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LA PROTECCIÓN DE LA DIMENSIÓN DE ASEQUIBILIDAD DEL DERECHO HUMANO AL AGUA EN ESPAÑA: PROBLEMAS DE GOBERNANZA

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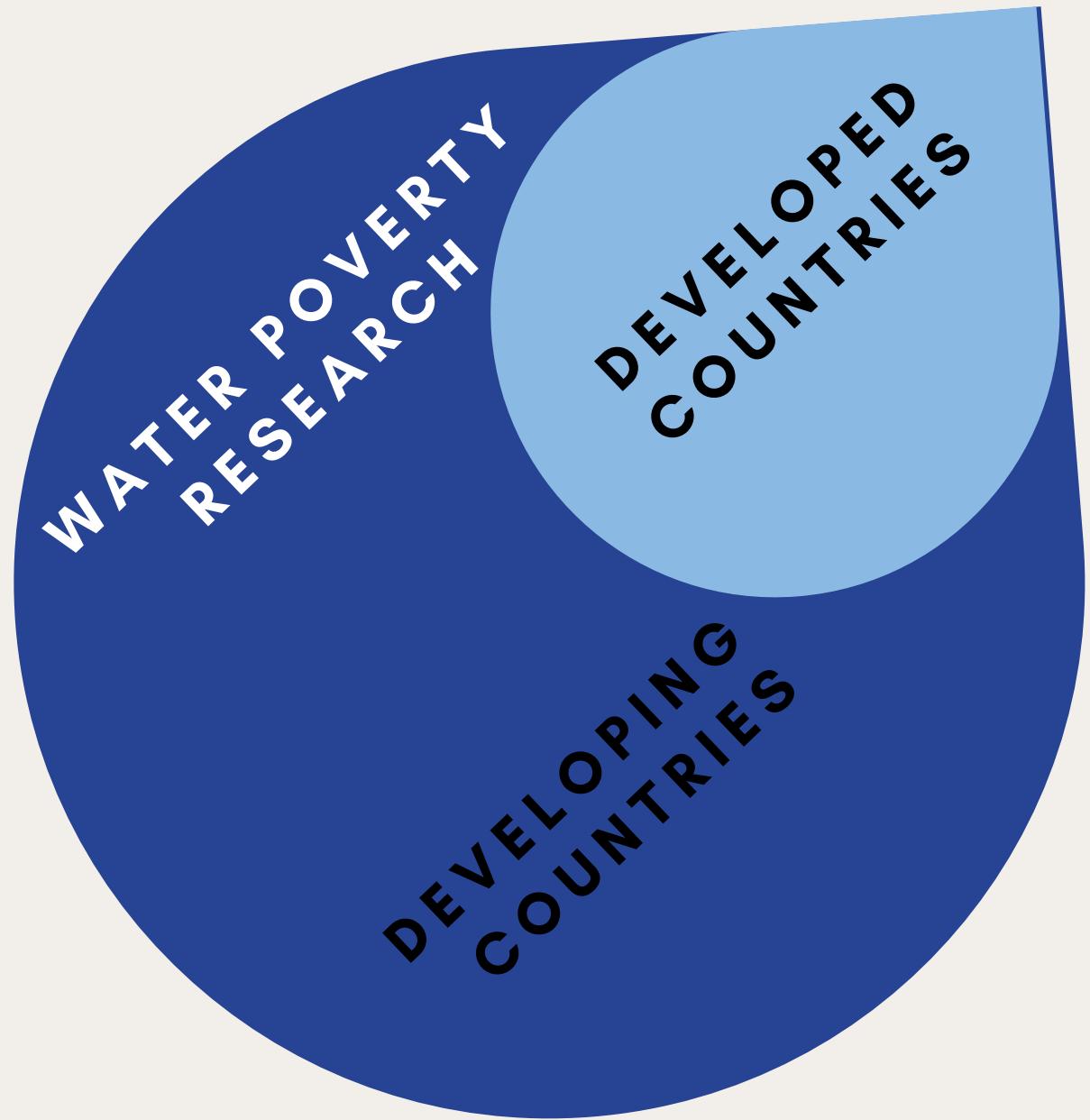
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INTRODUCTION

BISWAS & TORTAJADA, 2018



Access to water as a human right: sufficient, safe, acceptable, physically accessible and affordable water for personal and domestic use (United Nations, 2010).

