



We own it!

**THE FUTURE
OF WORK
IS OURS.**

Discover the campaign
on youth cooperative
entrepreneurship
by CICOPA.



International Organisation of
Industrial and Service Cooperatives
A Sector of the International
Co-operative Alliance

Introduction

CICOPA, the global organization of cooperatives in industry and services and a sector of the International Cooperative Alliance, represents around 68,000 cooperatives¹ employing 4 million people active in 30 countries and involved in the most varied activities such as catering, tourism, manufacturing, construction, engineering, communication, energy production and care services. In terms of mission and inner structure, the main types are worker cooperatives, social cooperatives and self-employed producers' cooperatives, which are characterised by the fact that the workers or the producers are the majority owners of the cooperative.² Democratic control by the enterprise staff or producers has a strong implication on the type of management which characterizes these cooperatives.

On the other hand, cooperatives in general and in these sectors in particular have proved over time their adaptability to different contexts, and have shown particular resilience to the ongoing economic crisis. For them to maintain such adaptability and resilience, it is crucial that they regenerate themselves through a transition towards new generations.

Based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity, an increasing interest for the cooperative way of doing business has been observed among youth across the world over the last few years. This materializes to a large extent through the establishment of cooperative SMEs under the form of worker, social or producers' cooperatives.

In this context, CICOPA is dedicating particular attention to youth cooperative entrepreneurship in 2017. In January 2017, we are launching a [WE OWN IT!](#), a campaign for youth cooperative entrepreneurship designed as a powerful communication tool and an umbrella for the activities CICOPA will develop to promote the creation of cooperatives during that period and started preparing as of April 2016.

Context and motivations for the campaign

For the past several years, the level of youth unemployment in the world has increased to alarming levels, with an even more alarming structural impact on society and the economy. In Northern Africa, the youth unemployment rate is around 30% as a whole and 45% for young women.³ In Sub-Saharan Africa, it is 12.5% but this data hides the fact that most youth find jobs in the informal economy, in spite of marked improvements in the educational levels.⁴ In Northern America, it has decreased moderately (e.g., in the USA it was 15.7% at the end of 2015, down from 16.6% one year before), but is about twice as high as the adult unemployment rate.⁵ In Latin America and the Caribbean, it is

¹ This number includes around 2,000 Spanish worker-owned enterprises called *sociedades laborales*, which are not cooperatives but are very similar to cooperatives.

² Some of them, such as a few hundred Collective Interest Cooperative Societies (SCIC) in France, are structurally multi-stakeholder (including in their membership workers, users and other actors); in such cooperatives, workers are not necessarily the majority of members, but they constitute a substantial ratio of them.

³ ILO (2016) World Employment Social Outlook 2016 (Geneva: ILO), p. 31

⁴ Ibid., p. 34-35

⁵ Ibid., p. 36

three times as high as for the adults, and “22 million young people aged 15-24 do not work or study”.⁶ In the Arab countries of the Middle East, one in three male youth and one in two female youth are unemployed, in spite of improvements in the educational levels.⁷ In Asia, where youth educational levels have improved markedly, “the incidence of unemployment among those youth who do enter the labour market still remains significantly higher than that for their adult counterparts, at around five times as high in South-Eastern Asia and the Pacific, and three to four times as high in Eastern Asia and Southern Asia”.⁸ In Western and Central Asia, the youth unemployment rate is close to 17%.⁹ In the European Union, 4.6 million young people under 25 were unemployed in the EU in August 2015. This represents an unemployment rate of 20.4%: in other words, more than one in five young European job-seekers cannot find a job. In Spain and Greece, they are more than one in two. Equally alarming, the average youth unemployment rate is almost twice as high as the rate for adult unemployment in most EU Member States.¹⁰

At the same time, over the last few years and particularly since the 2008 economic crisis broke out, young people around the globe have been expressing increasing dissatisfaction about mainstream economic governance and an increasing interest for cooperatives including under emerging and innovative forms, in a quest for more democracy and transparency.

Cooperatives can be the tool for young people to create an enterprise that makes sense by putting into practise ethical values such as honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others. As a consequence of the cooperative way of doing business, young people can find a job with a higher level of stability and resilience than the average and break the obstacles they face in taking a more active and autonomous place in society by making them take ownership and feel more responsible for their own initiatives. In today’s world, the collaborative work at the heart of cooperatives is natural for many young people; however, cooperatives are not so well known among them. This campaign seeks to spread the word about the cooperative path that many youth are already following.

