

MONEY GROWS ON TREES

Youth organisations
setting up cooperatives



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Preface

Within the current structures and environment, youth organisations find it increasingly difficult to raise funds. However, this, in the spirit of innovation and adaptation, has spurred the need to create alternative funding sources. Many youth organisations in Europe have already expanded and diversified their fundraising strategies and others are looking to do so.

We are committed to promoting financial autonomy and to strengthen the capacity of youth organisations in Europe. Based on our mission and the background developed in youth entrepreneurship and social enterprises, we decided to look at possible alternative income generating activities that would enhance the work of youth organisations in the current changing funding framework. Based on its participatory and social oriented nature, we identified cooperatives as a valuable business model, which may compliment the work and mission of youth organisations and to further empower them to do the work they do.

This toolkit is a practical guide as it provides a theoretical background to business, more specifically, of course, cooperatives. It is also a political tool as it urges youth organisations to rethink their fundraising strategies, to encourage them to reposition themselves within a changing environment and to encourage them to start looking at business as a way to promote their mission and advance their work. The content of this toolkit is based on various online resources and professional experiences of our experts and partners. These resources – and more – are referenced at the end of this toolkit.

We hope that this toolkit will inspire youth organisations and will lead them through the captivating world of cooperatives.

List of Abbreviations

ACI	Alleanza delle Cooperative Italiane <i>Italian Cooperative Alliance</i>
AGCI	Associazione Generale Cooperative Italiane <i>General Association of Italian Cooperatives</i>
AGESCI	Associazione Guide e Scout Cattolici Italiani <i>Association of Catholic Guides and Scouts of Italy</i>
CCU Bulgaria	Централен Кооперативен Съюз <i>Central Cooperative Union of Bulgaria</i>
CECOP	European confederation of industrial and service cooperatives
COCETA	Confederación Española de Cooperativas de Trabajo Asociado <i>Spanish Confederation of Worker Cooperatives</i>
DGRV	Deutscher Genossenschafts- und Raiffeisenverband <i>German Cooperative and Raiffeisen Confederation</i>
ICA Europe	Cooperatives Europe
ICOS	Irish Cooperative Organisation Society
IFM-SEI	International Falcon Movement – Socialist Educational International
ILO	International Labour Organisation
NABCO	National Association of Building Co-operatives
NCR	Nationale Coöperatieve Raad voor land- en tuinbouw <i>Dutch National Cooperative Council</i>
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NUWPC	Националният съюз на трудово-производителните кооперации в България <i>National Union of workers' productive cooperatives in Bulgaria</i>
SCIC	Société coopérative d'intérêt collective <i>Collective Interest Cooperative Society</i>
VDP	MitUnternehmer - und Genossenschaftsverband <i>Organisation for German Partnerships, Joint Ventures & Co-operatives</i>
YEU	Youth for Exchange and Understanding
ZaSlo	Zadruge Slovenije <i>Cooperatives Slovenia</i>

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INTRODUCTION

One of the main challenges youth organisations face today include financial sustainability and autonomy. The European Youth Forum and its members, therefore, decided to produce this toolkit, which focuses on cooperatives and how they can help youth organisations overcome current funding challenges. Being able to partly fund its own activities through a cooperative and without depending on external support, it will enable youth organisations to play an integrated role in society and will provide an opportunity to young people for expanding their skills sets.

However, there is a lack of knowledge among youth organisations about opportunities provided by income generating activities. The European Youth Forum has previously lobbied for and raised awareness among its members about youth entrepreneurship and social enterprises among individuals. As a next step, the European Youth Forum and its members would like to explore youth organisations' opportunities for developing a business that would allow them to generate income for their activities and benefit society, the local community as well as their members.

This toolkit is part of the overall strategy of the European Youth Forum to build the capacity of youth organisations in Europe. The first section of this toolkit presents the main features of the cooperative model and aims to raise awareness about the sector. This section is indeed pedagogical and presents the added value of the cooperative model and its synergies with the youth sector. The second section of the toolkit provides practical information and aims to guide youth organisations through the various steps of planning and setting up a cooperative.

In addition, several case studies are presented throughout the toolkit, which provide concrete examples of youth organisations that have found a balance between their mission and objectives and an income generating activity. To conclude, the toolkit includes a list of unions and federations in Europe, which offer support and can provide answers to any questions youth organisations may have during the process of setting up a cooperative.

The current state of youth organisations and cooperatives

Funding strategies represent one of the main components of the sustainability strategy for youth organisations. Traditional sources of funding include institutional and other private donors. In the current economic and funding crisis, however, there is a need for alternative sources of funding. Finding models for income generating activities to ensure the wellbeing and autonomy of youth organisations thus represent a key concern.

