

Empowering digital citizens

Making humane markets work
in the digital age

April 2023



Who has produced this report?

A Global Initiative for Digital Empowerment of over 70 international specialists including policy experts, researchers, Internet technical experts, business people, online and security specialists and others.

Dedicated to the reformation of rules for the global digital economy.

Prioritize the broad interests of all people, rather than just businesses and governments, which are too often the primary benefactors of today's digital economy.

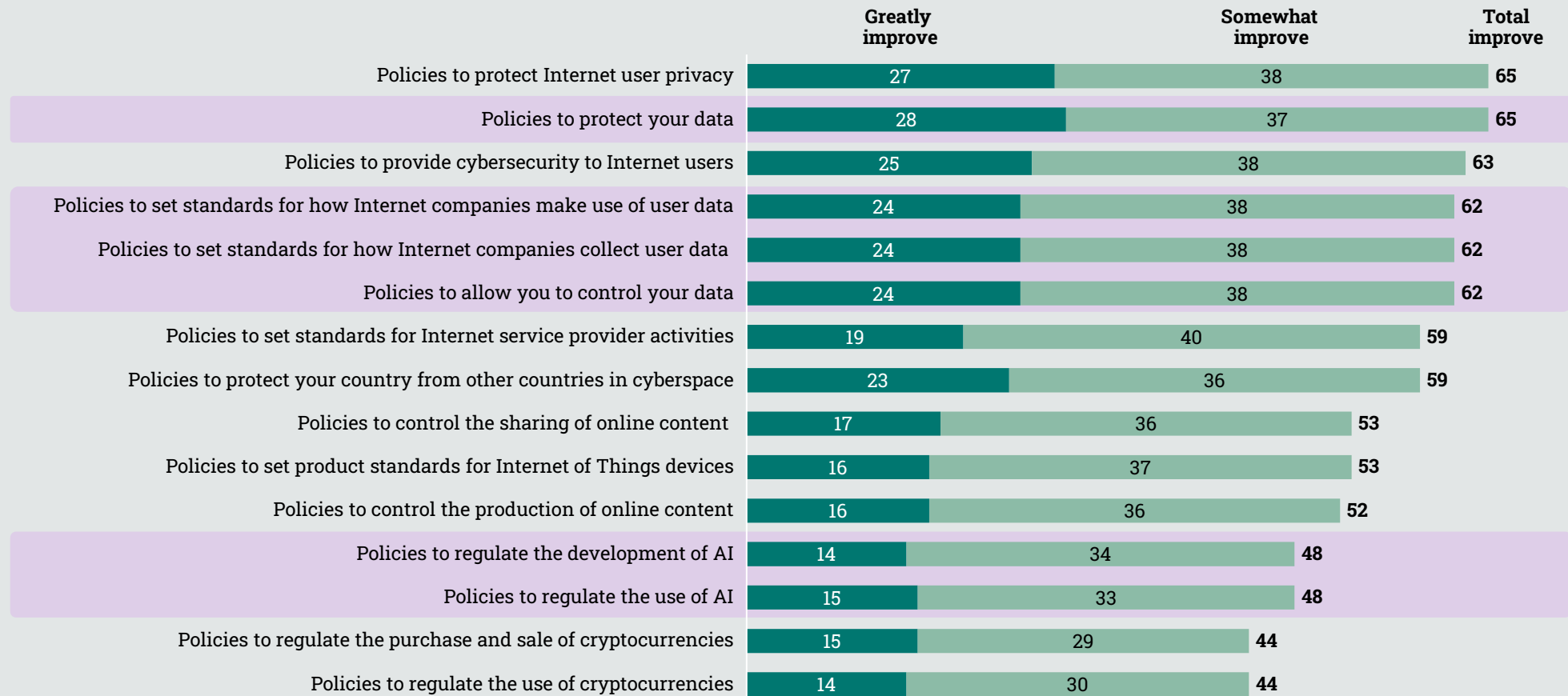
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A majority in the global survey of 20 countries agree that new government policies are required to improve internet trust

