



Nexa Center for Internet & Society
191° Mercoledì di Nexa

**Un'alternativa al capitalismo digitale? Confini
e traiettorie delle piattaforme cooperative**

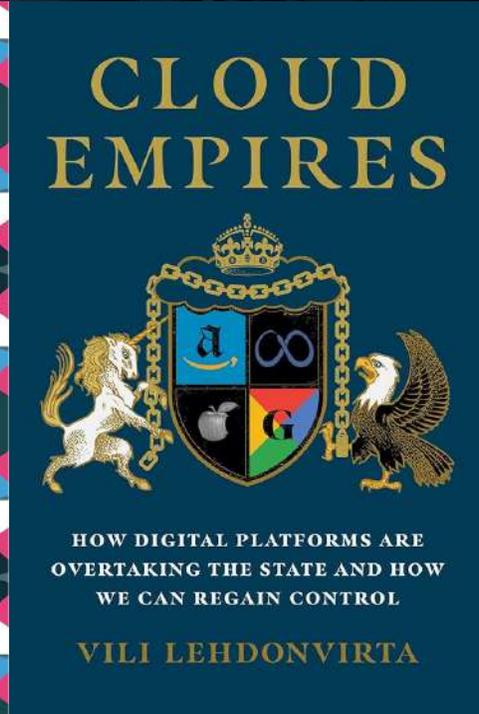
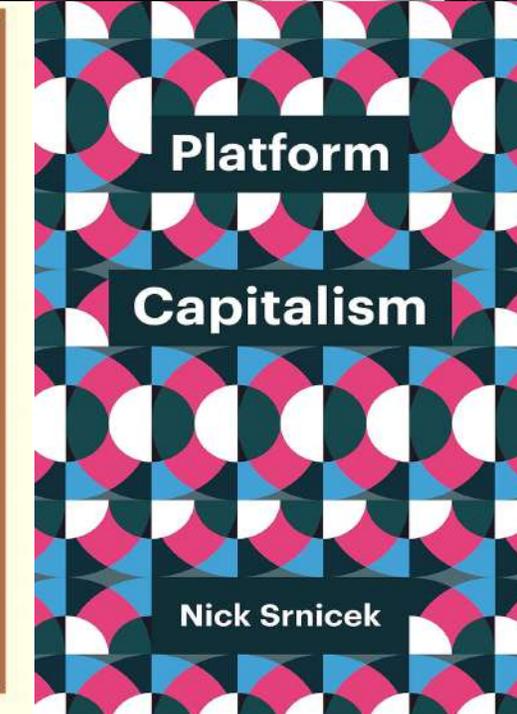
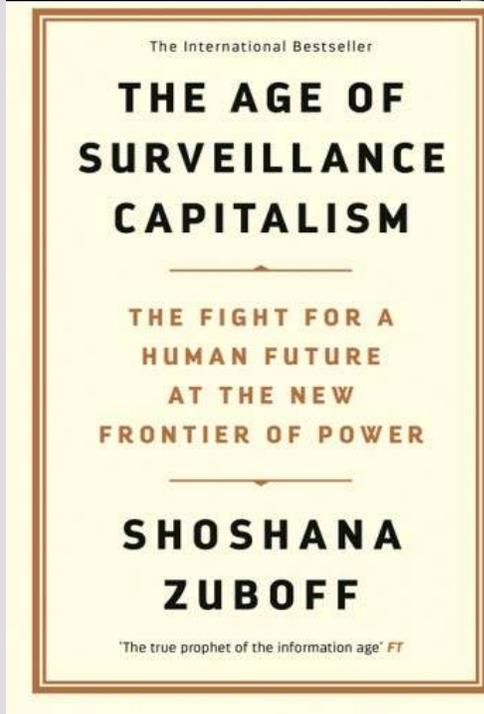
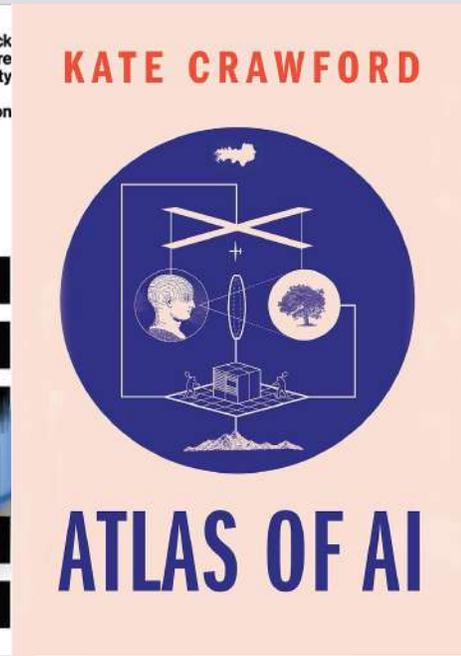
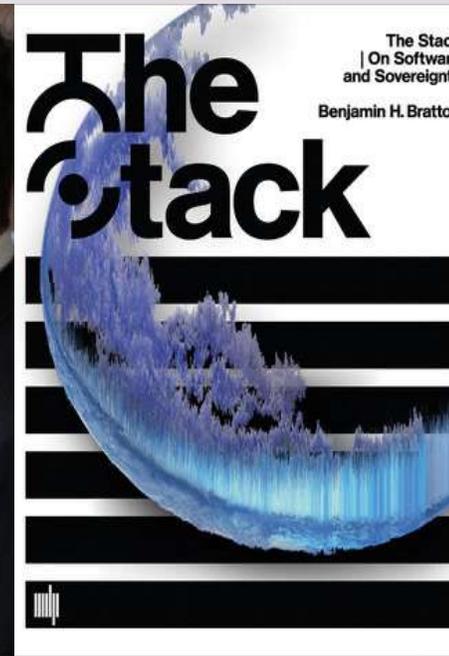
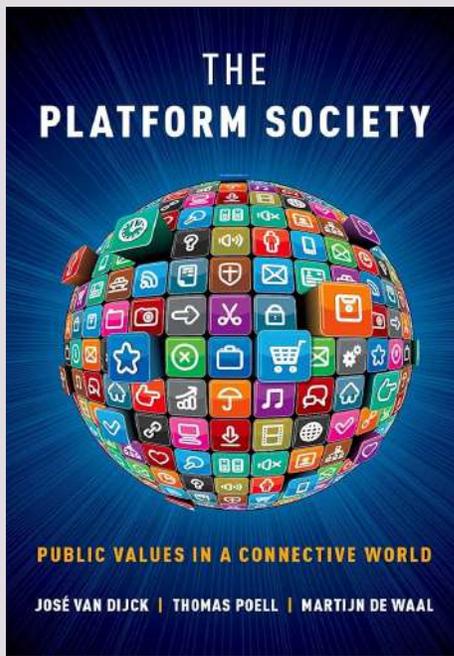
Stefano Tortorici
Scuola Normale Superiore
11.02.2026

Intro, Countervailing Platform Power

Piattaforme cooperative e le loro sfide: Survey e The Drivers Cooperative

AI e cooperative? Transkribus e Cooperative AI

Fairwork e cooperative?



Che Fare?



Image © Stefano Tortorici

26-27 JUNE
2025

Palazzo Strozzi
Faculty of Political and
Social Sciences
Scuola Normale Superiore
Piazza Strozzi
Florence

Organizers:
Lucia Amorosi
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COUNTERVAILING PLATFORM POWER

Regulation, Organizing and Intersectional Solidarities

Keynote Speakers:

VEENA DUBAL University of California, Irvine
VASILIS KOSTAKIS TalTech, BKC Harvard, P2P Lab
MILAGROS MICELI Weizenbaum Institute, DAIR Institute, Data Workers' Inquiry
TREBOR SCHOLZ Platform Cooperativism Consortium, The New School, BKC Harvard

Roundtable:

LI ANDERSSON Committee of Employment and Social Affairs in the European Parliament, Finland
GIULIA DRUETTA Labor Lawyer, Torino
OLGA GIUNTA Cgil - Palermo
JAMES OYANGE African Content Moderators Union, Kenya
AKKANUT WANTANASOMBUT Tamsang Tamsong Cooperative, Thailand
MARCO ZANOTTO AdI Cobas - Padova