WHO and UNICEF (2017): drinking water supply reaches practically every household.

- Then?

The problem concerns affordability.

SPAIN

Institutional protection of the human right to water is an issue of concern.

- Unemployment
- 26,6% AROPE
- Problems to pay the bills (water, electricity)

WATER: private sector supply just 23% of the municipalities, but 55% of the population.

Variety of legal frameworks. Local sector assumes the responsibility.

OBJECTIVE

To determine whether low-income families face a genuine threat of exclusion from water supply.

We ask whether the combination of the legal and institutional frameworks and pricing policies can lead to families at risk of poverty being denied access to domestic water.

To this end, we analysed whether the Spanish legal framework allows that water supply is cut off for non-payment of the bill.

METHOD

Sample of large Spanish cities; 16 Spanish cities,

- More than 100,000 inhabitants.
- Local regulation which explicitly states that the water supply may be cut off in case of non-payment of the water bill.

THE EMPIRICAL STRATEGY. Consists of estimating the proportion of the family budget spent on the water bill, on average, and under different assumptions.

The analysis takes into account discounts on the water tariff and assistance programmes for low-income families.

To measure affordability, we estimate the financial effort a typical family has to make to pay the water bill for essential levels of consumption. To that end, we estimate the billing amount under the assumption of a three-person household, with consumption of 100 litres of water per day per person, for a month.

METHOD

This study makes a number of different estimates of the payment a family has to make, and to get an approximate idea of the budgetary effort required by families to pay their water bill.

Three different situations have been considered.

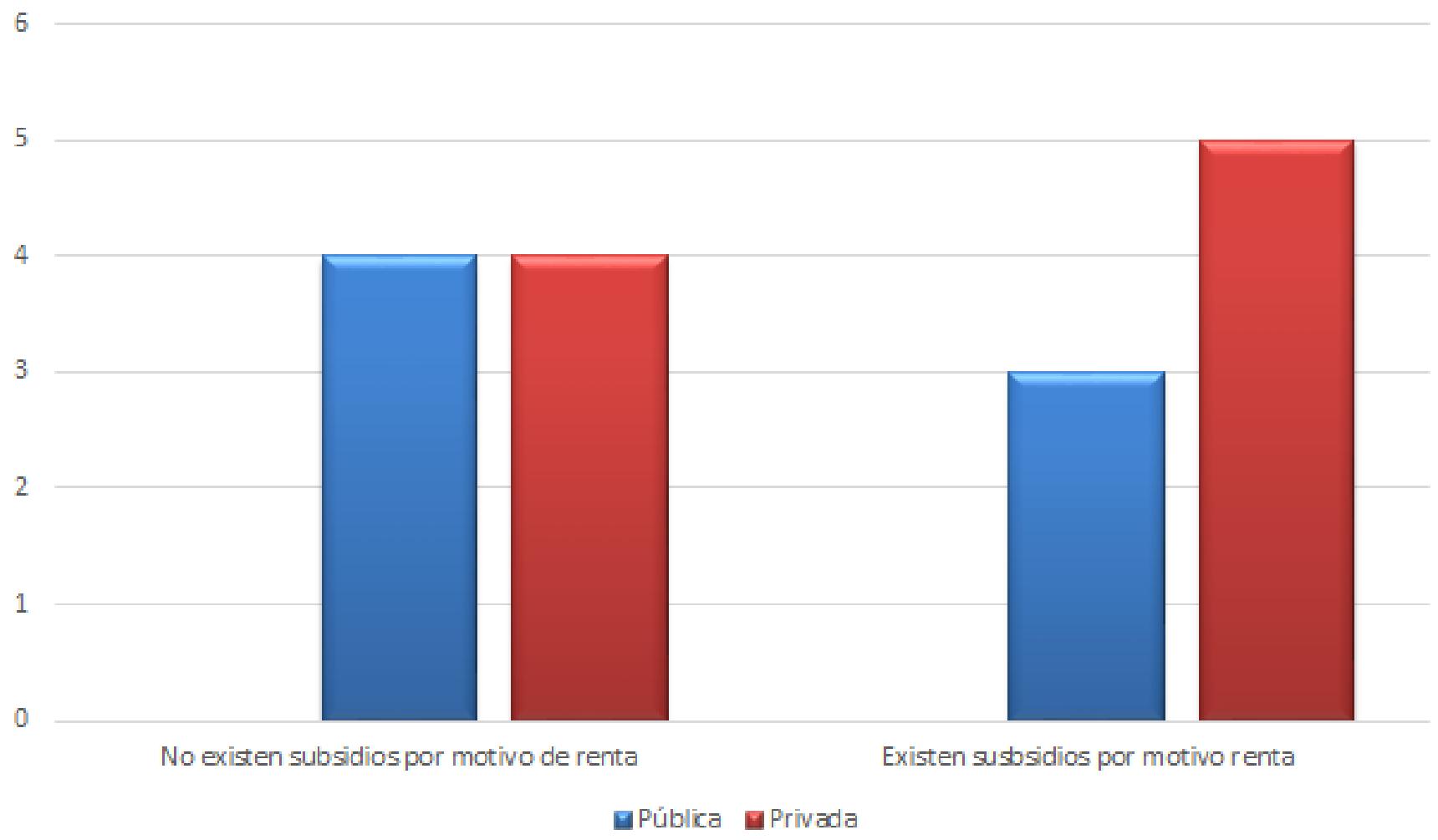
The household size: The average household in Spain has 2.5 people.

