

ISSUE No: 15 — DATE: December 2002

NEWS FROM ROEP

☆ Regional Assembly, Lisbon

Co-operative enterprises have a significant role to play in helping to create a more competitive and dynamic Europe. This was the conclusion of the Regional Assembly and Seminar held in Lisbon, 10-11 October. A highlight of the event was the presence of Mr. Erkki Liikanen, European Commissioner in charge of Enterprise and Information Society. In his keynote address he considered co-operatives as bridges between communities and global economies. With the increasing share of electronic commerce, he feels that co-operatives have an even better chance to obtain the confidence of consumers. In this context he encouraged co-operatives to use dot coop. He confirmed the recent supportive measures of the European Commission, in particular to the adoption of the Statute for a European Co-operative Society (ECS) and the official communication under preparation on the promotion of co-operatives. Mr. Liikanen invited ICA Europe and its member organisations to help the Commission's efforts in raising and increasing awareness of co-operative success and good practice.

Presentations made at the Seminar included: "The ILO Recommendation 193 on co-operatives and its implementation" by Jürgen Schwettmann, Chief, ILO Co-op Branch; "The Statute for a European Co-operative Society: Easier co-operation across borders" by Daniela Cario, DGRV, Germany; "Enlargement – What impact on co-operatives?" by Jerzy Jankowski, President, National Co-operative Council, Poland; "Dot.coop fostering co-operative enterprises" by Jean-Claude Detilleux, President, GNC, France; "Co-operatives in Enterprise Europe" by Francesco Ianniello, Head of Unit, DG Enterprise, European Commission and the "Statement of the ICA Europe Youth Seminar". These presentations are available on the ICA Europe web site: <http://www.ica.coop/europe/aura.html>

The three member organisations of ICA, Fenacoop, Inscoop and Confagri, were hosts to the 300 participants of this successful Assembly. Mr. José Luis Arnaut, Deputy Prime Minister addressed the Assembly on behalf of the Portuguese government.

At the invitation of the National Co-operative Council, the next Regional Assembly will be held in Poland in September 2004.

☆ Elections

The Regional Assembly elected a new President for ICA Europe in the person of Pauline Green, Chief Executive Officer of the Co-operative Union (UK), two vice-chairs: Anne Santamäki (Finland) and Jean-François Hoffelt (Belgium) as well as ten other members of the European Council. See page 2.



WE WISH YOU ALL
A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR





CHAIRPERSON OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL
Pauline GREEN, Co-operative Union/Co-op Group, United Kingdom

VICE-CHAIRPERSONS OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL **VOTES**

	<i>Name</i>	<i>Nominating Organisation(s)</i>	<i>Country</i>	
1	Anne SANTAMÄKI	Finnish Consumer Co-operative Organisation (FCCA)	Finland	139
2	Jean-François HOFFELT	FEBECOOP	Belgium	128

MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL **VOTES**

	<i>Name</i>	<i>Nominating Organisation(s)</i>	<i>Country</i>	
1	Paul ARMBRUSTER	DGRV	Germany	181
2	Etienne PFLIMLIN	Confédération Nationale du Crédit Mutuel	France	177
3	Javier SALABERRIA	Confederación de Cooperativas de Euskadi	Spain	174
4	Galina KISELEVA	Centrosojuz of the Russian Federation	Russia	172
5	Nina JARLBÄCK	Kooperativa Förbundet	Sweden	168
6	Felice SCALVINI	CONFCOOPERATIVE / AGCI LEGACOOP	Italy	167
7	Pál BARTUS	AFEOSZ-Coop Hungary	Hungary	148
8	Petr BROŽEK	Co-operative Association of the Czech Republic	Czech Republic	147
9	Jerzy JANKOWSKI	National Co-operative Council	Poland	113
10	Marian RYBAR	Co-operative Union of the Slovak Republic	Slovak Rep.	104



☆ European Council

At their meeting in Lisbon on 9 October, the European Council received an excellent oral report from Pauline Green on the work of the ICA Board Task Force. Ivano Barberini, ICA President and Iain Macdonald, Director General gave a comprehensive report on ICA global issues, which was appreciated by the members. On the proposal of Felice Scalvini, Vice-President of Confcooperative, Italy, members agreed to recommending the Regional Assembly to send a message to the European Convention asking them “to recognise the value and social function of co-operative enterprises and adopt appropriate measures to promote and favour the development of enterprises, whose structure and aims correspond to the co-operative principles”.

