ACTIVITY REPORT 2020



EUROPEAN CONFEDERATION OF INDUSTRIAL AND SERVICE COOPERATIVES

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WHAT TO EXPECT IN 2021



A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear members,

The intensity and the difficulties we have all experienced in 2020 are such that this year seems to have expanded. The year 2020 is a year of distances, postponements, unprecedented difficulties to be faced. The Covid-19 pandemic, which we all hoped could be contained after the summer of 2020, is still ongoing. Only now, in the middle of 2021, we are beginning to glimpse a possible restart.

In CECOP, the year 2020 was stretched by extending the mandate of the current board of directors for an additional year. This allowed us to ensure continuity in our work, and this activity report demonstrates it. After the first few weeks of disorientation, CECOP was able to reorganise, like many of our member cooperatives, its working methods. This has allowed us to achieve important goals and, in some respects, also to improve our capacities by making better use of new technologies.

It has been a year of webinars and remote meetings, but also a year of strengthening our presence in political and institutional representation at European level. Indeed, 2020 was the year in which the new European Commission took office and in which the European Parliament, elected in spring 2019, went into full swing. Important measures and an ambitious work programme were launched in response to the pandemic crisis and not only.

CECOP was constantly present in following the evolution of European policies to make sure that cooperatives play a leading role in the challenges of the green transition, the digitalisation of the economy and work, the new European industrial strategy, and the policies for SMEs, for the promotion of a more social, more cohesive, and more equal Europe.

We invested a lot of energy in the Stand Up for Social Pillar campaign, that resulted in the launching of the action plan for the European pillar of social rights.

In this context, **work** has been our main focus. Work is the main element of our identity and the heart of the cooperatives' mutualistic function and the fundamental resource to exit the crisis. It is the key resource to accompany the transition towards a green and digital economy. Work is at the heart of epochal transformations, as highlighted in our publication "All for one" showing how cooperatives can be a decisive strategic response to prevent the fragmentation of work and workers from becoming a cause of insecurity and poverty. We worked to reiterate that cooperatives are at the heart of sustainable and inclusive development and are the fundamental pillar of the social economy, helping to prepare the ground for the upcoming Social Economy Action Plan.

With this 2020 report of activities, the term of office of the CECOP Presidency and Board also comes to an end. It has been an intense and hard-working mandate, for which I wish to thank the staff, who have always worked with great commitment and passion, competence, and availability. My thanks also to the members of the Board, the Vice Presidents, and of course all our member organisations.

Finally, a fond memory full of nostalgia and sadness to our colleague Stilian Balasopulov, who has suddenly left us, and who has always been a loyal and passionate companion for all of us.

In cooperation,

finst frem.

Giuseppe Guerini



A WORD FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL



Dear members,

This year in CECOP has been marked by hard work and a continuous fight for the voices of our industrial and service cooperatives to be heard.

The first half of the year, our attention and most of our work was directed towards the members affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, especially toward cooperatives in the forefront of the crisis (primarily in the care and health sector), and toward all the workers in our cooperatives that were uncertain about their future.

Despite the difficulties and the scratches that 2020 will leave on all of us, worker and social cooperatives continue adapting through innovative solutions and adjusting to the new challenges.

In the CECOP Secretariat we also had to adapt to work in the pandemic, but thanks to your contribution and support, we were able to bring our members' voice in the EU agenda, to improve our cooperatives' visibility, to provide them with the right tools for their own development and strengthening, and to promote mutual learning and knowledge sharing.

Yours cooperatively,

Diana Dovgan Secretary General of CECOP



2020 AT GLANCE





2020 AT GLANCE



2020 AT GLANCE

ОСТ

- <u>CECOP's worker coops</u> shaping the EU digital transition
- <u>CECOP's joint statement</u> on cooperatives for a sustainable future
- <u>CECOP welcomes</u> the European Minimum Wage proposal







- <u>CECOP's joint report</u> on Social Economy's role in supporting migrant entrepreneurs.
- <u>CECOP's ALL FOR ONE</u> <u>campaign</u>
- CECOP Mutual Learning Session on Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship
- CECOP's toolkit on measuring cooperatives' social impact
- CECOP Board



2020 AT GLANCE

DEC

- <u>CECOP and NAUWC</u> <u>webinar</u>: role of education in the EU Action Plan
- <u>CECOP's ALL FOR ONE</u>
 conference
- <u>CECOP welcomes</u> the EP call for inclusion of social economy in the industry strategy
- <u>CECOP Bulletin #5</u> on EU Social Affairs
- <u>CECOP's report</u> on Social Enterprises Laws in Europe







NETWORK

CECOP belongs to its members. Being part of CECOP means to be part of a network where members can exchange experiences, build partnerships, and design common strategies. A substantial amount of our work is invested in the coordination and management of the network.

