

TECHNO-SOCIAL INNOVATION IN THE COLLABORATIVE ECONOMY

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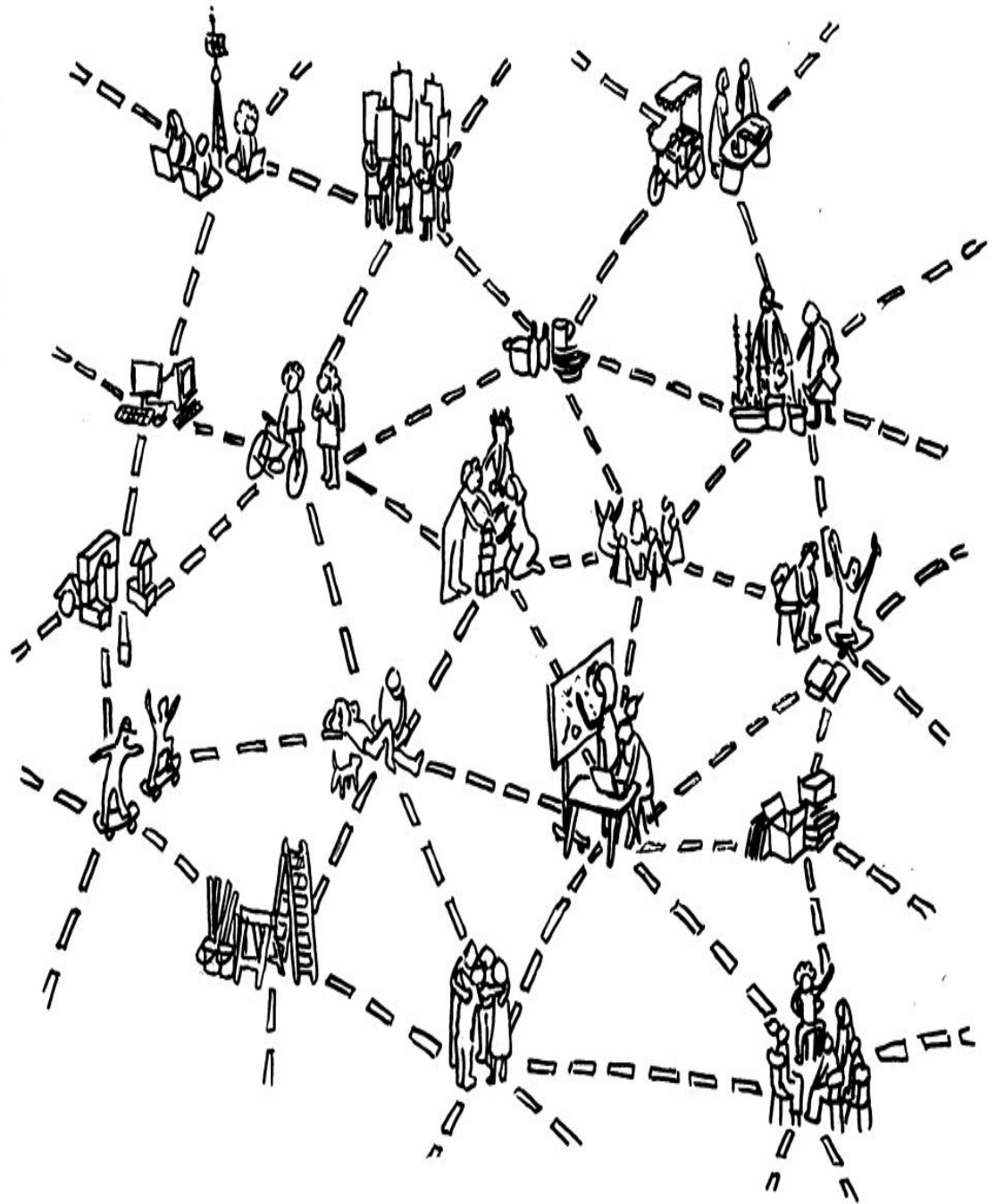
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RESEARCH OBJECT

Internet-enabled
commons-based
organizational models



peer production, the
digital commons,
cosmolocalism, platform
cooperatives, open
cooperatives and
Distributed Autonomous
Organizations (DAOs) on
Blockchain

