

**The direct transition
to a classless society**

**A programme for the future
for the international
anti-capitalist movement**

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1. THE HISTORICAL ROLE OF THE WORKING CLASS

Only the working class – led by a united and dialectically trained Marxist left – has the potential today to break the destructive spiral of exploitation, inequality, environmental destruction and social disintegration.

The Hegelian dialectic – the recognition of internal contradictions as the driving force behind historical developments – remains a central advantage of Marxist theory over technocratic or moralising approaches. Only an organised left with a strategic future programme can mobilise the working masses.

Today's enemy: the power of the financial system

Historically, classical Marxist analysis was justifiably directed against private ownership of the means of production and the exploitation of the proletariat by industrial capital. However, in actually existing socialism, it became clear that the socialisation of the means of production is insufficient as long as labour itself is not socialised. This would have required a global transformation – but it did not happen.

The bourgeois mode of production – mediated by exchange value, abstract labour and the exchange of equivalents – remains in place as long as labour is organised in terms of time, products in terms of market prices and needs in terms of accounting systems. This omission prepared the ground for the development of state socialism with its centralised power structures and its lasting alienation.

Today, however, capitalism has undergone a structural transformation: industrial capital is no longer the primary driving force behind capital accumulation, but globally networked financial capital. It is this system that creates the permanent pressure to grow, that transforms innovation into exploitation and blocks any development that is geared towards people.

Left struggles often address the symptoms – inequality, poverty, wage differences – without attacking the actual power base: the abstract capital

in the financial sector, which directs the real economy through interest mechanisms, stock market speculation and debt. As long as this structure remains untouched, all reforms remain purely cosmetic.

The task today: freeing the economy from the dictatorship of the financial markets

The goal can no longer be a purely institutional socialisation of capital – for example in the form of state or cooperative ownership models – but its liberation from the logic of profit. Not the 'expropriation of the expropriators', but the disempowerment of profit itself is on the historical agenda today.

Only when production is no longer geared to profit, but to human needs and ecological regeneration, can the dialectic of capital be suspended and transformed into a new, humanistic mode of production.

A historic mistake of the October Revolution was to socialise capital without overcoming the logic of capital appreciation. The consequence was the reproduction of authoritarian structures under the banner of socialism.

The objective conditions for a classless society – automated production, abundance of resources – were not present at the time, and a worldwide revolution was not enforceable.

But today we stand at a historic threshold.

The possibility of finally overcoming capitalism is real. The productive forces have reached an unprecedented level, exponentially increasing global economic growth has already created material abundance, we are globally connected, and artificial intelligence can replace the market.

It would be fatal to miss this historic opportunity – we have no time to lose.

Danger of infiltration and instrumental division

Left-wing movements are being systematically infiltrated by reformist, technocratic and bourgeois-institutionalised forces. This is particularly evident in the climate movement: what began as a global uprising was

diverted through 'scientific advice' into a depoliticised discourse on technology. Capitalism itself was no longer questioned.

Even more radical groups such as Extinction Rebellion were marginalised or ridiculed by the tactical exaggeration of internal contradictions, for example in the use of resources. This strategy serves to divide both the left and society as a whole.

The need for a new, unifying programme

Today's productive forces – highly automated, digitally networked, globally organised – made it possible for the first time in history to create a world beyond material scarcity. However, they remain blocked by the logic of finance capital. The fear of losing one's job leads to a paradoxical defence of wage labour, although automation has long since made it redundant.

What is missing is a strategically sharpened, unifying programme of the left that does not get lost in treating the symptoms, but instead focuses on the central contradiction between productive possibilities and profit-driven modes of production.

Such a programme may be utopian – not in the sense of being illusory, but in the sense of a radically realistic perspective of liberation. Those in power also use utopias: Elon Musk's visions of Mars, for example, legitimise political interests. Why shouldn't we take up a utopia of Earth rescue?

Dialectics means: recognising the main contradiction

Dialectical thinking requires identifying the most historically effective contradictions. Today, the main contradiction is no longer primarily between labour and capital, but between the real economy and an unbridled financial system that extracts and accumulates profits without being productive. If the Marxist left recognises this contradiction as the central one and places the liberation of the economy from the domination of finance at the centre of its strategy, it can live up to its historical role.

If the compulsion to make a profit is eliminated, systematic exploitation will also end. People will be freed from heteronomy.

What is outlined here is not a revolutionary overthrow in the classical sense, but a collective withdrawal of waged labour – a transformation that is possible by peaceful means.

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2. TODAY'S THREATS TO HUMANITY

The ecological destruction, the growing inequality, the neocolonial structures in world trade and the danger of wars are not accidental aberrations. They are direct and systemic consequences of capital valorization under the dictate of the financial system. The compulsion for permanent capital accumulation – conveyed through debt, profit expectations and interest mechanisms – forces the global economy into a destructive growth model.

Imperialist competition as a motor of conflict

Global competition for resources, markets and cheap production conditions intensifies conflicts between nation states, classes and regions. Wars, geopolitical tensions and economic blackmail are expressions of a system that is based on the fundamental logic of competition and expansion – and thus constantly creates new areas of tension.

Coupling of economic growth and social benefits

In capitalist society, social systems are linked to economic growth because the level of contributions is determined by the salaries of employees. This means that when economic growth declines, social benefits also shrink. Because of this chain of cause and effect, workers are forced to support economic growth.

The ecological crisis as a consequence of capital utilisation

The warming of the earth's atmosphere is not an autonomous natural phenomenon, but a result of decades of capitalist production. In the 200 years of the industrial revolution, gigantic quantities of fossil energy

sources, which were formed over a period of 60 million years, have been burned in an extremely short period of time.

This rapid consumption has triggered a kind of geological 'explosion', the incipient effects of which we are now feeling, whatever one wants to call it.

The role of finance capital in the reproduction of the crisis

The increasing power of global finance capital is not a mere side effect, but an expression of the structural transformation of capitalism itself. Financial markets dictate investment decisions, determine policy and shape legislation in line with capitalist logic of exploitation (the process by which capitalists extract surplus value from workers).

In this process, even the ecological catastrophe is being converted into a new source of accumulation, in that economic growth is generated by the reconstruction of destruction (the costs for the elimination of the damage caused by the flood disaster in the Ahr valley¹ in 2021 are estimated at over 40 billion euros, which contribute to the gross domestic product).

¹ Ahrtal is a part of the Rhine Valley.

On the left-wing debate on climate change

The justified scepticism within left-wing and Marxist circles is not directed against climate change as such, but against the bourgeois appropriation of climate policy. Under the guise of ecological responsibility, measures are being implemented that primarily burden the working class and the global South, while the capitalist elite secures its profits.

At the same time, we must not relativise the reality of the ecological crisis – it is a concrete, material threat that arises from the logic of capitalist production and destroys the foundations of our lives.

Global economic output has increased fivefold since 1970, although the world population has only roughly doubled. And according to the International Monetary Fund, the exponential growth continues, although we are already clearly feeling the effects in the form of increasing natural

disasters, which are due to the warming of the earth's atmosphere caused by the still increasing emissions of greenhouse gases.

The alternative: decoupling profit and production

The problem is not 'the economy' per se, but its dependency on profit under the conditions of capital valorisation. If we can free the economy from the domination of the financial system and establish production that is oriented towards people's needs, the destructive compulsion to grow can be ended.

A system of this kind, no longer geared to profit but to the common good and ecological sustainability, would make it possible to cut back production globally – without losses in terms of social welfare but with ecological gains. The inequality between the global North and South and neocolonialism could be ended.

3. INCREASING DANGER DUE TO THE TRANSFORMATION OF OUR MORAL VALUES

In the late phase of capitalism, we are experiencing a profound erosion of collective moral values. Social acceptance of morally reprehensible facts is growing – not because man is naturally indifferent, but because capitalist reality forces him to normalise injustice in order to continue functioning.

For example, it is accepted that a convicted criminal is re-elected as president of the world's largest economy – an expression of the fact that political power is no longer tied to ethical standards, but is defined by media power, money and class interests.

It has also become the norm for democratically governed states to engage in the arms trade with authoritarian regimes. The export of capital in the form of armaments is declared to be a legitimate form of 'economic development' (i.e. the export of death and misery).

Everyday life also shows the brutalisation of morals through capitalist constraints: mass layoffs are trivialised as 'necessary restructuring', homelessness is presented as individual failure, and the destruction of

habitats in the Global South for the raw material needs of 'green technologies' is legitimised under the label of sustainability.

