

3 strategies for change

A mapping exercise of actions to strategies

Radical reforms – Transforming Institutions and Politics

Radical reforms involve changing laws, rules, infrastructures, and institutions step by step. These changes build upon what already exists today, always keeping the goal of a Good Life for all in mind - even in the present. Therefore, radical reforms can be seen as a strategy to change the system from within. The idea is that radical reforms are either implemented “from above” by the state or achieved by social movements and political parties through the state. Other terms for these reforms include non-reformist reforms (André Gorz) or revolutionary realpolitik (Rosa Luxemburg).

Examples

Concrete policy proposals for radical reforms include reducing working hours, introducing basic and maximum income, setting limits on resource consumption, and phasing out fossil fuels.

Opportunities

Radical reforms create supportive frameworks for Nowtopias, ensuring that these free spaces are preserved, can grow, and become more widely established in society. Nowtopias constantly face structural barriers, such as a lack of resources, land, property, competitive conditions, time constraints, and social inequality. Legal advantages and financial support for small, regional, sustainable, and cooperative economic models can support Nowtopias.

Radical reforms, such as unconditional basic care for all or a significant expansion of public services in communities, can provide people with more security and independence. This would enable a fairer and less fearful discussion about how society needs to change. It would also allow for better decisions on which sectors of society should grow and which should be reduced.

In particular, when combined with shorter working hours for all, this promotes a more solidarity-based way of living. It reduces the importance of paid work, values care work, makes gender relations more equitable, and gives everyone more time to organize increasing parts of their lives together, outside of the market. Redistribution of wealth and income through tax, inheritance, and property reforms would allow everyone to have equal opportunities in a more just society, strengthen democracy, and encourage active participation.



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Radical reforms are also essential to overcome the dependency of our current institutions and infrastructures on economic growth and to promote a solidarity-based way of life throughout society. Only through various radical reforms can a stable, growth-independent society be created that strengthens social justice, democracy, and self-determination.

Challenges and Limits

To ensure that gradual changes do not remain mere reforms and potentially even strengthen the existing system, they must always aim for a fundamental socio-ecological transformation. The foundation for this is the critique of existing power structures, domination, and exploitation. The example of the energy transition shows that political measures can either bring about significant changes or largely maintain the status quo. Today, renewable energy is mostly produced by companies seeking profit and competing with one another. Instead, preference could be given to local, democratically organized energy cooperatives.

Furthermore, radical reforms can only be implemented if many people advocate and push for change, and if key groups align themselves with these demands.

Sources

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