Altona Teams



Poffaiele Teams



Strozzi Teams



Web Page



Unions

Benchmarking projects

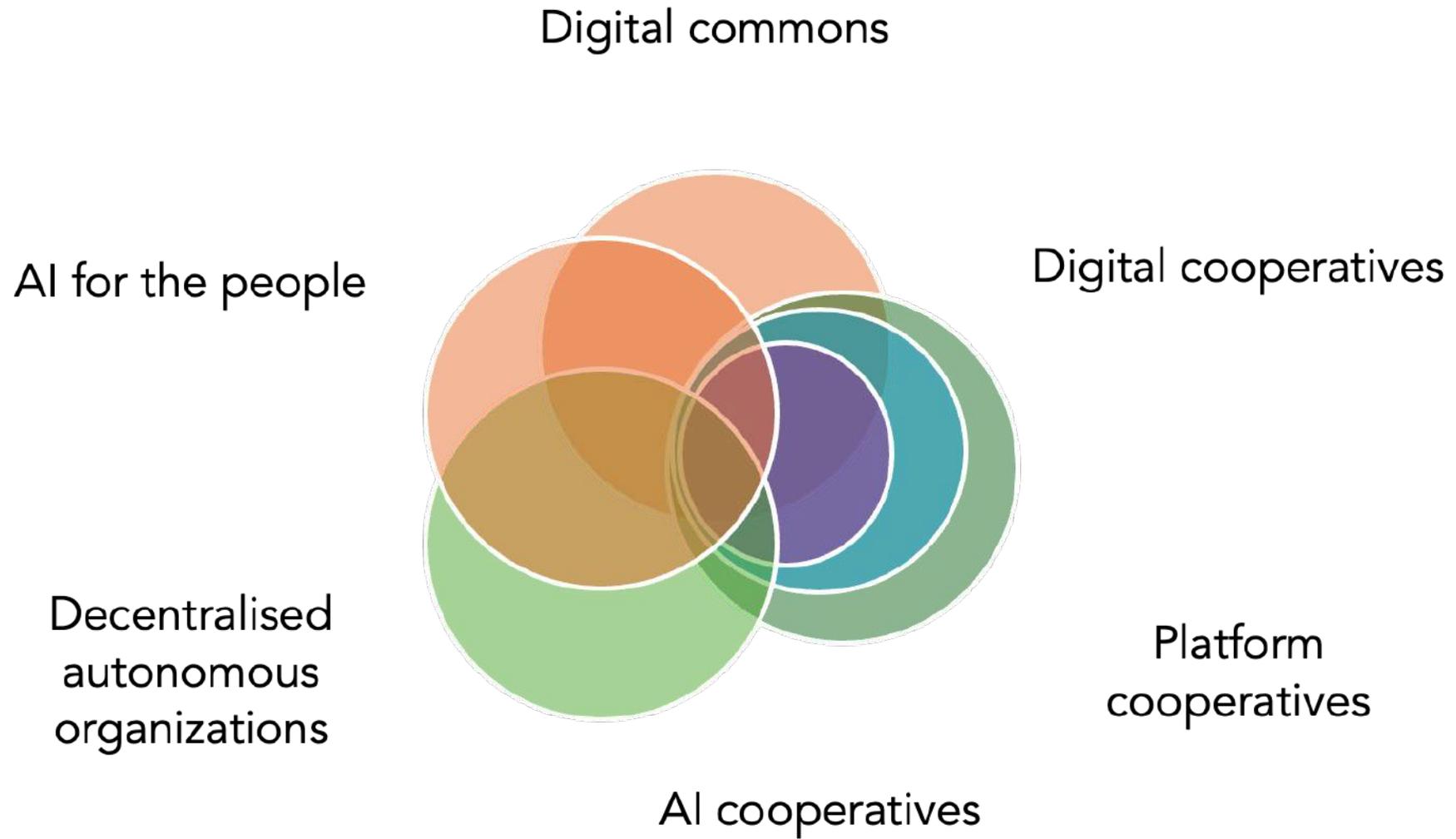
Social movements

Legislative attempts

Digital solidarity economies



Consumer and business associations



Cooperativismo di Piattaforma... e Piattaforme Cooperative

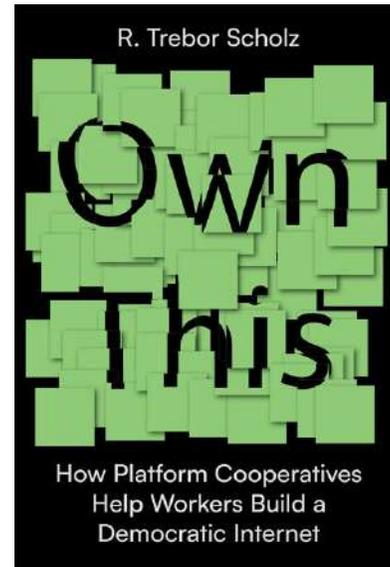
Movimento sociale

2014

Platform Cooperativism Consortium

<https://platform.coop/>

(25 gennaio '26: 643 progetti in 53 paesi)



Imprese

Piattaforme digitali

Imprese principalmente online

Intermediano almeno due tipi di utenti

+

Aderiscono, al loro meglio, ai **principi cooperativi dell'ICA**

+

Proprietà ampia tra lavoratori e utenti

+

Governance democratica (una testa un voto)

(Mayo, 2019; Scholz 2023)

We are a driver-owned cooperative in New York City specializing in paratransit and Non-Emergency Medical Transportation.

Drive with us

Ride with us



BUSINESS PLATFORM CO-OP

NORTH AMERICA UNITED STATES

Uber and Lyft drivers in Minneapolis consider co-op launch

The local union is looking to join the Drivers' Cooperative after the ride-share platform threatened to leave the city over a minimum wage hike

The Drivers Cooperative

«A Worker-Owned Cooperative Tries to Compete With Uber and Lyft»

NYT, Maggio 2021

<https://drivers.coop/>

NYC 2021, 12000 autisti iscritti

Denver 2024

Minneapolis, Washington?



the driverscoop We're out here! The Drivers Cooperative is proud to partner with @aac @jamaaltbailey36 & @fernandez4ny to provide free rides to the polls for NYCHA residents! Go vote!

Visualizza 1 commento

31 ottobre 2020 · Vedi traduzione



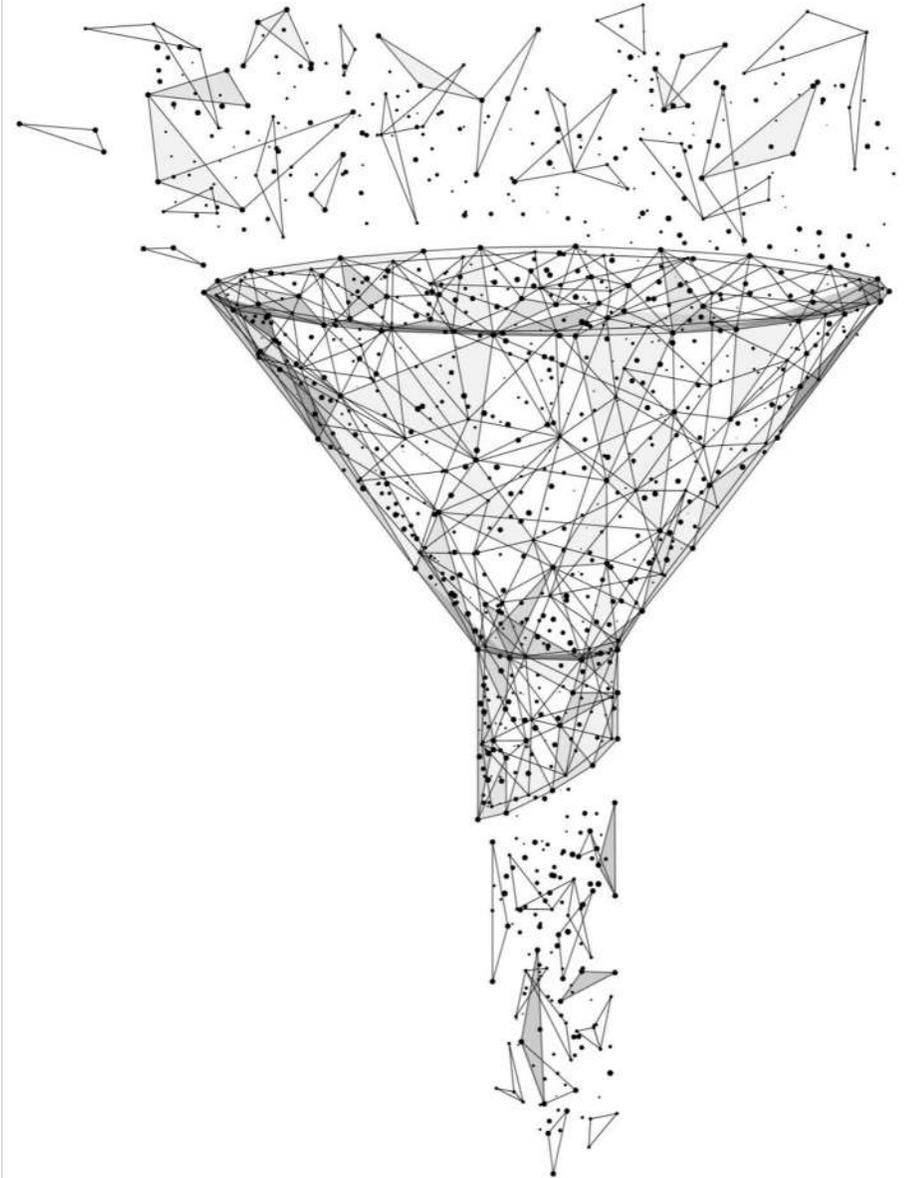
Survey, 86 respondents

27 piattaforme cooperative attive

Le Sfide

Le Sfide di The Drivers Cooperative

The Blown Head Gasket Effect



Working Paper n. 138 | 25
ISSN 2281-8235

Stefano Tortorici

MAPPING PLATFORM COOPERATIVES: IDENTITIES, DIMENSIONS AND CHALLENGES

Please cite this paper as:

Tortorici, S. (2025). Mapping Platform Cooperatives: Identities, Dimensions and Challenges, *Euricse Working Paper Series*, 138|25.