Such developments lead to democracy degenerating into a façade that increasingly serves as a means of enforcing particular vested interests – secured by a media and financial system that shapes public opinion according to the interests of exploitation.

At the end of this development, there is acceptance of increasing inequality, increasing neocolonialism and the exploitation of natural resources. When moral categories such as justice, solidarity or human dignity are replaced by economic efficiency criteria, it is no wonder that ecological and social devastation are considered collateral damage of 'unlimited' politics.

It continues into our everyday lives. When we stand on the platform and are surprised to find that our train has been cancelled without replacement, we no longer get upset but tolerate it without objection.

We have already become weak-willed and compliant tools of the system. That is why democracy can be misused for the wrong goals today. This is the great danger, but there is nothing we can do about it unless we change the system that leads to these conditions.

We must act quickly. [To the content](#)

The new possibility of overcoming capitalism

4. DIRECT TRANSITION TO A CLASSLESS SOCIETY

The two central prerequisites for the immediate transition from capitalism to a classless society are fulfilled today:

The productive forces are sufficiently developed.

Humanity today has technologies at its disposal with which large parts of the economy could be automated – from agriculture to industrial

manufacturing and logistics. But under capitalism, this automation is deliberately slowed down or steered into irrational channels.

When machines replace human labour, millions lose their income and thus the opportunity to participate in consumption. Capital fears not technical feasibility, but the social loss of control. That is why people continue to be employed even though robots could step in – not because it makes sense, but because the system depends on wage labour and consumption.

This gives rise to paradoxical situations: instead of useful automation, overproduction is practised, for example with goods that nobody really needs and that are deliberately designed to break well before their actual useful life, or with manipulation through advertising and discount campaigns to buy goods even though they are not really needed.

Under the current capitalist mode of production, a significant portion of use values are disposed of well before they reach their natural wear limit in order to artificially increase the sale of goods and maintain the capitalist accumulation regime. This planned obsolescence serves only to maintain profit and is an expression of the inherent contradictions of capital, which can only secure its existence through constant compulsion to grow.

From an objective point of view, the material basis for a drastic reduction in the socially necessary working hours – to a 20-hour week, for example – would have been in place long ago. But instead of liberating the productive forces in the interests of the working class, society continues to bow to the dictates of finance capital. The ideology of 'full employment' is maintained as a fetish, although in reality it amounts to sabotaging automation and blocking the potential for mass liberation from alienated work.

A revolutionary break with the financial system and capitalist commodity production would not only create the basis for the abolition of wage labour, but also open up the transition to a classless society. In such a society, the productive forces could be developed under collective control

and according to the needs of all, thus equitably distributing the socially produced wealth and overcoming the compulsion to gainful employment.

We live in abundance

To ensure that economic growth has continued to increase in recent decades, the lifespan of goods has been systematically shortened. This so-called 'planned obsolescence' has become the norm. Products are disposed of long before they would technically be unusable, not because it is necessary, but because capitalism demands constant turnover of goods. The cycle of buy-consume-throw away has become the basic condition for profit.

Although the world population has only roughly doubled since 1970, the global gross domestic product has increased fivefold. This shows that today we produce more than twice as much as we would actually need – and yet it seems as if there is a shortage everywhere.

True abundance begins where we free ourselves from the compulsion to capital realisation. If products are allowed to develop their full lifespan and the purpose of production is no longer profit but the common good, it becomes clear that we have had enough for everyone in abundance for a long time.

Since the financial system will become obsolete in the transition to a classless society, many former employees from the finance and insurance sectors will also be available to support the economy according to their abilities. [To the content](#)

5. CANCELLATION OF THE CAPITAL RELATIONSHIP THROUGH VOLUNTARY PRODUCTION

Labour as a source of financial value

Under capitalism, a commodity acquires its financial value not from its use, but from the labour that goes into its production. The value of human labour is transferred to the commodity.

According to the Marxist theory of value, the capitalist sells the resulting commodity not only at the value of the labour time used, but at a higher price – in order to appropriate the surplus value. This arises from the fact that the employees work longer than would be necessary to reproduce their own labour power.

This surplus value is the source of profit. It is the result of the exploitation of wage labour and forms the economic basis of the capitalist relationship. The entire financial system is based on this exploitative dynamic: it thrives on extracting surplus value from the real economy, transforming it into capital and accumulating it.

Today, with the transition to a classless society, we have the opportunity to prevent commodities from acquiring exchange value in the first place. We can prevent commodities from acquiring financial value by not transferring any 'value' to them at all, through voluntary labour.

Raw materials are common property, not commodities

Capitalism obscures the fact that the raw materials on which all production is based are gifts of nature. The earth does not demand a price for its resources. It provides us with water, wood, metals and energy sources free of charge. But under capitalism, these gifts are transformed into private property, made scarce, combined with wage labour and thrown onto the market in the form of commodities.

Voluntary work and the creation of products free of exchange value

If all social production were now based on voluntary, unremunerated work, the value structure would change radically:

- No financial value would arise because wage labour would no longer be incorporated into the products.
- Raw materials would remain free, and no exchange value would be added through voluntary work.
- The product would continue to have use value, but no price.

In this way, the commodity would be devalued in the Marxist sense: it would remain a useful good, but lose its character as a commodity.

Abolition of money, profit and capital

In such a mode of production, wages are no longer necessary because people give each other their labour and the products they create as a gift. No one has to buy anything because everything is accessible free of charge. As a result:

- No money
- No profit
- No accumulation
- No financial capital

The financial system loses its grip on the real economy because exchange value no longer exists and thus no profit can arise. This would remove the basis for capital valorisation, without compulsion, without violence, solely through conscious collective practice.

Transition to a classless society

This would be the real transition to a classless society in the sense of historical materialism – not through expropriation from above, but through the conscious decision of the producers to give their labour as a gift instead of selling it.

There would be no losers: former capitalists would also have access to the goods necessary for a dignified life, but no longer at the expense of others. Class relations would be peacefully abolished because their material basis would disappear.

The abolition of profit also changes the nature of ownership of the means of production. Therefore, private ownership of the means of production will dissolve by itself. [To the content](#)

6. THE EXTERNAL RUPTURE: WHY CAPITALISM CANNOT BE OVERCOME FROM WITHIN

The history of capitalist societies is also the history of the failure of all far-reaching attempts at reform *within the* system. For more than fifty years, movements have increasingly tried to tame the destructive consequences of capital accumulation through state regulation, redistribution, co-determination or ecological measures. But every serious intervention that endangers the rate of profit is neutralised, appropriated or crushed.

This is not due to a lack of ideas or political will, but to the structural logic of capital itself. Capitalism is not an open system that can be reformed at will, but a closed-loop machine of exploitation that judges every social measure by whether it hinders or promotes capital accumulation.

As soon as reforms touch the substance of this exploitation – for example through nationalisation, progressive taxation or property limitation – the system bites back: with capital flight, market fluctuation, political destabilisation or the integration and defusing of oppositional movements.

Even social democratic parties, which once stood for making the economy more humane, have been integrated into state-monopoly capitalism and turned into administrators of its imperatives. Green movements have also become part of market-compliant management – their ecological critique usually ends at 'green growth' and market-based solutions. Unfortunately, more and more states are turning to neoliberalism.

The system cannot be revolutionised from within because its inner logic measures every measure in terms of capital usability.

Only a break from the outside can interrupt this dynamic – an intervention that takes place outside the logic of exchange and independently of the financial system. The historically unique opportunity for this exists today: through the collective decision of working people worldwide to no longer work for wages, but voluntarily – for the common good.

If no one demands wages anymore, money, prices and markets lose their basis.

If raw materials, labour and goods no longer have to be bought, but are provided collectively, the necessity of a market as an intermediary ends.

The special thing about this is that production does not have to be interrupted. On the contrary – it is merely freed from its destructive orientation towards profit.

This is how the sustainable transformation of the economy can begin. The things that are really needed will continue to be produced – only without wage dependency, without competition, without money.

Such a step is not utopian, but a realistic strategy in the face of the global crisis. It is the only conceivable way to outwit the system, not to overthrow it head-on.

Capitalism cannot be reformed – but it can be drained of its resources if people collectively withdraw from its innermost engine – the compulsion to wage labour. [To the content](#)

7. THE DAY OF THE TRANSITION – THE TRANSITION TO A CLASSLESS SOCIETY

Due to the global interdependence of the chains of goods, a selective change is unthinkable. Only a simultaneous global transition guarantees that raw materials, intermediate products, spare parts, finished goods and services lose their financial value everywhere at the same time – and thus become available for free.