In 2013, CICOPA members acknowledged that it was crucial to work on policies towards the youth, by including it in the organization’s 2013-2020 strategic plan. CICOPA’s activities on youth cooperative entrepreneurship will reinforce and echo activities which its members are already implementing at national level. At the regional level, CECOP CICOPA-Europe has already started implementing some activities in this field:

- collaboration with the European Youth Forum¹¹ (2013-2014) in the design of a toolkit *Youth organisations setting-up cooperatives* dedicated to young people interested in establishing a cooperative;

⁶ Ibid., p. 42

⁷ Ibid., p. 45

⁸ Ibid., p. 49

⁹ Ibid., p. 58

¹⁰ In August 2015 the overall unemployment rate in the 28 EU Member States was 11%, according to European Commission data: see http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Unemployment_statistics

¹¹ European Youth Forum is the organisation representing the voice of young Europeans in front of the EU institutions. They lobby for youth interests and needs. www.youthforum.org

- participation in the European Youth Event (EYE)¹² organised by the European Parliament and the European Youth Forum in Strasbourg, France (May 2014); below some pictures of CECOP's presence at the event and the implication of some young visitors at our stand:



CICOPA also played a central part in the production of the video *Working Together for a Cooperative Future*,¹³ which was screened for the first time at the plenary of the International Cooperative Alliance Conference *Towards 2020: what will your Cooperative Look Like?* on 11 November 2015 in Antalya, Turkey.

¹² www.cecop.coop/Worker-and-social-cooperatives-a

¹³ Available on Youtube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AQXdYdXbQI4>



Inside the international cooperative movement, the young cooperative leaders are beginning to make their voices heard. For example, during the International Summit of Cooperatives in October 2014, young cooperative leaders published a message titled *Young Leaders: Co-operate to Transform Society*, which was uploaded on the International Cooperative Alliance’s website, calling on the cooperative movement to transform an economy based on the individual accumulation of wealth and power into a system that serves the collective well-being of people and our planet through redistribution of resources, common ownership and the active participation of the youth.¹⁴ In Europe, the European Young Co-operators Network was launched in the framework of Cooperatives Europe’s General Assembly in Paris on 23 April 2015. The network aims to share knowledge and best practice, promote innovative young cooperatives and work together to get better youth representation within boards, institutions and conferences in the cooperative movement.¹⁵

Objectives of the campaign

- A. **Promote cooperative entrepreneurship and employment among the youth** in the world at large through the promotion of worker, social and producers’ cooperatives.
- B. **Create an impact on governments and international organizations regarding cooperative entrepreneurship and employment** through worker, social and producers’ cooperatives among the youth, and provide them with concrete policy recommendations in this field.

How to reach these campaign objectives?

The two above objectives first of all require to **increase knowledge on the state of the art of youth cooperative entrepreneurship**, through a study which would feed the campaign contents. It will

¹⁴ <http://ica.coop/en/media/news/young-leaders-co-operate-transform-society>

¹⁵ www.cecop.coop/On-air-the-European-Young-Cooperators-Network-has-been-officially-launched

increase the knowledge about the trends regarding the creation of cooperatives by the youth and will also address policy recommendations to policy makers.

An effective way to promote youth cooperative entrepreneurship is to **show very concrete cases of cooperatives created and developed by the youth** and provide national contacts to help establish them. Displayed in an interactive way by using small videos, graphics, gifs, pictures etc., this information could be shared by different organisations through the social media and the web. Indeed, with the general disenchantment which they feel, many youth no longer believe in statements: they want to see the facts.

Such contents can, in turn, provide a powerful basis to lobby governments as well as international and regional institutions: in order to **properly combine the two above objectives and show to what extent they are inter-related**, it would be appropriate to **schedule a physical event** such as a conference, where both the youth and policy makers are present.

Campaign activities and deliverables

The activities and deliverables planned during the campaign are the following:

1. A website designed for young people interested in creating a cooperative

This dedicated website will provide visibility to the campaign and is aimed at attracting young people towards worker, social and producers' cooperatives.

This website will:

- provide concrete cases and information to young persons interested in worker, social and producers' cooperatives;
- promote worker, social and producers' cooperatives among young people;
- provide practical information on how to establish worker, social or producers' cooperatives in the countries where the youth find themselves, by linking them with CICOPA's national member organisations.

This website, accessible through the CICOPA website, will present best practices of worker, social cooperatives and producers' cooperatives created by young people around the world in an interactive fashion. The website will also guide those who are unaware of what cooperatives are through different processes and leading them at the end to CICOPA's member organisation in the country where they are based. It will also serve as a merge tool of the products of the campaign.

2. Publication of a dossier on youth cooperative entrepreneurship

A study on youth cooperative entrepreneurship is an essential tool for knowledge-building on the topic, but also, once published, for lobby, advocacy and visibility. The publication will analyse the

interest for, and trends among young people in establishing worker, social and producers' cooperatives around the world, including under emerging new forms. Some concrete cases will be included, telling the story of some successful youth cooperatives across the world. We will also present some recommendations for policies at international, regional and national level in order to enable and foster the establishment of cooperatives by young people.

3. A video highlighting best practices of worker, social and producers' cooperatives created by young people

Successful stories can be a very effective way to promote cooperatives. This tool is regularly used in CICOPA's communication strategy. EU institutions or other entities (e.g., the European Youth Forum) often ask us to provide best practice examples. Besides, we have already experienced, through the documentary film *Together – How Cooperatives Show Resilience to the Crisis*,¹⁶ which we produced in 2012 and is available in 10 languages,¹⁷ to what extent can videos be a powerful tool and a great support in conveying a message. Video interviews of young co-operators clearly contribute to illustrating the character of cooperatives as member-owned enterprises. Finally, short videos are a very popular source of information for today's youth and are easily disseminated and shared on social media, websites, online magazines, etc.

