

# End Women's precarity through Employment as a matter of Climate Justice in Spain.

The potential of NGOs to influence Green Policies.



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**STUDENT REPORT**

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**List of Abbreviations**

AEI = Agencia Estatal de Investigación [State Research Agency]

ApS = Alianza por la Solidaridad

CDTI = Centro para el Desarrollo Tecnológico Industrial [Centre for the Development of Industrial Technology]

COVID-19 = Coronavirus Disease

EEC = Estrategia “España Circular” [Strategy “Circular Spain”]

GDP = Gross Domestic Product

NGO = Non-Governmental Organisation

STEM = Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Spain is very vulnerable to climate change, especially in the Mediterranean area (Instituto de la Mujer, 2020, p. 15). The temperature has risen by an average of 1.5 degrees in 30 years, heat waves are more frequent and longer, serious flooding takes place several times in a year, 75% of its territory is at risk of desertification in the present century, and 90% of glaciers have disappeared in the last century (ibid, p. 12). Moreover, it is estimated that the country needs two-and-a-half times its surface area to supply the needs of its economy today and the ecological footprint per inhabitant in Spain was four global hectares in 2016 (MITECO et al., 2020, pp. 16-17).

In this context, research shows that 78.5% of those who identify themselves as women show concern for climate change and the environment against 75.2% of men (Instituto de la Mujer, 2020, p. 16). Besides, 61% of women attribute personal responsibility for climate change, compared to 47% of men (ibid, p. 18). However, although women in Spain are more committed to reducing climate change, they suffer its consequences the most. To name a few, several studies show that mortality from cardiovascular disease attributed to extreme temperatures affects women more and that they are more vulnerable to energy poverty (ibid, pp. 13-14).

In the light of those vulnerabilities and considering the subsequent need for a shift in the consumption and production model of Spain, we find that job insecurity characterises the women's labour force. Sectors such as commerce, tourism and care work are highly feminised in Spain, and they are among the most precarious (Oxfam Internacional, 2018, p. 32). Besides, there is a high rate of temporality and the breach in the rate of unemployment was 15.4% higher for women than for men by November 2020 (Paro Registrado—Infogram, 2020). By 2019, 24% of employed women had a part-time job against 7% of men (INE, 2020). In Spain, part-time work and temporality are key factors of social exclusion and working poverty (FOESSA, 2019, p. 3). To reduce these problems, the report by the Women's Institute identifies new opportunities in the circular economy, green and blue jobs, clean mobility and the bio-economy (Instituto de la Mujer, 2020, p. 75). Another solution may be entrepreneurship, however, between 2013 and 2017 only 37.6% of entrepreneurs were women in Spain (SGR-Cesgar, 2020, p. 8). Besides, what motivates those few women to start up is the difficulty of finding work and because the possibilities that appear for them are for precarious employment, therefore, they have to risk their savings to generate income in this way (Rius, 2017, pp. 6-10). Besides, the *Asociación Red GEM España* (2020) stresses that this type of "entrepreneurship out of necessity is usually more prone to failure, not growth-oriented and tends to create more precarious work"(p. 118).

This project aims to analyse the potential of a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) to influence policies and contribute to the reduction of both climate change and the vulnerable position of women in the labour market, which is a rather new field of study. The NGO understudy is *Alianza por la Solidaridad* (ApS) because this project has been written at the time of doing my

internship in their headquarters. ApS is an International NGO based in Spain, which has a trajectory of over 30 years and among the priorities of its Country Strategy, there is to promote climate justice<sup>1</sup> where it emphasises the work of the NGO on employability and its intention to promote green jobs, especially among women (ApS, 2019, p. 10). Thus, this research aims to answer the following question: *“What are the opportunities and obstacles for Alianza por la Solidaridad to influence policies to end women’s precarity and achieve climate justice simultaneously?”* The research is characterised by a critical and independent analysis of the opportunities and obstacles of the policies by the researcher and it problematises the findings, leading to several recommendations for the intervention of the NGO.

The research presents different chapters to answer the research question. First, there is a description of the methodology; second, the theories that guide the analysis; third, the in-depth analysis of two Spanish green policies considering their strengths and weaknesses for the employability of women and the potential of ApS, as an NGO, to influence those policies; finally, we find the conclusions of the research.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Choices

The project focuses on Spain as the country of analysis because the receiving NGO of the internship is based on Madrid and committed to climate justice and gender equality. The further specificities that make Spain an interesting country of analysis appear under section 2.3, on the case study.

This project aims to explore the following problem formulation: *“What are the opportunities and obstacles for Alianza por la Solidaridad to influence policies to end women’s precarity and achieve climate justice simultaneously?”* It will guide an analysis to discover to what extent an NGO can play a role in those realms and what strategies it can implement to be a relevant actor. The formulation includes the word “precarity” because the point of departure is the consideration of job insecurity as conditioning to be in a precarious situation, additionally, climate change affects women differently and determines their standards of living. Thus, improving their labour conditions as part of the new fields of employment is a matter of climate justice, which is a priority for ApS (2019, p. 10). Equally important is the use of “policies” since it provides a broader framework as the project analyse the potential to influence both the implementation of the policies to guarantee a gender perspective on them and the policy-making process.