Based on the experiences of many youth organisations in Europe and around the world, co-operatives are valuable models to be promoted among youth organisations. Sustainability and long-term development perspectives motivate cooperatives. Setting up a cooperative business represents a great opportunity for youth organisations to pursue their mission and, at the same time, for generating profit for the sustainability and autonomy of the organisation.

In addition, youth organisations have been an important stakeholder in promoting quality jobs for young people and fighting unemployment in a period defined by the economic and consequent funding crisis. Cooperative businesses are an important source of employment and could therefore represent a way for many young people who want to enter the labour market to gain skills. So far, the number of young people engaged in cooperatives remains relatively low: it is estimated that cooperatives provide a total of 100 million jobs worldwide.¹ This means that there is room for young people and youth organisations to explore the cooperative sector further as opportunities continue to be unexplored.

Setting up a cooperative business may represent an added value for youth organisations on different levels: a) it may create additional sources of funding for youth organisations ensuring their financial sustainability and autonomy, b) it may allow youth organisations to enhance their work and c) it may create quality jobs for young people and allow them to gain skills.

1. Chavez Hertig M.E. (n.d.). *100 million jobs: The contribution to cooperatives to employment creation* [Pdf], available: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_101313.pdf [5 Mar 2014].

Box 1: Roma Scout Center

Italy

The Roma Scout Center is a cooperative founded by AGESCI (Associazione Guide e Scout Cattolici Italiani) in 2009. It is a multifunctional space, which offers modern accommodation and meeting facilities. The Center is situated in the heart of Rome and is committed to respecting the principles of simplicity, sustainability and attention to all customers. The cooperative employs 19 people, 14 of which are women.

Designed as a new generation hostel, the Roma Scout Center offers cheap accommodation and attracts mainly young customers, though families and professionals who opt for the hostel experience are also welcomed. In addition, the Roma Scout Center aims to become a hub for the promotion of a culture of respect and a space where people from different cultures can come together and share experiences. Moreover, the cooperative organizes activities to promote social inclusion in the neighbourhood and the local community.

Since it was founded, the Roma Scout Center has seen an increase in recognition of its work. They have hosted many events for organisations in the Roma Meeting Center adjacent to the hostel, among others for Unicef, Libera antimafie, Agesci, Croce Rossa Italiana and other not-for-profit associations.

For more information, see the Roma Scout Centre's website:
<http://www.romascoutcenter.it/en/>.

COMPARING BUSINESS MODELS

Each business model is comprised of specific frameworks, which to a large extent dictate the nature and structure of the business. Below is a table that briefly examines three different types of business, namely the traditional business, the non-profit organisation and the cooperative business models: →

What are cooperatives?

A youth organization or a group of people willing to develop new or increase existing income generating activities can choose among different possibilities. One of those is to create an enterprise, which will allow for more financial autonomy (less dependency on subsidies, donations, etc.) and will allow young people to acquire responsibilities, commitment and develop skills. Various business models regulated by distinct legal provisions or statutes exist. One of those is the cooperative enterprise. But why choose to establish a cooperative, rather than a traditional business?

Cooperatives are, as described by the International Cooperative Alliance, ‘an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations, through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise’.² A cooperative model may be thought of in the following way:

Cooperative
=
People come together to meet common needs
through a democratic business

2. International Co-operative Alliance (n.d.). Co-operative identity, values & principles [online], available: <http://www.ica.coop/coop/index.html> [5 Mar 2014].

	Traditional business model	Non-profit organisation	Cooperative model
Ownership	Owned by investors	Generally not owned by a person or members	Owned by its members
Control	Shareholders control the business according to their investment share	May be controlled by members who elect a board or the board may elect its own successors	Democratically controlled according to the principle 'one member - one vote'
Board membership	The board is usually composed of a combination of independent directors, management and other directors who hold either financial or business ties to the organisation	Members of the board are usually not beneficiaries of the services provided, but are usually chosen for philanthropic or political reasons	The board is usually composed of members elected by members
Dividends	Dividends earned through shares are returned to shareholders and are considered as income	Profits are entirely reinvested for the benefit of the public and the organisation's own operations	Profits are reinvested in the business and/or returned to members
Objective	The objective is to maximise profit, i.e. shareholder returns	Work to serve the public interest	Work to satisfy needs, maximise customer service and member satisfaction

In this equation, together means that the cooperative is established by a group of people. This group may share a common project, idea and/or objective. It also means that this group of people, who are the cooperative's members, will take part in the management and decision-making processes together, but that they will also share risks and responsibilities. A cooperative is a democratically managed enterprise based on the principle 'one member - one vote'.