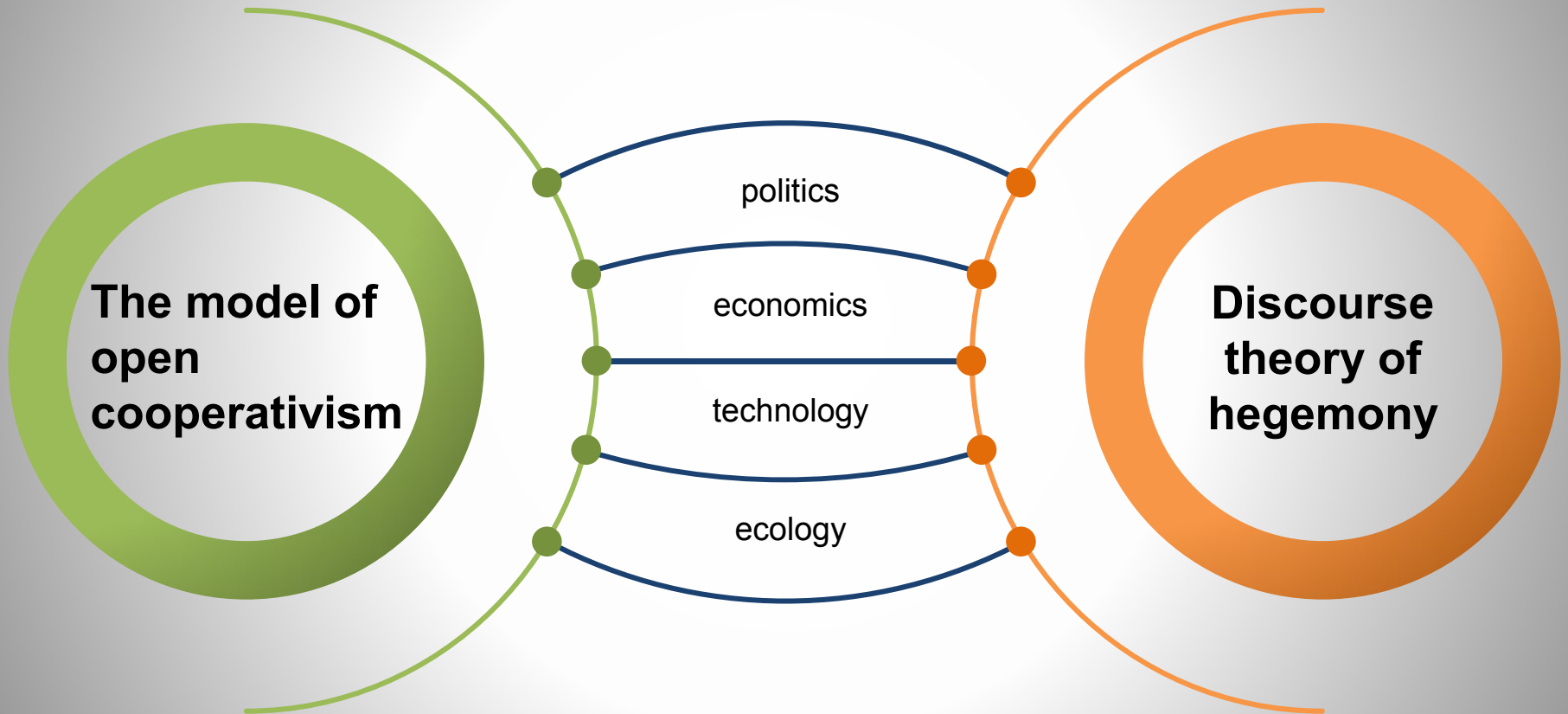


RESEARCH QUESTION

The role of open-source technologies and the digital commons in the creation of a collaborative economy?



THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK



**The model of
open
cooperativism**

politics

economics

technology

ecology

**Discourse
theory of
hegemony**

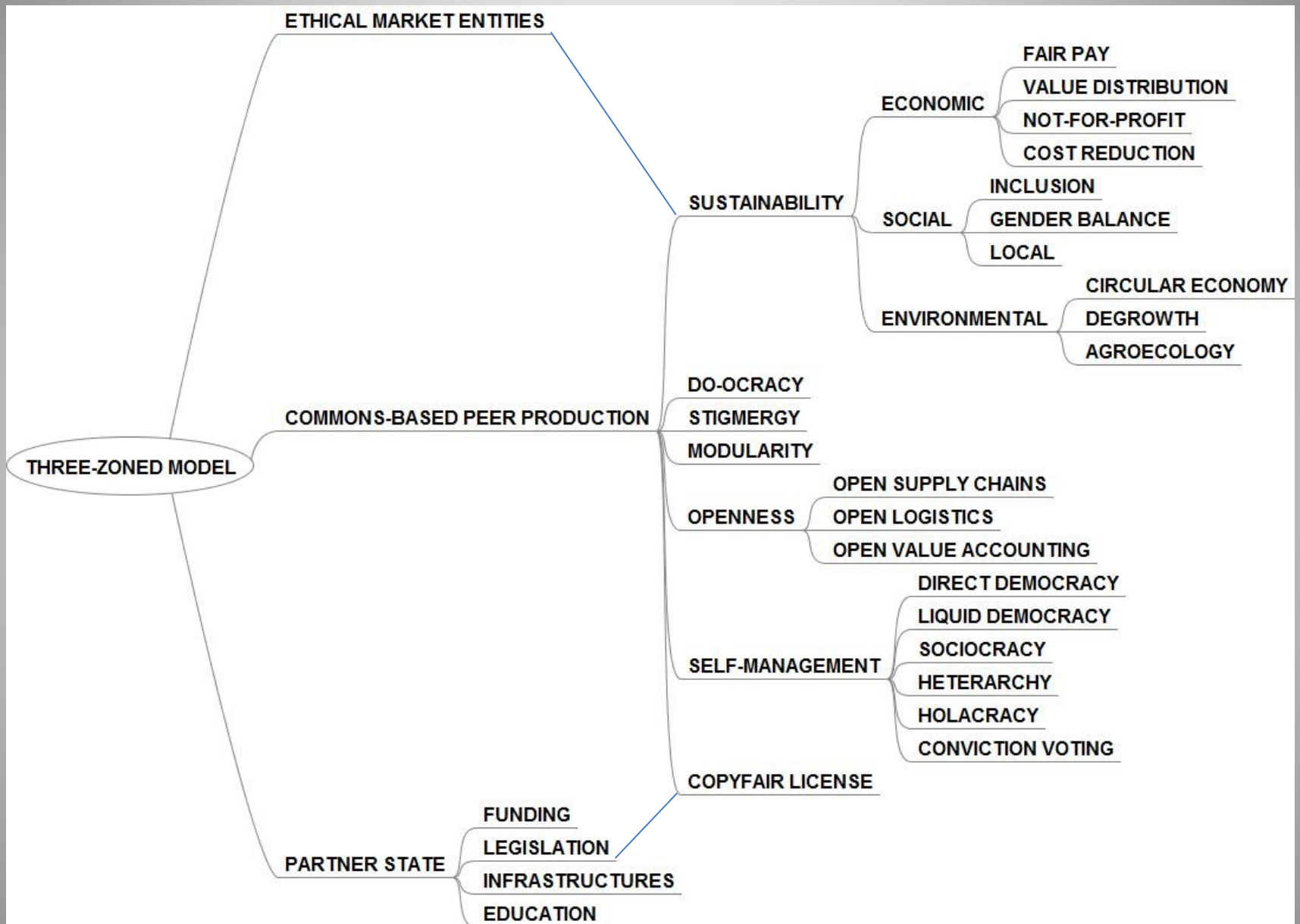
How ? > **Methodology**

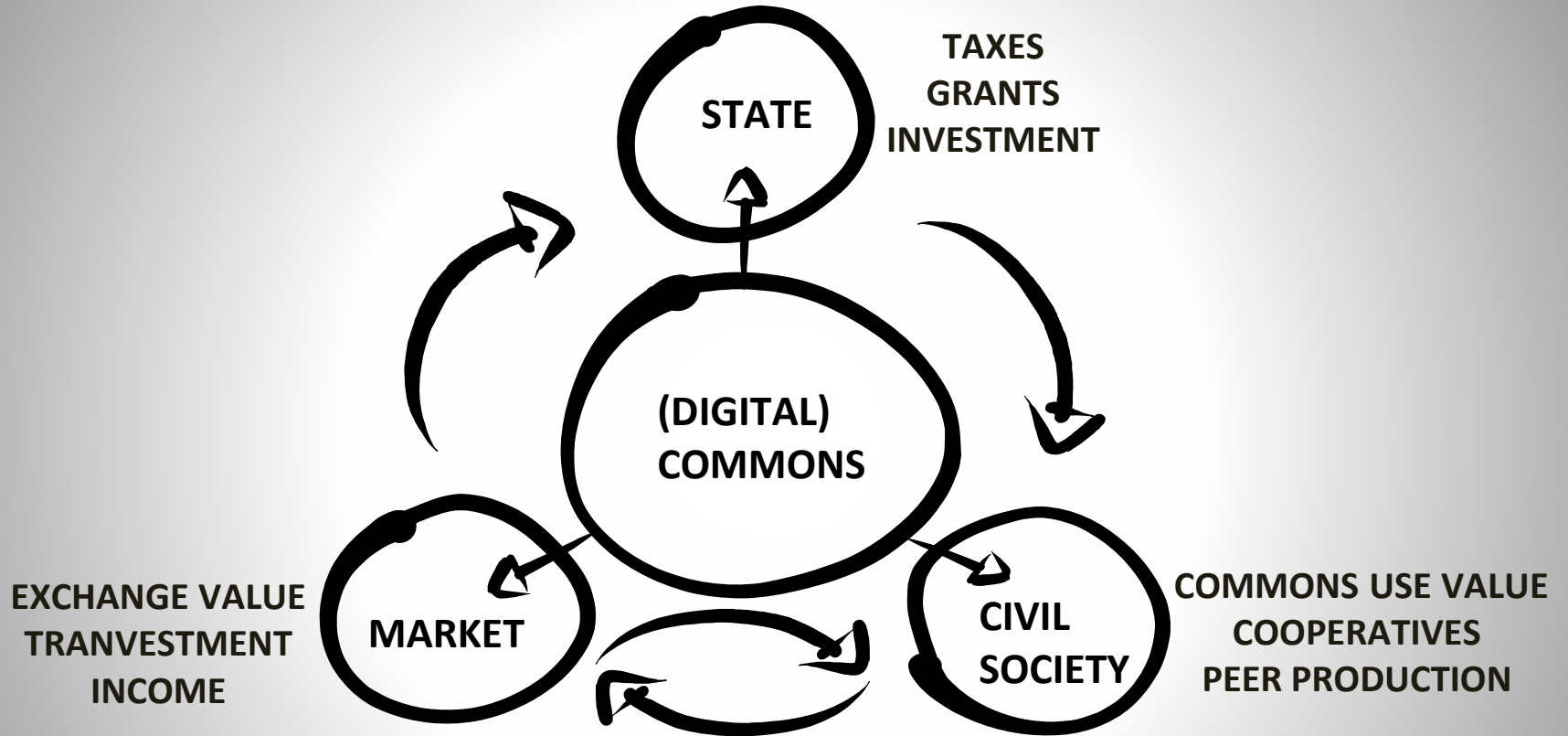
Multi-case study:

- P2PLab/Tzoumakers (Greece)
- Open Food Network (Global)
- CoopCycle (France)
- Circles UBI (Germany)

Why? > **Research objective**

To explore success and limiting factors of the cooperative economy





Capitalist enterprise	Traditional cooperative	Open cooperative
information asymmetry, privacy	partial information symmetry	openness, sharing, holoptism (transparency)
profit maximization, shareholder value	value distribution among coop members	value distribution among multiple stakeholders
hierarchy, one dollar, one vote	hierarchy, assembly, one member, one vote	self-governance, sociocracy, one member, one vote
centralised proprietary R&D, patents, rent extraction	closed proprietary licenses > not producing commons	open protocols, open supply chains, stigmergic coordination, commons
planned obsolescence, negative externalities	sustainability	circular economy, repairability, adaptability, maintenance
division of labour	division of labour	equipotentiality, do-ocracy, stigmergy, modularity
salaries	salaries	open value accounting, salaries

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Commoning reduces costs and fosters social innovation, democratization, sustainability



Ethical market entities that have access to commons gain a competitive advantage vis-à-vis closed proprietary models



Capitalism is forced to adapt to post-capitalism



From each according to her capacities, to each according to her needs

Problem 1

Traditional and platform cooperatives **cannot challenge capitalism**

Solution 1

Traditional and platform cooperatives need to **transform into open cooperatives**

