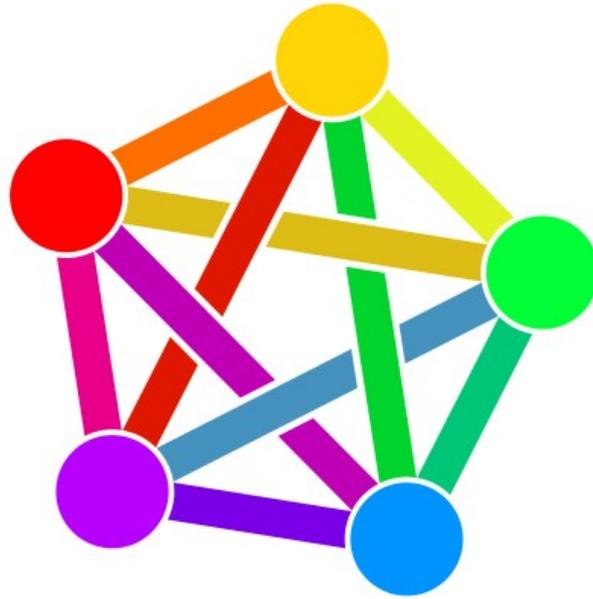


Fediverse 21 (PL). Part 1

**Better
network
infrastructure
for the social
sector**



**Communication,
information
and cooperation
under social
control**

**Technical interoperability
for social interoperability**



Part One

- We'll talk about how oligopolistic corpomedia works (using Facebook as an example) and why the social sector in Poland needs to take action to create its own social networking space.
- How Fediverse works and why it is a better environment for community initiatives.

Let us start with some stories...

*"The main problem is the social media algorithm deciding what content reaches us. The result is a simplistic, zero-sum view of the world. This leads to a situation where you can either be with us or against us. And if you are against us, you deserve to be deleted, invalidated [...]
It is very important that we have access to a broad spectrum of views. Instead, we have the digital equivalent of a medieval mob roaming the streets looking for someone to burn at the stake. So it is terrible for anyone who is a victim of such a mob. And it makes me fear for the future of the world."*

[- Rowan Atkinson](#)

- The Bureau of Meteorology, state health departments, the leader of the Western Australian Opposition, charities and Facebook itself are among those affected by Facebook's imposed information blockade of Australia.
- On the morning of 16 February 2021, Facebook blocked the publication and sharing of news from both Australian and global news channels in Australia
- The corporation said the decision was made in response to draft new regulations, currently being debated in the Australian Senate, requiring Facebook and Google to set fees for news agencies for publishing their content.

Source: [The Guardian](#)

"Facebook handles 16 million accounts of Polish women and men. In spite of this, due to the language, which is incomprehensible for them, they refused to accept the lawsuit filed by the Social Initiative for Drug Policy in Polish in connection with the blocking of its posts. We are fighting in court for the case to be held entirely in Polish: it is crucial for the real possibility of global corporations' clients to fight for their rights in their native languages." (Panoptikon Foundation)

The Planetarians, an environmental and climate change educational group, noticed that information about events and the need to make important decisions reached only a fraction of the group's participants on FB. The reason: the limitation of "organic" reach by Facebook's algorithms. (Author's information)

Narrated by Dobromir...

Facebook has been harassing me for a long time to create advertising, to promote the page, to promote posts. I figured that since the pre-sale had started and the books were less than two weeks away from physically leaving the printer, maybe I could show some activity as an author and maybe create the cheapest ad on Facebook. FB charged a buck for card verification, allowed the ad to be created, sent me an email congratulating me and told me to wait.

Wait.

Wait.

Today, annoyed that it was taking so long, I went to the help page and there a popup popped up that my ad account had been blocked. WTF? For what? I go into the "Verify Account" tab, select the "give me, f*, reason" option - I get a response that I have no account.

Annoyed I flick through documentation, help, nothing. I go to Facebook for business, there reports a cheerful bot. *How can I help you, Dobromir?* I click an option, it replies: *check your mailbox*. I already checked, nothing came.

– *Did I help solve the case?* - asks the bot cheerfully. – No.

– *Then how can I help you, Dobromir?*

– Account disabled.

– *Check your mailbox. Did I help you solve the case, Dobromir?*

– **NO.**

– *How can I help you, Do...*

– **REPORT AN ISSUE**

– *Select an area*

– **Advertising**

– *Check your mailbox. Did I help solve the case?*

– **NO. F*K, NO, YOU @#*@ @#@!!\$#%**

Dobromir continues...

