

# Macroeconomic Theory - Overlapping Generations (OLG) Households in General Equilibrium Framework

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**Sample Teaching Slides II**

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# Environment

- ▶ Time is discrete.
- ▶ Closed economy with a representative competitive firm.
- ▶ Competitive market: Prices ( $w, r$ ) are taken as given by households.
- ▶ Overlapping generations (OLG) of households:
  - Each period, a new generation is born and lives for two periods (young  $\rightarrow$  old).
  - Young supply inelastic labour (one unit).
  - Old retire.

# Household problem

A household earns wage income  $w$  in period 1, chooses  $(c_1, c_2)$  to maximize lifetime utility:

$$\max_{c_1, s, c_2} \left\{ \frac{c_1^{1-\sigma}}{1-\sigma} + \beta \frac{c_2^{1-\sigma}}{1-\sigma} \right\}$$

subject to

$$c_1 + s = w,$$

$$c_2 = (1 + r) s,$$

$$c_1, c_2 > 0$$

# Firm and pricing

A representative firm with Cobb-Douglas technology. The firm's profit maximization problem is:

$$\max_{K,L} \{AK^\alpha N^{1-\alpha} - wN - qK\}$$

and the net interest rate is

$$r = q - \delta, \quad \delta \in (0, 1).$$

# Baseline calibration (for simulations later)

Parameter		Value
Discount factor	$\beta$	0.98
Risk aversion	$\sigma$	2
TFP level	$A$	1
Capital share	$\alpha$	0.33
Depreciation	$\delta$	0.05

# Firm Problem

Firm chooses  $(K, N)$  to maximize profit:

$$\max_{K, N} \left\{ AK^\alpha N^{1-\alpha} - wN - qK \right\}.$$

FOCs:

$$\begin{aligned} w &= (1 - \alpha)AK^\alpha N^{-\alpha}, \\ q &= \alpha AK^{\alpha-1} N^{1-\alpha}. \end{aligned}$$

# Lagrangian Approach - Household Optimization (1/2)

Household problem:

$$L(c_1, c_2, \lambda) = \max_{c_1, c_2, \lambda} \left\{ \frac{c_1^{1-\sigma}}{1-\sigma} + \beta \frac{c_2^{1-\sigma}}{1-\sigma} + \lambda \left( w - c_1 - \frac{c_2}{1+r} \right) \right\}.$$

First-order conditions (FOCs):

$$\frac{\partial L}{\partial c_1} : c_1^{-\sigma} - \lambda = 0$$

$$\frac{\partial L}{\partial c_2} : \beta c_2^{-\sigma} - \frac{\lambda}{1+r} = 0$$

$$\frac{\partial L}{\partial \lambda} : w - c_1 - \frac{c_2}{1+r} = 0$$

Combining:

$$c_1 = \lambda^{-\frac{1}{\sigma}}, \quad c_2 = \lambda^{-\frac{1}{\sigma}} \left( \frac{1}{R\beta} \right)^{-\frac{1}{\sigma}}$$

where  $R = 1 + r$ .



## Lagrangian Approach - Household Optimization (2/2)

Plugging into the budget constraint:

$$\lambda^{-\frac{1}{\sigma}} = \frac{w}{\left[1 + \frac{1}{R} \left(\frac{1}{R\beta}\right)^{-\frac{1}{\sigma}}\right]}.$$

Therefore, the optimal consumption-saving rule is

$$c_1 = \frac{w}{\left[1 + \frac{1}{R} \left(\frac{1}{R\beta}\right)^{-\frac{1}{\sigma}}\right]}$$
$$s = w - c_1$$

# Lagrangian Approach - Competitive Equilibrium

The CE is characterized by the following system of equations:

$$\lambda^{-\frac{1}{\sigma}} = \frac{w}{\left[1 + \frac{1}{R} \left(\frac{1}{R\beta}\right)^{-\frac{1}{\sigma}}\right]}, \quad (1)$$

$$c_1 = \lambda^{-\frac{1}{\sigma}}, \quad (2)$$

$$c_2 = \lambda^{-\frac{1}{\sigma}} \left(\frac{1}{R\beta}\right)^{-\frac{1}{\sigma}}, \quad (3)$$

$$s = w - c_1, \quad (4)$$

$$N = 1, \quad (5)$$

$$K = s, \quad (6)$$

$$w = (1 - \alpha)AK^{\alpha}N^{-\alpha}, \quad (7)$$

$$R = 1 + \alpha AK^{\alpha-1}N^{1-\alpha} - \delta, \quad (8)$$

$$Y = AK^{\alpha}N^{1-\alpha}. \quad (9)$$

Exogenous variables:  $\{\beta, \sigma, A, \alpha, \delta\}$ .

