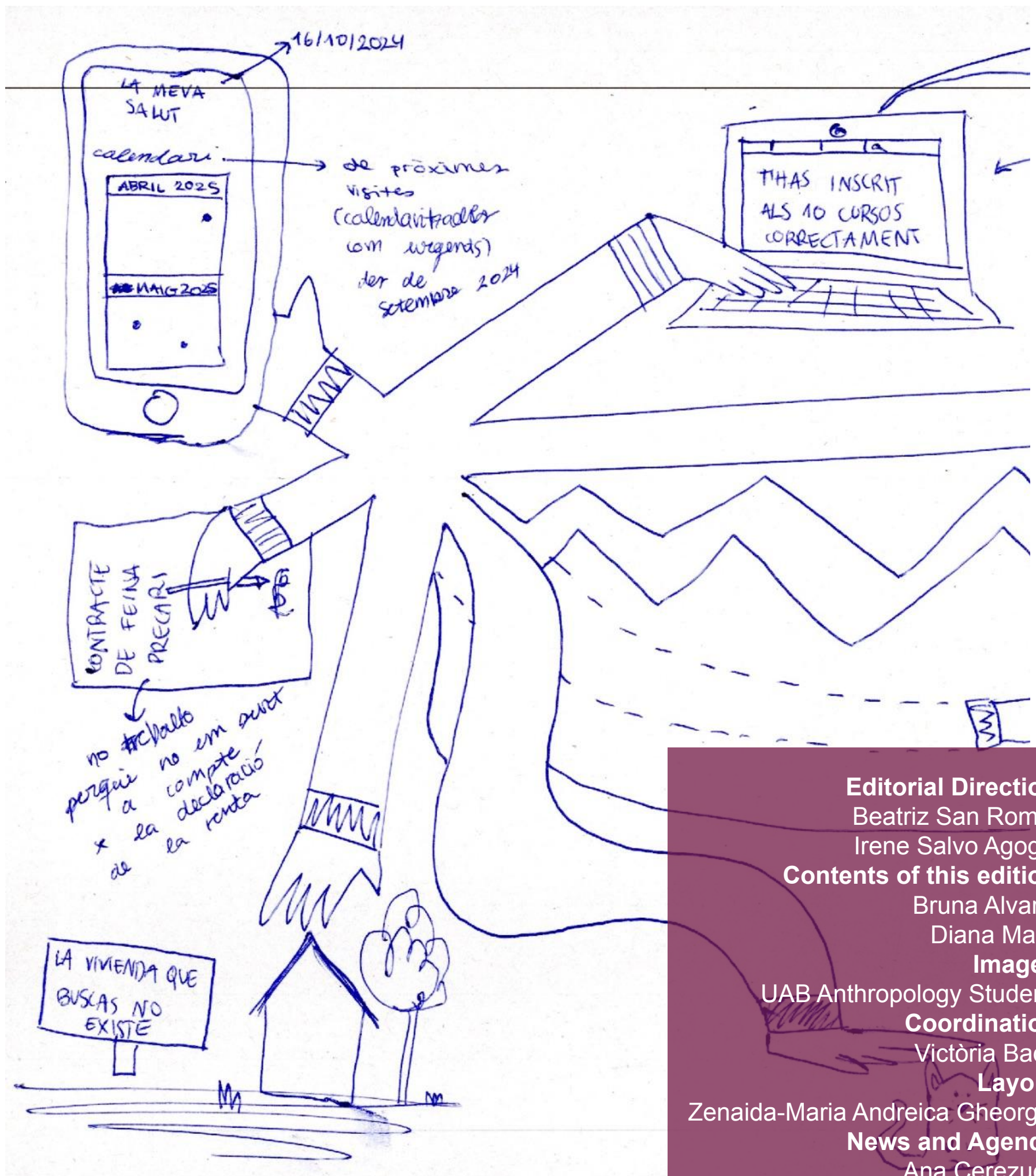


Young anthropology students' perceptions of the future in the context of austerity



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The AFIN Group has participated in an international project entitled **Austerity and Altered-life courses**, carried out from the University of Manchester (UK) by a team led by Sarah Marie Hall. The objective of the project was to analyse how austerity policies enacted by governments since the economic crisis of 2008 are still impacting the lives and imagined futures of young people between 18 and 35 years old in Manchester (UK), Barcelona (Spain) and Sardinia (Italy).

On the occasion of the closure of the first phase of this project, a day was organised in which a series of workshops were carried out in each of the three sites of project. The AFIN Group organised two activities. The first was a meeting with twenty Anthropology students at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB), most of whom were young people around 20 years old. Students were asked to discuss and reflect on what they understood by austerity policies, if and how they were affected by them, and their ideas and hopes for the future. To do this, they were asked to draw a line on a blank sheet of paper that symbolised their life, and starting from the present, to mark the ages for the next stages of their lives in order to visualise and materialise the future. These drawings are the ones that illustrate this publication. The second activity was a meeting with eight researchers from the AFIN Group to analyse the impact of austerity policies on reproductive and care decisions and practices.

In this publication, we present the results emerging of the focus group with anthropology students to reflect on their perceptions of the future at different life stages.

What are austerity policies?

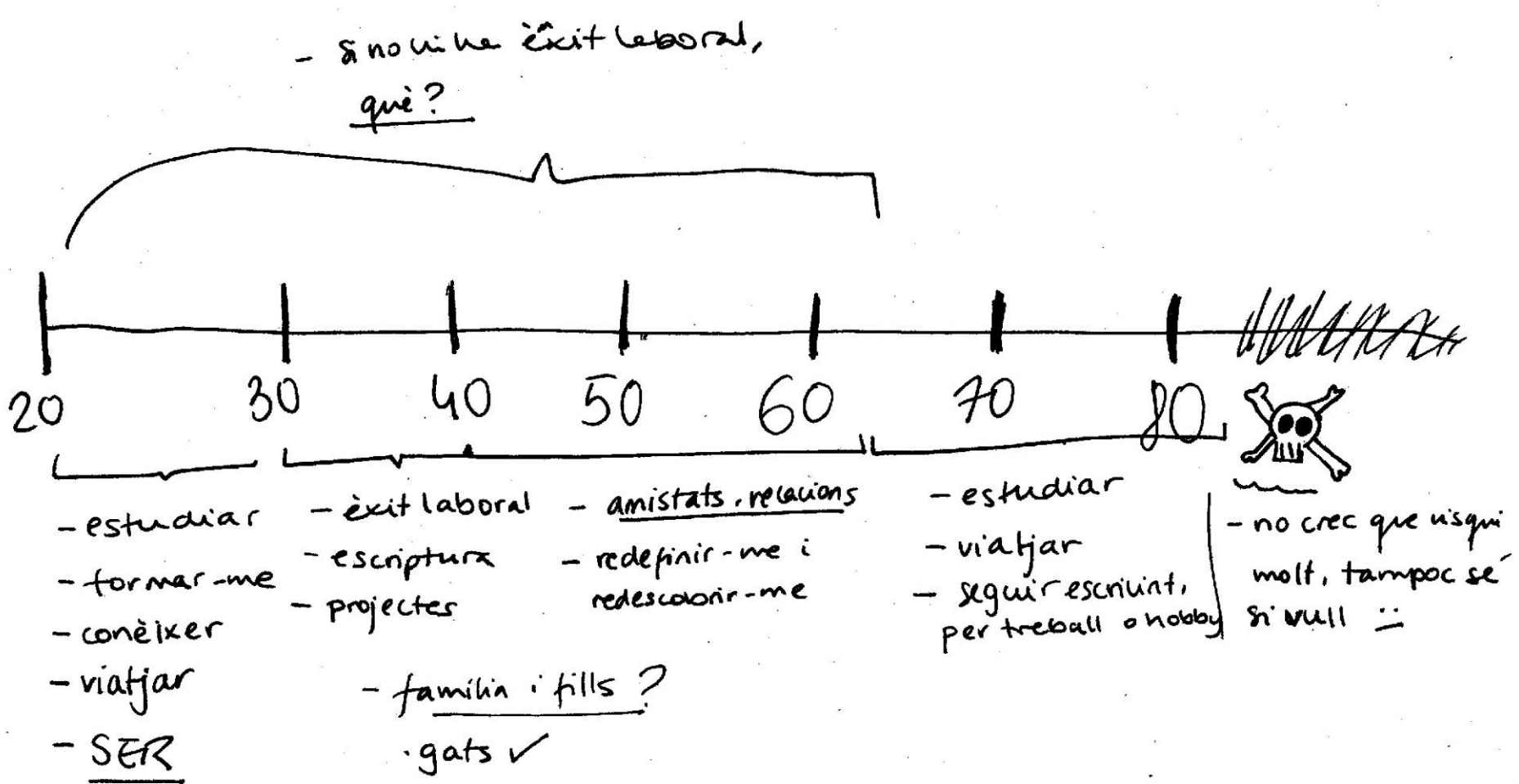
Some feminist geographers, such as Amy Greer Murphy, Sarah Marie Hall and Alison Stenning, have defined austerity policies as a choice by governments to manage the economy in a certain way in order to alleviate the effects of the 2008 financial crisis in Europe and other Global North states. In this sense, austerity is not inevitable, it is a political choice, which has had consequences on the daily lives of many people. The policies have increased social inequalities as result of cuts in public investment in housing, education or health, to name but a few.

