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The Precarious Case of Female Representation

A Single Case Study of Female Political Representation in Lund's Municipality

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"Så länge kvinnors arbete värderas lägre än männens, så länge en stor grupp av kvinnor är lågavlönade och har svårt att klara sig ekonomiskt för att de har "kvinnojobb" fortlever den hierarkiska könsordningen i samhället. Så länge vård och omsorg för barn, gamla och sjuka nedvärderas och ansvaret läggs huvudsakligen på kvinnor för det "passar deras natur". Så länge kombinationen av låga inkomster, usla arbetsförhållanden och mycket ansvar för familjen gör en stor grupp av kvinnorna slitna och sjuka har vi långt kvar till jämställdhet mellan könen"

Soheyla Yazdanpanah (2013, 49)

Abstract

The thesis proceeds from Sweden's first gender equality sub-goal; *Equal Division of Power and Influence,* in order to investigate how the political power is divided between the sexes within local committees in Skåne and in Lund. Political commitments at local level should be carried out alongside labour or other occupation; and thus the overall aim of the thesis is to investigate if labour market mechanisms affect women's representation in local governments.

A single case study of female representation in Lund's local government with both quantitative and qualitative methodology was conducted and through criterion sampling, eight female time politicians were selected and interviewed.

The thesis takes its point of departure from some of Anne Phillips' (1995) arguments developed in *The Politics of Presence;* in particular her notion that the sex of the representatives is significant and affects their political agenda. The data collected from the semi-structured interviews is analysed within the context of the ideas put forth in *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class* by Guy Standing (2014a).

The result implies an unequal allocation of power between the sexes in local committees in Skåne and in Lund. Women are underrepresented in the majority of the committees and possess fewer power positions. The division of representation both resembles and is affected by the horizontal and vertical gender segregation in the labour market. The respondents claimed that their political commitments were possible due to the nature of their employments and employees. This might be one reason for the political underrepresentation of women in Lund's municipality, as female-dominated sectors are of precariatic nature and characterised by low salaries, insecure employments and high rates of sick-leaves. Women with precarious employments are not able to take leave of absence for their jobs for political commitments, despite their right by law. Moreover, the respondents implied that it is more difficult for women to become time politicians[1], due to the traditional notion that women hold responsibility for domestic positions, such as caring for children and the elderly; hence have limited time to indulge in leisure and participate in democratic activities.

The result indicates that the unequal allocation of power in Lund's local government is related to mechanisms that define the Swedish labour market.

Keywords: Female representation, the precariat, the politics of presence, social representation, labour market, local governments, female-dominate sectors, equal allocation of power, Lund's municipality.

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[1] In Swedish: *fritidspolitiker*

Acknowledgements

1. Introduction

"Equal division of power and influence. Women and men are to have the same rights and opportunities to be active citizens and to shape the conditions for decision-making" (Government 2016).

The above quote pinpoints the first out of four sub-goals[2] of the Swedish gender equality policy. It indicates that women and men, girls and boys ought to be able to participate in and influence the processes that shape our perceptions, ideas and practices. Both sexes should be represented at all decision-making levels, in order for women and men to have a voice in society on equal terms. A balanced representation in political decision-making bodies is an important democratic principle and thus significant in order to obtain gender equality (SOU 2015:86).

The first sub-goal is a result of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which was adopted in 1979 by the United Nation General Assembly. Sweden was one of the first countries to sign it in 1980. Part two, articles 7-9 of CEDAW focus on women's participation in the public sphere and emphasises political life and representation. It implies that all State Parties[3] should actively take appropriate measures against all forms of discrimination that prevent women from participating on the same terms as men. In Beijing 1995, *The Beijing Platform for Action*, was adapted by the UN. It recommends that affirmative action should be taken by State Parties in order to achieve gender equality (Freidenvall 2006, 7).

The Official Report of the Swedish Government (SOU 2015:86) indicates the importance of emphasising both formal and informal power structures that cause and maintain the unequal distribution of power between the sexes, rather than solely focusing on changing attitudes to achieve gender equality. It is significant to note that a balanced representation of women and men in senior positions does not guarantee an equal allocation of *real* power; however it is an essential prerequisite for qualitative aspects of the exercise of power to be changed in a more equal direction.

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[2] According to Official Reports of the Swedish Government (SOU 2005:66), the objective of gender equality policy; "Women and men are to have the same power to shape society and their own lives", was divided into four sub-goals. However, the new report (SOU 2015:86), suggests further changes and a fifth sub-goal to be added – but the parliament have not affirmed this matter yet. Further on, this does not affect the first sub-goal, which the thesis will proceed from.

[3] In Swedish: *Konventionsstater*

1.1. Historical Background

Historically the characteristic of all Western democracies have been the absence and exclusion of women from decision-making forums and societal institutions, as their responsibilities have tended to be limited to work in the private sphere. Women were assigned responsibility for children and the home. However, the economic boom in the 1950s and 1960s resulted in labour shortage which caused women and immigrants to serve as a "reserve army" in the labour market. Consequently, the traditional gender roles were challenged and fundamentally changed the family and the state relationship (Hernes 1987, 2; Lundqvist & Roman 2010, 74). As women became essential for the labour market, but earned 30 percent less than men; women's dual role as mothers and workers was elucidated and gained medial and political attention (Hirdman 2001, 157). More women became politically oriented and women's participations within political assemblies increased during the 1970s (Bergqvist, Adman & Jungar 2008, 10). As a result, politicians and government commission experts became pressured to create a more gender-neural discourse and political practise that replaced traditional family policy. The reforms aimed at creating institutional conditions that served as incentives for women to earn proper wage, thus the 1970s is the decade gender equality became institutionalised[4] (Lundqvist & Roman 2010, 74). Despite the fact that Sweden, along with the other Scandinavian countries, have been a progressive force in terms of women's political participants and gender equality reforms, compared to other Western societies; a closer analysis indicates that such things as subordination, discrimination and underrepresentation of women, is still ongoing in Sweden and the Scandinavian countries as well (Hernes 1987, 31).

Previous research and The Official Report of the Swedish Government (SOU 2015:86) mainly put emphasis on representation at national level, in the parliament. Not much research has investigated representation at local level, in municipalities[5]. There are some differences between being a politician in the parliament and in local governments; the main difference b being that political commitment at national level is a full-time employment, while it is an avocation at local level. This implies that the political commitment one has in local governments should be carried out alongside labour or other occupation. The prerequisite of being a politician at national level differs from local level, thus it is significant to further on

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[4] Individualised tax system (1971), parental insurance (1974), simplified divorce system (1974), increased rights for abortion (1975), expansion of public childcare (1976), the right for parents to get reduced working hours (1979) (Lundqvist & Roman 2010, 74).

[5] Some of those that has, is presented in section: "Representation"

investigate the representation between women and men in local governments. Decisions regarding education care and welfare and urban development, to name a few, are taken in local governments, and thus directly affect the citizens in a municipality.

Further on, because representatives in municipalities are expected to labour alongside their political commitment, I also want to investigate if the mechanisms that define the Swedish labour market affect women's political representation.

1.2.   Research Question

Based on the above contextualisation, the overall aim of the thesis is to investigate if labour market mechanisms affect women's representation in local governments. This requires a combination of two research fields, as previous research about female representation at local level have not related women's political representation to the labour market. To this effect, I seek to answer the following two questions:

1. How is the political representation divided between the sexes within local committees in Skåne and in Lund?
2. Does the labour market affect women's representation in Lund's local government?

This study is a single case study with emphasis on four committees in Lund's municipality.

1.3.   Equal Allocation of Power

In *Welfare State and Women Power; Essays in State Feminism* (1987), Helga Hernes, highlights three factors significant for women's political representation; justice, resource and interests. The first factor, *justice,* relates to the question of democracy; since women constitute half of the population, they should obtain approximately 50 percent of all political positions. If the allocation of power is not equal between the sexes, structural mechanisms are hindering women to obtain such positions and thus democracy is not complete. Hernes' second factor is that of *resources;* based on women's and men's different knowledge and experiences, due to the gender segregation of the labour market and care work. An equal allocation of power in decision-making assemblies would enable a broader perspective and knowledge; otherwise women's experience becomes an unutilised resource. The third factor relates to *interests* and the idea women and men operate within different spheres and develop different interests. These interests may sometimes conflict, thus men are not necessarily able to represent women. If women are not represented or underrepresented, there is a risk that matters concerning women, such as gender equality and domestic violence, are excluded from the political agenda (Bäck & Öhrvall 2004, 12; Freidenvall 2006, 33-34; SOU 2005:66).

1.4. Women as a Social Group

Referring to women as a social group when arguing for increased female representation in politics could be problematic. Historically the notion of categorising women as a homogenous group with common needs and interests, has contributed to conflicting positions within feminist theory. Women of colour argued that dominant feminist theory and rhetoric was Eurocentric when analysing interests and oppression (Young 1990, 217-218). In addition, lesbian women claimed that mainstream feminist analysis was solely based on heteronormative assumptions. These criticisms led to new branches within feminist theory and changed the previous dominated notion of women's needs and interests (Freidenvall 2006, 36; Young 1990, 217-218). In contrast, postmodern theory criticises the notion of women as a group with common interests for essentialism. Such arguments they argue do not consider the differences between women or the interests shared by some women and men. Furthermore, postmodernists claim that femininity and masculinity are socially constructed and hence fluctuating; dividing men and women into two different categories will preserve the gender stereotypes and reinforce the existing power structure that oppresses women (Freidenvall 2006, 36). However, Iris Marion Young (1990, 43) emphasises on the importance of referring to women as a social group due to shared experiences:

> "The sexual division of labour, for example, has created social groups of women and men in known societies. Members of each gender have a certain affinity with others in their group because of gender, even when members of each gender consider that they have much in common with members of the other, and consider they belong to the same society" (Young 2000, 43).

According to Young (2000, 225) gender is a relational concept and not an abbreviation for essence. Referring to women as a social group will serve as a counterpart to liberal individualism which denies the existence of social groups. By solely proceeding from individualistic ideology and referring to people as individuals – the mechanisms for exclusion and oppression will be reduced to individual problems and not systematic, structured and institutionalised processes (Young 2000, 223). Young (2000, 21) criticises the postmodern idea for not being able to identify discrimination based on gender, if women are not referred to as a group. Nevertheless, Young (1990, 47-48) is aware of the fact that group identities are multiple, fluid and shifting. There is no common nature that the members of a group share, as women are differentiated by age, sexuality, class and ethnicity (to name a few), which implies that all women have multiple group identification. However, Young (2000, 224-225) argues that the first feministic resistance against oppression is hence to acknowledge women as a

social group and create a group consciousness based on specific feature and attributes that emerges from women's experiences. If women were to be denied being part of a social collective, it would only favour those who benefit from women's severance.

The thesis proceeds from Iris Marion Young's (1990; 2000) notion of women as a social group, when investigating women's political representation in committees. By doing so, female time politicians' shared experiences is in focus, which enables a holistic understanding of assumed systematic difficulties these women experience[6].

1.5. Definition of Terms
Below, significant terms for the thesis is presented and explained.

1.5.1. Sex and Gender

> "Gender is the structure of social relations that centres on the reproductive arena, and sets of the practices that bring reproductive distinctions between bodies into social processes" (Connell 2009, 11).

Discussion and debate on gender often emphasise the dichotomies between women and men, based on presumed biological differences between them. Gender is employed to define cultural differences between women and men based on this biological assumption. However, Raewyn Connell (2009) lists a set of difficulties related to merely emphasising biological differences. Gender scholars, such as Connell (2009, 10) argue that gender is a matter of social relations within which individuals and groups act.

The ongoing discussion of political representation is, however, grounded in a biological dichotomy, as the division between women and men in politics is solely based on the biological sex. The allocation of power is described in terms of women and men, proceeding from the notion of biological sex. In the thesis, the term sex will be used to *describe* the current allocation of power, while the term gender will be used in order to *explain* the reasons for the unequal allocation of power; as the quotation above implies.

1.5.2. Work and Labour
The thesis will distinguish between work and labour based on Engels' footnote added to Karl Marx' *Capital* from 1887[7]. Engels recognised that work, activities done outside the market (unpaid) has *use value*, while labour done for a wage or compensation, has *exchange value*. Guy Standing (2014ab) also proceeds from this distinction. Standing (2014b, 964) argues that labour is an activity in which one's time and effort is spent on working for somebody in some

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[6] "See section: "Feminist Standpoint Theory"
[7] Referred to the Swedish version; (Marx 2013, 41).

position of subordination. The term labour is hence used when referring to employment and jobs. Further on, Standing (2014ab) divides work into several different components in order to elucidate both exploitation and control. Two of his definitions of work is used throughout the thesis; (1) *care work*, when refereeing to the work focused on looking after children, relatives and the home; and (2) *reproductive work*, when referring to the work of being political active or the work done in order to *prepare* for labour or other work (Standing 2014a, 206; 2014b, 964).

1.5.3. Time Politician

The term "Time politician"[8] will be used when referring to elected politicians within local governments. The term implies that political duties are carried out alongside labour or studies (SKL 2015). According to chapter four, paragraph 11 and 12 in the *Swedish Local Government Act*, time politicians are entitled to leave of absence from their employment if the performance of their mandate requires them to do so[9]. They are also entitled compensation for any labour or other financial benefits they lose due to their mandate (Regeringen 2015).

1.6. Delimitations

The thesis proceeds by illustrating the quantitative gender equality concerning representation in Lund's committees. The political representation is, as mentioned above, grounded in a biological dichotomy, as the division between women and men in politics is solely based on the biological sex. In Sweden two genders are recognised by law. Despite these binaries, there are people who identify as neither women nor men. Using these terms can cement the binary and heterosexual normative. However, as Young (1990; 2000) argues[10], these terms lay bare gender power structures within political assemblies, and are thus used throughout the thesis.

Moreover Phillips' (1995) *The Politics of Presence* argue for increased social representation, based on sex and ethnicity, in political assemblies. Although there are other attributes such as sexuality, class and age, to name a few, that affect one's experiences and opportunities to become a time politician; the thesis only puts emphasis on the biological sex of the representatives.

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[8] In Swedish: *Fritidspolitiker*
[9] "Such leave of absence include time required for: 1. meetings of local government bodies, 2. other meetings that are necessary in the course of their duties, 3. travel to and from meetings, and 4. requisite daily rest period immediately before and after meetings." (Regeringen 2015).
[10] See section: "Women as a Social Group"

2. Theoretical Framework

In this section, the theoretical framework and the key concept of the thesis is presented. After presenting Iris Marion Young's (1990) theory of social representation and Anne Phillips' (1995) *The Politics of Presence*; a theoretical discussion takes place and motivates why the thesis departures from the politics of presence. Subsequently, the concept of *The Precariat* by Guy Standing (2014a) is outlined.