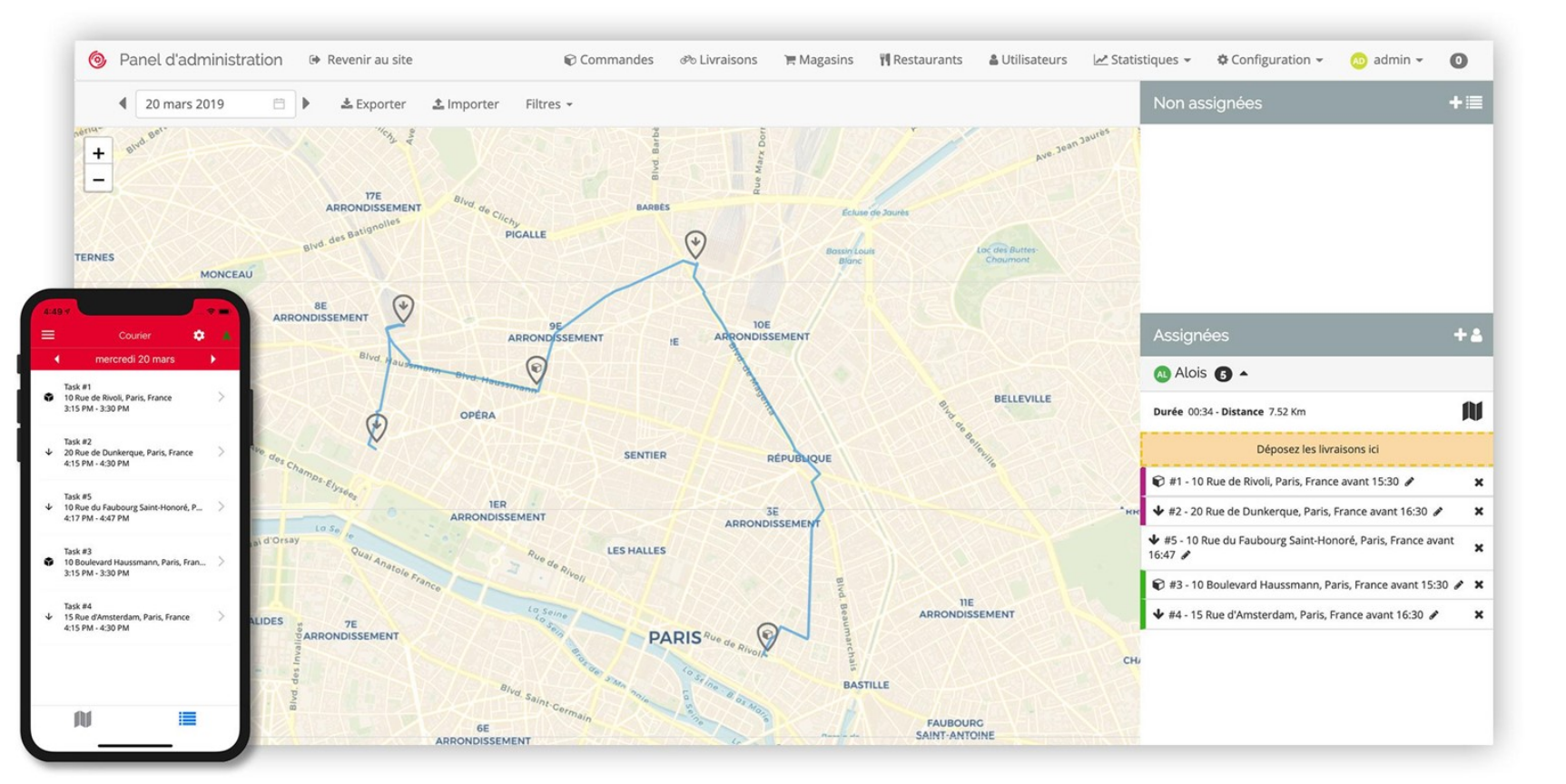
Problem 2

Open cooperatives are prone to **capitalist cooptation** due to the openness of the commons they produce

Solution 2

Open cooperatives need shared incentives and protective mechanisms such as **closed loops** and **copyfair licenses** between the commons and ethical market entities to secure livelihoods for commoners

CoopCycle: open-source bike delivery app



CoopCycle

Established in France in
September 2017

**Software developer and a
federation** of more than 67
bike delivery cooperatives

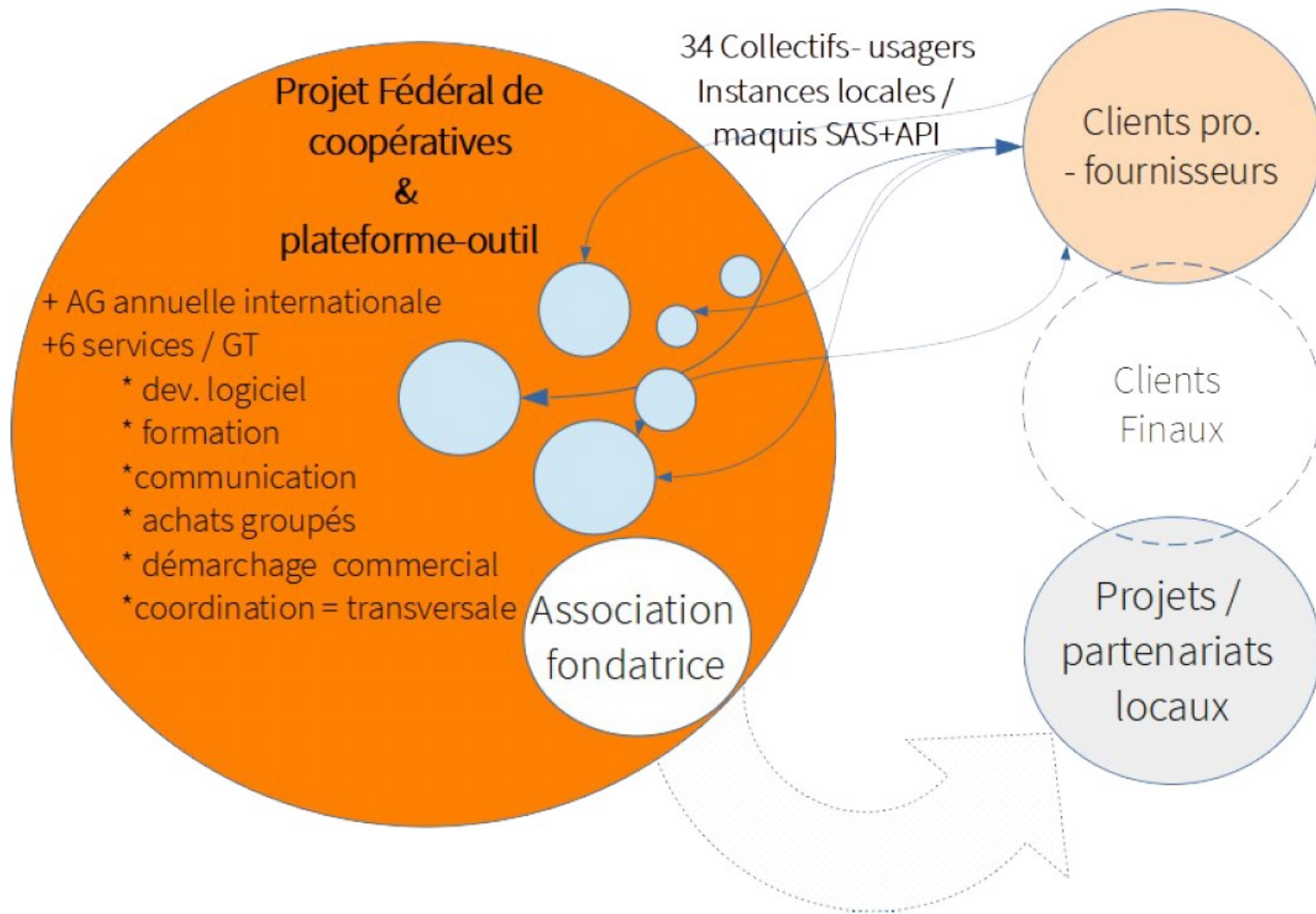
**Digital infrastructure and fleet
management** for bike delivery
e-logistics and services in the
cooperative sector