Un survey internazionale

Pretestato nell'Agosto 2023

46 domande in 5 sezioni:

1. Identità
2. Forza lavoro
3. Finanza
4. Governance
5. Sfide

Circa 200 preselezionate organizzazioni di interesse dalla Letteratura e PCC Directory
ampiamente diffuso (accademici,
federazioni, social)



1 Agosto 2024

86 risposte su 245

60 fallimenti

Classificazione su 4 variabili:

1. Primarily **Platforms** (Question and Data)
2. **Cooperative** (ICA and Governance)
3. Primarily **Online** (Question)
4. **Active** (Market and Revenue)



SURVEY



Mapping Inactive Platform Cooperative Projects



120 progetti

45 respondents



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO



SCUOLA
NORMALE
SUPERIORE



Classificazione

1. Piattaforme Cooperative (27):

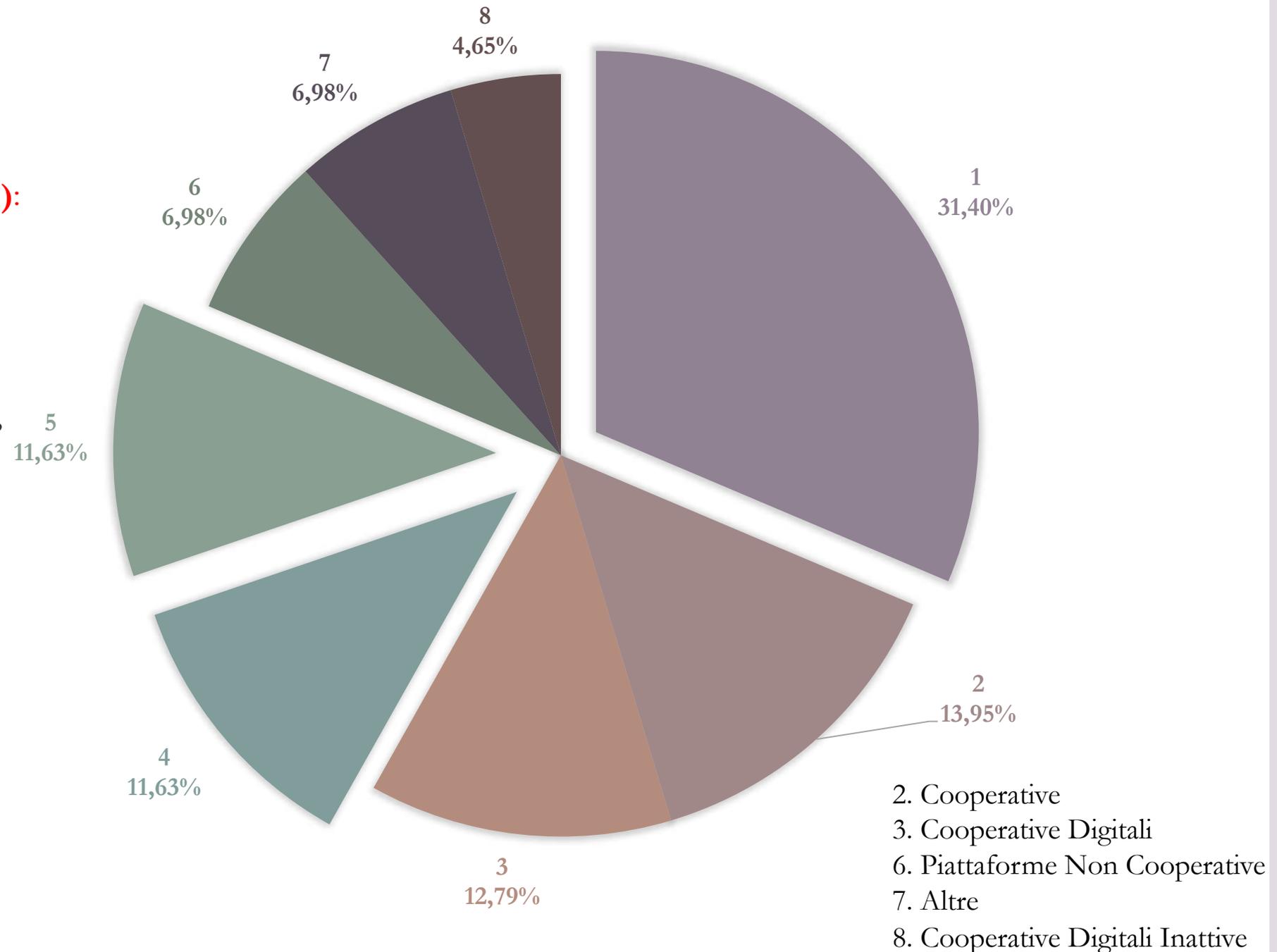
Primarily platform, online, cooperative, and active.

4. Cooperative Ibride (10):

Primarily platform, cooperative, and active, but not primarily online.

5. Appena Lanciate o Piattaforme Cooperative Inattive (10):

Primarily platform, online, and cooperative, but inactive or launched in 2024 (2).



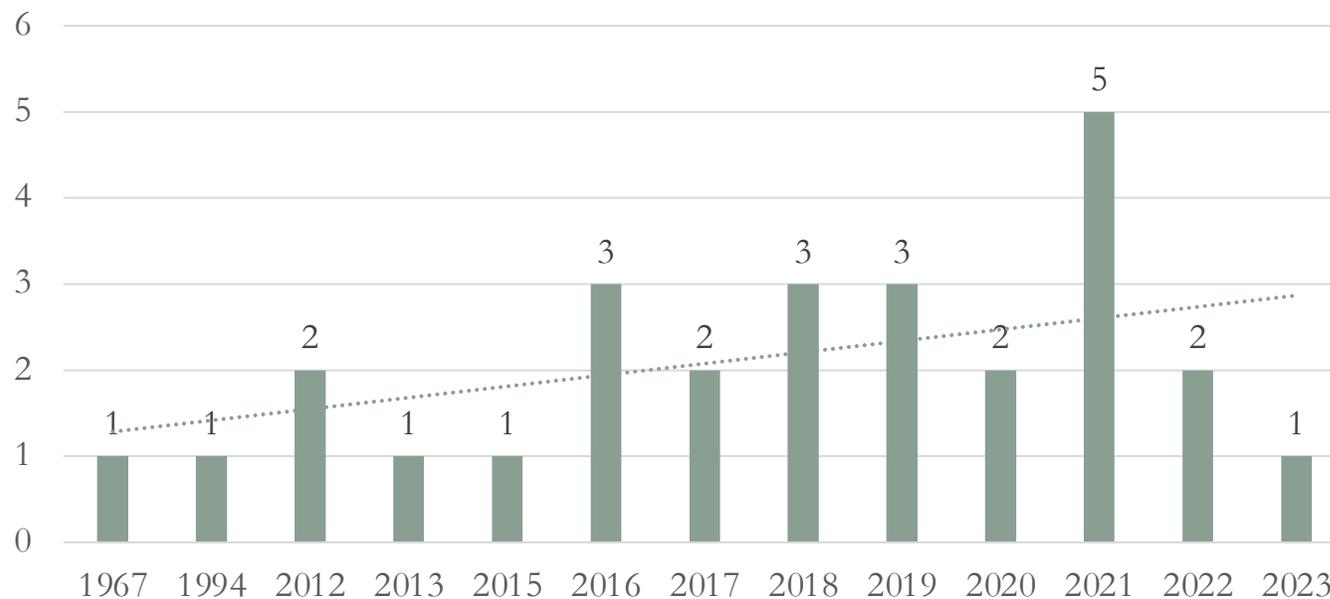
Anno di Registrazione

1. Un incremento costante (B).

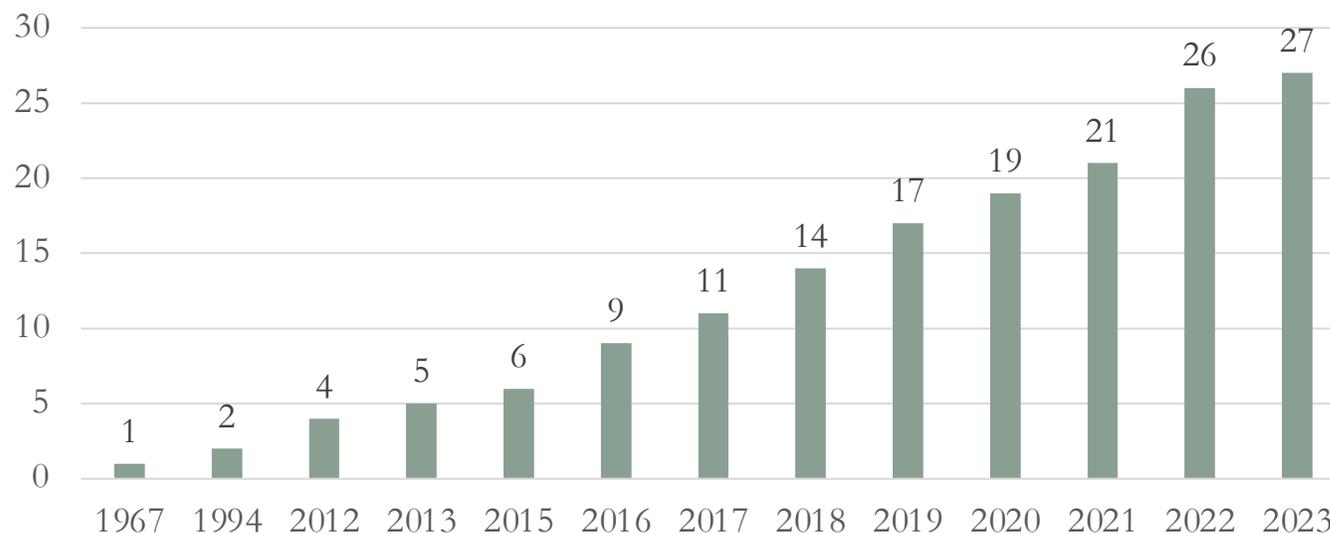
2. **5 anni** tra il 2016 e il 2021 (18) (A).

