. Specifically, he claims that ‘harsh austerity which is being implemented by many countries in euro zone has increased economic inequality’. Greece, as well as other Southern European countries, attempts to transform its structure by following austerity measures such as salary reduction and cuts in social benefits. Moreover, he points out that ‘inequality and unsustainable
development constitute the two sides of the same coin'. All the amendment recommendations by the IMF, the World Bank as well as the European Commission lead to a discursive, weak and unstable growth. Furthermore, ‘economic inequality affects economic growth causing various political and social problems’. From my point of view ‘social problems’ become evident from the high unemployment rates in youth populations (selected) exceeding 55% and 20% respectively, as well as from the current way of life of the elderly in Greece in this frame of ‘social welfare provision destruction’.

Based on the above, this project will initially attempt to understand the so called economic-political inequality among the two countries and the impact on young and elderly Greeks and Swedish. For this purpose, I will try to shed light on specific factors such as gender, age/generation and class with reference to the two societal groups and at the same time to see how youth is affected. The reason for targeting the youth population in the second question is not something one-dimensional. ILO Director-General Guy Ryder (2013) points out that 'world’s youth were most vulnerable to the growing job scarcity'. Hence, the youth are secluded from labor market more than other social groups. More specifically, according to the Economics of Crisis (international consortium of scholars) there is also a gender impact, which means that 'women are disproportionately fewer than men in the work industry'. At the same time the youth (both male and female) can be considered as the most energetic social group having always alternatives in mind. Thus, the research questions that this project poses are as follows:

1. How do economic inequalities lead to a conflation of gender, age/generation and class intersections and affect the elderly and youth in Greece and Sweden?

2. How do (then) the youth in the above two countries face social injustice consolidated by their intersections?
Literary review - personal standpoint

Many scholars, especially those belonging in politics and/or economics, analyze how ideologies affect economics in the decision making process. As a result of this interrelation between political and economic aspects, countries range from rich and/or well organized to poor and/or problematic. In this sense, many countries, even those belonging to the same alliances, meet different standards of living. In other words, inequalities between countries exist.

According to Michael Dauderstadt (2010) "EU consists of member states at widely varying stages of development and divergent income levels". In my opinion, this certainly constitutes a two or three speed Europe. Thus, the European Union does not constitute an integral body based on equality and solidarity but a mechanism with embedded economic inequalities.

The same author in his article ‘Immeasurable Inequality in European Union’ underpins the constant economic inequality between European countries. He precisely states that ‘the differences between member states are enormous. Small, rich countries contrast sharply with big, poor ones....’ and that ‘measures of income inequality’ connote an economic divergence ‘not only between states but also between social groups coming from the same country’ (2011:44). These arguments reflect my case. I have chosen to write about two countries facing this economic disparity while at the same time I attempt to investigate whether specific groups such as the female youth and elderly can be considered as the most disadvantaged social groups or not.

According to sociologist Jutta Allmendinger (2014) 'incomes and wealth are distributed unevenly across and within the EU Member States. This is an area where most governments in Europe and elsewhere have been reluctant to intervene'. (2014:52). The Greek and Swedish economy respectively reflect the two sides of the same coin, where coin is the Union in which they have been participating so far (the so called European Union). The one side, to which Greece belongs, represents the weak peripheral economies while the other, in which Sweden participates, the strong, well developed, as well as rich countries of the North.
Inevitably, the above divergence has more to say at the social level. Marilyn Power (2008) in her book ‘Social Provisioning as a Starting point’ displays the neo liberal nuances that EU applies in a variety of policies. In this sense, the race to economic development and the liberal character of labor markets seem to endanger the existence of a Europe based on social welfare. Hence, peer EU members are always thinking in economic terms, even for matters which are kept out of economic studies. As a result, they do believe that an economic approach can solve miscellaneous social problems at once.

In the same frame of economic analysis, feminist economists claim that ‘human well-being should be a central measure of economic success. Properly evaluating economic well-being requires attention not only to aggregate or average distributions of income and wealth, but also to individual entitlements and what Amartya Sen has identified as the heterogeneity of human needs’ (Floro 1995; Aslaksen, Flaatten, and Koren 1999; Sen 1999, pp. 5).

Moreover they point out the importance of a well designed welfare state where ‘the goal of welfare reform should be to raise the level of well-being....’ and that ‘...policy should aim at ending poverty, rather than ending welfare’ (pp.10). Because of this uneven situation among EU countries and the unequal way that welfare systems are designed, people within society are categorized and face discrimination.

This is in line with what Patricia Collins (1990) stressed in her document ‘Black Feminist Thought in the Matrix of Domination’ where ‘people experience and resist oppression on three levels: the level of personal biography; the group or community level of the cultural context created by race, class, and gender; and the systemic level of social institutions’ (1990:227).
A major repercussion of the current economic inequality in Europe is the impact on youth and particularly on the female population. Schuberth and Young (2011) describe women's participation in both private and public sector as a 'small minority' (2011: 117). This does not only pertain to economically unstable EU countries such as Greece but also to well-organized countries such as Sweden. So, the employment gap between the two genders still exists even in cases where economy flourishes.

Thereafter, the way that countries in EU reform (or even deconstruct) their welfare systems makes them be divided into blocks; the Northern and the Southern. Regarding this division, I chose to devote my researching time to two countries belonging to the aforementioned blocks. What is a bit special about this project is that I intentionally chose not to focus on the international relations issue despite the fact that my previous study background is quite relevant. On the contrary, I attempt to move a step forward by exploring how specific groups are affected by this ‘state division’ and how intersections of gender, age/generation and class interact and pose impasses. Thus, I combine my previous educational background with the aims of this program, hoping that I will present a project which looks not only at a general (states) level but, instead, infiltrates into specific details in regard to the groups chosen.
Research design

Problem area:
How does economic crisis affect the young and elderly in Greece and Sweden?

Research questions:
1. Why do Greece and Sweden, although they belong to the same European alliance, differentiate in various fields and how do intersections of gender, age/generation, and class affect the youth and elderly in the aforementioned two countries?

Method:
Qualitative/Quantitative Research: Comparative case study based on secondary external sources (relevant statistics and reports included)

Theories:
1. Intersectionality
   a. Neo liberalism
   b. Neo classical economics

Analysis

Conclusions-Recommendations
With the intention to analyze the outline, I could state that I process this project based on Nina Lykke’s notion about a structural orientation (2010: 144). The latter means that a step by step process of composition (from the general point to the more specific) will take place. This means that at an initial stage the **problem area** is quoted. This refers to the reasons behind the division into ‘poor and rich Europe’ and the impact on the youth and elderly in Greece and Sweden. In previous years, Europe was seen as an ideal place to live and work. Nowadays, it is deemed as a continent with major political and economic challenges ‘ahead’. As a result, this ambiguity will constitute the center of my personal educational research interest.