However, when the group of anthropology students at the UAB were asked what austerity policies were, they proposed two meanings. One was linked to the personal decision to live austere, in the sense of wanting and being able to live with few expenses, taking into account the environmental situation, recycling and watching their budgeting, in other words, living an austere life. The other meaning was aligned with that proposed by feminist geographers and was described as state policies that involve decreasing public spending, namely on education,

health and third sector - i.e. social organisations that work to meet the basic needs of people living in poverty and marginalisation.

In the case of Spain, the analysis carried out by anthropologist Silvina Monteros showed how the governments of the Popular Party (1996-2004) privatised companies and how social policies were divided between social protection policies, which were accessed through social security contributions via a labour contract, and social assistance policies, for people who were not part of the formal labour market. While social protection policies were a State responsibility, social assistance was left in the hands of groups like the Catholic Church, the Catholic NGO Caritas and other similar groups, the Red Cross, ONCE, UNICEF or institutions like Save the Children and, more recently, small and medium-sized NGOs that make up

the third sector and become "companies". These "companies" are then subcontracted by public administration, or "collaborating entities" to carry out intervention projects at the mercy of the annual renewal of the public and political resources on which they depend. This is a situation that implies a double precariousness. On the one hand, the decrease in public investment in social policies favoured by the great competition between these organisations to obtain the few resources allocated to social investment. On the other hand, reduced public funding also led to a deterioration of working conditions for staff in these NGOs, with lower salaries and a high level of temporary contracts. Since the 2008 crisis, and for the first time in Spain, research has shown the phenomenon of "working poor", i.e. people whose work and income did not

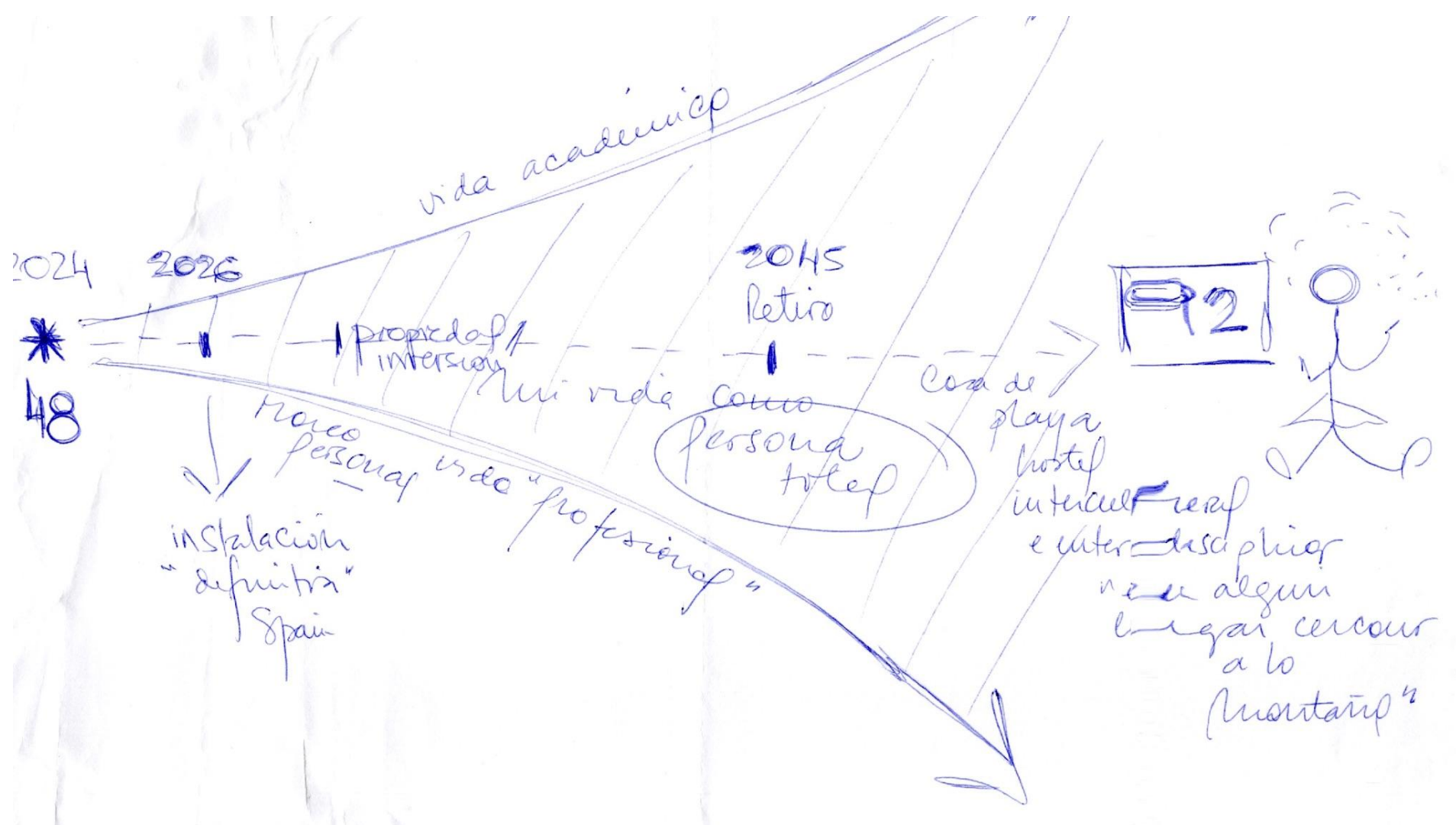


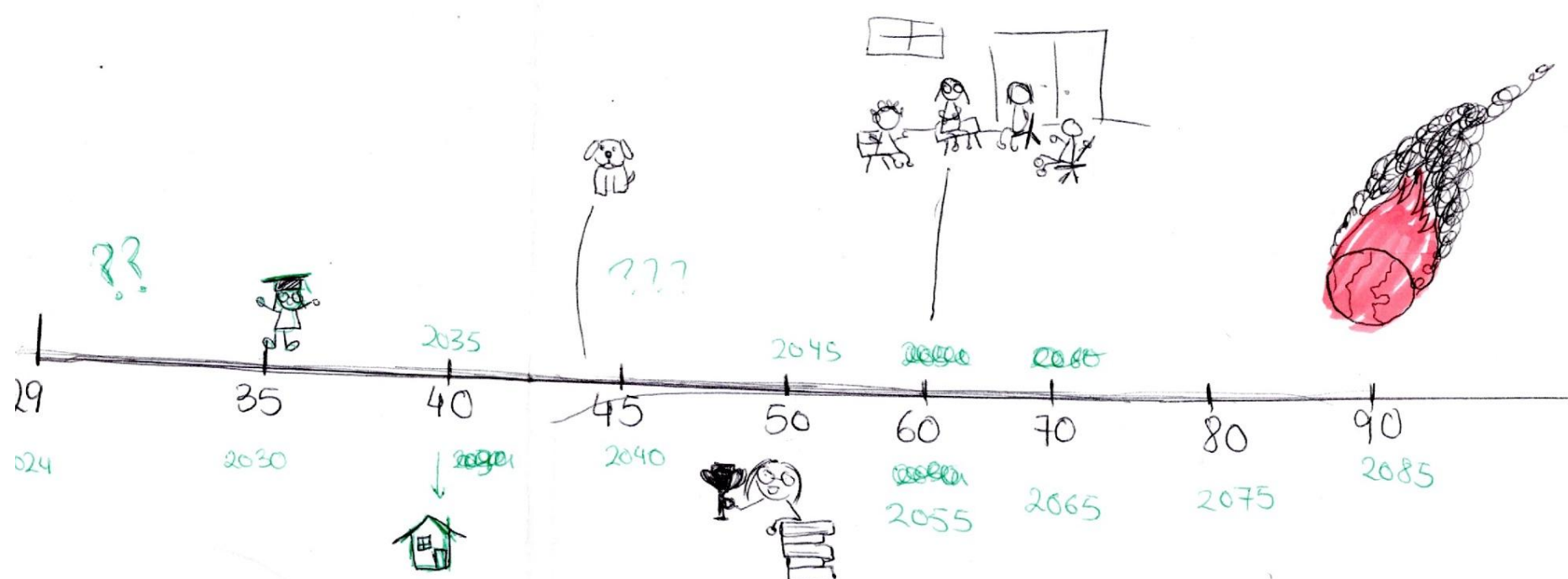
lift them out of poverty or social exclusion. According to an Oxfam Intermón report by Alejandro García-Gil, 13.7% of working people were living below the poverty line in 2024, equivalent to three million working people.

