

ACTIVITY REPORT
2021



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Author and Publication Coordination: Francesca Zaganelli

Co-editors: Diana Dovgan, Victoria Hernandez, and Diana Potjomkina

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Dear CECOP members,

The 2021 CECOP Report of Activity is still marked by the consequences of the crisis caused by the pandemic, but also by a strong continuation of our organization's activities to promote and enhance the work of cooperatives, in key areas of the daily lives of many European citizens. At the same time, our work in strategic sectors of the economy, industry, and social infrastructure, has continued in all communities where our cooperatives operate.



We have done this with commitment and dedication, turning the need to work remotely through digital devices into a new opportunity to be closer to our members, closer to cooperatives, and better connected. We have also remained active in international relations with CICOPA, the ICA, and with our European partners: Social Economy Europe, Social Platform, and Cooperatives Europe.

Concerning our advocacy work, the most challenging themes have been, on one side, the intense preparatory work for the launch in December 2021 of the Social Economy Action Plan by the European Commission, and on the other hand, the engagement with the European Industrial Forum, whose topics are key for many of our cooperatives.

Interlacing the industrial and the social paths is the issue of platform cooperatives and digital platform workers, the subject of a directive that the European Commission published in December last year. We have been working hard in the preparatory phase, and we continue working hard to keep the voices of our cooperatives heard during the process, leading to a legislative transformation.

In the pages of this report, you will find information that gives an overview of the work we have done, which I invite you to read and explore further.

As we are writing these pages on the activity of the past year, we cannot avoid thinking of the current, unacceptable, and incomprehensible war that is raging in the heart of the Europe we love.

The distress and the violence affecting the people of Ukraine is worrying.

Cooperatives are enterprises for peace and solidarity. Many of our cooperatives in the neighboring countries are working to welcome people forced to leave their homes. As well as in all the other countries where our members are present, we know that solidarity initiatives are numerous and are a credit to the cooperative movement.

As a representative organization, we shall be aware of the very difficult times ahead of us, humanly and economically. That is why we have, once again, to bring out the capabilities and potential of cooperatives, in promoting a different model of development and economy: inclusive, democratic, participatory, and fair.

Yours faithfully,

Giuseppe Guerini
CECOP President



A message from the Secretary General



Dear CECOP members,

2021 was a remarkable year. While the world was still amid the COVID-19 pandemic, some parts of the European continent started to see the light at the end of the tunnel. Many of our members, and their cooperatives, were also able to start recovering and re-establishing operations after some intermittent pauses. For CECOP, it was no exception. The year also came with its challenges and setbacks, as for some months, the staff were confined to their homes, but our work had to continue.

Our activities were diverse from the start. In the first semester, CECOP organised a joint conference together with our Portuguese member Confecoop, in which we discussed the future of the EU disability strategy. In the second semester, we published “Lights On!”, our modest but important contribution on how worker and social cooperatives tackle informal work, starting off from examples of our network.

We continued a work started in 2018 on cooperatives’ social impact measurement in collaboration with our members through a mutual learning session organized in July and a publication, “Lasting Impact”, shedding the light on experiences from Italy and Spain.

At the same time, our Vice-President, Francesca Montalti, has been appointed as member of the EU Industrial Forum, which comes as an important recognition of cooperatives as an integral part of the European industrial landscape.

The end of the year saw two highly awaited policy files that had been in the making and on our table for quite some time: the Social Economy Action Plan, and the Platform Work Directive. The CECOP secretariat followed and discussed with members these files closely for years and started developing relevant policies that will benefit the cooperatives from our network.

CECOP also had its fair share of democratic elections, the nomination of a new Board and the re-election of our President, Giuseppe Guerini. After a co-construction process with members, we also unveiled our new strategic plan for the next four years (2021-2025), which will serve as a compass to continue our important work, giving our members and their cooperatives visibility in the EU, as well as providing them with the tools and resources to continue developing and strengthening. Finally, we also had the pleasure to welcome a new member from Slovenia.

Moreover, 2021 was the last year of our four-year partnership agreement with the European Commission under the EaSI programme. This partnership benefited CECOP tremendously, enhancing our presence and our advocacy work within the European institutions, contributing to the capacity building of our network, increasing the opportunities for collaboration with partners, and reinforcing our mutual relationship with members.

I am also pleased to announce that at the end of the year, we signed a new four-year partnership agreement (2021-2024) under the ESF+ programme. This is not only a re-confirmation of our established relationship with the European Commission, but it will also provide us with the additional resources necessary to continue contributing to the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

All those impressive achievements would not have been possible without the energy and commitment invested by my colleagues, and I would like personally to thank Francesca Zaganelli, Mila Shamku, Victoria Hernandez, Anton Möller, and Diana Potjomkina. And of course, our President, Board members and all CECOP members for their support.