The profits of the cooperative are, at least partly, reinvested in order to pursue its primary mission and members decide together for which purpose they should be used (equipment, diversification of activities, trainings, etc.). This means that each member has an equal stake and an equal opportunity to contribute, voice their opinions and make decisions. Together also means that a cooperative can provide an answer for people who have limited access to resources, but who share human capital, such as ideas, creativity or knowledge.

Common needs mean that the cooperative responds to its members' needs. The primary purpose of the cooperative is not to generate profit for its members. Rather, the cooperative draws on members' needs and, very often, the needs of the wider community. These needs can be diverse: create employment, provide services for the members and the community, such as social services, cultural or environmental services. Needs may also include selling goods or products in order to generate income that could finance other objectives; for example a youth organization establishing a book shop or café cooperative in order to finance its activities. Because cooperatives are member-owned enterprises, and because members are always part of a certain community (young people, students, urban area, etc.) and are based on community needs, cooperatives contribute naturally to the general interest of the community.

Box 2: Maison de la Danse

Lyon, France

Created in 1980 by five choreographers from Lyon, Maison de la Danse is a place for dance creations and performances. Today, Maison de la Danse holds an important place on the French dancing scene.

Initially created as a worker cooperative (where members of the cooperative consisted mainly of the workers – choreographers, dancers, etc), Maison de la Danse has chosen to change its statutes to become a Collective Interest Cooperative Society (SCIC). In fact the French SCIC statute allows Maison de la Danse to enlarge its membership to other categories of members such as users (public), other collaborating troupes or institutions, local authorities etc.

Membership to Maison de la Danse requires a financial contribution. This type of multi-stakeholder cooperative can be a way of raising funds from external partners. A cooperative can prove to be a very adequate model for such cultural projects, as they very often require collective work and diverse sources of finance.

Box 3: Impronte Sociali

Ferrara, Italy

Impronte Sociali is a social cooperative created in 2005 by a group of young friends who were tired of poor quality jobs. They wanted to create opportunities for themselves and wanted to provide innovative and ecological solutions for the community. Including activities, such as the placement of photovoltaic and solar plants, Impronte Sociali has come up with a very original and green service in the town of Ferrara.

They created the “Walking School Bus” where volunteers and parents use the cleanest and most inexpensive transport solution: they walk children to school. Impronte Sociali is an interesting example of how both the young people involved in the cooperative as well as the community may reap mutual benefits: employment, environmentally friendly and affordable services.

YOUTH ORGANISATIONS AND COOPERATIVES

Cooperatives are similar to traditional businesses in some respects as they may cater to all intents and purposes. Though different from traditional businesses, a cooperative is a group of people who work towards shared economic goals in a jointly owned and democratically operated business. Engagement of young people with cooperatives can be considered as a valuable opportunity for employment, empowerment and engagement in the transition to full economic, social and civic participation.

Indeed, within cooperatives themselves, dialogue and mechanisms for effective youth involvement are often lacking.³ In addition, cooperatives may have difficulty engaging with youth due to a lack of resources, capacity and supportive environments.⁴ Moreover, many young people tend to consider cooperatives as outdated or do not perceive them as viable job options.⁵ At the same time, cooperatives may engage with young people and offer support when adapting to changing environments, to sustain and to develop themselves.

However, the European Youth Forum and its members are convinced that cooperatives can generate employment for young people and income for youth organisations and that cooperatives can be a place where young people in Europe can develop skills. Sustainability and long-term development perspectives motivate cooperatives and can thus offer more stable work conditions and be an added value in times of crisis. During his speech on the occasion of International Day of Cooperatives (2011), the Director-General of the ILO said:

3. International Cooperative Youth Statement 2012 [Pdf], available: <http://social.un.org/coopsyear/documents/closing/YouthStatement.pdf> [5 Mar 2014].
4. International Cooperative Youth Statement 2012 [Pdf], available: <http://social.un.org/coopsyear/documents/closing/YouthStatement.pdf> [5 Mar 2014].
5. Vargas-Lundius R. (2011) Feeding future generations: Young rural people today – prosperous, productive farmers tomorrow [Pdtf], available: <http://www.ifad.org/events/gc/34/panels/proceedings.pdf> [7 Mar 2014].

“Cooperatives have great potential (...). Today they have 1 billion members and generate 100 million jobs. Young people can bring a new dynamism to the cooperative movement.”