Despite this context, it seemed that the group of anthropology students linked austerity policies to something they were part of, because they did not consider themselves to be part of socially excluded groups, as if "everyday austerity", a term coined by Sarah Marie Hall to define the impact of austerity policies on people's daily lives, did not affect them. At that point, they were asked specifically if and how austerity policies impacted on their lives, to which they responded by focusing on education and health, specifically the large class

sizes in primary schools and the lack of support for children with special educational needs.

Although the group did not seem to be talking about their present lives, at one point, the topic of mental health came up, in particular the inability of the health system to provide prompt care and how this had led to an increase in the use of private health services, specifically an increase of 40% since 2014 in Spain and by 47% since 2003 in Catalonia. Despite these references, AFIN had the feeling from the group that they were still not thinking about the direct impacts of austerity policies on their lives. Since they had talked about education, they were asked if and how they perceived the impact of austerity policies on the university. The first thing they described was the impact of rising tuition fees on the





Anthropology degree and they began to speak in the first person, which they had not done before. At this point, the researchers realised that they had hit on a question that impacted on the day-to-day life of the student group. In fact, the data published by the Observatori Universitari show that between 2001 and 2021, the year in which tuition fees were reduced as an exceptional measure due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the increase in the tuition fees has been between 21.4% and 30.6%, depending on the university degree, which means going from an annual tuition fee of €600 in 2001 to €1050 in 2024. Furthermore, the same Observatory has found inequalities in the price of enrolment for a degree course in Arts and Humanities between the different public universities in different Spanish autonomous communities. For example, in Catalonia it costs more than twice as much (€1361) as in Asturias (€518).

Moreover, the students who took part in the focus group also felt that doing just a Bachelor's degree in Anthropology was not enough, and so they perceived a certain obligation to take - and to pay for - a Master's degree afterwards. The Observatori Universitari has pointed out that the price of the cheapest Master's degree has increased by 89.9% between 2001 and 2021, while the most expensive ones have increased by 30.6%.

Apart from the rising tuition fees, the group of students also spoke of the deficiencies in the university infrastructure, such as broken furniture and projectors that did not work. In fact, they explained that not long ago they arrived at the classroom and found it flooded, requiring a change of room to hold the class.

One of the students emphasised the process of privatisation of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, such as that of

the Plaça Cívica, the square in the centre of campus where premises that had been destined for the different student associations supported by the university had been reassigned to private businesses such as an optician's shop, a driving school, or a copy shop.

Along with this, another student also highlighted the precarious situation of university teaching staff, with part-time and temporary contracts, forcing such staff to work a minimum of two jobs. Although a new university law passed in March 2023 (Organic Law 2/2023 of 22 March) proposes to regularise the situation of university teaching staff and increase the supply of permanent positions, change has been slow and the precariousness of university teaching staff persists.

Finally, one student referred to the normalisation of precarity, saying: "we have normalised this lack of resources". She was right. Most of those who participated in the focus group were between 2 and 3 years old in 2008 when austerity policies were designed, i.e. in their lives they have grown up influenced by these policies, and without knowing the possibilities of a welfare state.

The impacts of austerity policies on UAB female students

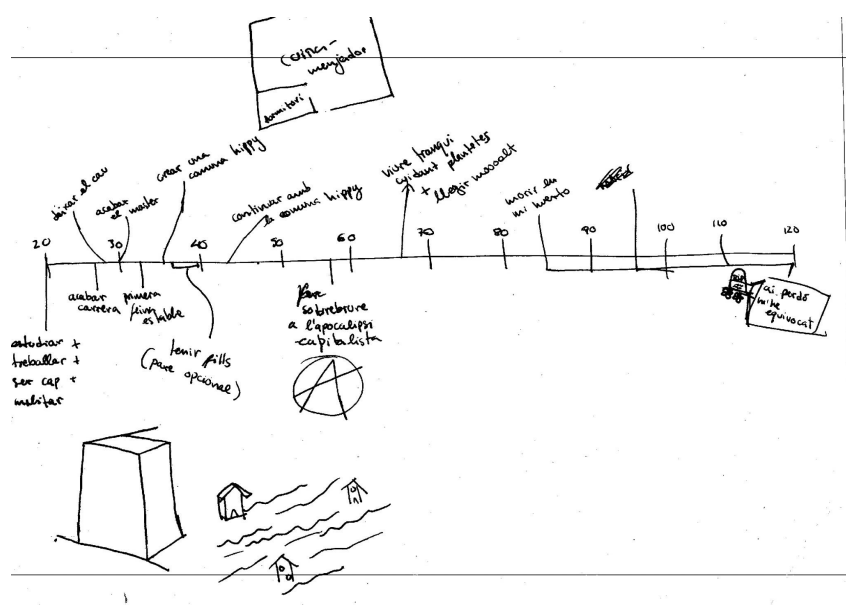
After a collective reflection on austerity policies, an activity was proposed in which the students had to write on a

white sheet of paper, privately and anonymously, how austerity policies had affected them. Only ten of the twenty students chose to participate in this activity. The subsequent analysis showed that the impact of austerity policies on their lives was reflected in three aspects: difficulties in dealing with health problems, both their own and those of close relatives; situations arising from their status as children of families with a vulnerable economic and employment situation; and having to give up their own projects or seeing some life choices as no longer possible for them. Each of these three areas is discussed in more detail below.

Health problems for themselves or family members

Some people expressed their concern about an overcrowded health care system, with long waiting lists and difficulties in referral to specialists, both for themselves and for their relatives. For example, one student explained the difficulties faced by her family when her grandmother had a fall:

My grandmother broke her hip and femur in an accident. Two months short of a year after the accident, she is still in a wheelchair and waiting for an operation that should have been done in July [this activity took place in October]. In addition, we have many complications with medical visits, residences,



rehabilitation, medication, transportation, etc.

This situation implies family reorganisation, in which the issues involved in the management of a dependent person emerge. Delays in her grandmother's rehabilitation process prolonged her dependency on her family, including the student herself, without any support from state institutions.

In other cases, the health situation of family members had a impact direct on the care responsibilities of the people who participated in this activity: "Austerity policies are affecting the diagnosis of my mother's illness. Her life is hanging by a thread, her diagnosis has been changed many times, and her illness is critical".

This student directly relates austerity policies to the lack of a diagnosis to address her mother's mental health. In the meantime, she tries to continue

with her studies, in addition to taking on the specific care that her mother requires.

Impoverished employment and economic situations

Some students who participated in the focus group live in families with complex relational situations. They are young people, but very aware of the situation in which their families find themselves.

Precariousness is multiple in many areas of my life, it weaves a web that traps my all life experience. The tension that my parents experience at work due to overload, as they work as clerks in a hospital with a shortage of staff and billing demands, which leads to a stress that undermines their life experience.