The first meeting of the newly elected European Council was held in Manchester, on 16 December. On behalf of the Presidium Pauline Green, chairperson of ICA Europe drafted a proposal on Strategy, Procedures and Operations. The priorities suggested for the work of the Council over the next two years are: the strengthening of co-operative cohesion in Europe and the campaign to ensure that co-operatives are recognised as key players in the economy of each country in the region. Council members approved the paper and agreed to enlarging the Presidium (chairperson and two vice-chairs) with three more members, namely Galina Kiseleva, Russia, Petr Brozek, Czech Republic and Felice Scalvini, Italy. This new Executive intends to meet as necessary in order to drive forward the decisions made by the Council and strengthen relationship with all European members. The European Council decided also to draft a “regional response” to the ICA Board Task Force Report after having received the reactions of European members on the paper.

We encourage you to discuss the Executive Summary of the Board Report - circulated by the ICA Director General early November – with your members and send us your comments and suggestions as soon as possible.

The next meeting of the European Council will be held in Helsinki, 14 March 2003.

NEWS FROM MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

☆ Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Co-operative Association of Bosnia and Herzegovina has addressed an appeal for support to ICA members. You will find the appeal in its original form received from Sarajevo on the last page of this Bulletin. Although the Government declared its support for co-operative development through adopting a new co-operative law, it has not allocated any funds or loans to accompany this. Therefore, any form of assistance in kind or project support would be appreciated, which would allow the National Co-operative Association to continue its activities aiming at the promotion of co-operative development in the country. We count on your solidarity.

☆ Finland

The new Finnish co-operative legislation adopted earlier this year is available in English on the following web site: www.pellervo.fi/laki/E0011488.pdf. The Co-operative Act can also be ordered by e-mail finncoop@pellervo.fi or by fax at +358 9 694 8845 at the price of EUR 5 plus shipping and handling costs.

For more information on Pellervo, the Confederation of Finnish Co-operatives please see its web site: www.pellervo.fi/finncoop/



☆ France

Crédit Mutuel responded to a tender published by the European Commission concerning technical assistance to Georgia for the creation of a network of savings and credit co-operatives.

The Groupement National de Coopération (GNC) initiated a major research project with the aim of publishing a Directory of French Co-operators. The aim is to trace back the history of the French co-operative movement and pay tribute to the founders and key players.

☆ Italy

The main theme of the 36th Congress of LEGACOOP held in Rome, 28-30 November, was: "The Co-operative Project: Freedom and Security, Entrepreneurship and Participation". The Congress amended the Statutes of the organisation and sent a message to the President of the Republic urging the adoption of a new Co-operative Law. The 500 delegates attending the Congress elected Mr. Giuliano Poletti as its new President. Mr. Poletti was former Vice-Chairman of LEGACOOP and President of the Regional Union, Emilia Romagna.

Having served two terms of office as President of LEGACOOP, Mr. Ivano Barberini, ICA President was elected to a new post, Chairman of the National Assembly.

☆ Portugal

The co-operative sector in Portugal represents 5 per cent of the Gross National Product. Co-operatives are involved in agriculture, housing and retail trade as well as in providing social and cultural services. In the Republic's Constitution, co-operatives are mentioned as being an integral part of the country's social and economic development. The presentation of Manuel Canaveira Campos, President of INSCOOP, made at the ICA Regional Assembly for Europe, on the challenges for the Portuguese co-operative movement, is available in French from their Secretariat.

For more information: <http://www.inscoop.pt>

☆ Russia

Parliamentary hearings on the subject "Essence and Role of Co-operation in the National Economy" were conducted on 5-6 December in Moscow. Members of the Parliament, co-operative leaders from all sectors, high-ranking government officials and decision-makers took part in the sessions.