Director-General of the ILO⁶

Cooperatives are principle-based enterprises that put people, rather than profit at the centre of their operation. As such, they follow a broader set of values than businesses, which are associated with profit making. This set of values includes self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity.⁷ The democratic nature of the cooperative model encourages participation, broadens ownership and fosters youth empowerment.⁸

Based on democratic values, cooperatives can provide the opportunity to develop social consciousness and self-actualization of young people. Moreover, cooperatives can be developed in a youth friendly way where young people's needs and concerns are acknowledged and addressed.⁹ Therefore, cooperatives are a valuable option for youth organisations to develop their own business: they require low capital for start-up, have limited liability and provide employment flexibility.¹⁰

The International Labour Organization (ILO) stipulates that a lack of information prevents the development of cooperatives.¹¹ Continued promotion of the cooperatives model and continued efforts to raise awareness about this model could persuade a larger audience of the existing and potential role of cooperatives in society.

6. Message of the ILO Director-General on the occasion of the International Day of Cooperatives [online], available: http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/media-centre/statements-and-speeches/WCMS_158883/lang--en/index.htm [6 Mar 2014].
7. International Co-operative Alliance (n.d.). Co-operative identity, values & principles [online], available: <http://www.ica.coop/coop/index.html> [5 Mar 2014].
8. International Labour Organisation (2012) A better future for young people: What cooperatives can offer [Pdf], available: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/-ed_emp/-ed_emp_msu/documents/publication/wcms_195535.pdf [5 Mar 2014].
9. International Cooperative Youth Statement 2012 [Pdf], available: <http://social.un.org/coopsyear/documents/closing/YouthStatement.pdf> [5 Mar 2014].
10. International Labour Organisation (2012) A better future for young people: What cooperatives can offer [Pdf], available: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/-ed_emp/-ed_emp_msu/documents/publication/wcms_195535.pdf [5 Mar 2014].
11. International Labour Organisation (2002). Recommendation concerning promotion of cooperatives, No. 193 [online], available: http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:P12100_ILO_CODE:R193 [5 Mar 2014].

COOPERATIVES GENERATE SOCIAL BENEFITS

Cooperative enterprises have several positive outcomes. These include:

Autonomy

Whilst staying true to its nature, cooperatives must be competitive, which holds true for all types of enterprises. As profits are reinvested in the cooperative, the cooperative may rely on a greater financial autonomy and stability, compared to conventional business, which are increasingly financed by loans.¹² To a certain degree, this explains why cooperatives have generally been more resilient during the crisis - they may even promote local and regional economic development - than conventional enterprises.¹³ Cooperatives' autonomy is perfectly compatible with their strong tradition of engaging in collaboration with public authorities. Such collaboration may be through public procurements, grants or other types of partnerships.

Democracy

Cooperatives bring democracy to the workplace and into economic activities. This is an important element for youth organisations that ground their work on democratic values and participation of their members, as well as for young people who have lost confidence in the economic system and in the usual way of doing business. Being part of a cooperative means that every member's voice is heard in an enterprise that is characterized by openness, transparency, accountability and equality.

12. Zevi, A., Zanotti, A., Soulage, F., Zeliaia, A. (2011) Beyond the crisis: Cooperatives, work, finance: Generating wealth for the long term [online], available: <http://www.cecop.coop/Beyond-the-Crisis-Cooperatives> [31 Mar 2014].

13. Roelants B., Dovgan D., Eum H. and Terrasi E. (2012) The resilience of the cooperative model: How worker cooperatives, social cooperatives and other worker-owned enterprises respond to the crisis and its consequences [Pdf], available: http://www.cecop.coop/IMG/pdf/report_cecop_2012_en_web.pdf [31 Mar 2014].

Empowerment and learning by doing

Being a member of a cooperative contributes to the development of new skills as members can be directly involved in the enterprise management, which requires multiple skills. Cooperatives can also help overcome obstacles, which young people may face in obtaining an active and autonomous space in society, support them in taking charge and feel more responsible for their own initiatives.

Employment

Cooperatives can also be an answer to employment or self-employment needs. Consider, for example, cooperatives of graphic designers, journalists, etc. When a member of the cooperative is also a worker, he or she has a double advantage: security as an employee and responsibility and control as an owner. Cooperative values and principles are attractive to young people both as a means to create their own enterprises and as an employer who will provide them decent and valuable work.

