GHENT
CITY OF THE COMMONS

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GEF

oikos

DENKTANK VOOR SOCIAAL-ECOLOGISCHE VERANDERING

Ghent: example of historical waves of citizens' initiatives:

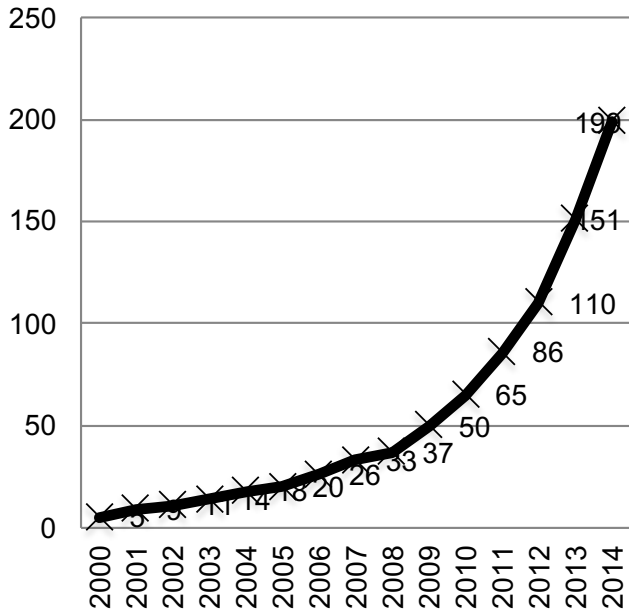
***First wave**: guilds in Middle Ages*

***Second wave**: industrial city and co-ops (first in 1873)*

A new wave of *commons* (citizens' initiatives)

+/- 500 initiatives in **Ghent**

Flanders: 10x more new initiatives than 10 years ago



Citizens create and share knowledge, software and the economy

Citizens initiative: sharing electric cars
cooperative, shares = 250€; 100% electric & 100% digital
City policy: free parking

Democracy is multiple (also citizens' case)