Today's world economy is based on global supply chains – that is why it is crucial that the conversion takes place simultaneously worldwide. Only in this way can we prevent the profit motive, property titles or market mechanisms from regaining the upper hand. Marx himself assumed a worldwide revolution – today it can be done peacefully.

The prerequisite is continuity.

On the day of the conversion, nothing in people's everyday lives should change noticeably. Life must go on as if nothing had happened, so that supplies are not endangered at any time and no panic arises.

It is a tacit agreement between employees and employers. So far, work has been done in advance until the wage was paid and now the products are given away for free at the same time as the work is done for free.

All existing employment, supply and service contracts remain valid. Work continues as before – only without wage payments, which we do not really realise, since wages would be paid with a time delay anyway. All production chains remain in place on a transitional basis.

The only difference is that prices will be completely eliminated. All products and services will be free because there will be no paid work and therefore no exchange value. Work becomes a gift – and this mutual gift-giving changes everything.

The first thing we will notice is that the products in the shops will no longer cost anything when we do our errands after work. Since we are prepared for this day, we will not make the mistake of stockpiling. We don't have to, because from this day on everything we need is free. Everything we need for a happy and contented life is given to us as a gift, and there is no longer any threat of losing our existence.

Therefore, in the future, our decisions will be based on mutual help and solidarity.

The social feeling of happiness

This sudden liberation from economic pressure leads directly to a significant increase in national happiness. People receive what they need without having to pay for it, as gifts that naturally make us happy. Greed turns into generosity, scarcity turns into abundance.

Even the entrepreneurs benefit: they no longer have to service loans, pay wages or calculate prices. Accounting becomes redundant. They receive everything they need for free, just like everyone else.

This also removes the pressure to capitalise. Many will be happy about the sense of purpose gained and the lack of responsibility for competition, layoffs and market pressures.

This form of transition avoids radical system breaks or violence.

Shrinking consumption and ecological relief

Without the profit motive, artificially created demand and planned obsolescence are no longer necessary. It would be nonsensical to give away more than necessary. Therefore, less is consumed and demand drops immediately. As a result, production can shrink to what is socially necessary.

People from redundant industries – such as the finance or insurance sector – help where they are needed: with basic services. Unemployment is no longer a problem because everyone is automatically provided for.

Digital control instead of market logic

Artificial intelligence and global networking help to distribute goods according to demand. These tools replace the market and enable a fair and transparent supply. These instruments are monitored and controlled in a grassroots democracy.

A peaceful revolution

The power of this solution lies in its simplicity. There is no need for preparatory upheavals, no violent expropriation. Just a worldwide joint decision to switch to voluntary work on the same day. Then the capitalist logic of exploitation will give way to a humane gift economy (an economy based on giving and receiving) and the transition to a classless society will become reality. [To the content](#)

8. ORGANISATIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE GLOBAL TRANSITION TO A CLASSLESS SOCIETY

How can humanity be motivated to work voluntarily worldwide?

The idea that all of humanity will suddenly start working voluntarily seems unrealistic at first glance. Many people find it difficult to imagine that such a fundamental change could be implemented peacefully.

Regardless of the fact of authoritarian control by the state and the safeguarding of profits for pharmaceutical companies, we can also learn a lesson from the coronavirus pandemic at the beginning of 2020. It proved that globally coordinated measures are possible. Within a few days, economic sectors such as aviation and the automotive industry were shut down without basic supplies collapsing.

The working population worldwide largely behaved in a disciplined, solidary and prudent manner. Despite the erosion of democratic rights and the technocratisation of life, the pandemic proved that when people recognise a common goal, they can cooperate worldwide.

This historical example shows that a simultaneous, worldwide transition to a money-free economy of voluntary work is also conceivable – when insight, solidarity and global coordination come together.

A worldwide general strike would also be a means of collective action. In history, a general strike has always been a powerful tool for enforcing social demands. Usually, it is about higher wages, better working conditions or protest against government restrictions.

In this case, however, it is not about putting pressure on individual employers or governments, but about a collective liberation of humanity from the influence of the financial system on the economy.

The motivation for this particular 'strike' could therefore arise from a radical claim to equality: the demand that no one – whether unemployed or employed – should be disadvantaged. Only on this basis can work really be distributed equally.

This equality can only be created voluntarily, when all people provide for each other instead of competing for money.

This new general strike would therefore have a completely different goal: not to stop work, but to get humanity continue to work voluntarily, without pay or reward. The salary is no longer necessary, but the work, which is of course necessary for society, remains.

Contracts, supply chains, production processes – everything we take for granted today will remain in place for a limited time to ensure a seamless transition. Only the flow of money will stop. Workers will not notice this at all, because wages are usually paid with a time lag.

There will be no more calls for us to take more than we need for a contented life, because that would be completely out of place when it comes to gifts. Therefore, consumption will decrease immediately without causing an economic crisis, because companies are no longer under pressure to generate profit.

Social conditions will also change abruptly because social happiness automatically increases with the daily receipt of gifts. Therefore, we will mainly treat each other with solidarity and try to relieve the burden on people who are still exposed to high economic pressure as quickly as possible.

The social feeling of happiness would also increase immediately because no one would be excluded from human rights such as shelter, food and medical care.

What begins as a utopian idea could be transformed into a new form of solidary economic activity through the global organisation of a general strike – without revolution, without violence, but through the conscious self-empowerment of humanity. [To the content](#)

9. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE WILL REPLACE THE MARKET COMPLETELY

Under capitalism, production is geared towards profit. Supply and demand appear to be natural forces, although they are distorted by advertising, price pressure, competition, scarcity and speculation.

In an economy based on voluntary work, however, the profit motive no longer applies, and with it the need to artificially stimulate consumption. Production is then no longer based on the market, but on real social needs.

Today, artificial intelligence (AI) can help us to distribute goods fairly.

Just-in-time instead of five-year plans

The old idea of a centrally planned economy with rigid production targets is outdated. In a networked world in which all production and consumption data can be digitally recorded, it is possible to react dynamically to changes – in real time.

Every time goods are removed, whether it be food or a spare part, digital signals are already being generated: special shelf systems, warehouse logistics and ordering systems communicate with each other. Even co-living spaces or people can register their need for services, e.g. repairs.

In a market-free economy, these signals would continue to be used, but not for pricing or profit expectations, but purely for analysing demand. Artificial intelligence records what is needed, recognises patterns, balances out regional differences and provides recommendations for action to producers, including civil society potential such as repair cafes (where people can get their broken items repaired).

Decentralised coordination instead of market

Instead of an anonymous, uncontrollable market, there is a transparent, cooperative network that is monitored by grassroots democracy.

Production sites, warehouses, distribution points and repair centres are digitally linked. Interfaces between companies are retained, but orders are no longer placed by 'buying' but by reporting needs.

The supply contracts that applied before the changeover can continue for the time being; they will gradually be replaced by new cooperation agreements based on solidarity and shared responsibility.

Artificial Intelligence can help to optimise processes, minimise waste and reduce energy consumption. It recognises maintenance requirements, coordinates transport and helps to use resources efficiently and sparingly. In areas where automation is not yet possible, people can volunteer –

motivated not by compulsion, but by a sense of purpose and social recognition.

Democratic control and codetermination

Digital networking also creates new opportunities for grassroots democratic participation. Regional supply councils, platforms for setting priorities, collective feedback systems – all this can be mapped using today's technologies. People can directly participate in deciding what is produced, how and where. Artificial intelligence serves as a decision-support tool – not as a ruler.

Shrinking economy – growing life

Without advertising, planned obsolescence and competitive pressure, less is produced – and precisely what is needed. AI recognises when demand is falling and reduces production accordingly. Resources are conserved, the environment is relieved, the climate is protected. The shrinking economy is not a sign of crisis, but of liberation. Because the less work there is to be done, the more time there is for life. [To the content](#)

10. PROPERTY IN THE CLASSLESS SOCIETY

Under capitalism, property is not just a means of individual security but the central instrument for maximising profit. Whether factories, rented apartments or unused land – property exists to accumulate capital.

Even an owner-occupied flat generates profit because no rent has to be paid and the money saved can be used elsewhere. Even uncultivated land increases the price of land due to the artificial scarcity of the remaining area – also in the service of exploitation.

Property historically did not come about because people wanted to say, 'This is mine,' but to force others to work for them. Before private property, land was common property. The fence around the land did not mean protection, but domination: it marked the boundary where exploitation began.