Having established the area of my research, I pose two relevant **research questions** which constitute the second part of my research design. Intending to address my questions, I utilize secondary data which comprise book material, articles and journals that are in resonance with the populations in two different areas of the European continent. Besides, statistics is also applied. A critical approach to neo liberal policies will arise. For this purpose Lykke’s book (2010) *‘Feminist Studies: A Guide to Intersectional Theory, Methodology and Writing’* as well as books such as *‘Social Provisioning as a Starting point for Feminist Economics’* will contribute to the enrichment of my argumentation. It is worth saying that many quotations from feminist scholars will be input. Such quotations critically refer to the neo liberal way that countries approach and design their welfare system. In this sense, articles such as *‘Feminism and Neoliberal Governmentality’* compiled by Johanna Oksala (2013) will be used.

Thereafter, relevant **theory and models** come supplementary as each one, from different angles, constitutes conceptual tools for my analysis chapter. Intending to be clearer, each theoretical perspective assists me to address my research questions. How can this take place? In fact, the point of departure is Intersectionality but in order to investigate how particular intersections ‘take action’ and create a sense of social injustice I will use two supplementary concepts, Neo liberalism and Neo classical economics. The reason for such a choice is based on the nature of the two research questions posed. The first question deals with social injustice as a result of neo liberalism. The latter is a dominant economic ideology on which EU bases its policies. Having analyzed how different
intersections in regard to the youth and elderly in both countries are unfolded, I will strive to limit down my interest on the youth as they are described as more dynamic than the rest of the population and I will attempt to investigate whether they perceive migration as a way out to their social impasse or not. In doing so, I have found proper to use the Neo classical economics model as it is considered illuminative in breaking down push and pull factors.

Last but not least, the collection of data and the way that they are presented assist me in order to move on to a further step which is the analysis part. The secondary material and statistics that I collected in conjunction with my theoretical perspectives lead to the revelation of essential outcomes.

Method and Materials

The purpose of the chapter is to present the sources of data that have been used and the type of investigation that strives to accomplish my academic endeavor. This thesis is a comparative case study based on a mixed use of qualitative and quantitative research strategy. In this sense, this project as a case study specifically strives to examine the impact of particular intersections in relation to the two focus groups. The qualitative part is used ‘in an exploratory way’ and can be deemed as ‘the phase where hypotheses and theory are generated and verified later on in a quantitative - confirmatory- section’ of the study (Bendasolli 2013). Quantitative study is conducted to follow up on the outcomes from qualitative data. In this sense, secondary sources such as articles from books as well as theoretical perspectives such as Intersectionality will be applied initially, while statistics about the two populations will be utilized in the case study chapter. Based on the above rationale, quantitative and qualitative data complement each other.

There exist many definitions from different scholars which, more or less, are intertwined. As a result, sociologist James Mitchell (1983) sees a case study as ‘detailed examination of an event (or series of related events) which the analyst believes exhibits (or exhibit) the operation of some identified general theoretical principles’ (1983:192). Other scholars such as Hammersley Gomm, and Foster (2000), define a case study as a ‘research that
investigates a few cases in considerable depth' (2000:23). In my case, I will draw my attention to two specific social groups (the youth and the elderly) in two specific countries (Greece and Sweden).

Dealing with the type of a case study, Professor Robert Stake (1995) in his book ‘The Art of Case Study Research’ points out that three different types of cases exist. The variation among them depends ‘on the type of research question’. Thus, there exist ‘explanatory, descriptive, and exploratory case studies’ (1995:5-7). As far as the explanatory type is concerned, questions are asked with “how” or “why”. A descriptive case study deals with ‘background information’ and ‘accurate description of the case in question’. Last but not least, exploratory cases pose questions by using the word ‘what’ (1995:5-7).

As my intention is to ask ‘how’ various intersections affect the youth and elderly in Greece and Sweden and ‘how’ the youth strive to overcome the dominant sense of social injustice, I should mention that the type of this case study is explanatory.

Data collection

Data have been collected in resonance with my research questions. First, I searched for material concerning the young and the elderly in Sweden and Greece. Furthermore, I tried it to be up to date. This means that I collected data which depict the current situation in the two countries and with reference to the two groups selected. As a result, secondary external sources comprising feminist literature will be used. Additionally, numerical depictions will be unfolded through the implementation of relevant statistics in regard to the youth (male and female) and the elderly. The reason for adding statistics is the fact that the summarized data allocated will assist me to support the hypothesis part. Thus, its contribution is great. Pictorial statistics, such as charts and tables, as well as relevant articles focusing on the welfare regimes that I intend to research will be used in a combinative and critical way against the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and European Union. I have attempted to use reliable sources, that is why (before selecting each source) I compared it with other pertinent ones. The data used in this project vary and can be seen at a qualitative and quantitative level. Thus, the qualitative data used are as follows:
- Secondary material and especially documents encompassing articles, academic literature (parts from books) such as ‘Feminist Studies: A Guide to Intersectional Theory, Methodology and Writing’, ‘Social Provisioning as a Starting point for Feminist Economics’ as well as ‘Feminism and Neoliberal Governmentality’ are used in a way that assists me to form my theory.

- Other relevant secondary external sources (taken from books) such as Neo classical economics and Neo liberalism are used in tune with my research questions.

At the same time, this project also encompasses quantitative data in a precise row. This means that I initially used statistics about the overall population of Greece and Sweden but while moving forward I made my project more specific by using statistics about specific populations such as the youth. Last but not least, I comprised gender statistics in order to investigate the employment inclusion between the two genders in the two countries. Thus:

- Statistics from the Hellenic Statistical Authority (EL.STAT.) is used for Greece.
- Statistics from the Swedish Administrative Agency (SCB) is used for Sweden.
- Statistics from Eurostat is used for shedding light on employment differences between genders in both countries.

Both qualitative and quantitative data are used in resonance with the three intersections (gender, age/generation, class) I preferred to write on.
Selection of groups and countries

Many factors can be seen as the motivation power behind my choice. First and foremost, I am a person of Greek origin and my age allows me to see how the things in this country were before its entrance in the European Economic Union and how they are currently. Scandinavia was the region where I spent a significant part of my life and Sweden is the country of my studies. As far as the focus group is concerned I belong to the one of the two categories scrutinized and I am really cautious about how the youth population can be converted from the ‘most dynamic category’ to a group of people facing a variety of intersections (ILO 2006:10).