2.1. Politics of Difference

In *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (1990) Iris Marion Young claims that representative democracy cannot be complete if political assemblies do not reflect upon the populations' social representation based on gender, ethnicity and class. Oppressed and minority groups should thus through special regulations be included in the political system in order to avoid assimilation and to preserve their traditions and culture. Young (1990, 39-40) claims that oppression and domination are two factors constraining justice. Young proceeds from the notion of *oppression* as a structural concept in order to describe injustices social groups experience in the normal processes of everyday life.

> "In this extended structural sense oppression refers to the vast and deep injustices some groups suffer as a consequence of often unconscious assumptions and reactions of well-meaning people in ordinary interactions, media and cultural stereotypes, and structural features of bureaucratic hierarchies and market mechanisms (…). We cannot eliminate this structural oppression by simply getting rid of the rulers or making some new laws, because oppressions are systematically reproduced in major economic, political, and cultural institutions" (Young 1990, 41).

Oppression is thus maintained and reproduced by individuals by simply living their lives or doing their jobs, and do not understand themselves as agents of oppression (Young 1990, 42). Iris Marion Young (1990; 2000) lists *five faces of oppression[11]*, any one of which marks out a group as oppressed. However, each of these forms of oppression overlap and exist with the other; reinforcing ideological *–isms,* such as racism, sexism and classism.

Iris Marion Young (1990) criticises the notion of universal humanism for not considering differences within society. Young (1990, 164-165) argues that universal humanity does not acknowledge the group differences that enable privileged groups to perpetuate cultural imperialism by normalising their experiences to appear natural and universal. In this process, the privileged group ignore their own group specificity and creates blindness to disadvantages

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[11] Exploitation, marginalisation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence.

marginalised groups experience by socially and culturally differing and not being able to measure up to the privileged groups' standards. Based on these arguments, Young (1990, 166-167) suggests that basic institutional changes, such as group specific rights along with group autonomy and self-organisation, will create politics that affirm positivity of group difference which enables empowerment and liberation.

2.2. The Politics of Presence

Anne Phillips (1995) argues that the politics of ideas germinate political exclusion of groups defined by their gender, race and ethnicity. Phillips' arguments proceed from the notion of diversity which have been central for liberalism and the formation of liberal democracy. The diversity of opinions, preferences, beliefs and goals, all of which arises from a variety of experiences, is according to Phillips, being treated as separate matter. Differences are considered in terms of intellectual diversity, irrespective of the representative (Phillips 1995, 5-6). Phillips (1995) claims that *what* is represented is very much affected by *who* represents:

> "Most of the problems, indeed, arise when these are treated as totally separate from the people who carry them; or when the people dominate attention, with no thought given to their policies and ideas. It is in the relationship between ideas and presence that we can best hope to find fairer system of representation, not in a false opposition between one or the other" (Phillips 1995, 25).

Phillips (1995, 5) hence challenges the politics of ideas and argues for the politics of presence to complete the politics of ideas. The politics of presence proceeds from Young's (1990) notion of social representation in combination with political of ideas: in order to rise demand for political inclusion of marginalised and excluded groups and demand equal representation between the sexes (Phillips 1995, 5).

Anne Phillips (1995) criticises the Responsible Party Model[12], as the intense rate of development in the society aggravate for the parties and its politicians to predict the political agenda in advance. The party programmes are not enough to prepare the voters and provide for answers on questions that will be treated during the upcoming term of office. Alone the politics of ideas lack the ability to correspond to political reality (Phillips 1995, 57). Furthermore, accountability is only limited to policies, programmes and ideas, hence secured in advance by being confined to the politics of ideas. Philips (1995, 24, 156) accentuate an additional element of "representativeness", which will limit the exclusive focus on the content of policies and programmes, allow more autonomy and not be amendable to the same

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[12] Explained in section: "The Responsible Party Model"

mechanisms of accountability. The politics of presence will not only enable democracies to keep representatives accountable to their declared policies, but it will also allow a representation that enables new issues on the political agenda and challenge the excluding hegemonic power of dominate perspective (Phillips 1995, 158).

Phillips (1995, 158) claims that women's entrance on and participation in the labour market has enabled sexual segregation in the employment structures of all western societies. Women and men occupy distinct positions in the society. Men have a monopoly over paid employment, while women dominate the lower paid sectors and have the responsibility for care work (Phillips 1995, 66). The particular interests, concerns and needs that arise from women's experiences cannot adequately be addressed in a political arena dominated by men (Phillips 1995, 66). Phillips (1995, 66) thus argues that equality in representation is essential, since equal rights to vote has not effectively severed for (gender) equality. However, Phillips moves beyond an essential unity of women and proceeds from Young's (1990; 2000) notion of women as a social group; since the politics of presence neither indicates nor guarantees that women will only represent women's interests, but female politicians are more likely to take decisions in line with female voters, due to shared experiences (Phillips 1995, 158).

> "The politics of presence is not about locking people into pre-given, essentialised identities; nor is it just a new way of defining the interest groups that should jostle for attention. The point, rather, is to enable those now excluded from politics to engage more directly in political debate and political decision" (Phillips 1995, 167).

Moreover, Phillips (1995, 62) argues that quotas should be used to enable a balanced representation of the sexes and argues against the controversy of quotas since it promotes social justice and is essential for the democracy[13] (Phillips 1995, 63).

2.3. Politics of Difference vs. Politics of Presence

As noted above, both Anne Philips (1995) and Iris Marion Young (1990) argues against the notion of universal humanism which is the foundation of modern western representative democracies; for excluding women, people of colour and people from lower socioeconomic classes. They both argue for the importance of a more inclusive political system, in which the experiences of marginalised and oppressed groups are expressed and taken into consideration.

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[13] Phillips gives an account for quotas by differentiating between four arguments; (1)The role model successful women politicians' offer; (2) the principle of justice; (3) the principle of interests; (4) women's different relationship to politics (Phillips 1995, 62)

Although they both argue against political systems solely based on politics of ideas, Phillips and Young provide different solutions to this matter.

Iris Marion Young (1990) puts emphasis on group autonomy and collective engagement. She argues for public founding and institutional support to facilitate group organisation. The public support should hence consist of and result in (1) collective empowerment through self-organisation of group members; (2) group analysis in policy proposals – decision-makers are obligated to take group perspective into consideration; and (3) group veto power in policies directly affecting a group, such as reproductive right policies for women (Young 1990, 184).

Based on these arguments Young (1990, 187) is mainly concerned with representation of group experience, interest and perspective; and does not specifically imply proportional group representation in order to accomplish that aim:

> "Allocating half of the places to women, on the other hand, might be more than is necessary to give women's perspectives and empowered voice, and might make it more difficult for other groups to be represented" (Young 19990, 188).

Anne Phillips (1995, 46-47) agrees with Iris Marion Young (1990, 188) on the notion that proportional representation does not simply imply fair representation. While Young argues that the proportional representation will exclude social groups; Phillips criticises Young's claim of participatory involvement of all social groups, for neither being favourable nor possible to achieve within existing political assemblies.

Moreover, Phillips (1995, 22-23) claims that creating politics solely around differences of gender or ethnicity leans towards a `balkanization´ of polity that undermines social alliance and threatens the realm of unifying ideas. The strength of politics of ideas Phillips (1995, 23) argues is the fact that it enables citizens to focus attention on policy differences dividing them. Maintaining parts of politics of ideas in the politics of presence, is therefore desirable as the politics of presence emphasise more on group differences than allowed in politics of ideas.

In sum, the thesis proceeds from some Anne Phillips' arguments in *The Politics of Presence*. Both of the theories presented argue for the importance of increased female representation as it will enable women's experiences and interests to be considered within politics. Since women and men have been assigned different roles in society; a political arena dominated by either one of the sexes, cannot conduct policies without excluding (at least) one group. In this case, the politics of presence is preferred, since it identifies problems within the current political assemblies, argues for the importance of an equal allocation of power between the

sexes, and provides solutions that are possible to obtain within *existing* local governments. Further on, arguments against social representation and the politics of presence is outlined[14].

2.4. The Precariat – A Key Concept

In *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class* (2014a) Guy Standing recounts how millions of people worldwide, as a result of neoliberal globalisation, have entered the precariat. The precariat is a result of European countries' roll back of social securities created for the industrial working class and the bureaucratic public sector after the Second World War; and establishment of labour market flexibility[15]. In classic Marxist terms, the precariat is a "class-in-the-making" if not a "class-for-itself", as neither its characteristics nor social income corresponds to the old notions of class. The precariat, unlike the proletariat, does not have stable, fixed-hour jobs and are not subject to collective agreements and unionisation; instead it consist of people with minimal trust to the state or with capital. Standing (2014a) describes the process and its characteristics as followed:

> "To be precariatised is to be subject to pressures and experiences that lead to a precariat existence, of living in the present, without secure identity or sense of development achieved through work and lifestyle" (Standing 2014a, 28).

Standing (2014a, 201), as mentioned earlier, distinguishes between work and labour. Labour is done for a wage or compensation, and has exchange value, while work has use value. What is considered to be labour depends on *whom* it is done for, rather than *what* is done (Standing 2014a, 201)[16]. In the twentieth century, all work that is not labour was disregarded. Standing (2014a, 201) claims that this division is not only sexist, but it also devalues necessary reproduction activities and activates preserving our social existence. Since women have historically been assigned care work, it has been neglected in the economic and social analysis. In addition, labour market flexibility has resulted in insecure part-time, low-paid jobs and is regarded as common for women. Standing (2014a, 104) argues that women's growing role in the labour market, has coincided with the growth of the precariat. More women hence experience what Standing refers to as the "triple burden":

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[14] See section: ""The Sex is Insignificant""

[15] (1) Wage flexibility – speeding up and *down* the changes in demand; (2) employment flexibility – easy ability of firms to change (decrease) employment levels, resulting in reduction of employment security and protection; (3) job flexibility – move employees inside the firm to change job structures; (4) skill flexibility to adjust workers' skills easily (Standing 2014a, 9-10).

[16] Standing narrates how Cambridge economist, Arthur Pigou, note that if a cook or housekeeper is hired, national income and employment would go up. However, if he marries her, and she continues to do the same work, national income will go down, and unemployment rate goes up (Standing 2013, 7; 2014b, 965).

> "They are expected to do most of the care work for children and `the home´, they are expected to labour in the market in order to afford `the home´, and they are expected to care for the growing number of elderly relatives" (Standing 2014a, 105).

Further on Standing (2013&2014ab) argues that in this area of time, which is referred to as "tertiary time"[17], the distinction between home and workplace, have been erased; creating the "precariatised mind" – sense of time disarray and having no control over time. Standing (2013, 11) argues that the precariatised mind is a diminishing mind; it corresponds easily to subliminal advertisings by commodified politicians with populistic politics, peddling banal recipes easy to digest because they play on their fears and make no demands on the mind. The commodification of politics results in a thinning of democracy; low turnouts in elections and more people attracted by populistic politicians and neo-fascist messages (Standing 2014a, 253). This phenomenon became evident in Sweden after the 2010 election, in which the Social Democrats had their worst election symbolised as the end of the "Swedish model". The far-right Swedish Democrats were later elected into the parliament (Standing 2014a, 258). This is one of the reasons for the precariat not as yet having become a "class-for-itself". It is in conflict with itself, as the fear of losing the little they have, is taken advantage of by populist politicians who blame another group within the precariat (example migrants) for their situation. It prevents people from recognising the economic and social structures generating their common set of insecurities and vulnerabilities (Standing 2014a, 42).

In sum, whether cause or effect, the flexible labour market has coincided with the decline of the welfare state. It has created tertiary workplaces where work and labour are constantly ongoing, as people are expected to labour more and perform better. The tertiary workplace intensifies the inequality, resulting in more exploitation of the precariat and easing of the schedules of the privileged (Standing 2014, 203; 2014b, 965). The worst consequence of this tertiary flexible-labour market is the inequality of *time*:

> "This leads to the worst aspect of tertiary time, the growing inequality in control over time. The rich and the salariat have relatively strong control over their time; the precariat, very little" (Standing 2013, 13).

This results in loss of energy to indulge in cultural activities or/and to participate in political activities, which could be spotted in thinning democracy by declining turnouts in elections

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[17] In tertiary time, work and labour activities is ongoing in a 24/7 environment; tertiary workplaces are a mix of home, formal workplace and public spaces. It should be distinguished from previous areas of time; agrarian time (dominated by seasons and weather) and industrial time (dominated by the clock, where labour and work are defined in blocks – workers labour for 12 hours a day) (Standing 2014b, 965).

and declining membership and activities inside of political parties). Women are thus more vulnerable as they take more precarious jobs and may experience the "triple burden" (Standing 2013, 17).

The concept of the precariat is used as it provides with references in approaching the empirical material collected through semi-structured interviews. It enables me to critically assess women's condition on the Swedish labour market, and serve as a guideline to find out if there is a relation between female representation at local level and their conditions in the labour market.

3. Method, Methodology and Material

The thesis takes its point of departure from theories addressing political representation and gender relations, with emphasis on the theoretical perspective developed in *The Politics of Presence by* Anne Phillips (1995). The politics of presence proceeds from a sociological stand point and emphasises social settings and the environment as they affect one's experiences and opinion. Based on this notion, Phillips (1995) argues for the importance of representation consisting of a broad variety of social backgrounds, with emphasis on gender and ethnicity (Wängnerud 1999, 17).

3.1. The Precarious Case – A Single Case Study

According to Robert K. Yin (2007, 30-32) a case study is a comprehensive research study; it investigates a phenomena within its natural settings, especially when the boundaries between the phenomena and the context are not undoubtedly evident. It relies on numerous sources of empirical support. In this study, previous theoretical and conceptual proposition are used in order to guide the data collection and analysis. Case study is a suitable methodology for this study because the aim of the thesis is to look at female representation in the local government in Lund's municipality. Further on, two fields of research are combined in order to investigate if the labour market affects women's political representation in local governments. The relation between female representation and labour market is not clearly evident, since previous research on female representation in local governments has not connected it to the labour market. Both quantitative and qualitative methods are conducted, and the empirical material from previous research on female representation is used in order to gain empirical support that enables me to answer the research questions.

The thesis proceeds from some of Phillips' (1995) arguments developed *The Politics of Presence* presented earlier[18], in particular her contention that social representation, such as sex, of the representatives is significant and affects the political agenda. The data collected from the semi-structured interviews will be analysed within the context of the ideas put forth in *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class* by Guy Standing (2014a)[19]. Concepts provide reference and guidance in approaching the empirical material. The concept of the precariat enables me to uncover the phenomena which I seek to highlight; namely the relationship between the unequal allocation of power between the sexes in local politics and the mechanisms that define the Swedish labour market (Bryman 2012, 388).

As indicated above, a holistic single case study as the *representative* case on female representation in Lund's local government, best describes the methodology used in the thesis. A holistic single case study emphasizes a single unit of analysis, in my case, the committees in the local government in Lund's municipality (Yin 2007, 60). The objective of a representative case is to capture the conditions of a commonplace situation, such as looking at female representation in Lund's local government; the case is thus neither unusual nor extreme in its nature, but rather it provides a suitable context to answer my research questions. In this case I have gathered information about the existing situation within the local government and within the Swedish and regional labour market, along with interview material that gather the experiences' of female time politician's all of which are essential in a representative case (Yin 2007, 62). Thus, the thesis puts emphasis on women's experiences and proceeds from feminist standpoint theory, which is described below.