3. Lieve **decrescita** nel numero di registrazioni negli ultimi tre anni(A).

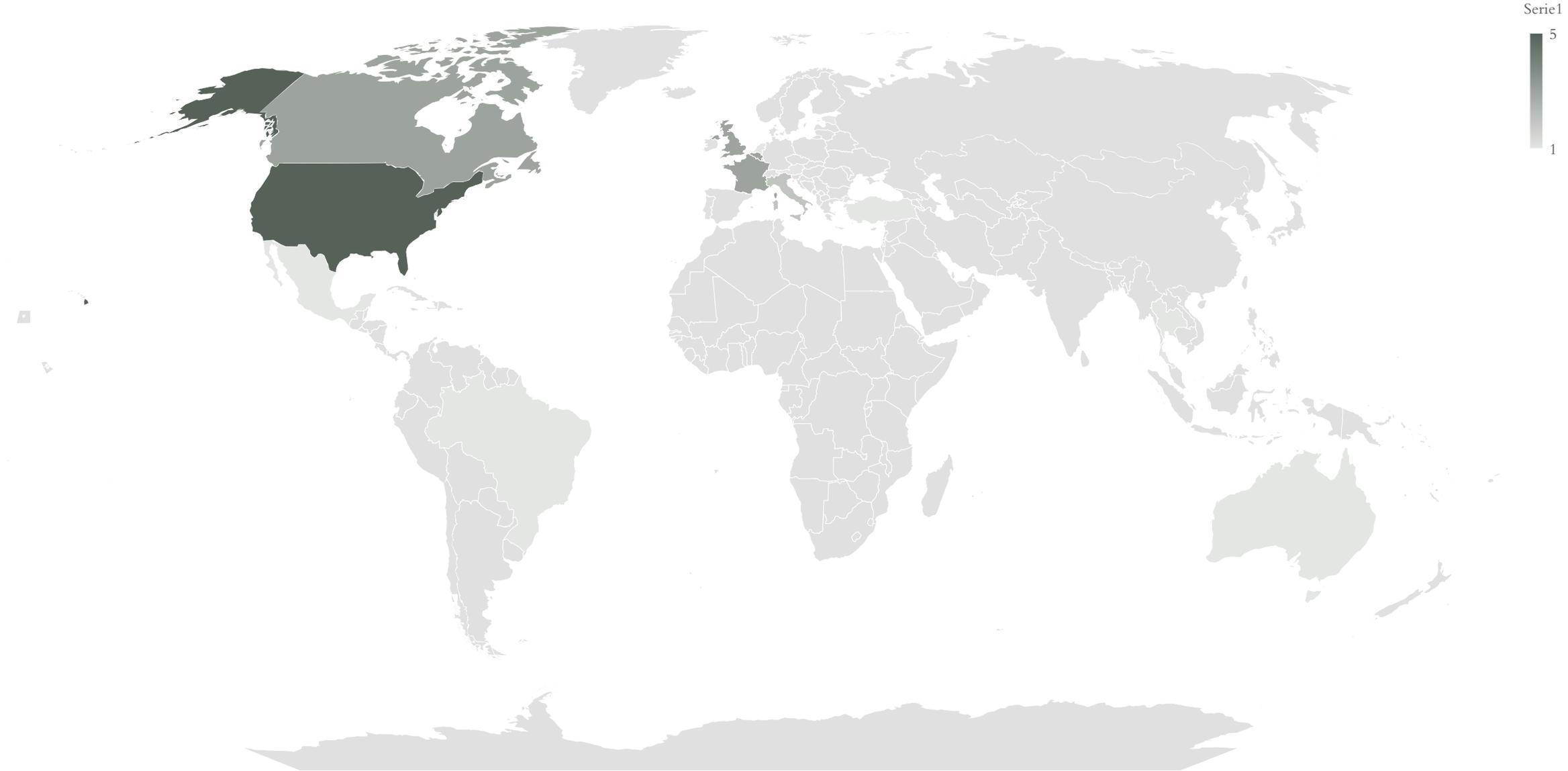
Year of Registration (A)



Historical Growth (B)



Geografia legale



Geografia legale

Legal Country	Number
Usa	5
Belgium	3
Canada	3
France	3
UK	3
Italy	2
Australia	1
Austria	1
Brazil	1
Estonia	1
Mexico	1
Thailand	1
the Netherlands	1
Turkey	1

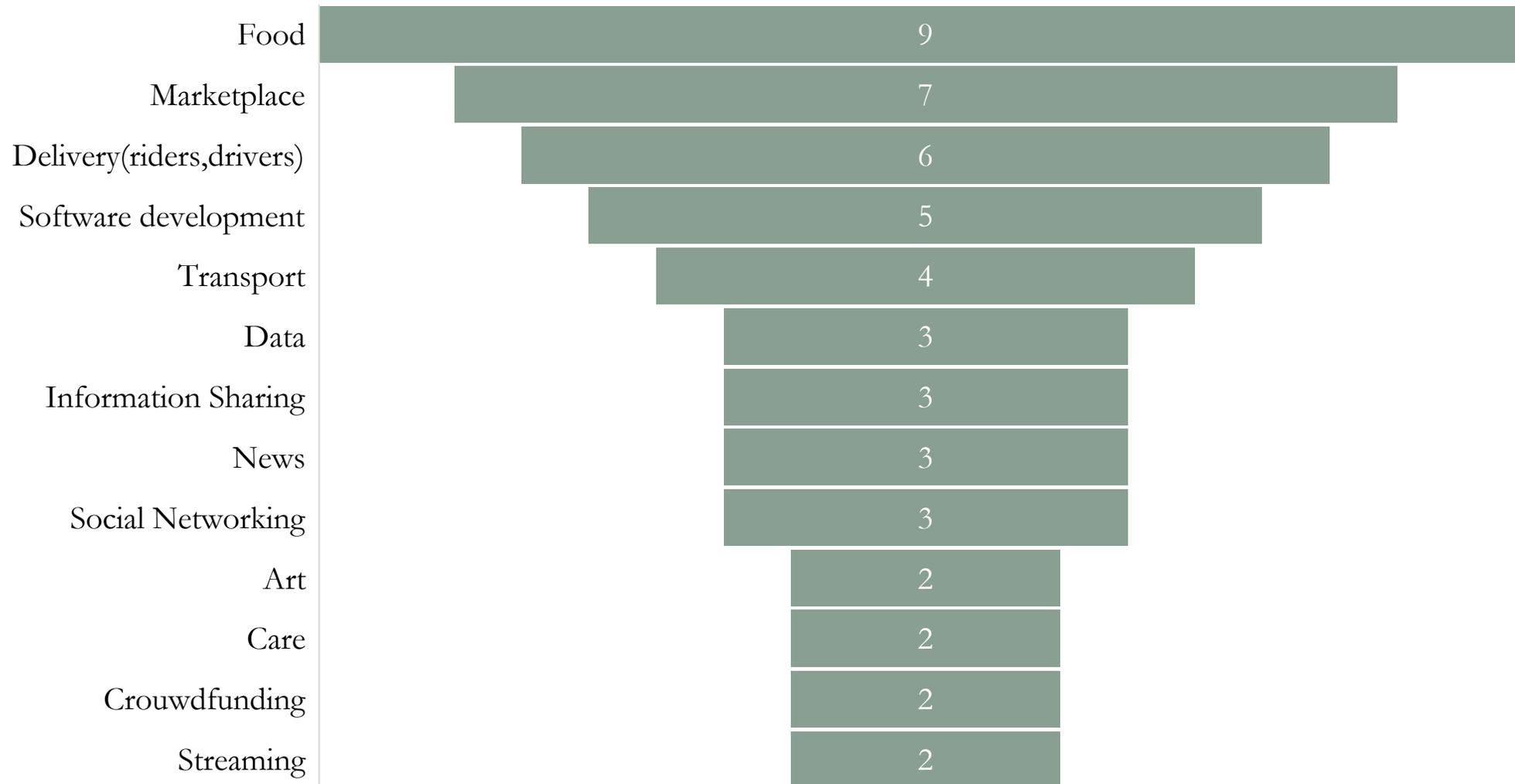
VS

Geografia delle attività

11 multinazionali, solo una attiva in **85 paesi**

Principali attività

(scelta multipla)



Dimensioni

10 grandi (L) (2024):

1. Oltre **50 Lavoratori**
2. Almeno **100 Membri**
3. Oltre **500 Transazioni**
4. E generano **Entrate** di almeno **1 milione US\$** nel 2023.