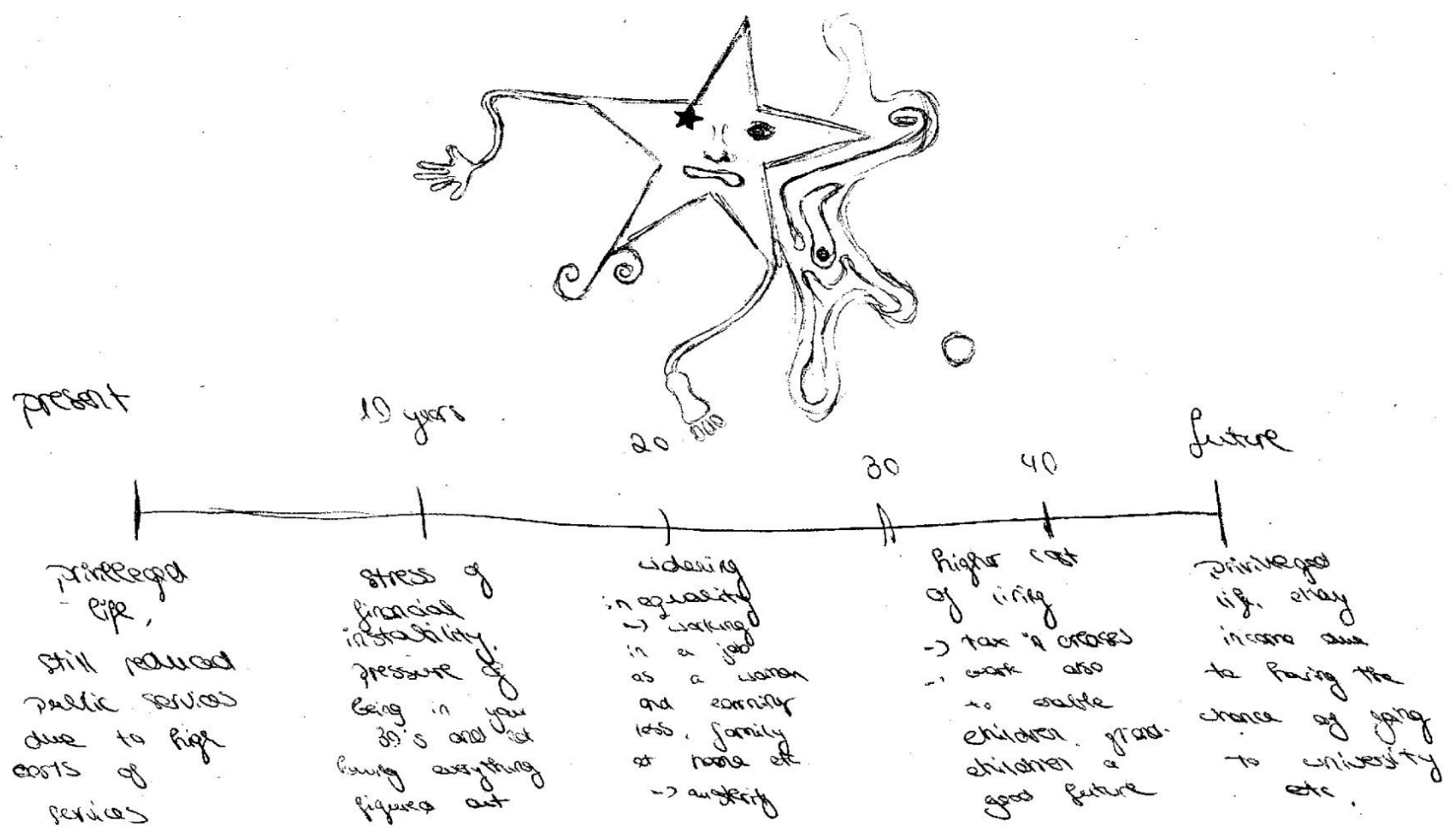
Both parents are employed. Despite this, they perceive that they are overburdened by the demands of their workplace, which causes them stress and discomfort. Precisely one of the factors that cause them stress is the "demands of turnover". That is, although they work in the health sector, they are required to obtain a certain number of "clients" / "patients". The student did not provide any further information about her parents' place of work, but this experience could be a

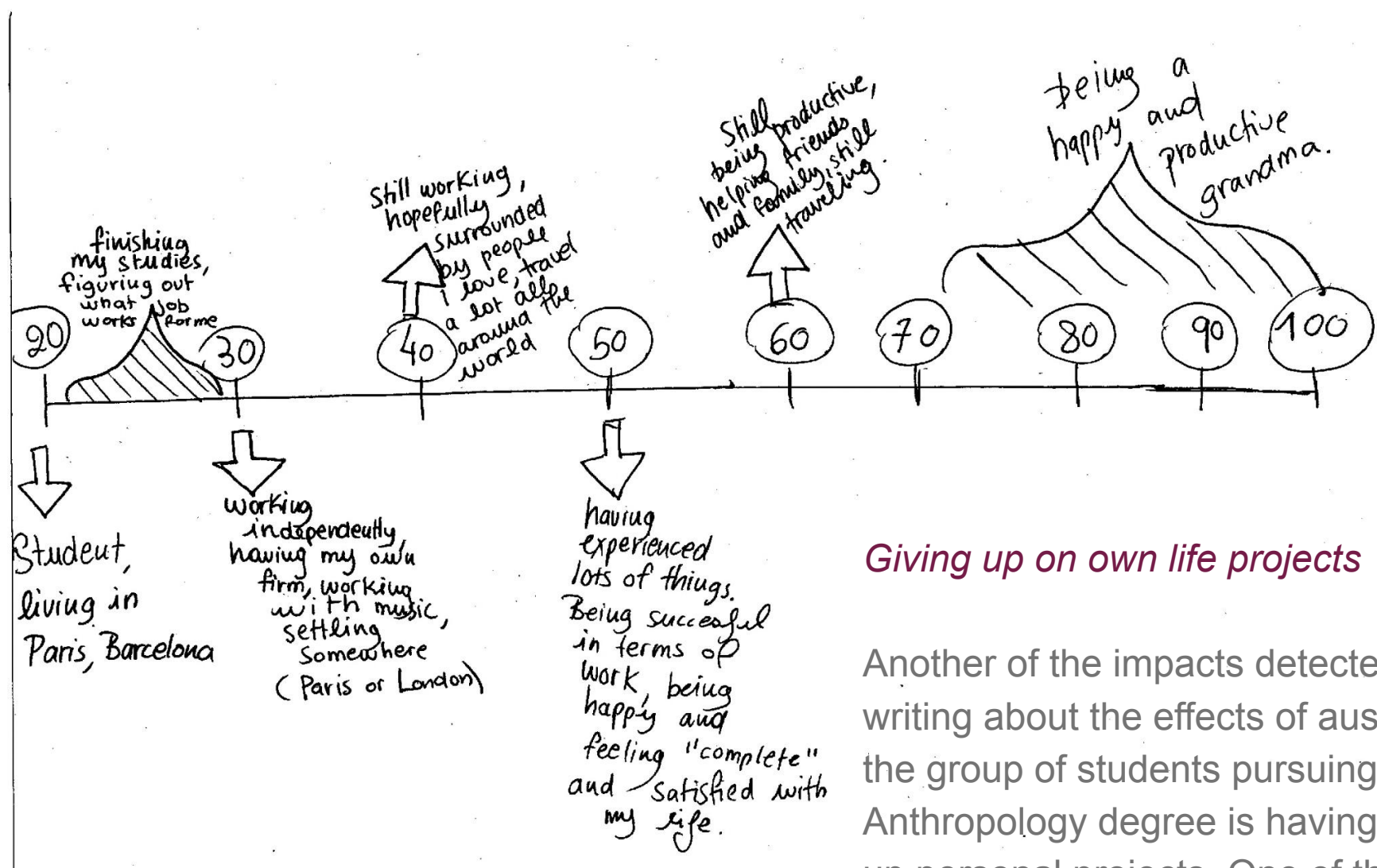
direct impact of the cuts in the Catalan public health system since 2008.

Another student shares her family situation, with economic difficulties and no hope for the future, with the paradox that, thanks to this situation, she has been able to obtain a scholarship:

In my case, austerity policies have only affected me positively by granting me the scholarship to access these studies. In the case of my family, they are not enough. We live on the salary of two pensioners and one person exploited in a precarious job, which exhausts her in return for a miserable wage (...). This is only in my immediate family, because in my extended family the cases and the miseries are unmentionable. As the situation stands, we are doomed.