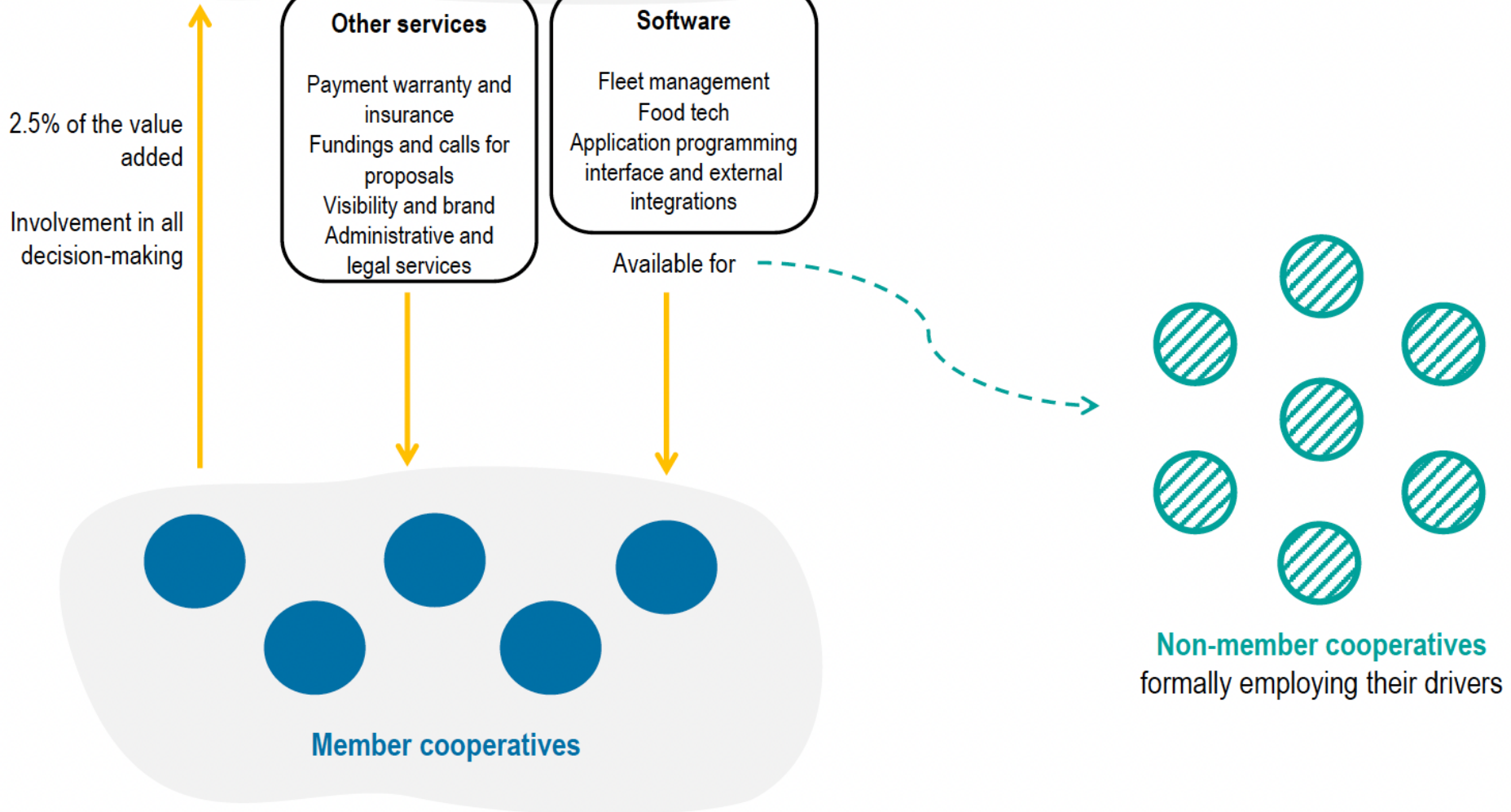


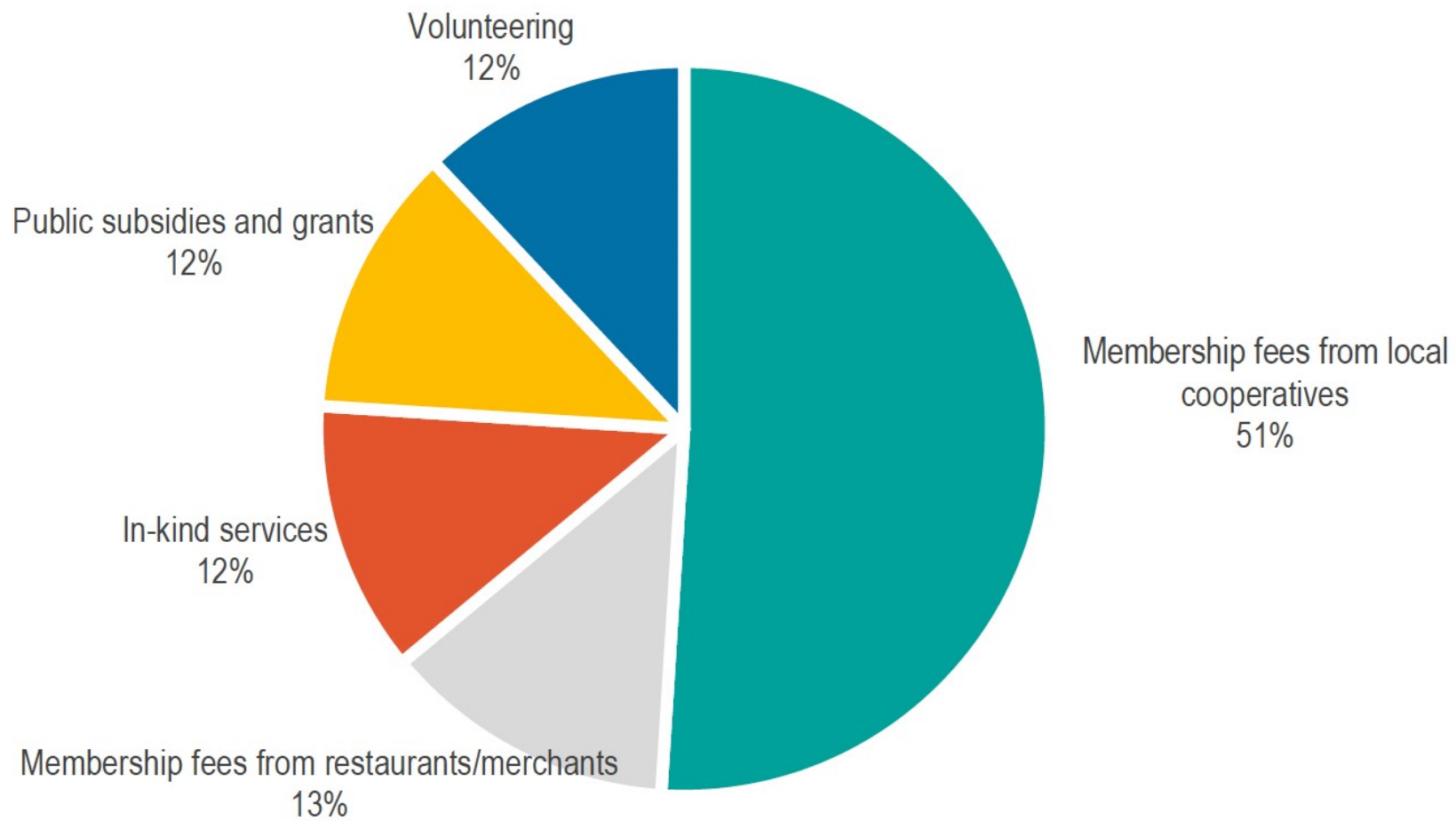
The CoopCycle association is a group of volunteers that help bikers to gather and organize around:

- an anti-capitalist economic model, based on the Commons
- the development of the CoopCycle software (UI/UX, dev, trainings, docs, aso.)
- political lobbying, juridical toolbox, global coordination



The federation CoopCycle





Coopyleft license ensures that the software is used only by **cooperatives or social economy actors** in which workers are employees

The CoopCycle software is not open source : its code is available on Github, but **not anyone can run it for commercial purposes**

Coopyleft license limits the commercial use of the software to member coops that pay a fee (at least € 500)

Member coops participate in the federation and avail of the software and the services

Coopyleft license prevents the capitalist cooptation of the digital commons

Digital commons allows federation coop members to reduce costs by pooling resources, knowledge, and services (the platform software, smartphone app, etc.)