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<sup>1</sup> “Climate justice means addressing the climate crisis whilst also making progress towards equity and the protection and realisation of Human Rights”, especially of those more affected and who have contributed less to the problem (Climate justice — In depth, n.d.)

In order to answer the question, the project follows the structure of a case study. Prior to the analysis of the context and discussion of the topic at hand, the project presents the theories that will guide it. There are four different theoretical frameworks and, at the time of presenting each of them, there is a link to the Country Strategy of ApS, to understand their relevance.

First, it analyses where the power of NGO lies so we can understand how they can influence policies. Second, the ecofeminist approach and the Doughnut Economic model appear together because they share many of their principles and are key to understand the necessary changes in the Spanish production and consumption model. Finally, intersectionality relates to the others as soon as it pays attention to the structures of power, thus the differences in the affectation by climate change to several actors.

## **2.2 Empirical data gathering**

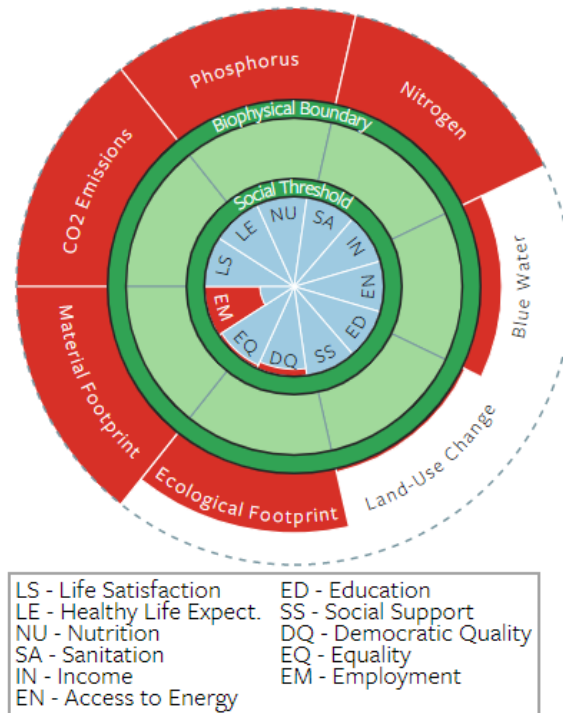
There are a set of materials used as empirical data. This research relies mainly on secondary data, such as national statistics, Spanish public policies, and research papers. The project contextualises the intervention through references to the Country Strategy of ApS (2019) to identify where does climate justice appears as relevant and how they can strategically achieve the goals of the organisation within a given national context.

## **2.3 Country case study**

A country case study will be the research method. The introduction presented what characterises the Spanish context in terms of climate change, the concern of society about it, and the unequal labour conditions of women; and Chapter 4 will show the possibilities of civil society for influencing policy processes, specifically the case of ApS as an NGO.

To understand the relevance of the case and its sections, we refer to an analysis by the University of Leeds, which illustrates the current situation of the countries concerning environmental sustainability and the social situation based on the Doughnut economy. Thus, we can see that Spain is well above of what would be desirable in biophysical parameters; however, it has a low score in some social indicators such as employment, gender equality and democratic quality. The best scenario, according to this model, is to be within the planetary limits, while covering people's basic needs; in other words, there should not be any concept in red, the social indicators should appear in blue and the intermediate circle in green.

Figure 1. The Spanish context according to the Doughnut model



Source: Country Comparisons (n.d.)

Because of these results, climate change policies are gaining momentum in the last few years, and especially after the outbreak of COVID-19. Spain is one of the European countries more affected by this phenomenon and the position of the current Government of Spain is seen by many as an opportunity to move toward a greener and socially just economy (Spain is Feeling the Impacts of..., 2019, November 27). In fact, they have developed several policies on the topic. The project chooses two that could determine the future for women's prosperity because they focus on the transition of the economic model and the importance of the circular economy. These policies are framed within a worldwide political context that promotes sustainability through guiding documents such as the European Green Deal, the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals (A European Green Deal | European Commission, n.d.; The Paris Agreement | UNFCCC, n.d.; THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development, n.d.). In this scenario, the project intends to find out what an NGO can do to accelerate the achievement of gender equality and women's rights.

## 2.4 Research design

In order to answer the research question, the project presents four theories and the country case study as the methodology to use. The analysis' chapter will be determined by deskwork, reviewing several documents. According to it, the research takes mainly qualitative data, although

it also gathers quantitative data to back the argumentation. In that chapter, the theories will interlink the issues presented, problematising the case. These elements will guide the critical analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of two Spanish green policies in terms of women's employability at the time of intending to change the productive and economic model of Spain. This will introduce to what ApS can do as an NGO in that context, what its role is at the time of influencing policies and implementing projects, and to what extent it has power. In fact, the project is action research as soon as it aims to produce practical solutions after analysing the context (Blaxter, Hughes & Tight, 2006, p. 67).

## **2.5 Delimitations and limitations**

Finally, a series of internal delimitations and some limitations (external to the researcher) define the scope of the project.