Statutory meetings

Statutory meetings are the space where democracy is put into practice inside of our network. During the year, we organised two board meetings, one General Assembly, and two Executive Committees. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, this year all our meetings went fully virtual.

During the General Assembly on the 9 of June 2020, members approved the creation of a third member category, called "Network Affiliates". This was an important moment in CECOP, aimed at associating those organisations that are not developed enough to become our full-fledged members, but that are growing and moving towards the representation or support of our cooperatives in countries where CECOP is still absent.

COVID-19

During the isolation period, we launched a survey to understand the impact that COVID-19 had on our members, their affiliated cooperatives, and to understand better their specific needs. At the same time, we maintained a constant dialogue with the European Commission (EC), following closely and analysing the EU response to the COVID-19 crisis.



Moreover, our President co-signed a <u>solidarity message</u> accompanied by the presidents of CICOPA and CICOPA Americas, to provide words of encouragement and hope, since this crisis spares no one around the globe. We have also been promoting our cooperatives <u>collecting stories</u> and reactions from members, showing the impressive capacities of our members and affiliated cooperatives to adapt to this ever-changing pandemic situation.

CECOP analysis on cooperatives in the industry and service sector in Germany

After a year-long desk research, the Secretariat made an analysis of the socioeconomic, legal, and historical context, in which cooperatives in the industry and services have developed since the 19th century in Germany. This internal report contributed to increase the Secretariat understanding of the movement in Germany and identify some key actors for the development of future relations.

CECOP Working Group on Non-Standard and Platform work

Cooperative solutions to problems of Non-Standard and Platform work are emerging all across Europe and worldwide, but several challenges remain to be tackled and new problems arise. To follow these trends, CECOP launched its working group on non-standard and platform work among members.

On the first half of the year, the working group focused on the impact of the COVID pandemic on non-standard and platform work on which it published a <u>policy paper</u> highlighting the problems for workers during the pandemic.

Additionally, the working group worked on identifying the different legal challenges concerning worker-members of cooperatives for non-standard and platform workers, reflect on potential problems and articulate recommendations, namely for the 2021 EC Platform Work initiative.





CECOP Working Group on Industry

The CECOP Industry Working group has been created to react with some concrete recommendations on European Commission's Industry Strategy. In the context of the Covid pandemic and the EU National Recovery Plan, CECOP members discussed strategies of cooperation across Europe and set the base for 2021 nomination of Board Member Francesca Montalti in the EC Industrial Forum Expert Group.

Members' promotion and communication



Our internal newsletter, CECOP Link, keeps us close to our members. Two issues were published in 2020 that are available in the members' private session of the website.

During the year we also launched <u>#COOPTALES</u>, a new section on our website showcasing stories about the cooperatives, our members' affiliates, and the people behind them.

Part of a bigger coop family

CECOP is the sectoral organization for industry and services of <u>Cooperatives</u> <u>Europe</u>, the European Confederation of cooperatives from all sectors. We actively participate in statutory meetings, thematic working groups, and coordination meetings on European policies, along with other sectoral cooperative organisations and CECOP is represented in Cooperatives Europe's Board by our President.

On the occasion of the European Green week 2020, we signed a <u>common</u> <u>statement</u> on the contribution of cooperatives to economic, environmental, and social sustainability.

CECOP is also the European regional organization of <u>CICOPA</u>, the world sectoral organization for cooperatives active in the industry and service sector.



ADVOCACY

CECOP represents the interests and expresses the needs and concerns of its members to the EU institutions, other European-level policy makers, national governments, and the wider cooperative movement. We promote worker ownership, democracy at work, sustainable growth, quality employment, inclusion of the most disadvantaged citizens, and social justice.

CECOP & the European Commission (EC)



As member of the European Commission's expert group on social economy and social enterprises (GECES), CECOP advises the EC on policy measures to strengthen the social economy and social enterprises ecosystems in the EU and takes part in the working group the "Role of clusters and similar forms of business cooperation in fostering the development of Social Economy". CECOP was furthermore able to contribute to the evaluation of the Social Business Initiative through a dedicated GECES seminar and to take part in early-stage discussions on the Social Economy Action Plan foreseen for the end of 2021.

The EC's skills agenda, published in July, is a <u>roadmap</u> by the Commission of the challenge SMEs face (such as worker and social cooperatives) in skills development and attraction of young workforce in today's labour market.