Valentin Ermakov, Chairman of Centrosojuz's Council, stressed in his report, the important role consumer co-operatives play in the solution of the vitally important problems of Russian villages. He underlined the contribution of consumer co-operatives to creating jobs, providing loans for purchasing goods, maintaining 29.000 shops in remote areas, which is an unprofitable activity and assisting the sick, the poor and rural people, in general.

Other speakers emphasized that 57 % of the rural population were under the poverty line and the number of jobless people was close to two million. Youth were leaving the village and the countryside was becoming deserted. All speakers agreed on the vital role co-operatives can play in improving this situation and contribute to the development of national economy. Some speakers called the attention to tax legislation, which didn't take into account the social responsibility of consumer co-operatives and urged amendments to legislation in order to develop rural infrastructure and impede Russian villages to disappear.

☆ Sweden

KF – Kooperativa Förbundet has been reorganised. The new structure consists of the office of the President and CEO, Mr. Börje Fors and the four departments: KF Secretariat headed by Lars Hillbom, KF Co-op Society Contacts, KF Finance and KF Cards.



“Our new structure is tailored to KF’s new duties”, said Mr. Börje Fors. “KF’s jobs now include operating as the national union of consumer co-operative societies in Sweden, and being the active owner of subsidiaries and associated companies. This applies specially to Coop Norden, our most important associated company.” The new structure will also produce considerable cost-savings.

KF is the principal owner of the associated companies Coop Norden AB, which includes Coop Sweden and Coop Bank AB. KF owns 42 per cent of Coop Norden, FDB Denmark 38 per cent and Coop NKL Norway 20 per cent. KF also owns 47 per cent of Coop Elektro AB.

☆ United Kingdom

The Co-operative Group, Midlands Co-op and Oxford, Swindon and Gloucester Co-op have linked with Oxfam to make giving to charity easier. Shoppers will now be able to donate money as they pay for their shopping. The money donated will be used to provide clean water supplies in Africa.

The Co-operative Group has acquired the business of Alldays, one of the largest convenience store chains in the UK. The deal which adds over 600 stores to the Group’s portfolio makes it the UK’s leading convenience store operator.

As a result of a decision made by the UK Co-ops to switch its entire range of own brand chocolate to Fairtrade, UK sales of ethically-produced chocolate are set to double.

The deal which has been struck with the Ghanaian cocoa co-operative, Kuapa Kohoo, will

- Guarantee a fair price for their cocoa harvest
- Provide vital services to impoverished communities
- Give much need support to the co-operative movement in Ghana
- Encourage other retailers to follow suit

EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND PARLIAMENT

☆ Successful conclusion of enlargement negotiations

Negotiations were concluded with ten candidate countries, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, at the European Council of Heads of State held on 12-13 December in Copenhagen. They reached agreement on the formula for enlarging the EU to encompass ten new Member States as from 1 May 2004. The objective is to welcome Bulgaria and Romania as members in 2007. The European Union is ready to open accession negotiations with Turkey in 2004.

Out of the total of Euro 408 million, Euro 108 million will go to Poland, specifically for implementing the Schengen agreement on border controls. The rest will be split among the other new Member States.

The new Member States will receive a rural development package, which is specifically adapted to their requirements and has more favourable conditions than those applied to the present EU Member States. The amount available for the ten countries was fixed at Euro 5.1 billion for 2004-2006. Direct aids for the new Member States will be phased in over ten years. They will thus receive 25 per cent of the full EU rate in 2004, rising to 30 per cent in 2005 and 35 per cent in 2006. Poland won the right to make early use of Euro 1 billion of the EU money that had been allocated to it for structural instruments, so it can bridge any gaps in its national budget from topping up direct payments to its farmers.