The persisting inequality between the countries I am examining, led to the creation of two extra vulnerable groups, those of the Greek young and elderly (the youth in Greece before 2008 were one of the most dynamic groups, while the elderly benefited from the provisions of the public services). I will also attempt to penetrate into gender issues by presenting statistics showing whether there is a different level of employment inclusion between male and female or not. In this sense, my focus group will be those between 18 and 27 years old as well as those being in retirement age. I do so because the first group was considered to be ‘the most productive’ (at least before the crisis) but currently after graduation the youth are excluded from the labor market. (ILO 2006:10). Thus, there is no continuity and smooth transition to their next life chapter, which is employment segmentation. So, the core criteria in my selection are two: age and place of origin.
Delimitations of the study

This project’s limitations are various. This means that I will only pay attention to two social groups (youth and elderly) living in two specific places, Greece and Sweden. Hence, other social categories deemed vulnerable (such as single moms etc.) have been overridden while other intersections besides gender, age/generation and class might be neglected. The reason for leaving out many other sub-categories among the youth and elderly (such as disabled, refugees etc.) is based on the fact that in such social groups national and/or international legal frameworks are applied so I am not quite sure if I could cover all this research nexus. I have to affirm that I am also quite sensitive to those considered vulnerable and for whom I did not speak up, but I am in favor of the view that if someone is not pretty familiar with something so sensitive, it is better to make another research choice, as imperfect knowledge can lead to a complexity. To avoid such an allegation I could add that I prefer to speak about a category to which I belong to because I think that my ‘sight’ and ‘site’ can shed much more light and make it more manageable than choosing something to which I am not quite intimate (Lykke 2010:6).

Scope of the study

The core aim of this paper is to further understand and examine the relation between two completely different countries, but not in all aspects (f.i one belonging to the European continent whereas the other being part of the BRICS block) because this kind of comparison would certainly be evident. On the contrary, I will strive to address the reasons for this ‘chasm’ between two countries participating in the same alliance, while, at the same time, I will try to constraint my research interest to specific groups of people.
**Ethical considerations**

Ethics is the most essential capital during the synthesis of a project as the real conditions of the problem can be revealed and lead to a change of the current impasses. This clearly depends on the researcher’s position and his/her deontology. Therefore, the composition of this project is always based on respect towards those considered oppressed. As a researcher of this thesis, I can admit that I am morally responsible (“accountability”) for the interpretation and presentation of reality. In this sense, and according to Nina Lykke’s inspiration which in fact is an argument coming from Haraway and Barad, we are ‘situated in’ and ‘are part of the reality we investigate’ (Lykke 2010:159). The main objective of this paper is to highlight the problem based on honesty and at the same time to contribute to a distribution of social justice and social inclusion as well (2010:156). On the basis of this logic, I could describe myself as a human rights defender and advocate of human equality throughout Europe.

**Theoretical framework**

Theory constitutes one of the most important sections in this thesis as many arguments will be used in such a way that will assist me to demonstrate the nature of the problem and to answer the questions raised. With the intention to be more clear and understandable I can stress that the main theoretical perspectives used in this project come from the field of sociology and especially from a theory called intersectionality. From the investigation I have done I found proper to use the perspectives of the intersectional theory coming from Kimberle Crenshaw (1990), Nina Lykke (2010) as well as a relevant document expounded by the Association for Women’s Rights in Development (2004). The reason for such a ‘combinative choice’ lies on the fact that they can be useful tools to see the inequalities that exist in relation to the two social groups in Greece and Sweden.
If we take into account that different intersections exist and that with the passing of the years they are becoming normality, social inequality for both the young and older people in Greece and Sweden subsists. Upon this, further examination is required. That is why I use the (political) economic model of Neo-liberalism. Therefore, I believe that Neo liberalism as a means of intervention and management of public policy in both Greece and Sweden may explain why inequality occurs in both areas. In this view, the model of Neo liberalism from Lander Wendy which gives emphasis to the construction of the welfare state (something that really triggers me in both the Greek and Swedish case) comes supplementary to the core theory, as it can be a tool through which I can debate intersections of age/generation, gender and class and it will assist me to highlight the underlying reasons for the existing social inequality as well.

Besides the model of Neo liberalism which contributes mainly to shedding light on the causes of this predominant unequal situation in regard to the youth and elderly Greek and Swedish population, a second model will be used as well. This model is called Neo classical economics and does not focus on the causes but on the consequences of the social injustice. If we assume that this model links economy with immigration, it will be used with reference to the young Swedish and Greeks as they are considered to be the most dynamic group in society.
Intersectionality

Intersectionality is a theory which derives from the sociological spectrum and it was initially named as such by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989. This concept is actually a feminist theory which came to the spotlight in the late 1960s and early 1970s with the rise of the feminist movement. The core scope of this theoretical perspective is the study of intersections between forms or systems of discrimination, oppression or domination. Nina Lykke (2010) in her book ‘Feminist Studies: A guide to Intersectional Theory: Methodology and Writing’ utilizes the following definition:

‘Intersectionality can be considered as a theoretical and methodological tool to analyze how historically specific kinds of power differentials and/or constraining normativities based on discursively, institutionally and/or structurally constructed socio-cultural categorizations such as gender, ethnicity, race, class, age/generation, dis/ability, nationality and so on, interact and in doing so produce different kinds of societal inequalities and unjust social relations’ (Lykke N 2010:50).