The water consumption per person was based on the finding that people need between 50 and 100 litres of water per person per day to guarantee that their basic needs are met (United Nations, 2010).

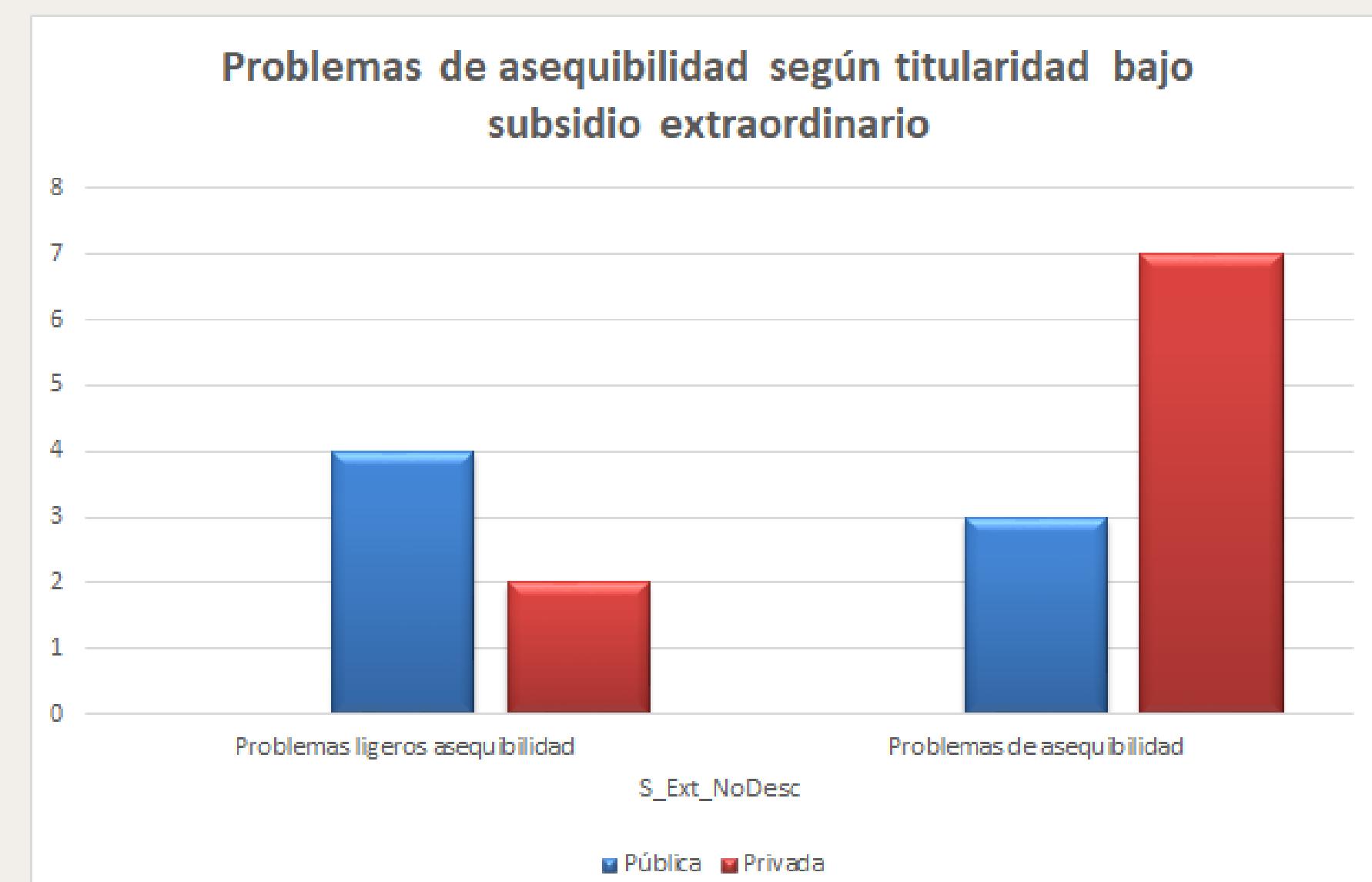
RESULTS

	Bill (Euros) 9 m ³	As a percentage of income		
		Average salary	National minimum wage	Aid programmes
Madrid	20.04	0.60	1.91	4.66
Barcelona	39.19	1.24	3.73	9.11
Valencia	29.14	1.12	2.78	6.77
Sevilla	41.46	1.65	3.95	9.64
Zaragoza	16.04	0.59	1.53	3.73
Málaga	19.47	0.86	1.85	4.52
Murcia	40.52	1.61	3.86	9.42
Palma de Mallorca	40.77	1.46	3.88	9.48
Las Palmas de Gran Canaria	24.23	0.95	2.31	5.63
Bilbao	16.44	0.55	1.57	3.82
Alicante	23.16	1.01	2.21	5.38
Cádiz	31.19	1.22	2.97	7.25
Huelva	30.74	1.38	2.93	7.14
Tarragona	17.52	0.63	1.67	4.07
Lleida	19.77	0.77	1.88	4.59
Granada	30.81	1.25	2.93	7.25