3.2. Validity and Reliability

Within the methodology of using a case study, several criterions are used in order to evaluate the quality of the study, concerning its validity and reliability. Although there are a numerous different aspects of these terms, the most suitable once for this single case study is external validity and reliability.

The external validity seeks to recognise to what extent findings from a single case study can be generalised beyond the current study (Yin 2007, 55). Critics argue that single case studies do not provide the in depth basis needed for generalisation. However, Yin (2007, 57-58) argues that case studies produce analytical generalisation, in which the researcher is able to generalise a set of findings and add insight into existing broader theoretical discussions. For

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[18] See section: "The Politics of Presence"
[19] See section: "The Precariat – A Key Concept"

example the empirical material collected from the surveys and the semi-structured interviews (explained below), can be used in order to identify other local governments in Sweden, in which the female representatives experiences and results resembles the results in the thesis. In this way, single case study might develop upon existing theoretical assumptions and could be seen to have external validity.

The reliability illustrates the procedures of a study (such as the data collection) in order for it to be repeated later on and gain the same results (Yin 2007, 55). The objective is thus to ensure that if another researcher follows the same procedures described and conducted in the same area, similar results and conclusions would be found (Yin 2007, 59). As such, the single case study can be considered reliably. If a researcher conducts the same quantitative survey and proceeds from my interview guide when conducting semi-structure interviews, and proceeds from the objective to investigate if the mechanisms that define the Swedish labour market affect women's political representation in local–governments; it is likely that the same results will be gained (Yin 2007, 55&59).

3.3. Feminist Standpoint Theory

Feminist investigations into the social world focus on power in relation to knowledge production. Knowledge of social life is not only a result of theory, culture and ideas; it is also a product of history, produced in specific political, social and intellectual conditions and situations (Ramazanoğlu & Holland 2002:20-21). The ontological and epistemological position of the researcher varies. In order to understand the lives of marginalised groups, feminist research "study up" (Ramazanoğlu & Holland 2002:22-23). Since one of the objectives for the thesis is to comprehend the reasons for the unequal allocation of power between the sexes in local governments; semi-structured interviews were conducted in order to gain the knowledge and experiences of female time politicians. Furthermore, the feminist standpoint enables me to either confirm or disaffirm Phillips' (1995) arguments in *The Politics of Presence,* such as investigating if the sex of the representative affects the political agenda. This method enables me to map the practice of power, in the context of local government and female representation, by focusing on social institutions such as the organisation of local governments and their ideologies in order to understand diverse ways women are underrepresented (Harding 2004:30-31). By doing so, standpoint theory combines both politics and science in order to illustrate that (1) politics both advances and impedes the growth of knowledge and (2) elucidate the groups such politics advance or impede knowledge. By locating the political and material disadvantage, standpoint theory provides

insight into how hierarchical social structures work (Harding 2004:31).

The use of feminist standpoint theory when studying representation within political assemblies is essential. Dominated theories grounded in representative democracy, are solely based on the politics of ideas[20]. This has in turn both ignored and excluded the significance of women's presence in the politics and the importance of an equal allocation of power. However, the female time politicians' experiences are part of a wider social structure. The gender inequalities and discrimination they may experience need to be contextualised and supported with quantitative data. Thus, in this single case study, the assumption of an unequal allocation of power is based on quantitative data that centres on women's political representation at the level of local government in Skåne.

3.4. Quantitative Data Collection

During the autumn semester of 2015, I held an internship at the County Administrative Board in Skåne[21]. The county administrative boards are Swedish Government Agencies, located in each of Sweden's 21 counties. Their main responsibility is to coordinate the county in line with government objectives. Each year, every department within the county administrative board receives a government remit, with assignments that should be accomplished within a given time frame. My task was to work with one of these assignments and reconceptualise Skåne's gender equality strategy; with focus on the first gender equality sub-goal; *Equal Division of Power and Influence.*

My empirical material was collected by sending out an email to all municipalities in Skåne. The email explained the purpose of the data collection and provided the instructions for the data required. The data included information about representation between the sexes in four committees[22] and two public utilities[23], from current term of office (2014-2018). The committees represent two traditional female dominated sectors and two traditional male dominated sectors. My task was to find out if there is any difference in political representation between these gendered sectors.

The data was collected into an Excel file and later on converted into tables and divided on (1) sex; female and male; (2) power position, if they possessed an ordinary position or a replacement position; and (3) the sex of the chairman and vice-chairman. Here it should

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[20] See section: ""The Sex is Insignificant""

[21] In Swedish: *Länsstyrelsen Skåne*

[22] Town planning committee (Byggnadsnämnden), Social service committee (Socialnämnden), Education committee (Utbildningsnämnden) and Tchnical committee (Tekniska nämnden)

[23] Council houses (Kommunala bostäder) and Council electricy (Kommunalägda elbolag)

be noted that according to Statistics Sweden (SCB), quantitative gender equality implies equal distribution between women and men in all areas and sectors in society. If there are more than 60% women in a sector, it is female dominated and if there are more than 60% men in a sector, it is male dominated. Therefore a 40/60 allocation implies a balanced representation for women and men (Statistiska centralbyrån 2014:2).

3.4.1. Limitations

The material was collected by myself, in my capacity as an intern on behalf of the County Administrative Board Skåne. The collected material will be made public and could be used for research purposes. However, a dilemma arises because I did not state that the data collected at that time would be used in research, before getting published by the County Administrative Board. This could render the use of the data ethically questionable. However, after discussing this dilemma with my supervisor from the County Administrative Board Skåne, I decided to use the material. According to my supervisor, all material collected by the County Administrative Board is public and could be used at any time for other purposes, especially for research purpose[24]. Moreover, it should be noted that committees at local level are volatile in its composition; representatives enter and resign from the committees throughout the mandate period.

3.5. Qualitative Data Collection
3.5.1. Semi-Structured Interviews

The empirical data collected implied an unequal allocation of power between the sexes in the committees throughout Skåne. In order to in depth comprehend the data collected from the municipalities and to understand the reasons for this unequal allocation of power; semi-structured interviews were conducted. Semi-structured interviews "offer the researcher access to people's ideas, thoughts, and memories in their own words rather than in the words of the researcher" (Reinharz 1992, 19). The interviews allowed me to collect the ways in which the respondents view their social world, as the flexibility in the questions enabled the respondents to fully respond from their own personal point of view (Bryman 2012, 473). As mentioned above, the concept of the precariat (Standing 2014a) was used as a guideline for the construction of my interview guide and used to analyse the data gained from the interviews.

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[24] See reference: Länsstyrelsen Skåne. (2016). *En jämn fördelning av makt och inflytande: Kvinnors och mäns deltagande i nämnder och kommunala bolag i Skåne- några exempel.* Page:11

3.5.2. Interview Guide

The questions asked to the respondents, proceeded from a carefully composed interview guide[25]. The purpose of the interview guide was to structure a list of questions that would be asked when conducting the semi-structured interviews. The questions in the interview guide structured so that the interviewee would be able to answer based on her experiences and opinions (Bryman 2012, 473) "Face sheet" information of both a general and specific kind (name, age, profession, committee and position within the committee etc.) was provided at the beginning of each interview section, in order to contextualize the interviewees' answers (Bryman 2012, 473).

The challenge faced when transcribing interviews was that it was very time-consuming. However, it enabled me to keep the respondents' words intact so that valid information would be presented and an accurate analysis would be carried out in the thesis. In order to minimise the workload, the data was transcribed and analysed after each interview (Bryman 2012, 482-4484).

3.5.3. Informed Consent

Ethnical issues were considered when conducting the interviews in order to preserve the integrity and confidentiality of the interviewees. The respondents were given informed consent and received a *Research Information Sheet* that informed the nature of the research and the implications of their participation from the beginning. They also had to sign an *Interview Consent Form* to ensure that they have understood and agreed upon the conditions [26](Bryman 2012, 130, 138-141). Further on, in the *Research Information Sheet* I wrote that; "I would do my utmost to uphold confidentiality and anonymity"[27] as I, due to factors outside my control were not able guarantee confidentiality and anonymity[28]. However, I did everything I could to ensure confidentiality, such as using pseudonyms in transcripts and quotations; and altered specific detailed information that could be identifiable. These minor changes did not change the meaning of the respondents' words.

3.5.4. The Respondents

For qualitative research, purposive sampling is used. It implies that the sample of respondents is chosen so that they are relevant for the research question. In this single case study, the purposive sampling approach used is criterion sampling; all of my sampling respondents had

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[25] Found in Appendix "Interview Guide"
[26] Found in Appendix "Research Information Sheet" and "Interview Consent Form"
[27] Ibid.
[28] Anonymity could not be guaranteed as some of committees consist of few women.

to meet particular criterions (Bryman 2012, 418-419). The respondents had to be female time politicians serving the technical-, building-, education-, and/or social committees of the local government in Lund and they had to be in the ages between 30-65 years old and have an employment. Based on these criterions, student and senior citizens were not interviewed. These criterions are significant as the objective of the thesis is to investigate if there is a relation between female representation in Lund's local government and the labour market.

One difficulty with conducting qualitative research is to establish the outset for how many respondents that are needed in purposive sample; a sample that is too small could make it difficult to achieve the required data and information. On the contrary a sample that is too large could make it difficult to undertake case-oriented analysis. The size of the sample is therefore highly depended on the situation and the research case (Bryman 2012, 425). In this single case study, eight respondents were chosen; four serving in either one of the education committees or as part of the social service committee, and four serving either in the town building or in the technical committee. As discussed above, since there are few women serving in each committee, I am not able to give detailed information about the women due to their integrity and the fact that anonymity was promised. However, all of the respondents met the criterions; Alida, Andrea, Astrid and Bibi, served on the "soft" committees while Agnes, Alma, Esther and Eva served on the "hard" committees. In theory, political ideology of the respondents was not considered as the objective was to gather their experience's as time politicians regardless the party they belong to. All of them possessed at least a replacement-seat, while some of them held higher position within their committee. The majority of them described their working place as female-dominated and three of them had foreign heritage.

4. The Swedish Political System

This section describes the constitution of Swedish democracy and governance. It starts by describing the overall governance and how representative democracy works and ends with an in depth explanation of the governance of municipalities is provided.

4.1. The Instrument of Government

> "1§ All public power in Sweden proceeds from the people.
>
> Swedish democracy is founded on the free formation of opinion and on universal and equal suffrage. It is realised through a representative and parliamentary form of government and through local self-government.

Public power is exercised under the law[29]" (Riksdagen 2014b).

The above statement is excerpted from the first paragraph in the first chapter of the *Instrument of Government*[30] which is the fundamental law defining the principles of the Swedish democracy. It describes how the country should be governed, what the citizens' democratic rights are and how the public power between the government, parliament, county council and municipalities should be allocated (Lagen n.d; Riksdagen 2014a).

Swedish governance is based on representative democracy constructed on party-based democracy, with universal and equal suffrage. Representative democracy is a two-stage processes in which the citizens first choose the representatives whom in turn act as the citizens' agents and make the decisions (Bäck, Erlingsson & Larsson 2015, 21; Esaiasson & Holmberg 1996, 4). According to the constitution, the Swedish parliament (Riksdag) is the most significant public institution and the highest decision-making authority at the national level. The notion that the parliament represents the people legitimises its power of exercise. Representative democracy highlight two models of representation; politics of ideas and social representation[31]. The former implies that the constitution of parliament should solely reflect the populations' ideas and opinions and characterises the Swedish system. The representatives should represent their parties' ideas, and not their own. Hence, attributes such as sex, age and ethnicity, of the representatives is insignificant in the politics of ideas. Representative democracy is known as *representation run from above* and indicates elements of elitism and paternalism (Bäck et al 2015, 74&76; Esaiasson & Holmberg 1996, 4; Lewin 2015, 83).

4.1.1. The Responsible Party Model

The Responsible Party Model (RPM) serves as the core of the politics of ideas and the Swedish representative democracy (Esaiasson & Holmberg 1996, 3). The model implies that parties present stable and divergent party programmes during election campaigns in order to compete for the voters support. The voters decide upon the programmes and policies that the parties represent and the winner (either a single party or a coalition) forms a government and carriers out the presented policies during the upcoming term of office. At the next election the voters can hold the coalition or the governing party accountable for what they did/ did not achieve (Dahlberg 2009, 270; Esaiasson & Holmberg 1996, 3; Wängnerud 1999, 15). The

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[29] In Swedish: *"All offentlig makt i Sverige utgår från folket. Den svenska folkstyrelsen bygger på fri åsiktsbildning och på allmän och lika rösträtt. Den förverkligas genom ett representativt och parlamentariskt statsskick och genom kommunal självstyrelse. Den offentliga makten utövas under lagarna."*
[30] In Swedish: *Regeringsformen*
[31] See section: "Politics of Difference"

political parties, and not individual politicians, are the actors as the disciplined and programmatic parties constitute the motor of RPM. Political parties function as mediators between public preferences and policy outcomes. The model implies top-down leadership, opinion formation from above and highlights accountability, in which the elections play a critical role in the political system (Dahlberg 2009, 270; Esaiasson & Holmberg 1996, 3).

4.2. The Local Self-Government

> "1§ Municipalities and county councils may themselves attend to matters of general concern which are connected with the area of the municipality or county council or with their members and which are not or to be attended to solely by the state, another municipality, another county council or some other body" (Regeringen 2015).

The political power in Sweden is decentralised as the political system is constituted of four subsystems[32]. The national government is superordinate to the other systems, as it sets the boundaries for the county council and the local council and has the authority to withdraw the power municipalities possess. However, the principle of local self-government has been enshrined in the *Instrument of Government*, and gain further autonomy through laws such as the *Local Government Act* (the first paragraph in the second chapter is cited above)*, levying of taxation* and *the plan monopoly[33]*. These laws have enabled local government independence (Larsson 1994, 39-40; Regeringen 2015). *The Local Government Act* serves as a frame law, which indicates that decisions taken in the city council is only valid until a higher authority, declare otherwise[34] (Larsson 1994, 41).

90% of the municipalities' budget is intended to provide welfare services to the citizens including education, child care and care of the elderly, social service, culture- and recreational activities. The municipalities' are also responsible for the infrastructure and technical supply, and to provide housing[35] (Bäck et al 2015, 206; Regeringen 2015).

In sum, the political system in Sweden is highly depended on how the synergy between the local and national level develops. However, the governance at local- and national levels is essentially the same; both are based in representative democracy with universal and equal suffrage (Larsson 1994, 45-46; SKL 2015).

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[32] The national system (*Riksdagen*), the regional, county council (*Landstinget*) and the local municipal council (*Kommunen*). The church (*Svenska kyrkan*) could also be counted as one system.
[33] In Swedish: *kommunallagen, beskattningsrätten* and *planmonopolet.*
[34] In Swedish: *Kommunfullmäktige* – the highest decision-making authority on municipal level.
[35] Most of the municipalities have public utility housing associations.