Based on the definition, it can be said that Intersectionality through a consistent analysis and advocacy is always targeting on human rights augmentation as well as on policy development. According to Kimberle Crenshaw (1993) ‘there are procedures of subordination and the various ways those procedures experienced by people who are subordinated and who are privileged’ which can be eliminated by ‘daring to speak against internal exclusion and marginalization’ (1993:1297-99). Such neglect leads various groups of people to discrimination for a variety of reasons. This refers to the ‘power relations embedded in social identities’ and that ‘gender can only be understood in this context’ (Shields 2008:301). Hence, gender can play a significant role in doing so. One of the major cornerstones of modern feminism is the highlighting of the ways in which women face many more difficulties than men in a variety of social domains.
As far as the employment section is concerned ‘a persistent gap between male and female’ subsists not only in payments but also in occupational recruitment and re-employment after a dismissal (Hodge 2012). This is exactly the core scope of feminism where equal treatment among genders should exist in all aspects of society. The gender aspect in both the Greek and Swedish case will be manifested in a numerical way (in the case study chapter) in order to investigate whether the female youth and elderly in both countries are twice likely to be marginalized (in contrast to men) or not. The possibility of getting a job is linked to class. In other words, those having a job can be seen as a middle-upper class while those being unemployed belong to lower social strata. The same happens with the elderly population as the level of their pensions defines their social status (class). Besides class, Lykke’s definition depicts age/generation as one of the core ‘socio-cultural categorizations’ leading to social injustice and inequality. The latter will be applied according to a statistical separation of employment inclusion. In this sense, male and female people between 18 and 27 years old will be comprised. Age/generation can then be proved as a determinant factor for bringing in/equality. As a result, the youth and elderly for different reasons but for the same causes (economic aspects) might face social inequality. ‘Intersectionality assumes that discrimination is not static but depending on time, situation and location’ (la RivièreZijdel, 2009:34). This will be examined in both Greece and Sweden where social inequality exists not only for the youth while trying to get a job but also for the elderly population in trying to benefit from social services. As age is one of the most invested categories such a categorization will occur with the contribution of statistics where age is precisely allocated. According to Philip Martin (2003) contemporary economic instability in a significant part of the European Union ‘has affected young generation’ in such a way that many people migrate looking for better employment conditions. In a variety of professions, especially those considered female dominated sectors, young women migrate much more than men (2003:11). Hence, migration is conflated with young generation while at the same time these outflows embrace also gender aspects.
Due to the fact that people participate in more than one community, they can experience oppression and privilege in a parallel manner. As intersectionality is continuously striving to succeed 'human rights for all' it can be deemed as a tool 'for building a global culture of human rights from the grassroots to the global level'. This is not something easy to happen as we live in the era of globalization and neo liberalism.

Neo liberal globalization perpetuates conditions of discrimination and intolerance not only for women but also for others who are considered to be oppressed (elderly etc.) According to (AWID) Association for Women's Rights in Development (2004) neoliberal policies 'are justifying the exclusion of those who have been left behind by the global economy and aggravating poverty, inequality and human rights violations. Clearly, globalization and economic change are impacting on different people in different ways' (2004:1).
Economic theories

Neo liberalism

After World War II, the leaders of the coalition forces converged in New Hampshire (USA) in order to open a discussion deal about the new phase of the world economic system and how it should be managed. The main target of this meeting was the establishment of a detailed plan ‘for the future of the global postwar capitalist economy in order to create a favorable international trading environment’ (Spero and Hart 2010:215). The outcome of this discourse was the creation of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, which later became the World Bank (George 1999). The aforementioned organizations were responsible for giving guidance to those states having economic problems.

Neo liberalism as an economic philosophical notion proclaims a favorable trade among nations (Onimode 2004). Moreover, according to Martinez and Garcia (1997) the global freedom and economic prosperity can be achieved through “deregulation, liberalization and privatization” (2004:12). This kind of approach leads national governments to a more minimalist ability to intervene. Hence, this notion resulted to the adoption of a policy where ‘whereas under Keynesian welfarism the state provision of goods and services to a national population was understood as a means of ensuring social well-being, neo-liberalism is associated with the preference of a minimalist state’ (Wendy L 2000:5).

Appropriate instruments for the adaption of the aforementioned economic reform methods are IMF and World Bank. But the way in which fiscal targets take place lead to recession; provoking many times the criticism of the common sense. This means that most of the guidance given by those instruments to national governments is stringent to such a degree that it many times causes the reaction not only of the citizens but also of the governments. The above policy of neo liberalism, several times, does not lead to immediate results (of economic growth and welfare prosperity) but in the long term. In other words, the aforementioned economic model of intervention encompassing privatization and deregulation often leads to serious societal problems (unemployment,
social reactions) to the country which receives the ‘enforcement’ of the institutions of liberalism such as the IMF and the World Bank. (Frankel 2000:12).

Inevitably, 'deregulation and privatization have become central themes in debates over welfare state restructuring' (Wendy L 2000:5). Unfortunately, this mixed type of governmentality between governments and organizations led to a perception of welfare services, particularly hospitals, as businesses or even multinational companies that needed to be deregulated and privatized (2000:7). This is exactly what is happening currently in countries where the IMF 'collaborates' with governments in an effort to overcome crisis (f.i. Italy, Spain etc.). Under this type of governmentality people or even populations are excluded from the so called welfare state, as citizens have already met a reduction or even loss of their personal economic assets. These 'new forms of globalized production relations and financial systems are forcing governments to abandon their commitment to the welfare state' (2000:6).

The consequences of neoliberal tactics are mostly conceived in the economic sector, but results in the long term are also in areas such as migration. Such effects are well documented not only in the United States but also in countries (especially) of Southern Europe. Citizens in such countries have become suitable targets for people who guide and align neoliberal initiatives (around the world) having seen ‘their economic security decline, jobs disappear, and welfare provisions reduce’ under the neoliberal policies that have been adapted in these countries since 1980 (Harvey 2007:32). Neoliberal policies comprising ‘waves of structural adjustment and austerity measures’, in many cases, lead to the establishment of immediate obstacles (2007:34) causing serious societal problems even in a globalized economy, such as the Greek one. The above make the current situation in Southern countries, in particular Greece, seem quite suffocating.
Neo-classical economic theory

Neo classical economics is considered to be one of the core approaches for addressing the initial causes of labor migration. According to the main delegates (Lewis-1954 and Todaro-1976:434) there exists a difference in the area of procurement and demand (of jobs) which is caused by geographical attributes. In this way, different countries provide alternative professional and social chances. Sweden and Greece constitute an indicative example of how timely migration flows are unfolded. This means that many citizens from peripheral economies migrate from the one side to the other, keeping always in mind their economic prosperity and their social cohesion. Moreover, neoclassical theorists formulate global economy in a way that divides the world’s system into two poles. As a result, two different models of countries appear, which refer to the 'low-wage states from the one side that ‘push’ job seekers to approach high-wage states’ on the other side (Fassmann H et.al 1997:434). In this sense not only wages but also social stability are described as influential reasons for migration. Factors leading to migration are the following:
Intending to breakdown the above table I can point out that there is a remarkable number of people, even in Europe, who live under social decline as a result of incorrect ideopolitical policies which transform the economic agenda. In this sense, the table above reveals two different categories of countries. On the one side there are places like Greece where the contemporary economic crisis comprises all the push factors while on the other there are countries (like Sweden) that pull citizens to migrate and gain from the benefits (pull factors) that a country of destination can offer.