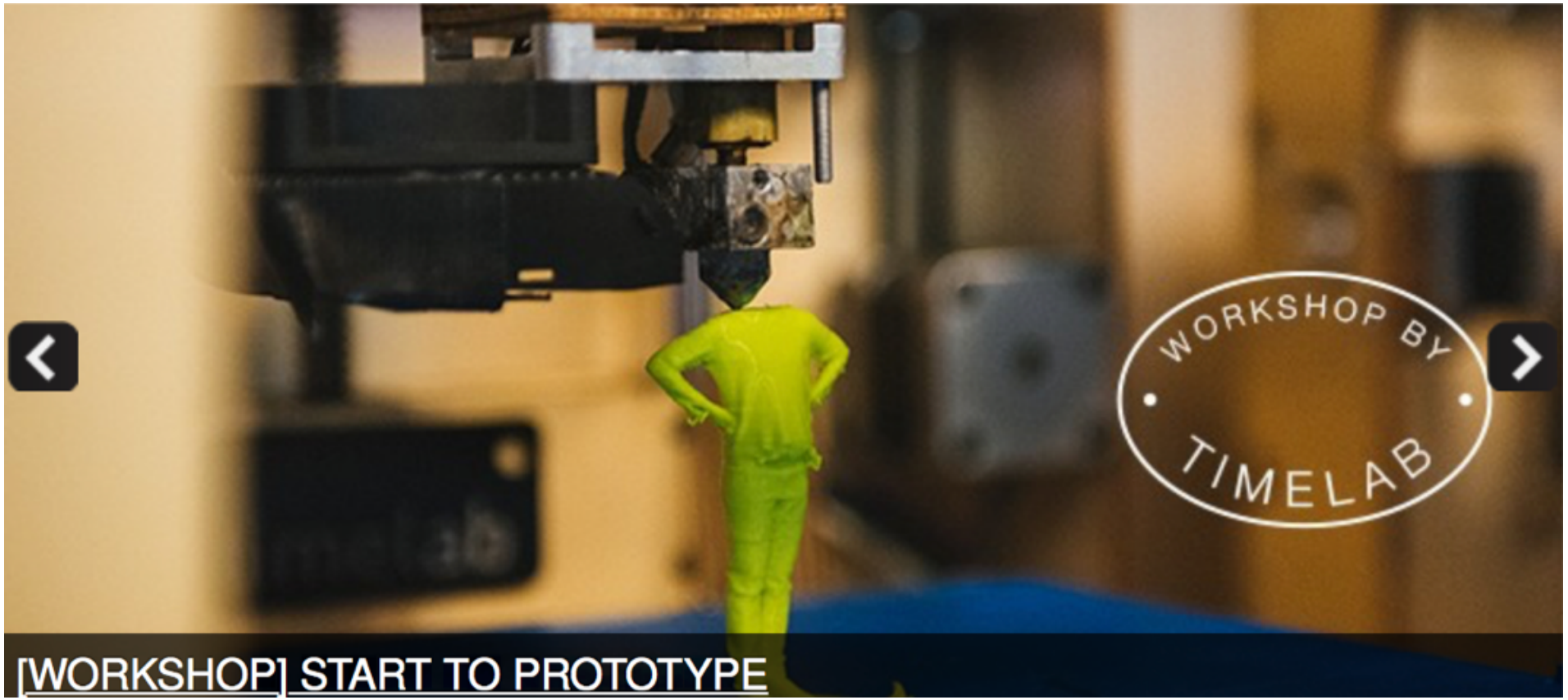
From participation to co-creation

Stimulate co-operation, respect autonomy

New institutions & processes for public-civil partnerships

New institutions & processes:

- incubator for civic entrepreneurs (logic of contribution/generative logic and stead of profit/extraction)
- Chamber of the Commons (compare with Chamber of Commerce)
- City level finance (crowdfunding, ethical urban bank, …)



Living Streets in Ghent: *reclaiming the streets*

Ghent: project Buurzame Stroom

citydistrict “Sint Amandsberg”: 1128 houses/apartments
Dense populated, big diversity

- Putting solar panels on all possible roofs (e.g. group purchase for residents, roofs of people don’t want to invest et.)
- Decrease energy consumption households and SME’s
- Increase efficiency of the grid (battery, storage of heat, …)

New vision on government: the Partner State

city = vibrant community of creative citizens

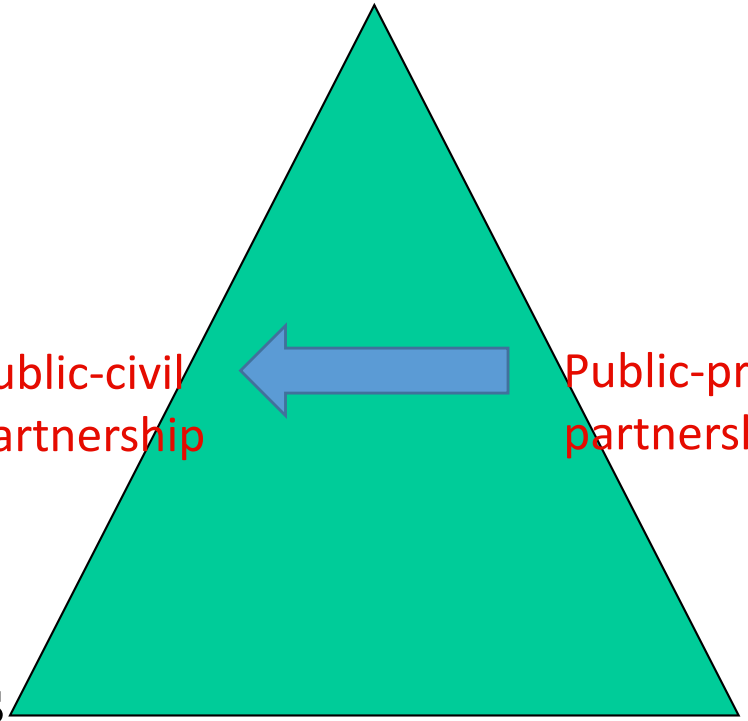
How to create public-civic synergies?

e.g. Common Food Strategy

Crowdfunding platform of the city: if citizens support your initiative, government will also