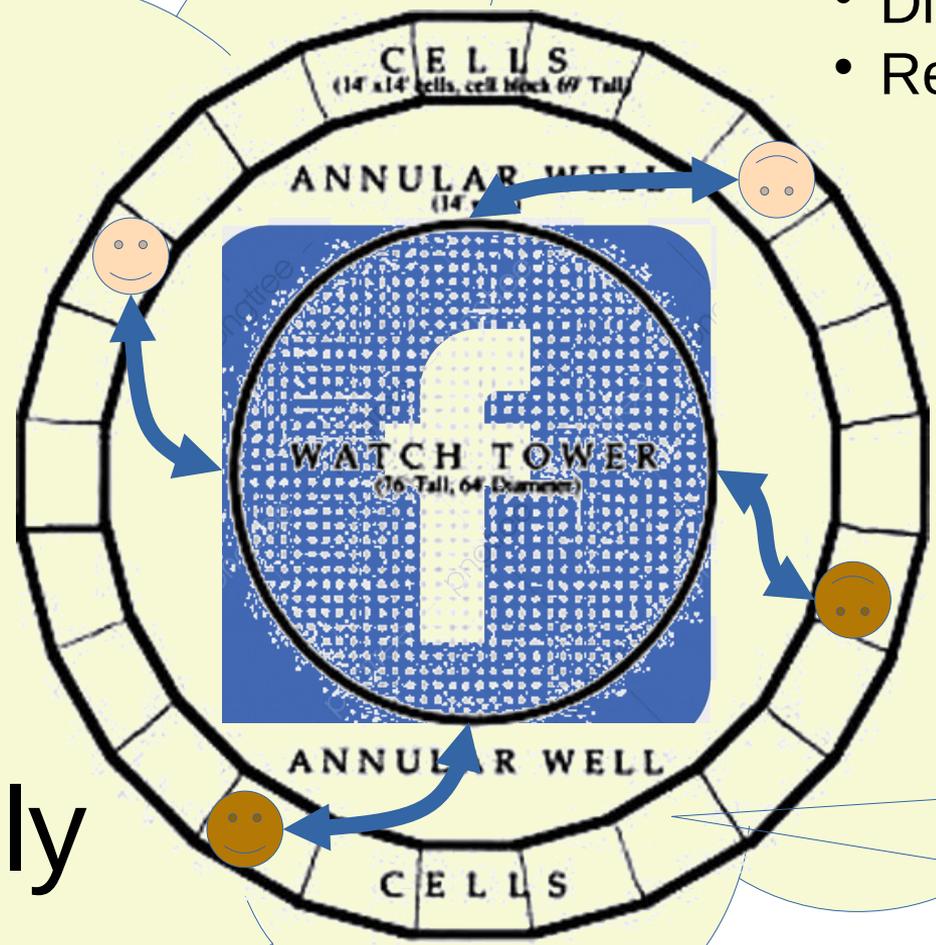
Well, I calmed down and asked my publisher. The publisher suggested I check out an option I wasn't even aware existed.

I still don't know what this is about, except that if I don't verify my account within 30 days, they will block my advertising permanently. Of course, they don't say whether it was because of this that the advertising account was blocked. It's just that "unusual activity" has been detected, and that's that. What is it? It is not known.

And what is verification? Give your phone number, scan your ID, submit your fingerprint and a naked photo with a fish on your head.

In conclusion, let the fediverse develop and dominate the world already, because FB is driving me white hot.

How a monopoly works



- Algorithmic censorship
- Discretionary moderation
- Reach manipulation

Panopticon,
ideal prison

The shadow of a sweet mountain...

- Number of active FB users worldwide, about 2,800,000,000 - one third of humanity.
- FB users in Poland: 21 670 000 - 58% of the population. At the same time 56% of Polish voters (more: [Panoptikon Foundation](#)).
- **One can reasonably conclude that "social consciousness" in Poland is at the moment shaped by FB politics and any "independent" activity here is a fiction.**

It does not happen by itself...

- Information bubbles, where most of the information that appears reinforces a sense of closure, and precisely dosed negative stimuli build a sense of threat.
- Greater popularity of aggressive and "inbred" statements, lower reach of references to external sources.
- Promoting memes instead of conversation.
...is just the tip of the sugar mountain of algorithms.

Monopoly is toxic

- The monopolist operates outside our jurisdiction, which makes any confrontation even more difficult.
- Even events and local communities are *legally* subject to the regulations of the monopoly.
- Cutting off access to an account means losing social memory.
- FB actively impedes the export and import of information beyond what the law enforces.
- Technically and organisationally, FB follows the "black hole" principle - whatever falls into FB is supposed to stay there.

What is social sector to me (us)?

- Built from the bottom up
- By self-governing communities
- Linked by a network of freely formed relationships
- Delivering the social good
- As their members understand it.

Network infrastructure is not neutral

Independent communities can exist even in prison, but:

- Just maintaining them there requires much extra energy.
- The constant pressure of a hostile environment is changing social dynamics and not in a good way.

So we need a network that ...

... will help us control our own territory: our social memory, communication circuits and security, shared resources and services.

... will help you to freely form relationships with other communities, deciding with whom you want to communicate and on what terms.

... will provide a neutral common space where even mutually hostile communities can communicate safely.

The Fediverse is such a network



Fediverse means diversity

- Social media platforms: Mastodon, Friendica, Hubzilla
- Multimedia: Funkwhale, Pixelfed, Peertube
- Blogs: Writefreely, Joinplume, Socialhome
- Meeting organisation, link aggregators, podcasts, e-learning and ever new things...

It speaks languages...

- RSS
- Email
- Twitter
- Wordpress
- Telegram

... and learns new ones all the time!

How does the fediverse work?

We freely choose the platform, interface and services we need.