Intending to be more precise, low employment demand for graduates, wage reduction, the ambiguous attitude of Greek society towards knowledge and eventually the ‘wrong development model’ adopted by Greece led to the establishment of the aforementioned push factors. Hence, all the aforementioned influence them to see developed countries as a vital instrument for their (personal) development. As a consequence, this division creates ‘massive waves’ of migrants (especially young as they are deemed as the most motivated and dynamic social group) affecting the structure of economy and society in both countries. The aforementioned analysis is seen in a macroeconomic perspective.
Apart from the macroeconomic analysis, neoclassical economics constitutes also a micro-level theory which means that the emphasis now is given on potential migrants and their choice to migrate. Consequently, they are presented as rational actors, which means that the decision (of migration) depends on some crucial parameters. The first refers to the maximization of their income, so confirming the general belief that developed economies can offer considerably highest wages and more employment gains in contrast with home countries. Moreover, social marginalization is another crucial point. Furthermore, high-wages countries are considered to be productive places for the progress of skills and capabilities of a migrant, resulting to the absorption of proper benefits in order to correspond to the needs of the new environment. The above-mentioned verifies the argument that international migration is a human capital investment.
Case Study

This thesis is a case study because it draws attention not to two countries in general (Greece and Sweden) but to specific social categories of people from the above two countries. In this sense, specific statistics is synthesized in relation to young people (of age between 18-27 years old) as well as older people who are retired. Thus, what I do is to apply an ‘in depth study of a particular situation’ (Yin 1984:23). For this reason, I do not speak (only) about economic inequalities between countries but instead, I prefer to limit a very wide field of study into only one researchable subject. Hence, my research interest is on specific cases by attempting to isolate a small study group / particular population. This specific analysis can be done more easily by collecting statistics, so this is the reason for doing such a (selective) collection.

Following this rationale the statistical elements that I have collected are in full alignment with the three intersections of the first question (class, age/generation, gender). As a result, statistics does not constitute generalities but ,on the contrary, it tries to investigate how such intersections transcend and whether they affect the youth and the elderly in Greece and Sweden to the same extent or not. Additionally, this data in combination with the theory and the other secondary elements (which I gathered) are compared in the analysis chapter, so this project is a comparative case study between the Swedish and Greek youth and elderly. As a result, my data collection has been processed meticulously and always in relevance to the two populations. Having collected the same data about the same social groups I will then move to a comparative breakdown. This will assist me to emphasize comparison within similar contexts and to outline possible similarities and differences as well.
Overview of economic data between Greece and Sweden

In 2008, Greece met a protracted recession and until now many governments have changed. In April 2010, many rescue packages have been delivered with the intention to stabilize its economy. International institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank in resonance with the EU countries implemented mutually a neoliberal program of economic reform intending to make the Greek economy return back to the road of economic stability and growth.

As far as Swedish economy is concerned, according to the World Economic Forum (2015), (Swedish economy) is one of the most competitive economies in the world, and specifically it is ranked 4th. One of the most notable economic events that took place in 2003 was the referendum posing the dilemma of the Euro or the Swedish crone. It was decided that the crone would remain as the national currency and since then the economic upturn has started. Forecasts predict a growth in the economic sector of about 3.5%. Nevertheless, by 2014 economic analysts as well as international institutes such as the IMF warn about the increasing accumulated prices of household mortgages.

The following charts indicate in precision the newsreel condition in the Greek and Swedish economy:
Unemployment rates in overall population in Greece and Sweden

Greece:

Source: EL.STAT. (2015)

Sweden:

Source: SCB (2015)
With the intention to analyze the above charts I can stress that in the Greek case there is an escalation of the percentages over the years. In this sense, before the onset of the Greek crisis, unemployment/employment rates in the total population were quite the same as other well developed European economies; something that makes me believe that the division between the South and the North in the economic sector did not exist and if it did, it was in a lesser degree than now. Moving on to the unemployment rates in the overall Swedish population, I can point out that the Swedish economy has a more stable character. This means that, while in 2008 unemployment rates had reached a lower point, in 2010 the increase in the respective percentages was minimal. Over the next four years an economic stabilization was consolidated with a very low decrease (in unemployment rates) of about 0.6% after 2010.
Youth unemployment rates (18-27 years old) %

Greece:

Source: EL.STAT. (2015)

Sweden:

Source: SCB (2015)
Similar to the respective rates of the overall population, unemployment in the youth population of Greece follows a remarkable rise which accounts for more than half of the respective group of people. In this way and according to the data collected by the Hellenic Statistical Authority (2015) young Greeks nowadays have great difficulty in getting a job. According to the above chart, it can be reported that since 2008, when the economic crisis upraised, things have been going from bad to worse.

As far as youth unemployment rates in Sweden are concerned, I would say that compared to the overall population, where stabilization with no steep fluctuations subsists, the rates in the respective population are significantly high in contrast to the total unemployment rates.
Employment rates by gender (15-64 years old) %

Greece:

![Graph showing employment rates by gender for Greece from 2013 to 2015.]

Source: Eurostat (2015)

Sweden:

![Graph showing employment rates by gender for Sweden from 2013 to 2015.]

Source: Eurostat (2015)
The above two charts denote the employment/unemployment gap between males and females in the two countries selected. I preferred not to embrace only the young ages as my intention is to indicate that the gap (between the two genders) exists not only in the young ages but also in the wider population. Looking (at a glance) at the two charts, it can easily be reported that similarities and differences exist. What can be seen as a difference is that the division in Greece is greater than in Sweden. In addition, in both cases there is an escalation over the years. This means that more men and women get a job but the gap still exists.
Elderly population economic facts

In the same way that young population in Greece is affected by the current government policy which is trying to apply diverse amendments for changing the problematic public sector of the country, elderly people face many obstacles as well. According to the Greek Ministry of Labor the overwhelming majority of Greek pensioners receive a quite low pension.

In this way, about 33.1% receives 371.64 euro while another 33% of pensioners receives about 675 euro gross per month. Less than 30% receives as a pension 1,224 euro per month whereas the average retired income does not exceed 907.65 euro, before taxes and reservations for healthcare coverage included (Labor Ministry, 2013).