This description of her family situation exemplifies the daily impact of being part of a "working poor" family. The salary of the working person is not enough to support the family unit, so it is the pensions of retired workers that help support the family. In 2022, journalist Ruth Drake wrote a story for Radio Televisión Española explaining that during and after the COVID pandemic, there were more than one million households with all working-age members unemployed and that these people had to rely on the parents' pensions to survive. Although, according to the National Institute of Statistics, the current unemployment rate stands at 11.21%, the lowest since the 2008 crisis, and although the number of households in which all working-age members are unemployed has fallen, the figure is still high: 850,000 households, many of which will be relying on the pensions of





Giving up on own life projects

Another of the impacts detected in writing about the effects of austerity on the group of students pursuing an Anthropology degree is having to give up personal projects. One of the students had to give up her gym membership because she could not afford it: "A gym membership costs €50 a month. It is very expensive, and I had to give it up". Although gyms can be spaces for healthy socialising, there are many people who cannot afford this type of leisure. As an example, another student, who was already in her thirties, wrote "impossibility of single parenthood: housing, financial, work, work-life balance, parenting...".

This student, who was considering becoming a single mother, saw it as impossible due to the difficult balance between work and family life, and economic and employment difficulties. The situation of "structural infertility" in the Spanish context has been widely described by Diana Marre and Bruna Alvarez, who state that Spain has gone from the "baby boom" of the 70s to

the retired people living in them. The worrying thing is that Spanish pensions are sometimes as low as €400 per month.

Going back to the experience that the student explained anonymously, she ironically values "positively" the poor economic situation in her family that allowed her to access the scholarship. The two pensions and her mother's salary are not enough to support her. In a report by the Youth Council in Spain and Intermón Oxfam in 2023, it is noted that 55.6% of young people with severe material deprivations have mental health issues, due to the balancing act between studies, precarious jobs, and exorbitant rents. In contrast, among those without economic problems, 37.7% of young people face mental health issues.

"structural infertility" in the 90s, where it still has the second-lowest fertility rate in Europe (1.13 children per woman) due to difficulties in access to housing, difficulties in reconciling work and family life, the slow incorporation of men into domestic and care tasks - in heterosexual couples - and feminist discourses that associated free women with non-motherhood, especially after the dictatorship where being a mother was a social obligation. This situation has led to a delay in motherhood that hinders people's reproductive projects, as in the case of this student, who condenses it in a single sentence.

Another impact of austerity policies on the realisation of personal projects was linked to the feeling of a lack of "second chances", and the need to choose well and not to make mistakes:

Because of austerity, I am forced to decide my actions with more certainty. That is, I can't try different sports - with the expense of equipment - or take up a second career and discover that I like another one. I can't even go on a long trip to "discover" myself. The range of possibilities is limited to the mental health consequences that come from the feeling of living in a corset.

This person's feeling is linked to narratives of choice, and individual responsibility "to make good decisions",

perceiving that he or she cannot afford to be wrong and has no options. These narratives of choice hold individuals responsible for their own decisions, regardless of the social context in which they are made. This student clearly perceives that it is her social context that limits her choices.

Interestingly, the topic of housing did not appear in the focus group, but it did in three of the individual writings on the impact of austerity policies. That the discussion did not focus on housing was surprising, as rising housing prices and the difficulties young people face in accessing decent housing is a constant theme in the Spanish media. In January 2024, the economic research centre, FUNCAS, published a report identifying that six out of ten properties are being bought for investment. Furthermore, this report pointed out that, in the last twenty years, home ownership among young people has decreased by 35%, from 70% to 35%. As a solution, the authors proposed housing policies supporting rentals, the price of which has doubled since the early 2000s.

The housing situation in many Spanish cities has changed since the 2008 crisis, which had an impact on those who had bought a home at a time of maximum speculation and exorbitant prices, until real estate assets collapsed. That is, suddenly, homes were not worth the price for which people had taken out mortgages. Many families were left homeless but had to continue paying their mortgages. At that

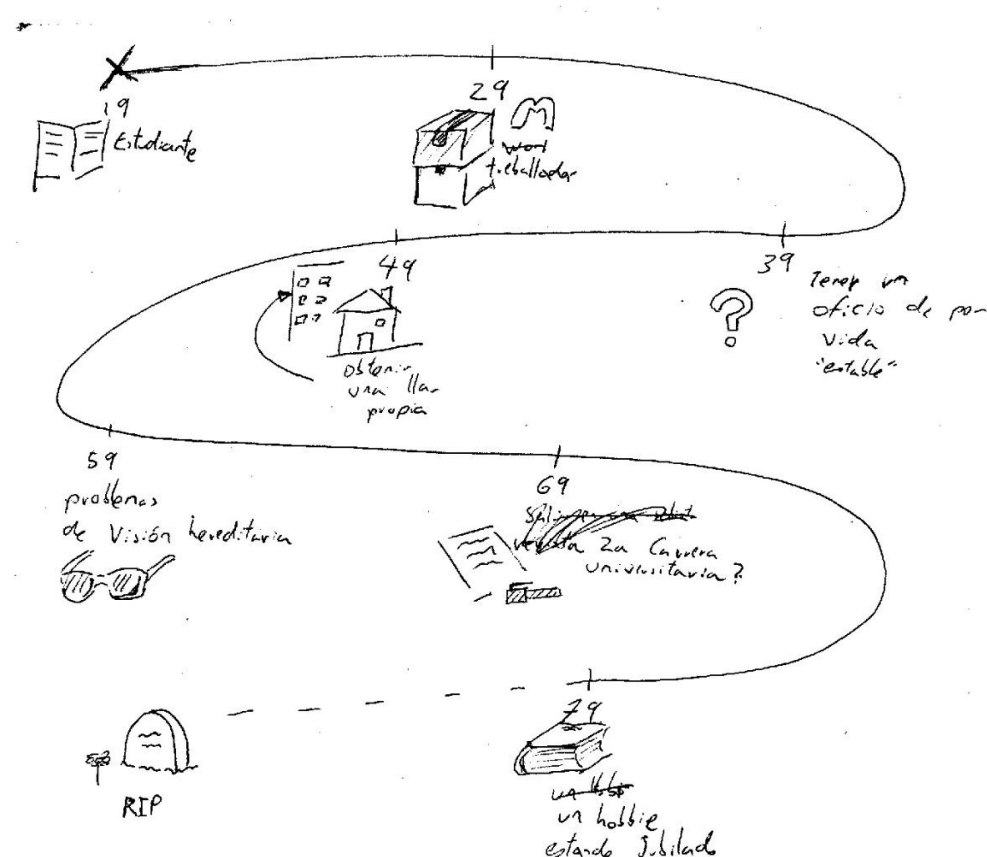
time, social movements, such as *V de Vivienda* or the *Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca (PAH)*, who were a partner of this project, encouraged the occupation of homes that had been left empty and in the hands of the banks. The slogan was: "People without houses, houses without people". Currently, according to *Diario.es* journalist Aitor Riveiro, real estate speculation has been transferred to rentals, partly due to the gentrification of cities and seasonal tourist rentals, but also because many of the homes for rent are in the hands of large companies and *vulture funds*, which may have up to 20,000 homes for rent. This means that these large holders regulate the price of housing, causing families who have two flats and rent one of them to increase the price in line with the prices set by the large

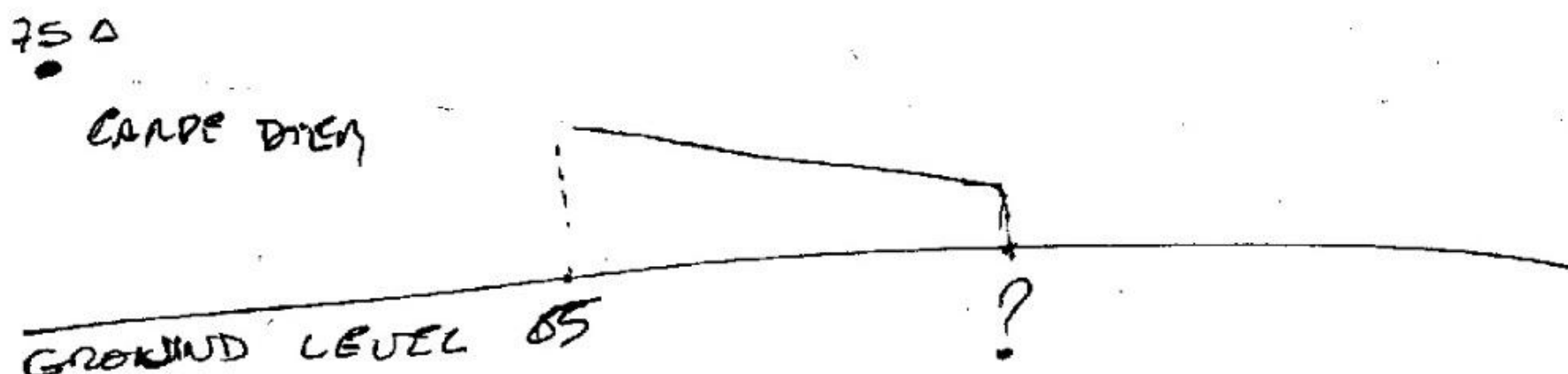
owners in the market.