Endogenous variables:  $\{c_1, c_2, s, w, r, K, N, Y\}$ .

# Dynamic Programming Approach - Household (1/4)

We turn the household problem into a recursive problem. For the general case, we have:

$$V_t(a_t) = \max_{c_t, a_{t+1}} \left\{ \frac{c_t^{1-\sigma}}{1-\sigma} + \beta V_{t+1}(a_{t+1}) \right\}.$$

s.t.

$$\begin{aligned} c_t + \overbrace{a_{t+1}}^{=s_t} &= \overbrace{y_t}^{=w_t} + Ra_t && \text{when young (working life)} \\ c_t + a_{t+1} &= Ra_t && \text{when old (retirement)} \end{aligned}$$

where  $a_t$  is asset holding (asset holding today  $a_t$  = savings from yesterday  $s_{t-1}$ ). Key assumptions:

► Born with no asset:  $a_1 = 0$

► Terminal conditions:

$$V_{T+1}(a_{T+1}) = 0 \quad \Rightarrow \quad V_T(a_T) = u(\underbrace{(1+r)a_T}_{c_T})$$

# Dynamic Programming Approach - Household (2/4)

For our specific case where the households live for two period (young and old), the recursive formulation can be expressed as:

$$\textbf{Period 1 : } V_1(a_1) = \max_{c_1, a_2} \left\{ \frac{c_1^{1-\sigma}}{1-\sigma} + \beta V_2(a_2) \right\} \quad \text{s.t. } c_1 + a_2 = y_1 + R \underbrace{a_1}_{=0}$$

$$\textbf{Period 2 : } V_2(a_2) = \max_{c_2, a_3} \left\{ \frac{c_2^{1-\sigma}}{1-\sigma} + \beta \underbrace{V_3(a_3)}_{=0} \right\} \quad \text{s.t. } c_2 + a_3 = \underbrace{y_2}_{=0} + Ra_2$$

**Assumptions:**  $a_1 = 0$  (born with no asset),  $y_1 = w$ ,  $y_2 = 0$ ,  $R = 1 + r$ , and life ends after two periods so  $V_3(a_3) \equiv 0$ .

We proceed to solve the household problem by *backward induction*: first period 2 (consume all), then period 1 (choose  $a_2$ ).

## Dynamic Programming Approach - Household (3/4)

The Bellman equation in period 2 is:

$$V_2(a_2) = \max_{c_2} \frac{c_2^{1-\sigma}}{1-\sigma} \quad \text{s.t. } c_2 = (1+r)a_2.$$

- ▶ No income in period 2 ( $y_2 = 0$ ) and no savings in period 3 ( $a_3 = 0$ )
- ▶ Thus, optimal consumption  $c_2 = (1+r)a_2$ , and the value function is

$$V_2(a_2) = \frac{[(1+r)a_2]^{1-\sigma}}{1-\sigma}$$

- ▶ Marginal value function:

$$\frac{\partial V_2(a_2)}{\partial a_2} = (1+r)^{1-\sigma} [a_2]^{-\sigma}$$

## Dynamic Programming Approach - Household (4/4)

Given  $V_2(a_2)$ , Bellman equation in period 1 is:

$$V_1(a_1) = \max_{a_2} \left\{ \overbrace{\frac{(y_1 - a_2)^{1-\sigma}}{1-\sigma}}^{c_1} + \beta \overbrace{\frac{[(1+r)a_2]^{1-\sigma}}{1-\sigma}}^{V_2(a_2)} \right\}$$

Taking FOC wrt  $a_2$ :

$$-(y_1 - a_2)^{-\sigma} + \beta(1+r)^{1-\sigma}(a_2)^{-\sigma} = 0.$$

Solving the FOC, the optimal plan is:

$$a_2 = \left[ \frac{(\beta R)^{1/\sigma}}{R + (\beta R)^{1/\sigma}} \right] y_1$$

$$c_1 = y_1 - a_2$$

$$c_2 = Ra_2$$

where  $R \equiv (1+r)$ .