The delimitations include the election of the country of analysis as well as the specific policies and empirical data chosen to analyse the case. Although we cannot generalise the case, it provides useful tools that apply to other cases since it considers the active role of NGOs as agenda-setters, bringing new ideas from theories to the field. The analysis will consider how the different NGO's sources of power can influence not only at the local level but also at the macro level, to achieve climate justice and the economic model of the Doughnut<sup>2</sup> in Spain or countries with a similar context. Equally, the structure of the project may show the potential for NGOs to influence in other fields. Hence, if the NGOs use the theoretical ideas presented in this project to guide their intervention, they will provide innovative actions.

The limitations are related to the situation derived from the COVID-19 restrictions, which made impossible to do in-depth fieldwork, as well as access other sources that are not available online. Therefore, the solution was using several online libraries and platforms.

## **3. THEORY**

This chapter briefly presents four different theories that work as an instrument to analyse the context of Spain and the potential actions that an NGO can take to influence policies and play a role in women's employability in environmental issues, thus achieving climate justice. Their ideas are interconnected and complete each other to critically discuss the topic under Chapter 4. Finally, to understand the relevance of the theories in this research, there are some references to the institutional strategy of ApS throughout this chapter.

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<sup>2</sup> Chapter 3 presents the model.



### 3.1 NGO power and influence

Given that the project aims to analyse what is the potential of ApS to influence policies, this section introduces to different types of power the NGOs can exercise to create change. Böstrom and Tamm Hallström (2010) did an analysis of several NGOs and their growing influence on global decisions, and concluded that NGOs are playing the role of “agenda-setters” in many cases (pp. 42-43).

The aim of the article by Böstrom and Tamm Hallström (2010) is to refer to the process of developing social and environmental standards and certificates. Nevertheless, as they locate the discussion within global politics, it applies to the field of political advocacy and participation, where the different types of NGO power influence their ability to reach political actors, influence public policy and gain social support.

The authors define four types of NGO power:

1. Cognitive. It “refers to the ability of actors to provide unique knowledge and information” (ibid., p. 45). The NGOs can provide a different framing and expertise at the time of creating norms. In the case of international NGOs, they can provide an international framing because of their presence in different contexts and the information they can get directly from terrain about the effects of global risks, such as climate change, etc. (ibid., p. 46). The information they provide is seen as reliable, without the potential interests that could be behind the information provided by a corporation or State (ibid.). In the case of ApS, the cognitive power emanates from the successful projects on climate justice implemented by it in different contexts, such as Senegal, Mozambique or Haiti and its over 30 years of experience (Justicia climática y sostenibilidad, n.d.)
2. Social. It refers to the ability to create alliances (Böstrom and Tamm Hallström, 2010, p. 47). They highlight the importance of collaboration to influence decisions because “no powerful argument could be promoted from the viewpoint of a single category; yet a single category could add a necessary element within a given argument” (ibid). In the case of ApS, taking part in an international federation as ActionAid and other networks is an important source of influence and other potential collaborations will appear under Chapter 4 (Sobre Alianza, n.d.)
3. Monitoring. As soon as the NGOs assess the performance of states, transnational corporations, etc., drawing attention if they do not comply with their promises (Böstrom and Tamm Hallström., 2010, p. 47). When ApS highlights the inactivity of the Government regarding climate justice, for example, through the “Walk for survival” campaign<sup>3</sup>, it is using its monitoring power doing a call for action (Home, n.d.).

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<sup>3</sup> The “Walk for survival” campaign called for climate justice during the last term of 2020.

4. Symbolic. It refers to the name or logo that may symbolise legitimate values in a given context. They clarify that NGOs are not always seen as experts within their fields of intervention, but some of them have the honour of being seen as “moral authorities” and add value when they take part of multi-stakeholder decisions (Böstrom and Tamm Hallström, 2010, p. 44).

To summarise, there are different ways to advocate change from an NGO and be successful. The analysis will show how they apply to the case of ApS in Spain regarding women’s employability and climate justice. Moreover, to understand why the role of the NGO is crucial and why climate change and gender are important to be analysed together, the following sections will introduce to three different theoretical perspectives: ecofeminism, Doughnut economics and intersectionality.

### 3.2 Ecofeminism and Doughnut Economics

In this project, we take the stance of constructivist ecofeminism rather than the essentialist one represented by Vandana Shiva among others (Herrero, 2013a, p. 11; Herrero, 2013b, p. 280; Buckingham, 2004, p. 147). The spiritual or essentialist approach identifies a natural link between women and nature, whereas the constructivist one understands that link as a social construction (Herrero, 2013a, p. 10).

Herrero (2013b) describes the ecofeminism as “a school of thought and social movement that explores the encounters and synergies between environmentalism and feminism” (p. 280). According to this definition, the theory stands as a fundamental pillar for this project and plays an important role to analyse the context and the actions to take from the NGOs on environmental issues and from a gender perspective. We link this theory to the Doughnut Economics since both share many of their principles.