We look forward to sharing with you our activities and work throughout the year.

Yours cooperatively,

Diana Dovgan
Secretary General



New Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025

In June 2021, CECOP members approved the new CECOP Strategic Plan for 2021 – 2025 which consists mainly of three pillars:

- **First pillar:** To ensure that EU policies and legislation create a favorable environment for worker and social cooperatives
- **Second pillar:** To increase the visibility for worker and social cooperatives in Europe
- **Third pillar:** To build a strong and democratically-led network

As the world is still recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic and crisis, its impact on cooperatives continues to pose a struggle. Other challenges such as the green and digital transition for cooperatives, their access to capital, and youth engagement, will shape the actions of our organization in the next years. Additionally, the rise in non-standard employment and the ascension of platform cooperatives will also demand attention and specific actions in the future.



Read the Strategic Plan

New Board 2021 – 2025

During the 2021 Congress, CECOP members democratically voted for the re-election of Giuseppe Guerini for his second mandate as President of CECOP and elected a new Board. We are already a year into a wonderful collaboration!

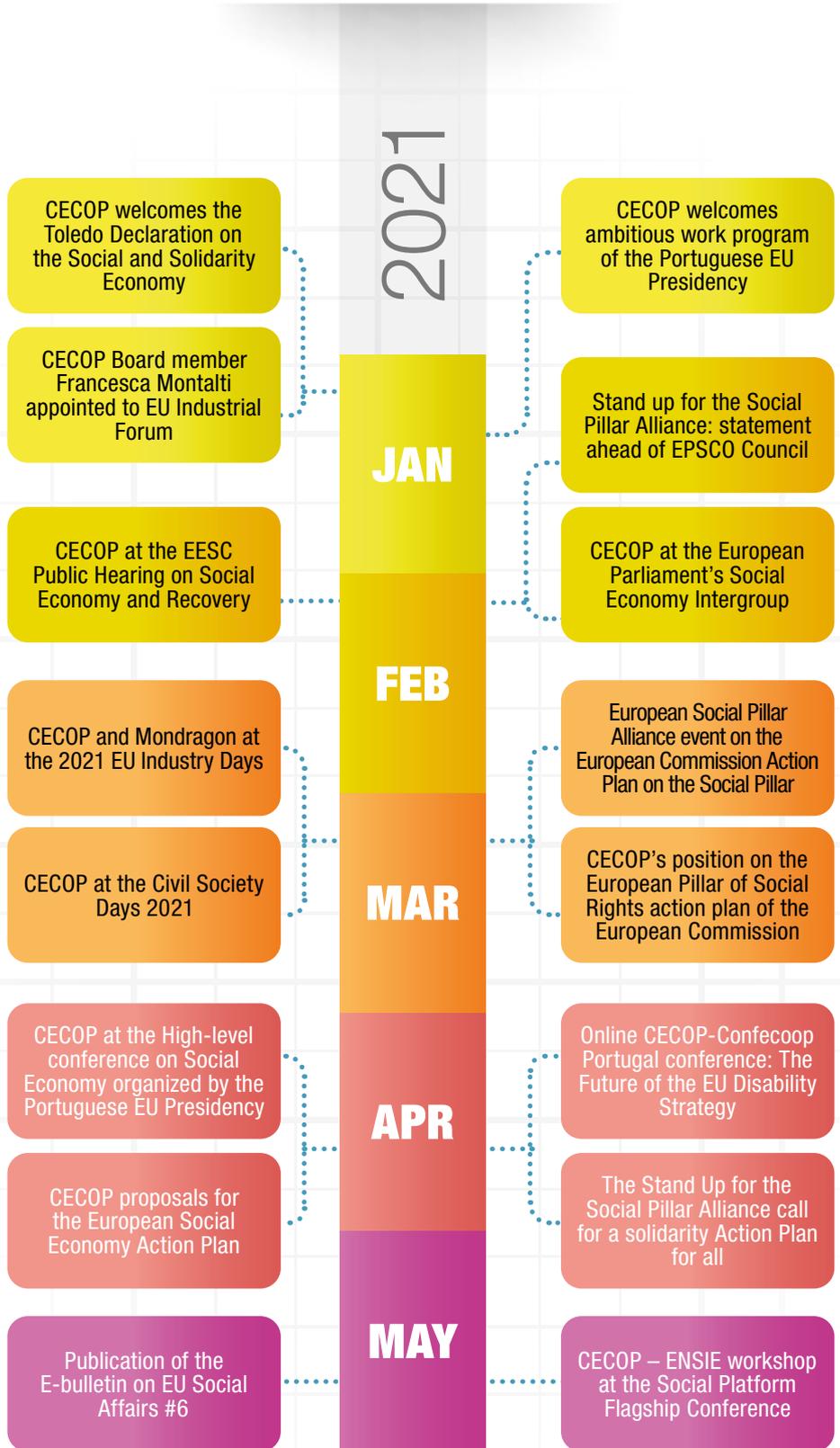
Board members
Term 2021-2025

 Janusz Paszkowski NAJWC, Poland	 Beshidar Todorov NUWC, Bulgaria	 Antonio Martinez de Bajanda COCETA, Spain	 Silvia Spadaro Confcooperative Lavoro e Servizi, Italy	 Sevastita Grigorescu UCECOM, Romania	 Siem Whellens Co-operatives UK	 Malena Riudavets COCETA, Spain
 Joaquim Pequicho Confcoop, Portugal	 Jarmo Hänninen Coop Finland	 Francesca Mantelli Legacoop Produttore e Servizi, Italy	 Anne-Laure Desgris SMART, Belgium	 Giuseppina Colosimo AGCI Solidarietà, Italy	 Massimo Mota AGCI PSI, Italy	

CECOP CICOPE Europe

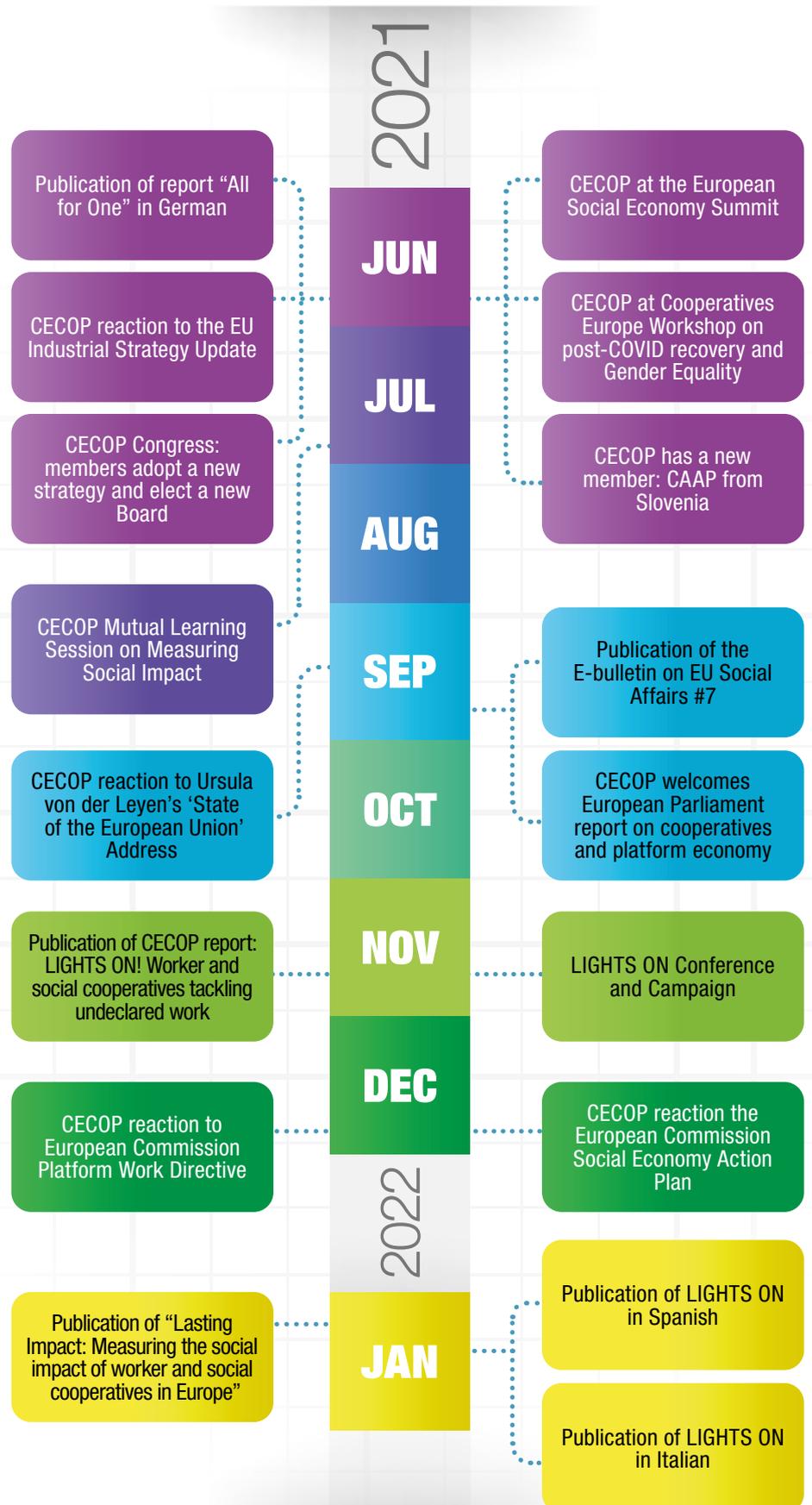


2021 at a glance





2021 at a glance





CECOP belongs to its members

Being part of CECOP means to be part of a network where members can exchange experiences, build partnerships, and design common strategies. The coordination and management of the network is central to CECOP's work.

