



Weekly Digest

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Editorial

Welcome to issue ten of the Weekly Digest. In this issue we report primarily on recent meetings and activities in Europe. The enlargement of the European Union has brought with it the opportunity for greater co-ordination of efforts to promote and represent co-operatives. The ICA is playing a leading role in this process on behalf of its European members. This week we also briefly report on ICA activities in Africa. As usual we would welcome your comments on the style and content of the weekly newsletter.

European Cohesion Leads to Increased Coordination between ICA Europe and CCACE



ICA Europe and the Co-ordinating Committee of European Co-operative Associations (CCACE) have signed a protocol for common action under the banner Co-operatives in Europe. The recent ICA European Council meeting agreed to the protocol which will now see much greater co-ordination between the two organisations. The above photo shows European Council members in celebratory mood after the Council meeting.

ICA Europe's President, Dame Pauline Green who has been the driving force behind the move for closer relations, is delighted. She signed the agreement on behalf of ICA Europe. Étienne Pflimlin, (*photo opposite*) President of CCACE and President of the Confédération Nationale du Crédit Mutuel, France signed on behalf of CCACE.



Pauline Green explained the background to the decision. "On 1 May 2004 ten new countries will join the European Union. This will bring the size of the EU to 25 member states. It will also mean that for the first time the majority of the member organisations in ICA Europe will be within the EU rather than outside of it. Since the election of the present Council of ICA Europe in Lisbon in 2002, we have been in detailed negotiations with CCACE our partner co-operative organisation based in Brussels."

.. / ...

The protocol recognises the respective identity of both organisations. ICA Europe is the pan-European representative of co-operative member organisations whereas the CCACE is the co-operative co-ordinating umbrella organisation recognised by the EU institution.



Under the protocol, ICA Europe and CCACE have agreed to a common action plan and associated budgets under the *Co-operatives in Europe* banner. *Co-operatives in Europe* will be the marketing brand for a common platform to the European institutions. Behind it, the two organisations will initially develop a joint database, communication and consultation system to ensure that the co-operative movement collectively can build its presence and visibility in the EU.

“Our objective” said Pauline Green (*photo opposite*) “is to better service our members, and exercise the influence that the strength of our presence in Europe’s economy demands”. The first practical outcome of the protocol is that ICA Europe will open a business office in Brussels. *Co-operatives in Europe* will also begin immediately communicating and consulting with the combined membership base of ICA Europe and CCACE on EU issues. For more information please contact Dame Pauline Green pauline.green@cooperatives-uk.coop

ICA European Council Adopts Ambitious Programme for 2004

ICA Europe’s governing body the European Council met in Budapest, Hungary on 31 March 2004. The main outcomes of the meeting were the signing of the protocol with CCACE, described above, and the setting up of the new ICA Europe Office in Brussels. Agreement was also reached on the outline of a new development strategy, drafted with the help of the ICA Europe Development Task Force which met before the Council meeting. The draft development strategy focuses on co-operative organisations in countries outside of the EU and seeks to add value to the global ICA development goals. This strategy will be submitted for adoption at the forthcoming Regional Assembly. Agreement was also reached on the final programme for the Regional Assembly in Warsaw which will be held on 23-24 September 2004.

ICA Europe Opens Brussels Office

The ICA European Council has approved the establishment of a new Business Office in Brussels. The office will be staffed initially on a part time basis by ICA European Officer Barbara Coghlan. Ms Coghlan (*photo opposite*) will also continue to be based in the ICA’s European Office in Geneva assisting European Director Gabriella Sozanski. Ray Collins, ICA Europe Business Consultant will be working with Ms Coghlan in the Brussels office.

The main functions of the new office will include establishing contacts with the EU, taking a leading role in the EU consultation processes, improving communication with members on EU related matters and lobbying on behalf of members. These activities will be closely co-ordinated with the Brussels office of CCACE. The ICA is grateful to its Italian member, Confcooperative (www.confcooperative.coop) for providing temporary accommodation to allow the office to be quickly established. The new office will open in May 2004.



Hungarian Co-operative Movement Celebrates 100 Year Anniversary



The ICA European Council meeting coincided with the 100th anniversary celebrations of the holding of the ICA Congress in Budapest in 1904. A special celebrative session was held in the Hungarian Parliament. It was hosted by the National Co-operative Council of Hungary and its members. The celebrations saw the inauguration of a commemorative plaque of Count Sándor Károlyi, member and main sponsor of the 1904 ICA Congress. The photo opposite shows the unveiling of the special plaque honouring Count Károlyi.

Successful ICA – ILO Conference Held for EU Acceding Countries



A conference on the topic of *ILO Recommendation 193 in Practice – Co-operative Values and Principles in National Legislation* was held in the Hungarian Parliament, Budapest, on 1-2 April 2004. The conference was jointly organised by the ICA and the National Co-operative Council of Hungary in collaboration with the International Labour Office (ILO). It was timed to coincide with the European Council meeting, reported elsewhere in this issue.

