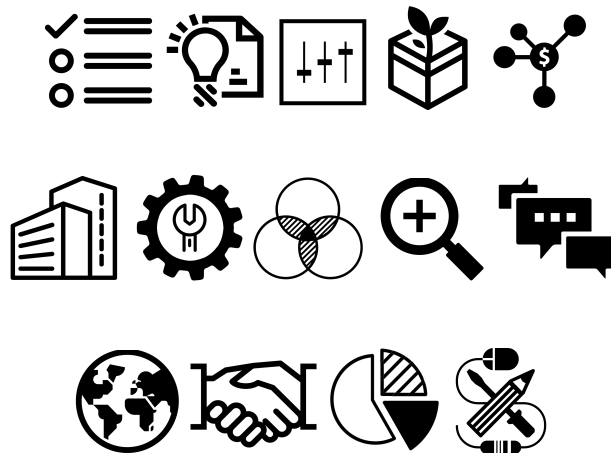


# Summary: procomuns statement and policies for Commons Collaborative Economies at European level



Source, contributors and more info at: <http://procomuns.net/en/policy/>

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## Collaboration means Economy

Collaboration in achieving shared objectives and the provision of goods and services that meet the needs of the population and ensure a decent life is, or should be, the purpose of the economy. The adoption of new information technologies and communication has greatly reduced coordination and collaboration transaction costs, generating a universe of new opportunities.

## Commons as a third productive model

Commons-based production is accomplished by communities who work for mutual and collective benefit under the principles of participation and shared governance, resulting in collective property and open access resources and services. Commons is a third model that

breaks with the binomial market-state notion, formed -allegedly- by the only two organizational models able to meet the needs of the population; it aspires to have a more respectful balance between the conventional replication system and that of a caring social economy, as well as looking after the Environment.

The most renowned and highly successful cases are Free Software (which dominates over proprietary software in many fields, including for example Internet servers) and Wikipedia (a global leader in free knowledge and online participation), which demonstrated that the commons model can succeed and have more presence than traditional proprietary economic models in sectors where it operates. Commons-based production is growing at a fast pace, expanding into many areas.

### **What economy do we want? Extractive and privative collaborative economy vs social, solidarity and commons economies**

Recently, we have seen the emergence and growth of hybrid models that adopt the same ethos and present organizational rationales that are similar to the collaborative commons economic model, based on principles of collaboration, but which in turn -at the same time- privatize other aspects and layers (that are privately owned and which do not allow people who contribute to intervene in its governance model). This is the case of Uber and Airbnb, multinational corporations based in Silicon Valley, which behave in the style of the prevailing globalized capitalist economic model, based on extracting profits through networked collaboration.

The collaborative economy has been on the one hand readapted to a deepening process of economic models, driven primarily by profit and speculation (Internet as the new bubble, like real estate in the past), creating severe inequalities and loss of rights, and on the other hand, it is a reality that allowed the principles of a cooperative, social and solidarity economy to ascend and gain centrality, with great potential for economic transformation and innovative solutions for social and political exclusion problems, as well as environmental sustainability. It is time to choose what type of collaborative economy -and in the end what kind of economy- we want.

### **An economic model for a different economy: from privatization to “commonification”**

The commons collaborative economy also represents a different public policy model. Organizational commons models can be an inspiration for public administrations, becoming more efficient and making better use of public resources, as well as opening new channels for the participation and activation of civil society in solving common problems and public needs through commons-private partnerships. It is a way of moving from prevailing privatization -within the globalization crisis cycle- to "commonification", through the involvement of citizens and democratic institutions in the provision and production of public goods and services, without having to fall into a private framework or state re-centralization, but via the activation of citizenship.

Now is the time for promoting public policies for changes towards a commons based collaborative economy

Now is the time for administrations and governments to join and strengthen this type of collaborative economy, ignoring the one that is appropriating its name, taking action to stop the enclosure of knowledge and digital commons. Now is the time because the emerging role of cities and municipalities as operating systems of change is coming together, as well as the need to advance towards shared solutions against inequalities, participation in and with institutions, testing of new formulas in which economic activity is understood in a holistic way and at the service of the people.