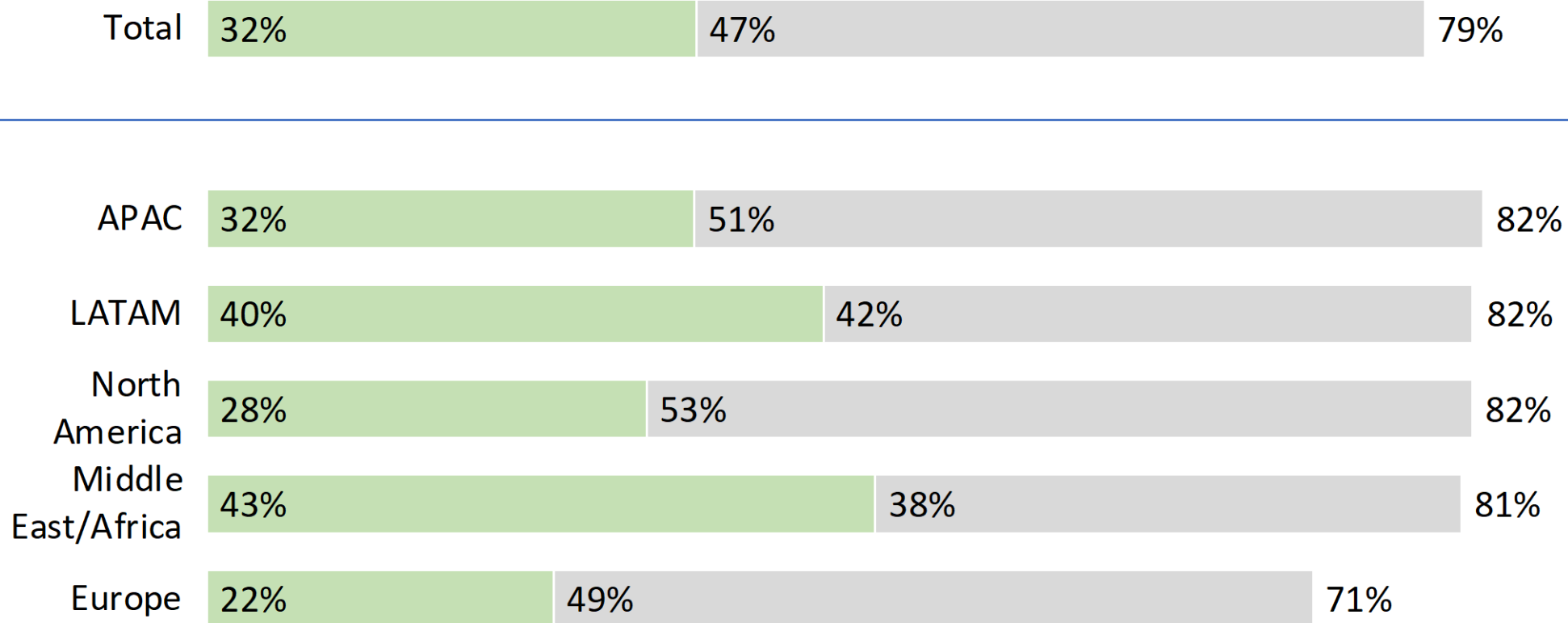
How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements



Developing countries citizens have the highest level of concern about online privacy.