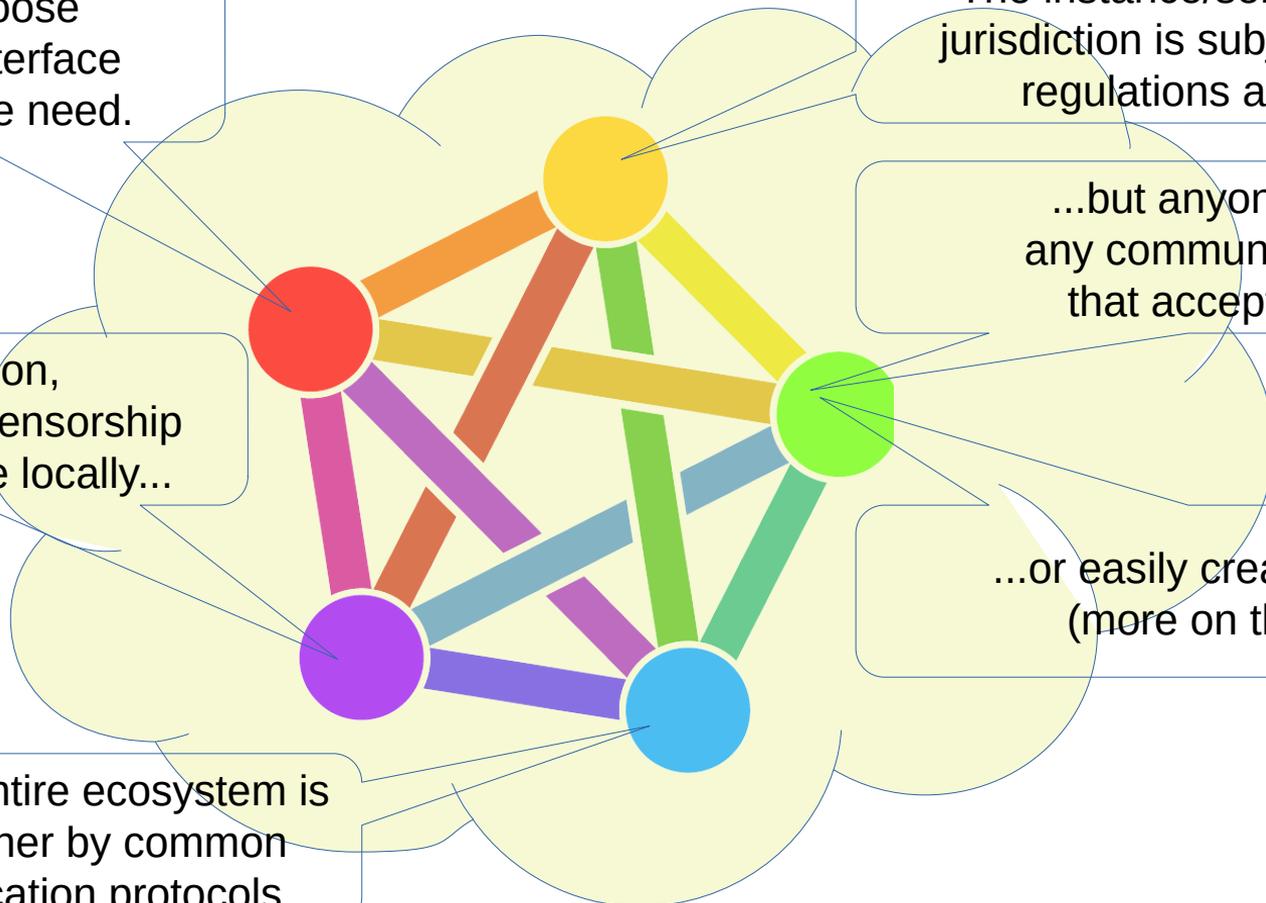
The instance/server in the local jurisdiction is subject to the same regulations as the user...

...but anyone can join any community/instance that accepts them...

Administration, moderation and censorship are only possible locally...

...or easily create their own (more on that later!)