Box 4: Cooperativa Corazón de la Montaña

Bogotá, Colombia

Cooperativa Corazón de la Montaña is a newly set up cooperative linked to the Acacia Foundation, which is a member of International Falcon Movement – Socialist Educational International (IFM-SEI). The cooperative is based in Bogotá, Colombia, is composed of young mothers and youth and offers catering services to enterprises, organisations and schools. The main reason for setting up this cooperative was to generate an income for its members and to provide new skills for them. Each of its members holds equal rights to participation and power in decision making for the future growth of the cooperative. As such, all decisions are made in meetings, which are held regularly. Cooperativa Corazón de la Montaña are currently in the process of establishing themselves legally.

The cooperative offers catering services to enterprises, organisations and schools in Bogotá. The food, which they offer, is healthy and largely made from ingredients from their own organic garden. They try to be as environmentally friendly as possible by using organic ingredients and by being aware of the materials used in the production process, e.g. by recycling waste and by avoiding the use of packaging systems containing polystyrene, which can be damaging to the environment.

The cooperative has provided a way for the Acacia foundation to promote and sustain its activities. These activities have included teaching children about horticulture and providing workshops and educational activities for children. People from Bogotá have even volunteered and helped the cooperative by conducting market research, organizing workshops on cooking and menu development as well as maintaining the organic garden. Part of the profits made go to the Acacia foundation for the implementation of their projects focused on children.

Although the cooperative does not yet create jobs and they find it challenging to compete in the food market of Colombia, it offers members an opportunity to generate additional income. Memberships may be combined with other responsibilities, such as jobs, studies, child rearing, etc. One member of the cooperative notes that being involved in the cooperative has been extremely valuable as it teaches practical skills, such as cooking and gardening, as well as the history of the cooperative movement.

Cooperativa Corazón de la Montaña may be contacted via e-mail:
coopcorazonmontana@gmail.com.

6 STEPS FOR SETTING UP A COOPERATIVE

This toolkit is designed to motivate youth organisations to set up a cooperative for themselves. If planned well and if the idea is good, a cooperative can make a difference and can help youth organisations develop a stable financial basis and provide members and the wider community a way to gain skills.

But stop! Before going ahead, it is worth taking a step back and taking a minute to identify needs and whether a cooperative can satisfy these needs. Setting up a cooperative may distract youth organisation from their core work and may lead to frustration. The steps and questions provided below can prevent distraction and frustration and can lead youth organisations to identify the perfect business idea for them.

Step 1: Identifying needs

First of all, needs of the youth organisation or the needs of members should be identified. This is an important step, as it will help structure the cooperative in later stages. Needs of the youth organisation may include income generation. A structure of a cooperative, however, may also be linked to the youth organisation's current activities, thus focusing on, for example, education, food and nutrition, reaching out to people or other. At the end of this step, the youth organisation should know if setting up a cooperative is right for them.

- **What is the mission of your organisation?**
- **What does your organisation need?**
 - Do you want to reach out to more, perhaps, different people? If so, to whom?
 - Do you think something is missing? If so, what?
 - Do you need (more) resources? If so, which kind of resources do you need?
How much do you need to make a difference?
 - Do you or your members need to learn something acquire new skills and competences? If so, what?

- **Can you get what you need from establishing a cooperative?**

- Will a cooperative help you reach the desired impact?
- Will a cooperative help reach out to different people?
- Will setting up and running a cooperative distract you from your core activities?

Step 2: Motivating and including members

In this step it is important to consider issues, which were raised in step 1. Start by informing youth organisations about cooperatives and why this business model is the appropriate model for the intended activity. It is important to keep members involved throughout the entire process: a cooperative is always a group project and motivated partners are needed in order to set the cooperative up. The identification of synergies and motivated teammates is crucial for this step.

- **How will you identify synergies and motivated team members?**
- **How will you inform other youth organisations?**
- **How will you pass the message that your organisation needs to set up a cooperative to enhance its work?**
- **How do you plan to keep members involved?**

Step 3: Generating business ideas

Now that a motivated team has gathered, it is time for creativity. The key is to come up with a viable business idea that respects and falls in line with members' identity. The business idea should rely on the available resources and skills and may include selling goods, such as baked goods or crafts, renting bicycles, or other. Alternatively, business ideas may include the provision of services, which fulfil needs in the community, such as solving youth unemployment, care for the elderly, migration, countering environmental challenges, etc.

Perhaps one of the most important elements to be considered in this step is the long-term business objective: a business idea based on the long-term provides more guarantees for sustainable activities and income.

- **What is needed in your community?**
- **Will you focus on selling goods or on providing services?**
- **Do you have strengths that can help you fulfil the needs of your community?**
- **What do other people or youth organisations think you are good at?**
- **What does your organisation have or provide that others do not?**
- **Is there something others often ask of you?**
- **Can any of the above be a basis for a business model? If so, how?**

Step 4: Planning the business

Now, how can a business idea be turned into a viable business? This step includes aspects, which complement the long-term business prospect. This fourth step includes market research, budgeting and members' identity.