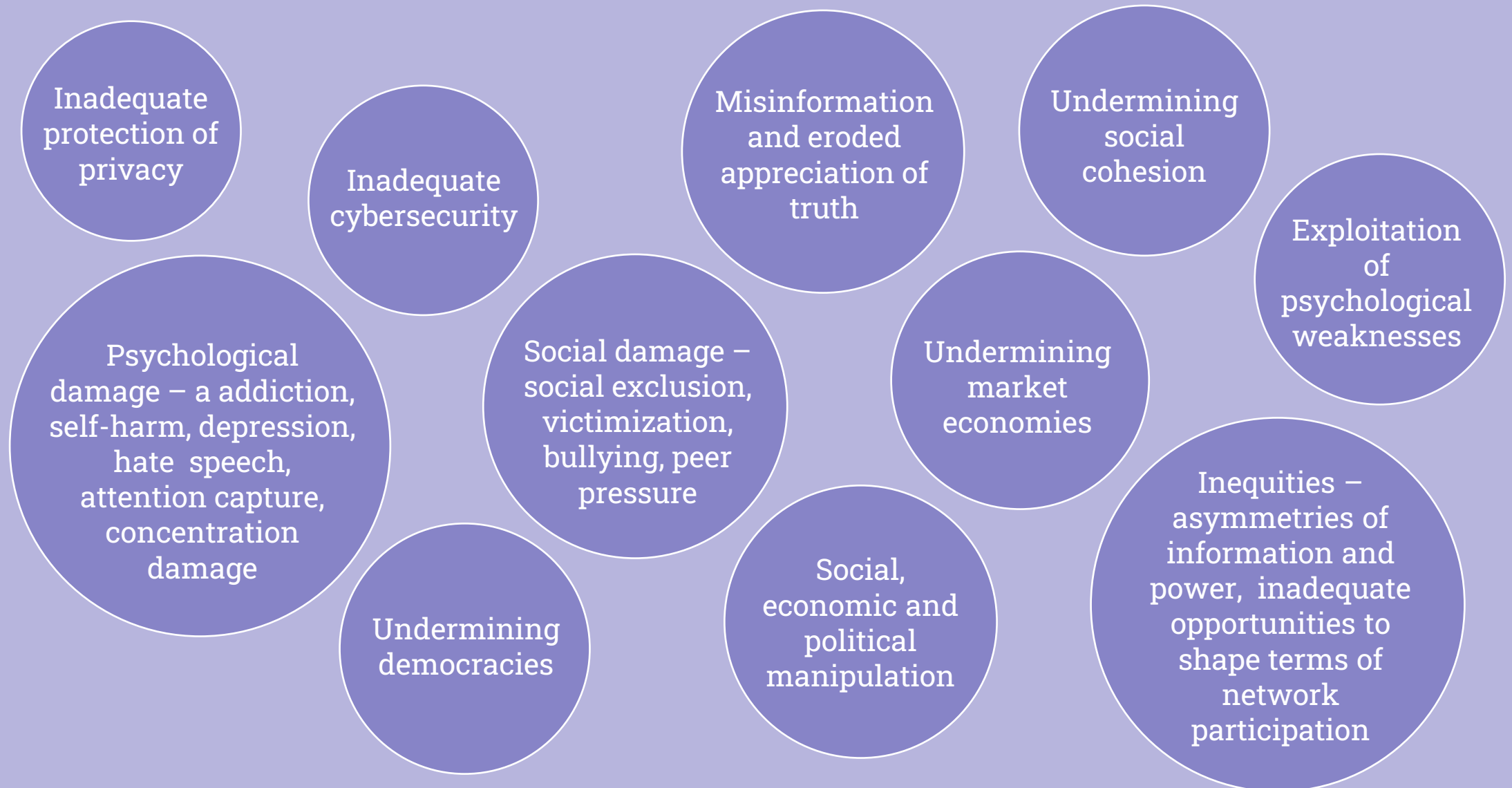
CONCERN ABOUT ONLINE PRIVACY

■ VERY CONCERNED ■ SOMEWHAT CONCERNED



Base: Total respondents (n= 14519) ; 2019(n=23,854)
Q1.1 How concerned are you about your online privacy?