# Dynamic Programming Approach - CE

Competitive equilibrium characterized by:

$$\overbrace{a_2}^{=s_1} = \left[ \frac{(\beta R)^{1/\sigma}}{R + (\beta R)^{1/\sigma}} \right] y_1,$$

$$c_1 = y_1 - a_2,$$

$$c_2 = Ra_2,$$

$$N = 1,$$

$$K = a_2,$$

$$w = (1 - \alpha)AK^\alpha N^{-\alpha},$$

$$R = 1 + \alpha AK^{\alpha-1} N^{1-\alpha} - \delta,$$

$$Y = AK^\alpha N^{1-\alpha}.$$

Exogenous:  $\{\beta, \sigma, A, \alpha, \delta\}$

Endogenous:  $\{c_1, c_2, a_2, w, R, K, N, Y\}$

# Solution Method 1: Fsolve



## Fsolve - sol\_GE\_sys\_residuals.m (1/2)

We stack all equilibrium conditions as residuals  $F(X) = 0$  and use a nonlinear solver `fsolve` to find the unknowns  $X$ :

Unknowns:  $X = [c_1, c_2, s, w, r, K, N, Y]^T$

Parameters:  $\{\beta, \sigma, A, \alpha, \delta\}$

Residual system  $F(X) = 0$ :

$$F_1 : \beta c_2^{-\sigma} - \frac{c_1^{-\sigma}}{1+r} = 0 \quad (\text{Euler})$$

$$F_2 : c_1 + \frac{c_2}{1+r} - w = 0 \quad (\text{Budget})$$

$$F_3 : s + c_1 - w = 0 \quad (\text{Savings})$$

$$F_4 : w - (1 - \alpha)AK^\alpha N^{-\alpha} = 0 \quad (\text{Firm: wage})$$

$$F_5 : r - \alpha AK^{\alpha-1} N^{1-\alpha} + \delta = 0 \quad (\text{Firm: interest})$$

$$F_6 : N - 1 = 0 \quad (\text{Labour market})$$

$$F_7 : K - s = 0 \quad (\text{Capital market})$$

$$F_8 : Y - AK^\alpha N^{1-\alpha} = 0 \quad (\text{Production})$$

## Fsolve - sol\_GE\_sys\_residuals.m (2/2)

```
function [c_1,c_2,s,w,r,K,N,Y] = sol_GE_sys_residuals(beta,sigma,A,alpha  
    ,delta,X0);
```

```
options = optimset('Display', 'off'); % Turn off Display  
fsolve(@cFOCs_f, X0, options);      % call fsolve
```

```
function F = cFOCs_f(X)                % define the function F with X  
    % unpack input arguments  
    c_1 = X(1);    c_2 = X(2);  
    s    = X(3);  
    w    = X(4);    r    = X(5);  
    K    = X(6);    N    = X(7);  
    Y    = X(8);  
    % system of equilibrium equations (residuals)  
    F(1)    = beta*c_2^(-sigma) - c_1^(-sigma)/(1+r);  
    F(2)    = c_1 + c_2/(1+r) - w;  
    F(3)    = s + c_1 - w;  
    F(4)    = w - (1-alpha)*A*K^alpha*N^(-alpha);  
    F(5)    = r - alpha*A*K^(alpha-1)*N^(1-alpha) + delta;  
    F(6)    = N - 1;  
    F(7)    = K - s;  
    F(8)    = Y - A*K^alpha*N^(1-alpha);
```

```
end
```

```
end
```

## Fsolve - sol\_GE\_Fsolve.m

```
% ---- MAIN SCRIPT ---- %
clear; close all; clc

% Parameters (one period = 30 years)
beta = 0.95^30;
sigma = 2;
A = 1;
alpha = 0.33;
delta = 1 - (1-0.05)^30;

% Initial guess for endo. vars: [c1 c2 s w r K N Y]
X0 = [0.5, 0.5, 0.2, 0.8, 0.02, 0.2, 1.0, 1.0];

% Solve
[c_1,c_2,s,w,r,K,N,Y] = ...
sol_GE_sys_residuals(beta,sigma,A,alpha,delta,X0);

% Print results
disp('---- Results----- ');
disp(['Y   =' num2str(Y)]);
disp(['K   =' num2str(K)]);
disp(['N   =' num2str(N)]);
disp(['R   =' num2str((1+r)^(1/30))] ); %annualised gross return
disp(['w   =' num2str(w)]);
disp('----- ');
```