The market survey

There is an idea for a cooperative (book shop café, educational services, or other). At this stage it is important to get an in-depth understanding of customer's feelings and preferences in order to determine, which products and services the cooperative should offer and how the cooperative should market these products and services. Compare the idea with existing businesses in the area. Dialogue with the community, in which the organization is embedded, is fundamental. An idea could be to organize a survey among potential beneficiaries or clients, such as students, other youth organisations, etc.

- **Ask you members:**

- Is your idea really what your members want?
- Do they suggest changes to your idea?
- Perhaps members suggest something different?

- **Look at your community:**

- Is someone else already doing the same thing?
- How is your idea different?
- Which differences will your cooperative make?

The budget

Capital needed for cooperatives in the start-up phase vary according to different national laws and types of activities. Cooperatives require some level of member financing usually in the form of cooperative shares. In addition, cooperatives may need additional financing in the start-up phase. Loans can come from funds for social economy, cooperative or commercial banks or may come from specific cooperative financial institutions, which are generally managed by cooperative federations. Other sources may be public programmes.¹⁴

- **What do you need to start in terms of capital, people, money, resources and time?**
- **Are members willing to contribute? If so, how much?**
- **Will you need to borrow money? If so, how much and where will you borrow it from?**
- **How much money can you make from the cooperative?**
 - How high do you expect your turnover to be?
 - How much profit can you generate?
 - What do you want to do with this profit?

The cooperative members' nature

The nature of the members can vary across a wide range and depends on their role. There are thus various types of cooperatives. For example, a worker cooperative suits a cooperative where staff owns the cooperative. Or, a consumer cooperative means that users or consumers of the business decide main orientations. Thirdly, a cooperative may

14. Different public programmes supporting the setting up of cooperatives are available at the national level. For more information see the list of national support contacts at the end of the publication. One of the main programmes supporting cooperatives at the European level is the new EU umbrella programme for employment and social policy EASI. More info <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1081>.

include staff, beneficiaries, public authorities, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) and/or other (youth) organizations. This, we will define as multi-stakeholder cooperatives. Members' nature will determine who holds the power of decision-making and control of the cooperative.

- **Who shall be involved in the cooperative?**
- How many people should be involved?**
- **Who will decide what? Who will make which decisions?**
- **Which type of cooperative do you want to set up?**
- **What role will youth play in the cooperative?**

Step 5: Contact a business support structure

A motivated team has been assembled, a business idea has been generated and steps for realizing the idea have been identified. Now, consider support mechanisms. In almost all European countries there are cooperative unions and federations that provide business support for the development of the business structure. These organisations will provide relevant information and advice that is needed in order to start a cooperative, for example:

- **Legal support**
 - **Support for the development of your business plan**
 - **Creation of a commercial strategy**
 - **Access to funds**
 - **Training (cooperative governance, human resource development, etc.)**
-
- **Do you have questions, which remain unanswered?**
 - **Do you need help or support in setting up a cooperative?**
 - **Which union or federation may help you find answers to the above questions?**

Step 6: Setting up the structure

This last step includes official registration according to national law. The newly registered cooperative may consider becoming a member of a cooperative federation from which they may receive advisory support that goes beyond the start-up stage.

The next section of this toolkit provides a list of unions and federations in various European countries, which offer support to cooperatives.

- **What needs to be done to run the business?**
- **Which responsibilities and tasks need to be fulfilled? How will you decide who does what?**
- **Which legal forms for cooperatives exist in your country?**
 - Where do you need to register your cooperative?
 - Which legal form suits your idea for a cooperative best?
- **Do you want to become a member of a federation?**

LIST OF NATIONAL SUPPORT CONTACTS

Austria

Österreichischer Revisionsverband

They have set up an online platform to support the creation of new cooperatives in Austria. Through the platform you can get in contact with an adviser in any region of the country.

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www.kooperieren.at

Armenia

Farm Credit Union of Armenia

They are the only financial institution based on cooperative principles in Armenia. They provide support to people who wish to set up a cooperative.

—

#18 Khajaznuni St.

0018 Yerevan

Tel.: +37410 550831

www.fca.am

Belgium

Febecoop

They represent cooperative enterprises in Belgium and have three regional agencies that provide advice to cooperative start-ups.