Existencia de subsidios según titularidad



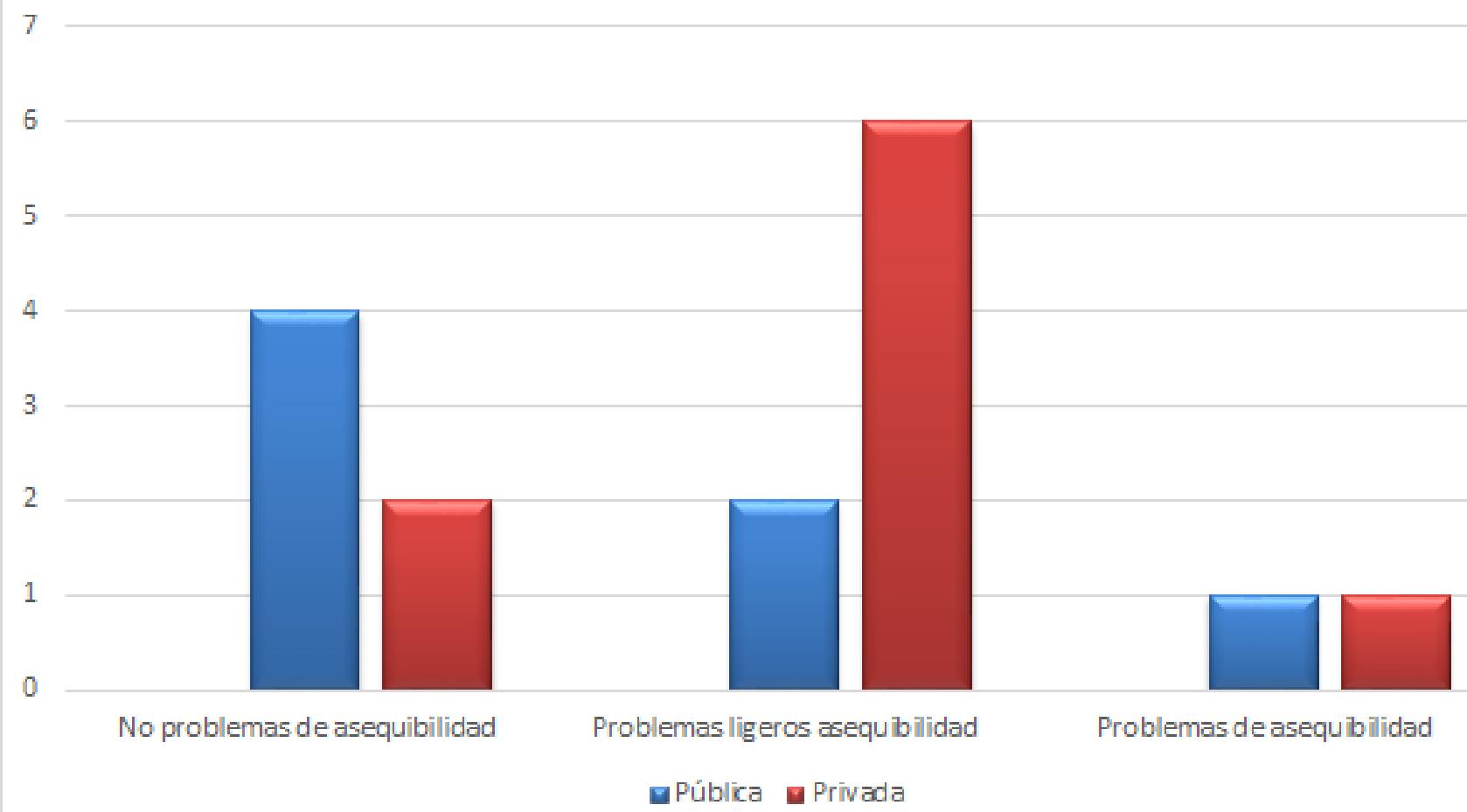
Problemas de asequibilidad según titularidad bajo subsidio extraordinario