# Solution Method 2: Gauss–Seidel (G-S)

# Gauss–Seidel Algorithm (Step-by-Step)

**Objective:** Instead of relying on `fsolve` to solve the entire system of CE conditions, we solve the model by iterating between household and firm decisions until capital converges.

1. **Initial guess:** Pick a starting value for capital  $K^{(0)}$  and compute implied market prices:  $w$  and  $R$ .
2. **Household problem:** Given  $(w, R)$ , solve for optimal savings  $s_1$  (or equivalently asset holdings  $a_2$ ).
3. **Update capital:**  $K^{(i+1)} = s_1^{(i)}$  or  $K^{(i+1)} = a_2^{(i)}$  and recompute market prices using the firm's FOCs based on the updated  $K^{(i+1)}$ .
4. **Check convergence:** Compare new and old capital levels:

$$\text{Error} = |K^{(i+1)} - K^{(i)}|$$

5. **Stopping rule:** If error  $<$  tolerance (e.g.,  $10^{-3}$ ), stop. Otherwise, return to step 2.

**Intuition:** The algorithm iteratively adjusts  $K$  until households' saving decisions are consistent with firms' capital demands (i.e., the goods and factor markets clear).

# Gauss-Seidel - sol\_GE\_GaussSeidel\_DP\_Lagr.m (1/4)

```
clear all; close all
tic
disp('----- New run -----');
% Parameter values
beta    = 0.95^30; %0.9324^30; % 0.9324
sigma   = 2;
A        = 1;
alpha   = .33;
delta   = 1 - (1-.05)^30;

% Initials
Kold     = .01;
Nold     = 1;
w        = (1-alpha) * A * Kold^alpha * Nold^(-alpha);
R        = 1 + alpha * A * Kold^(alpha-1) * Nold^(1-alpha) - delta;

% for iteration
error    = 100;
errorv   = 100;
iter     = 0;
itermax  = 50;
tol      = .001;
update   = .5;
```

# Household - sol\_GE\_GaussSeidel\_DP\_Lagr.m

Given  $w, R$ , the household chooses  $c_1, c_2, s_1$ , using one of the three methods (user's choice):

- ▶ **Method 0 (Lagrangian):** Solve FOCs analytically.
- ▶ **Method 1 (DP with FOC):** Closed-form savings rule from Euler equation obtained through solving DP analytically.
- ▶ **Method 2 (DP with Value Function):** Discretise asset space, search for  $s_1$  that maximises  $V_1$ .

## Gauss-Seidel - sol\_GE\_GaussSeidel\_DP\_Lagr.m (2/4)

```
while (iter<itermax)&&(error>tol)
% [1.] Solving the household problem (3 different methods)
I_DP = 2;
%
if I_DP==0    % Lagrangian using FOCs
    lambda_sig=w/(1+(1/R)*(1/(R*beta))^(1/sigma));
    c_1 = lambda_sig; c_2 = lambda_sig*(1/(R*beta))^(1/sigma);
    s_1 = w - c_1;
elseif I_DP==1 % Dynamic programming using FOCs
    s_1 = (R*beta)^(1/sigma)/(R+(R*beta)^(1/sigma))*w; % a_2 = s_1
    c_1 = w - s_1; c_2 = R*s_1;
elseif I_DP==2 % Dynamic programming method using value function
    % Asset space (a2 = s1), step size = w/100
    s1v = [0:w/100:2*w]; % coarser grid
    %s1v = [0:w/1000:2*w]; % finer grid
    V2v = (R*s1v).^(1-sigma)/(1-sigma); % Value over the asset space
    c1v = w - s1v; % possible choices for consumption 1
    % find value function for V1
    V1v = (c1v>0).*c1v.^(1-sigma)/(1-sigma) + (c1v<=0).*(-10^10) +
        beta*V2v;
    % find the max value of the value function and optimal saving
    [val,pos] = max(V1v);
    s_1 = s1v(pos); % optimal saving/asset
    c_1 = w - s_1; c_2 = R*s_1;
end
```