Statutory Meetings

Statutory meetings are the space where democracy is put into practice inside of our network. During the year, we organized two board meetings, one General Assembly/Congress, and two Executive Committee meetings. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, during 2021 all our meetings happened virtually.

Enlarging the network

As part of its strategy, CECOP keeps growing. In 2021, the CECOP family welcomed a new member, Center for Alternative and Autonomous Production (CAAP) from Slovenia, extending the CECOP representation to 16 countries in Europe.

[Read more](#)



The Members' Mutual Learning Sessions

The Members' Mutual Learning Sessions are a space for members to share, learn and discuss topics of interest to them.

In 2021, the Mutual Learning Session focused on the issue of cooperatives' social impact measurement. During the session, members and partners from Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Poland shared their different approaches and methods of measuring social impact in use among cooperatives in Europe. [Read more](#)



Working Groups

Working Groups are an opportunity for members to share practices and feed secretariat's advocacy work.

During 2021, two working groups were active: The Working Group on Platform Work, tasked with discussing non-standard and platform work, and the Working Group on Industry – reacting with some concrete recommendations on the European Commission's Industry Strategy.

CECOP LINK

CECOP Link is the quarterly internal newsletter for members. This is a useful way to stay in touch with members and for them to get exclusive insider information, as well as to stay informed of CECOP latest developments.



CECOP represents the interests and expresses the needs and concerns of its members to the EU institutions, other European-level policy makers, national governments, and the wider cooperative movement.

We promote worker ownership, democracy at work, sustainable growth, quality employment, the inclusion of the most disadvantaged citizens, and social justice.

We are represented in the EU Industrial Forum, SME Envoy, GECES, DG EMPL's Stakeholders Dialogue and we join forces with Cooperatives Europe, Social Economy Europe and Social Platform to achieve our goals.



CECOP reacts to Ursula von der Leyen's 'State of the European Union' Address

'Cooperatives cannot compete with enterprises that don't contribute their fair share', commented CECOP President on European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen's second State of the European Union address, calling for EU laws that fight tax avoidance. [Read more](#)



Picture: CECOP at the high-level conference on Social Economy of the Portuguese EU Presidency.



Cooperatives at the center of the new Social Economy Action Plan

In 2021, CECOP [welcomed](#) the European Commission’s adoption of the new Action Plan for the Social Economy. CECOP worked in partnership with the Commission and with the partners to bring worker and social cooperatives into the center of the discussion, acknowledging them as a key social economy actor and making sure they fully benefit from the proposed measures.



Picture: CECOP at the Social Platform Flagship Conference.



CECOP – ENSIE Workshop at the Social Platform Flagship Conference

During the workshop “Social Economy: The Road to Social Europe? An Action Plan for and with Europe’s Social Economy”, organized in collaboration with ENSIE, CECOP, and different actors of the social economy, identified joint key recommendations for the Social Economy Action Plan.



CECOP at the European Social Economy Summit

Cooperatives, by virtue of their business model, can guarantee [a just transition by combining environmental and social goals](#) – this emerged from the European Social Economy Summit in Mannheim.



CECOP at the Social Economy Intergroup Public Hearing on Skills and Digitalization

Worker and social cooperatives are at the forefront of the digital transition and provide the skills needed to live in the new digital economy. [Read more](#)



Action Plan for the European Pillar of Social Rights

In 2021, CECOP [welcomed](#) the European Commission's Action Plan to implement the European Pillar of Social Rights proclaimed in 2017. Rightfully, this action plan acknowledges the potential of social economy actors such as worker and social cooperatives in delivering these social rights to European citizens. CECOP closely follows – notably through its EaSI grant agreement – the implementation of the Action Plan to make sure that promises are kept.



“Stand Up for the Social Pillar” Alliance

Together with Social Platform, European Trade Union Confederation, Social Economy Europe, and European Movement International, we are part of the [“Stand Up for the Social Pillar” Alliance](#), calling on the European Institutions and Member States to properly implement the 20 principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights. In 2021, the Alliance signed a [joint statement](#) for the implementation of the Action Plan and was part of “A solidarity Action Plan for All” [event](#).