## **The collaborative commons economy: what are we talking about?**

### **Guiding principles**

The guiding principles of the collaborative commons economy approach, and the things we can do, therefore, in order to address the initiatives designed to promote and foster a collaborative economy (taking into account the different actors involved) would be:

#### **What kind of economy?**

- One that seeks to provide a service or resource that is economically sustainable, without putting profit above the purpose of service or entering into speculative dynamics.
- One that recognizes beyond monetary value through governance procedures adopted to ensure the control of value generated by users and community members.
- One in line with company procedures related to the cooperative, social and solidarity economy, such as cooperative tradition and the third sector (e.g. foundations representing the community).
- One which is attentive and responsible for externalities generated, both in terms of environmental and social reproduction.
- One that includes principles of equality and justice in the development and distribution of work, focusing on the welfare of people in the governance of the community.

#### **What kind of knowledge?**

- Open knowledge through the use of open licenses (such as Creative Commons licenses). One that seeks to promote access and reclaim the resources generated through public or collective ownership.

## What kind of technology?

- Technology options that favor the transparency, participation and freedom of citizens, taxpayers and users. In this sense, one based on free software, open standards and if possible on decentralized architectures.

From the Barcola group (Barcelona Col·laborativa) and the collaborative peer production initiatives under its umbrella, informed by the research developed by the Dimmons.net group at IN3-UOC and the P2Pvalue European Project, in connection with the procomuns.net conference (March 2016 Barcelona, which had more than 400 participants), and as a result of an open parallel process of participation in the co-design of public policies, we propose this set of recommendations, followed by specific measures:

## General principles

- Economic policy: To support SMEs following the rationale of a cooperative economy, social solidarity and the companies with production and consumption patterns which take care of the environment, social reproduction and which are inclusive. This means adapting business methods and the role of the citizen as a producer in the collaborative commons economy .
- Technology policy: To support free and decentralized technologies.
- Political knowledge and innovation: To support open knowledge and ensure that innovation is funded by public funds available under free licenses.
- Public policy (public administration / public services): To encourage the creation of partnerships between public administrations and the collaborative commons economy, within the strategy to move from privatization to "commonification".

Among more than 120 proposals generated, these 10 measures below are an example of the ones with more support from participants at the procomuns.net event, which were prioritized and subsequently joined an extensive collection of policies in a working document which is available here <http://procomuns.net/en/policy/>

1. Improving regulations for a commons collaborative economy: Explore new forms of legislation on legal / economic subjects, beyond multinational profit models, that promote participatory governance, a social mission and / or environmental sustainability.
2. Promote the incubation of new projects and initiatives in the collaborative commons economy: Create an incubator with physical and technological infrastructure designed for commons, and facilitate access to resources for collective commons entrepreneurship, which -apart from the positive social impact- would promote viable projects meeting the criteria of openness, reusability, transparency, etc.
3. Promote existing formulas or enhance new ones for financing commons initiatives: Create a call to fund innovative pilot projects co-financed by a match-funding model,

which in turn creates a “pool” for projects with commons criteria, ultimately combining individual crowdfunding with seed funding, which multiplies each citizen’s input.

4. Adopting or reassigning the use of spaces and other public infrastructures for this sector: Enable joint management of workspaces and empty premises for the work and development of collaborative commons production projects, facilitating mobility and the sharing and promotion of sector professionals and stakeholders.
5. Change how public administrations operate internally on some fronts linked to commons: Conduct a pilot scheme in which public bodies and governments use community actors or services as commons companies, such as guifi.net infrastructures for digital communication.
6. Combat malpractice and corruption in government policy in the field of technology and knowledge: Mandatory registration of meetings and contacts with lobbyists and lobbyists representing the economic interests of large telecommunications and technology services corporations.
7. Assist in promoting cities and neighbourhoods in order to bring their economies and other related sectors closer: To promote a network of open manufacturing spaces, such as FabLabs, makerspaces, libraries, community centers and other municipal bodies or educational programs with municipal participation, focusing on economic recovery, reuse and stimulus.
8. Expand city brands in terms of the external visibility of local initiatives: Promote organic, social, repairable -with no planned obsolescence-, transparent, open and free source product seals.
9. Making sure investments in major technological events contribute to promoting local commons: Promoting conferences and major events in cities to give visibility and support to the collaborative commons economy, ensuring the promotion of open technology and local commons experiences.
10. Encourage and support the research and understanding of this phenomenon in order to move forward: Provide open access to public data on economic and social aspects, entrepreneurship, support actions, results, etc. (always respecting privacy regulations).