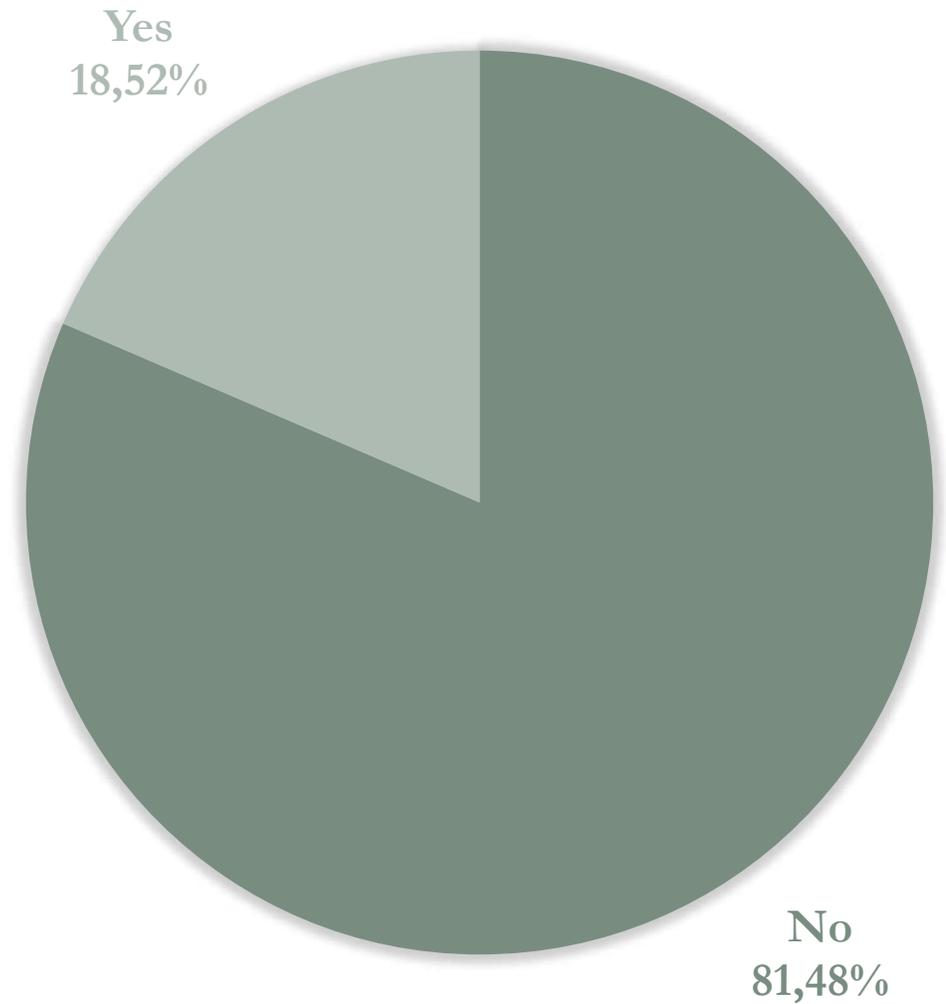
9 piccole (S)

8 medie (M)

N.	Membership	Revenue	Labor Force	Market	Size
1	S	M	L	L	L
2	.	S	L	L	M
3	S	S	S	L	S
4	S	S	S	L	S
5	.	S	S	S	S
6	L	S	L	.	M
7	L	L	L	L	L
8	M	S	M	M	M
9	M	S	S	S	S
10	L	L	L	L	L
11	M	L	M	L	L
12	L	M	L	L	L
13	S	S	S	L	S
14	M	S	M	M	M
15	M	L	L	L	L
16	.	S	S	L	S
17	.	S	M	L	M
18	L	M	S	L	M
19	M	S	M	S	M
20	S	S	S	L	S
21	.	S	S	M	S
22	L	M	L	L	L
23	L	L	M	.	L
24	L	S	M	L	L
25	L	L	L	.	L
26	L	S	S	M	M
27	S	S	S	M	S