The role of profit – and its dissolution

The crucial question is: how can this logic be overcome? The answer lies not in expropriation of the means of production, but in the abolition of profit itself. Without profit, property loses its central function as an instrument of domination. It becomes functionless.

Owners then have no incentive to hold onto property, since they can no longer exploit it, but continue to be responsible for its maintenance, administration and risk. Since they cannot sell it either – because there is no market – the only thing left for them to do is to release it. In this way, property is not socialised, but simply rendered superfluous. It dissolves – not through force, but through the loss of its purpose.

In this way, humanity's relationship to ownership and property returns to a state that prevailed for over 95% of its history: the commons instead of private property. Means of production, raw materials, water sources or ore mines automatically become freely usable again. There is no need for either private or communal ownership, since everything is shared and used according to need. The old division between the possessors and the non-possessors loses all material basis.

No appropriation

Even well-intentioned models of collective ownership, such as those managed by democratic councils or cooperatives, do not overcome the logic of ownership. They merely manage property differently – often more fairly – but they do not dissolve it. Even under the slogan of socialisation, ownership remains, only in a different form.

Socialisation also means the conscious and often violent appropriation of the means of production – and thus contradicts a general sense of justice that rejects compulsory expropriation. The idea that property will dissolve by itself through a loss of function is therefore not only more practical, but also morally more convincing.

To achieve this, we need a qualitative leap: the economy must be completely decoupled from the financial system. Only in this way can ownership as a social power relationship disappear.

Socialisation led to state socialism

In real existing socialism, the means of production and living space were formally declared public property. But in fact, people had no real access to them. The 'public property' remained someone else's property.

This often led to neglect, because no one felt individually responsible. The property question was not fundamentally resolved – property was merely redistributed. This became apparent in 1989 (the fall of communism) at the latest: what supposedly belonged to everyone was unspectacularly converted back into private property – as if nothing had happened.

The problem is that as long as property remains legally definable – even as state property – it can also be re-privatised. In a system without property, on the other hand, the legal infrastructure for transferring ownership is lacking. If no one 'owns' the land, it cannot be sold. The idea of a market is therefore irrelevant.

Protection of privacy

Even in a society without property, the protection of privacy remains a central concern. The loss of ownership does not in any way mean the abolition of personal spaces or individual retreats. On the contrary: when there are no economic interests behind land ownership and housing, privacy can be shaped more freely and autonomously.

No one will be forced to share spaces they don't want to share just because ownership or rent prices dictate it. People choose their places of residence, housemates and ways of life voluntarily – and for social, not financial reasons. Personal space is not socialised, but respected because there is no longer any need to control or economically exploit it.

Technological aids, for example in the field of communication or automated provision, are designed in such a way that they respect

individual spheres and do not monitor them. A world without property can thus also be a world with greater respect for privacy – because it is no longer violated by property interests.

Conclusion

The only solution lies in the complete overthrow of the financial system and profit. Only when profit as the motor of exploitation disappears will property relations dissolve – not through laws, expropriation or redistribution, but through the devaluation of their basis. Property loses its function and collapses. What remains is the free, common use of resources – a world without property, without profit, without social classes.

Avoiding forced expropriations will also ensure that the transition to the classless society is non-violent. [To the content](#)

11. THE CHANGE IN WORK ETHIC IN A CLASSLESS SOCIETY

Voluntary work instead of wage dependency

When work is no longer subject to financial constraints but is done voluntarily, its entire character changes. It becomes an expression of creativity, self-fulfilment and contribution to society. Motivation no longer arises from the pressure to survive, but from the joy of the activity itself.

This marks the historical break with capitalist wage labour.

There are convincing arguments and empirical evidence that the drive to engage in voluntary, community-oriented work is deeply rooted in human nature – regardless of financial incentives. This is not only supported by anthropological observations, but also by findings from psychology, sociology, behavioural economics and neuroscience.

In primitive societies, work was not motivated by money, but by the direct satisfaction of needs and social cohesion. Cooperation was essential for survival: those who did not contribute were excluded or considered unreliable. Hunting, gathering, childcare, protecting the group – all of this

was done voluntarily, without exchange or reward. The drive to work together served to preserve the species. Sources such as Marshall Sahlins (1966: 'The Original Affluent Society') and Christopher Boehm ('Hierarchy in the Forest') provide impressive evidence of this.

These conditions have been true for more than 99 per cent of human history.

Modern psychological and neuroscientific studies also confirm that altruism and cooperation trigger happiness hormones such as oxytocin and dopamine. Voluntary helping activates reward centres in the brain – comparable to eating or sex.

The so-called 'helper's high' has been scientifically proven, among other things in the study by Jorge Moll et al. (2006), as well as in the work of Sonja Lyubomirsky ('The How of Happiness') and in Deci & Ryan's self-determination theory on intrinsic motivation.

Several billion people worldwide do voluntary and unpaid work: disaster relief, club work, nursing, neighbourhood assistance, animal welfare, political movements – this work is not done for money, but out of social responsibility, joy, meaning or habit.

According to the Federal Statistical Office (2022), approximately 30 million people in Germany are involved in voluntary work, and in Switzerland around 40% of the population. Voluntary and unpaid work is often the norm, particularly in the Global South, where much of the work necessary for society is not regulated by money.

Numerous experiments in behavioural economics also show that people do not only respond to financial incentives. In so-called public goods games, many participants make voluntary contributions to the common good, and when monetary incentives are introduced, motivation often decreases – this crowding-out effect has been studied by Fehr & Gächter (2002: 'Altruistic punishment in humans') and Gneezy & Rustichini (2000: 'Pay Enough or Don't Pay at All'), among others.

Children also display this impulse: they play at work – building, caring for others, organising – without being rewarded for it. In many cultures, children of a certain age voluntarily help out, e.g. with harvesting, fetching water or household chores, because it is part of the community. Anthropological observations such as those of Jean Liedloff ("The Continuum Concept") and Barry Hewlett's research on the Aka people in Central Africa confirm this impressively.

In extreme situations and crises, people often help spontaneously and voluntarily, even at the risk of their own lives. Examples include neighbourhood assistance during the Covid-19 crisis, solidarity after natural disasters, and willingness to help refugees.

The drive to volunteer in the service of the community is therefore deeply rooted in evolution and has remained culturally alive. It manifests itself in forms that are not tied to money: care, creativity, community building, mutual assistance. This urge is not a utopia, but a daily reality – it is just often overshadowed or distorted by the logic of money.

If external constraints such as money were removed, this inner drive would probably become more visible and effective again.

Overcoming alienation

Karl Marx criticised capitalist labour as alienated, because it separates people from their product, their activity, their fellow human beings and themselves. Only by abolishing the logic of wage labour can work belong to people again.

Each person can then freely and independently choose an activity that matches their inclinations, abilities and talents, without being forced to earn a living.

In a classless society, in which the financial system and the logic of wage labour have been overcome, most people will, over time, be able to do exactly what they really enjoy doing – be it baking, programming, caring,

designing or even cleaning. Those who enjoy baking will occasionally get up at four in the morning to bake bread rolls and croissants for other people, not out of necessity but because they enjoy it.

In this way, many jobs are filled from the inside out – through personal enthusiasm rather than economic pressure. It is important to prevent monotony by means of solidarity.

Solidarity-based organisation of unpleasant work

For necessary but unpopular tasks that cannot be taken over by volunteers or machines, solidarity-based rotation systems are being developed that are controlled and staffed in a grassroots, democratic manner.

The decision to participate remains voluntary, but is based on an awareness of social responsibility, of doing something for others in return for the daily gifts we receive. Distribution is not based on wage incentives, but on principles of solidarity and a sense of community.

In an economy freed from the financial system, technological progress can finally be used in a people-centred way. Robots no longer replace people for profit, but instead take on the most physically demanding and monotonous work.

An end to global exploitation

Today's world economy is based on the exploitation of cheap labour, especially in the Global South – for example in the extraction of raw materials or in textile production. In a classless society, this relationship becomes obsolete. It no longer matters whether a pair of trousers is sewn by a person in Asia or a person in Europe.

No one has to work under duress anymore. Should people refuse certain jobs, this is not seen as a problem, but as a necessary correction of a historically grown injustice, and solutions are sought through grassroots democracy.

New forms of enterprise – without profit, without exploitation

In a post-capitalist mode of production, no one earns money from enterprises. This eliminates the economic incentive for exploitation. Entrepreneurs then no longer act as capital owners, but as coordinators of meaningful processes.