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Place des Barricades 1
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Rue du Tériss, 45
4100 Seraing
Tel.: 00 32 (0)4 330 65 01
facw@febcoop.be

Bulgaria

Централен Кооперативен Съюз (CCU Bulgaria)

They represent 805 consumer cooperatives and more than 150,000 members. They offer support services to people who want to start a cooperative enterprise in Bulgaria.

—

G. S. Rakovski Str. 99

Tel.: + 359 2 926 67 00

info@ccu-bg.com

www.ccu-bg.com

Националният съюз на трудово-производителните кооперации

в България (NUWPC)

It is the union for worker cooperatives in Bulgaria.

— 11 Dondukov blvd

1000 Sofia

Tel.: +359 2 88 38 48

uniontpk@uniontpk.com

www.uniontpk.com

Croatia

Hrvatski Savez Zadruga

The Croatian Association of Cooperatives is the umbrella organisation of cooperatives in Croatia. Their activities include providing assistance in setting up cooperatives.

—

Amruševa 8/1

10 000 Zagreb

Tel.: +385 (0)1 487 0053

Fax: +385 (0)1 487 0055

Denmark

Kooperationen

They are the Danish organisation representing cooperative enterprises at cross-sectoral level.

—

Reventlowsgade 14, 2

1651 København V.

Tel.: +45 33 55 77 49

Fax: +45 33 31 21 30

kontakt@kooperationen.dk

www.kooperationen.dk

France

Confédération générale des Scops

This is the national federation of workers cooperatives. It has 13 regional offices providing assistance to new cooperatives.

—

www.les-scop.coop

Coop de France

They represent farmer cooperatives. For initiatives in this sector please contact your regional office.

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www.coopdefrance.coop

CoopFR

Contact for general enquiries about cooperatives. This organisation represents cooperative enterprises in any economic sector in France.

—

24 rue du Rocher

75 008 Paris

Tel.: 01 42 93 59 59

contact@entreprises.coop
www.entreprises.coop

Georgia Iberia

This is the agricultural and industrial cooperative society of the Georgia. They provide general information about cooperatives in Georgia.

—
Umashevi Str. 8
Lilo
info@iberia.coop
www.iberia.coop

Germany **Deutscher Genossenschafts- und Raiffeisenverband (DGRV)**

It is the national association of cooperatives. They provide assistance to those willing to start a cooperative in Germany. For this, DGRV created a specific web platform. The platform provides interesting information on how to start a cooperative and provides contact details for local branches, which provide assistance for setting up a cooperative business.

—
www.genossenschaften.de

MitUnternehmer - und Genossenschaftsverband (VDP)

This is a co-entrepreneur cooperative association.

—
www.menschen-machen-wirtschaft.de

Greece

Δίκτυο Κ.Α.Π.Α.

Network K.A.P.A. is an NGO that promotes the cooperative business model in Greece. They are working to establish a cooperative development agency and provide advice on how to set up a cooperative business in Greece.

—
PO 1333 - Τ.Θ. 1333
PC 45110 - Τ.Κ. 45110
Ioannina - Ιωάννινα
Tel.: 6972404946
www.diktio-kapa.dos.gr

Ireland

National Association of Building Co-operative (NABCO)

They provide services linked mainly to housing cooperatives.

—
Co-operative House
33 Lower Baggot Street
Dublin 2
Tel: +353 1 661 2877
Fax: +353 1 661 4462
www.nabco.ie

Irish Cooperative Organisation Society (ICOS)

They provide support to cooperatives from other business sectors.

—
The Plunkett House
84 Merrion Square
Dublin 2
Tel.: +353 1 676 4783
www.icos.ie

Italy

Alleanza delle Cooperative Italiane (ACI)

The ACI group consists of three inter-sectoral cooperative organisations. Each cooperative organisation has regional and local branches, which provide support services to people willing to start a cooperative business.

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Confcooperative

www.confcooperative.it

Legacoop www.legacoop.coop

Associazione Generale Cooperative Italiane (AGCI) www.agci.it

Malta

Koperattivi Malta

Besides representing and providing services to Maltese cooperative enterprises, they provide assistance in setting up new cooperatives.

—

Mdina Road

Qormi, Malta

QRM 9011

Tel.: +356 21484835

manager@cooperatives-malta.coop

www.cooperatives-malta.coop/

start-a-cooperative

Moldova

Trade Cooperative University of Moldova

They provide information about cooperatives and provide assistance to people who are setting up a cooperative through cooperative business incubators.