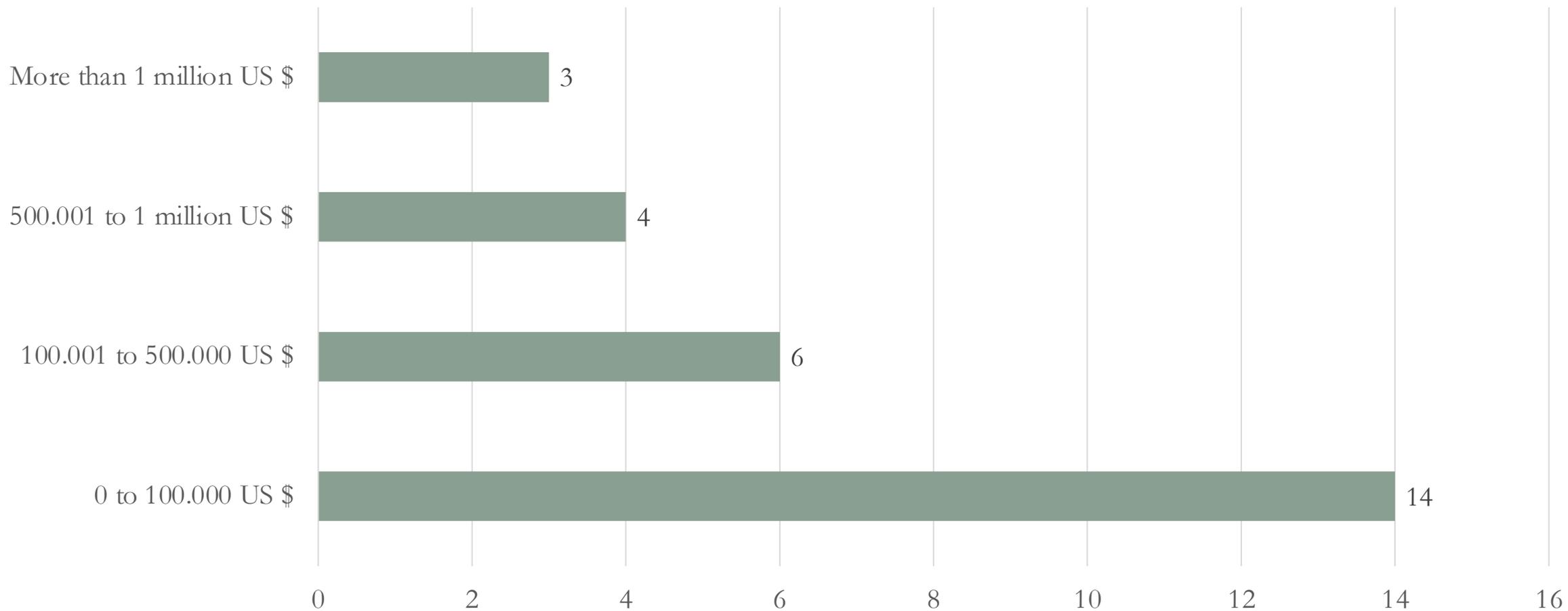
Blockchain

1. Governance
2. Trasparenza
3. Moneta



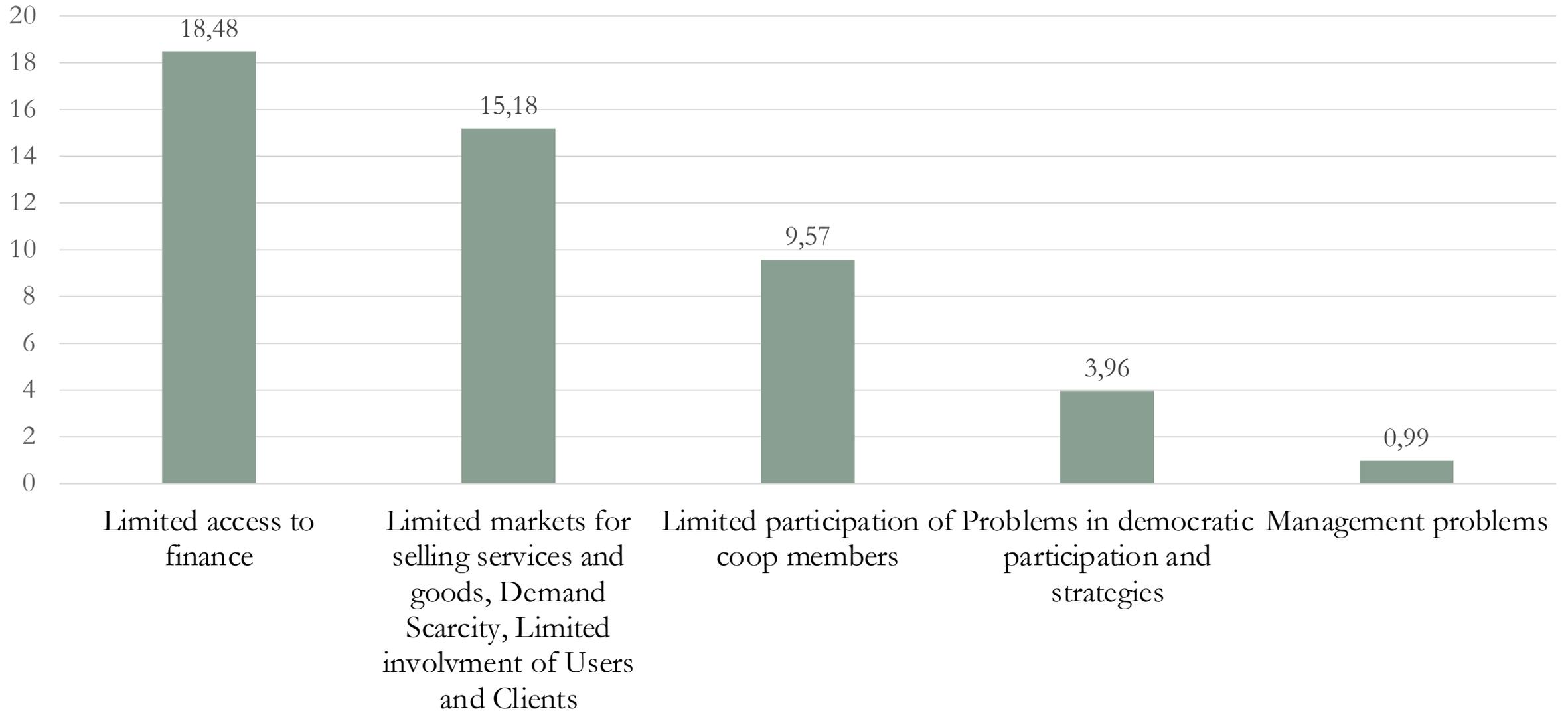
Finanza

Investimenti dalla fondazione



Sfide

1) Finanziarie 2) Di mercato 3) Democrazia 4) Legali



An illustration on the left side of the slide shows a person in a dark suit and red tie standing under a white umbrella. The person is holding a briefcase and looking down. Several large, thick, red arrows are falling from the top left towards the person, symbolizing a crisis or heavy burden. The background is a teal color with a subtle pattern of overlapping triangles.

The Drivers Cooperative

Estate 2024

Crisi

Crollo dei ricavi (-60% nei primi sei mesi del 2024)

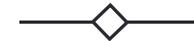
Scarsa democrazia e **conflitti di potere nella governance**

Non una piattaforma di ride-hailing, ma il programma **MTA**

Access-a-Ride

50-100 lavoratori

Ritardi nei pagamenti





Volume 15 Issue 1



RESEARCH
ARTICLE



OPEN
ACCESS



PEER
REVIEWED

The Blown Head Gasket Effect: Rise and struggles of The Drivers Cooperative in New York City

Stefano Tortorici *Scuola Normale Superiore*

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14763/2026.1.2063>

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Competing Interests: The author has declared that no competing interests exist that have influenced the text.

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Keywords: Digital solidarity economies, Platform cooperativism, Ride-hailing, Multistakeholder, Platform infrastructures

Metodologia



- * **16 interviste semi-strutturate** (40 min – 1h30) con driver, co-fondatori (Denver e NYC), staff e leader sindacali del settore taxi di NYC; inclusa **un'intervista di gruppo** con il management.
- * **3 mesi di ricerca etnografica mirata** e oltre **6 mesi di osservazione partecipante** (assemblee, talk pubblici, manifestazioni, canali interni)
(marzo 2023 – aprile 2025).
- * **Ricerca documentale:** statuto, legislazione, lettere e comunicazioni interne.



Una Tipologia delle Sfide

3 cluster principali

1. Strutturali

2. Organizzativi

3. Errori da first mover e specifici di contesto

1. Strutturali

- Settore a **bassi margini e altamente competitivo**
 - **Finanza**
 - **Consumatori esigenti**
 - **“Cos’è una cooperativa?”**
 - **Competenze**

2. Gestire un'impresa democratica

- **Democrazia vs Urgenza**
 - **Educazione**
 - **Fragmentazione**

3. Errori da first mover e specifici di contesto

Una necessità

Statuto

Trasparenza

Tempo

La Piattaforma

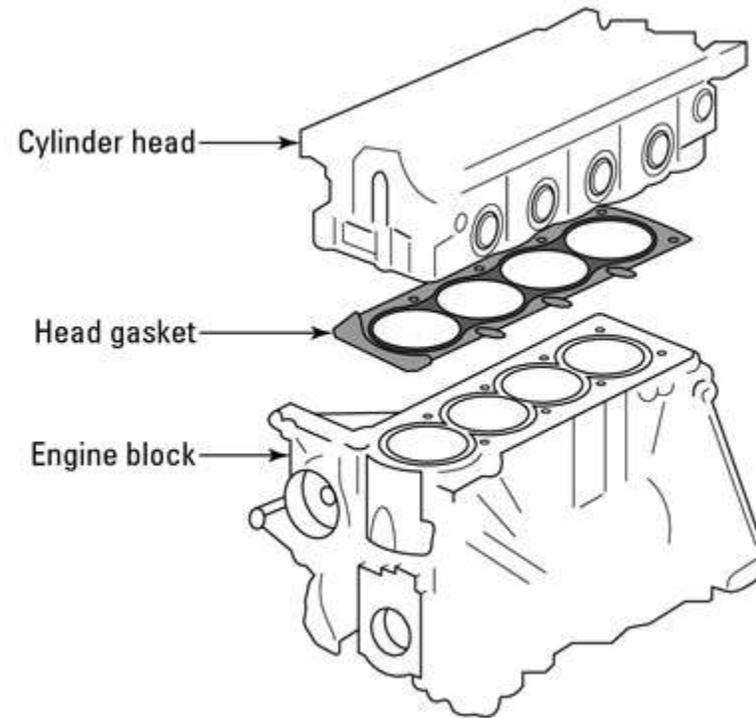
«Questo è uno degli errori, il più grande errore che abbiamo fatto: la piattaforma. È stata costruita male. [...] Abbiamo speso milioni su Co-op Drive.»

Stakeholder divergenti possono fratturarsi nel tentativo di sviluppare una piattaforma cooperativa

The Blown Head Gasket Effect

La Piattaforma

Ingegneri



La Cooperativa

Autisti

Capitale

Politica

Tempo

Risultati

1. Contrazione

2. Insoddisfazione degli autisti

3. Autosfruttamento



Achievements

Una cooperativa di lavoro (con un nuovo board eletto e una nuova piattaforma appena lanciata)

Una federazione

Maggiore potere dei lavoratori

Avanzamenti legislativi

E con l'Intelligenza Artificiale?



AI And Machine Learning

5 Ways Cooperatives Can Shape the Future of AI

by Trebor Scholz and Stefano Tortorici

June 25, 2025



EschCollection/Getty Images

Summary. AI development is dominated by a handful of powerful firms, raising concerns about equity, accountability, and social harm. AI cooperatives—democratically governed and community-owned—offer a promising alternative through five key... [more](#)

Today, AI development is controlled by a small cadre of firms. Companies like OpenAI, Alphabet, Amazon, Meta, and Microsoft dominate through vast computational resources, massive proprietary datasets, deep pools of technical talent, extractive data practices, low-cost labor, and capital that enables continuous experimentation and rapid deployment. Even open-source



COOPERATIVE AI?

Trebor Scholz and Stefano Tortorici



Cooperative AI

AI Cooperatives

Cosa le cooperative stanno
facendo

Imprese, strumenti, educazione

Cooperative AI

Che politica e su che alleanze
possono contare

Politica

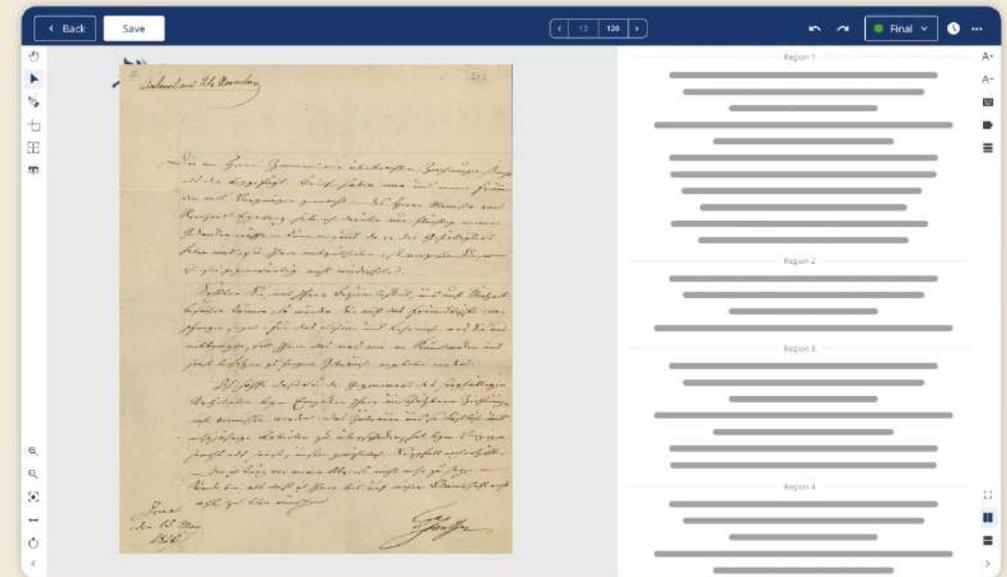
Riconoscimento Ottico (OCR)
Trascrizione linguaggio a mano (HTR)
Reti Neurali Profonde

Unlock the past with Transkribus

Transkribus enables you to automatically recognise text easily, edit seamlessly, collaborate effortlessly, and even train your custom AI for digitizing and interpreting historical documents of any form.

