



Boosting the circular economy among SMEs in Europe





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SMEs are key to boost the transition

The world is facing unprecedented environmental challenges



including: material resource scarcity, ecosystem decline, water scarcity and global warming.

Non-renewable natural resources are becoming more scarce



SMEs are essential in the transition since they account for the majority of economic activity:

- represent **99% of all businesses** in the EU;
- account for **85% of new jobs** created over the last years;
- and provided **two-thirds of employment** in the EU private sector (Eurostat, 2018).



There are large hurdles for SMEs to become circular:

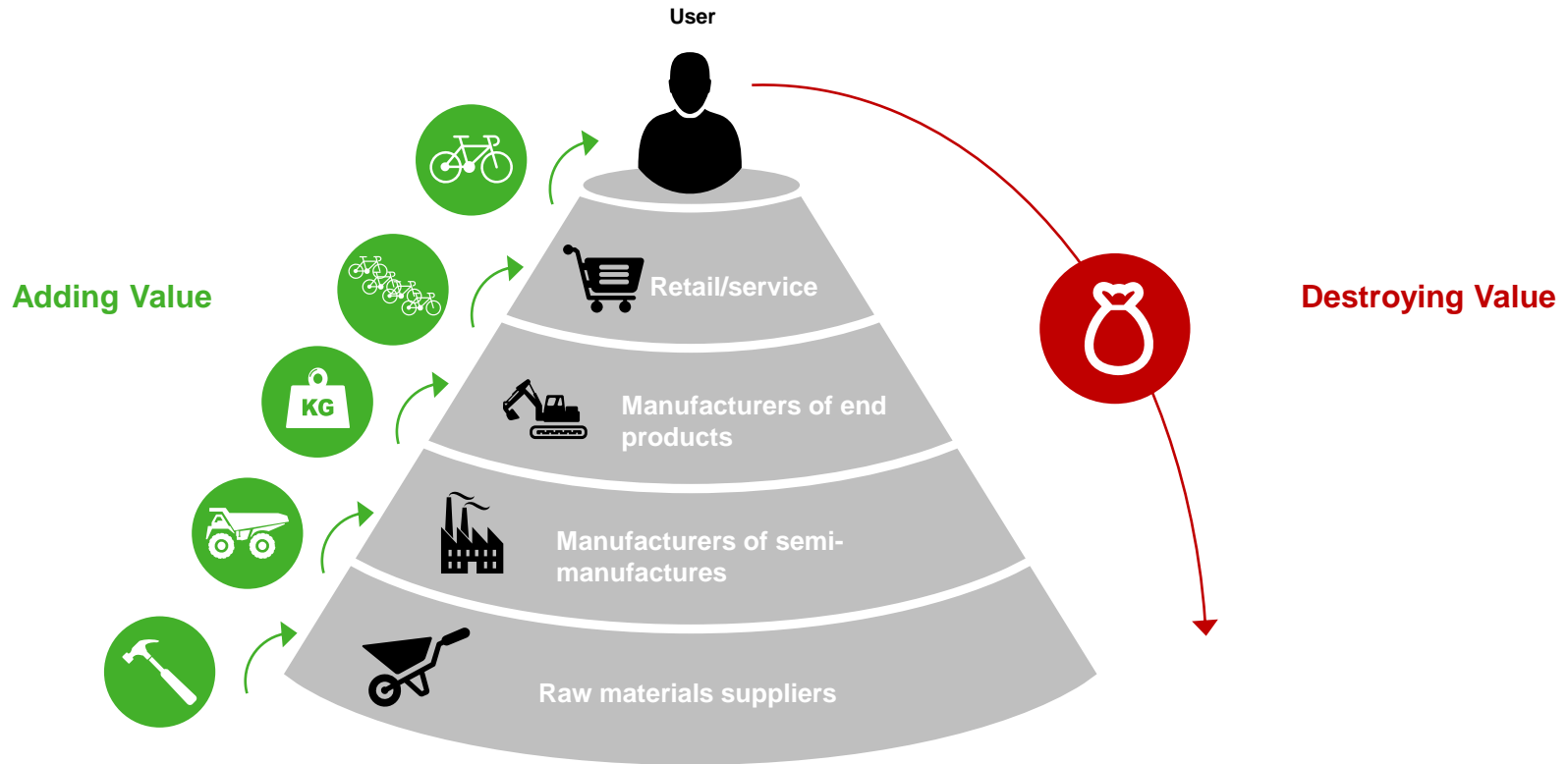
- lack of awareness and knowledge due to a smaller time horizon;
- access to technical knowledge and skills;
- access to finance;
- more restricted organizational capacity;
- and lack of support from supply chain.