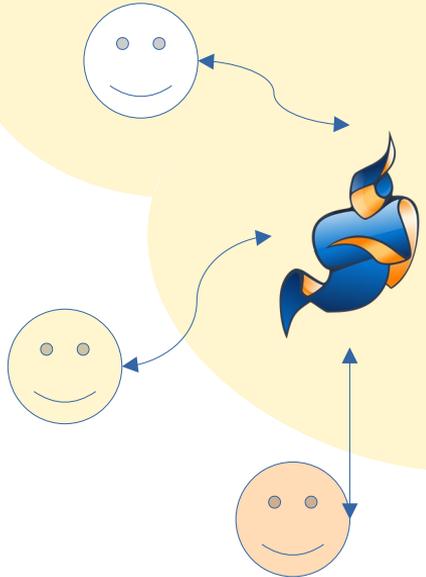
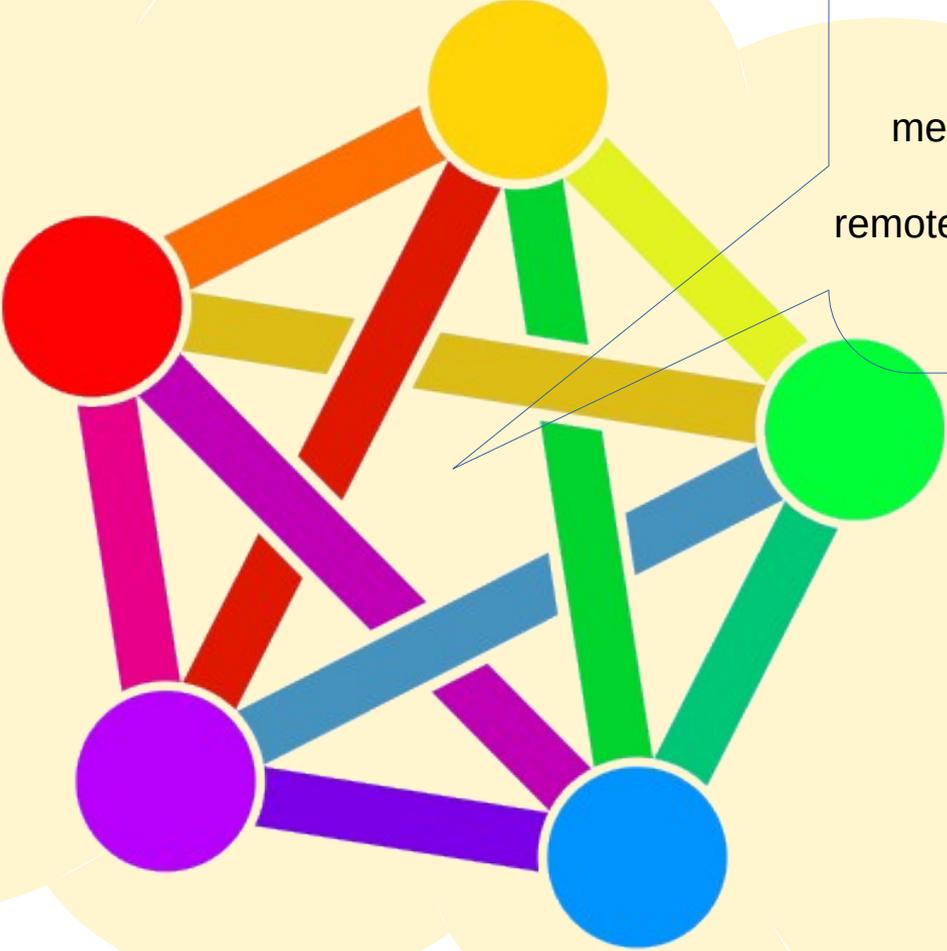
...and the entire ecosystem is tied together by common communication protocols.

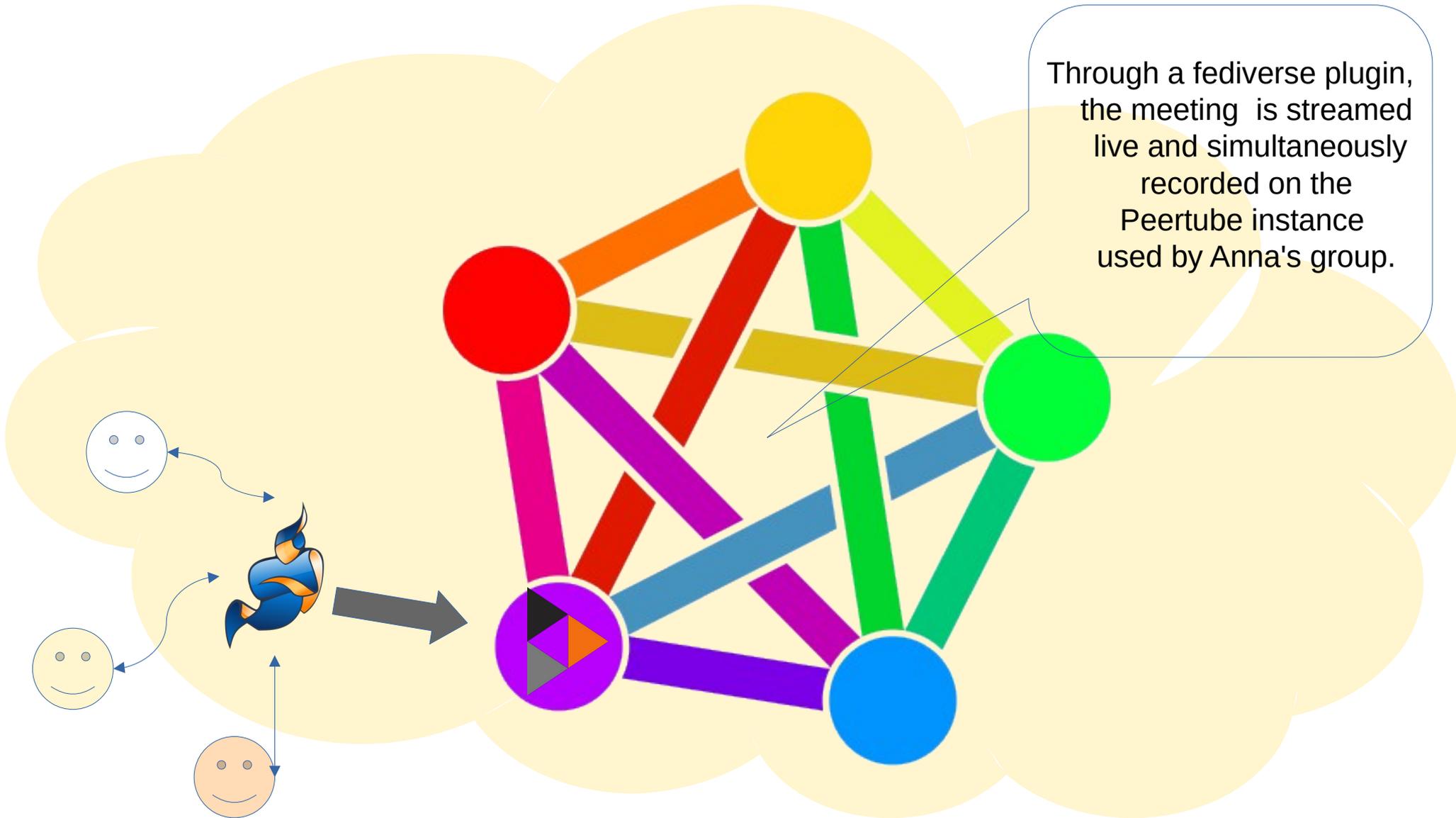


But actually, how it works?

