



## What is CECOP?

CECOP is the European confederation of industrial and service cooperatives. Our members are national federations of cooperatives, and organisations that promote cooperatives. These members represent **25 members in 15 European countries**. We give voice to 40,000 enterprises, employing 1.3 million workers – mainly three types of cooperatives:

- **35,000** worker cooperatives - democratically managed and owned by the workers, who share risks and responsibilities.
- **12,000** social cooperatives (employing 270,000 workers) - which respond to the needs of communities by providing social, cultural, educational and environmental services. These are also known as 'services of general interest'. Some of them contribute to the integration of disadvantaged and marginalised people, by providing work.
- **1,000** cooperatives of self-employed producers such as freelancers, truck drivers, taxi drivers, journalists, masons, graphic designers, consultants, doctors and lawyers. These cooperatives help overcome isolation and improve security, by sharing resources, benefits and things like marketing or accountancy services, workspace and equipment.

### Our vision and mission

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 stronger and fairer Europe, working through cooperatives to bring democracy and solidarity to the workplace, sustainable economic growth, and social cohesion. As a European confederation, we commit ourselves to:

- Represent the interests of our members to the EU institutions, other European-level policy makers, national governments, and the wider cooperative movement
- Support our members through networking, mutual learning, designing common strategies and agreeing collective positions
- Develop industrial and service cooperatives across Europe, and support their capacity to cooperate with each other – building new national organisations where they don't yet exist
- Increase the visibility of cooperatives in industry and services, in the forms they are mainly organised - worker cooperatives, social cooperatives and cooperatives of self-employed producers
- Carry out research and contribute to knowledge about industrial and service cooperatives

### Our history

European cooperatives in industry and services go back to at least 1883, when the first recorded worker cooperative was established by jewelry workers in Paris. Around the beginning of the 20th century, there was a wave of worker cooperative development all over the European continent. Responding to the unjust labour conditions of the industrial revolution, they provided worker members with better, fairer and more dignified relations of work, and protected them with systems of welfare and social security.

Social cooperatives emerged around the 1970s, as an answer to communities' need to overcome the lack of social services and work inclusion.

More recently, we have seen the development of cooperatives of self-employed producers, creating the double benefit of providing members with both autonomy and security, in response to the uncertainty and instability created by non-standard forms of employment.

CECOP was founded in 1979 in Manchester, UK, by a group of cooperators from 6 countries: France, Italy, The Netherlands, Belgium, the United Kingdom and Denmark. In 1982, it established its first secretariat in Brussels, and in 1992 it became a fully fledged confederation.

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