Closing loops will significantly change supply and value chains and thereby affect SMEs

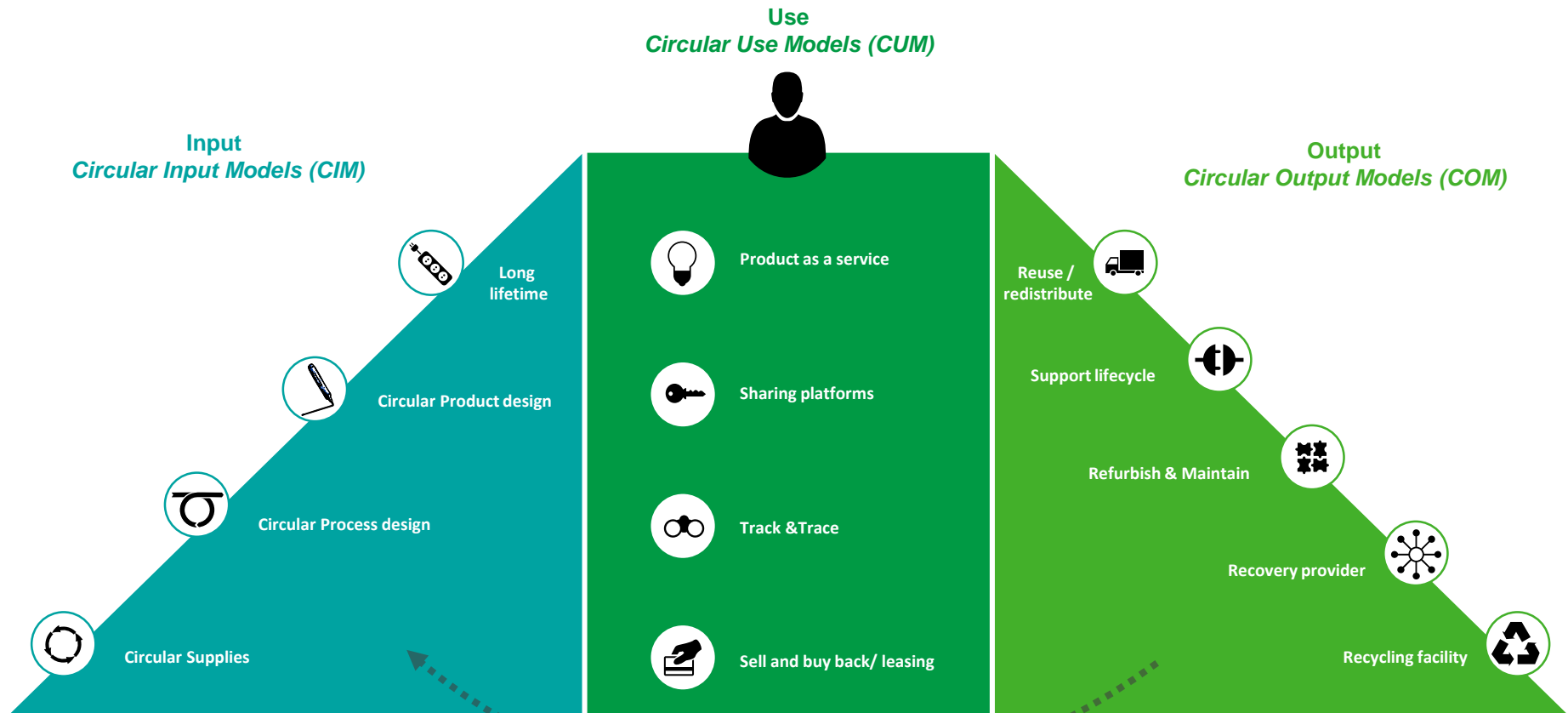


Reshaping the value cliff...