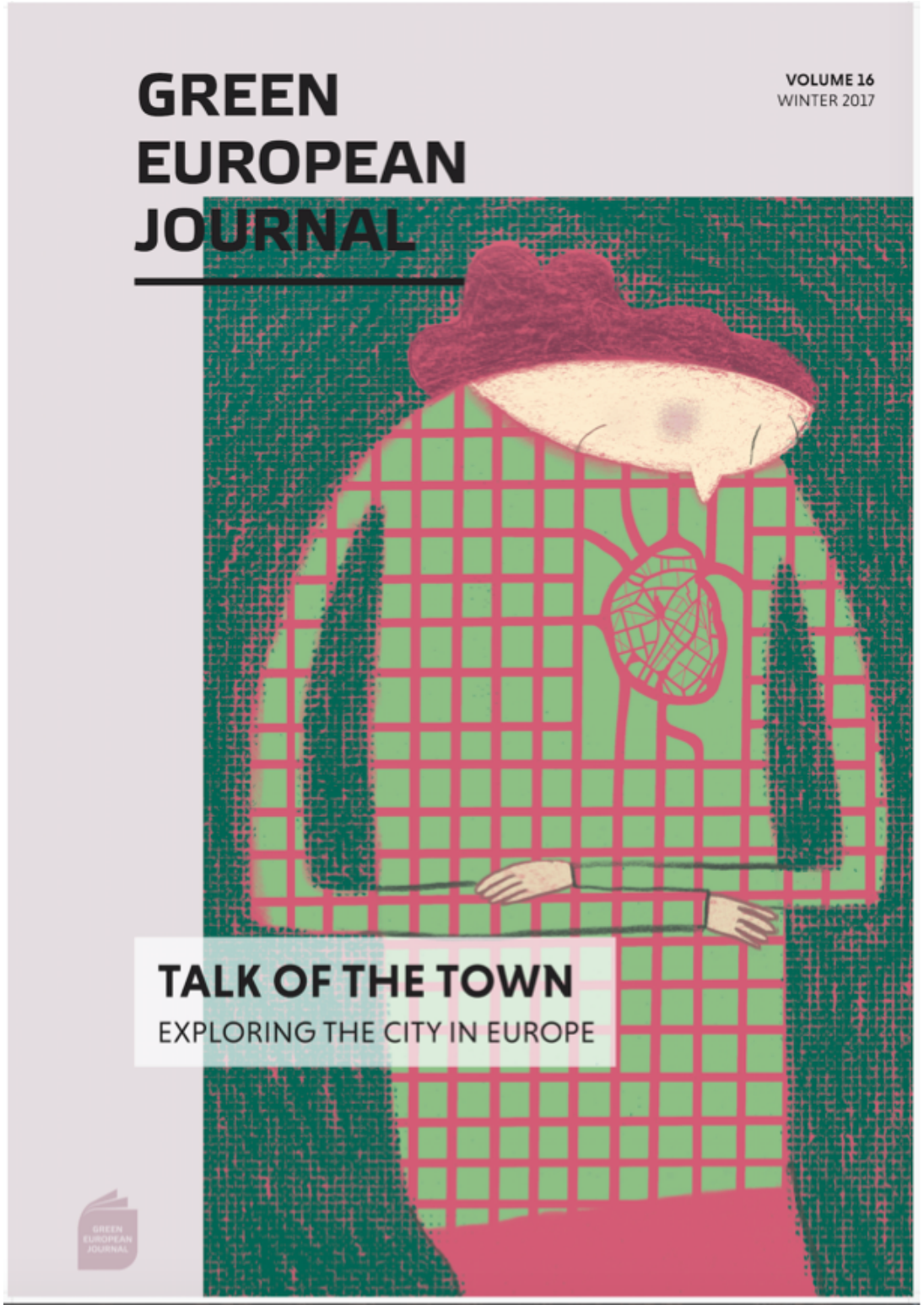
Society: 3 ways of organizing, each with its own social relations and logic

Commons: ethics of care



State: universal rights (and bureaucracy

Market: profit and growth



The city as the new political centre

Green cities are the prototype of sustainable societies

But!

