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Press release – for immediate release

Young people and cooperatives: A new report seeks to improve engagement between young people and the cooperative movement

[#coops4dev](#) releases its latest global [research report](#), co-produced by all ICA regional offices with the support of the [Co-operative College](#) and input from the [ICA Youth Network](#).

A new thematic research publication “*Young people and cooperatives: a perfect match?*” is released today, presenting research and analysis based upon the direct input of young people in 20 countries.

Organised into five chapters and presenting a number of practical examples of youth cooperation, the report identifies ways that support between young people and cooperatives can be improved. 420 responses from young people were collected and analysed for the research, which surveyed both young cooperators and young people less familiar with the cooperative model.

The report demonstrates that cooperatives can play a crucial role in solving the challenges of young people, whilst also contributing to the UN Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)), including SDG 8 on decent work and SDG 4 on quality education. It's five key focus areas are employment, education, inequalities, engagement and civic participation, and entrepreneurship. The report also highlights ways in which cooperatives can improve their support and engagement towards young people.

By improving knowledge of cooperatives, communicating their benefits effectively, and by developing democratic and inclusive cultures of cooperation, the cooperative business model can be a truly viable alternative for solving the challenges facing young people, which have been amplified against a new backdrop of insecurity and inequality emerging since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Produced in the framework of the ICA-EU Partnership ([#coops4dev](#)), external support for the research was provided by the Co-operative College (UK), with conclusions and recommendations developed in collaboration with the ICA Youth Network.

The report was endorsed by key stakeholders, including high level representatives from the cooperative movement, civil society, and the European Union. Erinch Sahan, Chief Executive of the World Fair Trade Organization, highlighted the role of cooperatives for youth employment, noting: “cooperatives are the shining alternative. Naturally embedded in their communities, they are geared to spread wealth and opportunity far and wide. As the pioneers of economic democracy, they are needed now more than ever”.

ICA Director General, Bruno Roelants, acknowledged the value of the report for the cooperative movement by stating that “this study is a mind-opener, and its conclusions and recommendations provide essential food for thought to us all within the cooperative movement on how to promote youth cooperatives, youth employment and participation in cooperatives, as well as education on cooperatives”.

Notes to the editors

Cooperatives are **people-centred enterprises** owned, controlled and run by and for their members to realise their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations.

The International Cooperative Alliance **unites, represents and serves** cooperatives worldwide. Founded in 1895, it is one of the oldest non-governmental organisations and one of the largest ones measured by the number of people represented: **1 billion cooperative members on the planet**. A total of 318 organisations from 112 countries are members of the International Cooperative Alliance. It is the apex body representing cooperatives, which are estimated to be around 3 million worldwide, providing a global voice and forum for knowledge, expertise and co-ordinated action for and about cooperatives. Read more about **our mission** [here](#).

The **ICA-EU Partnership on international development** (also known as **#coops4dev**) was signed in 2016 between the International Cooperative Alliance and the European Commission to strengthen the cooperative movement as a key actor in international development.

Read more about #coops4dev on [its website](#).

This report is co-produced with the regional offices of the ICA with the support of the [Co-operative College](#) and input from the [ICA Youth Network](#).



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