The minimum wage initiative is another <u>important step</u> in the achievement of Social Europe and cooperatives have an important role to play in the promotion of a more dignified work culture, especially in the context of the stark transformation of our labour markets.

In its collaboration with DG GROW, CECOP is regularly invited to take part in SME Envoy (political) and SBA Follow Up (technical) meetings where it is consulted on policies that have an impact on small and medium enterprises (SMEs), together with major EU networks representing SMEs.

On March 2020, in the context of the EC new Industry strategy and SME strategy, CECOP <u>highlighted the important role</u> and capacity of transformation of industrial cooperatives, which provide quality jobs and equal redistribution of wealth at the local level.

The <u>potential of cooperatives in the digital economy</u> is also referred to in the EC's analysis on the opportunities and challenges digital technologies provides for the social economy.

CECOP is regularly invited to take part in consultations and discussions on employment and social inclusion related policies **in collaboration with DG EMPL**. Additionally, in December 2020, CECOP was invited to give keynote presentation in the consultation of social actors concerning the platform work initiative, ahead of its launch in early 2021.

The launch of the EC's "A strong Social Europe for Just Transition" document, a road towards the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, set out <u>opportunities for further collaboration</u>, whereas cooperatives answering to many economic, social, and democratic needs are ready to embrace the opportunities given by the environmental and technological transition with a human and democratic approach.

Since 2018, the 4-year "EaSI" partnership agreement signed with the Commission, provides us with a privileged space for exchanges and discussions about social inclusion and employment related policies with DG EMPL and other funded networks.





CECOP & European Parliament and European Economic and Social Committee

CECOP regularly takes part in the European Parliament (EP) Intergroup on Social Economy and the Intergroup on Public Goods while maintaining regular contacts with some Members of the European Parliament (MEPs).

On June 2nd, we intervened in the first public hearing of the EP Intergroup on Social Economy represented by our Italian member, <u>Legacoop Produzione</u> <u>e Servizi</u>, to highlight the importance of industrial cooperatives and worker buyouts practices in times of crisis.

In December, we welcomed recognition of the EP's Own-Initiative Report on the EU industry strategy which <u>recognized the important role of cooperatives</u> in complementing the EC new Industry strategy, the European Green Deal and the European Skills agenda.

In addition, CECOP met with MEP Sylvie Brunet, rapporteur on the European Parliament's Own-Initiative report on improving working conditions and access to social protection of platform workers to convey our message on the cooperatives' solution to the challenges of platform work.

On a regular basis, CECOP also collaborates with the European Economic and Social Committee.



The Stand Up for the Social Pillar Alliance

CECOP together with the Social Platform, the European Trade Union Confederation, Social Economy Europe, and European Movement International is part of a strategic alliance to call the European Institutions and Member States to properly implement the 20 principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights.



Workshop on the role of education in the upcoming European Action Plan for the Social Economy

On December 1st, together with our Polish member, the National Auditing Union of Cooperatives (NAUWC), CECOP co-hosted a <u>national workshop</u> on the role of education in the European Action Plan for the Social Economy.

Where many countries in Europe still lack the tools, incentives and knowledge on the subject, this conference provided concrete contributions and recommendations to fill this gap by sharing inspirational examples from Poland, Spain, and France on how to learn from each other and develop new strategies for cooperatives in education and promote cooperativism in mainstream education curricula.

Participation in "Made in Social Europe" exhibition by Social Platform

CERCINA, a Nazaré-based social cooperative (affiliated to the national federation of Portuguese social cooperatives FENACERCI) was featured in Social Platform publication titled <u>"Made in Social Europe"</u>. This publication featured 19 inspiring practices from civil society organisations of the Social Platform network.

Policy contributions to Social Platform statements on the Pillar

CECOP participated regularly in the Social Platform's working group on the European Pillar of Social Rights. This not only allowed for more efficient monitoring of policies such as the Social Pillar Action Plan and an increased visibility of CECOP standpoints in publications of the Social Platform, but also helped to allow for informed reactions published by CECOP independently.





CECOP conference and campaign on non-standard and platform work "All for One"

Pursuing in the promotion of the <u>All for One report</u> published by CECOP in 2019, CECOP launched a <u>communication campaign</u> and a <u>docuseries</u>, that included the worker-owned cooperatives strategy to react to the challenges of non-standard work. This was a month-long campaign during the month of November, that culminated in an <u>online conference</u> on December 3rd.

The event showcased experiences from the network and featured the different perspectives from practitioners, researchers, and policy makers. Moreover, the event highlighted the cooperatives capacity to mutualize needs and risks, and provide mutual aid and solidarity.