Cities = battlefield where the fight about ‘the good life’ is fought over

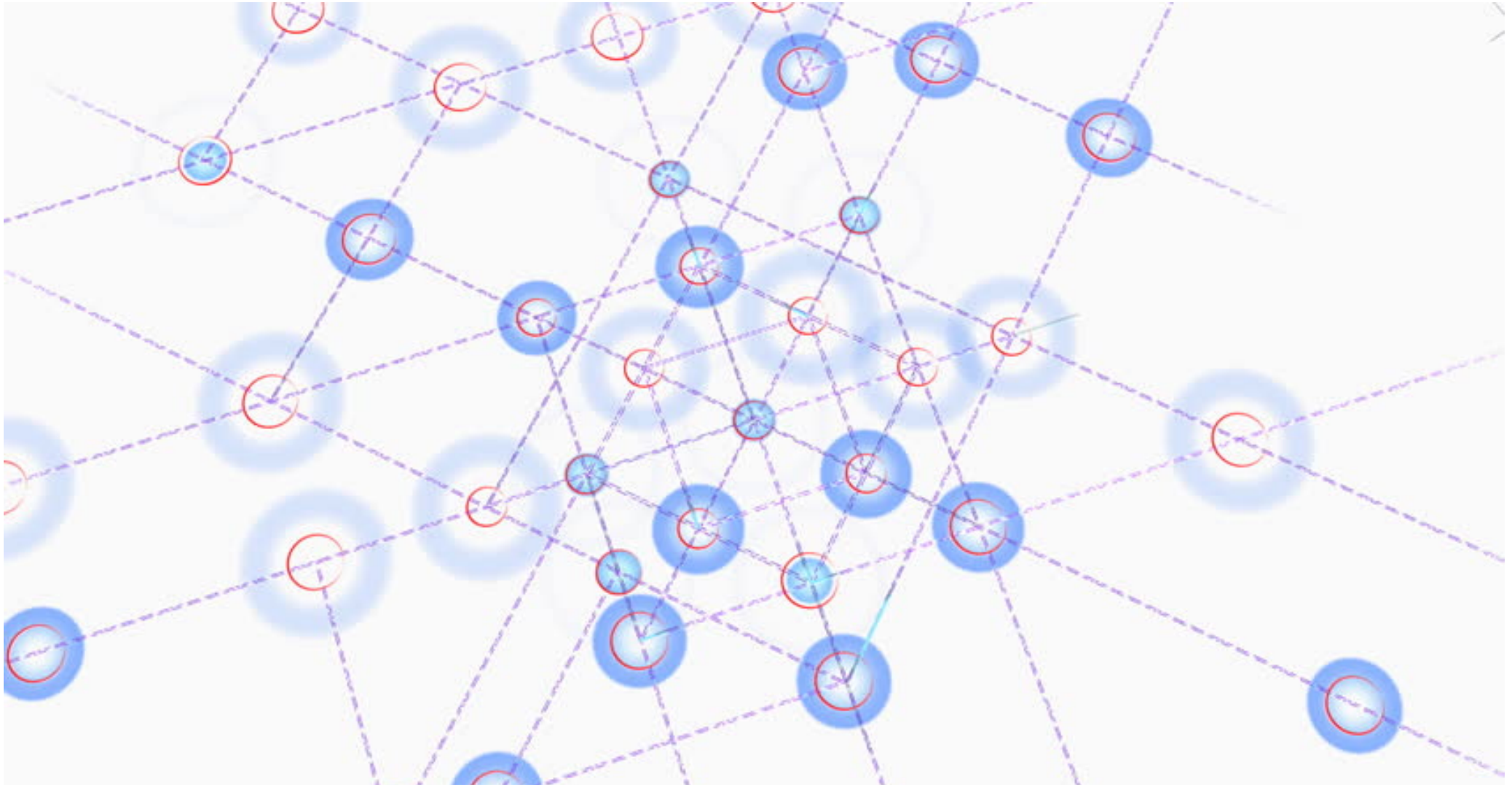
TWO ROADS:

- *The money decides* privatisation/gentrification/segregation

- *A good life for all* where citizens take back control

The power of cooperation: mutualising digital infrastructures (open source digital platforms, e.g. Fairbnb, …)

-> translocal political networks

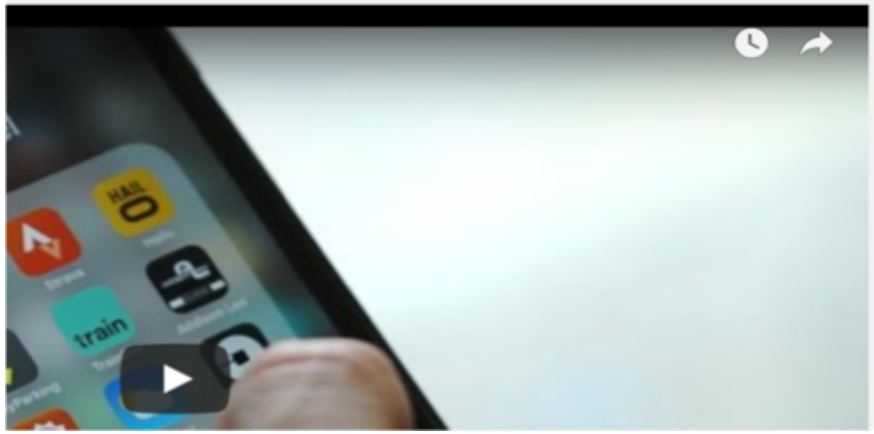


Cities have to become a crucial transnational governance level

Translocal cooperation of movements and progressive cities: *local is always at the same time global*)

We can do better than Uber

Updates 1 | Comments 3 | Supporters 464 | Contact project



Supporters

We want to build a driver-owned minicab firm and ride-hailing app that will provide an ethical, co-operative alternative to Uber.