☆ **Pre-accession economic programmes of candidate countries**

Candidate countries have submitted their second Pre-accession Economic Programme (PEP). The objectives of the PEPs are to identify the appropriate economic policies and reforms needed to prepare for EU accession, and to develop the institutional and analytical capacity necessary to participate in the multilateral surveillance procedures of EMU upon accession. The full document (Enlargement Papers) is available on:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/economy_finance/publications/enlargement_papers/elp14_en.htm

☆ **Commission appoints expert group to study consequences of enlargement**

Next year the European Union expects to sign a Treaty of Accession with ten future member countries. Its ratification will be accompanied by a wide public debate - which has already commenced - on the implications and challenges of the extension of the EU to 25 members. The European Commission considers that an independent high-level report on the consequences of enlargement should now be made, to inform and accompany the debate. Although a number of studies have been published in recent years, a comprehensive analysis, at the European level, is desirable to provide clear and authoritative answers to the many questions, which are posed by the public. Mr Wim Kok, former Prime Minister of the Netherlands has agreed to chair the work of the Report. Mr Kok will be assisted by a group of eminent experts from present and future Member States and by the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies at the European University Institute, Florence. The report is expected by the end of March 2003.

☆ **Enterprises in Central & Eastern European Countries**

The creation of new enterprises slowed down between 1995 and 2000. Around 500 000 non-agricultural enterprises were newly registered in the CEECs in 2000. The creation rate of enterprises was about 13 per cent, after having been above 19 per cent in 1995 and 1996. It differed considerably across countries: in 2000, it was above 20 per cent in Estonia and Latvia and below 10 per cent in Lithuania and Slovenia. In September 2001, the survival rates of enterprises active in January 1995 in the CEECs ranged from 26 per cent in Lithuania to 67 per cent in Slovenia.

This information comes from a report published on 10 December by the Statistical Office of the European Communities in Luxembourg: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat/>

☆ **Recent publications**

Eurostat published 5 December a compilation of economic and social indicators concerning the ten Acceding Countries. Tables are available in PDF and WORD on <http://europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat/>

Statistical Yearbook of the EU Regions – A tool for analysing regional differences

This publication sets out some general socio-economic data: population, GDP, labour force and unemployment. It investigates in greater detail certain economic sectors and some transverse economic themes. The publication also presents the indicators available for the regions of the candidate countries.

☆ **EU Research Framework Programme**

The European Commission and Candidate Countries signed association agreements on the Euro17.5 billion 6th EU research Framework Programme (FP6) 2003-2006). Candidate countries will have the same rights and obligations as EU Member States within FP6. Research will therefore be the first area in which EU enlargement becomes a reality.

The Commission adopted 11 December a broad set of measures with a view to improving the decision-making in the European Union within existing Treaties. At the same time the Commission presented a report concerning progress achieved on this area since July 2001 when the White Paper for European Governance was issued. Taking into account the recently decided measures



on "Better regulation" the Commission has now fulfilled most part of its commitments undertaken in the White Paper.

☆ **European Convention**

The Commission has presented a communication to the Convention on the institutional architecture of the future Union. This contribution that is entitled "For the European Union, Peace, Freedom and Solidarity", suggests the simplification of the method of running the EU and growth in its efficiency.

The Commission plans for some innovations (appointment, responsibility) and suggests the generalisation of the methods of co-decision and the abolition of the unanimous vote. It would like to provide the Union with a single voice in terms of international policy but it is opposed to appointing a President of Europe.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/commissioners/prodi/pdf/com_728_2002_en.pdf

☆ **Social Economy in CEEC**

The first conference of Social Economy in Central and Eastern Europe was held in Prague, 24-25 October. The aim of the conference was to promote the recognition of social economy in CEEC and encourage a dialogue between its institutions in East and West. The outcome of the conference was the constitution of a working group identifying funding sources for social economy enterprises. Mr. Francesco Ianniello, in charge of Social Economy within DG Enterprise of the European Commission proposed that the working group be open also to the various DGs of the Commission.