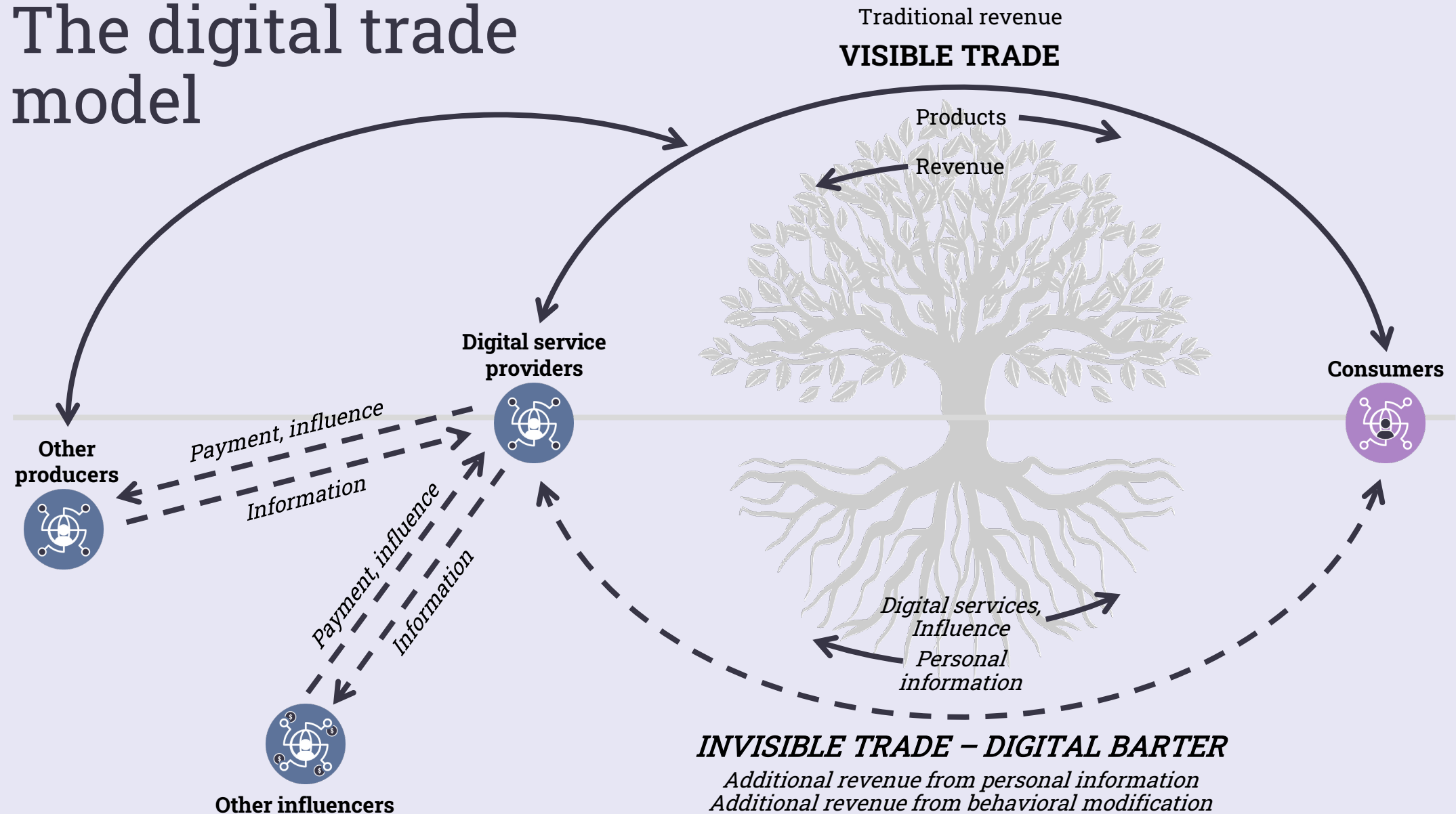
Problems generated by present regime



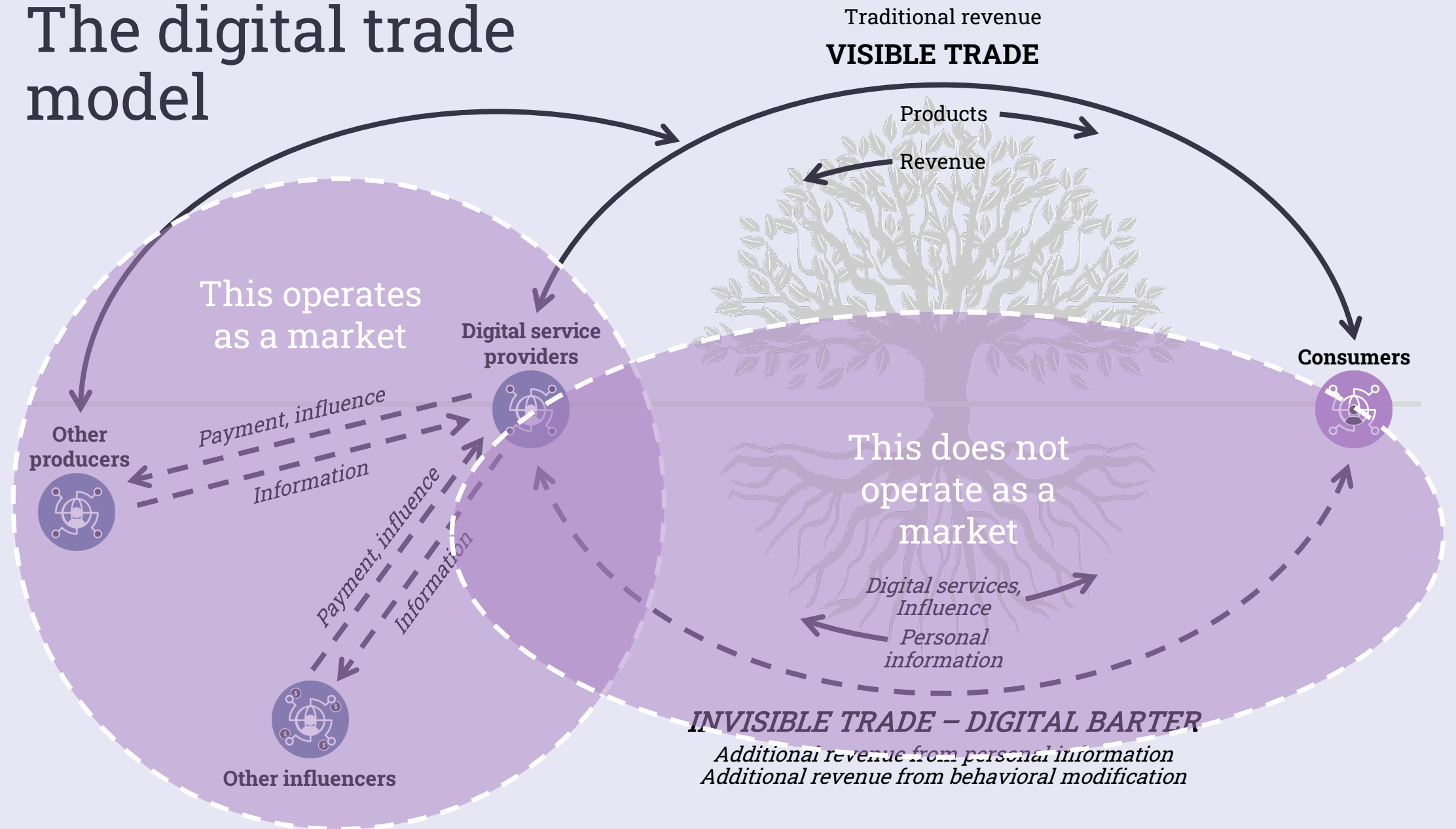
Source of the problems

Third-party-funded digital barter,
leading to a misalignment of interests
between the digital consumers and the
third-party financiers

The digital trade model



The digital trade model



Current policy approach

Treat symptoms in isolation

- Competition laws
- Privacy policy
- Injunctions against hate speech
- Consumer rights guidelines
- Business practices laws
- Taxes on digital transactions
- Fines for digital fraud
- ...

Result

**Policy makers
engage in a never-
ending battle
against
systematically
inappropriate
incentives**

The way forward?

Give users control of their data,
individually and collectively

In a topological network, which knows no
geographic boundaries, the best way to achieve
sovereignty and more equitable digital
economic power is to empower the data
sovereignty of citizens

Proposals 1: Ensure citizens' control over their personal data and who has access to it.

- Personal Data, such as defined in the EU's General Data Protection Regulation, should be maintained by citizens in a trusted repository and citizens should have the obligation to ensure that the data is authenticated by the state of legally accepted sources
- The citizen controlled repository should be the sole initial legal source of this data for public and private transactions, unless specifically stated otherwise by law. The data accessed by an entity could carry a transaction-specific digital signature confirming that the data in the hands of the entity has been sourced correctly. Such data holdings will be open to audit.
- Citizens should have effective control mechanisms over who accesses data about them and should be able to negotiate the terms and conditions under which such data is processed, through easy-to-use technical tools and supporting institutions.
- Provide GAAP-like audit oversight to data aggregators/traffickers with regard to the protecting the data they hold to ensure that the source of Personal Data is only the required citizens' trusted repository.

Proposals 2: Enable citizens to negotiate the terms under which their personal data is used

- Provide effective rights of association and representation for citizens to ensure that professionals skilled in the data markets can advise groups of citizens, and negotiate on their behalf, about what terms should apply to the use of their Personal Data.

