Between 1950 and 2020, the global economy faced multiple crises, with four widely recognised as global - 1975, 1982, 1991, and 2009 - and two more recent crises also drawing significant attention: the COVID-19 pandemic (2020) and the Russian aggression against Ukraine (2014, escalating in 2022). These crises had profound impacts on socio-economic policy, leading to declines in real GDP and government revenues, alongside rising deficits. Such disruptions highlight the importance of investigating how welfare is distributed under these abnormal conditions. While considerable research has examined income distribution and inequality during crises, the intergenerational dimension of welfare distribution remains underexplored, despite the potential for ageing populations and shifting demographic structures to intensify intergenerational conflicts over resource allocation.

This proposed research investigates the interplay between economic crises, intergenerational welfare distribution, and welfare state dynamics. The primary objective is to evaluate the effects of economic crises on the distribution of welfare across generations. Several research questions are posed: How do economic crises influence public spending and its allocation among different generations? Specifically, how does spending on various age groups change during crises? How do crises impact intergenerational welfare distribution? Are there patterns in these changes across different welfare state regimes, and if so, which regimes perform better in achieving a balanced intergenerational welfare distribution? Is there a link between the age structure of a population and changes in intergenerational welfare distribution during crises? Moreover, does the evidence suggest the presence of gerontocracy, where resources are disproportionately directed towards older generations? Have successive crises reinforced the idea of social protection as a cornerstone of global governance and demonstrated the welfare state's role as a caregiver during times of hardship? Finally, how do household or individual incomes and consumption patterns change during crises, considering their socio-demographic characteristics, including age?

To address these questions, the study utilises macro-level data from Eurostat and OECD databases, alongside micro-level data from the LIS Cross-National Data Center and/or Eurostat. This approach allows for a comprehensive analysis of how intergenerational welfare distribution and public spending evolve at the macroeconomic level before, during, and after crises, and how such crises affect household or individual incomes and/or consumption. The findings will be assessed in relation to welfare state regime typologies, with the aim of identifying which models and policies are most effective in ensuring social protection and equitable intergenerational welfare distribution during crises. A variety of regression and clustering procedures will be employed to conduct the data analysis.

This research is particularly novel in several respects. It focuses on the economic context of intergenerational welfare distribution, specifically during economic crises. It employs temporal and spatial analyses, going beyond static approaches to examine changes over time and across countries. Furthermore, it advances the concept of measuring intergenerational welfare distribution by focusing on outcomes rather than the inputs typically studied in existing literature. The research also bridges the results of static and dynamic analyses with welfare state regime classifications, integrates macro-level and micro-level data analyses, and incorporates the COVID-19 crisis - an area largely overlooked so far due to limited data availability.

From a policymaking perspective, this research is essential for understanding how effectively different countries have managed successive crises in terms of protecting various age groups from adverse impacts and whether these efforts have enhanced the balance of intergenerational welfare distribution.