## Gauss-Seidel - sol\_GE\_GaussSeidel\_DP\_Lagr.m (3/4)

```
% [.2] Clearing the labor and capital markets
N      = 1; % inelastic labor
Knew   = s_1; % capital

% Use onvex updating rule for capital for stabiity
K      = update*Kold + (1-update)*Knew;

% [.3] Using the firm's FOCs to pin down factor prices
w      = (1-alpha)*A*K^alpha*N^(-alpha);
q      = alpha*A*K^(alpha-1)*N^(1-alpha);
% Interest rate
r      = q - delta;
R      = 1 + r;
% Output
Y      = A*K^(alpha)*N^(1-alpha);

% [.4] the convergence condition and updates for next iteration
error  = 100*abs(K - Kold)/Kold; % error in percentage
errorv = [errorv error];
%
Kold   = K;
iter   = iter+1;
```

end

## Gauss-Seidel - sol\_GE\_GaussSeidel\_DP\_Lagr.m (4/4)

```
disp('---- Results----- ');
disp(['Y   =' num2str(Y)]);
disp(['K   =' num2str(K)]);
disp(['N   =' num2str(N)]);
disp(['R   =' num2str(R^(1/30))] ); % annualised
disp(['w   =' num2str(w)]);
disp(['error=' num2str(error)]);
disp('----- ');

toc
```

## G–S - Analytical vs. DP (Numerical) Household Sol. (1/2)

	(i) Analytical	(ii) DP, step size = $\frac{w}{100}$	(iii) DP, step size = $\frac{w}{1000}$
$Y$	0.40049	0.39807	0.40062
$K$	0.062477	0.061342	0.062540
$N$	1.00000	1.00000	1.00000
$R$	1.02860	1.02900	1.02860
$w$	0.26833	0.26671	0.26842
error	0.00086253	0.00076821	0.00079105
<b>Runtime (s)</b>	0.039171	0.042734	0.051140

- ▶ (i) Household problem solved analytically ( $I\_DP==0/1$ )
- ▶ (ii) and (iii) solved by value search on discretized asset grid ( $I\_DP==2$ )
- ▶ (i) is nice, but many problems have no closed-form solution  $\rightarrow$  use (i)/(ii)
- ▶ All runs use the same Gauss–Seidel relaxation, tolerance, and production parameters

## G–S - Analytical vs. DP (Numerical) Household Sol. (2/2)

Level differences are small but systematic:

- ▶ DP with coarser grid (ii) produces slightly lower  $K$  and  $Y$  relative to analytical (i).
- ▶ Finer grid (iii) brings DP back in line with analytical:  $K$  and  $Y$  essentially match (differences at  $< 10^{-4}$ ).

Prices and wages move accordingly:

- ▶ With lower  $K$  in (ii), the wage  $w$  is a bit lower and  $R$  a touch higher (marginal products respond to capital).
- ▶ In (iii),  $w$  and  $R$  revert to analytical values.

Runtime:

- ▶ Runtime rises modestly with grid refinement.

### Note

**Intuition:** Coarser grids tend to lead low-asset households to *under-save* due to fewer saving choices. This biases  $K$  and  $Y$  downward.

**Trade-off:** Finer grids improve accuracy but increase computational burden (slower).

**Solution:** A potential solution is using ▶ non-uniform grid.

# Supplementary Material



# Left-Dense (Power-Transformed) Grid (1/2)

Formula:

$$\text{grid}(t) = a_{\min} + (a_{\max} - a_{\min}) t^p, \quad t \in [0, 1], \quad p > 1$$

Code:

```
function grid = left_dense_grid(amin, amax, n, p)
% Left-dense non-uniform grid on [amin, amax]:
% (You need to set p>1 so points cluster near amin)
    t = linspace(0,1,n);           % uniform in [0,1]
    grid = amin + (amax-amin)*(t.^p); % convex warp clusters left
    grid(1)=amin; grid(end)=amax;   % exact endpoints
end
```

Intuition:

1. Start with a uniform grid  $t = [0, \frac{1}{n-1}, \dots, 1]$ .
2. Apply a nonlinear stretch  $t \mapsto t^p$ .
3. Since  $f(t) = t^p$  is convex for  $p > 1$ , points dense near  $a_{\min}$  and sparse near  $a_{\max}$ .