Multistakeholder cooperative

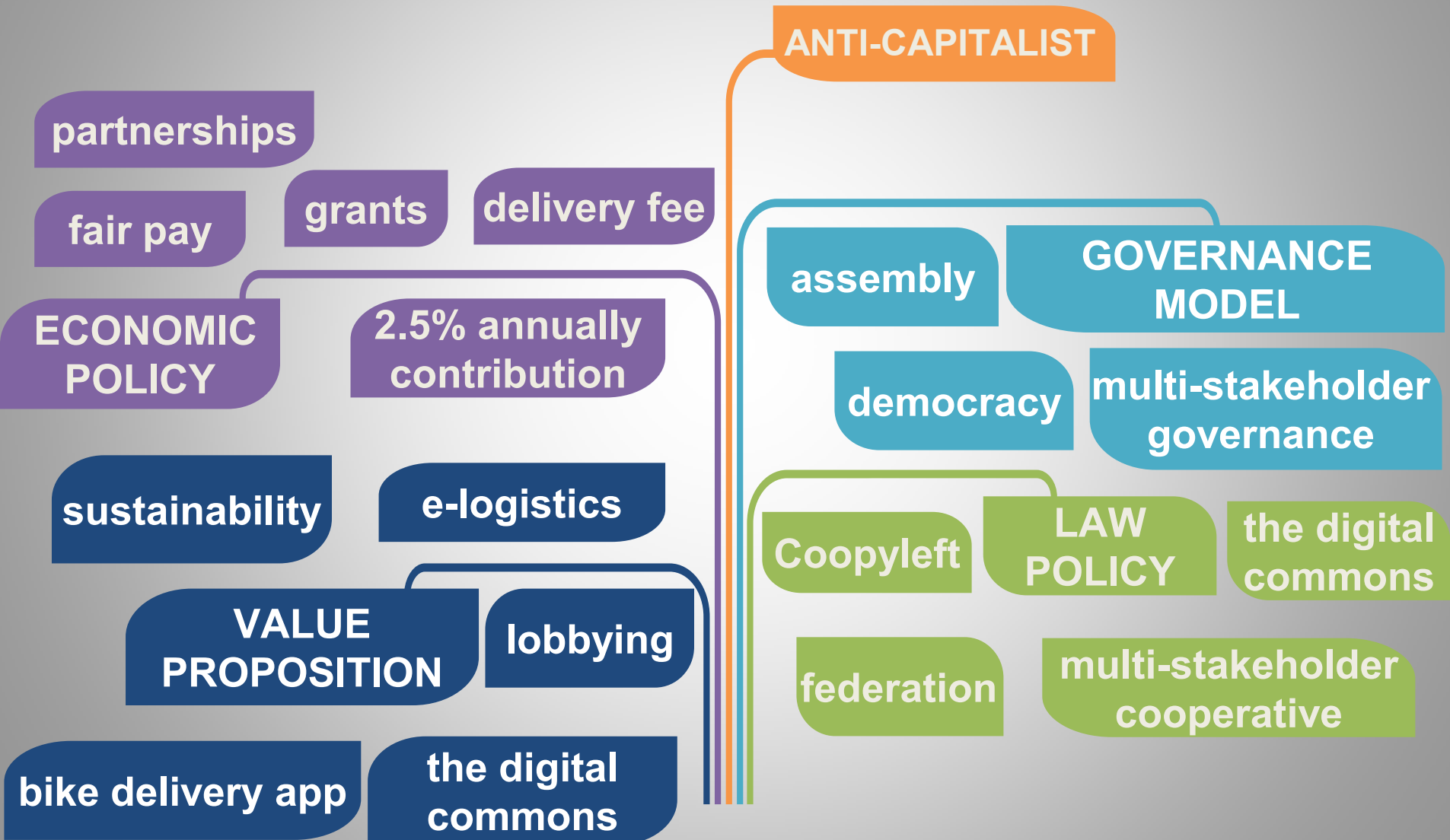
CoopCycle association transitions into a *Société coopérative d'intérêt collectif (SCIS)* to engage multiple stakeholders:

- Workers' co-operatives from "developed" countries
- Workers' co-operatives from "developing" countries
- Citizens' co-operatives
- Retraining and employment schemes
- CoopCycle employees
- Partners
- CoopCycle volunteer association
- Public authorities

General principles:

- dual purpose (**economic efficiency and social utility**)
- democratic governance (**one partner, one vote**)
- **limited profit** (variable capital, indivisible reserves...)

COOPCYCLE DISCOURSE ANALYSIS



Papadimitropoulos V. and Malamidis H. 2024. The Transformative Potential of Platform Cooperativism: the case of CoopCycle, TripleC, Vol 22 (1): 1-24

Breakthroughs

- digital commons
- copyfair license
- federation
- multi-stakeholder cooperative
- sustainability

Challenges

- strong competition from the gig economy
- lack of capital
- lack of cross-sectoral value chains
- weak counter-hegemony

Consolidation of findings

Lack of cross-sectoral value chains to close the loops between capitalism and post-capitalism