The economic model of the Doughnut was introduced by Kate Raworth in her book “*Doughnut Economics: Seven ways to think like a 21<sup>st</sup>-century economist*”, which is summarised in Raworth (2017) and provides a framework to understand why a change of economic paradigm is necessary. Hereafter, we present the seven points and connect them to ecofeminist principles:

1. “Change the goal: from [Gross Domestic Product] GDP growth to the Doughnut” (ibid., p. 219). Not only is it important to grow in economic terms, but how we grow is crucial and it has to be sustainable and thriving. The ecofeminism also criticises the GDP as an indicator of development because it considers neither the caring economy (mainly performed by women) nor sustainability. In fact, “it may come to count environmental degradation as wealth” (Herrero, 2013a, p. 3).
2. “See the big picture: from self-contained market to embedded economy” (Raworth, 2017, p. 220). This bigger picture of the economy must value the contribution of other hitherto invisible systems such as the caring economy. The ecofeminist approach adds that human

beings are “ecodependent” since our survival depends on natural resources; but we also depend on other human beings, especially in specific moments of our life cycle, and usually, women have developed this caring work because of the sexual division of labour and the traditional gender roles (Herrero, 2013b, p. 281). Besides, the patriarchal and capitalist systems have grown against both systems that sustain life and have underestimated both of them (Herrero, 2013a, p. 1).

3. “Nurture human nature: from ‘rational economic man’ to social adaptable humans” (Raworth, 2017, p. 220). We are interdependent, adaptable and social human beings, for these reasons, the natural behaviour is to be cooperative rather than competitive. That competition is based on the dominant dual thought that characterises Modernity -men vs women, nature vs culture, science vs traditional knowledge, etc. - and is hierarchical (Herrero, 2013b, p. 284).

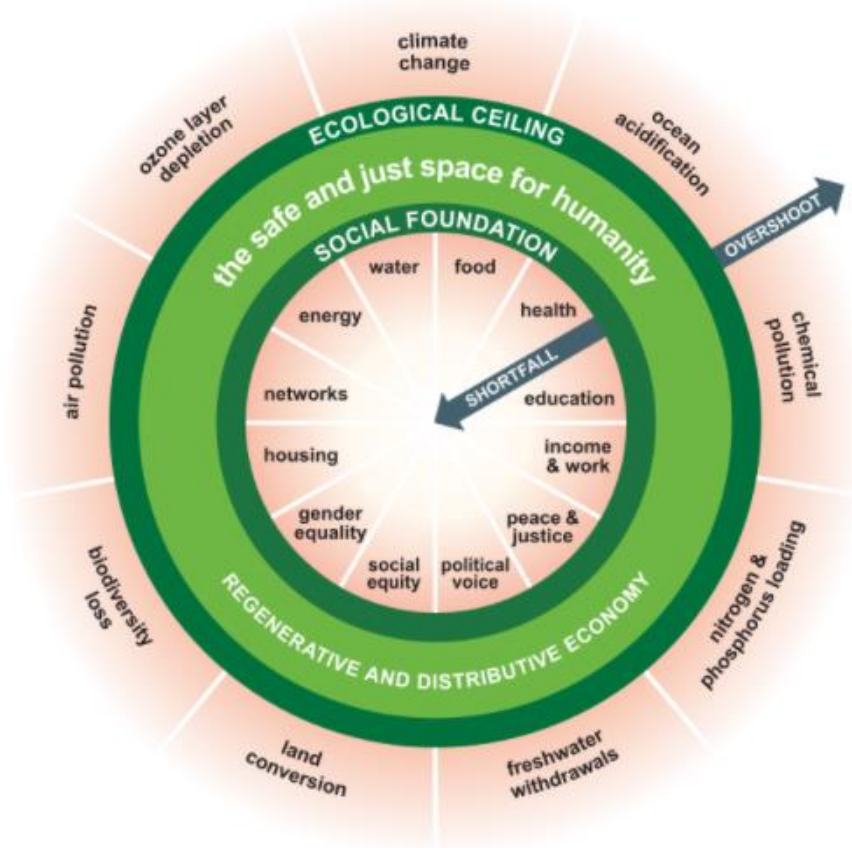
The ecofeminist approach claims that the wellbeing of the people must be the primary aim of society and economy, and women should no longer be passive actors, but leaders and owners of their lives (Herrero, 2013a, p. 8).

4. “Get savvy with systems: from mechanical equilibrium to dynamic complexity” (Raworth, 2017, p. 220). The current linear thought is blind to the interconnections and impacts between different systems. The economy is not isolated, it is influenced by society and the environment as well as it influences those systems.
5. “Design to distribute: from ‘growth will even it up again’ to distributive by design” (ibid., p. 221). The value of production must be shared from the beginning.
6. “Create to regenerate: from ‘growth will clean it up again’ to regenerative by design” (ibid., p. 221). This idea is based on the circular economy; where the waste generated by a product can create a new one within the same or another industry.
7. “Be agnostic about growth: from growth-addicted to growth-agnostic” (ibid., p. 221). The model defends that nothing grows eternally in nature; if something does, we understand it as threatening. Consequently, the overall objective of the economy cannot be growing but thriving. The ecofeminist perspective adds, on the one hand, that the ecological approach shows that the endless growth is not sustainable, and the feminism understands that tendency as a result of a patriarchal and androcentric system that is opposed to every life on Earth (Herrero, 2013a, p. 9). The solution, therefore, is to connect the socioeconomic system to the natural cycles and “naturalise” men, so they take care of the planet and other human beings (ibid., p. 11). Herrero adds that sustainability is not possible if gender equality is not achieved, they go hand in hand (ibid.).