4.2.1. The Organisation of Municipalities

In Sweden, approximately 38 000 elected political representatives are represented in 290 of Sweden's municipalities. 97 percent of them are time politicians [36](in this section referred to as "representatives"[37]). In local government elections, non-Swedish citizens with three years of residency have the right to vote and run as candidates (Larsson 2002, 113; SKL 2015).
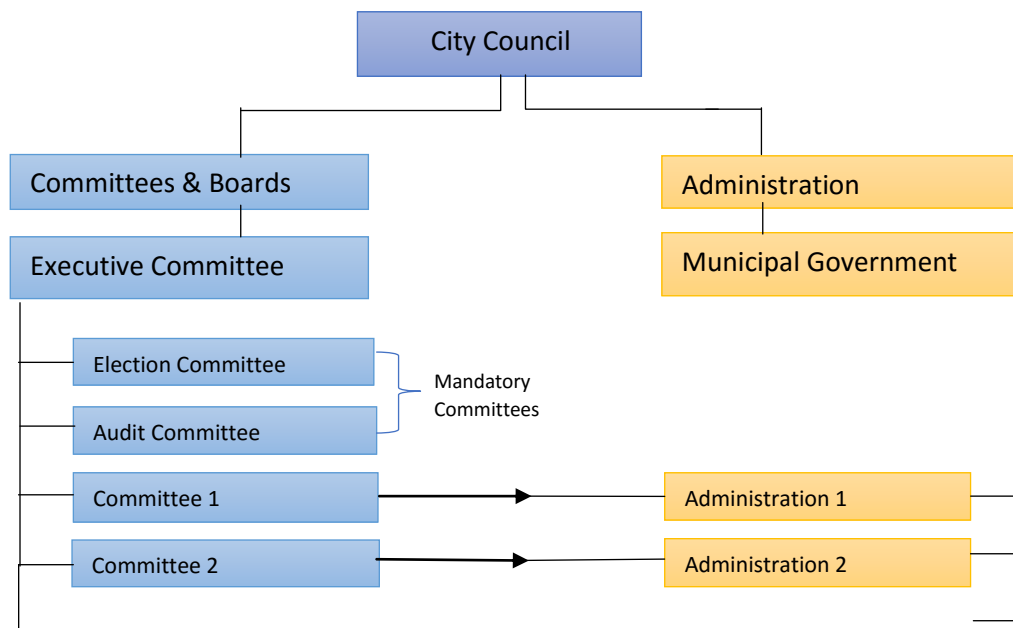
Fig.1

Figure 1, simplistically illustrates how the political and administrative organisation of a municipality could be organised. The blue boxes exemplify political assemblies and the yellow boxes exemplify administrations with civil servants. The city council is the highest decision-making authority and decides upon the overall decisions concerning the municipality, such as the budget and taxation, among others. The representatives chosen at the local election are allocated proportionally between the parties. The municipal executive committee is the highest executive body, appointed by the city council. The largest party in the city council also possesses most of the seats on the board. All the decisions that will be taken in the city council is prepared and processed in the municipal executive committee. It is also responsible for the economy and manages and coordinates all the work within a municipality (SKL 2015; Svenskt näringsliv 2014, 4).

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[36] See section: "Time Politicians"
[37] Since not all of the elected representatives in municipalities are time politicians.

The committees are responsible for distinct areas and work in depth with questions concerning the specific area, such as education, housing and traffic. The committee representatives are chosen by their own parties and approved by the city council. They both prepare matters that will be decided upon and implement decisions taken by the city council. In practise, all work within a municipality is carried out by civil servants working within the administration connected to a committee. In turn, they process *and* prepare the matters that the representatives in the committees will decide upon, but it is always the representatives that have the utmost responsibility. Since the municipalities differ in size and resources; the municipalities themselves decide upon committees needed and their names, thus the organisation of municipalities differs from one another. However, according to law, the election and audit committee are mandatory committees for every municipality (SKL 2015; Svenskt näringsliv 2014, 5).

Through civil dialogue, the citizens have the ability to discuss priorities and objectives with the representatives. In almost all of the municipalities in Sweden, the citizens are able to write a petition with requirements, opinions or questions to the municipality.[38] Once the petition is handed in, it becomes a public document which the municipality is obligated to process, either in the city council or in the responsible committee. The citizens have the ability to appeal against decisions concerning social assistance or building permits, among others. They also have the right to appeal to the administrative court if decisions taken might be against the law. The former is called an *administrative appeal* and the latter is called *legality review* (SKL 2015; Svenskt näringsliv 2014, 7).

5. Previous Research

The purpose of this section is to situate the thesis empirically and theoretically. It is divided into two main sections. The first section focuses on representation and outlines statistics over representation in political assemblies and summaries some of the previous research done within the field of female representation at national- and local level. Followed by arguments against social representation and the politics of presence. The second section focuses on women's conditions in the labour market based on the result of The Official Reports of the Swedish Government[39] and the time women and men spend on care work. Subsequently, arguments against the labour market and its role in producing social injustices and

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[38] In Swedish the process is called: *medborgarförslag*

[39] (SOU 2004:43; 2005:66; 2014:28; 2014:30; 2014:81 & 2015:50)

reproducing gender identities and hierarchies, is outlined. Both sections end with a brief summary.

5.1. Representation

According to The Official Report of the Swedish Government (SOU 2015: 86, 98), the composition of the parliament after elections is a significant indicator in terms of allocation of power and influence. The parliament is the highest decision-making assembly; which, among other things, passes laws and decides upon government expenditure and revenue in the state budget. An equal allocation of power between the sexes is thus a significant prerequisite for equal power and influence in the society.

Since the imposition of universal suffrage in 1919/1921, the development towards equal allocation of power within the parliament has been languid. After the 1973 election, female representation increased to 20%. Two factors for this increment was (1) that the parliament went from a bicameral to a unicameral system and (2) women's increased demands for a gender equal society and equal allocation of power between the sexes within decision-making assemblies In 1994s election, female representation increased to 40%, as a result of the Social Democrats' introduction of quotas on their party list, known as the principle of *Varannan damernas*[40]. This principle is still used by the Social Democrats, the Green Party and the Left Party (Freidenvall 2006, 6-7; SOU 2015: 86, 99).

Since the election in 1994, female representatives in the parliament have increased from 40% to 47% in 2006. The two latest elections, 2010 and 2014, female representatives have decreased to 45% in 2010 and 44% in 2014, which is a result of the decreased number of female candidates on some parties party lists[41] and enter of the Social Democrats in the parliament, which only had 15% women. Foreign born representatives have increased with 2 points since 1991 to 8.3% 2014, however, the amount of foreign born female representatives has decreased (SOU 2015: 86, 100, 105).

5.1.2. Female Representation and Interests

The Official Report of the Swedish Government (SOU 2015: 86, 107) confirms that a horizontal gender division exists within the parliament. Women are more likely to be represented in committees concerning social issues, such as care, welfare and education, while men are likely to dominate committees related to economics, technique and defence. In 2004, the committees were almost equal with 47% women and 53% men on average. However, after

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[40] The principle implies alternate listing of women and men in party lists.
[41] The Liberal Party, the Christian Democrats, the Centre Party and the Swedish Democrats (SOU 2015:86, 101)

the two latest elections, as mentioned above, the gender patterns have once again become more obvious.

In order to investigate if the politics of presence has empirical support, Lena Wängnerud (1999) conducted her dissertation on political priorities and political interests of female and male representatives in the parliament. Wängnerud (1999) reached the conclusion that a gender pattern exists; as more women enter the parliament, the politics becomes more along between "female" and "male" lines. Women are hence overrepresented (in relation to their proportion in the parliament) in policy areas concerning reproduction, while men are overrepresented in areas concerning production. Wängnerud's (1999) conclusion implies that the gender pattern is due to the women's own choices based on their own interests. The horizontal gender division should thus not solely be seen as an expression for gender discrimination, although it is more difficult for women to enter traditional male dominated committees. Moreover, the interest for "female" issues, such as gender equality, is very low among men. Women's entry into the parliament has expanded the political agenda, to the extent that it now includes women's experiences and interests. However in order to reach balanced representation, the parties have to draw attention to this matter and take action (Wängnerud 1999).

Bergqvist, Adman and Jungar (2008) also confirms the existence of horizontal and vertical gender division, and divide it into "soft" and "hard" sections. These sections reflect the societies' and politics' notion of what is valuable and important. The "soft" sections have thus been ascribed as less powerful since they have been traditionally female dominated. However, Bergqvist et al (2008) emphasize that issues concerning production are not necessarily more significant than reproduction issues. At election times, "soft" issues concerning welfare, care and education are important in welfare states such as Sweden, and the questions are driven by and affect both women and men. Further on, Bergqvist at al (2008), like Wängnerud (1999), also argues that once women enter political assemblies, their experiences and interests becomes a significant part of the political agenda.

5.1.3. Social Representation in Municipalities

According to Statistics Sweden report *Förtroendevalda i kommuner och landsting 2015* (Statistiska centralbyrån 2016), women are underrepresented among the elected representatives in municipalities. The proportion of women among elected representatives is 43%, which is 7 points less than it should be, as women constitutes 50% of the population. More women are represented among the younger representatives (18-30 years), 47%,

compared to 37% of women represented over 65 years (Statistiska centralbyrån 2016, 5, 27). Foreign born people over 18 years old, constitute 19% of the population, but are represented by 9%. Lower income earners are underrepresented, and predominantly female. The groups that are overrepresented are men, high income earners, public servants and people with higher education. According to the report, there are no significant differences between current term of office and the previous one (2010- 2014) (Statistiska centralbyrån 2016, 5, 33-34).

5.1.4. Horizontal and Vertical Division of Representation
The report from Statistics Sweden (Statistiska centralbyrån 2016, 51-54) implies that there is a horizontal and vertical division of representation between the sexes in municipalities. The vertical division is evident as 57% of the women are represented in committees concerning care, welfare and social service, while they are underrepresented (29%) in committees concerning technical issues. There is a balanced representation in committees concerning education and culture. The vertical division is evident as more men than women are represented in power positions. 37% women are chairman and 41% are vice-chairman in committees, and 37% of the chairmen in the municipal executive committee are women, which are an increase with 7 points since 2011(Statistiska centralbyrån 2016, 6, 55-56).

5.1.5. Gender Power Relations at Local Level
Anne Gustafssons' (2008) dissertation aims to investigate the extent to which women can achieve political power, and influence politics on the basis of their interests and experiences as members of a marginalised group in society. Similar to Wängnerud (1999), Gustafssons' (2008) departures from Phillips' (1995) the politics of presence; as her empirical material to a large extent supports the theoretical assumptions set out by Phillips. Gustafssons' (2008) empirical material emphasizes the significance of women's political presence for politicising gender relations and promoting women's interests in politics. Both female and male representatives experience that gender equality issues and issues regarding the reproductive sphere have gained increased political attention as more women have entered politics. According to the female time politicians Gustafsson (2008) interviewed, the horizontal division between the sexes in politics can be explained by gender power relations; men monopolise the most influential positions and excludes women from such positions. Thus Gustafsoons' dissertation puts more emphasis on the impacts of the gender power relations than Wängnerud's (1999). Gustafssons' (2008) dissertation hence implies that women's opportunities to manoeuvre in politics is limited by gender power relations and their difficulty of finding *time* for their political engagement and assignments.

Micael Nilsson's (2008) dissertation aimed to examine women's and men's access to both quantitative and qualitative local political power in the city of Norrköping, between 1970 and 2006. Similar to Gustafsson (2008) Nilsson (2008) puts emphasis on gender power relations and how it affects women's political participation and representation. Nilsson's dissertation illustrates a political gender regime that has been built upon informal power structures and homogeneous relations between male representatives. This political gender regime has in turn excluded women from power and influence until the 21st century. Nilsson's (2008) research implies that gender is a factor affecting women's political participation but not men's. By analysing "hard" and "soft" committees; Nilsson argues that women's integration into local politics did not contribute to change within the "soft" committees, as men continued to dominate the "soft" committees. Men have thus been overrepresented in *both* "soft" and "hard" committees. However, in the 21st century some aspects of the gender regime changed, by promoting a more "female coded" leadership based on communication, cooperation and delegation of power. Consequently, more female representatives in 21st gained access to real political power (Nilsson 2008).

5.1.6. Female Time Politicians and the Labour Market

Gun Hedlunds' dissertation *Det handlar om prioriteringar – Kvinnors villkor och intressen i lokal politik* (1996) investigated women's conditions and interests within local politics in the city of Örebro. Hedlund (1996) gained the same results as Wängnerud (1999) concerning women's political choices and roles. The majority of the women Hedlund interviewed indicated that they represent female interests better than their male colleagues. Hedlund also found out some of the difficulties and obstacles female time politicians encounter. Similar to Gustafsson (2008), one significant difficulty female time politicians' experience is the lack of *time*. The women in Hedlund's dissertation expressed one's angst over how to balance politics, family and labour, since women spend more time on care work compared to men. Further on, the consequence that woman are more represented in reproductive labour is that it is not only their colleagues that will be affected when they take leave of absence from their employment. A third part, such as the people within geriatric care, welfare and school are also directly affected by absence. The female time politicians who labour within the reproductive sector are hence more likely to experience guilt and shame if they ought to be absent from their job due to political engagement. Hedlund (1996) argues that this might be a reason for why male civil servants and men on higher positions are overrepresented among the time politicians.

5.1.7. "The Sex is Insignificant"

Arguments against increased female representation proceeds from the notion of the Responsibility Party Model and the fact that the Swedish representative democracy is based on the politics of ideas. As mentioned earlier[42], the politics of ideas is based on the notion of universal humanism, hence the social background, such as sex, age and ethnicity, of the representative is insignificant since she/he should solely represent the parties' ideas (Bäck et al 2015, 76). The elective representatives should reflect the citizen's opinions, which according to liberal democracies, is separated from the individual's sex and other attributes (Bergqvist et al 2008, 20). Torbjörn Larsson (1994) proceeds from this argument and states:

> "Now then, what ought the answer to the question whether or not women are needed in decision-making assemblies be? In the face of this briefing; no. The representative system in Sweden is based on politics of ideas, not social representation, and for that people are needed, the sex is insignificant"[43] (Larsson 1994, 117).

Present in arguments against the increase in female representation, is the notion that Sweden is one of the most gender equal countries. Further on, the arguments question why representation based on sex should be more important than other factors, such as ethnicity and age (Bäck et al 2015, 76). The arguments against increased female representation ignore the correlation between one's experience and opinions/interests. Phillips' (1995) and Young's (1990) arguments of the significance of social representation, are hence rejected by solely putting emphasis on the impossibilities of creating political assemblies based on social representation; as it is neither desirable nor possible in representative democracies based on the politics of ideas (Bäck et al 2015, 75-76; Larsson 1994, 114-117). However, as the empirical material from previous research (outlined above) implies, the sex of the representatives in fact matters and has affected the political agenda.

