5 PROPOSALS FOR A TRANSFORMATIVE LEFT-WING PROGRAMME FOR THE 29 NOVEMBER SPANISH GENERAL ELECTIONS

Research & Degrowth International
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Executive summary

The announcement of a snap election has compressed the time available to develop a programme to meet the historic moment we are living through. The rise of the far-right and fascism calls for proposals that can challenge prevailing norms, provide material answers to the cost-of-living crisis, and offer a future transformation grounded in what is possible—possibilities that are expanded by current social struggles. The general strike on 11 November and the election campaign are two distinct arenas, but they share two fundamental questions: What kind of society do we want to move towards? What essential work and goods do we want to exist, and who gets to decide what they are and how they are provided?

The housing crisis and cost-of-living crisis, job insecurity and the crisis of care are not systemic failures: they are the outcomes of turning essential goods and services into commodities. Overcoming, even partially, the sense of scarcity and constant competition produced by capitalism is a precondition for imagining other collective ways of life, freeing up time and resources to care for people and the planet. This is the premise shared by the policies we propose for a programme capable of winning a social majority in the 29 November election.

1. A JOB GUARANTEE FOR THE ECOSOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

Employment for everyone who wants it

Main problem addressed: Involuntary unemployment and precarious work, and the need to redirect the workforce and collective capabilities towards the ecosocial transition.

Definition: Employment for every person willing and able to work in activities essential to well-being. Work and the economy are reorganized based on meeting social and ecological needs.

Implementation: Employment up to 30 hours per week at a decent wage, voluntary participation and no requirement to participate in order to receive benefits. Phase 1: the state acts as employer of last resort in sectors where it is already active, with a focus on reskilling. Phase 2: employment in strategic sectors and universal basic services through public, cooperative and community partnerships (food, housing, energy, etc.).

Key impacts: Establishes a baseline of secure access to employment and sets a standard for working conditions, working hours and workplace democracy; strengthens the capacity of key sectors for the ecosocial transition; helps reverse rural depopulation.

Examples: The Swiss National Service (social and ecological jobs through a civil service agency); a pilot jobs programme in Marienthal, Austria.

2. REDUCING WORKING HOURS

Everyone working, working less, working better

Main problem addressed: The imbalance between working life and personal life, and involuntary unemployment.

Definition: A 30–32-hour working week, spread across the week to support a fairer sharing of everyday care responsibilities.

Implementation: Reduce working hours to 30–32 per week with no loss of pay, alongside the right to part-time work, appropriate early retirement, holidays, and longer, equal and non-transferable leave for childbirth and childcare. Although the Job Guarantee may set a standard number of hours, a universal reduction in working time remains essential to ensuring a fair distribution of work.

Key impacts: Evidence points to environmental benefits (less commuting), health benefits (less burnout and better sleep), and improved well-being (more time for care, friendships and community life).

Examples: The four-day working week pilot in the United Kingdom involving 2,900 workers; the reduction to 36 hours in Iceland following successful pilot programmes; and the 32-hour pilot in Valencia.

3. UNIVERSAL CARE INCOME
Freedom to care for people and for life

Main problem addressed: The cost-of-living crisis, socioeconomic and gender inequality, and the invisibility and undervaluation of care in its many forms.

Definition: The Universal Care Income (UCI) is a transformative tool to recognise, make visible and compensate care work—both paid and unpaid—which sustains human life and ecosystems.

Implementation: A universal, unconditional monthly cash transfer adjusted to the cost of living. Taking average per-person spending on housing and food into account, a UCI in Spain would amount to approximately €650 per month.

Key impacts: Reduces dependence on wages to meet basic needs; gives people greater autonomy over how they use their time and whether to take up paid employment or devote time to care.

Examples: The B-Mincome experience in Barcelona has shown positive effects: more than two-thirds of beneficiaries were women with substantial care responsibilities. Their material well-being and autonomy improved, and they invested in their children's education and well-being.

4. DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE OF PUBLIC HOUSING
Homes to live in, not to speculate on

Main problem addressed: The cost-of-living and housing crises, and housing insecurity driven by speculation.

Definition: A public housing stock created by expropriating properties held by investment funds and banks and bringing vacant homes into public ownership. Tenants/residents, civil society and public institutions have ability to deliberate and make decisions about how this housing is governed. This approach starts from the premise put forward by the Tenants' Union Confederation: "building more homes is not the solution; the homes already exist, but they are in the hands of speculators." Building more without structurally changing the treatment of housing as a market commodity is both impossible and undesirable, not least because of planetary limits.

Implementation: Expropriating the 1,076,753 homes owned by private companies (investment funds, banks, SAREB and property-holding companies) would increase the public housing stock from 1% to approximately 5%. In line with the demands of the housing union movement, bringing around four million vacant homes into the public stock would make it possible to reach a public housing stock of close to 30%, provided there is a commitment to upgrading and renovating homes in the context of the climate crisis. Governance should be democratic and consistent with both the universal basic services framework and the housing movement's demands—including rent caps and rent freezes.

Key impacts: Decommodifies and provides affordable housing, reducing dependence on wages to live with dignity; gives the public sector the capacity to intervene in the market and address the housing crisis; curbs speculation; avoids the resource consumption associated with new construction. It also challenges the prevailing idea of a home as an investment asset versus a home as a place to live.

Examples: The 2021 consultative referendum in Berlin on expropriating property owned by private real-estate companies with 3,000 or more units in the city. Vienna has around 220,000 municipal homes and 200,000 subsidised cooperative homes, demonstrating that affordable housing can be maintained at scale.

5. FOOD SOCIAL SECURITY
Public supermarkets and food cooperatives

Main problem addressed: The commodification of food, oligopolistic control of food distribution (leading to unfair prices for producers and consumers), and insufficient support for the agroecological transition.

Definition: The two components of an alternative public food system, designed to replace the current unsustainable and unjust model are: (a) public supermarkets/food stores—non-profit food retailers under public ownership and managed by public, cooperative or community bodies; and (b) Food Social Security (FSS)—a redistributive programme providing universal access to healthy, nutritious food, democratically managed and funded through a combination of public funds and social contributions. These components work together as FSS provides universal access, while public supermarkets provide the physical and logistical infrastructure.

Implementation: Integrate newly established public supermarkets and food stores, municipal markets, consumer cooperatives, local shops and participating retailers into the FSS, using shared ecosocial criteria and public-community governance. The FSS could be facilitated through the UCI, with a basic allowance of €150 on a card for purchases at public and private outlets that support the agroecological transition and local farming. The amount could be adjusted according to production and distribution capacity. FSS would create stable, democratically directed demand; public supermarkets would provide distribution, purchasing and supply capacity at scale.

Key impacts: Guarantees the right to food by decommodifying access; provides a stable outlet for the agroecological transition with lower energy and material use; intervenes in production–distribution–consumption relations rather than subsidising consumption or creating isolated outlets; and fosters shared responsibility between rural and urban areas.

Examples: Local Food Social Security projects in France; cooperative supermarkets.

How would it be funded?

Your paragraph text

1. **Tax restructuring:** Reduce the tax burden on labour and shift the focus towards resource use and wealth, particularly the wealth and income accumulated by the richest 1%.
2. **Budgetary restructuring:** Cut spending on harmful sectors, military budgets and other damaging budget lines, and redirect resources towards increased ecosocial spending.

3. **Examples of fiscal instruments:** A new wealth tax, progressive reform of personal income tax, taxes on financial transactions and resource extraction, and wealth caps and maximum income limits to support redistribution.
4. **Monetary policy restructuring (medium and long term, at EU level):** Abolish the debt and deficit limits established by the Maastricht Treaty and put an alternative to the Stability and Growth Pact in place.

ANOTHER ECONOMY IS POSSIBLE. AND WE CAN START BUILDING IT TODAY.

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