CECOP at the high-level conference on Social Economy of the Portuguese EU Presidency

The role of cooperatives in [creating local jobs and tailored services for their communities](#) was highlighted by our President during the High-level conference on Social Economy of the Portuguese EU Presidency.



CECOP Lasting Impact report

[Lasting Impact report](#): In this report, two well-established measurement tools in Italy and Spain show the importance of collecting data on the social impact of cooperatives in their communities – not just to increase their visibility but also to self-assess their work.



CECOP at EESC Public Hearing on social economy and recovery

During a public hearing of the European Economic and Social Committee, CECOP President Guerini and several members of CECOP discussed the role of the social economy in a fair and sustainable recovery of Europe's economy. 'The Social Economy is a key partner in the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, to ensure inclusive growth and job creation, and to implement the European Pillar of Social Rights', said CECOP President. [Read more](#)



Cooperatives at the center of the new European Industrial Strategy

Most of the cooperatives represented by CECOP are SMEs (almost 90%), and around 40% are active in the industry sector. The current business landscape is a demanding one, as the industry must adapt to the new needs of the constantly changing market. CECOP continues to bring forth the voice of cooperatives working in industry as an example of resilience, democracy, sustainability and innovation. In particular, it highlights the importance of supporting cooperatives for a just and democratic transition in the implementation of [the EU Industry and SME Strategy](#) approved by the European Commission in March 2020.



CECOP at the European Industrial Forum

CECOP is represented by its [Vice-President Francesca Montalti](#) in the European Industrial Forum and active in three of its Task Forces: Task Force 1 - Single Market, KPIs and industrial ecosystems; Task Force 2 - Support the development of transition pathways; Task Force 4 - Identify and advise on cross-border and cross-ecosystem investment needs and cooperation opportunities. It monitors the implementation of the Industrial Strategy and provides input to the Commission's Annual Single Market Reports.



Industrial Strategy lacking recognition of worker and social cooperatives' resilience

The Industrial Strategy does not acknowledge the importance of worker and social cooperatives to create and maintain jobs, especially in critical times. CECOP has thus drawn some [key lessons learned](#) during the recent COVID-19 crisis and the impact on its cooperatives.



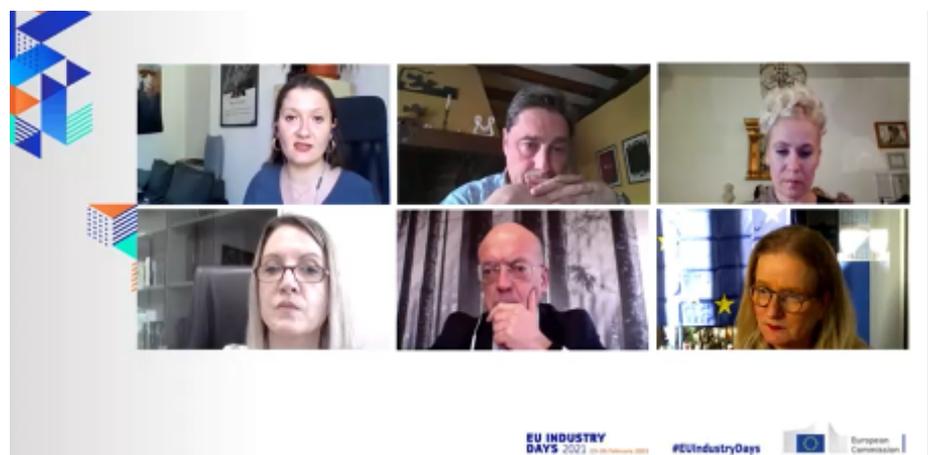
CECOP in the Focus Group on Pact for Skills

In the context of the [Pact for Skills](#), launched by the European Commission, CECOP joined a Focus Group launched by DG GROW to contribute to the promotion of concrete actions to support the upskilling and reskilling of workers in Europe.



CECOP at the EU Industry Days

The EU Industry Days is an event organized annually by the European Commission to discuss industry challenges and co-develop opportunities and policy responses in an inclusive dialogue with a wide range of stakeholders. In 2021, CECOP spoke in the panel organized by Mondragon Corporation on ['Accelerating industrial transformation and workers' skills development through worker cooperatives'](#).



Picture: CECOP at EU Industry Days.



Non-standard and undeclared work: what can cooperatives do?

Non-standard work remains a challenge across Europe, putting in jeopardy decent work opportunities, the social protection of workers, and the occupational health and safety of workers. Worker and social cooperatives across Europe have therefore developed successful models to fight this phenomenon, and to uphold the rights of vulnerable workers. In 2021, CECOP has dedicated several activities to promote the role of worker and social cooperatives in this field.