When the Anthropology students were asked why they had not talked about the housing issue, they gave two arguments. The first was that they had normalised the situation. The second was that they did not believe that the state could do anything to change it. They are right. Journalist Aitor Riveiro explains that all the aid given by the state for renting results in further price increases, thus creating a privatisation of the aid which in turn ends up in the pockets of the big landlords.

Lifelines

The second activity that was carried out with the participants was to ask them to draw their lifeline from their current age, in order to project the future decade by decade. Most of the students placed their present age between 19 and 23. The first milestone that many of them identified was to finish their anthropology degree, and for others, it was to be able to continue studying postgraduate and master's degrees. One of the students placed between 20 and 30 "studying, training, getting to know myself, travelling, BEING". In her thirties, she begins with what she called "success in the workplace" In fact, most of them placed the milestone of finding a stable job in their thirties, but others placed it in their forties:





“Anthropology has no professional opportunities in Spain, nor prestige. FRUSTATION” and “25 I finish my degree; 26 I try to find a job as an anthropologist; 27 I fail miserably in trying to find a job as an anthropologist”.

These two excerpts are interesting in that the first links the difficulties of working as an anthropologist to the social context and the second assumes that the difficulty of finding a job as an anthropologist is purely individual, i.e. it depends only on oneself.

Only one student prioritised her reproductive project over her work project, despite the fact that she planned finish her degree and specialise in Health Anthropology in her 20s. Even so, in this same decade she planned to work longer hours in her current job in a shop in order to achieve economic stability that would allow her to become a mother at 29:

[Between 20 and 30]: To have achieved some professional goal, or at least, that my work doesn't

make me feel bitter or stagnated.

At 29, to be able to be a mother for the first time and start a family.

This student shared her life project with the others and made it clear that she was very clear that she would "work to live and not live to work", placing the welfare of her future children and at the centre of her life family project: "to be able to educate and raise my children. To be happy. To be able to travel and do whatever I want, without my work being an impediment".

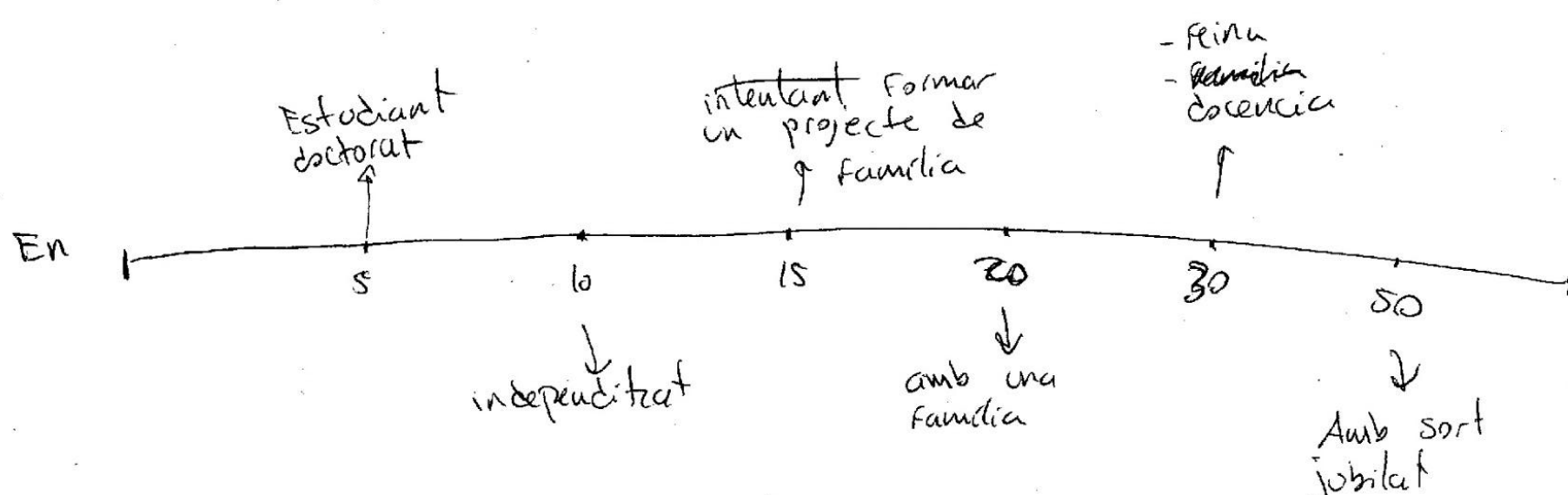
The other people who spoke about their plans to have children did so with uncertainty. One of the students drew two lifelines. Both started in the present and bifurcated at the age of 31. One option would be to have children and become a civil servant, which would provide her with the economic and employment stability to start a third university degree and reach the age of 41 with three children, a house of her own and the possibility of travelling. The second option, at the age of 31, would be to share a flat, preparing for a competitive examination, with two Master's degrees, starting a third

degree and having "decided not to have children, because she cannot afford it".

This bifurcation linked her plans to have children to being a civil servant with a permanent contract, on the understanding that this would give her greater recognised labour rights than those afforded by people working in a private company (for example, the possibility of reduced working hours and pay or the right to leave without pay but with the right to return to the same place of work), as well as lifelong economic stability and a 37.5 hour working week, conditions that are considered be conducive to having children. In Bruna Alvarez's doctoral research, one of the mothers participating in the research delayed childbearing until the of age 33. Her goal was to become a mother when she had established her career as a secondary school teacher. Although she wanted to have two children, she only had one daughter, as the second one never came, despite having undergone assisted reproduction treatment. This is a paradigmatic example of what Fabricio Bernardi coined the *child gap*, which

could be translated as the gap between the number of children one wishes to have and the number of children one finally has, and which serves to explain the low fertility rates in Spain, which can be explained, among other things, by the delay in childbearing, which often prevents having more than one child. In fact, Spain is twice the European Union average in terms of maternity over 40 years of age.

Returning to the "two lives" projected by the student, if not she were a civil servant, she would find herself in a precarious housing and employment situation, which would not allow her to have children. In the imagination of this young university student, there are no nuances: in order to develop her project to have children, the only way is to have job stability as a state employee. She perceives that the private labour market can offer no other option than economic precariousness. In view of this, four students raised the possibility of joining with family and community to support their plans to have children. One mentioned the possibility of buying



a plot of land with siblings to build three houses, one for each sibling to develop their family project there. Three others considered having children, without ruling out single motherhood, but in a context of community and strong affective networks, built from political militancy feminist and care, and claiming the concept of "care" as an alternative response to what they themselves call "individualism" and "capitalism".