CICOPA, together with its regional organizations CECOP CICOPA-Europe and CICOPA Mercosur, has recently produced a collaborative video called *Working Together for a Cooperative Future* representing nine examples of cooperatives created by young persons around the world.¹⁸ The selected cooperatives have been working in a cooperative manner in the process and have been asked to film themselves. The purpose of the video was to appeal to the youth's interest, be a source of inspiration and motivation, and give some concrete examples in creating an entrepreneurial adventure through the establishment of a cooperative.

The video will be used:

- on the campaign website (see point 1 above);
- on CICOPA's websites and social media;
- during the conference on youth cooperative entrepreneurship planned during the campaign (see point 4 below);
- as an advocacy tool;
- to promote worker, social and producers' cooperatives;
- on the websites of members, partners and organisations targeting the youth as part of a dissemination strategy.

4. Conference on youth cooperative entrepreneurship

A conference on youth cooperative entrepreneurship will be organised during the one year campaign. The purpose of the event is to analyse the possibilities offered by worker, social and

¹⁶ The documentary can be viewed at www.together-thedocumentary.coop

¹⁷ Namely English, French, Italian, Spanish, Polish, Bulgarian, Greek, Turkish, Japanese and Korean

¹⁸ Namely, from Brazil, Argentina, South Africa, Japan, the USA, Poland, France, Italy, Spain,; the video is available on Youtube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=AQXdYdXbQI4

producers' cooperatives to young people in order to respond to their entrepreneurial and employment needs through values such as common ownership, democratic governance, self-realisation, empowerment and responsible attitude toward the community.

The target public for the conference will be both the youth and the policy-makers at international, regional and national level. CICOPA members (national organisations of worker, social and producers' cooperatives) will be associated with the event in order to bring delegations of young cooperative entrepreneurs. Particular attention will be dedicated to geographical balance in order to count on the participation of young people from all around the world.

The conference will mainly address the following issues:

- identify challenges and barriers encountered by young people while trying to establish a cooperative;
- present cooperatives as a solution to self-employment (e.g., cooperatives of graphic designers, cooperatives of journalists etc.);
- address community needs through a cooperative (from environmental issues to student needs etc.);
- discuss intergenerational solidarity: how older co-operators can help younger ones;
- suggest concrete policy recommendations to policy makers based on concrete experience.

During the conference, various success stories of youth cooperatives will be displayed in order to inspire and motivate the participants.

The style of the conference will also be adapted to the target public, with dynamic interventions, videos, sessions moderated by young people, etc. The conference will be designed in such a way that the young participants have an active role.

Representatives from organisations dealing with youth entrepreneurship and employment as well as from other cooperative sectors will be invited to take part in the conference.

How to support the campaign?

We need you to make this campaign happen. You can choose to support one specific action or several ones:

→ As a **sponsor**:

Organizations and enterprises willing to provide direct financial support. Sponsors will have their logo published in all the outputs of the campaign. The minimum amount to be a sponsor is 5000 €.

→ As a **donor**:

Donations by organizations, enterprises or individuals can also be made to enhance the campaign. They will be mentioned in the section [“Supporters”](#) of the website.

→ As a **partner**:

To help promote and create contents for the campaign. They will be mentioned in the section [“Supporters”](#) of the website.

Publication of accounts

We will publish the accounts of the campaign (income and expenditure) on <http://donations.cicopa.coop/accounts> with regular updates. Any donor or sponsor will obtain detailed accounts of the campaign upon request.

Estimated budget

Item	Preparation starts	TOTAL
1. Website Communication plan for creation and promotion Coordination WebDesign and visual identity, maintenance of the site, proofreading Domain and hosting Subtotal :	August 2016	7,750 € 8,250 € 7,960 € 120 € 24,080 €
2. Video Coordination and promotion Production of engagement videos and images summarizing “Working together for a cooperative future” Subtitles in one language Subtotal:	December 2016	5,244 € 1,300€ 1,200 € 7,744 €
3. Dossier on youth cooperative entrepreneurship Strategic plan for promotion Coordination Research Design and layout Translation into Spanish & French Productions of 50 copies Subtotal:	December 2016	2,000 € 5,430 € 5,000 € 1,240 € 1,400 € 475 € 15,545 €
4. Conference on youth cooperative entrepreneurship Design and coordination Communication & dissemination Design and productions visuals Travel costs for a delegation of 10 youth to participate in the conference 10 participants x 300 EUR per participant Subtotal:	February 2017	5,000 € 5,000 € 3,750 € 3,000 € 16,800 €
5. General campaign costs (administration, accountancy, travel)	August 2016	19,363 €
TOTAL BUDGET NEEDED		83,532 €