LIGHTS ON! Worker and social cooperatives tackling undeclared work

Focusing on the qualitative analysis of 11 European cooperatives, the [LIGHTS ON publication](#) explores how the cooperative model can offer concrete solutions to support the transition of undeclared workers into the formal economy within the European context.

The report was promoted during an [online event](#) witnessing the participation of national actors, the ILO, ELA, and ETUC as a tool to promote a better understanding of the potential of cooperatives in tackling undeclared work.

The work was also promoted through a [docuseries](#) that, throughout four episodes, highlighted key findings of the report and showcased cooperatives on the ground fighting undeclared work.



Picture: CECOP's "LIGHTS ON!" conference.



Platform cooperatives: an example of quality and democracy

Many platform workers are misclassified as self-employed, meaning they do not have access to social protection and are denied basic workers' rights. Moreover, they are often dependent on the untransparent digital management of investor-driven capitalistic platforms. In 2021, CECOP [welcomed](#) the Platform Work Directive proposal of the European Commission to put an end to the misuse and abuse of platform workers' employment status and dependence on algorithms.



Picture: CECOP's working group on non-standard employment and platform work.



CECOP members' working group on non-standard employment and platform work

In 2021, the CECOP members' working group on non-standard employment and platform work focused on [advocating for the recognition of platform cooperatives](#) by the European institutions and highlighting the potential of cooperatives to improve working conditions in the platform economy. Over the last years, CECOP and its members gained substantial experience in addressing the needs of platform workers, developing cooperative solutions to the challenges of the platform economy, and improving working conditions for platform workers. The cooperative solution for platform work has been acknowledged also by the [European Parliament](#) and the [European Economic and Social Committee](#).



European Pillar of Social Rights: a cooperative priority

Unequal access to employment, education, social services reinforce and deepen existing inequalities. Worker and social cooperatives [play a crucial role](#) in fighting the causes of these inequalities across Europe by providing quality work and social inclusion opportunities. CECOP brings forward the advantages of the entrepreneurial model of worker and social cooperatives for youth, women, people with disabilities, migrants, and any other vulnerable category at risk of social exclusion.



Picture: CECOP's workshop on the Future of EU Disability Strategy.



Workshop on the Future of EU Disability Strategy

The workshop, organized by CECOP in collaboration with its Portuguese member, ConfeCoop, on the [Future of the EU Disability Strategy](#) provided valuable insights on how worker and social cooperatives ensure the rights of persons with disabilities and offered supportive recommendations for national and European policymakers on the new EU Disability Strategy.



CECOP at Cooperatives' Europe workshop on post COVID recovery and Gender Equality

CECOP accentuated the role that cooperatives can play in providing better entrepreneurial opportunities to women, even in times of crisis, compared to traditional enterprises, during the [workshop on post COVID recovery and gender equality](#) organized by Cooperatives Europe.



CECOP at the Civil Society Days

Organized by the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), the Civil Society Days are a public forum, bringing together civil society organizations, European citizens, and European institutions. In 2021, CECOP took part in the roundtable "Social Economy and youth entrepreneurship for a sustainable recovery" highlighting the role of [cooperatives in job creation](#), in particular for young people.



4-year partnership agreement with the European Commission under the EaSI programme

CECOP signed a [four-year-partnership agreement](#) (2018 – 2021) with DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, financed by the EaSI programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) supporting EU-level NGO networks active in the areas of social inclusion and poverty reduction.

The EaSI activities in 2021 included:



Two analyses

- [Impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on cooperatives in industry and services](#): Information was gathered all year long through different channels (discussions with members, statutory meetings, analysis of members' reports). [Lessons learned from the COVID crisis](#).
- [Analysis of data on cooperatives contributing to social inclusion](#): In collaboration with its Italian and Spanish members, CECOP collected qualitative and quantitative information on the positive social impact of worker and social cooperatives on the communities they operate in, their workers, and their beneficiaries.



Two publications

- [LIGHTS ON! Report](#): On worker and social cooperatives' contribution to the transition from the informal to the formal economy. Available also in Italian and Spanish.
- [Lasting Impact Report](#): On measuring the social impact of worker and social cooperatives in Europe: focus on Italy and Spain, was published displaying two best practices of social impact measurement among cooperatives and the outcomes on the data analyzed about the cooperatives' social impact in Italy and Spain.



3 events

- [LIGHTS ON! Conference](#) presenting the outcomes of publication LIGHTS ON and debating with other EU and international actors on the role that cooperatives can play in fighting undeclared work.
- [Workshop on the Future of EU Disability Strategy](#) providing an insight on how worker and social cooperatives ensure the rights of persons with disabilities.
- [A Mutual Learning Session on Social Impact Measurement](#) for CECOP members discussing challenges and opportunities for cooperatives and share existing experiences in the network based on the [toolkit for members](#) published in 2020.