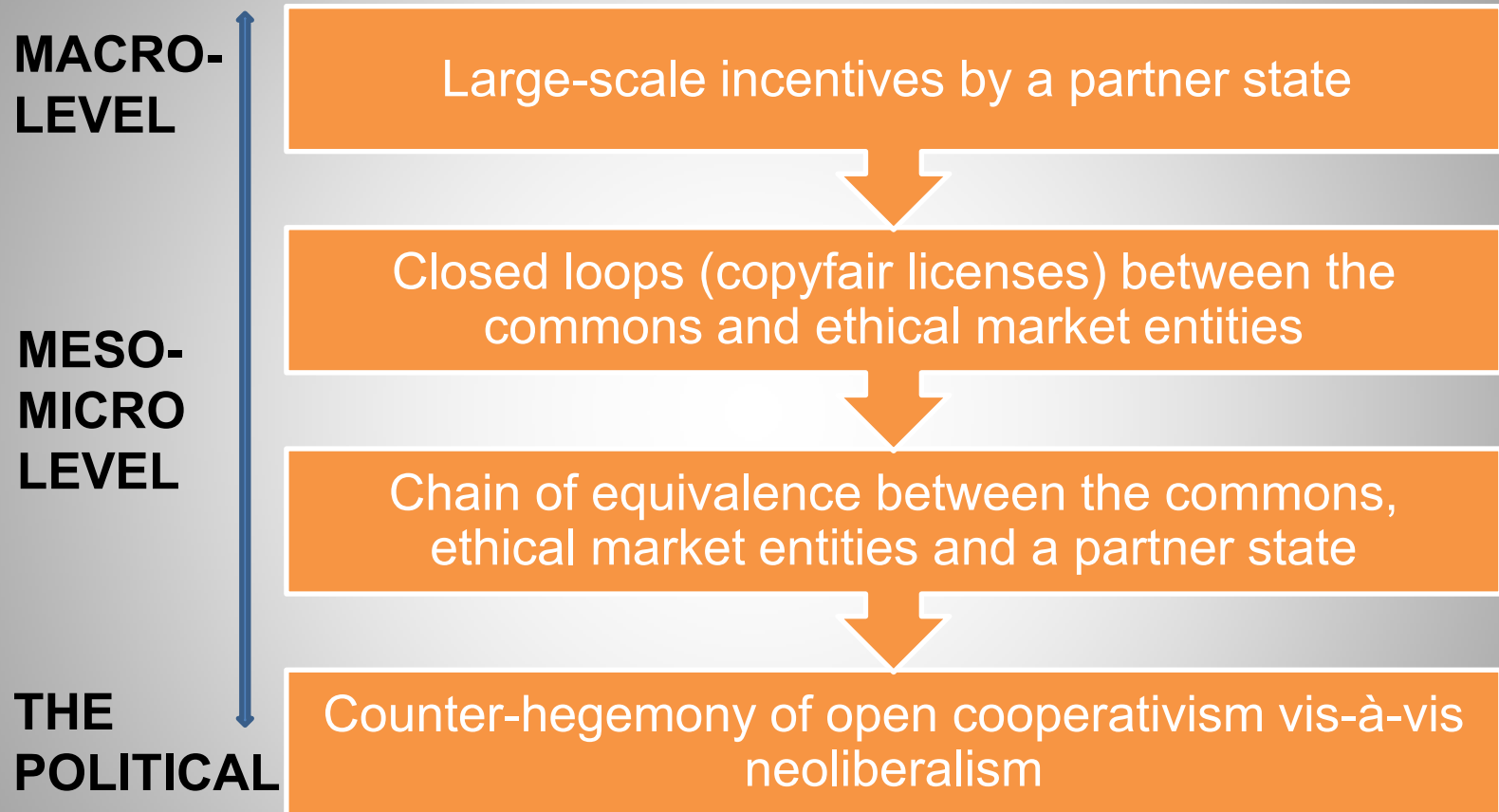


Lack of a chain of equivalence between the commons, ethical market entities and partner state