[See features](#)[Try for free](#)

50 credits for free. Every month.



Transkribus-Read Coop

Societas Cooperativa Europaea (SCE)

Spin off di due progetti Europei di EC.
Finanziamenti per **10.6 milioni di Euro**

Ottobre 24

230 membri da **27** paesi

235 mila users

90 milioni di immagini processate

CER medio: **5%**

Eccezione? Nicchia? Durerà nel tempo?



RESEARCH ARTICLE

REVISI **The artificial intelligence cooperative: READ-COOP, Transkribus, and the benefits of shared community infrastructure for automated text recognition**

[version 2; peer review: 2 approved]

Melissa Terras¹, Bettina Anzinger², Paul Gooding³, Günter Mühlberger⁴, Michaela Prien², Joe Nockels⁵, C. Annemieke Romein⁶, Andy Stauder², Florian Stauder²

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⁵Digital Humanities Institute, University of Sheffield, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S3 7QY, UK

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Latest published: 07 Oct 2025, 5:16
<https://doi.org/10.12688/openresearch.18747.2>

Abstract

Background

Stakeholder input into Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) is critical for creating AI systems that are both innovative and accountable. This paper examines READ-COOP (<https://readcoop.eu>), a platform cooperative that develops and hosts its own AI and ML Automated Text Recognition (ATR) tools (<https://transkribus.org>). This case study demonstrates an alternative cooperative governance model for technology innovation and creating responsible AI infrastructure.

Methods

We employ Reflection-In-Action and a qualitative Member questionnaire to document the development of READ-COOP from European Commission funded research project to independent cooperative. We assess the cooperative's structure, management, and community engagement from 2019 to 2024, including membership

Open Peer Review

Approval Status

	1	2
version 2 (revision) 07 Oct 2025	 view	 view
version 1 20 Jan 2025	 view	 view

1. **R. Trebor Scholz**, The New School, New York, USA

2. **Thibault Clerice**, Inria, Paris, France

Any reports and responses or comments on the article can be found at the end of the article.

Nonostante tutti i problemi delle cooperative (di piattaforma)

COOPERATIVE IMPACT

The 3 million cooperatives on earth contribute to sustainable economic growth and stable, quality employment

THE
COOPERATIVE
MOVEMENT
ACCOUNTS

for at least
12%
of humanity

TOP 300 COOPERATIVES GENERATE



2.4
trillions USD
in turnover

COOPERATIVES PROVIDE JOBS OR WORK
OPPORTUNITIES TO



280
million people
across the globe

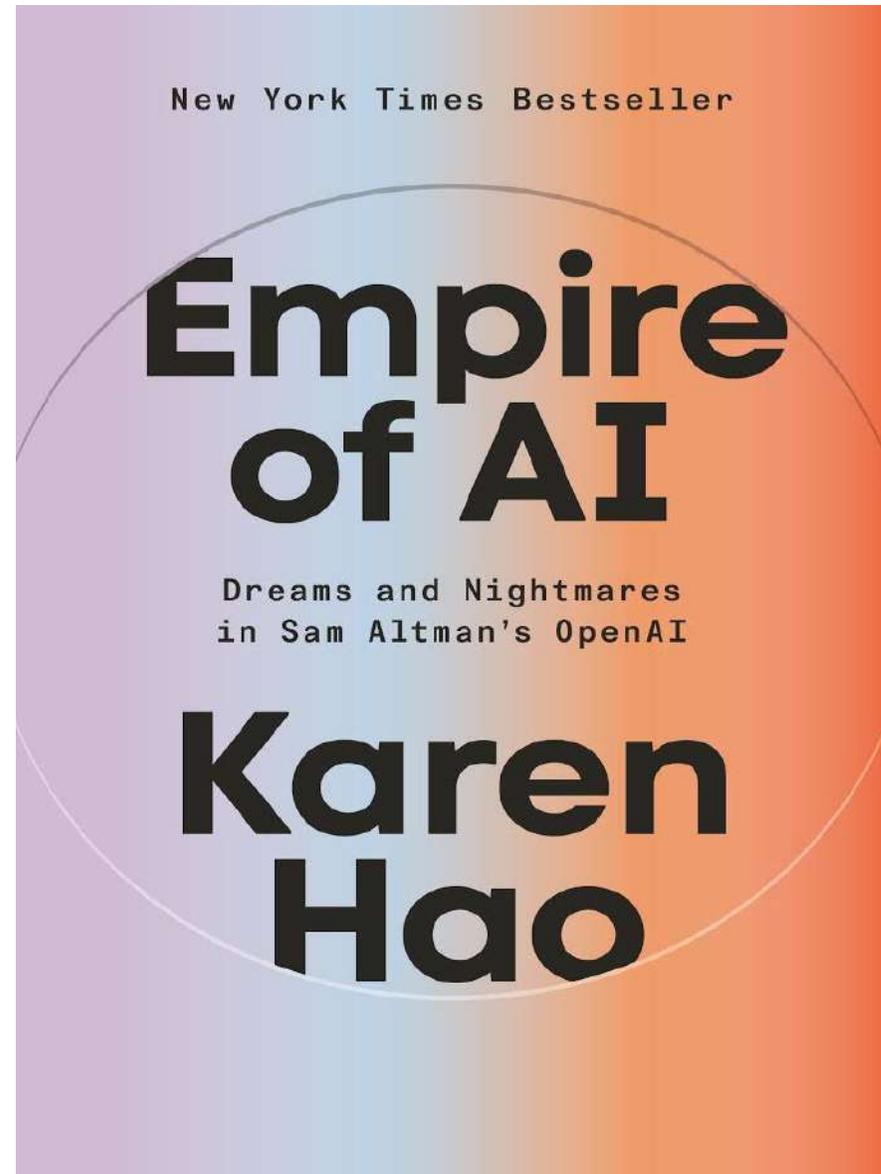
10%

of the world's employed
population.

Le cooperative
hanno un peso
economico
globale

International Cooperative Alliance
(<https://ica.coop/en>).

AI alza
ulteriormente
la posta



EuroStack – A European Alternative for Digital Sovereignty



Supported by



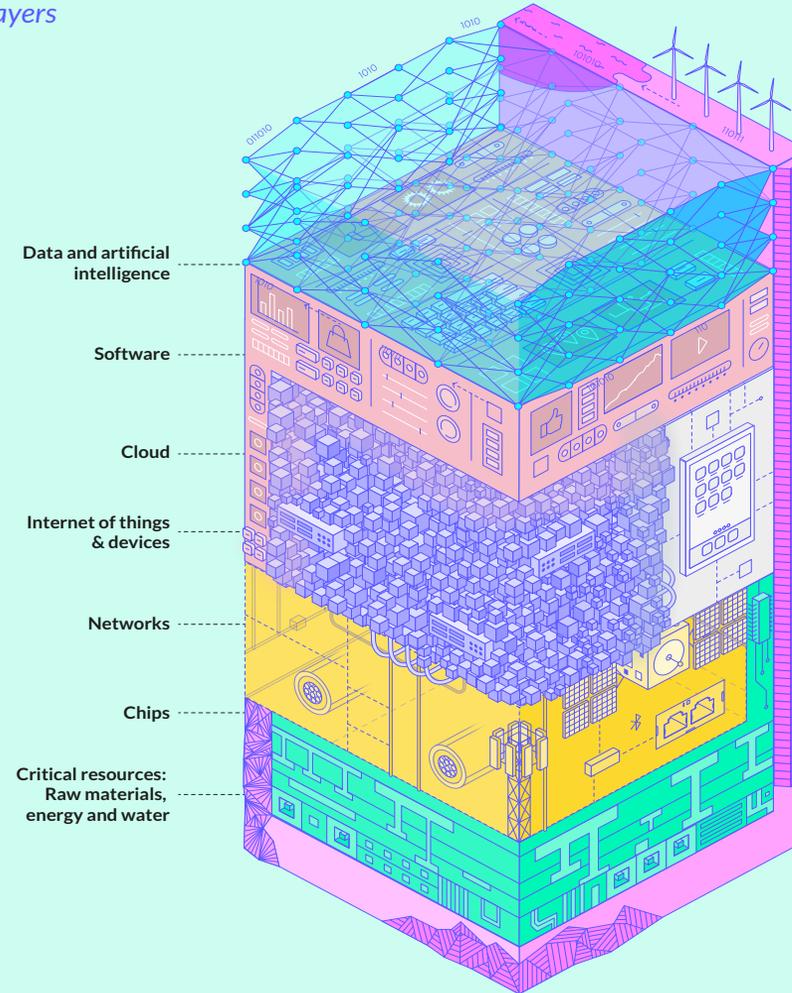
Commissioned by

BertelsmannStiftung

Bria et al. 2025

The current digital stack

The layers



A Cooperative Digital Stack?