Proceeding with the Swedish elderly population, it can be said that Sweden has the second-largest proportion of people aged 80, a figure that in total is estimated to come to 5.3 per cent of the population. As a result, Sweden’s allocation of elderly care is almost five times the EU average. A central part of the Swedish welfare policy is health and social care. As pension is an integral part for covering all of the needs that this particular age has, the average national retirement pension in 2012 was about SEK 11,500 per month. Many Swedish elderly people also receive occupational bonus that are allocated according to their contribution to their company. At the same time and with the intention to enhance third age people's standards of living, initiatives ranging from transportation facilities to in-house care have been adopted. The cost for the implementation of such an auspicious program comes up to more than 10 billion Euros. The vast majority of cost is covered by municipal taxes as well as government grants. In this sense, about 3 per cent of the cost is financed by patient charges (Sweden 2014).
Analysis

This chapter constitutes the pylon of this research project for the reason that it combines all the data in a way that precisely addresses the two research questions and at the same time it informs the reader about the outcomes of this thesis. For a better understanding, I present data in a certain order. This means that I begin with the question that encompasses intersections of gender, age/generation as well as class and the way that these (in this environment of economic inequalities) unfolded and affect the two selected groups who have been chosen and are defined in the case study chapter. Having done that I will try to be more specific by shedding light on the impact of such a social injustice.

*How do economic inequalities lead to a conflation of gender, age/generation and class intersections and affect the elderly and the youth in Greece and Sweden?*

It was stated in the beginning of this project that ‘both countries, despite the fact that they belong to the same European alliance, have an unequal standard of living’. Greece and Sweden face a remarkable (economic) difference for a variety of reasons. At first, the responsibility for such an inequality between the two countries is at a national level. This means that the political- ideological orientation of Greece in the last 30 years (after the overturn of dictatorship) is seen through the ‘eyes of the Neo liberalism’.

With the intention to express my personal point of view in a more precise way I could point out that neo liberalism has been adopted by all Greek governments keeping always in mind the three core elements ‘*deregulation, liberalization and privatization’* (Wendy L 2000:5) This is exactly what is happening in Greece nowadays. A professor of sociology Larner Wendy (2000) states that ‘*neo liberalism leads national governments to a more minimalist ability to intervene’* (2000:6). From my point of view the latter argument is a crucial part on which I should focus and elaborate more. In this sense, when public services are transferred from the public sector to private funds then inevitably a welfare state does not exist. Furthermore, he points out that *'new forms of globalized production relations and financial systems are forcing governments to abandon their commitment to the welfare state'*. (2000:6).
Another nodal point that precisely describes the ‘death of welfarism’ in Greece is the relation or the collaboration between this country and the instruments of Neo liberalism. This is the point where national responsibility is conflated into international accountability. The IMF and the World Bank play a lead role (in Greece) during the last 8 years as both ‘organizations are responsible for giving guidance to those countries facing economic problems’. For me, this close contact between the last Greek governments and the above mentioned organizations is the ‘perfect recipe’ for destruction. Particularly, they mutually work in order to succeed a ‘collapse’ of the remaining Greek welfare state. In other worlds this is similar to what it was mentioned by feminist economists who claim that welfare policies should always attempt to eradicate poverty rather that end the welfare state. I think that in Greece the second angle takes place.

On the contrary Sweden has so far a different way of ruling. This means that, the ‘Swedish economy can be seen as neo liberal capitalist due to the fact that more than 90% of its companies are privately owned while less than 10% are public. Nonetheless, it is also a pattern of welfarism as high income taxes are distributed across the entire society. This means that the Neo liberalism that subsists at the economic level does not affect negatively the provision of public services. As a result, hospitals and other core elements that comprise welfare states are not deemed as businesses that need to be privatized, as is the case in Greece.

Another nodal point is the currency factor. Sweden and Greece both belong to the EU but they do not belong to the same economic alliance. This means that Sweden has, after a referendum, preferred to retain its own currency (Swedish crone) while Greece after an opaque process, as did not meet ‘the criteria of convergence’, adopted Euro as its currency (Europa 2001). For me this is a very critical element because when someone belongs to the same team they need to align with the rules of the game. This is a practice which I really doubt if it can be successful, as in many cases ‘the big fish eats the small one’ (Debating Europe 2012). On the contrary, I have to admit that when you participate in such an economic alliance you will benefit from the economic provision. But still I am wondering about the flexibility or even the allowance (permission) when someone (like the present Greek government) wants to reform the (welfare) state. Does he/she have to
ask the IMF and the World Bank for permission? Probably yes as mistaken politico-economic policies of the Greek governments of the past continue operating under the IMF’s surveillance. So, both parts are at fault. Based on this unevenness between Greece and Sweden I am really curious about how particular intersections come to the fore and affect the same focus groups.

Hence, having analyzed precisely the reasons leading to such an economic differentiation between the two countries I will move a step forward by being more specific and having in mind the two societal groups that can be characterized as oppressed (at least in the Greek case). According to Kimberle Crenshaw’s (1990) perspective there are people within society who are ‘subordinated and who are privileged’. I see this kind of division as a process/incidence of neo liberalism. One of the core arguments of Lander Wendy’s (2000) is that ‘whereas under Keynesian welfarism the state provision of goods and services to a national population was understood as a means of ensuring social well-being, neo-liberalism is associated with the preference for a minimalist state’ and that neo liberalism seeks economic prosperity through ‘deregulation, liberalization and privatization’. The above mentioned arguments have been used in a way so that the impact on the social groups selected will be precisely indicated.

As far as the elderly population is concerned, intersections of gender, age/generation and class do not depend on employment inclusion but on financial resources through the pension system and access to health services. Concerning intersection of gender in the elderly population is in fact a continuation of how this particular intersection is unfolded in young people. In other words, women are employed to a much lesser extent than men (as shown in statistics) thus, they get pensions to a lesser extent. This is exactly the reason why I chose not to restrict the age range in gender statistics but to let it up to 64 years old as I wanted to show that disparities between the two genders exist in older ages as well. Concerning the Greek case pensions as well as the public and free access to health services, they have vanished due to the implementation of a neoliberal agenda. According to relevant data mentioned in the case study chapter, 66% of Greek pensioners receive (a pension) of maximum 670 euro while the remaining 30 percent receive 1200
euro per month. From the above it can be concluded that only a scant percentage receives an adequate pension in relation to the country’s standards of living.