—

8, Gagarin Avenue, MD-2001 Chisinau

Republic of Moldova

Tel.: + 373 815601 or

+373 69278333

www.uccm.md

Netherlands

Nationale Coöperatieve Raad voor land- en tuinbouw (NCR)

They are a member organization representing cooperatives on many business sectors in the Netherlands. Besides serving their members, NCR promotes the cooperative business model with information and education activities on cooperative entrepreneurship. They also manage a digital platform with general information about how to start a cooperative and organize an annual meeting about cooperatives. Finally, by becoming a member you can receive individual support and advice at a convenient rate.

—

Groenmarktstraat 37

3521AV Utrecht

Tel.: 030-284 0490 or

030-284 0499

www.cooperatie.nl

Norway

Samvirkesenteret

It is the Norwegian Cooperative Center, which was established in 2008 by the main Norwegian cooperative organisations as a centre for information, documentation and advice. The centre organizes courses, conferences, printed information material as well as information on their website.

—

Tel.: +47 22 40 39 23

www.samvirke.org

Poland

National Cooperative Council

They deal with cooperative enterprises from all economic sectors.

—

Ul. Malborska 65, 30 – 646 Kraków

Tel.: 00 48 12 265 73 90

www.spoldzielnie.org.pl

Krajowej Rady Spółdzielczej

The National Auditing Union of Workers' Cooperatives provide advice to workers cooperatives.

—

00-013 Warszawa

ul. Jasna 1

Tel.: 22 59 64 300

krs@krs.org.pl

Russia

Centrosojuz

They are the Central Union of Consumer Societies of the Russian Federation. They provide general information about cooperatives and can connect you with one of the regional unions of consumer cooperatives, which can provide instructions on how to start a cooperative business.

—

www.rus.coop

Slovenia

Zadruge Slovenije (ZaSlo)

Slo.coop is a newly created organization representing cooperatives in Slovenia. They have some experience in working with youth organisations and youth and provide assistance in the creation of new cooperatives.

—

Žička 4a

3210 Slovenske Konjice

www.slo.coop

Spain

Cepes

The Spanish business confederation of social economy represents cooperatives, worker-owned societies, mutual benefit societies, insertion companies, special employment centres, fishermen's guilds and stability associations. They have more than 200 support structures at regional level. You can find a list of support structures and their contact details on the dedicated pages of the Cepes' website.

—
www.cepes.es/pagina_cepes=46

Confederación Española de Cooperativas de Trabajo Asociado (COCETA)

They are the Spanish confederation of worker cooperatives. COCETA has regional offices, which provide support for the establishment of new cooperatives. COCETA has put in place specific programs for the creation of worker and social cooperatives by young people.

—
C/Vallehermoso 15-1°
28015 Madrid
Tel.: 34 91 446 97 50
confederacion@coceta.coop
www.coceta.coop

Sweden

Coompanion

They offer information, advice and training on how to start a cooperative business. Coompanion's corporate advisers are experts in cooperative entrepreneurship. Coompanion is based in 25 different locations in Sweden.

—
www.coompanion.se

United Kingdom

Co-operatives UK

They are the national trade body that campaign for co-operation and works to promote, develop and unite co-operative enterprises. Co-operatives UK has a dedicated advice team, which can be contacted for support in setting up a cooperative. You can also have a look at the start a coop section on their website.

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Holyoake House
Hanover Street
M60 0AS - Manchester
Legal Services Team
Tel.: 0161 214 1750
legal@uk.coop
www.uk.coop/start-co-op

Ukraine

Ukoopsilka

They are the central union of consumer societies in Ukraine. They can provide general information about cooperatives and cooperative law in Ukraine.

—
7/11 Khreshchatyk st.
Kyiv 01001
Tel.: (38-044) 226-20-43
Fax: (38-044) 279-10-39
uks@carrier.kiev.ua
www.coop.com.ua

LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

CECOP (n.d.) European Confederation of Workers' Cooperatives, Social Cooperatives and Social and Participative Enterprises [online], available: www.cecop.coop/ [1 Apr 2014].

COOP (n.d.) International Co-operative Alliance [online], available: <http://ica.coop/en> [1 Apr 2014].

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<http://social.un.org/coopsyear/documents/closing/YouthStatement.pdf> [1 Apr 2014].

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<http://www.un.org/en/events/cooperativesday/> [1 Apr 2014].

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International Cooperative Youth Statement 2012 [Pdf], available: <http://social.un.org/coopsyear/documents/closing/YouthStatement.pdf> [5 Mar 2014].

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ILO (2012) A better future for young people: What cooperatives can offer [Pdf], available: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ed_emp_msu/documents/publication/wcms_195535.pdf [5 Mar 2014].

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**JUST GET STARTED,
AND GOOD LUCK!**