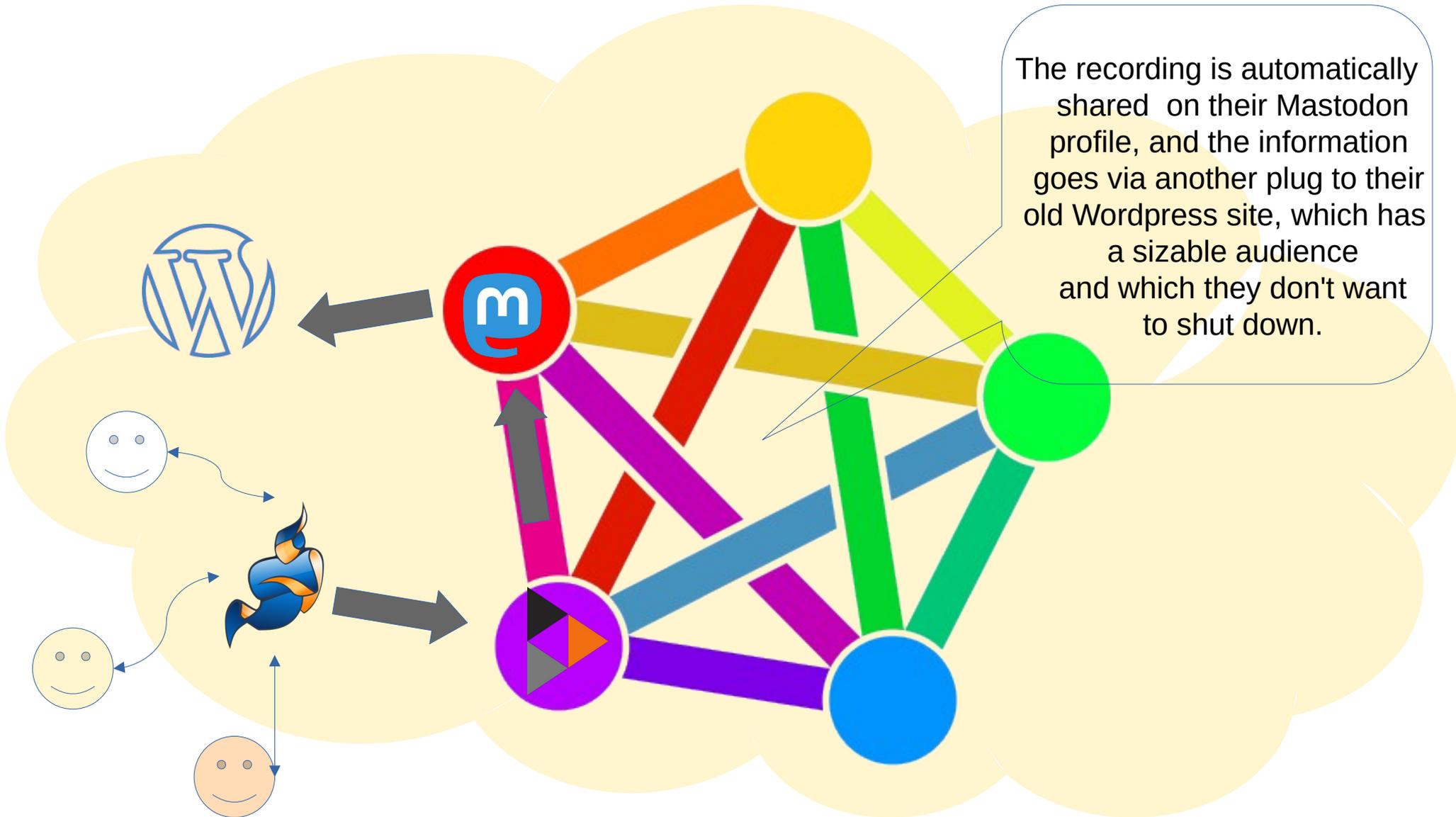


Anna and friends hold online meeting on Jitsi about new initiative for working remotely mothers with children.