Federation- FDB, Denmark; "How to measure business success – Key performance indicators in the British movement" by Bob Burlton, Chief Executive of Oxford, Swindon & Gloucester Co-op, UK and Chair of the UK Co-operative Union and "COOP NORDEN in action" by Nina Jarlbäck, President of Kooperativa Förbundet, Sweden, are available on the CCI web site: <http://www.coop.org/cci/index.htm>

☆ **Intergroup on Social Economy**

The activity of the European Parliament' intergroup on social economy was relaunched at a public meeting held in Brussels on 27 November. The meeting was chaired by Marie-Hélène Gillig.

☆ **European Economic and Social Committee**

The first European Seminar on Social Economy and Disability was organised in Brussels on 22 November by the European Economic and Social Committee, in close co-operation with CEP-CMAF (European Standing Conference of Co-operatives, Mutuals, Associations and Foundations). The main purpose of the seminar was to raise awareness on disability issues in the social economy sector, particularly in view of 2003, the European Year of People with Disabilities.

NEWS FROM THE SECTORS

☆ **Consumer Co-operatives International - CCI**

At the CCI General Meeting held in Lisbon on 9 October a Code of Conduct on Electronic Commerce was adopted as a guideline for consumer co-operatives involved in e-commerce. The text is available on the CCI web site: <http://www.coop.org/cci/index.htm>

The establishment of two sub-committees was also approved by the members, namely one on Co-operative Identity chaired by Anne Buch Jørgensen and the other on Business effectiveness chaired by Bob Burlton.



A Seminar followed the general meeting, which discussed Co-operative values and business success. The three presentations: "Implementing co-operative principles - FDB's consumer policy" by Anne-Buch Jørgensen, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the Consumer Co-operative Federation- FDB, Denmark; "How to measure business success – Key performance indicators in the British movement" by Bob Burlton, Chief Executive of Oxford, Swindon & Gloucester Co-op, UK and Chair of the UK Co-operative Union and "COOP NORDEN in action" by Nina Jarlbäck, President of Kooperativa Förbundet, Sweden, are available on the CCI web site: <http://www.coop.org/cci/index.htm>

☆ Health

At its meeting in Lisbon, the International Health Co-operative Organisation of ICA (IHCO) agreed to the ICA Gender Equality Committee's proposal to hold a joint seminar in Oslo in conjunction with the ICA General Assembly next September. The Seminar will have a double focus, the first part would discuss health co-operatives as a form for providing quality health and social care services to women and men, while the second part would address the HIV/AIDS epidemic around the world.

☆ Housing

A memorandum of understanding was signed by a number of ICA Housing members to form a "Housing Development Consortium" with the aim of pooling experts and funding for housing co-operative projects as well as co-ordinate existing activities for a more effective use of resources for housing development.

ICA Housing held a joint seminar with the Gender Equality Committee in Lisbon entitled "Housing and Services for Special Needs". The programme and presentations are available on: <http://www.ica.coop/gender/seminars/gec-housing-2002.htm>

☆ CCACE

The new Director General of DG Enterprise, Mr. M. Mingasson took part in the recent meeting of the Co-ordinating Committee of the European Co-operative Associations in Brussels. He took special note of the concerns of the EU co-operative organisations vis-à-vis the draft Green Book on Entrepreneurship and the future Communication on co-operatives, both included in the work programme on legislation of the Commission for 2003. A working group was set up at the meeting with the aim of making sure that co-operatives are properly included in the European Convention.

NEWS FROM ICA

☆ Extraordinary contributions

Members have reiterated their support for ICA as a global co-operative organisation and contributed financially to its future development. ICA Europe would like to thank the following organisations for their extraordinary contributions:

Confédération Nationale du Crédit Mutuel, France
National Federation of Consumer Co-operatives, Co-op Hungary
Lega Nazionale delle Cooperative e Mutue, LEGACOOP, Italy
National Association of Handicraft and Production Co-operatives, UCECOM, Romania
Kooperativa Förbundet, KF, Sweden
Union of Consumer Societies, UKOOPSPILKA, Ukraine
Co-operative Group Ltd, United Kingdom



☆ **Gender**

On 15 October, women and men around the world celebrate World Rural Women's Day to highlight the special contribution that women make to rural communities around the world. ICA President Ivano Barberini and Vanda Giuliano, Chairperson of the ICA Gender Equality Committee published a message on this occasion entitled "Poverty is Everybody's Business: Education and Training a key for poverty eradication". The message is available on the web at: <http://www.ica.coop/gender>

☆ **Dot coop**

ICA Head Office hosted a meeting in Geneva recently to discuss the promotion of dot coop. ICA agreed to take on more of a co-ordinating role and to encourage the greater use of the dot coop domain name. Further meetings are planned and members are asked to make greater efforts in the promotion of dot coop in Europe.