The Doughnut is based in the SDG and advocates a change of mindset (Raworth, 2017, pp. 217-222). It identifies the Fundamental Human Rights in the inner circle, which have to be covered without exceeding the planetary boundaries. According to this, when analysing the

overall situation on a given country, the best scenario must locate the use of resources and the coverage of social rights above the “social foundation” and under the “ecological ceiling”, what figure describes as “the safe and just space for humanity”, where we satisfy the human needs without destroying the planet.

Figure 2: Doughnut Economics Model



Source: About Doughnut Economics | DEAL (n.d.)

In conclusion, both the ecofeminist approach and the Doughnut economics are normative points of departure to understand the relevance of the project because they are the desirable approaches and models to achieve at the macro level. At the same time, they are the lenses through which the project will analyse and discuss the gender perspective within the policies and the NGO’s action. Additionally, the gender perspective leads the intervention of ApS, being at the core of the mission and the Theory of Change (ApS, 2019, p. 5) and it takes into consideration the ecofeminism perspective within its strategy (ibid, p. 10).

Nevertheless, the normative stance of the project is not complete if we do not include the intersectional approach, which is key for the NGO and this research, and that it is introduced in the next subsection.

### **3.3 Intersectionality**

The definition of intersectionality by Hill Collins and Chepp (2013) suggests that “gender, race, class, sexuality, age, ethnicity, ability, and similar phenomena cannot be analytically understood in isolation from one another; instead, these constructs signal an intersecting constellation of power relationships that produce unequal material realities and distinctive social experiences for individuals and groups positioned within them” (p. 3). Therefore, this theory is particularly interesting to the subject at hand given that climate change and the measures taken to adapt and mitigate its effects, affect differently depending on the intersection of a series of particularities such as the above mentioned but also geographical location, the current or previous field of work, etc. Moreover, Greta Gaard (2015) relates ecofeminism and intersectionality not only to highlight those structural inequalities but also to include nature as a subject of oppression (p. 30).

In the same vein, the theory provides a critical approach at the time of advocating for a power shift, because we must consider the complexity of systems of oppression and take into account marginal experiences that could be otherwise left aside from the dominant assumptions and political decisions (*ibid.*, p. 9). Moreover, from the stance of intersectionality, it is equally necessary to make privilege visible to analyse the entire infrastructure of inequality (Choo & Ferree, 2010 in Hill Collins & Chepp, 2013, p. 10). In fact, ApS (2019) highlights the importance of considering “intersecting inequalities” (p. 8).

### **3.4 Conclusion**

The definition of different types of power and their combination is crucial to influence policies from the perspective of the NGO. This influence must guide to turning the economic model of Spain into a Doughnut, led by an inherent ecofeminist perspective, as the path to end women’s precarity and achieve climate justice. Finally, given that the situation of women is particularly vulnerable in terms of climate change issues in Spain but it is different depending on several experiences, it is necessary to have an intersectional view.

## **4. ANALYSIS OF SPANISH GREEN POLICIES**

The following chapter presents the critical analysis of two relevant Spanish Green Policies: the Bill on Climate Change and Energy Transition (Congreso de los Diputados, 2020, 29 May) and the Circular Economy Strategy (MITECO et al., 2020).

It problematises the findings through two different subheadings to answer the research question. First, it identifies the opportunities and limitations of each policy to promote women’s employability, hence end precarity, guided by the theories presented under chapter 3. Second, based on the previous subheading and considering ApS’ institutional framework and power, it

analyses the potential of the NGO to achieve climate justice through influencing policy-making and their subsequent implementation, and running its own projects in the frame of both policies.

## **4.1 Climate Change and Energy Transition Bill**

### 4.1.1 Employability of Women

#### Opportunities

According to the Bill, modifications to the energy model solve the problem of climate change, aiming at decarbonising the economy through adaptation and sustainable development, emphasising the generation of quality jobs (Congreso de los Diputados, 2020, 29 May). This aim relates to Doughnut Economics as soon as sustainability and social wellbeing are at the core. Moreover, it refers that this is a social opportunity for a more equitable distribution of wealth (ibid, p. 4). Hence, it presents a chance for the employability of women in an emerging quality labour market, to reduce social and economic inequalities.

Regarding the implicit ecofeminist profile of the Bill, we find that among its guiding principles are equality between men and women and the protection of vulnerable groups (ibid, p. 12). Article 24.3 indicates that there will be a gender perspective in the Bill and its instruments for implementation and development (ibid, p. 22). In the seventh final provision, it mentions that data on climate change risks will be disaggregated by sex (ibid, p. 32).