It is exactly what it was stated at a summit regarding the implications of the IMF policies in Southern European countries by the American Professor of Medicine Howard Waitzkin: ‘it has been confirmed by many studies that IMF policies have negative health effects in countries where extreme neoliberal measures take place. Ever such policy that reinforces inequality leads to a deterioration of health. The insistence on free and self-regulating market is a kind of ideology, a kind of religion without any evidence that improves health’ (Enet.gr 2011). The above argument reflects exactly the current condition of the Greek welfare state. Privatization and deregulation led the state health system to a destruction. When I see what is happening nowadays in the Greek (welfare) state I bring in mind Power’s notion (2008) where ‘reform policies should aim at ending poverty rather than ending welfare state’. As a result, without adequate economic resources and sufficient medical coverage the elderly in Greece have become one of the most discriminated as well as vulnerable social categories. Otherwise, ‘neo liberalism as a consolidated evidence of globalization generates social processes of exclusion for even wider social groups’ (Haralampous et al. 2011). This is exactly what is currently happening (in Greece) with the cuts in the health and social provision domains respectively.

With the intention to compare and contrast the aforementioned group of people in Sweden and Greece I can uphold that the elderly in these two countries have nothing in common. In this sense, the Swedish elderly receive sufficient health and social care services when their retirement pension is one of the highest in contrast not only to Greece but also to many other European countries. In this sense, intersections of age/generation and class in the Greek case either in the youth or in the elderly population flare up and conflate into each other creating a sense of injustice and non belonging. On the contrary in Sweden and particularly in the elderly population, all these welfare policies have been adopted attempting to eradicate the aforementioned intersections and create (as much as it can be) a nexus of integration and social inclusion as well.
Moving on to the youth population the reforms taking place in Greece lead to a division. Thus there are those being ‘subordinated and those being privileged’. Taking this as a starting point of analysis I can stress that the most subordinated groups are the youth and the elderly in Greece while in Sweden it is only youth. The disadvantageous position of Greece might based on the fact that it is not governed independently but it is under surveillance. Hence, even if the current right government wants to alleviate the occurring social impasse, it is unable to succeed in doing so as it has to get permission from its invigilators (IMF, World Bank etc.). With the intention to address the reasons provoking such an ‘oppression’ to those being young in both countries I can justify it by saying that both countries, as far as the economic sector is concerned, use neo liberal policies as a tool for bringing growth and prosperity. But if we take a look at unemployment rates in the youth population (as they are presented in the case study chapter) I can state that such policies can be characterized as ‘latent’. Thereafter, can someone justifiably wonder what the impact is. From the data collected in the case study chapter and specifically with reference to the employment/unemployment rates of the youth population, intersection of age/generation plays a significant role on the employment seclusion of the youth. According to Nikos Malkoutzhs who as a journalist conducted a relevant survey in the first quarter of 2013, unemployment at the age up to 24 years was reaching 60%. From the 27 Member States of the European Union in 18 EU countries unemployment youth exceeds 20%. In some countries, nevertheless, the respective rates during the last few years increased remarkably (f.i. Sweden). In this sense, in Ireland, Slovakia and the European South (Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal) one to two people has no access to the labor market.
According to the data collected and presented in the case study chapter this politico-economic orientation establishes more and more obstacles in regard to the two particular groups of people. I shall begin by presenting the current image that affects and differentiates the youth among Sweden and Greece. In the case study chapter where statistics about the youth population in Greece is unfolded, almost 60% of young Greeks between 18 and 28 are unemployed. The reasons have been precisely addressed above. Intersections of age/generation, gender and class occur as all of them have a sense of not belonging. Hence, few opportunities, insufficient conditions, poor medical care (all those detected as push factors) lead to a rise of discrimination between young people who are employed and those being unemployed. Furthermore, those having a job face a fear of losing their job as the Greek market is completely unstable. I can understand their professional insecurity by interpreting things ‘through the eyes’ of Silvia Federici (2006). According to her notion ‘capitalist development’ as the one occurring currently in Greece ‘is at the same time a process of underdevelopment’. I see this kind of underdevelopment taking place at the social level (etc. labor rights).

The blame for such a hard situation is on the austerity measures and the character of the amendments. The European ‘axis’, particularly France and Germany ‘awoke from slumber’ (Reuters 2013). They realized that the 27 million unemployed threaten Europe’s social coherence. Representatives from both countries disclosed their intention to implement a program whose focus will be on the combat against the increasing unemployment rates in the youth population. Nikos Maltzoukhs (2013) adds that if not emergent and immediate policies are taken into action this ‘’lost generation’’, as is characterized, will continue to be a destabilizing factor of Europe’s social cohesion. What should also be underlined is that in this chain reaction of intersections, young people are those who deemed as being the most subordinated. This is a term which was implemented by Crenshaw and in this project it refers to young female people. Looking at the statistics where employment by gender in Greece is denoted, I can easily point out that young female Greeks between 18 and 27 years old are the most marginalized group. In this sense, they can simply be described as the ‘victims’ of the contemporary neo liberal policy of reforms.
Proceeding with the Swedish case I can point out that a similar situation exists. According to Lorenza Antonucci (2011) ‘the first source of great doubts about Sweden as the dream-land of inequality is the level of youth social exclusion especially through employment participation’. In this sense, as far as intersections of gender, age/generation and class in the youth of Sweden are concerned, I can state that some similarities as well as some differences exist between the youth in the two countries. What can be highlighted as a core similarity is that in both countries the same intersections take place. In other words this means that the youth face a problem of occupational inclusion something that makes them not fully integrated into the social level. As a result they are partially or fully financially supported by their families. This ‘financial dependence’ makes them being vulnerable and an inextricable part of Sweden’s lower social strata (class) as they are poor and unemployed.

Moving on to the difference in the way that intersections of gender, age/generation and class are intertwined in both countries, I can stress that all the above take place to a lesser extent in Sweden than in Greece. This can be verified by viewing the unemployment rates statistics in overall and in the youth population as well as in gender employment inclusion rates. From the above mentioned there is no denying that the Swedish youths constitutes one of the most marginalized groups. This is exactly what was mentioned by Kimberle Crenshaw (1993) when speaking about those being ‘privileged’ and those who are ‘subordinated’. Therefore, in both cases the youth are subordinated. According to the Intersectionality theory and especially based on Stephanie Shields' (2008) and Jarrah Hodge's (2012) perspectives, there is a significant division/discrimination (between females and males) in the way that employment procurement takes place. In this sense the most disadvantageous group or subcategory among the youth are young females. This reflects the current image not only in one of the two countries (particularly Greece with the astonishing unemployment rates in youth) but also in Sweden. With the intention to be as precise as I can, in the latter the gap exists but according to the respective chart in a lesser scale than in the Greek case.
The deep causes behind such a social neglecting are due to the neoliberal orientation that both countries (even to varying degrees) have adopted as their economic administration policy. Such policies have perfectly summarized through intersectional theory where AWRD (2004) underlines that ‘neoliberal policies are justifying the exclusion of those who have been left behind by the global economy and aggravating poverty, inequality and human rights violations. Clearly, globalization and economic change are impacting on different people in different ways’. (2004:1). With the interrelation of intersections a nexus of social injustice and pessimism is spread. Intending to indicate how this sort of correlation takes place I have to refer to psychological factors. According to DeFrank & Ivancevich (1986) and Hanisch (1999) the effects of a job loss can be detected either to a psychological or physical level. In this sense, ‘depressions, frustration as well as various cardiovascular and physical diseases take place’ (1986:54).