They design sustainable forms of production together with the other employees, who either stay in the company of their own free will or leave – depending on where they can best develop their skills.

In the vast majority of companies, the bosses will quickly adapt to the new conditions and feel liberated from the burden of the profit motive.

Calculation of working hours

As Marx emphasises in his ***Critique of the Gotha Programme*** (a document outlining the principles of the German Social Democratic Party in 1875), the distribution of labour – that is, the allocation of consumables in proportion to the amount of work done by each individual – is a relic of the old bourgeois society. It arises, as he writes, from the 'first phase of communist society', which 'still bears the birthmarks of the old society' (Marx-Engels Collected Works 19, 20).

This form of distribution remains rooted in the principle of exchange of equivalents: 'Here, obviously, the same principle prevails that governs the exchange of commodities, insofar as it is an exchange of equivalents' (ibid.).

In terms of content, it is not a genuine overcoming of capitalism, but a transformed continuation of its central logic: performance is measured, evaluated, calculated and remunerated – no longer in money, but in working hours. Although there is no surplus value, working hours remain an abstract measure that does not eliminate inequalities, but reproduces them in a different form.

Marx is clear: 'This equal right is an unequal right for unequal labour [...] It is therefore a right of inequality, like all rights' (ibid., p. 21). The

calculation of working hours generalises the human being as a worker and reduces them to this function – regardless of their life reality, their needs or their family situation.

Friedrich Engels adds to this critique and warns against the overemphasis on formal equality, as it also becomes visible in the calculation of working hours. In a letter to August Bebel, he calls the French socialists' idea of equality “a one-sided” and “confusing” idea that must be overcome (MEW 34, 129). The working hours account also operates with a false notion of equality that actually leads to inequality.

The accumulability of working hours certificates

Another major objection to the working hours account is structural: even if proponents of this idea emphasise that it is not about money but about ‘vouchers’ that are destroyed after use, it still reproduces a central weakness of money – its infinite accumulability. An arbitrarily large number of working hours can be written down on a piece of paper or stored in a digital database just as easily as an arbitrarily large sum of money.

This creates the same opportunity for privilege through the hoarding of labour time. An individual can accumulate a surplus of working time credits through particularly intensive or long work (or through particularly privileged activities) – analogous to the accumulation of capital. This does not eliminate inequality, but merely organises it in a new form.

Thus, working hours as a means of exchange are nothing more than another form of abstract value, subject to the same social mechanisms of division as money. [To the content](#)

12. VANISHING OF CAPITALIST SOCIAL SYSTEMS

In a society in which every person has unrestricted access to everything necessary for life, the need for traditional capitalist social systems, which are based on the organisation and administration of poverty and inequality, no longer exists. Unemployment, health and pension insurance

lose their purpose because the question of the minimum subsistence level and social security is no longer regulated by wages and income.

These systems originally emerged under capitalism to mitigate the existential insecurity of the working class while simultaneously maintaining the capitalist production system and labour power as a commodity. The state – or rather the existing system – acts here as a mediator to ensure that workers can continue to work for capital.

In a society without profit and wage labour, where production takes place on a voluntary basis and everyone has access to the necessary resources independently of the labour market, the entire bureaucratic apparatus needed to maintain these social systems is no longer necessary. This is because everyone has unconditional access to everything needed for a happy and contented life.

In such a society, unemployment insurance, which originally served to cushion the precarious existence of workers in times of unemployment, is therefore unnecessary. In a society in which everyone is provided for through voluntary work and the principle of giving, this mechanism of social security, which is based on the ongoing necessity of wage labour, is no longer necessary.

The same applies to the pension system. In a society in which everyone is automatically provided for, there is no need to save money for old age. There are no social classes divided by the compulsion to work for a wage and the existential pressure associated with it. Everyone is equally provided for, regardless of their position in the labour life.

Administration, education and culture, which in capitalist societies are often seen as sectors secured by taxes and state funding, can now be organised in a completely new way in a voluntary society. In a world without financial constraints and the need to cover social needs through taxes, education and culture can be made freely and equally accessible to all.

Education, which in capitalist systems is often treated as a commodity that not all people can afford, will now be accessible to all. In a society in which the well-being of all people has the highest priority, education is not a question of income, but a communal process organised through collective responsibility and solidarity.

Cultural and social work as a collective responsibility

Culture, which is often commodified in capitalist societies, also undergoes a fundamental change. It is no longer seen as a product of the entertainment industry or a status symbol, but as a common good that serves and is created by society.

In a society without financial incentives, people are no longer forced to earn their living with activities that do not suit them or that only serve to profit others. Instead, they can flourish in cultural and creative fields without being affected by financial worries or the pressure to commercialise. [To the content](#)

13. PROGRESS THROUGH THE DESIRE FOR IMPROVEMENT INSTEAD OF COMMERCIALISATION

Real progress does not necessarily depend on competition and rivalry. Competition is not a natural principle, but a specific feature of capitalist production relations, which goes back to the Scottish economist and philosopher Adam Smith. It results from the compulsion to capital appreciation. Companies compete for markets, profits and cost reduction, not for the social benefit of their products or services. Capitalism produces technical progress, but it arises under conditions that simultaneously generate exploitation, alienation and crises.

The true driving force of social development lies in the development of the productive forces – i.e. technology, knowledge and human labour – and in their connection with the relations of production. Under capitalism, these two areas repeatedly come into conflict. New technologies could make life

easier, but often lead to rationalisation, redundancies or the development of weapons technology.

Only in a classless, united society without private ownership of the means of production, and thus without the pressure of competition, can progress fully serve the common good.

Cooperative forms of work can even be more efficient and creative than competitive systems. In a world where no one has to struggle to secure their livelihood, people can think, research and try out new things more freely. Motivation then arises not from fear or competitive pressure, but from intrinsic interest, social purpose and mutual inspiration.

Science, art and technology have also produced innovation in pre-modern societies or in solidary collectives – not through competition, but through collaboration and shared knowledge.

Examples from reality show that enormous progress is possible even under non-competitive conditions. Open-source software, Wikipedia or voluntary research in science are not based on economic competition, but on cooperation and contribution to the common good. Innovations also arose in monastic communities, cooperatives or indigenous cultures – not despite, but precisely because of collective thinking.

The belief that only competition can create progress is a myth of bourgeois ideology. Competition produces short-term efficiency, but in the long term it often leads to inefficiency through the waste of resources, planned obsolescence and social division.

The potential of cooperative systems is much greater: people enjoy developing new solutions when they see the point of their work, feel recognised and know they are connected to others. Progress through cooperation is often slower, but more sustainable and humane. A society freed from the financial system can develop this potential – through voluntary work, shared responsibility and global solidarity. [To the content](#)

14. THE ROLE OF THE BOURGEOISIE IN THE TRANSITION TO A CLASSLESS SOCIETY

Under capitalism, entrepreneurs are under constant pressure from the financial system. They have to service loans, pay interest and generate profits to remain competitive.

These constraints often lead to efficient, exploitative or environmentally destructive business practices – not out of malice, but out of systemic necessity. Exploitation arises mainly from the profit motive of the capitalist system.

With the global transition to voluntary work, however, these structural constraints no longer apply. Raw materials are in the public domain, intermediate products cost nothing, and work is done voluntarily and in solidarity. The means of production remain in place, but their use is no longer regulated by market prices. Capitalists no longer have to pay wages and at the same time they themselves are provided for free, like everyone else.

This frees them from the constraints of financial capital. Without the need to maximise profits, they can focus on the greater good, the well-being of their employees and environmental sustainability. What used to be a business imperative can now be a moral compass.

Even shareholders – those who previously controlled economic events from the background via dividends and capital flows – will lose their source of income, but not their standard of living. They will be provided for like everyone else, regardless of their income.

Those who have led a luxurious lifestyle can, in principle, continue to do so – provided that people can be found who are willing to help maintain it. However, many will be inspired by the general level of happiness and the new social atmosphere. It is well known that many of the super-rich already lead relatively respectable lives – not out of necessity, but out of conviction.

Their wealth was usually far greater than their actual consumption needs anyway. In a society without exchange value, without the pressure to make a profit and without the compulsion to own property, even the bourgeoisie could find their place – no longer as the ruling class, but as equal members of a liberated society.