Dissemination

- [E-bulletin on EU social affairs](#): an overview on the latest EU social affairs news from a worker and social cooperatives' perspective.



Projects

- LIGHTS ON! [Docuseries](#), and “[after video](#)” highlighting examples of worker and social cooperatives tackling undeclared work in Italy, Spain, and Slovenia.
- Social media promotion.

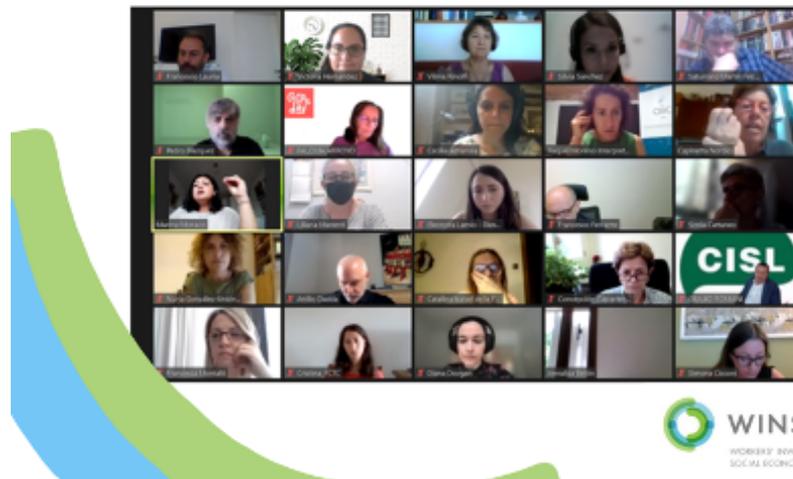


Network consolidation and enlargement

- The action allowed the consolidation of the network through desk research of the ecosystem of industrial and service cooperatives, in countries where CECOP has no members yet, and by organizing visits and meeting with key actors in these countries.
- In view of enhancing CECOP members’ participation and engagement in the network, the secretariat started drafting a membership strategy in collaboration with an external expert.

CECOP is a supporter of the WINS Project

For two years, European project partners gathered best practices and knowledge material related to information, consultation, participation rights of workers in social economy enterprises. [More information here.](#)



Picture: CECOP at WINS conference.



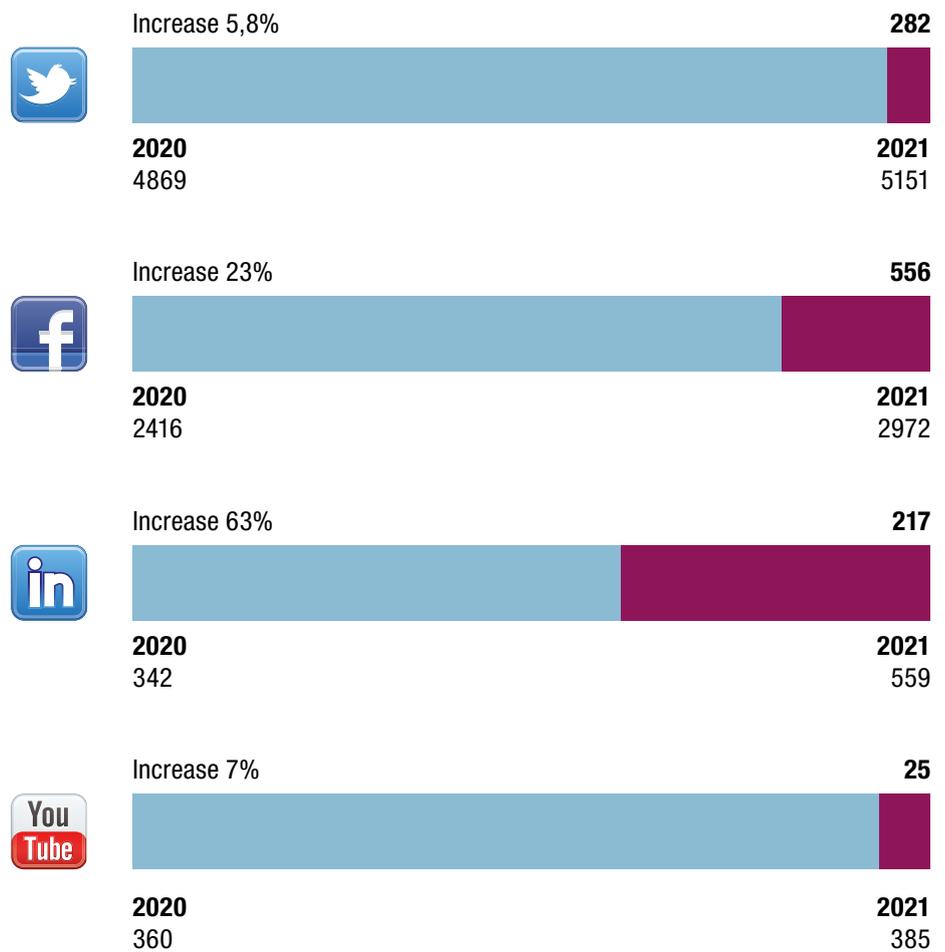
CECOP's main work is to promote the worker and social cooperative model among the EU institutions, European cooperative organizations, and the external public.