£12,207 raised of £30,000 target 41 %

464 supporters **13** days left

LATEST SIGN UP £

NEW ECONOMICS FOUNDATION

NEW ECONOMICS FOUNDATION CALLS FOR 'KHAN'S CARS' AS MUTUALLY-OWNED ALTERNATIVE TO UBER

'KHAN'S CARS' COULD BE A MUTUALLY-OWNED, PUBLICLY-REGULATED ALTERNATIVE TO UBER

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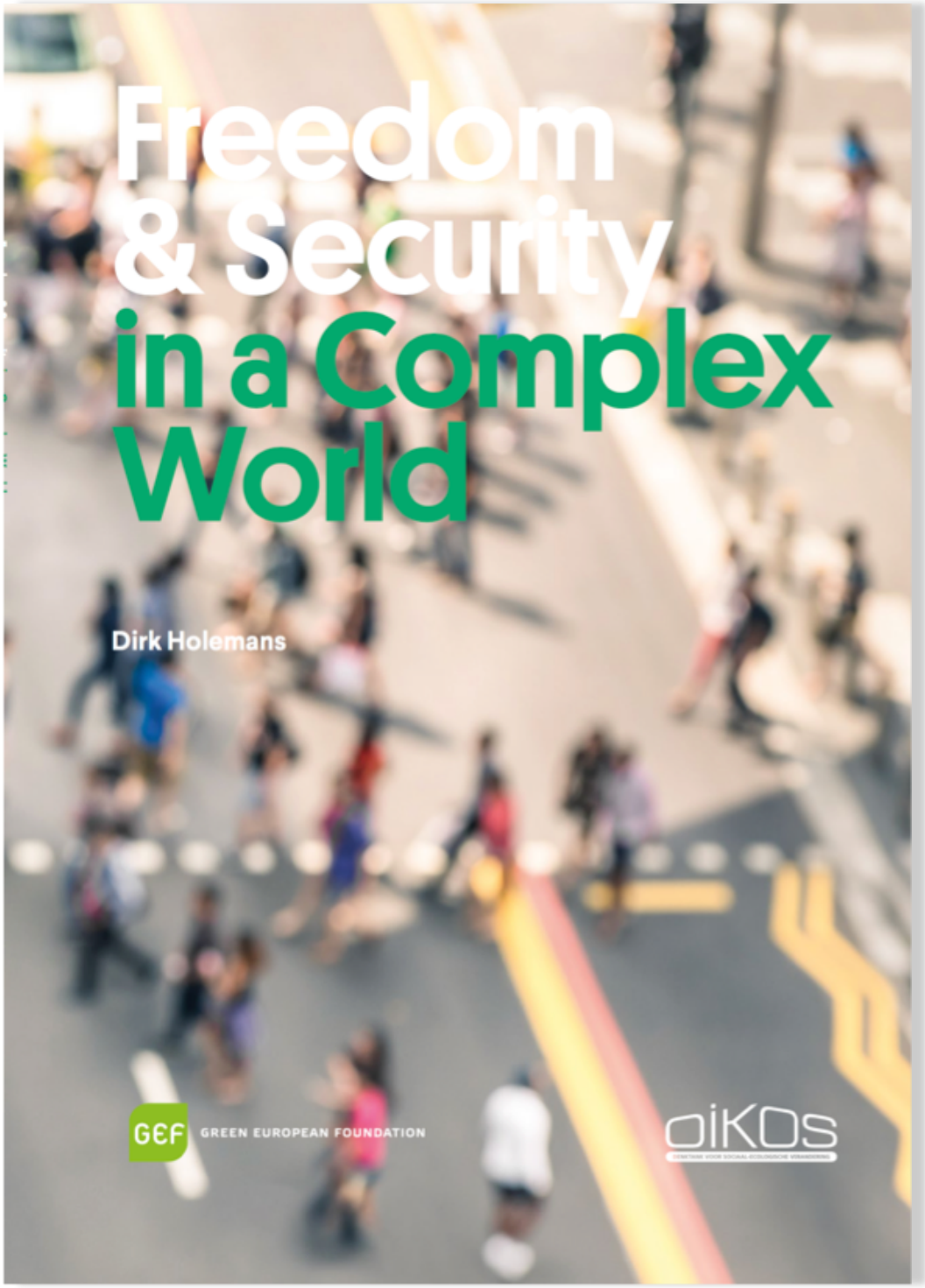
FABLAB

From Fablabs to Fab cities

A Green Transformation: Freedom and Security in Uncertain Times