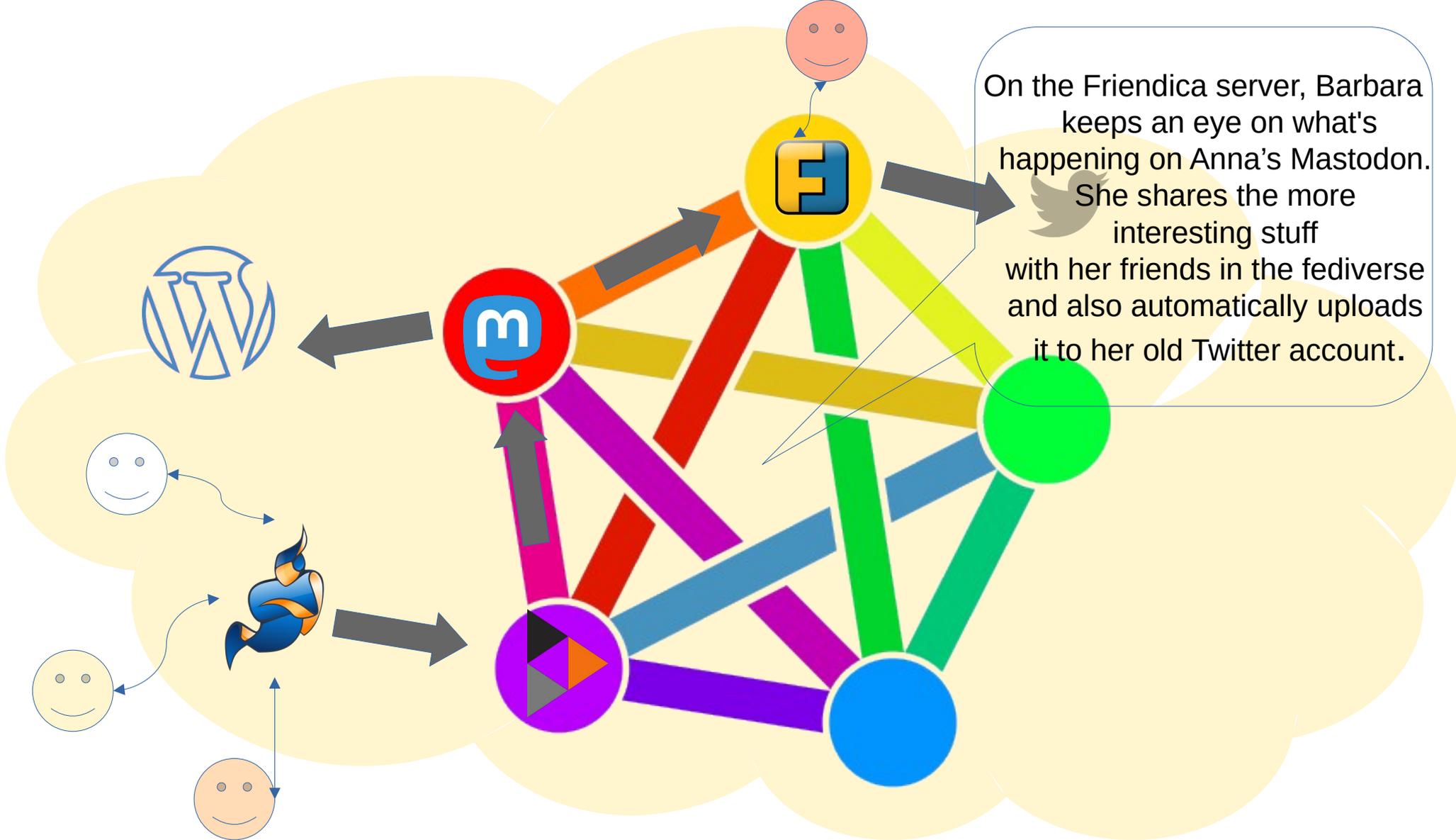


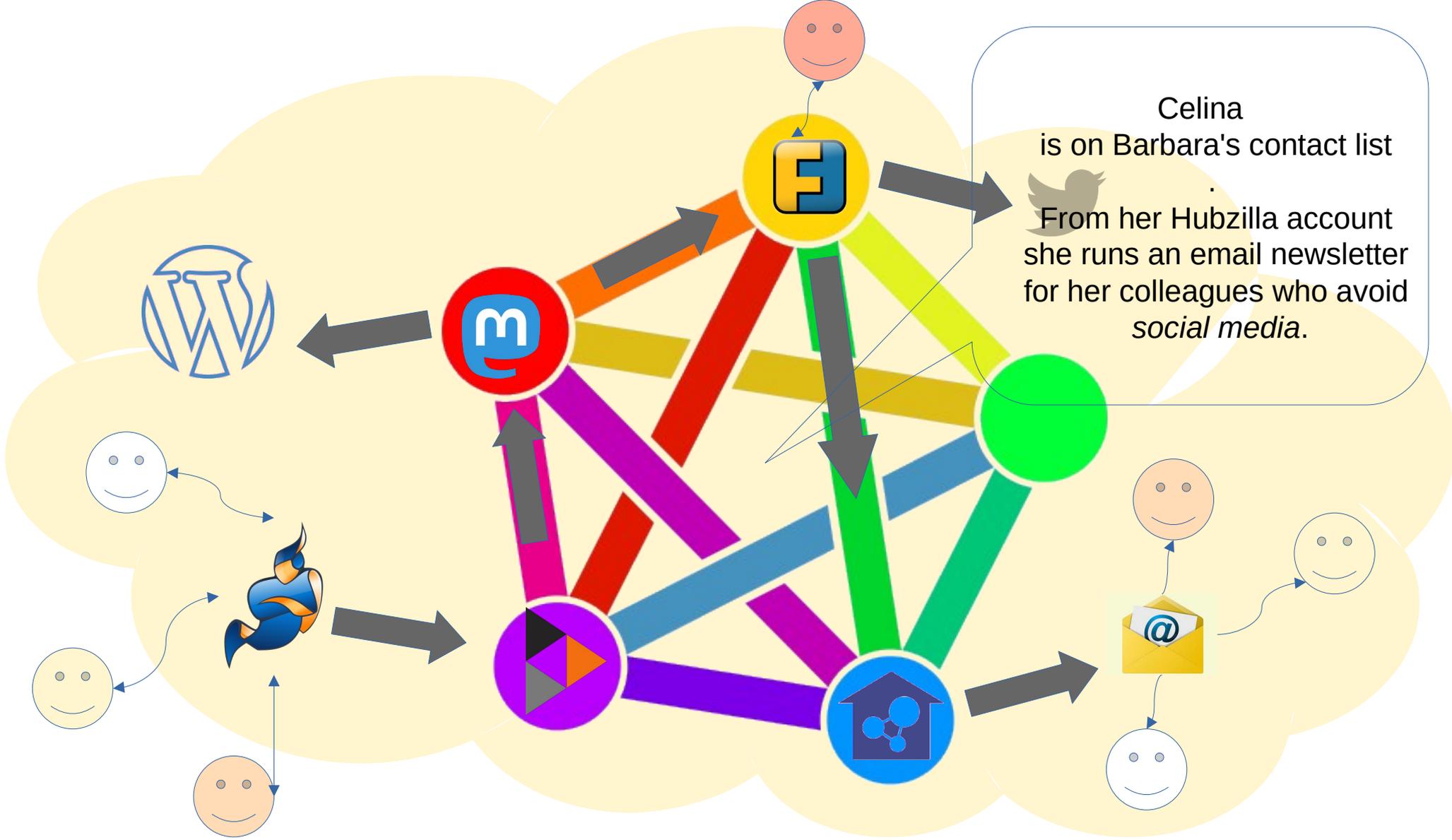


Through a fediverse plugin, the meeting is streamed live and simultaneously recorded on the Peertube instance used by Anna's group.