From this point of view, the youth in Greece and Sweden, after their graduation, have great difficulty in finding a job. As a result, they have a sense of not belonging and they consider themselves incapable. They believe that they cannot contribute and that they cannot make any personal progress. Hence, they are stationary.
How do (then) the youth in the above two countries face social injustice consolidated by their intersections?

Looking at the Intersectionality theory the current economic and social instability leads to an exaggeration of youth’s migration. In this sense, young people in both countries (as they deemed as the most dynamic social group) are threatened by social exclusion; hence, they see migration as a personally held indicative solution. Therefore, migration in both cases can be described as a kind of reaction/way out to the impasses imposed. What can be underlined regarding this fact is that young Greeks and Swedish display some different characteristics in their actions. This refers to two main factors: The first is linked to the place of destination (where they migrate) while the second to the number of migration outflows between the two selected groups.

Beginning with the Greek case, young Greeks migrate much more than young Swedish. This can easily be justified by looking at the statistics in relation to the youth population unemployment rates and gender statistics as well. Both can lead us to the following outcomes. In principle there is an employment exclusion for the Greek youth and only (approximately) a 40% is professionally active. From this percentage the vast majority of those working are men. Hence, Greek women are isolated, neglected and marginalized far ahead from men. This employment and thereafter social exclusion leads young Greek females to migration. This contemporary migration outflow takes place to a greater extent than in the past years. Based on that, it can be reported that ‘there is a change in migration patterns’ (Liapi M, Vaiou D 2014:207). This change does not mean that men do not migrate but it mainly means that women migrate much more than in the past. A further change also occurred on the educational attainment. In contrast to the migration in the previous decades, most of them (potential migrants) are highly qualified people, holding Bachelors, Masters and PhDs. According to Lois Lamprianidhs (2012) (professor of Economy Geography in Macedonian University) in the last few years a recorded number of approximately 300,000 Greeks, mostly skilled scientists, migrated to other European countries and to the USA as well. From the above number only 10 to 15% constitutes migrants with low credential something that indicates a Greek brain drain.
The Neoclassical economics perspective precisely outlines the way that migration movements are unfolded. In this sense the richest pole with countries such as Norway, Denmark and Sweden constitutes the destination country of those coming from countries affected by the crisis (Southern European countries), in particular Greeks.

As far as the respective population in Sweden is concerned, it can be reported that despite the overall stable and prominent condition of the Swedish economy, with only 8,1% unemployment, the number of youth unemployment does not follow the same trend. But as in the Greek case, the social stigma of being unemployed occurs and this is something that makes many young Swedish to flee the country in search of better employment and social conditions. What can be reported as a difference between the two migration flows (young Greeks and young Swedish) is that in the Swedish case potential migrants do not change pole as they migrate to a neighboring country, particularly in Norway (Day M 2012). This leads me to believe that even in the one of the two poles described through Neo classical economics, a sub-categorization of countries belonging to the same pole exists. In this sense, the youth from the ‘rich’ Sweden migrate to the ‘richest’ Norway. As far as gender nuances are concerned, there is no precise indication about Swedish female and male migration frequency and number. This is justifiable by viewing Swedish gender statistics. The employment gap between male and female is much lesser than in the Greek case so there are no significant differences (in the number of the two genders) that move abroad for employment reasons. Last but not least, in both cases (even in varying degrees) intersections of gender, age/generation as well as class affect the young in such a way that they push them to flee their home country. In this sense, intersections are linked to Neo classical economic push factors.
Conclusion-Recommendations

My thesis’ outcomes are various and can be detected to both a national and international level. First and foremost there is an astonishing difference between Greece and Sweden due to the different ideological orientation that each country encompasses. This means that Greek governments of the last decades give emphasis to economic matters without examining thoroughly the social impact. As a result, wrong economic policies lead to diverse impasses at the social level. In addition, Sweden strives to separate (as much as it can be) economy from society and despite the fact that neoliberal (capitalist) nuances exist in the Swedish economy, social services are still driven by welfare principles. Moving on to the international level the IMF, the World Bank and even the European Union ‘cooperate’ with Greece and suggest a continuation of the already confirmed fallacious neoliberal policies. According to my way of thinking this seems like trying to correct a mistake by doing a new mistake. As far as people’s inequalities are concerned, I can point out that the youth in both countries, to some degree, share a resemblance in the sense that they both see migration as a way out. On the contrary, Greek and Sweden elderly have nothing common to share. Thereby, the Swedish enjoy all the benefits that a well designed welfare system can offer whereas, the elderly in Greece face various obstacles and are considered to be one of the most discriminated groups in society.
As my intention is to end in a more optimistic way, I can highlight that change can take place. Optimism is not one of my innate characteristics but through my studies at Linkoping University I found hope.

- Firstly, I believe that an internal-notional change should happen. In this sense, either national governments or international organizations should adopt a more humanitarian policy. I really doubt doing so timely. Hankivsky, O., et al. (2012) claims that this can be done by *privileging those voices typically excluded from policy ‘expert’ roles* (2012:36). Particularly the young and the elderly should be a part of that policy agenda. Real change can only take place when it comes from inside.

- Secondly, activism can play a significant role. Robert Foltin’s (2006) paper about *Resistance and Organisation in Postfordism* has a lot more to say. Based on that, the young (and the elderly) from all over the world can coordinate through organisations and by *promoting communication and information about their battles or even small wins* can drive social change. (2006:56). For enlarging the possibilities of change, enrichment in the ways that movements (or even demonstrations) operate is required. According to Gerald Raunig (2007) capitalism as a global phenomenon can be tackled in the larger scale with the participation of various (vulnerable) groups of people, as only through this *global mobilization a sense of transversality will be unveiled*. Last but not least a rethinking of neo liberalism as a hegemonic economic ideology is required. It is exactly what Johanna Oksala (2013) in her article Feminism and Neoliberal Governmentality indicates. More specifically she claims that *economic questions of redistribution are needed in order to combat the hegemony of neo liberalism* (2013: 32).
References