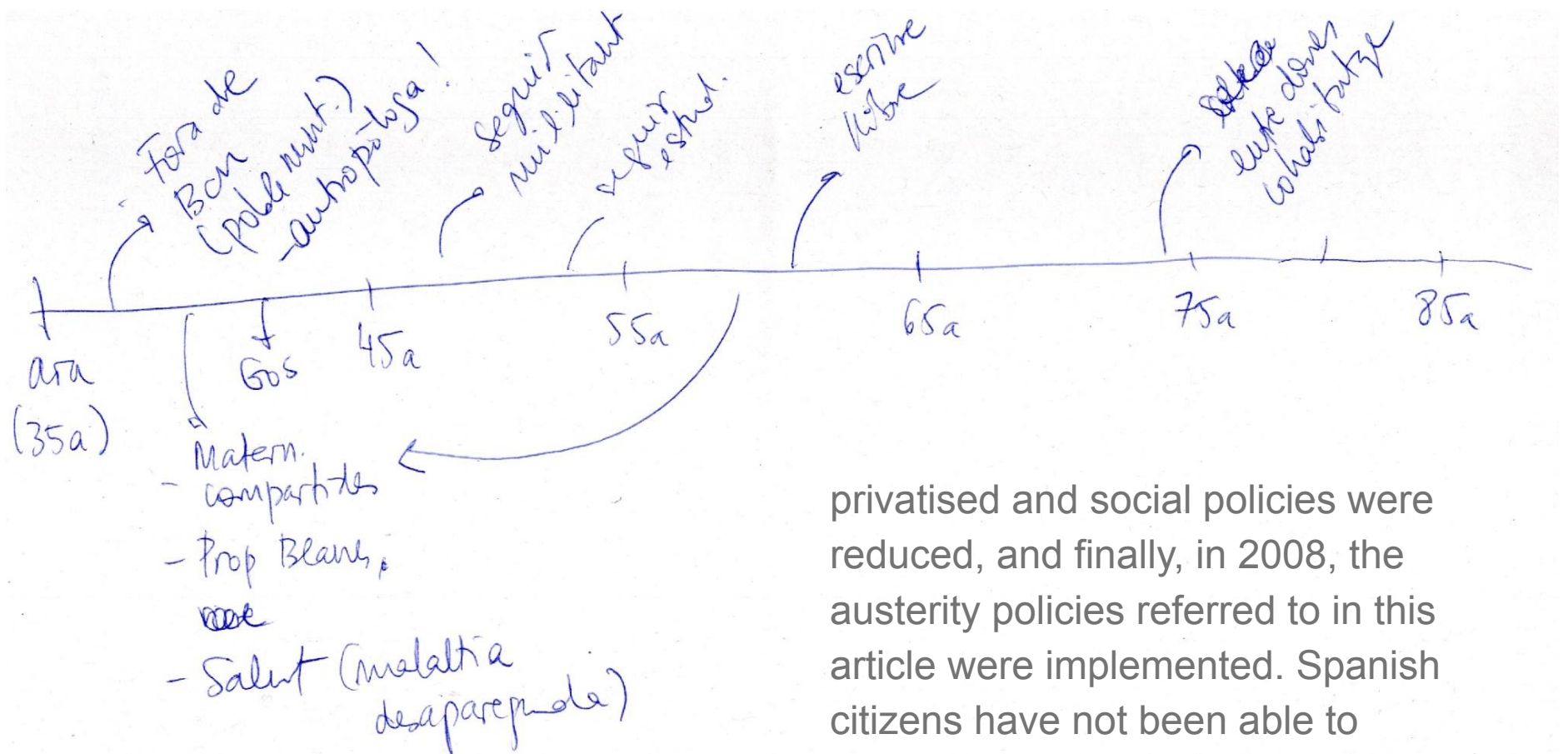
Finally, moving a little more into the realm of science fiction, one student posited a future *cyborg* scenario, where there was a robot revolution, and she could marry a robot. It is also important to note that in lifelines where there are no children, there are cats or other pets, producing a substitution of pets for children. A news item published by Radio Televisión Española in January 2025 specifically refers to the fact that "it is easier to take care of a dog than a child (...). And much cheaper". According to the Spanish Pet Identification Network, in 2023 there were 10 million dogs and almost 1 million cats registered. In contrast, according to data from the National Institute of Statistics, in the same year there were less than 2 million children between the ages of 0 and 4. The reasons for the preference of pets are directly related to the difficulties of reconciling parenting and dogs as substitutes for children, but also to other factors such as the romanticisation of living with a dog. This leads to a humanisation of animals and a dehumanisation of children, whose social

space is increasingly restricted.

Conclusions

This publication has analysed the AFIN Group's contribution to the project **Austerity and Altered-life courses**, carried out by a team from the University of Manchester. Specifically, this publication has focused on the analysis of an activity carried out with a group of anthropology students on their perception of austerity policies and their perception of the future.

The main results show how difficult it is for the young participants to identify if and how the austerity policies implemented in Spain since 2008 have impacted their daily lives, decisions and personal projects. The factors that explain this may be diverse. On the one hand, many of them were very young when austerity policies began to be implemented, so that, throughout their lives, they have normalised such policies simply as the only reality they know, "normalising" the lack of public policies. Only when the students were asked individually and privately about their own experience of austerity policies did three main themes emerge: in terms of health services - both for themselves and their families-; the fact of being part of working families, but with scarce resources despite the work of the parents; and giving up their own projects for fear of making mistakes and not having other options in life. Finally, when they drew their lifelines, they showed their frustration at not having a job in anthropology, and they showed



two very dichotomous life options. On the one hand, obtaining "success" and "stability" in their thirties, mainly through the civil service, which makes it possible to have children; or on the other hand, an option of absolute precariousness which makes it impossible to have a life with children. Only one student said that she prioritised life over work, viewing the latter mostly as a means of supporting and facilitating the former.

In this situation where, despite the differences, pessimism reigns, we could ask ourselves whether Spain has ever experienced a full democracy with the rule of law, which promotes citizens' welfare. In 1975, the last fascist dictatorship in Europe came to an end and Spain entered a democratic period marked by a neoliberal shift from the 1980s onwards. A few years later, in the mid-1990s, companies were

privatised and social policies were reduced, and finally, in 2008, the austerity policies referred to in this article were implemented. Spanish citizens have not been able to experience what a fully democratic society with a developed welfare state should be like. Partly because of this, today's young people are completely unaware of it and do not consider claiming it because it seems that, along with welfare, the utopian horizons, the possibility of dreaming and the illusion of inhabiting in a better world have also been lost.

About the authors



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Co-director of the AFIN Research Group and Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (Spain).

Her research interests include motherhood, reproduction, sexualities, and childhood. She wrote her doctoral thesis on the politics of motherhood in Spain, highlighting how the labor market, gender relations in heterosexual couples, the narrative of choice, and feminist discourse functioned as moral regimes that influenced reproductive decisions. Since 2017, she has co-coordinated the project *Sex-AFIN Sexuality and Childhood*, in Catalonia (Spain), Ciudad Juárez (Mexico), South Africa, and Brazil. She is currently researching reproduction in Barcelona (Spain) and Ciudad Juárez and Tijuana (Mexico), analyzing (non)reproductive mobilities. Specifically, her work in Barcelona focuses on gamete recipients, reproductive decisions and trajectories, and the work-life balance of reproductive health professionals in Catalonia. On Mexico's northern border, she is analyzing reproductive mobility in terms of births in the United States, assisted reproduction in Mexico, and voluntary abortions in both countries. She has published a book, five book chapters, and 25 academic articles, and has carried out a wide variety of research transfer activities, including training for primary and secondary school teachers and talks for families, as well as supporting people in assisted reproduction processes.

About the authors

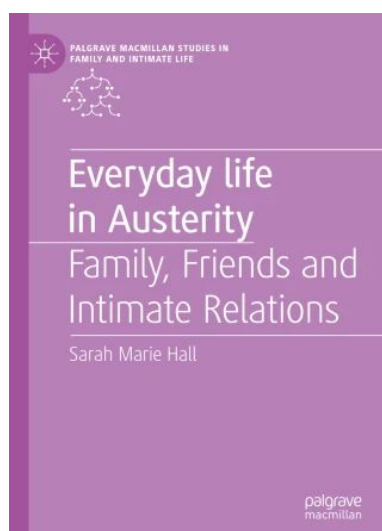


Diana Marre

**Professor at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.
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Her research areas are the social, cultural, and political aspects of human reproduction. She has been the principal investigator on numerous research projects related to human reproduction, family, and childhood, funded by various organizations and entities. In 2019, she received the ICREA Academia award. She is currently working on projects related to the mobilities imposed by certain barriers to reproduction and the experiences of individuals and families who undergo early reproductive losses and extreme prematurity, as well as the healthcare teams that support them.