# Left-Dense (Power-Transformed) Grid (2/2)

Numerical illustration:

$t$	$t^1$ (linear)	$t^2$	$t^3$
0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
0.25	0.25	0.06	0.02
0.50	0.50	0.25	0.13
0.75	0.75	0.56	0.42
1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00

Parameter choice and effects:

$p$	Spacing pattern	Typical use
1	uniform	baseline (equal spacing)
$> 1$	dense near $a_{\min}$	capture curvature near borrowing bound
$0 < p < 1$	dense near $a_{\max}$	capture behaviour at high wealth



# Chebyshev-Lobatto Grid (1/2)

**Goal:** Create dense grid near both ends  $[a_{\min}, a_{\max}]$ .

Formula:

$$\xi_j = \cos\left(\pi \cdot \frac{j}{n-1}\right), \quad j = 0, 1, \dots, n-1$$

$$a_j = \frac{a_{\min} + a_{\max}}{2} + \frac{a_{\max} - a_{\min}}{2} \xi_j.$$

Code:

```
function grid = cheb_lobatto_grid(amin, amax, n)
% Chebyshev-Lobatto nodes on [amin, amax].
% (points bunch/dense near both ends)
    j = 0:(n-1);
    xi = cos(pi * j / (n-1));           % nodes on [-1,1]
    centre = 0.5*(amin+amax);
    g = centre + 0.5*(amax-amin)*xi;
    grid = sort(g, 'ascend');           % ascending order
    grid(1)=amin; grid(end)=amax;      % pin exact endpoints
end
```

## Chebyshev-Lobatto Grid (2/2)

Let  $n = 5$  and interval  $[0, 10]$ .

Step 1: equally spaced angles

$$\theta_j = j \frac{\pi}{4}, \quad j = 0, \dots, 4.$$

Step 2: take cosines

$$\xi = [1, 0.707, 0, -0.707, -1].$$

Step 3: map to  $[0, 10]$

$$a = 5 + 5\xi = [10, 8.535, 5, 1.465, 0].$$

Step 4: sort ascending  $\Rightarrow [0, 1.465, 5, 8.535, 10]$ .

**Observation:** short gaps near 0 and 10, wide gaps in the middle.

# Why cosine creates endpoint clustering?

Cosine basics:

$$x = \cos(\theta), \quad \theta \in [0, \pi]$$

gives  $x \in [-1, 1]$ .

If we take equal angular steps in  $\theta$  from  $\theta_i = \{0, \frac{1}{n-1}\pi, \dots, \frac{j-1}{n-1}\pi, \pi\}$ , the corresponding  $x$ 's are **not equally spaced**. In fact,  $x(\theta_i)$  will be dense near both endpoints -1 and 1 and sparse around the centre.

Consider derivative:

$$\frac{dx}{d\theta} = -\sin \theta$$

- ▶ Near  $\theta = 0$  or  $\pi$ ,  $\sin \theta \approx 0 \Rightarrow x$  changes slowly, causing points to **crowd near  $\pm 1$** .
- ▶ In the middle ( $\theta \approx \pi/2$ ),  $\sin \theta = 1$ , causing  $x$  to change quickly and therefore points spaced wider.

## Gauss-Seidel - sol\_GE\_GaussSeidel\_DP\_Lagr\_v1.m

```
while (iter<itermax)&&(error>tol)
...
...
elseif I_DP==2 % Dynamic programming method using value function

    % DIFFERENT DISCRETIZATION METHODS
    % -----
    % [a.] Uniform
    %s1v = make_grid('uniform', 0, 2*w, 201);
    %s1v = make_grid('uniform', 0, 2*w, 2001);

    % [b.] Growing grid (left dense)
    s1v = make_grid('left_dense', 0, 2*w, 201);
    %s1v = make_grid('left_dense', 0, 2*w, 2001);

    % [c.] Chebyshev (dense near both endpoints)
    % (Not suitable for this problem)
    %s1v = make_grid('cheb', 0, 2*w, 201);

    % -----
    V2v = (R*s1v).^(1-sigma)/(1-sigma);
    ...
    ...
    ...
end
```