Participation in external events

Last October, CECOP was present in a European Social Economy exchange event "Leaving no one behind" on employment, upskilling, and social inclusion in the changing world of work. An event organised in the framework of the #DigitalRoadToMannheim, that will lead up to the European Social Economy Summit (EUSES) in May 2021.

In July, we intervened in an event organized by <u>KEDV</u>, a Turkish foundation supporting women cooperatives, discussing the gender dimension of the COVID-19 crisis.

We also were present in a discussion organized by <u>Calderdale Co-operative</u> <u>Association</u> (UK), on how to rebuild our economy and our society after COVID-19 trough worker engagement and democracy.

Invited by our Polish member NAUWC, CECOP presented the resilience of the cooperative model during the annual business conference of the AGH Technology University of Cracow, Poland.

E-bulletin on EU social affairs

Twice a year, CECOP publishes its <u>bi-annual Bulletin on EU Social Affairs</u>, featuring CECOP's work on social policy in Europe.

The bulletin provides an overview on the latest EU social affairs news from a worker and social cooperatives' perspective and includes some of CECOP Policy Work, news from our partners, and recommended readings.





Building partnerships

CECOP is a member of Social Economy Europe, REVES (European Network of Cities and Regions for the Social Economy) and Social Platform, a wider umbrella organization representing tens of EU-wide social NGOs. In the last elections at Social Platform, CECOP's Advocacy Coordinator was nominated member of the Management Committee. On a permanent base, we closely follow the Social Platform Working Groups (on Funding and on Social Standards), the membership committee and others.

In addition, we continuously establish links and partnerships with other actors that pursue similar objectives.

Last year we took part in a webinar organized by the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) where we presented the worker cooperative model as an example of Democracy at Work, alongside others such as the German codetermination, the theoretical bicameralism, and the employee ownership.





DEVELOPMENT

Our network is in constant development. CECOP supports the capacity of industrial and service cooperatives to work with one another, through mutual learning and participation in projects of interest.

EMEN project: Migrants' entrepreneurship

In September, the three-year project EMEN (European Migrant Entrepreneurship Network), supported by the EU's COSME programme, came to an end. The project gathered 12 partners and over 150 organizations working on migrant entrepreneurship to support and promote migrants' entrepreneurship in Europe.

As partner in the project, in collaboration with Diesis Network and REVES, we co-published a chapter on "Social Economy and Social Entrepreneurship: the role of social economy enterprises in supporting migrant entrepreneurs", in the framework of the EMEN project final publication. This chapter analyzes the support that social economy gives to migrant entrepreneurship. In addition, we co-organised a dedicated session during the EMEN final event "Growing Europe. Boosting migrant entrepreneurship networks",

More information about the project: <u>www.emen-project.eu</u>





4 years partnership agreement with the European Commission under the EaSI programme

CECOP has signed a four-year-partnership agreement with DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, financed by the EaSI programme for Employment and Social Innovation supporting EU-level NGO networks active in the areas of social inclusion and poverty reduction.

The activities planned by CECOP for the 2018 to 2021 period are aimed at improving the capacity of the network to fight poverty and social exclusion, promoting decent work and social protection for non-standard workers.

They also aim at helping CECOP's members to implement provide feedback on, and contribute to, EU social policies, but also improve the network's visibility, extend its coverage in Europe, and be fully recognized as a key actor in this field.

EaSI activities in 2020:

- A research was conducted in order to collect information on the contribution of cooperatives to fight informal work.
- Two publications, a comparative analysis of the Social Enterprises Laws in Europe, and a toolkit for members on methods of social impact assessment of Industry and Service Cooperatives in Europe.
- Three online events were organized (a Conference on cooperatives' contribution to non-standard and platform work, and a workshop on the education and social economy in Poland) and the preparation of the mutual learning session among CECOP members on youth employment and entrepreneurship.
- One working group among members on platform workers that is the continuation of the mutual learning session among CECOP members organized in 2019.
- One online campaign promoting CECOP's All for One report on cooperatives' contribution to non-standard and platform work, and an e-bulletin aimed mainly at disseminating EU social policies.
- Finally, the action allowed the consolidation of the network through a desk analysis of the ecosystem of industrial and service cooperatives in countries where CECOP has no members yet.



Members mutual learning session on Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship

On 11 November, we held a mutual learning session with our members, where we investigated opportunities and criticalities of promoting cooperative entrepreneurship among young people. This was done in collaboration with Lama Cooperative and the Youth Network of the Alleanza delle Cooperative Italiane.

12 participants shared their experiences, challenges, and good practices, in approaching the promotion of cooperative models amongst new generations from 7 European countries, UK, Poland, Bulgaria, Belgium, Italy, Sweden, and Finland.