5.1.8. Representation – A Summary

In sum, all previous research mentioned in this section confirms a horizontal and vertical political division of representation and argue for the importance of increased female representation. The horizontal division implies that female politicians are more likely to possess positions within "soft" committees related to the "reproductive" sphere such as health, welfare and education. While male politicians on the other hand, are overrepresented in

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[42] See section: "Feminist Standpoint Theory" and "The Swedish Political System"

[43] The quotation was translated from Swedish: "Nå, vad bör då svaret bli på frågan om det behövs några kvinnor i våra beslutfattande församlingar? Denna genomgång till trots är svaret nej. Det representativa systemet i Sverige bygger på *åsiktsrepresentativitet*, inte social representativitet, och till det behövs det människor, könet är här ointressant.

"hard" committees, responsible for the "productive" sphere such as economy, infrastructure and urban development. The vertical division implies that the number of women decline higher up in the power hierarchy, and is evident by statistics illustrating the overrepresentation of men in power positions, such as being chairmen. It also implies that a so called "glass ceiling" exist and prevents women from gaining certain power positions, although more women now are able to break through it (Bergqvist et al 2008, 35; Nilsson 2008, 71). The research by Bergqvist et al 2008; Gustafsson 2008; Hedlund 1996; Wängnerud 1999, have all focused on women's political choices and roles, while Nilsson (2008) put more emphasis on men and male homosociality, in order to understand the gender patterns and the unequal allocation of power within political assemblies. Both Hedlund's (1996) and Gustafsson's (2008) dissertation acknowledge the lack of *time* female time politicians experience, due to their assigned roles in the labour market and in the family. A common denominator for the previous research is the significance of an equal allocation of power and increase of female representatives. The sex of the representatives is in fact related to one's interests and opinions, in contrast to contrary arguments. These finding is used in "Result and Analysis" in order to analyse my empirical material.

5.2. Women in the Labour Market

As the previous section implies, women are more represented in "soft" committees concerning care, welfare and education, while men are more represented in "hard" committees concerning infrastructure, environment and housing. The Official Report of the Swedish Government (SOU 2015: 86, 114) claims that one reason for this gender pattern is the gender segregation in the labour market. Gender segregation in the labour market, like the political gender division, is horizontal and vertical. The horizontal segregation implies that women and men labour within different sectors and have different employers, and that the sectors are either male- or female dominated. A consequence of this division of labour is that men's labour are valued higher, which affects both the wage and grade of influence. The vertical segregation implies that the allocation of power is unequal between the sexes, as men to a larger extent obtain power positions (Länsstyrelsen 2014, 40; SOU 2014:30, 111).

5.2.1. Labour with Exchange Value

The historical explanation for gender segregation in the labour market is closely linked to the domestic gender division within household organisation, which has affected and determined women's and men's salaries. Traditionally, women have chosen either "family oriented" or

"carrier oriented" professions[44]. However, there is no evidence that "family oriented" professions, in the so called reproductive sectors, are more beneficial for the family. Female-dominated sectors are more time demanding and have less flexible working conditions. People working within these sectors are bound to their working place and have fixed working hours. The economic resource and the autonomy related to one's own working situations, is hence restricted. Consequently, female-dominated sectors have one of the highest rates of sick-leaves; as the professions are more emotional and physical demanding, comparing to male-dominated sectors (SOU 2014:30, 175-179; 2014:81, 13 & 2015:50, 60).

The salary difference between the sexes is evident as women on average earn 86.6% of men's salary, which implies a wage difference of 13.4%; women thus earn SEK 45000 less than men per year. Consequently, when the average woman retires, she has earned SEK 3.6 million less than the average man. However, by considering more variables, such as, profession, sector, education, age and working hours; the wage difference between women and men is 5.8%. Moreover, the average salary in female-dominated sectors is lower than in male-dominated sectors (SOU 2014:81, 11, 47-48; 2015:50, 58).

Women are also more likely to have more insecure employments compared to men. As a result of the 1990s economic crisis, the Swedish labour market became more unstable and resulted in the expansion of temporary employments. Temporary employments created new hierarchies in the labour market. At the bottom of this hierarchy are workers with limited influence over their working conditions and restricted autonomy in relation to their employers. More women than men have temporary employments and fewer women have gained permanent employment compared to men[45]. In 2002, half a million Swedes had temporary employments; 300 000 of them were women (Yazdanpanah 2013, 38; SOU 2004:43, 9-70; 2014:30, 95).

Women are underrepresented on higher positions, as more than two thirds of managerial positions are possessed by men. Within the public sector the proportion of male executives are higher than the proportion of men employed (SOU 2015:50, 7). Additionally, as Nilsson (2008) argued, leadership positions are constructed and dominated by masculine norms[46]. Women in the labour market are thus discriminated against due to stereotypical notions

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[44] "Family oriented" are professions such as; nurses, care takers, teachers. "Carrier oriented" are professions such as; engineers and economists (SOU 2004:43, 14).

[45] Such as; temporary position (*vikariat),* project employment (*projektsanställning)* and internship (*praktiktjänstgöring*) (SOU 2004:43, 70).

[46] See section: "Gender Power Relations at Local Level"

associated with women and femininity[47] and through the maintenance of homosociality[48]. Similar to women's condition in politics, these factors contribute to the composition of a glass ceiling, which in turn determine women's careers in the labour market (Fogelberg Eriksson 2005, 43-45; SOU 2004:43, 53; 2014:30, 94).

5.2.2. Work with use Value

As mentioned initially, work has use value. It includes all of activities and tasks around in and around the home and has thus been excluded from the economic scale in the twentieth century. According to The Official Report of the Swedish Government on care work and labour (SOU 2014:28), the allocation of care work is significant for gender equality within the household and in the labour market. The responsibility that women have for the home and children is one of the main reasons why women are employed part-time. As mentioned above, this has negative consequences both on both women's economy and psychic health. Even if both cohabiting partners labour full-time; the woman performs on average more care work, and is thus responsible for household choirs etc (SOU 2014:28, 11-13, 100).

According to time survey carried out by Statistics Sweden (Statistiska centralbyrån 2014, 38), women, on average, spend 3.5 hours on care work during a weekday and 26 hours during a week. While men spend 2.6 hours on care work during a weekday and 21 hours during a week. The time spent on different care work activities varies, both between the sexes and through different phases in life. For instance, cohabiting partners in the ages between 20-44 years, without children; spend approximately 18 hours per week each on care work. While cohabiting partners of young children spend different amount of time on care work; women spend 40 hours per week, while men spend approximately 33 hours (Statistiska centralbyrån 2014, 39). This concludes that young cohabiting partners spend equal amount of time on care work, but once they become parents, the use of time becomes more gender traditional. Women's domestic workload hence increases when they have small children; since they are more likely to use all of the parental leave they are entitled to and carry out most of the care work. Moreover, this workload decreases to a certain extent once the children become older, but increases again if they get more children. The time men spent on care work remains constant, regardless of the child's age and number of children (SOU 2014:28, 101; 2015:50, 59). Further on, the difference between women's and men's sick-leaves before having

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[47] Myths such as: "Women cannot handle", "Women do not want to be executives", "Women cannot be with their families" and "Women have children" (SOU 2004:43, 12).

[48] Through so called *"ryggdunksfilosofi"* or *"bastukultur"* on workplaces sets common references for men to relate to excludes women (2004:43, 53).

children is fractional, however, once children are born, women's sick-leave from labour increases significantly (SOU 2015:50, 60).

Care work also includes care of dependents outside the household, such as aging parents. Since the public geriatric care has decreased in scale from 1980s onwards, dependent care has increased (SOU 2014:28, 13). 42% of both women and men provide dependent care at least once a week, however gender differences are evident when observing how often care is provided. Female caregivers spend on average 5.4 hours per week compared to male caregivers, who spends 3.5 hours per week (Szebehely, Ulmanen & Sand 2014, 13-14). As a consequence, women are affected more than men. More than 40% of the women experience psychic distress and difficulty of keeping up with leisure activities. Twice as many women experience difficulties with focusing on their labour, even in cases where both women and men spend equal amount of time on dependent care (Szebehely, et al 2014, 17, 20).

5.2.3. Solution?

The Official Report of the Swedish Government (SOU 2015:50, 61), claim that women should labour more to ensure their financial independence as well as stimulate the national economy. The report (2015:50, 62) puts emphasis on working hours, and the importance that labour market parties offers full-time employments with adequate working conditions. Further on, both cohabiting partners should take equal responsibility for care work, and thus the government should regulate withdrawal of parental insurance. The report (2015:50, 62) suggests no further earmarked months for fathers, but highlights the importance of well operating social insurances, such as child care and geriatric care.

5.2.3. Critiques of the Labour Market

Vi bara lyder (2015) by Roland Paulsen gives an account of how the Swedish labour market mechanisms procreates increased inequalities in the country. Paulsen argues that the Swedish economy is thriving, due to efficient labour and increased production, given that one person produces as much as two people did in the 1980s. Despite the fact that the production has redoubled, the real salary has hardly increased and the working hours are the same. Consequently, a redundant workforce has emerged, as a growing part of the population does not have a salary at all, resulting in the fast growing poverty in Sweden. This in turn has shaped an absurd political discourse of "creating jobs" and "increase occupation rate"[49] (Paulsen 2015, 35-37). Paulsen's (2015) argumentation is in accordance with Standing's

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[49] In Swedish: *"skapa jobb"* and *"full sysselsättning"*

(2014a), as they both claim that the political discourse around labour market has created the emerge of precariat – insecure and stressed people.

Kathi Weeks argues in *The Problem with Work – Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics, and Postwork Imaginaries* (2011, 8) that labour not only produces economic services but also social and political subjects; the wage relation both alters income and capital, *and* disciplines individuals as worthy citizens, governable subjects and responsible family members. The feministic critic of the labour market hence highlights the vertical and horizontal division of labour;

> "Waged work and unwaged work alike continues to be structured by the productivity of gender-differentiated labour, including the gender division of both household roles and waged occupations, But the gendering of work is not just a matter of these institutionalised tendencies to distinguish various forms of men's and women's work, but a consequence of the ways that worker are often expected to do gender at work" (Weeks 2011, 9).

This in turn causes the enforcement of gender identities and hierarchies; as gender in the labour market is preformed and recreated on daily basis (SOU 2014:30, 110; 2015:50, 67; Weeks 2011, 9-10).

In oppose to the suggestions of the Official Report of the Swedish Government (SOU 2015:50) (mentioned in above) Paulsen (2015), Standing (2014a) and Weeks (2011), all argue for reduction of working hours, to at least six hours per day, and a recognition of care work. By doing so, both women and men have time for care- and reproductive work; time for rest and leisure; and creation of new ways of sustainable living.

5.3.4. Women in the Labour Market – A Summary

The division of representation is argued to be a consequence of the horizontal and vertical gender segregation in the labour market. Women are more present in the reproductive sectors while men are in productive sectors. The female-dominated sectors are characterised by low salaries, inflexible working condition, insecure employments and high rates of sick-leaves. Women are also underrepresented on managerial positions, to the extent that even female-dominated sectors have male executives. The gender segregation in the labour market is closely linked to the domestic gender division within household organisation. As the statistics illustrates, women spend more time on care work, including the care of dependents outside the household. Consequently, more women than men experience psychic distress, difficulty of keeping up with leisure activities and being able to focus on their labour. Women's condition

in the labour market and their assigned roles within in the family, are in accordance with Standing's description of the "triple burden"[50].

In order to create a gender equal labour market, the Official Report of the Swedish Government (SOU 2015:50, 61), claims that labour market parties should offers full-time employments. However, a feministic critic of the labour market implies that the labour market reinforces gender identities and hierarchies, and thus argues for the significance of reduced working hours. In sum, women's condition in the labour market is hence of a precariatic nature, and is expended on further on[51].

6. A Single Case Study - Lund's Municipality

Below, fundamental information about Lund's municipality, brief explanation of the committees and statistics over women and men in the labour market is provided.

6.1. Lund

Skåne consist of 33 municipalities, and during the current term of office (2014-2018), the county council is governed by the Social Democrats and the Green Party[52] (Region Skåne, 2015). Lund's municipality is also governed by the Social Democrats and the Green Party. From the beginning of the current term of office, they ruled in minority along with the Left Party and the Feminist Party[53], but the collation was dissolved in the autumn 2015, when the parties could no longer agree upon a common budget.

There are 16 committees in the municipality of Lund and the city council consists of 65 sits (Lund 2015). Both the municipal executive committee and city council are male-dominated as both of the assemblies consist of 62% men with a male chairman (Länsstyrelsen 2015, 62-63).The elected representatives in Lund's municipality differ from the rest of the municipalities in Sweden, as 23% of the elected are in the age between 18-30 years, comparing to 9% which is the average in Sweden (Statistiska centralbyrån 2015, 39).

Lund's municipality have approximately 117 000 residents and is an old university city. Lund's University has 41 000 students and 7500 employees. Lund is an attractive city to live in due to its reputations of being an academic city. Approximately 18% of Lund's population labour or study within academia. The population in Lund increase every year, despite the fact that the total income in Lund is below average compared with rest of Sweden (Lund 2014).

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[50] See section "The Precariat – A Key Concept"
[51] See section: "The Precarious Labour Market"
[52] In Swedish: *Socialdemokraterna & Miljöpartiet*
[53] In Swedish: *Vänsterpartiet & Feministiskt initiativ*

6.2. The Committees in Lund

As mentioned in the method section, the thesis focuses on four committees in Lund's municipality. All of the committees in Lund consist of 11 representatives, besides from one of the education committee, which consists of 13 representatives[54] (Lund 2015).

The social service committee belongs to the social service administration. Their objective is to support citizens who are in need of social services, such as economic support, rehab or labour market measures to name a few. It is also accountable for immigrants and people with addiction problems and (Lund 2015).

Lund has three education committees[55], two of them are responsible for childcare and pre- and primary school activities. Since Lund has approximately 76 pre-schools and 39 primary schools; the two committees are responsible for different geographic areas across Lund. The third education committee is accountable for secondary- and higher education, and Swedish language instruction for immigrant (SFI) (Lund 2015).

The building committee is administered by the urban planning office. They are in charge of processing building permits and registration, infrastructure and traffic planning, cultural heritage conservation, green structure and accessibility consultancy (Lund 2015).

The technical committee controls parks and forest areas, road maintenance, residential- and business areas, management of municipal land reserve. It is also in charge of public transportation and mobility service, but submitted some of the responsibility entitled to the former, over to the county council (Lund 2015).

6.3. The Labour Market in Lund

Sweden, compared to other countries, has high rates of women in the labour market (80% and 86% men). Skåne has the lowest employment rate in Sweden, 71% women and 73% men labour (Länsstyrelsen 2014, 42). In Lund those numbers are 67% women and 68% men. Twice as many women than men are employed part-time in Skåne, and more women are employed by the hour (Länsstyrelsen 2015, 32).