On another note, the Bill underlines the importance of education and training for sustainable development under Title VIII, articles 31 and 32 (Congreso de los Diputados, 2020, 29 May, p. 26). This is in line with the effort for employability since training is a necessary step to take before performing a job. In the same vein, Article 24 refers to the just transition of workers and territories, considering employment opportunities, policies related to occupational training, etc. In this context, the Just Transition Conventions must include an intersectional gender perspective to be truly “just”, since the transition affects differently to each women depending on other characteristics such as location, economic sector of employment, educational level, age, etc. (ibid, p. 22). Moreover, Article 25.3.c emphasises the adaptation of workers, which is an opportunity to offer training not only to the workforce who is to disappear in some geographical areas due to a shift in the production model (ibid, p. 22). To be inclusive, that training must include women that are in a precarious situation or unemployed.

#### Limitations

Under the light of the above mentioned, when the Bill defines the just transition, the question is to what extent it considers the inclusion of women (ibid, pp. 22-23). By focusing only on sectors of employment and geographical areas where there will be a change in the economic model, it may forget women, as they were male-dominated sectors. Thus, if not properly managed, the measures may be in detriment to women. For instance, it could leave women completely out,

or lead to the migration of men, which would end up placing a double burden on women. In those potential cases, women remain in those areas and must bear the reproductive and productive tasks they have already performed and, in addition, all other activities that were carried out by men. According to the argumentation under this chapter, women must be included for being a “vulnerable group”, although the needs of women may vary depending on several factors.

#### 4.1.2 NGO’s Action

ApS can play a key role to grasp the opportunities presented in the Bill and promote them, but also leverage the limitations, making them visible and trying to mitigate their impacts.

Article 35 defines public participation to develop specific actions within the context of the Bill (ibid, p. 27). This participation is an opportunity for NGOs and civil society to make demands and exercise social power, in parallel it must guarantee the involvement of the Ministry of Equality, which is not defined yet.

In this context, one may consider that the most relevant NGOs in this realm are traditional environmental NGOs so they may have a leading role. Most of them exercise different power, including monitoring power, which is especially relevant regarding the implementation of policies by states. Nevertheless, not all of them represent an ecofeminist compromise, which could risk the inclusion of women in the desired shifts. After carrying out a study of the five main environmental organisations in Spain (Ecologistas en Acción, Friends of the Earth, SEO/BirdLife, WWF and Greenpeace), it has been observed that only *Ecologistas en Acción* and Greenpeace claim to have ecofeminism as one of their main axes (Ecofeminismo, n.d.; Greenpeace, 2020). In both entities, there is a specific department of gender or ecofeminism (ibid). For this reason, other civil society organisations and NGOs traditionally linked to social issues (i.e.: ApS) must take part of the vindications and guarantee an ecofeminist perspective, exercising symbolic power at the same time.

Finally, the Bill considers the following bodies, where the participation of ApS can be key to exercise cognitive power and use its expertise to improve the implementation of the Bill. Tortajada (2016) explains “participatory processes have the potential to trigger multiple gains for both governments and society, and NGOs can become important sources of knowledge, information, and mobilisation rather than obstacles to governing and not forces that impose their own views” (p. 271). The bodies are:

- Committee of experts on climate change and energy transition. It must be equal, according to the Bill (Congreso de los Diputados, 2020, 29 May, pp. 26-27).
- Environmental advisory board (ibid, p. 11).
- National Climate Council (ibid).
- Sectoral Conference on the Environment (ibid).
- Commission for the Coordination of Climate Change Policies (ibid).

For the different bodies to be inclusive, they may include an equal distribution of their members, as there need to be more women in positions of power and decision-making on environmental issues. However, it is important to bear in mind that it is not only relevant to have more women in quantitative terms, as this would depoliticise the issue, according to the “benchmarking fallacy” (Ackerly & True, 2013, p. 5). The presence of women must pursue the transformation of power relations between men and women and the achievement of actual equality. An article by InspirAction (2017) calls upon the coordination between gender and climate change experts and respect for international agreements in these areas (p. 7). Equally, the article points out the necessity of gender analysis tools, where data collected for monitoring the Bill is disaggregated by sex, and there are specific gender impact assessments and gender budgeting (ibid, p. 8). Considering the critics presented in this paragraph and the rest of the analysis, ApS may be attentive and advocate the inclusion of them as part of the policies.

#### 4.1.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, the Bill presents several potentialities and gaps, which serve as opportunities for ApS to take action, exercise power and be part of the solution towards a just transition. Training and employability are of utmost importance within the Bill, which is in line with the Country Strategy of ApS (2019, p. 10). Additionally, there is an underlying ecofeminist approach pinpointed in the importance of a gender perspective within the topic of climate change and just transition. This also reflects the tendency towards a Doughnut Economic model, where the necessities and rights of human beings take place within the planetary boundaries. Finally, the intersectional perspective is missing.

## 4.2 Circular Economy Strategy

### 4.2.1 Employability of Women

#### Opportunities

The Spanish Circular Economy Strategy “Circular Spain 2030” (EEC, for its acronym in Spanish) was published in the spring of 2020. Its *raison d'être*<sup>4</sup> is “the just and solidary transition towards a new model that promotes the protection of the environment and the transformation of the productive system and, at the same time, progress, social welfare and gender equality” (MITECO et al., 2020, p. 8). Among the axes of sustainability, the social axis stands out, where it explicitly includes the gender perspective (ibid, p. 6). Therefore, there is an implicit ecofeminist perspective, joining the environmental and the feminist approaches and recognising the “ecodependency” of every human being, and it presents a tendency towards a new economic paradigm that fits the principles of the Doughnut Economic model.