This was the second ICA-ILO conference to focus on the implementation of ILO Recommendation 193. The first was held in St Petersburg in November last year for CIS countries. The participants at the Budapest conference included government and co-operative representatives from nine of the ten acceding countries about to join the EU. The conference received strong support from the Hungarian Government. The Deputy Prime Minister Peter Kiss, (*see top photo*) addressed the conference. Mr Kiss also met with ICA President, Ivano Barberini and ICA Europe President, Pauline Green during the conference. He indicated his support for co-operative development and the rapid adoption by Parliament of the new co-operative law.



The focus of the conference was on legislation. It received a report from the Chair of the ICA Legislative Advisor Group, Dr Hagen Henry on the progress of acceding countries towards enacting supportive and enabling co-operative legislation. Other speakers at the conference included Head of the ILO's Co-operative Branch, Jürgen Schwettmann, the Head of the Co-operative Unit, DG Enterprise, European Commission, Francesco Ianniello, the Chief Executive of the UK Co-operative College, Mervyn Wilson, and Pál Bartus, President of Co-op Hungary and ICA Board member. The conference adopted a resolution calling for more action from the European governments, co-operative organisations and the European

Commission to ensure that the potential of ILO Recommendation 193 was realised in member countries.

ICA Housing and CHF International to Host International Conference in Sarajevo, Bosnia



ICA Housing and CHF International will be jointly hosting *Toward Social Stability and Economic Development*, an international conference on "Practical Approaches to Housing Sector Development in Transition Countries." Held in Sarajevo, Bosnia 19-21 May 2004 this conference will bring together practitioners, donors, and decision-makers of housing and urban development to exchange ideas and develop closer collaboration throughout South Eastern Europe.



Iain Macdonald, ICA Director General will serve as the main introductory speaker during the conference's hosts welcome. This event has received practical support from the Housing and Urban Management Advisory Network (HUMAN) to the UNECE Committee on Human Settlements, and involves the collaboration of a number of housing experts throughout Europe. "Through this event, we look forward to building relationships and highlighting examples where community members and local officials have improved their housing circumstances at the local level," says Michael Doyle, President and CEO of CHF International. For more information on the conference, go to www.chfhq.org/sarajevo_conference.

ICA Welcomes Canadian Co-operative Support for ICA ROECSA Project

The Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) and ICA Regional Office for East, Central and Southern Africa (ICA ROECSA) have launched a new project. Its focus is on creating an enabling environment for co-operatives to function within East, Central and Southern Africa.

CCA board members travelled to Kenya to sign the document in late February 2004 and heralded in the new project. Pictured here are Bernard Kadasia, ICA ROECSA Regional Director, and Joanne Ferguson, Senior Director of the CCA International Development Programme.



ICA Director of Development, Jan-Eirik Imbsen welcomed the formal announcement and congratulated the CCA for their support of ICA projects. “This is an excellent example of the ICA working with one of its members on a very worthwhile project. It provides a model for others to follow” he said.

ICA Global HRD Committee – Names and Contact Details

As reported in [Weekly Digest No 8](#) the ICA’s Global HRD Committee met in Geneva on 25-26 March 2004, *see photo below*. This week we provide details of its membership and e-mail addresses.



- Yehudah Paz, Chair HRD Committee, Central Union of Co-operative Societies in Israel, yrpaz@kissufim.org.il
- Jan-Eirik Imbsen, Secretary, HRD Committee, ICA Director Development, development@ica.coop
- Esther Gicheru, Principal, Co-operative College, Kenya, coopcoll@wananchi.com
- Leow Peng Kui, Chief Executive, Singapore National Co-operative Federation, www.sncf.org.sg
- Fernando Martinho, Director, Escola Profissional de Economia Social (EPES), Portugal
- Mukasa Joseph, Chairman, Uganda Co-operative Alliance, ugasolar@infocom.co.ug
- Gabriele Ullrich, Switzerland, fazul@bluewin.ch
- Peter Davis, Unit for Membership Based Organisations, University of Leicester, UK, p.davis@le.ac.uk
- Bhagwati Prasa, Chief Executive, National Union of India, www.ncui.nic.in, Director General, National Council for Co-operative Training, bhagwatiprasad47@hotmail.com
- Vitali Teplov, Rector, Belgorod University of Consumer Co-operation, Russia, research@bupk.ru
- Tom Webb, Director, Global Co-operation, Canada, jtwebb@auracom.com
- Chris Cooper, Co-operative College, UK, chris@co-op.ac.uk
- Elba Echevarria, Cooperativa de Ahorro y Crédito de Arecibo (COOPACA), Puerto Rico, e_echevarriapr@hotmail.com

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