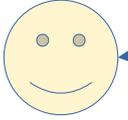
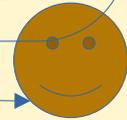
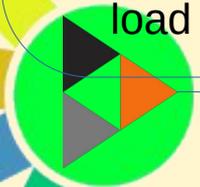
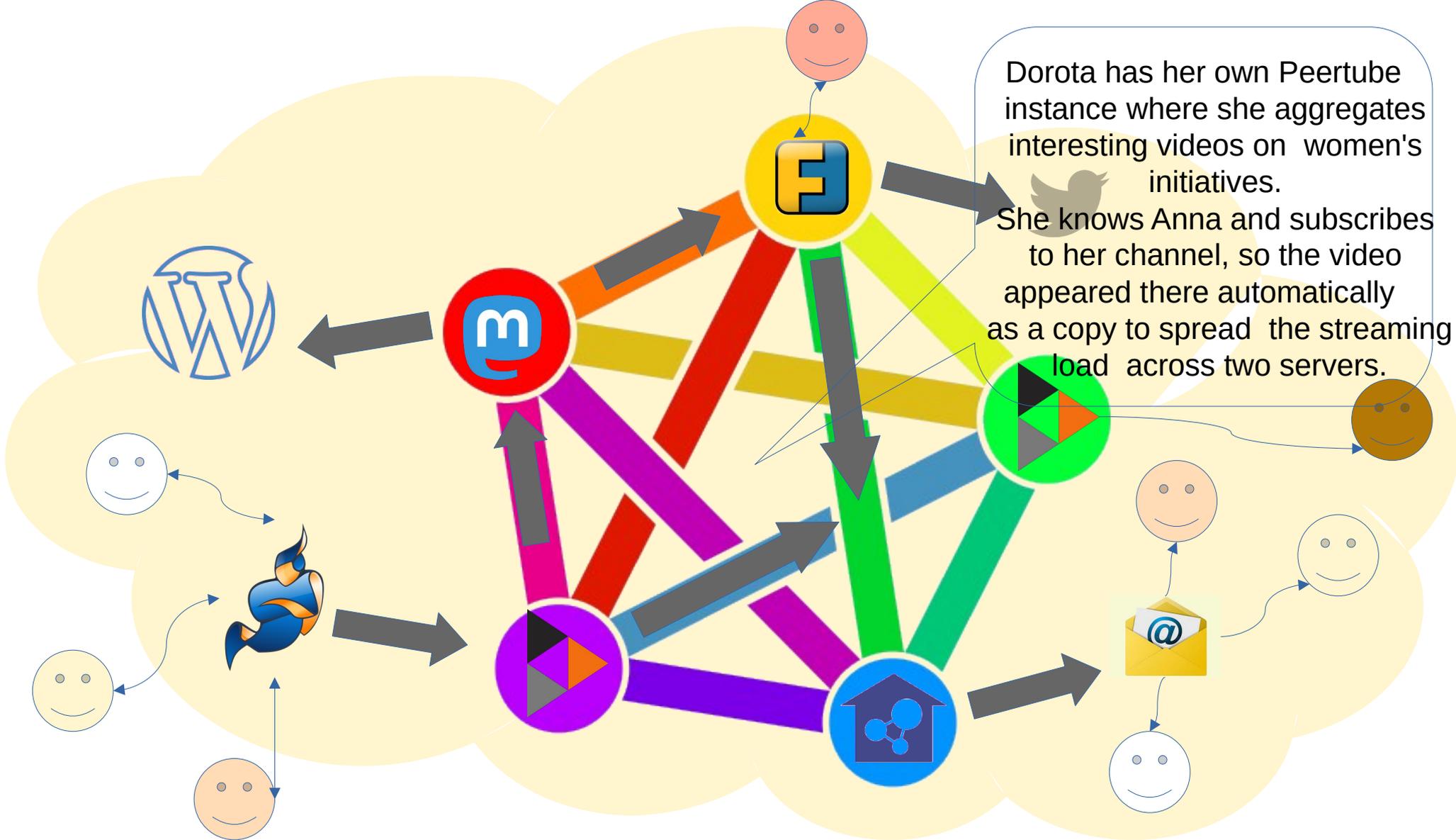