Non è un problema tecnico

... e politicamente?

Le cooperative mancano una struttura politica democratica

Non c'è un serio dibattito politico

L'ica non riesce a rappresentarle in tal senso

Diverse sfruttano i propri lavoratori e hanno perso qualsiasi
carica alternativa

... & Cooperative AI: una convergenza tra movimenti e cooperative

Per affrontare le radicali esternalità dell'IA (inclusi il lavoro nascosto, i costi ambientali e altro), le cooperative devono:

- diventare **attori politici radicali**
- **costruire alleanze** con i movimenti sociali, i sindacati e gli attori pubblici progressisti.

Allo stesso tempo, i movimenti sociali possono valorizzare le cooperative come strumenti concreti per portare avanti le proprie rivendicazioni.

Le sfide del cooperativismo

Economiche e tecniche

Politiche e organizzative

20 The challenges of platform cooperativism and the path ahead

Stefano Tortorici

1 Introduction

Cooperativism is not new, but platforms and digital technologies are. Applying cooperative principles to digital technologies and building platform cooperatives means inheriting the hurdles but also the lessons learnt over the two-century history of cooperatives (Benkler, 2017). However, it also requires navigating completely new challenges typical of platform businesses, e.g., expanding the demand till reaching the network effect and the ability to collect and use data. This chapter reviews the legacy and emerging dual challenges of cooperatives and platform cooperativism, namely their political identity and their business hurdles. In the end, it suggests possible paths to strengthen platform cooperativism to address the most pressing concerns of our time: the climate crisis, war, and divisions along gender, race, and class lines.

The structure of the chapter parallels the duality of cooperativism and its primary challenges. The first section outlines the political identity crisis within cooperativism and platform cooperativism. The second, based on an extensive literature review, highlights the challenges of scale, finance, and the market in cooperativism, and – drawing on case studies and data from an international survey – demonstrates how these difficulties persist and may be amplified by the characteristics of the platform economy in platform cooperativism. The third section suggests possible paths to address these challenges.

2 Theoretical framework

This study explores the dual nature of cooperativism (Jones & Kalmi, 2012; Marshall, 2014; Jossa, 2020; Dorigatti & Menzani, 2021) and the challenges faced by both traditional and platform cooperatives (Sacchetto & Semenzin, 2014; Hoyt & Menzani, 2013; Danna, 2019; Grohmann, 2021; Bunders et al., 2022; Mannan & Pek, 2023; Bunders, 2023). Cooperatives are defined based on the definition provided by the International Cooperative Alliance (hereafter ICA), while platform cooperatives are defined according to Ed Mayo (2019) and Trebor Scholz (2023).

**Estendere la metodologia e i principi Fairwork alle
(piattaforme) cooperative**



Fairwork

Fairwork

«un'iniziativa di ricerca globale che definisce e valuta standard minimi nel lavoro su piattaforma digitale»

Dal 2018

734 valutazioni di aziende, **41** paesi, **414** cambiamenti introdotti da **66** aziende.



Fairwork

Scoring System



Principle	First point		Second point		Total
 Fair Pay	1	+	1	=	2
 Fair Conditions	1	+	1	=	2
 Fair Contracts	1	+	1	=	2
 Fair Management	1	+	1	=	2
 Fair Representation	1	+	1	=	2

Maximum possible Fairwork Score



Methods: **Data Collection**



Desk research

Map platforms
and analyse
contracts / T&Cs

+

Worker interviews

Interview 6-10
workers per platform
per year

+

Manager interviews

Interview managers,
request evidence,
request changes

Putting it all together

Final scores are collectively decided and **peer-reviewed** by
two reviewers from other Fairwork country teams

**Estendere la metodologia e i principi Fairwork alle
(piattaforme) cooperative**

1. Principi Fairwork (10)

Leggermente integrati quando necessario

2. Principi Cooperativi (7)

Guidelinea dell'ICA (2015)

3. Principi Politici (to be developed) (10)

Fraser (2022)

1. I tre set di principi Fairwork

Location Based Platform work **Location Based Platform Cooperatives**

Cloudwork

Cloud Platform Cooperatives

AI

AI Cooperatives

Principi

1. Fair Pay

- 1.1 - Ensures workers earn at least the local minimum wage after costs (one point)
- 1.2 - Ensures workers earn at least a local living wage after costs (one additional point)

2. Fair Conditions

- 2.1 - Mitigates task specific risk (one point)
- 2.2 - Ensures safe working conditions and a safety net (one additional point)

3. Fair Contracts

- 3.1 - Provides clear and transparent terms and conditions (one point)
- 3.2 - Ensures that no unfair contract terms are imposed (one additional point)

4. Fair Management

- 4.1 - Provides due process for decisions affecting workers (one point)
- 4.2 - Provides equity in the management process (one additional point)

5. Fair Representation

- 5.1 - Assures freedom of association and the expression of worker voice (one point)
- 5.2 - Supports democratic governance (one additional point)

Fair Pay

1.1 - Local Minimum Wage, ensures workers earn at least the local minimum wage after costs (one point)

Platform workers often have substantial work-related costs to cover, such as transport between jobs, supplies, or fuel, insurance, and maintenance on a vehicle.^[1] Workers' costs sometimes mean their take-home earnings may fall below the local minimum wage.^[2] Workers also absorb the costs of extra time commitment, when they spend time waiting or travelling between jobs, or other unpaid activities necessary for their work, such as mandatory training, which are also considered active hours.^[3] To achieve this point platforms must ensure that work-related costs do not push workers below local minimum wage.

The platform takes appropriate steps to ensure both of the following:

Payment must be on time and in-full.

Workers earn at least the local minimum wage, or the wage set by collective sectoral agreement (whichever is higher) in the place where they work, in their active hours, after costs.^[4]

In the case of platform cooperatives shares and annual dividends should be taken into account.

1.2 - Local Living Wage, ensures workers earn at least a local living wage after costs (one additional point)

2. I principi e le linee guida dell' International Cooperative Alliance (ICA)

7 principi (1995)

Linee guida per l'interpretazione di parole e frasi (2015)

Adesione volontaria e aperta, garantisce che le cooperative abbiano un'adesione volontaria e aperta. (un punto)

Controllo democratico dei membri, garantisce che le cooperative siano gestite democraticamente dai membri. (un punto)

Partecipazione economica dei membri, garantisce un'equa partecipazione economica dei membri. (un punto)

Autonomia e indipendenza, garantisce che le cooperative siano autonome e indipendenti. (un punto)

Educazione, formazione e informazione, garantisce che le cooperative educino, formino e informino in modo trasparente i propri membri. (un punto)

Cooperazione tra cooperative, garantisce che le cooperative cooperino con altre cooperative. (un punto)

Impegno verso la comunità, garantisce che le cooperative si prendano cura delle proprie comunità. (un punto)

3. Valori Politici



Giustizia Climatica

Razziale

Classe

Genere

Disabilità

(2 punti, 1.1 e 1.2)

Internamente (5). All'interno della cooperativa
(rappresentanza, supporto interno, ecc.)

Esternamente (5). Al di fuori della cooperativa (movimenti,
organizzazioni, ecc.)

Tre punteggi separati, da non aggregare

- * Mantenere un confronto con le piattaforme capitalistiche.
- * Alcuni aspetti si sovrappongono, altri contribuiscono a definire ulteriormente gli altri (ad esempio, il principio di “impegno verso la comunità” può essere definito attraverso valori politici).
- * Talvolta, per quanto riguarda i valori politici e cooperativi, il punto può essere assegnato se viene fornita una giustificazione ragionevole tramite l’elaborazione di un elenco di “eccezioni”.

Fairwork and Cooperatives

Workshop 2025

This workshop aims to explore the operationalization of the Fairwork principles for platform cooperatives. In particular, it will open a discussion on how cooperatives might be evaluated not only through the Fairwork lens, but also in relation to the International Cooperative Alliance cooperative principles.

11 JUNE | 15:00-18:00 BST

HYBRID FORMAT* INVITATION ONLY

In-person:
Seminar Room, 1 St Giles,
Oxford Internet Institute,
University of Oxford

***scan QR code for Zoom registration**



Maddy Neghabian
(Outlandish Co-op)



Giuseppe Guerini
(CICOPA)



Ludovica Rogers
(Co-operatives UK)



Belen Albornoz
(FLACSO Ecuador)



Evrans Aydoğan
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Opportunità

Aiutarle in modo costruttivo a garantire condizioni migliori e a rafforzare l'educazione cooperativa, l'identità e il modello di business

Contribuire a prevenire l'auto-sfruttamento

Servire come strumento di advocacy politica e di dibattito pubblico

Distinguere le cooperative radicali da quelle convenzionali; comprendere ciò che è politicamente possibile in contesti diversi e potenzialmente favorire la creazione di nuove reti

Promuovere l'impegno politico cooperativo e la convergenza con i movimenti sociali e i sindacati



Grazie mille
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