The most common profession for women is within the care and welfare sector. It employs approximately 54 000 women, which constitutes 21% of all professions in Skåne and 15 % of all professions in Lund. The most common professions for men are salesperson, supply manager and stockbroker. 15 000 men are employed within these sectors, constituting 6% of

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[54] Barn- och skolnämnden Lund Stad (Which is also the committee used in the thesis).
[55] Barn- och skolnämnden Lund stad, Barn- och skolnämden Lund öster and Utbildningsnämnden.

all professions in Skåne and 4% in Lund. Followed by the building- and construction sector (approximately 12 000 men, 5% in Skåne and 2% in Lund) (Länsstyrelsen 2015, 36 - 39) [56]. 44% of the women in Skåne, and approximately 50% in Lund labour within the public sector. While 15% of the men in Skåne and approximately 30% in Lund, labour within the public sector (Länsstyrelsen 2015, 41) [57].

In conclusion, the political arena in Lund is male-dominated, and consists of younger elected representatives, compared to other municipalities. The labour market in Skåne, and in Lund resemble the rest of Sweden, as mentioned in previous section[58] and entail a horizontal division of labour.

7. Result and Analysis

In this section my empirical data collected from the quantitative surveys sent to municipalities in Skåne, and qualitative semi-structured interviews with eight female time politicians in Lund's municipality; is presented. The material is analysed with Phillips' (1995) *The Politics of Presence*, Standing's (2014a) *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*; and the information presented in the section: "Previous Research".

7.1. Unequal Allocation of Power

The empirical material collected during the internship I held at the County Administrative Board Skåne, implies a horizontal and vertical division of representation[59]. The material illustrates a gender pattern in which women are represented in "soft" committees connected to the reproductive sector, and men are represented in *both* "soft" and "hard" committees, connected to the reproductive *and* productive sector. However, unlike women, men dominate the political arena in Skåne as they are overrepresented in the "hard" committees (Appendix 3-4). A vertical division of representation within local governments in Skåne is evident, as women are underrepresented in power positions. Women, in all of the committees besides the social service committee, to a larger extent possess replacement seats rather than ordinary seats. The highest rate of female chairmen (39%) can be found at the social service committees, which implies that men monopolise chairmen positions in all committees (Appendix 1). However, women are more likely to possess vice-chairmen positions, as women are slightly overrepresented as vice-chairmen in the social service- and education committees (Appendix 1-2). Nevertheless, it is important to note that Lund's municipality

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[56] The professions can be found in the report *Kvinnor & Män i Skåne 2015* (Länsstyrelsen 2015, 36-37)
[57] The numbers are based on employees between the age of 16 – 64 years old
[58] See section: "Labour with Exchange Value"
[59] Appendix 1-4

slightly differs from the rest of Skåne. Women are underrepresented in all of the committees besides in the social service committee. The social service committee have 41% women, which is on the verge of a balanced representation (Appendix 1). Despite the fact that women are underrepresented in both the technical – and the education committee; both of the committees have female chairman and vice-chairman (Appendix 2&4). This could be due to the fact that both the Social Democrats and the Green Party have the principle of *Varannan damernas* on their party lists and nominate people to committees based on this principle.

7.1.1. The Horizontal Segregation

As mentioned initially, the Official Report of the Swedish Government (SOU 2015: 86, 114), briefly states that the gender pattern within committees might be due to horizontal division in the labour market. All of the respondents interviewed agreed upon this statement to some extent.

> "Yes, I agree with the statement. I labour with social issues because I have studied subjects concerning social issues, and when I wanted to get engaged in politics; it came naturally to me to get engage in a committee concerning social issues. (…) The labour market is reflected into the politics. However, it starts by how one is raised and the choices made in school. This in turn affects one's interests and the choice of carrier; and thus one's role in politics" (Bibi 2016).

The respondents answered in accordance with Bibi. All of the respondents mentioned the gender segregation in the labour market to be one of the reasons for why women and men are represented within different committees. The respondents claim that women and men apply for different committees based on the traditional roles they have been assigned to in society. All of the respondents claimed that one's own interests and the experiences gained by labouring in different sectors are significant factors for why women and men are represented in different committees[60]. Alida, Andrea, Astrid and Bibi claimed that the choice of committee came natural to them, due to their personal experiences and professions they have had[61]. However, none of Agnes, Alma, Eva and Esther had professional experience with issues that the town building- and technical committee process. Two of them had even started their political engagement in "soft" committees. Despite the fact that they all described their workplace as female-dominated; they choose one of the "hard" committees since they have had interests of urban development and wanted to challenge themselves and do something

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[60] It is important to note that it is mainly women who are represented in "different" committees as they are represented in the "soft" committees. Men are represented and (in Lund) overrepresented in almost all of the other committees; as my empirical material and previous research has proven.

[61] The social service – or education committee

completely different than they are used to. Eva also mentioned that, based on the traditional gender roles, men choose "hard" committees since they have more resources and power, while women chooses "soft" committees since women value care and relations more than money. Eva claimed that she had due to this experienced a more respectful reception from others than when she was engaged in a "soft" committee.

The horizontal division of representation is as Hedlund (1996), Wängnerud (1999) and Gustafsson (2008) argued, a matter of one's own interests and according to the respondents, one's interests are a result of the different roles assigned to women and men, and their different positions in the labour market. However, it is significant to note that the women in the "hard" committees chose that since they wanted to get involved with something completely different then their professions.

My empirical material is hence consonant with the previous research mentioned earlier[62]. The material gained from Skåne's municipalities resembles the Statistics Sweden report *Förtroendevalda i kommuner och landsting 2015* (Statistiska centralbyrån 2016).The material also supports Micael Nilsson's (2008) results regarding the fact that men still dominate political assemblies as they are represented in *both* "soft" and "hard" committees, while being overrepresented in the latter.

7.1.2. The Vertical Segregation

Some of the respondents emphasize that even within gender equal workplaces, men possess higher positions. Hence it is not only the horizontal division in the labour market that creates gender patterns within local governments; the vertical division is also a significant factor.

My empirical material was presented to each respondent, in order to gain their opinions and experiences for the unequal allocation of power between the sexes in power positions. As mentioned above, men monopolise the chairmen positions, which the respondents argued to be in accordance with men's position in the labour market. The tradition that men have leading positions in the labour market is one significant factor for why men possess power positions within committees. All of the respondents mentioned that men have become more confident than women. They argued that women experience that they have to be exceptionally competent, in order to take on such power positions. The respondents argued aligned with Astrid:

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[62] See section: "Representation"

> "There are a lot of men within politics that are not modest. I think it is like that everywhere, within all workplaces. Men who are not shy to say "I can be a chairman, how difficult can it be?" While women have more demands on themselves. I think women are under more pressure, and men get away with much more" (Astrid 2016).

This lack of confidence was argued to be a result of the fact women are under more pressure and are criticised more than men within politics. Some of the respondents experience homosociality, as men to a larger extent than women, confirmed and promoted each other. For some respondents, this resulted in exclusion of women in higher positions and in "hard" committees, as the gendered stereotypical notion implies that men have more knowledge and are more influential than women. Similar to the labour market, leadership positions are constructed and dominated by masculine norms (Fogelberg Eriksson 2005, 43-45; Nilsson 2008, 122).

Further on, both Alida and Astrid claimed that being a chairman or vice-chairman is highly time demanding, and therefore women are less represented on those positions. This notion is elaborated on further on[63].

As mentioned previously, in the section regarding women in the labour market, women are underrepresented in higher positions to the extent that even female-dominated sectors have male executives. This is in accordance with previous research and my empirical material, which implies that women are less represented in power positions, such as possessing an ordinary- or chairman position. The vertical division of labour hence resembles women's position within the local government in Lund's municipality. For instance, a "soft" committee, such as the social service committee, has on average more female representatives than men in Skåne, but is in fact characterised by male chairmen (Appendix 1).

7.2. Is The Sex Insignificant?

> "Representative democracy is not just party-based democracy- not even in a country like Sweden, with its strong and disciplined parties. Which particular persons are elected to carry out a party's program matters very much indeed" (Esaiasson & Holmberg 1996, 5).

The Swedish governance is characterised as representative democracy, based on the politics of ideas; with the Responsible Party Model as its core[64]. The politics of ideas is based on the notion of universal humanism. Both Young (1990) and Phillips (1995) argue against it, as it

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[63] See section: "The Inequality of Time"
[64] See section: "The Swedish Political System"

has excluded women and other social groups and created political assemblies dominated by white men[65]. In previous section[66] the arguments by political scientists against social representation is outlined. They claim that the sex of the representatives is insignificant in Swedish political system of the politics of ideas. However, previous research on female representation contradicts these arguments, as they have empirically proved that the sex of the representative is significant and increased female representation has changed the political agenda[67].

All of the respondents also claimed that the sex of the representative is significant. However, the majority of respondents claimed that there are more factors than solely sex, such as one's class, ethnicity, sexuality, place of residency and job; that matters. Hence all of the respondents claimed that different attributes of the representatives is significant to consider. However, Andrea raised the importance of not diverging too much from the party programme:

> "I think that one is quite bound to their parties. Neither women nor men can diverge too much, otherwise they will not be able to do careers within the party. However, sometimes in the committee one can tell that some questions are more important than other for some people, such as LGTB-issues. People are driven by their own experiences" (Andrea 2016).

Andrea, acknowledged the role of the politics of ideas in committees but still claimed that one's personal experience affects the politics one pursues. The elected representatives hence have personal capacity for action, to a certain extent.

The notion that women and men are represented in different committees, in fact indicates that women and men represent different interests. All of the respondents confirmed this, and the majority of them gave specific examples of how women would prioritise differently if they were not underrepresented in the "hard" committees. They mentioned that buildings would be constructed more utilitarian and that public transportation would be improved; based on the traditional gender role that women are responsible for the home and uses public transportation more than men.

Although modern political science does not undermine the significance of female representation, it is still to some extent ignoring the importance and positive consequences of equal allocation of power in political assemblies. The arguments that men can represent female interests and a gender equal representation do not necessarily mean that women's

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[65] See section: "Politics of Difference vs. Politics of Presence"
[66] See section: "The Sex is Insignificant"
[67] See Gustafsson 2008; Hedlund 1996; Nilsson; Wängnerud 1999.

interests will be represented, is still prevalent within the discourse. However, as Phillips (1995, 57) argues, it is essential to note that the RPM cannot predict political agendas in advance. Especially in local governments, such as in Lund, where the citizens have the ability petitions of requirements and issues the city council and committees are obliged to process[68].This fact and Andrea's statement (above) indicates that the representatives have autonomy and personal capacity of action. Thus how the representatives responds to issues their party programmes have not prepared them for, is highly depended on who they are and personal experiences. By applying a feminist approach to this issue[69], both I and previous researchers have been able to gain the knowledge and experiences of women. We have attained significant empirical support for the significance of female representation and thus argue for increased social representation to the extent that it complements the politics of ideas and create what Phillips (1995) refers to as the politics of presence.

7.2.1. The Consequence of the Underrepresentation

In Lund's municipality, the care and welfare sector is the most common employer for women 15%, followed by the education sector (pre- and after school teachers) 4%. 50% are employed within the public sector. In the local newspaper *Sydsvenskan* (Svahn 2016) recently reported that the sick-leave among the public employees is increasing for every year. This year the rate is 8% women and 4.1% men. The highest rates of sick-leaves are among female care takers within geriatric care with 13.8%. The highest rates of sick-leaves are in sectors connected to the care and welfare committee, the education committees and the social service committee; together their sick-leaves rate is 36.9% (Svahn 2016).

As mentioned in the previous section, women are underrepresented in all four committees in Lund, besides the social service committee; with 41% women represented which is on the verge of a balanced representation (Appendix 1). A question arose when I read the article; is the actuality that women are underrepresented in the concerned committees the reason for the increased sick-leaves?

Based on my empirical material and the arguments stated so far, I would answer yes. The trade union delegate in the article claims that the increasing sick rates are due to the high workload in addition to that the time pressures the employees' experience. The delegate implies that these sectors need more resources in order to employ more staff, reduce the size of the child groups and create better schedules for the employees, to prevent the increase of

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[68] In Swedish the process is called: *medborgarförslag*

sick-leaves (Svahn 2016). However, there are no such plans in Lund. The taxes will not increase within this term of office, which results in cuts in all of the sectors. The "soft" committees are the ones that get affected by it the most, which is evident by the increased sick-leaves.

My intention is not to indicate that the increased sick-leaves are solely based on the underrepresentation of women in the committees. I know that there are a lot of different factors that should be taken into consideration. However, my argument is that if women labouring in these female-dominated sectors would be present in concerned committees, then I believe that the priorities and the allocation of resources would be different. I thus agree with one of the respondent's statement:

> "It depends on the sex. If you are a woman you will probably become a teacher, a nurse, a pre-school teacher or labour within social service. You will thus labour within the public sector. (…) If you labour within the public sector as a woman, you will notice deficiency – for example the lack of resources" (Agnes 2016).

Nevertheless, the consequences of the absence of this group of women are discussed next.

7.3. The Precarious Labour Market

The Official Reports of the Swedish Government[70] regarding gender and the labour market confirms gender segregation in the Swedish labour market. Women in Skåne and in Lund are dominantly present in the reproductive sectors, while men are present in the productive sectors. As briefly stated earlier, women's condition in the labour market can be argued to be of a precariatic nature[71]. The female-dominated sectors are characterised by low salaries, inflexible working condition[72], insecure employments and high rates of sick-leaves. Moreover, women are more likely to gain insecure short-term employments because the employers do not want to get involved in non-wage costs; in case of pregnancy or withdraw from their jobs to care for their children (Standing 2014a, 103). These types of employments are what Standing (2014a) describes as precarious employments. Based on my empirical data, precarious employments do in fact affects women's representation at the local government in Lund's municipality.

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[70] SOU 2004:43; 2014:28; 2014:30; 2014:81 & 2015:50
[71] See section: "Women in the Labour Market – A Summary"
[72] While Standing (2014a, 9-10) argue for the problems with the establishment of labour market flexibility, (see section "The Precariat – a key concept"), the term *flexibly* have another meaning in this section and proceeds from SOU 2014:30, 175 notion which includes *flexitime* (flexible working hours) and less control by the employer.

7.3.1. The Consequence of Female-Dominated Sectors

As mentioned above, the female-dominated sector, also known as the reproductive sector, is characterised by precarious employments. Traditionally, women chooses "family oriented"[73] professions since they are supposed to have more beneficial working conditions; such as part-time- and flexible employments, and be less dangerous and physically exhausting conditions. Hence "family oriented" professions have been argued to facilitate the combination of labour and family life. Due to this, the salaries in female-dominated sectors have been lower, than male-dominated sectors (SOU 2014:30, 173). However, the empirical support for these arguments has been minimal, as research indicates that "family oriented" professions are more difficult to combine with family life[74]. Professions within the female-dominated sector are in fact more psychologically and emotionally arduous, and are less flexible and more time demanding (SOU 2014:30 174-177). As mentioned in the previous section, the care and welfare sector is the most common employer for women in Lund, but women's working conditions are getting worse as the sick-leaves increases every year. Hence women in female-dominated sectors do not have affirmative preconditions to become politically engaged.