In [#COOPTALES](#) we highlight how worker and social cooperatives from the ground contribute to the economic and social development of the community they belong to.

Additionally, CECOP operates as a bridge between the European Institutions and its national members. In the [EU Bulletin](#) CECOP aims to keep readers informed on EU-related social affairs, and to explain policies, as well as to offer legislative monitoring.

2021 in numbers

Following





Visibility



*75,288
unique
page views





CECOP is the sectoral organization for industry and services of [Cooperatives Europe](#), the European Confederation of cooperatives from all sectors, where we actively participate in statutory meetings, thematic working groups, and coordination meetings on European policies, along with other sectoral cooperative organizations. We are represented in the Cooperatives Europe's Board by our President.

We are members of [Social Economy Europe](#), [REVES](#) (European Network of Cities and Regions for the Social Economy), and [Social Platform](#), a wider umbrella organization representing tens of EU-wide social NGOs. In addition, we continuously establish links and partnerships with other actors that pursue similar objectives. CECOP is also the European regional organization of [CICOPA](#), the world sectoral organization for cooperatives active in the industry and service sector.





We are our members

CECOP represents 25 members in 16 countries. Our members are national organizations representing and promoting worker, social, and cooperatives of self-employed producers active in many areas across the industry and services sector.

Full members



NUWPC
Bulgaria



SCMVD
Czechia



Kooperationen
Denmark



Coop Finland
Finland



CGSCOP
France



AGCI Solidarietà
Italy



AGCI Produzione e Lavoro
Italy



Confcooperative
Italy



Legacoop Produzione e
Servizi
Italy



Legacoop Sociali
Italy



Koperattivi Malta
Malta



NAUWC
Poland



ConfeCoop
Portugal



UCECOM
Romania



CPS
Slovakia



COCETA
Spain



Co-Operatives UK
United Kingdom



Associated members



Diesis
Belgium



Smart
Belgium



Credit Cooperatif
France



CFI
Italy



Confcooperative Federsolidarietà
Italy



Confcooperative Lavoro e Servizi
Italy



Coompanion
Sweden

Network affiliates



CAAP
Slovenia



Governance



PRESIDENT
Giuseppe Guerini
Confcooperative, Italy



VICE PRESIDENT
Janusz Paszkowski
NAUWC, Poland



VICE PRESIDENT
Antonio Martinez de Bujanda
COCETA, Spain



VICE PRESIDENT
Francesca Montalti
Legacoop Produzione e Servizi,
Italy



VICE PRESIDENT
Anne-Laure Desgris
Smart, Belgium



VICE PRESIDENT
Si n Whellens
Co-operatives UK, UK



Bozhidar Todorov Stanchev
NUWPC, Bulgaria



Malena Riudavets
COCETA, Spain



Silvia Spadaro
Confcooperative Lavoro e Servizi,
Italy



Jarmo H nninen
Coop Finland, Finland



Sevasti a Grigorescu
UCECOM, Romania



Joaquim Pequicho
ConfeCoop, Portugal



Giuseppina Colosimo
AGCI Solidariet , Italy



Massimo Mota
AGCI Produzione e Lavoro, Italy



People behind the work



Diana Dovgan
Secretary General



Francesca Zaganelli
Membership Coordinator



Victoria Hernandez
Communication Officer



Gabrielle Tzelepis
Accountancy

We welcomed one new staffer in 2021



Diana Potjomkina
Advocacy Coordinator

We thank Mila Shamku, previous Advocacy Coordinator, and Anton Möller, previous Policy and Research Assistant for their invaluable work and time devoted to our organization in the last years!



Mila Shamku



Anton Möller

About CECOP

CECOP is the European confederation of industrial and service cooperatives. It represents the voices of worker cooperatives, social cooperatives, and independent workers' cooperatives. CECOP works to create a supportive environment for cooperatives, so that they can operate to their full strength and fulfil their mission of providing sustainable jobs and high-quality services to communities. Our aim is to build a fairer Europe and contribute to sustainable economic growth, to bring democracy and solidarity to the workplace.



The European Confederation
of Industrial and Service Cooperatives



 Avenue Milcamps 105, 1030 Brussels, Belgium