The recording is automatically shared on their Mastodon profile, and the information goes via another plug to their old Wordpress site, which has a sizable audience and which they don't want to shut down.





Celina
is on Barbara's contact list
From her Hubzilla account
she runs an email newsletter
for her colleagues who avoid
social media.

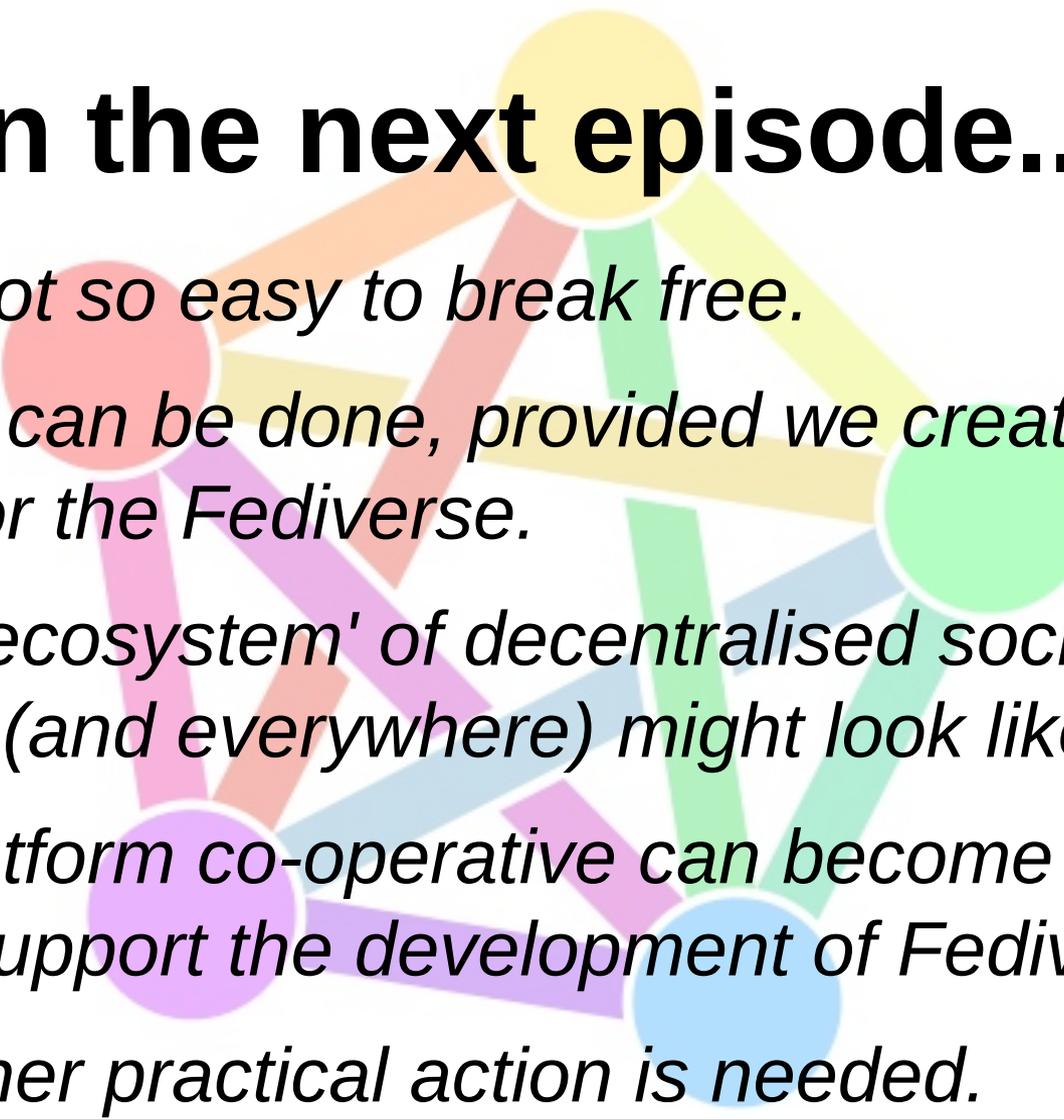


That is why ...



- Fediverse is friendly to communities and their networking.
- It protects us from external manipulation and censorship.
- We need it to cooperate, or to fight - but **on our own terms, not under the dictates of the powers that be.**

In the next episode...



- *Why it's not so easy to break free.*
- *But that it can be done, provided we create an open alliance for the Fediverse.*
- *How the 'ecosystem' of decentralised social networks in Poland (and everywhere) might look like.*
- *How a platform co-operative can become a neutral entity to support the development of Fediverse.*
- *What further practical action is needed.*



**Thank you for now,
you are welcome to more.**

Petros

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