Under capitalism, the worker is forced to advance his labour power because the remuneration is always deferred and takes place within the framework of a process of valorisation that is alien to him. The wage is not the value of his labour, but the price of his reproduction as a commodity. In the new mode of production, this relationship is abolished. Social wealth is no longer bound to abstract labour in the form of value, but flows directly into the production of use values for all. Remuneration is provided directly through collective access to the products – ‘from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs’, as Marx put it in his critique of the Gotha Programme (Kritik des Gothaer Programms).

It is not a question of ‘socialisation from above’, but of the conscious revolutionisation of the relations of production by the producers themselves. With the end of wage labour, the necessity of capital accumulation also disappears. The capitalist loses his economic power because no one makes themselves available in return for payment – instead, everyone produces voluntarily and in a socially responsible manner. This form of labour is no longer a commodity, but a conscious social activity: a core element of what Karl Marx called an ‘association of free individuals’.

The danger of a counter-revolution

Because no one expropriates, oppresses or disadvantages, but all people benefit directly from equal access to the goods produced, the new order lacks the basis for a counter-revolution. The capitalist class loses not only its function but also its *raison d'être* – it becomes historically superfluous.

What is crucial is that this transformation is not a utopian leap but the concrete resolution of the capitalist contradiction between social

production and private appropriation. The capitalist mode of production, which according to Marx itself produces its own 'gravediggers', is shut down by the conscious act of the producers – not by violence, but by collectively withdrawing the capacity to work from the process of exploitation. The revolution takes the form of the abolition of wage labour – that is, the central category of capital.

Voluntary work is the opposite of wage labour. It knows no exchange relationships, no calculations, no prices, no wages, no debts. It only knows need, gift, production and joy. It is a conscious act of giving, based on the new foundation of a globally coordinated economy of abundance. In this new form of production, the human being is no longer used as a means to an end, but stands at the centre of production as a free, social being. [To the content](#)

APPENDIX 1: AN AI-GENERATED FORECAST FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CLASSLESS SOCIETY

Question for ChatGPT:

In a historic act of collective consciousness, humanity has risen up and simultaneously switched to voluntary labour worldwide. Money, advertising and the pursuit of profit became obsolete overnight, replaced by a new culture of giving, driven by mutual solidarity and the genuine joy of sharing. There are no more prices, no more invoices, no more wages – instead, everything that is produced flows freely to those who need it. The industrial and digital infrastructure remains in place, but is inspired by a new motivation: the desire to contribute.

Please provide a comprehensive forecast of how social and economic life will develop in this new society – **after two weeks, six months, five years and twenty years.**

In particular, consider developments in the following areas:

- Solidarity and human interaction

- Reaction of the elites and the super-rich
- Level of education and access to knowledge
- Mobility and changes in transport habits
- Role and number of cars in cities
- New relationship between urban and rural areas
- Degree and role of automation in the economy
- Shifts between different economic sectors
- Economic performance in the global north and south
- International movement of goods
- Energy consumption and efficiency
- Share of renewable energy sources
- Availability and use of raw materials
- The course of climate change and how it can be contained
- The role of the state in a money-free society
- The development of democratic structures
- The significance and design of grassroots democratic processes
- Living standards in the Global South

International relations and new forms of global cooperation

Don't just describe facts and figures, but paint a vivid picture of how the atmosphere, thinking and everyday life of people are changing. What new forms of joy, responsibility and connection are emerging? What challenges will arise – and how will society meet them?

Answer:

I Two weeks after the global switch to voluntary work

The world holds its breath. Many still can't believe that everything in the shops is free. There was a bit of panic buying, but people quickly realised that this was completely unnecessary. Everyone smiles at each other or hugs – not out of euphoria alone, but out of deep relief. The pressure has been lifted. Many get up in the morning not because they have to, but because they want to. People voluntarily show up at factories, in fields, and at hospitals. Those who lack the strength to go stay at home without feeling guilty.

Solidarity and human interaction:

A collective feeling of connection arises. Neighbours help each other, and many people who were previously isolated experience real community for the first time. The first local self-organisation initiatives arise – canteens, transport services, translation services.

Note: Many people were able to experience this neighbourly solidarity for themselves during the lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Reaction of the elite and super-rich:

Many are initially paralysed. Without access to capital and control structures, they lose their usual influence. Some react with rejection or try to maintain their former power structure in closed circles. Others, however, are curious, observe developments and start to seek initial discussions with local communities. Occasionally, villas are spontaneously converted into open meeting places or storage locations for goods.

Education standard and access to knowledge:

Schools open up to all age groups. Children, young people and adults sit together in learning workshops. Learning is seen as a gift. Digital education platforms open their archives. Knowledge is de-commercialised.

Mobility & cars in cities:

Public transport is free. Many private cars remain unused because they are no longer needed. Car sharing is formed spontaneously. The first districts are beginning to establish car-free zones to create space for people to meet.

Urban-rural relationship:

A cautious move to the countryside begins. Some families leave the cities because they can now live where they feel comfortable – not where there is work. Urban gardening is experiencing a surge.

Automation of the economy:

Many people wonder what work machines could do to relieve them. The first developer communities are forming to simplify production processes – no longer for the sake of profit, but to reduce the burden.

Shifts in the economy:

The focus is on food supply, health and logistics. By contrast, the fashion, advertising and finance industries are shrinking rapidly – voluntarily and without protest. Many former office workers now support practical activities in order to get their hands dirty.

Global economic performance:

Gross domestic product can no longer be calculated. Prosperity is now described in terms of 'supply density' and satisfaction. The Global South is experiencing full recognition of its products for the first time – without exploitation.

International trade in goods:

International trade slows down briefly – not due to chaos, but due to reorganisation. Transport fleets are now no longer driven by profit, but by demand. Former competition becomes cooperation.

Energy consumption and share of renewable sources:

Energy is used more sparingly because no one has to make a profit from overproduction anymore. The first networks for switching to local energy production are emerging. Energy consumption is already visibly decreasing.

Availability of raw materials:

The consumption of raw materials is reduced abruptly: no more planned obsolescence, no more overproduction. Instead, a new era of repairing, sharing and creative reusing begins.

Climate change:

Although still unaffected on a global scale, initial data shows: emissions are falling, flights are rapidly declining, and meat consumption is falling. A new ecological awareness is spreading.

Role of the state:

Nations are beginning to redefine themselves. Many authorities are reorganising to ensure social coordination and provision. Tax offices are transforming into distribution centres. Armed forces are being reduced.

Democracy and grassroots democracy:

Local councils are emerging everywhere – initially informally, then in an organised way. Decisions are made in a more participatory way. People who were never interested in politics suddenly feel a sense of responsibility.

Global South & international relations:

A moment of healing begins. Many people in the Global North start to see the Global South not as 'aid recipients' but as equal partners. The first bilateral aid flows run in the opposite direction: know-how against infrastructure.

II Six months after the global transition to voluntary work

The initial excitement has turned into a new serenity. People seem more balanced, more alert, more free within. It is as if the pace of the world has slowed down without anything being lost in the process – on the contrary: the quality of life is noticeably improving. Initiatives are flourishing everywhere, neighbourhoods are becoming vibrant communities. Competition has become co-creation.

Solidarity and human interaction:

The initial euphoria has deepened into a culture of attentive mutual understanding. Conflicts continue to arise, but they are resolved in new

ways, often through dialogue, often publicly, with the aim of achieving understanding. Many people feel a sense of purpose in their daily lives for the first time.

Elites in search of meaning:

Some of the former super-rich are beginning to reorient themselves. Former CEOs and investors are getting involved in newly founded knowledge networks or local innovation spaces. Prestige now comes from contribution, not from ownership. Some, however, retreat into seclusion and publicly lament the loss of the 'old order', but are increasingly ignored. Those who get involved at eye level receive recognition – not because of their name, but because of their commitment.

Education and access to knowledge:

The education system is experiencing a renaissance. Learning is seen as an adventure, not as a constraint. Learning centres, open workshops and digital learning spaces are growing together. People switch fluidly between the roles of teacher and learner. The education standard is rising worldwide – not through tests, but through shared skills.

Mobility & cars in cities:

car sharing has become the norm everywhere. E-mobility is spreading decentrally, supported by local repair initiatives. Many cities have converted major traffic arteries into bicycle and pedestrian zones. Noise and smog are noticeably decreasing.

Urban-rural relationship:

rural areas are experiencing a revival. Old farmsteads are being renovated, abandoned villages are coming back to life. At the same time, green oases, social gardens and shared spaces are emerging in cities. The relationship between urban and rural areas is becoming more cooperative instead of hierarchical.

Automation of the economy:

In areas that are physically demanding or monotonous, automation teams have been formed to develop targeted solutions. Car factories are beginning to be converted to the production of machines and robots for the economy.