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<sup>4</sup> The French concept “raison d'être” means “reason for existence” (Cambridge University Press, 2020)



A specific heading refers to employment and training, as one of the general objectives of the EEC is to create quality jobs (ibid, p. 40). This is in close relation to the aim of this research, therefore connected to the previously presented Bill on climate change and the Country Strategy of ApS. The EEC defines that "it will lead to net employment growth of around 1%, with jobs created by developing sectors being offset by those destroyed in more polluting sectors, which will affect more countries and regions producing raw materials or with energy-intensive industries" (ibid, p. 11).

The EEC describes that the fundamental idea of circularity is "to maximise the resources available so that they remain in the production cycle as long as possible and to reduce the generation of waste, making the most of those whose generation has not been avoided" (ibid, p. 9). Therefore, new business opportunities and new value chains lead to the creation of employment. At this point, there is an opportunity to start from scratch, and then guarantee wage equality, which has not been achieved in other sectors yet and which would mean that the economic model is "distributive by design" as recommended by the Doughnut Economy, so "redistributive" actions are no longer necessary (Raworth, 2017, p. 221). Moreover, the principle of "being regenerative by design" (Raworth, 2017, p. 221) appears in the EEC within the following sentence: "A circular economy is a restorative or regenerative model of industrial production and consumption by intention and by design" (MITECO et al., 2020, p. 8).

As well as the Bill, the EEC considers "the perspective of workers, adapting their capacities and skills to the new demands of the market through active labour market policies" (MITECO et al., 2020, p. 20). Therefore, these policies will need to include a gender perspective and specific indicators to measure their gender impact and be intersectional.

In addition, under section 3.3 there are references to the priority sectors for action: tourism, textiles, building, industrial, food and agriculture, fishing and forestry, and consumer goods (ibid, p. 30). It is important to consider them when promoting the employability of women, strengthening the training on the specific skills that are necessary to undertake the new green jobs, but also training them in sustainable alternatives within the most feminised sectors. In particular, it pays special attention to eco-design, secondary raw materials and the use of waste (ibid). Regarding the most "traditional" sectors, such as tourism, it indicates that its survival will depend on good conservation of the environment and efficient use of resources since it highly depends on the climate (ibid, p. 36). This sector is highly feminised and has been negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which requires urgent measures for diversification and specialisation (EFE, 2020, April 17). As highlighted by InspirAction, (2017), women should not be seen only as victims of climate change, as this perpetuates gender roles and hides their transformative potential as leaders of change (p. 3). This idea is key for promoting the employability of women, and the role that they can play as entrepreneurs in matters of the circular economy, leading the change in the production and consumption model.

### Limitations

The EEC presents some important weaknesses or gaps that may hinder the achievement of women's inclusion. First, there is an absence of specific indicators to measure the gender impact (MITECO et al., 2020, pp. 49-51). Second, when it refers to the SDGs, there is no mention of the contribution of the EEC to achieve Goal 5 on Gender Equality (ibid, p. 12). Third, the objectives of the EEC are indicative objectives, without being binding "as long as they are not set out in the relevant legislation" (ibid, p. 28). Finally, the EEC keeps focusing on the GDP (ibid. p. 11), which is recommended by neither the Doughnut Economic model nor the ecofeminist approach. Both approaches consider that the most important aim for a country must be to thrive, not only to grow the GDP, which may be in the opposite direction, hindering human rights and environmental objectives.

#### 4.2.2 NGO's Action

As the previous analysis considered several opportunities and limitations, ApS can exercise social and monitoring power to highlight the necessity of including gender indicators, promote binding policies on the topic, consider the SDG 5, and justify why the focus on GDP is no longer valid if the State is to make actual change. In accordance, the EEC presents a series of institutions that can be strategic to exercise social power by the NGO (ibid, p. 20). The following entities may be key to promote women's employability and entrepreneurship in case ApS reaches an agreement with them (ibid):

- State Research Agency (AEI). There is a social dimension among the challenges that faces the AEI, hence, gender equality should be among its priorities (ibid, p. 20).
- The public business entity "Centre for the Development of Industrial Technology" (CDTI).

Additionally, the EEC identifies the involvement of the following actors/sectors as key to achieving its objectives:

- Public sector. Collaboration between Ministries and the three administrative levels - General State Administration, Autonomous Communities and local entities- (ibid, p. 6).
- Private sector. For example, it appeals to Corporate Social Responsibility and the productive sector (ibid, p. 41). In this context, ApS can underline the hidden power of corporations<sup>5</sup>; exercising monitoring and social power if both parts do an alliance.

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<sup>5</sup> ApS defines three different types of external power: visible (i.e.: states), invisible (i.e.: religion) and hidden (i.e.: corporations) (ApS, 2019, p.5)

- "All economic sectors must incorporate research and innovation as key elements for the achievement of the proposed objectives" (ibid, p. 26).
- Consumers and general society. "A central role must be played by the social agents and, in particular, by consumers and citizens, whose decisions to buy products and their behaviour in waste separation are fundamental" (ibid, p. 26). Here, awareness-rising is key, and that is a potential action to be promoted by ApS through campaigning.