The majority of the respondents seemed to be aware of women's working situation in female-dominated sectors and claimed that their working condition was one of the most significant factors enabling them to become time politicians. They claimed that they had the ability to be vacant from their jobs due to their political engagement, since their vacancy did not affect anybody directly, which it would if they held an employment at school or within geriatric care. This resembles Hedlund's (1996, 167-168) arguments, that women, within the reproductive sector have more difficulties of becoming time politicians. A third part, such as the people within geriatric care, welfare and school are directly affected by the absence of one employee, hence people (especially women) labouring within the reproductive sector, do not have the same possibility to take leave of absence as people (especially men) in the productive sector.

This is evident as Alida, one of the respondents that work within the reproductive sector, claimed that it would be easier to have a white collar job than working with people. She had experienced what Hedlund (1996, 167) described as "guilt and shame" and lack of support from colleagues due to the leave of absence for her political activates.

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[73] See section: "Labour with Exchange Value"
[74] See the Official Report of the Swedish Government (SOU 2014:30) From page 174 and forwards.

> "Every time I leave (the job due to political activates) I feel like a villain instead of being proud that I work for democracy in a democratic country like Sweden. I try to explain to my colleagues, however, last week one of them said "I disagree that politicians should be vacant" I told her that she does not understand and that I still labour for Lund's municipality" (Alida 2016).

Alida's situation had become better since she, due to her increased political engagement, managed to reduce her employment to 80%. This was possible due to her employer, whom had supported Alida and even changed her work place so that she was no longer required to labour weekends and evenings. The support from one's employer was mentioned by all of the respondents to be a significant precondition enabling their political engagement, and is elaborated on in the section below.

7.3.2. The Absence of the Precariat

According to *The Swedish Local Government Act,* time politicians are entitled to leave of absence from their employment due to political commitments. The respondents claimed that this is the most important factor enabling them to become time politicians. However, although it is a law, the respondents claimed that their possibilities of being vacant highly depended on their employers and the nature of their employment.

> "Everybody is entitled (to leave of absence) however one has to have the confidence to tell one's employer. Women are more likely to have time limited employments and are employed part-time, which puts them in an insecure position. I have an insecure employment, as my employment is temporary[75]which I have had for a couple of years. (…) This makes me more careful, although I know I have many rights. It is one's work that pays the bills. The small compensation we get for our political commitment is not enough if you are unemployed" (Astrid 2016).

Astrid, whom did not have permanent, safe employment, claimed that she was careful of not prioritising her political engagement too much, as she expressed the concern that it might result in her redundancy. She explained that this situation made her feel *insecure*. Other respondents, such as Agnes, Alma and Andrea, also confirmed that being a time politician affects one's career and chances in the labour market. Both Astrid and Alida (mentioned above) claimed that it was due to the support of their employers and partners that they were able to continue with their political activities; despite the precariatic nature of their employments.

The insecurity Astrid experiences due to the lack of safe employment is coherent with Standing's (2014a, 10) characterisation of the situation of the precariat. The intense

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[75] In Swedish: *vikariat*

globalisation has created constant competitiveness where both governments and corporation are striving to make their labour relations more flexible[76], for the sake of the market economy. The flexible labour market has in turn resulted in setbacks in social securities and resulted in the growth of inequalities. In Sweden, the privatisation and deregulation of the labour market since the 1980s, has resulted in different forms of temporary employments[77]. The low-wage jobs are quickly expanding within the welfare and care sector, and the cleaning sector. This has stemmed inequalities and created new hierarchies in the labour market. At the bottom of this hierarchy are workers with limited influence over their working conditions along with restricted autonomy in relation to their employers; such as women in the reproductive sectors[78]. Since women make out the majority in these sectors, the Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO), claim that women have the worst conditions in the labour market (Yazdanpanah 2013, 33-38).

My empirical material confirms the statistics from SCB (Statistiska centralbyrån 2016, 5, 33-34)[79] which implies that men, high income earners and public servants are overrepresented at local governments, even in Lund. Women with precarious employments are more likely to be absent; simply because their insecure working situation does not allow them to completely use the rights they are entitled to by the Swedish law.

7.3.3. The Labour Market – A Threat to Democracy?
The notion that "family oriented" professions are more "family friendly" can be argued to create false perceptions that women by nature ought to take care of children and the elderly, (another problematic notion that makes it more difficult for women to participate in local governments, discussed in the next section). This in turn cement traditional gender roles and resemble Kathi Weeks (2011) arguments of how the labour market preservers and reproduces gender hierarchies.

The reproduction of the notion that "family oriented" professions are suitable for women, is essential to highlight and challenge. The employments in female-dominated sectors are of precariatic nature. The low salaries, inflexible working condition, insecure employments and

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[76] (1) Wage flexibility – speeding up and *down* the changes in demand; (2) employment flexibility – easy ability of firms to change (decrease) employment levels, resulting in reduction of employment security and protection; (3) job flexibility – move employees inside the firm to change job structures; (4) skill flexibility to adjust workers' skills easily (Standing 2014a, 9-10).
[77] Such as; temporary position (*vikariat),* project employment (*projektsanställning)* and internship (*praktiktjänstgöring*) (SOU 2004:43, 70).
[78] See section: "Labour with Exchange Value"
[79] See section: "Social Representation in Municipalities"

high rates of sick-leaves, to name a few, do not only threaten women's well-being, but also a threat to democracy. Women do not have the same opportunity to be active citizens and shape the conditions of the decision-making, contradictory to Sweden's first sub-goal of maintaining gender equal policies. Women's rights are being actively restricted by labour market structures, as the inequality that predominate the labour market is being side-lined. Consequently, women (especially those with precarious employments) are in a continuous risk of ending up in a vicious cycle; their absence in local governments, results in budget cuts and reduced resources to female-dominated sectors, which in turn affects their health and thus opportunities to participate in societal issues – which is then evident by the underrepresentation of female time politicians in local governments.

All of the respondents mentioned that their political engagement were possible due to the nature of their employment and their employer. Only this acknowledgement proves the fact that the labour market does affect women's political participation and representation. Those respondents with employments of a precariatic nature had the *support from their employers* to become time politicians. The fact that the labour market determines citizen's opportunities to work democratically and participate in societal issues is alarming. I thus argue that the labour market not only controls people's opportunities to participate politically; in this relation, the labour market possesses the power of regulating the entire discourse of democracy. As the neoliberal globalisation is becoming more intense, the labour market becomes more flexible and the welfare states shrink; the increased privatisation and power of corporations can in fact directly threaten our democracy.

Despite the Swedish law, in practice, the employers are the ones that possess the power of deciding to what extent their employees can engage in politics. The conditions of female-dominated sectors are actively restricting people's (mostly women's) opportunities to be politically active. While the gender roles, discussed below, are controlling women to the extent that they neither have the time nor the energy to participate in societal issues. I am thus arguing that there is a relation between the labour market and women's political engagement, and the (under)representation of women in Lund's municipality; a correlation which is highly significant to acknowledge.

7.4. Inequality of Time

Being a time politician is not a full-time job. The Swedish term for it is; *Fritidspolitiker,* which indicates that the political commitment one has is to be done in one's spare time; alongside labour or other another occupation. As mentioned initially, this is a significant

difference from politicians at national level in the parliament, as their commitment is a full-time employment[80]. This is one of the reasons for the underrepresentation of women in local governments, which is elaborated on in this section.

All of the respondents claimed that being a time politician is highly time consuming. They all mentioned that it is much more reproductive work than only the official meeting each committee has once a month; there are both formal and informal meetings before each official meeting, which the time politicians should participate in as well. They are also expected to do study visits, participate in seminars and information meetings, and read all the documents required. Besides that, they have to participate in activates related to their own party, such as meetings and campaigns. The reproductive workload is very intense, as all of the respondents had several other commitments, either in the city council and/or as board members in their own party. They all expressed their experience similar to Agnes: "The problem with being a time politician is that you give them an inch and they take a mile" (Agnes 2016).

All of the respondents hence expressed that they wish they had more time. Three of them had reduced their labour hours in order to be able to balance family, labour and politics. Three other respondents mentioned that they would labour less, if their economy allowed them to. Furthermore, all of the respondents claimed that it is more difficult for women to be time politicians than men; and identified three difficulties; the higher expectation on women compared to men, women's working condition, and women's responsibility for the home and children. In addition, some of the respondents mentioned that there are two groups presented in Lund's municipality; the students and the pensioners due to the fact that they have more time, and have more *control* over their time. Alma stated that there is a certain group presented in Lund's municipality:

> "I have never liked the term "*fritidspolitiker*" because it sounds like something one does on one's spare time and that it is not serious. I think it is a very important commitment. However, it may require that one is a male pensioner, since elderly men are the ones on higher positions. Younger people do not have the ability to participate in meetings in the same extent" (Alma 2016).

Alma's statement resembles Alida's and Astrid's notion that women are less present on higher positions due to their lack of time[81]. This idea is in accordance with the fact that women are more responsible for care work, such as the home and children. This is elaborated on below.

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[80] See section: "Historical Background"
[81] See section: "The Vertical Segregation"

7.4.1. The Triple Burden

As mentioned, the respondents claim that it is more difficult for women to be and become time politicians due to their responsibility for the home and children. Women's time to perform other activities is hence limited. The statistics from SCB (Statistiska centralbyrån 2014) proves that cohabiting partners spend approximately the same amount of time on care work. Yet, once they become parents, women spend 8 hours per day on care work while men spend 4.7 hours. This could be a reason for why women in the ages of 30 – 65 years are less represented at local governments than younger and older women (Statistiska centralbyrån 2016).

The respondents also confirmed the notion that fewer women are active in the ages between 30-65 years, especially after they get children. Alma stated:

> "There were many women in the board, although they were the once who resigned once they got children. It goes without saying that they resigned while the men remained, no matter how new-born their child was" (Alma 2016).

All of the respondents thus confirmed that children affect one's political engagement. Six of the respondents with children claimed that their political engagement was facilitated by the actuality that their children had grown-up. They had more time now to indulge in leisure and it was also the reason for why they had several political commitments. One of the respondents, Bibi, is a single mother and has a young child. She claimed that her biggest challenge was to manage her time. She also expressed that the organisation of the local government in Lund's municipality is not designed for single-mothers, since the meetings are at evenings and they receive no support, such baby-sitting or likewise from the municipality. Furthermore, Bibi was one of the three respondents who claimed she would labour less if it did not affect her economy negatively. Astrid, whom is expecting her first child, also claimed that she might experience some challenges with time due to that.

The idea that women ought to be responsible for the children seemed to be given for all of the respondents. It is both the reason why women in the ages between 30-65 years are underrepresented in Lund's municipality and why they are more represented in the "soft" committees (as discussed previously). In addition, some of the respondents also mentioned women's responsibility for dependents care, almost as given as women's responsibility for the home and children. When asking why Eva became politically engaged, she responded:

> "The children moved away, I got separated, my dog died, my father died, and therefore, I had extra time. I felt that I wanted to do something meaningful with the time I had over" (Eva 2016).

Eva mentions the loss of her father as a factor that enabled her to have more time. This indicates that women, like Eva, also have to take care of aging parents. This actuality proves Standing's (2014a) notion that women are at risk of experiencing the triple burden[82]. Although 42% of *both* women and men give dependent care at least once a week; women on average spend more hours each time[83]. Consequently 40% of the women experience psychic distress and difficulty of keeping up with leisure activities. Twice as many women than men experience difficulties with focusing on their labour, even in cases where both women and men spend equal amount of time on dependent care (Szebehely, et al 2014, 17, 20). The specific trait of the triple burden is women's limited control over their time and lack of energy to indulge in leisure. This is, as mentioned earlier[84], a characterisation of the precariat. The traditional gender roles assigned to women indicates that they are responsible for all the care work, such as the home and children, and the elderly; while they must labour in the market in order to afford the home and survive economically. Women are thus a subject of the triple burden. Consequently, they lack control over their time and have limited time over to indulge in other activates or to become time politicians and keep their commitment through different stages of life.

8. Discussion

The thesis has supported Helga Hernes' (1987) three arguments for increased female representation; *justice, resource* and *interests[85]*. Yet, the result implies that women are underrepresented in local governments. One factor for this underrepresentation is women's precarious positions in the labour market; it either prevents them from becoming time politicians or makes it more difficult for them. One other factor is that care work is mainly assigned to women; which makes them a subject of the triple burden and thus lack the time and energy indulge in leisure. Women's position in the labour market and within the family entails a gender hierarchy in our society. Traditional gender roles are dominating the relation between women and men, which results in women's disadvantageous position in various aspects of the social life. Based on the arguments presented[86], it is highly significant to note

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[82] See section: "The Precariat – A Key Concept"
[83] See section: "Work with Use Value"
[84] See section: "The Precariat – A Key Concept"
[85] See section: "Equal Allocation of Power"
[86] See section: "Result and Analysis"

that my intention by no means is to claim that all women are part of the precariat. My objective is to expand the concept of the precariat and apply the specific traits of the precariat in order to critically assess and understand women's situation in the labour market. Consequently, it enabled me to discover that employments of precariatic nature in fact do affect women's political representation at local level[87].

An essential finding of this single case study is the power employers possess in permitting their employees to be vacant for political commitments, although they are entitled to leave of absence by the Swedish law[88]. The relationship between the labour market and citizen's opportunities to participate in the democratic process should both be acknowledged and discussed. Especially now when the political discourse around the labour market solely focuses on "creating new jobs" and "getting people into jobs", and is less concerned with working conditions. Even The Official Report of the Swedish Government (SOU 2015:50, 61), implies that women should get full-time employments as a way of achieving gender equality[89]. In this rhetoric, the consequences of the Swedish labour market, such as its role of reproducing gender hierarchies, are being ignored[90]. I argue that it is essential to critically assess the labour market discourse as the empirical material in this case supports the notion of a relationship between the unequal allocation of power between the sexes in local politics and the mechanisms that define the Swedish labour market.

8.1. Possible Solutions?

The aim of the thesis has not been to provide solutions of how women's political representation can increase. However, I have identified some possible solutions that I think future research can consider, and either accept or reject.

I do agree upon the principle of quotation in order to gain a balanced representation between the sexes in political assemblies. Yet, I do not think that it is the complete solution at local level. I argue that all parties should adopt the principle of *Varannan damernas* on their party lists and proceed from this principle when nominating people to committees. However, the main problem is not that women are actively excluded by their parties, instead, as many of the respondents mentioned; women are highly welcomed and needed. The problem is that women to a larger extent than men leave their political commitments because (1) the reproductive

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[87] With that said, I am highly aware of other factors affecting women's political representation at local level.
[88] See section: "The Precarious Labour Market"
[89] See section: "Solution?"
[90] See section: "Critiques of the Labour Market"

workload becomes too intense, and/or (2) they get children, and thus find it difficult to balance family-labour-politics.

Based on this notion, I have stated a brief list of solutions, which could increase female representation in local governments[91]:

✓ Reduced working hours to at least six hours. (Time and energy over to indulge in leisure and political activates. Promotes a more sustainable way of living).