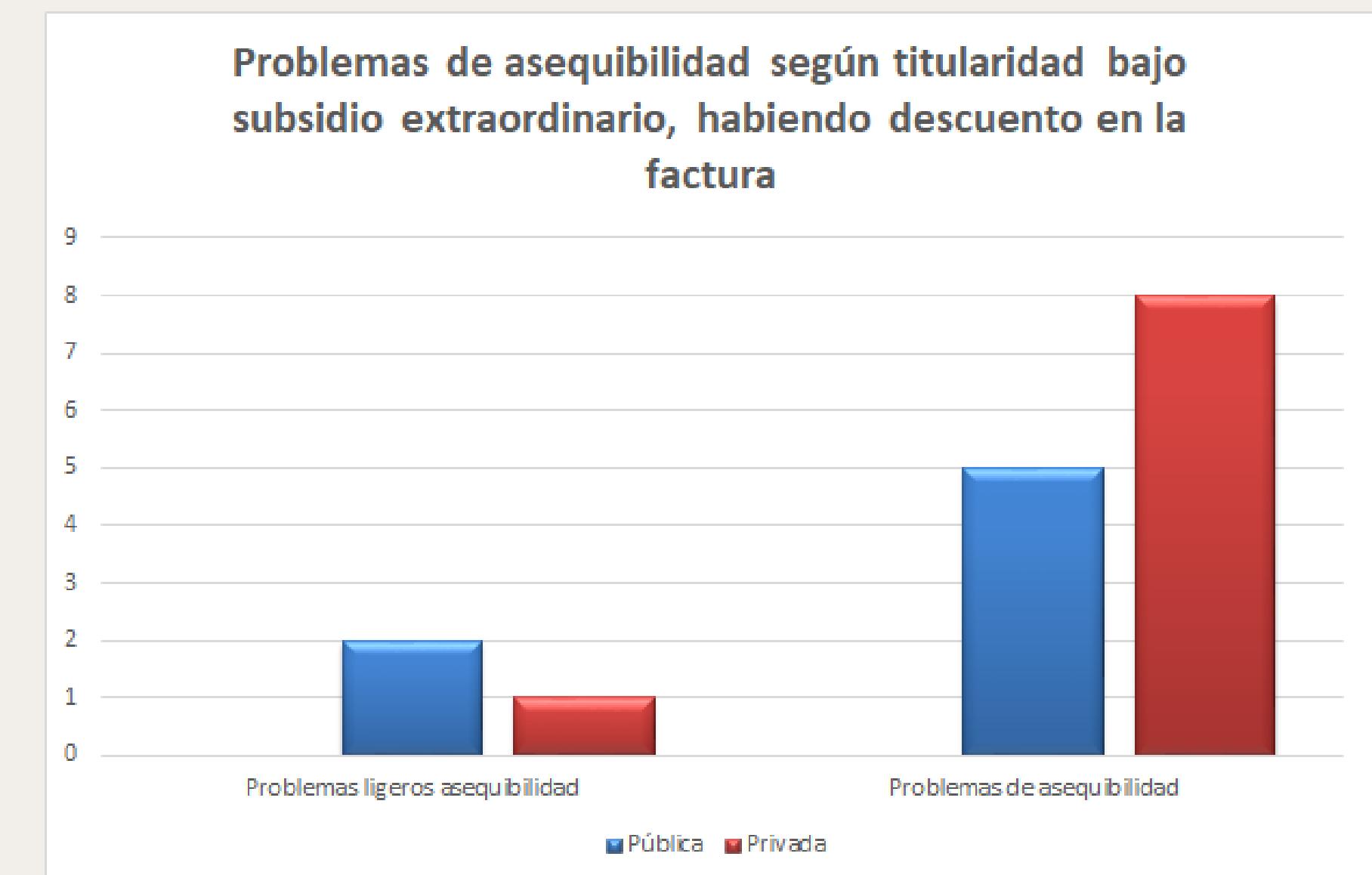
RESULTS

	Bill (Euros) 9 m ³	As a percentage of income		
		Average salary	National minimum wage	Aid programmes
Madrid	12.58	0.38	1.20	2.92
Barcelona	18.86	0.59	1.80	4.38
Valencia	29.14	1.12	2.78	6.77
Sevilla	41.46	1.65	3.95	9.64
Zaragoza	7.31	0.27	0.70	1.70
Málaga	19.47	0.86	1.85	4.52
Murcia	5.50	0.22	0.52	1.28
Palma de Mallorca	19.30	0.69	1.84	4.49
Las Palmas de Gran Canaria	24.23	0.95	2.31	5.63
Bilbao	10.88	0.37	1.04	2.53
Alicante	23.16	1.01	2.21	5.38
Cádiz	30.19	1.22	2.88	7.02
Huelva	23.33	1.05	2.22	5.42
Tarragona	12.63	0.45	1.20	2.94
Lleida	19.77	0.77	1.88	4.59
Granada	4.46	0.18	0.42	1.04

Cruce titularidad por problemas de asequibilidad, para el escenario de SMI y factura con descuento



Problemas de asequibilidad según titularidad bajo subsidio extraordinario, habiendo descuento en la factura



CONCLUSIONS

We find that the legal and institutional frameworks governing access to a minimum essential level of water in Spain depend on location. Similarly, there is not equal protection for the right of access to water in situations where people are at risk of social exclusion; it depends on the city where they live.

Although water services in Spain mostly comply with the principle of affordability, not all families are protected. On average, the water bill represents less than 3% of the family budget. In addition, tariff reductions and payment assistance schemes are generally available to help families in financial difficulty to pay their water bill. Even so, the water supply may be cut off in situations of severe poverty.

With respect to these situations of extreme poverty, the Spanish legal framework is not in line with Resolution 64/292/2010 of the General Assembly of the United Nations (2010). Families in extreme poverty face a real threat of having their water supply cut off.

**Thank you for
you attention.**