Likewise, the organisational model of the EEC adds three units for managing the implementation of the strategy, with public-private partnerships (ibid, pp. 46-47):

- Inter-ministerial Commission for the Circular Economy, where the Ministry of Equality is included.
- Circular Economy Working Group of the Waste Coordination Commission.
- Council for the circular economy. The social partners (environmental organisations, trade unions and the business sector) will take part. Thus, we expect the presence of organisations committed to the inclusion of the ecofeminist perspective in the implementation of the plans, and ApS may be part of it to exercise social and cognitive power.

In the light of this argumentation and considering the previous section under this chapter, it will be necessary to include women in these transition strategies, even if they were not previously part of those jobs that will disappear since forgetting them in this process will once again perpetuate inequality. At this point, the role of the NGO to exercise monitoring power will be crucial, making a call to action in case the ecofeminist approach is not actually in place since women have to play an active role on the change towards an ecological socio-economic order. Besides, an intersectional perspective is crucial to adapt to different women and contexts. The necessities of women will depend on their educational level, their geographical location (for instance, if they live in a place particularly impacted by the shift of the economic model, such as the North of Spain, where mining was the main sector a few years ago).

It has been presented how some feminised sectors are at risk due to climate change and require urgent measures, therefore, the NGOs can advocate the creation of new employment niches in nature tourism that is sustainable and respectful of the environment and the local population, which would trigger a positive impact on rural development. Therefore, those new niches and other related to eco-design, secondary raw materials and the use of waste may be key for women's employability and climate justice in Spain. Another key aspect is the importance given to education and training, which is related to the Strategy of ApS, therefore it can implement projects with women at risk of social exclusion that are already part of its projects in Spain, to include them in the new sectors.

#### 4.2.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, the Strategy “Circular Spain 2030” notices the relevance of new job opportunities, as well as the significance of training and education. These points are in line with the Country Strategy of ApS and the primary aim of the Bill on climate change. Accordingly, the importance of considering women in the plans that emanates from this policy is key, but the approach has to be intersectional. Even if they were not part of those economic sectors that are at risk under the new model and need of a “just transition”, they cannot be left behind again, and have to be part of the new model from the beginning. In this context, ApS may have the potential to play a role in implementing projects in alliance with other institutions, to promote specific training for women and labour inclusion afterwards and, at the same time, influence policy-making and implementation. Finally, the idea of a circular economy as an opportunity for new business opens the door to entrepreneurship, hence an opportunity for women to lead within the new economic sectors. To sum up, the EEC is a chance for implementing the Doughnut Economics model in Spain, including an ecofeminist approach, although the process could be slower than desirable.

### 5. CONCLUSION

Spain needs a shift in its consumption and production model to reverse the effects of climate change and the incipient industrial revolution cannot leave women behind. Throughout the project, we have witnessed how the current Government is developing policies for a sustainable future. This shift may guarantee climate justice or worsen the gender breach and inequality; we will have to wait until we can see those written intentions materialised. Nevertheless, the NGOs can play an active role to ensure that the emerging labour sectors of the ecological transition are an opportunity for gender equality. From my point of view, the overall objective of any intervention on this realm must be to achieve a Doughnut economic model, including ecofeminist and intersectional principles, as the theoretical and analytical chapters have shown.

In this context, the project has answered the question of “*What are the opportunities and obstacles for Alianza por la Solidaridad to influence policies to end women’s precarity and achieve climate justice simultaneously?*” It has made visible the opportunities and limitations of the policies. The opportunities show the path to implement projects on women’s employability, whereas the limitations and gaps offer a space of influence and advocacy to ApS through cognitive, social, monitoring and symbolic power. Moreover, the NGO can lead by example; use its expertise to implement projects aligned with its institutional strategy to show that some actions are possible and fruitful if there is commitment. That being said, the second part of the analysis of each policy has shown the potentialities of ApS to advocate the inclusion of women within the new jobs related to the just and ecological transition, through partnerships with several actors,

using its expertise and acting through concrete projects. The project presents recommendations to the NGO under those subsections; additionally, I would include training and favouring the exchange of information between experts in different fora. There is also an opportunity to promote entrepreneurship among women, nevertheless, there is a necessity to do alliances with other actors such as universities and achieve a higher proportion of women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) academic studies and promoting their contribution to circular economy encouraging them through awards and scholarships to write dissertations on the topic. It is not only necessary a provision of policies by the Government but also ensure that the ideas of environmentalism and feminism permeate the society, which ApS can influence through campaigning and awareness-raising.

Therefore, acting on women's employment from a perspective of improving its quality is highly necessary to reduce their precarious situation in Spain, including reducing gender-based violence founded on economic reasons and other vulnerabilities. We can conclude that training is a vital axis for real inclusion and entrepreneurship is a field to explore in Spain. The circular economy is nowadays an area of strategic interest, and, thus, women must be a target group when creating new green jobs and it needs to be accompanied by a redistribution of the burden of the caring economy. Thus, at the time of reducing women's job insecurity, the NGO is promoting climate justice, that is to find a double solution for those most affected by climate change and for the environment.

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