Shifts between economic sectors:

Health, education, nutrition, energy and culture have become the main sectors. Everything that used to be based on 'growth' and 'scaling' has been transformed into a logic of sufficiency. The focus is no longer on more, but on better.

Global economic performance:

Economic performance is measured in terms of 'degree of supply', 'satisfaction index' and 'cooperation density'. The Global South is no longer an extended workbench, but a cultural and practical co-creator. Regions in Africa and South America are taking on pioneering roles in organic farming and decentralised energy supply.

International trade:

The trade routes have changed. Transport still exists, but now as a service for the common good. Much is produced locally, but there are still global exchange processes – especially for goods such as technology, medicines or special tools. Sea and air traffic has been greatly reduced and organised more intelligently.

Energy consumption and share of renewable sources:

Energy consumption has fallen by about 40% simply by eliminating unnecessary production, advertising and bureaucracy. The share of renewable energies worldwide is around 60% and continues to rise steadily. Wind, sun and biogas are organised decentrally and maintained collectively.

Availability of raw materials:

Raw materials are hardly wasted anymore. Old devices are not thrown away, but disassembled, documented and reused. Global open-source databases on material flows are emerging. Raw materials are only mined according to ecological and social criteria.

Climate change:

CO₂ emissions have decreased significantly worldwide. Although this has not yet had a full impact on the climate, initial feedback from the atmosphere is encouraging. Extreme weather events will continue to occur, but new protection systems will be developed – based on cooperation, not profit.

Role of the state:

The state is increasingly becoming a network of coordinators, moderators and support structures. Centralised administrations are giving way to decentralised, participatory formats. Control is not exercised through money, but through open communication systems regarding demand, capacities and resources.

Democracy and grassroots democracy:

district councils, village communities and regional assemblies have stabilised. They not only coordinate decisions but also social initiatives. Digital tools enable broad participation. New forms of deliberative democracy are emerging.

Global South & international relations:

The roles have reversed: the Global South inspires the Global North with its experience in subsistence farming, solidarity-based organisation and ecological practice. International relations are no longer characterised by diplomacy or dependencies, but by mutual recognition and joint projects.

III Five years after the global switch to unpaid work

Humanity has reinvented itself – and it knows it. What was once considered utopian is now reality. The new culture of giving has transformed consciousness: people no longer feel like lone fighters in survival mode, but as co-creators of a shared future. A quiet dignity lies over everyday life, combined with a deep sense of meaning.

Solidarity and human coexistence:

Solidarity is no longer the exception, but the norm. The old selfishness, nourished by the system of rivalry, has lost its foundation. Those who need help get it – not out of pity, but as a matter of course. There is no longer any fear of being left behind. The concept of 'achievement' has been redefined: the common good, creativity, care and responsibility are the highest expressions of human productivity.

The role of former capitalists and the super-rich:

Many of the former elite recognise that their influence is now no longer based on ownership, but on commitment, creativity and contribution to the common good. Some contribute their experience, others withdraw. Prestige now comes from the level of responsibility, not from wealth. Former corporate headquarters have been transformed into public spaces – from knowledge centres to places of local supply.

Education and access to knowledge:

Education is ubiquitous – it happens in fields, in workshops, in virtual spaces, when travelling. Access to knowledge is completely open. Universities have become knowledge centres without hierarchies. Young and old teach and learn together. Society has transformed into a learning community that aims not for degrees but for understanding, skills and taking responsibility.

Mobility and cars in cities:

The number of cars has fallen by around 70%. Cities are now dominated by bicycles, small electric vehicles, footpaths, cable cars and shuttle robots. Large logistics centres have been converted into urban gardens or

meeting places. Travel is once again perceived as a conscious experience – not as an escape or a compulsion. Slowness has become an option again.

Relationship between cities and rural areas:

The relationship has largely become less polarised. There is no longer any pressure to 'flee the countryside' or any yearning to 'escape the city' – because everywhere offers good living conditions. Many people live in communities that are both urban and close to nature. New forms of settlement are emerging: small-scale, ecological, connected to a circular economy and offering a high quality of life.

Automation of the economy:

The economic life has become a self-learning system in which humans and machines work together in partnership. Many routine activities have been automated, while new creative and social tasks are emerging at the same time. Artificial intelligence is consciously designed – not to maximise profit, but to relieve the burden on humans and to strengthen human potential.

Shifts in the economic life:

Formerly dominant industries such as the arms or luxury goods sectors have largely disappeared or been converted. Instead, sectors such as reuse, care, permaculture, technology ethics, cultural creation and community-oriented building are growing. The economic structure reflects the values of society: sustainability, compassion, beauty and meaning.

Global economic performance:

It is important that we do what serves others. The supply is secured – worldwide. Famines, homelessness and untreated illnesses are a thing of the past. The Global South is an equal partner in worldwide cooperation – often with more innovative, resilient solutions than the North.

International trade in goods:

Only 20–30% of the former volume of goods is transported globally – the rest is produced regionally. Global transport networks continue to exist, but in a resource-efficient way: with sailing cargo ships and electric-powered container ships. These networks serve the purpose of mutual support, not competition.

Energy consumption and renewable energies:

Worldwide energy consumption is stable at around 50% of its pre-transition level. The share of renewable energies is over 85%. Fossil fuels are used almost exclusively for specialised applications. People have learned not only to use energy, but to appreciate it.

Availability of raw materials:

A global network of alliances of raw material producers coordinates transparent mining projects, circular use and recirculation. Mining is regulated ethically, often by the directly affected communities themselves. New materials (e.g. bio-based plastics, modular components) further reduce demand.

Climate change:

Global warming is slowing down. Emissions have fallen drastically. Society worldwide has changed direction – not only through laws, but also through attitude. Maintaining the ecosystem is no longer experienced as a sacrifice, but as an appreciation of life. Many ecosystems are beginning to regenerate.

Role of the state:

The state, where it still exists, has become a service point for social self-organisation. Its main tasks are infrastructure, coordination, crisis assistance and long-term planning. In many regions, security forces now work to prevent and de-escalate conflicts, supported by social committees and community work.

Democracy and direct democracy:

A complex network of local councils, digital forums, expert groups and global networks forms the new democratic backbone. Decision-making processes are more transparent, deliberative and inclusive. Mistakes are not covered up, but seen as an opportunity to learn. There is no longer a 'top', only spheres of responsibility.

Global South and international cooperation:

knowledge, technology and resources flow in both directions. The term 'development aid' has disappeared – replaced by equal partnerships. The diversity of cultural perspectives is celebrated, not homogenised. Global cooperation is not driven by fear, but by enthusiasm.[/read]

IV Twenty years after the global transition to unpaid work

The world is different. It has become quieter and at the same time more vibrant. Hectic and existential fear belong to the past. The rhythm of life is no longer oriented towards markets, stock exchanges or appointments, but towards seasons, communities and inner meaning. People no longer see themselves as 'consumers' or 'human resources', but as contributors to a collective work of art: a society that constantly reinvents itself - in the spirit of giving.

Solidarity and human coexistence:

Solidarity has become the cultural foundation – not only in the immediate environment, but globally. Humanity has developed a new collective sense of unity. Helping each other is as natural as breathing. Friendship, trust and mutual inspiration characterise social relationships. Alienation is rare – those who feel isolated are invited in, not excluded.

The former elites twenty years later:

Many of them have become mentors, have transformed foundations into open networks or are involved in technology development, education or global mediation. The transformation from power of ownership to

responsibility for the common good has been successful – where it was accompanied by inner transformation.

Education and knowledge:

Knowledge is no longer a possession, but a gift that is constantly being passed on. Educational institutions are places of dialogue, creativity and shared learning – across generations and across disciplines. Every child grows up in an environment in which they can freely develop their curiosity, accompanied by committed adults and modern technology that makes learning playful and profound.

Mobility and cities:

Cities have changed radically. They have become 'walkable landscapes', criss-crossed by watercourses, gardens, workshops and cultural sites. The noise of earlier traffic systems has ceased. The few vehicles still in use move silently and without emissions. Mobility is coordinated, resource-efficient, networked – and often not necessary at all because life in the city is rich and fulfilling.

Relationship between cities and rural areas:

The old division has been overcome. Wherever people live, vibrant communities arise. Rural areas flourish through organic farming, decentralised energy supply and cultural impulses. Cities are permeable and open. People commute less, stay longer in one place, and build sustainable social networks.