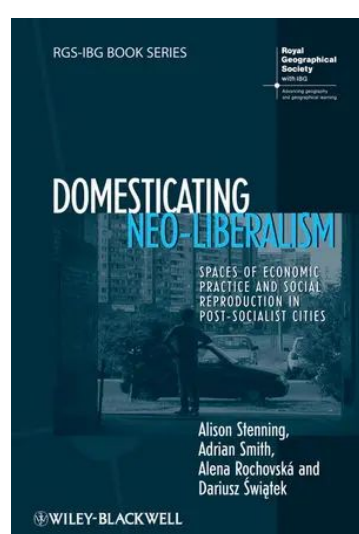
To read



Hall, Sarah Marie (2019)

Everyday life in Austerity. Family, Friends and Intimate Relations
Springer Nature

This book is about the impact of austerity in and on everyday life, based on a two-year ethnography with families and communities in 'Argleton', Greater Manchester, UK. Focused on family, friends and intimate relations, and their intersections, the book develops a relational approach to everyday austerity. It reveals how austerity is a deeply personal and social condition, with impacts that spread across and between everyday relationships, spaces and temporal perspectives. It demonstrates how austerity is lived and felt on the ground, with distinctly uneven socio-economic consequences. Furthermore, everyday relationships are subject to change and continuity in times of austerity. Austerity also has lasting impacts on personal and shared experiences, both in terms of day-to-day practices and the life courses people imagine themselves living.

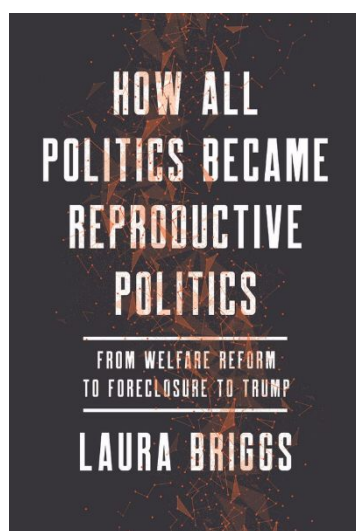


Stenning, Alison et al. (2010)

Domesticating Neo-Liberalism: Spaces of Economic Practice and Social Reproduction in Post-Socialist Cities
Wiley Online Library

Based on in-depth research in Poland and Slovakia, this book addresses how we understand the processes of neo-liberalization in post-socialist cities. Built upon a vast amount of new research data, it examines how households try to sustain their livelihoods at particularly dramatic and difficult times of urban transformation.

To read



Briggs, Laura (2017)

How All Politics Became Reproductive Politics. From Welfare Reform to Foreclosure to Trump.

University of California Press

Today all politics are reproductive politics, argues esteemed feminist critic Laura Briggs. From longer work hours to the election of Donald Trump, our current political crisis is above all about reproduction. Households are where we face our economic realities as social safety nets get cut and wages decline. Briggs brilliantly outlines how politicians' racist accounts of reproduction - stories of Black "welfare queens" and Latina "breeding machines" - were the leading wedge in the government and business disinvestment in families. With decreasing wages, rising McJobs, and no resources for family care, our households have grown ever more precarious over the past forty years in sharply race - and class - stratified ways. This crisis, argues Briggs, fuels all others - from immigration to gay marriage, anti-feminism to the rise of the Tea Party.

To watch



McKay, Adam (2015)

The big short

USA, 123 min

Three years before the 2008 global crisis triggered by subprime mortgages, which nearly collapsed the global financial system, four outsiders were the only ones who foresaw that the entire mortgage market was going to crash. They decided to do something unprecedented: bet against the housing market, going against all logical reasoning at the time. This film is an adaptation of Michael Lewis's book *The Big Short*, which reflects on the collapse of the American real estate sector that sparked the 2008 global economic crisis. (FILMAFFINITY).



Botto, Juan Diego (2022)

En los márgenes

Spain, 105 min

The countdown for three characters, with interconnected stories, who struggle to stay afloat and survive 24 crucial hours that could change the course of their lives. The film explores the impact of economic stress on personal relationships and how affection and solidarity can be a driving force to move forward. (FILMAFFINITY).

To watch

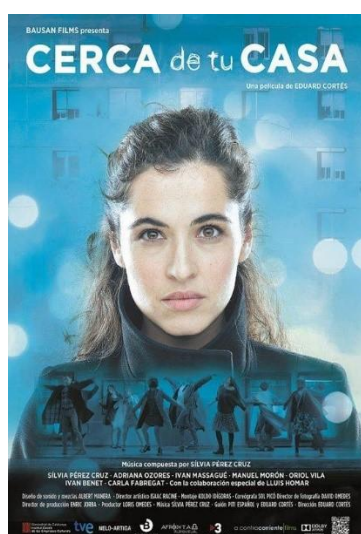


Del Castillo, Juan Miguel (2015)

Techo y comida

Spain, 90 min

Jerez de la Frontera, 2012. Rocío, a single mother without a job, receives no assistance or benefits. She lives with her eight-year-old son in an apartment whose rent she hasn't paid for months, so the landlord continually threatens to evict her. To cover living expenses and rent, she takes on poorly paid odd jobs and sells items she finds at flea markets. (FILMAFFINITY).



Cortés, Eduard (2016)

Cerca de tu casa

Spain, 93 min

A musical about the evictions that took place in Spain due to the economic crisis. After losing their home because they couldn't pay for it, a young couple with a 10-year-old daughter moves in with her parents. However, that home is also threatened by foreclosure, as it served as collateral for the daughter's mortgage. (FILMAFFINITY).

To read and to watch more



- Marie Hall, Sarah et al. (2025). Austere life-courses and foreclosed futures: A relational geographical approach to work, housing, and family across austerity Europe. *Dialogues in Human Geography*, 0(0), 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20438206251316005>
- Digital exhibition - School of Social Sciences - The University of Manchester
- *Austerity and Altered-life courses. Socio-Political Ruptures to Family, Employment and Housing Biographies Across Europe.* Proyecto general - The University of Manchester

News AFIN



Participate in our study on pregnancy and the environment

AFIN Group, in collaboration with the Ajuntament de Barcelona, Hospital de Sant Pau, Hospital Sant Joan de Déu, and Hospital del Mar, is conducting the study *Viure l'embaràs a Barcelona: dones i persones gestants davant l'emergència climàtica*. This research analyzes the experiences of pregnant individuals in relation to the effects of climate change and pollution on their health, reproductive decisions, and future perspectives.

In the first phase, in-depth interviews were conducted with participants from different districts of Barcelona. Currently, the study has entered its second phase, consisting of a survey aimed at those who have experienced pregnancy and/or breastfeeding in the city from 2022 to the present. This stage seeks to expand participation and include a greater diversity of experiences.

Those who wish to collaborate can complete the survey at [this link](#). Your participation will contribute to a better understanding of the effects of the climate emergency on perinatal health. The project results are expected to be shared through the AFIN Group's website, regular publications, and social media over the next year. Those interested in learning about the emerging results of this project can follow the group's updates or get in touch via email: c.afin@uab.cat.

Has viscut el teu embaràs o la lactància a la ciutat de Barcelona entre el 2022 i el 2025?

Volem conèixer la teva experiència!

Participa en un estudi sobre l'embaràs i el medi ambient.



Completar l'enquesta anònima només requerirà 10 minuts.

afinbarcelona.com/clima



Postdoctoral Stay of Dr. Janaína Gomes at AFIN

Dr. Janaína Dantas G. Gomes, a postdoctoral researcher at the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS) under the supervision of Professor Claudia Fonseca, is a member of the ANTHERA Research Network and is currently undertaking a research stay at AFIN from January to April, under the supervision of Diana Marre, thanks to a scholarship from the Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico (CNPq).

During her stay in Barcelona, Janaína has participated in various academic activities, including the AFIN Seminars, and has presented her work on

motherhood and child separation in vulnerable situations at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB) and the Universitat de Barcelona (UB). She will also present her seven-year experience coordinating a legal clinic in Brazil at the Faculty of Law of the University of Salamanca.

This stay has been a valuable opportunity to bring discussions on the violations of birth mothers' rights in Brazil to an international stage, broadening the debate and incorporating different perspectives on the topic. At the same time, the experience allows for deeper exploration of the importance of adoptees' voices in this context, a key aspect in understanding the dynamics involved.

This exchange has been possible not only thanks to the CNPq scholarship but also due to the support of the UAB and AFIN, which have provided an environment of exchange and collaboration essential for the development of these reflections. Additionally, this experience significantly contributes to the researcher's present and future reflections.