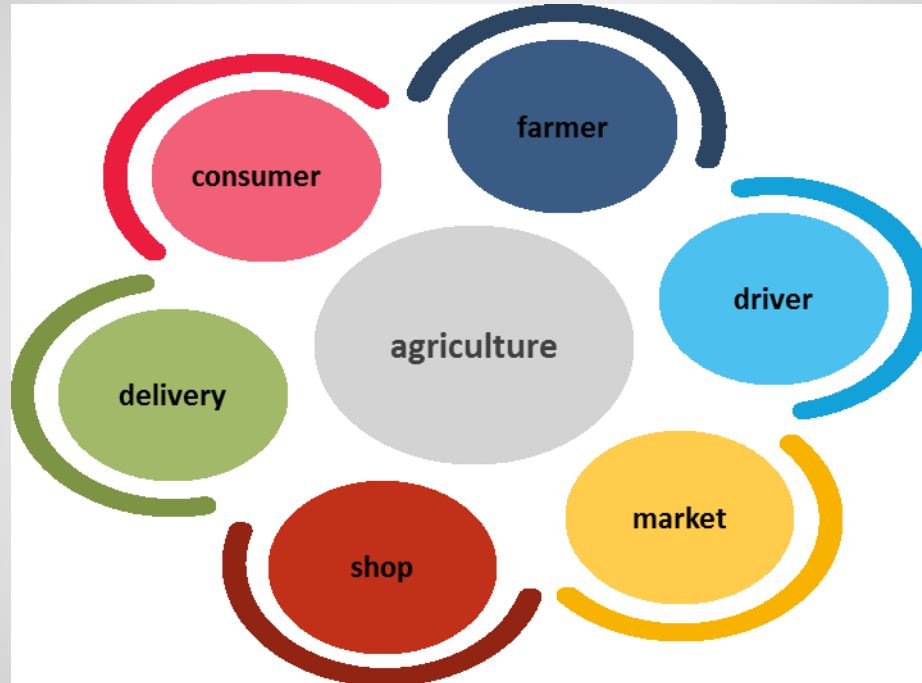


Weak counter-hegemony of open cooperativism

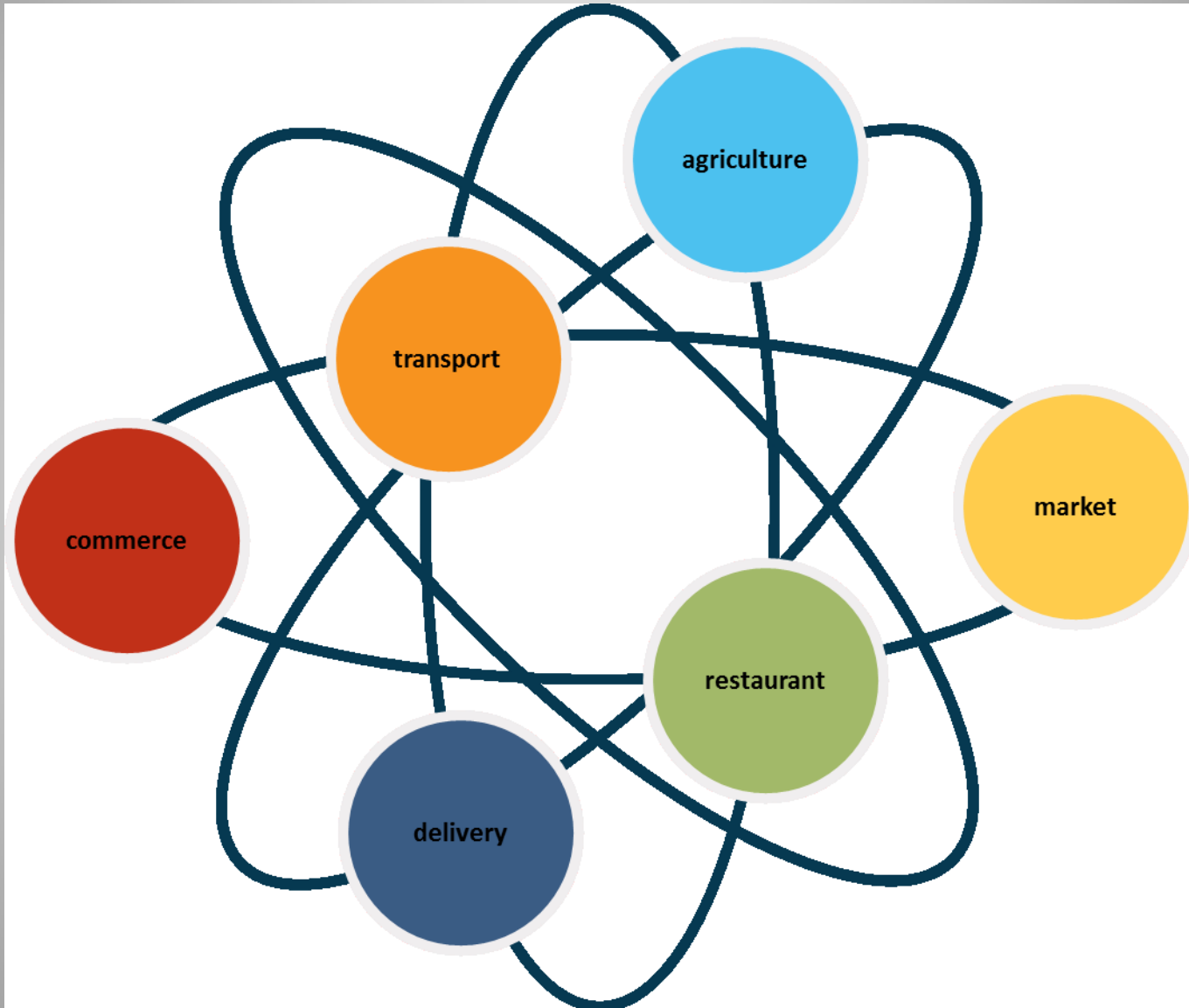
Recommendations

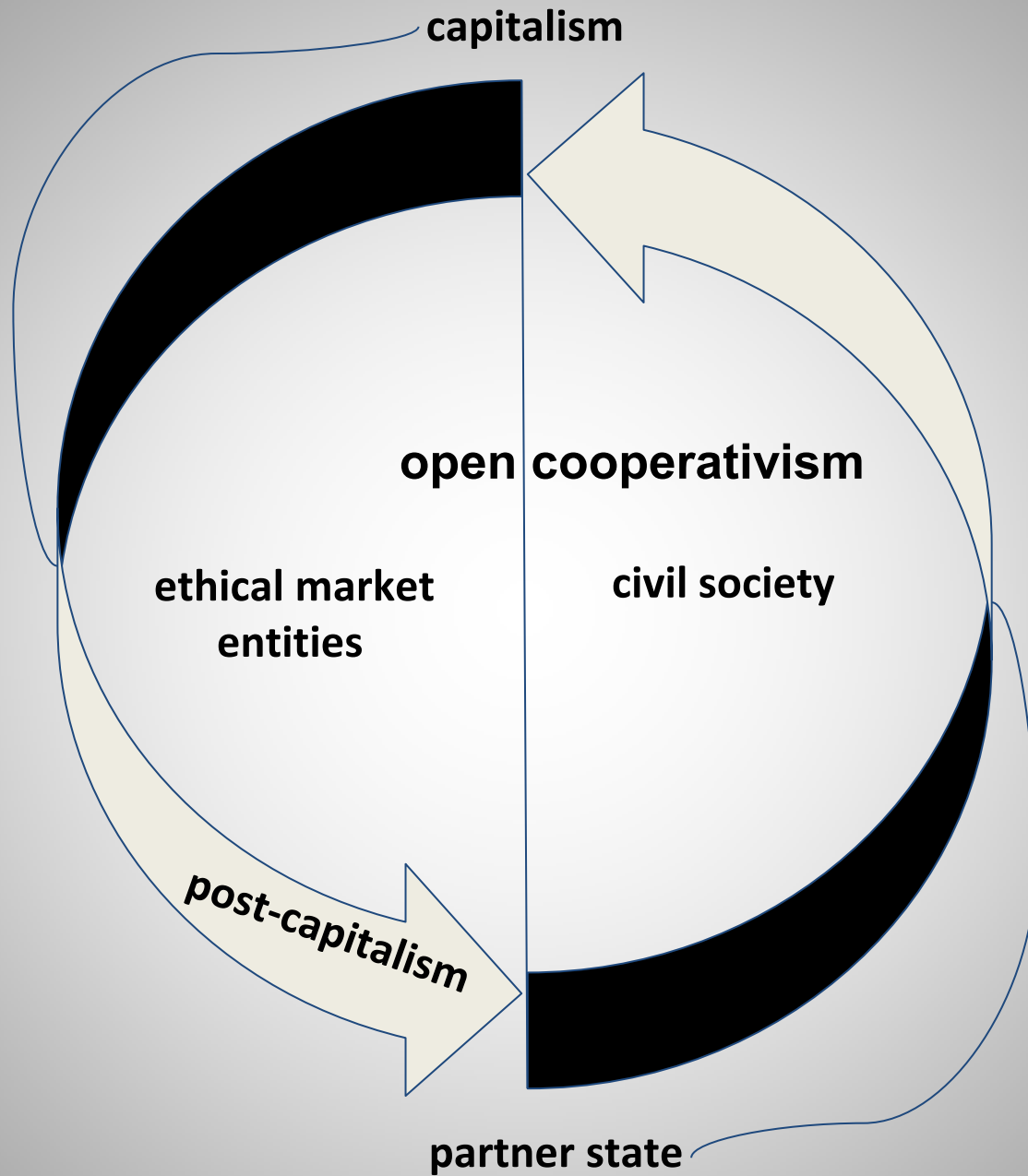


UNISECTORAL CLOSED LOOP



CROSS-SECTORAL CLOSED LOOPS





THANK YOU

<https://collabecon.gr/>

Vangelis Papadimitropoulos, *The Commons, Economic Alternatives in the Digital Age*, Westminster University Press, 2020

Vangelis Papadimitropoulos, *Blockchain and the Commons*, Routledge Editions, 2022