PEOPLE

- Dr. Josep Espriu Castilló died in Barcelona on 12 October at the age of 87. Founder and Honorary President of ICA member organisation, Fundació Espriu, he dedicated his life to promoting health co-operatives and worked out a model of health management in a co-operative way, which is considered worldwide as a model. He was also one of the three founding members of IHCO, the International Health Co-operative Organisation of ICA.
- ICBA's Central Executive elected a new President, Eugeniusz Laszkiewicz, chairman of KZBS, National Union of Co-operative Banks in Poland.
- At the 4th Congress of consumer co-operatives in late November, Mr. Pál Bartus, member of the ICA European Council and the ICA Audit and Control Committee was elected for another four-year term as President of Co-op Hungary, the National Federation of Consumer Co-operatives. Mr. Zoltán Zs. Szöke was appointed Secretary General.
- Former President of ICA Europe, Mr. Lars Hillbom was requested to remain a member of the ICA Board until the General Assembly elections in September 2003.
- Roberto Rodrigues, former ICA President was appointed Minister of Agriculture in Brazil. Congratulations Roberto!



APPEAL (Original letter)

COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION OF BOSNIA - HERZEGOVINA
S A R A J E V O

Sarajevo, 2002-11-15

TO: ALL NATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATIONS, ICA MEMBERS

Dear Cooperative Friends,

For many years now the co-operative movement of Bosnia and Herzegovina has been facing very difficult financial problems and lack of support. All the activities which have already been initiated by *Cooperative Association of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, now are under question due to its members disability to finance the very work of the *Association*.

A declarative support by the Bosnia and Herzegovina Presidency, which had been given to the activities of our *Association*, is not an obligation for anyone in this state, therefore it can not be regarded as a real support or help in development of Bosnia and Herzegovina cooperatives.

International institutions being present in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been omitting or avoiding our cooperatives and other organisations of that sector while realising their activities, due to some unknown reasons to us!

These are reasons why we decided to turn to national cooperative associations – members of ICA, in order to ask for an urgent support to cooperative movement of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The support could be financial resources, mechanisation, equipment, spare parts, seeding or planting materials, chemical protection materials etc.

Financial support should be sent on the account of Cooperative Association of Bosnia and Herzegovina No. : 503016-4617 opened at VAKUFСКА BANKA dd – SARAJEVO. Purpose of the remittance should be : for development of Bosnia and Herzegovina cooperative movement.

We deeply believe in Your understanding of our situation and position, therefore we are expecting a positive reaction to this appeal, in order to prove in practice some basic cooperative principles, like solidarity and mutuality.

For any additional information or clarification don't hesitate to contact us :
address: Zadrुžni savez BiH, 71000 Sarajevo, B. Djurdjeva 10
phone: 00387 33 209 317, (contact : Mrs. Majkalović Gordana) or
e-mail: zsbih@bih.net.ba

Thanking very much in advance for your attention, we remain,
Yours truly,

COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA



HOW TO CONTRIBUTE

All member organisations are kindly requested to send us any relevant information they want to share with other members.

Please send correspondence to ICA Europe at the address below.
Deadline for receiving contributions for the next issue is 30 November 2002

HOW TO CONTACT US

For more details on any of the topics mentioned in the Bulletin please write to:

ICA EUROPE BULLETIN
15 route des Morillons, 1218 Grand-Saconnex, Geneva, Switzerland
Tel: (41 22) 929 88 31/02 Fax: (41 22) 798 41 22
Email: icaeurope@coop.org
sozanski@coop.org