✓ Recognise care work to the same level of legitimacy as labour. (This would acknowledge the unpaid work women perform every day, thus destroy the traditional gender role).

✓ Individualise the parental insurance. (Both parents would take full responsibility for their new-born children and women would be able to gain better prerequisite and employments in the labour market[92])

✓ The municipalities should offer baby-sitting and assistance to elected representatives. (More women, especially single-mothers, would be able to participate in political meetings).

9. Conclusion

The first sub-goal of the Swedish gender equality policy indicates that women and men, ought to able to participate in and influence the processes that shape our perceptions, ideas and practices. Both sexes should be represented at all decision-making levels, in order for women and men to have a voice in society on equal terms. A balanced representation in political decision-making bodies is an important democratic principle and thus significant in order to obtain gender equality. Although Sweden has been a progressive force in terms of women's political participants and gender equality reforms, a closer analysis indicates that such things as subordination, discrimination and underrepresentation of women, is still ongoing in Sweden. Previous research done within this field has mainly focused on the representation in the Swedish parliament. Therefore, the aim of the thesis has been to study representation at local level, and to find out if there is a relationship between representation in local politics and the mechanisms that define the Swedish labour market. In this effect, a single case study of female representation in Lund's local government with both quantitative and qualitative methodology was conducted. Through criterion sampling, eight female time politicians were selected and interviewed.

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[91] The order of the solutions is not considered.
[92] See sections: "Women in the Labour Market" and "The Precarious Labour Market"

The Swedish governance based on the politics of ideas proceeds from the notion of universal humanism. The attributes of representatives, such as sex, age and ethnicity is claimed to be insignificant because the representatives should represent their parties' ideas and not their own. Despite this notion, all of the respondents claimed that the sex of the representatives in fact matters and has affected the politics. The representatives have autonomy and personal capacity of action. Further on, the quantitative material implies a horizontal and vertical division of representation; which supports the notion that women and men represent different interests. A gender pattern is thus evident as women are present in "soft" committees and men are present in *both* "soft" and "hard" committees. Men, to a larger extent obtain power positions, while women on average possess more replacement seats than ordinary seats. Men, thus dominate the political arena in Skåne. Lund's municipality slightly differs from the rest of Skåne. Women are underrepresented in all of the committees besides in the social service committee; yet, two committees have female chairman and vice-chairman. The political representation in the local government is affected by the labour market, as the same gender patterns exist there; women are represented in the reproductive sectors while men are represented in the productive sectors and to a larger extent possess power positions. The respondents also confirmed that the division of representation in committees are due to the gender segregated labour market. Moreover, all of the respondents claimed that their political commitments were possible due to the nature of their employment and their employees. This might be an explanation for the underrepresentation of the women in local governments. Women are more likely to possess employments of precariatic nature, because female-dominated sectors are characterised by low salaries, inflexible working condition, insecure employments and high rates of sick-leaves. Women's opportunities of being vacant from their jobs are thus limited, despite their right by law. The respondents also claimed that it is more difficult for women to become time politicians since they are the ones responsible for the home and children, and the elderly. Statistics presented confirms this notion, as women spend more time on care work than men. This actuality proves Standing's (2014a) notion that women are at risk of experiencing the triple burden. Thus, women, to a larger extent have limited time to indulge in leisure and political activities.

The results found in the thesis resemble previous research and supports Phillips' (1995) arguments in *The Politics of Presence*. The sex of the representative is significant and affects the political agenda. Political assemblies dominated by men might not consider women's needs and interests; as women and men have been assigned different roles in society. This is

unfortunately the case in Lund's municipality. I have argued that the underrepresentation of women labouring in female-dominated sectors in committees, is one of the reason these sectors have large budget cut-backs, which consequently results in increased sick-leaves among workers. Therefore I agree that social representation should complete the Swedish system of the politics of ideas and create the politics of presence; which is both possible and desirable within existing local governments.

Further on, the concept of the precariat (Standing 2014a) was expanded. I proceeded from the specific traits of the precariat in order to critically assess women's position in the labour market. It enabled me to uncover the phenomena that it is more difficult for women to become time politicians due to the precariatic nature of female-dominated sectors, *and* the traditional gender roles, which consequently make women a subject of the triple burden. This proves a relation between the unequal allocation of power in local governments and mechanisms that define the Swedish labour market.

In conclusion, I argue that the first sub-goal of the Swedish gender equality policy; *Equal Division of Power and Influence* should consider several different solutions that would enable equal allocation of power in local governments. There are several different factors that results in the unequal balance of representation between women and men that cannot be fixed by only implementing quotas and the principle of *Varannan damernas.* The thesis has proved that the Swedish labour market is one of those factors that affect people's opportunity to participate in democratic activities. Therefore, it is essential to both acknowledge this relation and identify new ones. Otherwise, gender equality in Sweden cannot be obtained, if the first sub-goal is not achieved.

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The Respondents
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Andrea – *present in one of the three education committees*. Interviewed in 2016-04-08
Astrid – *present in one of the three education committees.* Interviewed in 2016-04-06
Bibi – *present in the social service committee.* Interviewed in 2016-04-05
Esther – *present in the technical committee*. Interviewed in 2016-04-11
Eva – *present in the building committee.* Interviewed in 2016-04-06

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Appendixes

Research Information Sheet

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this research. This Information Sheet explains what the research is about and how Baharan Raoufi would like you to take part in it.

The purpose of the study is to investigate if there is a correlation between labour market mechanisms and the unequal allocation of power within local political assemblies.

In order to gain your experiences and opinions, I would like to interview you. If you agree to this, the interview will be audio recorded and will not last more than one hour.

The information provided by you in the interview will be used for research purposes. It will not be used in a manner which would allow identification of your individual response.

I, Baharan Raoufi, assure that I will do my utmost to uphold confidentiality and anonymity.

Once again, I would like to thank you for agreeing to take part in this research. If you have any questions about the research at any stage, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Baharan Raoufi, baharanraoufi@gmail.com

Interview Consent Form

- I, _____, have read and understood the Research Information Sheet provided.
- I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the research
- I understand that taking part in the research will include being interviewed and audio recorded.
- I have been given adequate time to consider my decisions and I agree to take part in the research.
- I understand that my personal details, such as name and employer address, will not be revealed to people outside this research.
- I understand that my words may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs but my name will not be used.
- I agree to assign the copyright I hold in any material related to the project to Baharan Raoufi
- I understand that I can withdraw from the research at any time and I will not be asked any questions about why I no longer want to participate.

Name of Participant: _____ Date:

Researcher Signature: _____ Date:

Interview Guide

Name
Occupation
Family situation
Committee
Position within the committee
Other missions within local government
Number of months/years active in local politics

(Present the data over representation in municipalities in Skåne, and the data for Lund).

Why do you think that men dominate political assemblies?
Why do you think that the power is allocated unequally between the sexes?
Why do you think that men, to a large extant obtain power positions, such as being chairman of a particular committee?
The Official Report of the Swedish Government (SOU 2015:86) argues that the gender pattern within committees is due to the horizontal division of power (A horizontal division of labour implies that women and men work within different sectors, and that the sectors are either male- or female dominated) – do you agree with this statement?
Why/ why not?

"As mentioned initially, the Official Report of the Swedish Government (SOU 2015: 86, 114), briefly states that the gender pattern within committees might be due to horizontal division in the labour market"

Why did you choose to be in the XX committee?
How did you gain your position?
What factors have facilitated your opportunities to be a time politician?
What factors have aggravated your opportunities to be a time politician?

Generally, on daily basis, how do you manage your time?
How do you manage your worktime?
How do you manage to combine family, work and politics, in the so called work/family balance?
Do you have time to indulge in other activities?

What have enabled you to become a time politician?
What are the challenges you face by being a time politician?
Do you think it is more difficult for women to be time politician than it is for men?
Why/why not?
If you could change something, in order to facilitate your everyday life, what would that be?

Appendix 1

Municipality	Ordinary, W	Ord. M	Rep. W	Rep. W	Chairman	Vice-chairman
Bjuv	7	4	4	7	M	W
Bromölla	2	3	2	3	M	W
Burlöv	5	4	8	1	W	M
Båstad	6	3	5	4	M	W
Eslöv	7	4	6	5	M	W
Helsingborg	8	5	2	5	W	W
Hässleholm	3	8	6	3	W	M
Höganäs	5	6	8	3	M	W
Hörby	6	7	8	5	M	W
Höör	7	2	5	4	M	W
Klippan	1	8	5	4	W	M
Kristianstad	4	7	2	4	M	W
Kävlinge	11	2	8	5	W	W
Landskrona	9	4	5	5	W	W
Lomma	6	5	7	4	W	W
Lund	4	7	5	6	M	M
Malmö	7	6	5	8	W	W
Osby	3	8	7	4	M	M
Perstorp	4	5	4	5	M	W
Simrishamn	9	2	6	5	W	M
Sjöbo	5	6	2	4	M	W
Skurup	3	2	2	3	W	W
Staffanstorp	6	5	4	4	W	W
Svalöv	2	3	5	0	M	M
Svedala	5	4	6	3	M	W
Tomelilla	2	5	4	3	M	M
Trelleborg	6	5	7	4	M	M
Vellinge	8	2	6	5	W	W
Ystad	9	4	5	2	M	W
Åstorp	7	6	4	3	M	M
Ängelholm	9	4	6	7	W	W
Örkelljunga	7	4	7	4	M	M
Östra Göinge	1	3	1	3	M	M
Total	184	153	167	135	13 W, 20 M	21 W, 12 M
Procentage	55%	45%	55%	45%	39% W, 61%	64% W, 36% M

Table over the representation in the social service committed, divided on sex.

Appendix 2

Municipality	Ordinary, W	Ord. M	Rep.W	Rep. M	Chairman	Vice-chairman
Bjuv	4	7	5	6	W	W
Bromölla	2	3	0	5	W	M
Burlöv	4	7	8	3	M	W
Båstad	6	3	2	7	W	W
Eslöv	2	9	6	4	M	M
Helsningborg	4	9	2	4	M	W
Hässleholm	4	7	5	4	M	W
Höganäs	7	4	10	1	M	W
Hörby	6	7	5	8	W	M
Höör	2	7	6	2	M	W
Klippan	6	3	7	2	M	W
Kristianstad	7	8	4	4	M	M
Kävlinge	4	9	5	8	W	M
Landskrona	5	8	6	4	W	M
Lomma	4	7	7	4	M	W
Lund	5	8	5	8	W	W
Malmö	6	6	5	7	M	W
Osby	5	6	5	6	M	M
Perstorp	5	4	6	3	W	M
Simrishamn	4	7	6	5	M	W
Sjöbo	-	-	-	-	-	-
Skurup	3	2	2	3	M	W
Staffanstorp	7	4	5	3	M	W
Svalöv	2	3	4	1	M	M
Svedala	4	5	3	6	M	M
Tomelilla	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trelleborg	5	6	5		M	M
Vellinge	4	7	9	2	M	W
Ystad	6	5	3	3	M	W
Åstorp	5	8	3	4	M	W
Ängleholm	-	-	-	-	-	-
Örkelljunga	4	7	6	5	W	M
Östra Göinge	3	2	4	1	M	W
Total	135	178	149	123	9 W, 21 M	18 W, 12 M
Procentage	43%	57%	55%	45%	30% W, 70% M	60% W, 40% M

Table over the representation in the education committee, divided by sex[93].

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[93] Based on the statistics collected from Barn- och skolnämnden Lunds stad. See description in section: "The committees in Lund"

Appendix 3

Municipality	Ordinary, W	Ord. M	Rep. W	Rep. M	Chairman	Vice-chairman
Bjuv	2	7	1	7	M	W
Bromölla	0	5	2	3	M	M
Burlöv	1	8	1	8	M	M
Båstad	2	5	2	5	M	M
Eslöv	1	9	4	8	M	W
Helsingborg	2	11	4	3	M	M
Hässleholm	1	9	2	4	M	M
Höganäs	0	7	2	5	M	M
Hörby	1	6	2	7	M	M
Höör	3	6	3	6	M	W
Klippan	0	9	2	7	M	M
Kristianstad	4	7	1	5	M	W
Kävlinge	1	12	5	8	M	M
Landskrona	3	10	2	8	M	M
Lomma	3	8	4	5	M	M
Lund	4	7	4	7	M	M
Malmö	3	6	3	6	W	W
Osby	2	3	1	4	M	W
Perstorp	3	4	1	6	W	M
Simrishamn	1	10	2	8	M	M
Sjöbo	2	7	3	2	M	M
Skurup	0	5	2	3	M	M
Staffanstorp	4	7	2	6	M	M
Svalöv	2	3	1	4	W	M
Svedala	1	6	2	5	M	M
Tomelilla	0	5	1	4	M	M
Trelleborg	2	8	3	7	M	W
Vellinge	3	8	3	8	M	W
Ystad	4	9	4	3	M	M
Åstorp	2	5	2	5	M	W
Ängelholm	2	11	4	9	M	M
Örkelljunga	0	9	3	6	M	M
Östra Göinge	2	2	4	0	M	W
Total	61	234	82	182	3 W, 30 M	10 W, 23 M
Procentage	21%	79%	31%	69%	10% W, 90% M	30% W, 70% M

Table over the representation in the town planning committee, divided by sex.

Appendix 4

Municipality	Ordinarie, W	Ord. M	Rep. W	Rep. M	Chairman	Vice-chairman
Bjuv	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bromölla	-	-	-	-	-	-
Burlöv	2	8	0	0	M	M
Båstad	4	9	2	11	M	M
Eslöv	-	-	-	-	-	-
Helsningborg	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hässleholm	1	9	3	7	M	M
Höganäs	4	7	6	5	M	M
Hörby	1	6	2	5	M	M
Höör	2	5	1	6	W	W
Klippan	3	10	6	7	W	M
Kristianstad	3	8	1	5	M	M
Kävlinge	2	11	2	11	M	M
Landskrona	5	8	2	8	M	W
Lomma	4	7	5	6	M	M
Lund	5	6	3	8	W	W
Malmö	1	8	3	5	M	M
Osby	4	11	6	9	W	M
Perstorp	-	-	-	-	-	-
Simrishamn	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sjöbo	-	-	-	-	-	-
Skurup	0	9	3	2	M	M
Staffanstorp	2	9	2	6	M	M
Svalöv	2	3	4	1	M	M
Svedala	0	7	1	6	M	M
Tomelilla	5	8	6	6	M	M
Trelleborg	3	8	4	7	M	W
Vellinge	4	7	4	7	M	W
Ystad	2	5	1	3	W	M
Åstorp	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ängleholm	5	10	4	10	M	M
Örkelljunga	-	-	-	-	-	-
Östra Göinge	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	64	179	71	141	5 W, 18 M	5 W, 18 M
Percentage	26%	74%	33%	67%	22% W, 78% M	22% W, 78% M

Table over the representation in the technical committee, divided by sex[94].

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[94] Not all municipalities have one technical committee. In some municipalities (the ones with missing data), the executive committee is responsible for technical matters.