Circle Economy et al. (2016)

...into the value hill



Circle Economy et al. (2016)

For this transition we need to inspire and help SMEs

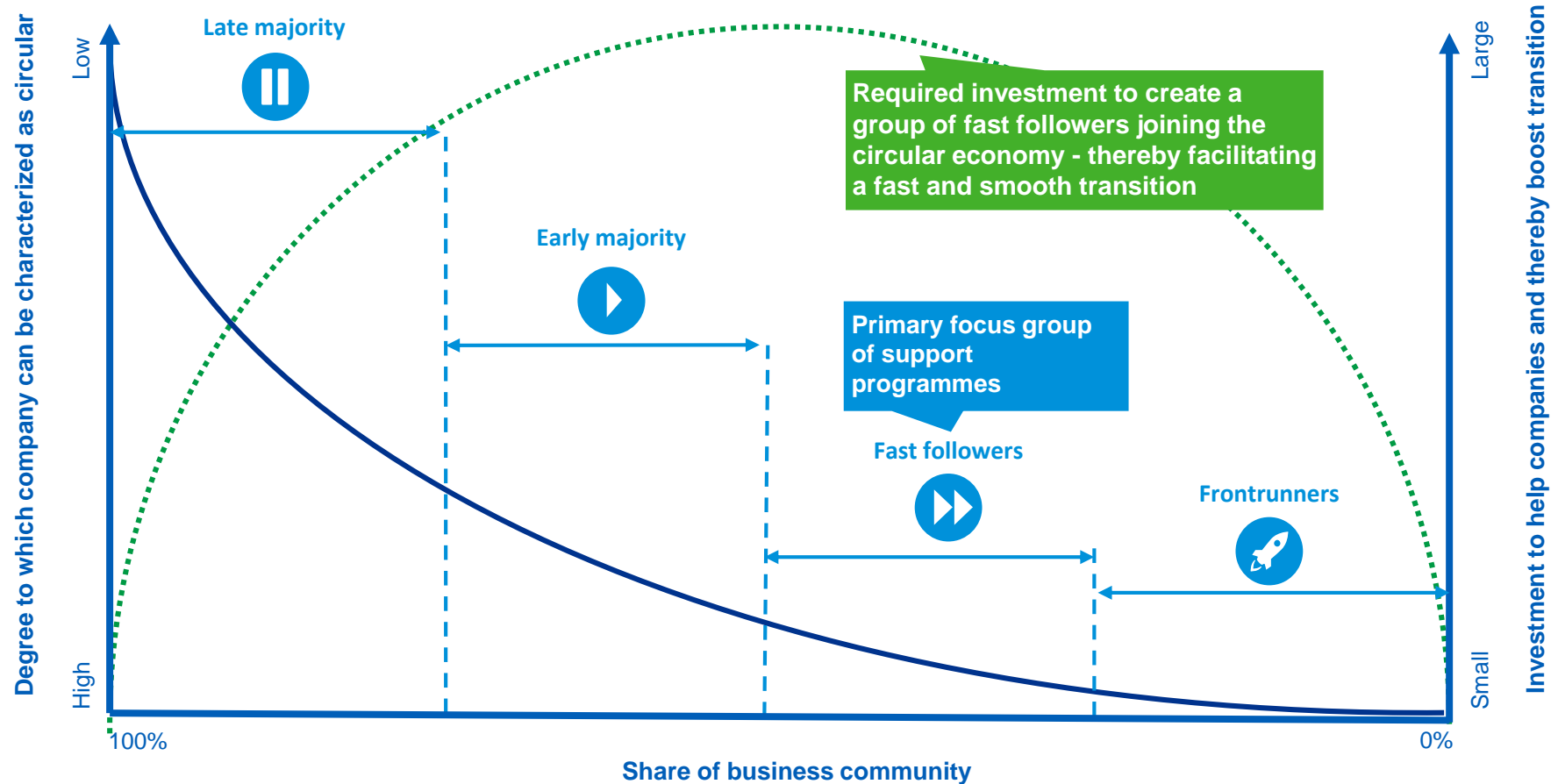
We need to inspire and help SMEs through **SME support programmes**. Which are combinations of support services offered to SMEs to inform them about the benefits of circular economy and helps them to reduce/overcome the barriers that hinders the implementation of circular economy strategies and practices.

Examples of support services offered through such programmes are amongst others:

- collecting and communicating inspiring examples;
- offering trainings on topics and themes related to circular economy (e.g.: circular design, circular procurement);
- facilitating communities of practice;
- offering vouchers and subsidies to reduce risk for SMEs to explore/implement circular economy strategies and practices;
- support for access to finance and subsidies;
- and/or a green deal on circular procurement to boost demand.



Invest now, be in the lead for years to come





Thank you

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