KNOWLEDGE

Carrying out research and contribute to knowledge about industrial and service cooperatives is vital to strengthen and support the work of CECOP and its network.



Measuring Social Impact. A toolkit for members

Over the last years, there has been a growing interest in promoting businesses' social dimension and impact on the society. However, while the social impact measurement tools to assess financial performance are well standardized, those related to social and environmental dimensions are less so.

Within the cooperative movement, some tools and methods assessing the social advantage of cooperatives, including worker and social cooperatives, have been developed at the national level much before impact measurement became fashionable.

This members-only toolkit illustrates five current practices and useful resources of social impact measurement in the CECOP network in Europe and it is available in the <u>Members area</u> (only for members) of the website.



Analysis of cooperative contribution to social inclusion

Through this analysis, CECOP is collecting qualitative and quantitative information on the positive social impact of worker and social cooperatives on the community they operate, its workers and its beneficiaries.

The analysis, that will also be pursued in 2021 and culminate in a publication. It is being developed in collaboration with our Italian and Spanish members, Confcooperative Federsolidarietà and COCETA.

Social Enterprise Laws across Europe: Publication

In December, CECOP published and analysis on the progress made by Member States in enabling adequate legal frameworks for enterprises which have a social mission 10 years after the EC's Social Business Initiative Communication (2011). The <u>report</u> suggests that cooperatives warrant specific consideration within these laws due to the values their business model incorporate which is recognized and safeguarded by the International Cooperative Alliance, such as self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity.

Research on cooperative contribution from informal to formal economy

Following the successful research on worker-owned cooperatives' responses to non-standard employment, CECOP launched a new research on the contribution of cooperatives to improve the world of work, with a focus on informal work. Informal work is a challenge in many European economies, leading to social dumping, unfair competition and a deterioration of workers' and social rights.

The research aims to explore how cooperatives and federations are affected by informal work and what strategies did they develop to fight informal work. The project is developed in collaboration with the expert Dr. Francesca Martinelli (Fondazione Centro Studi Doc, Italy).



2020 IN FIGURES



25 MEMBERS



3 EVENTS



1 GENERAL ASSEMBLY



2 BOARD



2 EXECUTIVE COMMITEES



1 ONLINE CAMPAIGN



2 WORKING GROUPS



2 RESEARCH

STUDIES

1 TOOLKIT FOR MEMBERS



2 PUBLICATIONS

2 EUROPEAN PROJECTS



2312 FOLLOWERS ON FACEBOOK



4771 FOLLOWERS ON TWITTER



314 FOLLOWERS ON LINKEDIN



360 SUBSCRIBERS ON YOUTUBE



399,741 WEBSITE VISITS



3623 SUBSCRIBERS ON MAILCHIMP







OUR NETWORK

FULL MEMBERS







Co-operatives UK

ASSOCIATED MEMBERS



OUR STAFF







Mila Shamku Advocacy Coordinator



Francesca Zaganelli Membership Coordinator



Gabrielle Tzelepis Accounting

We welcomed two new colleagues in 2020



Victoria Hernandez Communication Officer



Anton Möller Policy and Research Assistant

CECOP thanks colleagues Elisa Terrasi, Hyungsik Eum, and Ambra Porcedda, who left in 2019 and 2020, for their invaluable work and service to the organisation.



WHAT TO EXPECT IN 2021

Since the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, it was clear that something would have to change. An unprecedented sanitary crisis that affected the life of countless people, the job market, and the future of human relations.

Cooperatives as many other actors in the field have been confronted with the urgency to adapt to a new reality, while facing the arduous economic consequences of the lockdown.

Today, in mid-2021, we can begin to take stock of what has been and still will be, a difficult period for small and medium-sized enterprises, including our cooperatives. For this reason, in CECOP we will dedicate an important part of our work to analyse how our federations and cooperatives are responding to the crisis. What appropriate institutional environment can we create for the future of our cooperatives?

We will of course continue to tackle all topics dear to our network and make our voice heard. Indeed, many of our concerns are on the 2021 European Commissions' agenda, such as the reviewed Industry Strategy, The European Acton Plan for Social Economy, the implementation of the European Pillar of Social rights, the Platform work initiative, just to name a few.



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About CECOP

CECOP is the European confederation of industrial and service cooperatives. It represents the voices of worker cooperatives, social cooperatives and independent workers' cooperatives. CECOP works to create a supportive environment for cooperatives, so that they can operate to their full strength and fulfil their mission of providing sustainable jobs and high quality services to communities. Our aim is to build a fairer Europe and contribute to sustainable economic growth, to bring democracy and solidarity to the workplace.

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