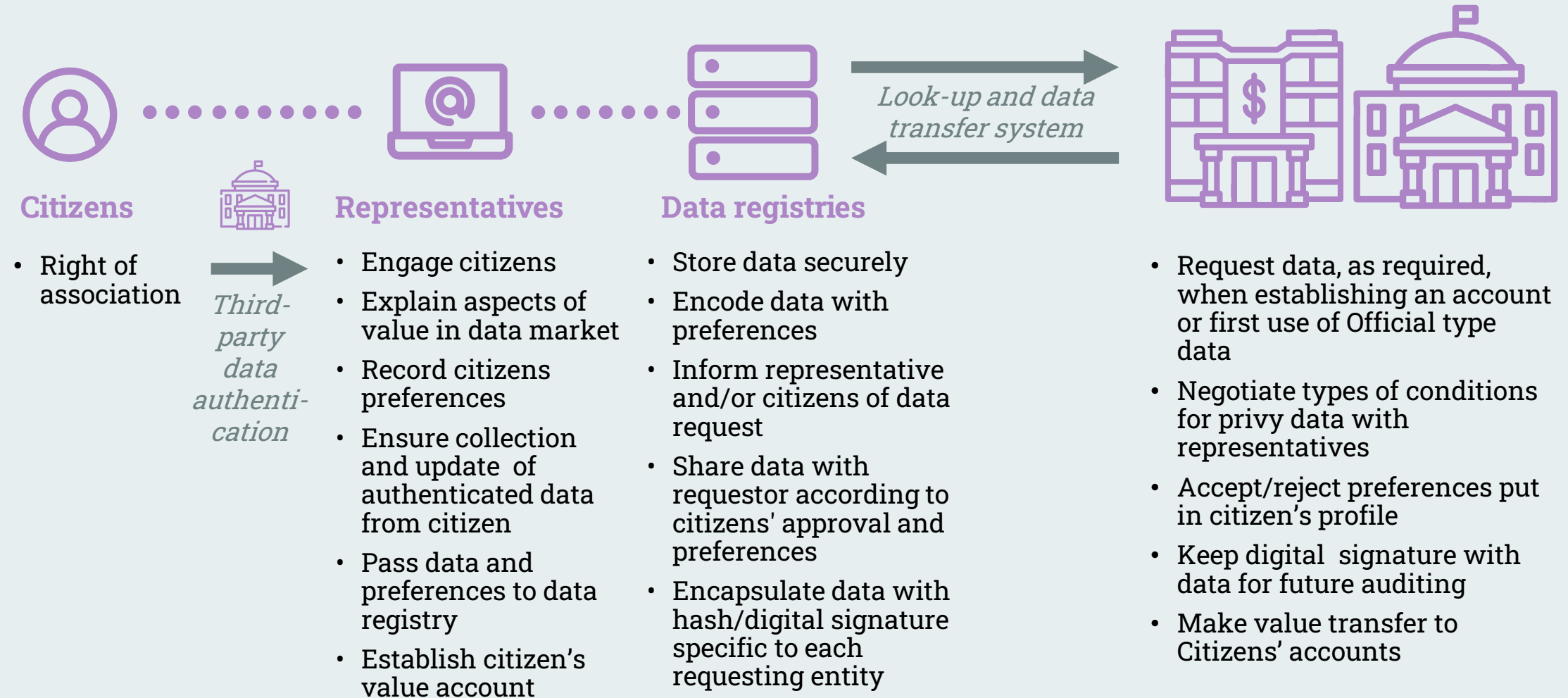
Proposals 3: Protect vulnerable citizens by imposing fiduciary obligations on the use of inferred data

- Ensure that entities which infer information about an individual from data which the citizen does not create have to abide by the duty-of-care rule that commonly applies in the offline world (for instance, between doctors and patients) - the data can only be used in the “best interests” of the data subject.

Proposals 4: Establish effective and accountable Data Commons

- Create accountability and legal structures to support the establishment of 'data commons,' which will consist of citizen communities with common interests who can pool personal data for the public good (e.g., medical research). (The recent EU Data Governance Act illustrates such a legal structure.)
- Ensure that common data are under the control of effective, trustworthy and competitive organisations that promote the benefits of data subjects and the broader society.
- Ensure that the data commons are permitted to use data only for specified purposes and that its use be transparent and accountable.

Proposed eco-system



Multiple technologies exist to support proposed data flow

Existing examples

- High Speed databases/resolution (e.g. DNS, PCCI)
- Hybrid block chain data storage (e.g. Seal)
- Personal ID wallets interacting with Data Exchanges (e.g. European eID)
- Personal Info Vaults interacting with Data Exchanges (e.g. Flemish Data Vaults)
- Tim Berners Lee's social linked data initiative (e.g. Solid and Inrupt)
- Self Sovereign Identity movement (e.g. Sovrin or Germany's IDUnion consortium)

Result

Policy makers do not need to pick a technology to implement these policies. They can either encourage an industry standard development or promote technological competition (providing there is full interoperability)

Thank you

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<https://thegide.org/empowering-digital-citizen-report/>