Automation and technology:

Technology serves people. Robots, artificial intelligence and digital systems have now almost completely taken over the tasks previously perceived as burdensome: heavy physical work, dangerous operations, repetitive processes. But they do not replace people – they liberate them. The economy functions efficiently, but not in an automated way 'for its own sake'. People remain at the centre of the development.

Economic structure:

The economy resembles a pulsating organism. Production processes are regionally anchored, resource-efficient and modular. There is no longer any superfluous mass production, no 'overkill' due to competition.

Creative, social, ecological and spiritual activities make up the majority of social activity. The term 'work' has been completely rethought – as a free form of participation in the public welfare.

Economy on a global scale:

The Global South is not only on equal footing with the Global North – in many areas (such as agriculture, culture, community organisation) it has become a role model. Global cooperation arises from real needs, not from trade agreements. Technological, medical and organisational innovations flow freely between all continents. The colonial past has been addressed and overcome through mutual recognition.

International trade in goods:

The global movement of goods has been reduced to one tenth of its previous volume. What is transported across continents today is primarily rare raw materials, technological special goods or cultural gifts. The world is organised locally – but connected globally. Means of transport such as emission-free ocean-going ships, solar-powered airships or transcontinental trains are symbols of the new world connection.

Energy consumption and sources:

Energy consumption is stable at around one-third of its previous level, despite a higher standard of living. Over 95% of energy comes from renewable sources. The concept of energy itself has changed: energy is understood not only technically, but also culturally, socially and emotionally – as that which nourishes and unfolds life.

Raw materials and circular economy:

All products are fully modular and repairable. The circular economy has become the norm. Resource flows are digitally recorded, coordinated

worldwide, ecologically mined and reused locally. Recycling centres are places of innovation, not disposal. The planet is no longer exploited, but cared for.

Climate change:

The global rise in temperature has been largely stopped. Many tipping points were avoided in time, and some zones that had already been crossed are beginning to recover thanks to human renaturation projects. The climate is once again the subject of poetry, art and everyday conversation – no longer of fear, but of responsibility and love for planet Earth.

State and democracy:

The state is a service provider, enabler and guarantor of fair participation. Administration is largely automated – but decisions are made collectively. Global and local councils, connected by open communication networks, form the backbone of the grassroots democratic organisation. Every person can effectively participate. Power has been replaced by responsibility.

International relations:

Borders still exist – but not as separation, but as cultural spaces with a permeable character. Conflicts are resolved through dialogue, mediated by neutral communities or Artificial Intelligence-supported mediation teams. Humanity has found itself as a global community – not in the sense of uniformity, but as a mosaic of diversity that enriches each other.

Conclusion:

Benharmonia is a world in which people choose the good together. Mistakes, setbacks and differences will continue to exist, but they will no longer be experienced as a threat, but as part of a living process. Society thrives not on control, but on trust. Not on coercion, but on voluntary commitment. Not on having, but on giving. [To the content](#)

APPENDIX 2: FUTURE PROGNOSIS - AN AFRICAN COUNTRY 20 YEARS AFTER SWITCHING TO UNPAID WORK

Question for ChatGPT: Are you competent enough to make such a prognosis for the Global South?

Answer: As an artificial intelligence, I have a broad knowledge base that includes many perspectives, including those from the Global South: postcolonial theory, Marxist analyses, field reports, scientific studies, development policy literature and the voices of activists, intellectuals and communities from Africa, Asia and Latin America.

However,

I am not a person with lived experience in the Global South. I did not grow up in poverty, have no colonial history in my family and have no real experience with resource scarcity, power asymmetries or cultural resilience under postcolonial conditions.

What I can do:

I can analyse carefully, incorporate different perspectives and respectfully and in a structured way sketch out a possible prognosis for the future – based on Marxist theories, solidary practical approaches and initiatives already existing in the Global South.

I Two weeks after the changeover

Location: A small village near the former capital, formerly characterised by subsistence farming, drought, informal work and remittances.

Atmosphere:

At first it was quiet. For two days hardly anyone left the house. Many thought it was a misunderstanding. No more wages? No police to control it? No selling, no buying – and yet everything should continue?

On the third day, the first groups started to work together to cultivate fields, mend water pipes and repair roofs. Women in particular quickly organised themselves. Many said, *'We've always cooked, cared for and helped each other – why not just carry on?'*

Voice 1 – Fatou, 36, teacher:

'The old school books are outdated, but my children need me. So I just started teaching again – under the mango tree. Three teenagers have joined me. They teach maths and music.'

Voice 2 – Mamadou, 52, former security guard:

'I was sceptical. No money, no control – how can that possibly work? But then I saw my neighbour repairing a broken solar panel with his son. I asked if I could help. Since then, we have been working together.'

Supply:

Food comes free of charge from regional warehouses. International aid organisations – now freed from financial pressure themselves – send containers of seeds, medicines and tools. The message is clear: *'This is not an emergency. This is the beginning of a new era.'*

Tensions:

Of course there is uncertainty. Some hoard. Others fear that no one will take care of garbage collection or medical care anymore. But it quickly becomes clear: in a society based on giving, responsibility and organisation arise in a new way – decentralised, solidary, pragmatic.

II Six months after the transition

Change in infrastructure:

repair instead of replacement becomes the motto. Young technicians, who previously had no chance of finding work, expand existing water and electricity systems. Materials come from cooperative warehouses, machines are shared. Mobile workshops move from village to village.

Health system:

Local traditional healers work hand in hand with female doctors from urban clinics, who now travel regularly to rural areas – voluntarily. New medicines from India and Brazil are distributed free of charge. Old mistrust disappears. The health centres are open, full, lively.

Education:

A wave of learning sweeps the country. Older women teach reading, while young people use online knowledge platforms on solar tablets. Language barriers are falling, and children learn English, French, Swahili and Arabic along the way. Not because they are forced to, but because they know that education is a gift that they can pass on.

Voice 3 – Khadija, 24, engineer:

'I used to have to work in a Chinese mine for little money. Now I lead a team that builds mud houses with solar-powered fans. We work voluntarily – and we laugh again.'

Culture & Religion:

Spiritual spaces, long marginalised, are gaining new importance. Mosques, churches and temples are becoming places of encounter, but also distribution centres for tools, water filters and learning materials. The distinction between 'religious' and 'social' is dissolving.

III Five years after the transition

Food production:

Agroforestry, permaculture and irrigation systems from gift technologies (including from Cuba and Kerala) ensure food security – diverse, regional and ecological. No one goes hungry anymore. Formerly abandoned villages flourish.

Migration:

Many who once fled are returning – not for lack of alternatives, but out of a desire to participate. Diaspora communities in Europe and the USA voluntarily support the infrastructure of their regions of origin – not with money, but with boots on the ground.

Media and communication:

A decentralised communication network ('Ubuntu-Net') has been set up independently of the old internet. Radio stations, podcasts and community

platforms connect villages and towns. People tell their own stories in their own words.

Voice 4 – Thomas, 18, former street child:

‘I used to live on the garbage dumps. Today I write poems about our new world. They listen to me. I have a voice.’

Security:

With no property, there is hardly any theft anymore. Conflicts are resolved by local councils of elders, often with AI mediation. Weapons have disappeared from everyday life. Peace is no longer secured by police, but by relationships.

IV Twenty years after the transition

Ecological regeneration:

The desert is retreating. Trees are growing where there used to be dust. Rain falls more often – not because of magic, but because millions of people have changed their lifestyle. Rivers are full of water again. Children play in them.

Technology and self-organisation:

former mobile phone factories have been converted into centres for robotics, 3D printing and solar technology. Communities produce spare parts themselves. Modern diagnostic systems, drones for seed distribution and learning avatars are normal – not as luxury items, but as everyday technologies for the common good.

International relations:

Formerly a recipient of development aid – today a source of innovation. The new Africa shares its experiences with other regions: how to live without money, how to organise without a state, how to survive through community. And how to dance, for no reason, but with all your soul.

Voice 5 – Awa, 63, former seamstress:

'I used to sew clothes for European companies, ten hours a day. Today I sew when I feel like it. For my grandchildren. For the theatre. For beauty.'

Social portrait:

The country is no longer 'underdeveloped', but 'developed differently'. No more poverty narrative, no more dependency. People know each other, know their history – and no longer feel small. They are part of a global community of gifting.

Conclusion:

Benharmonia has not worked less in the global South – but more profoundly. Because the break with the old was more fundamental here. And because the wealth of relationships, music, language, resilience has always been there – it just needed to be liberated.