



CECOP – CICOPA EUROPE

European Confederation of  
Worker Cooperatives,  
Social cooperatives and  
social and participative enterprises

19 July 2006

## CECOP DRAFT POSITION A EUROPEAN INITIATIVE ON TRANSPARENCY

CECOP position  
(draft)

CECOP – CICOPA-EUROPE (European Confederation of Worker Cooperatives, Social Cooperatives and Social and Participative Enterprises) is an international non profit association according to Belgian law and based in Brussels. CECOP – CICOPA-EUROPE's members include 29 national and regional federations of co-operative and participative enterprises representing around 65 000 enterprises employing 1,3 million workers, and 8 organisations promoting this type of enterprises.

One of the main statutory objective of CECOP – CICOPA-EUROPE is to ensure to its members a constant monitoring on possible issues in the agenda of the European Union in order to guarantee a general lobby for the worker cooperatives and other enterprises owned and managed by a majority of workers (on the basis of the World Declaration on worker cooperatives, approved by the International Cooperative Alliance in its entirety) as well as for the craft and small producers cooperatives in the industry and services.

It is thus obvious that CECOP – CICOPA-EUROPE welcomes this new Commission initiative and its consultation on transparency with a lot of interest and attention.

*Questions:*

- *Do you agree that efforts should be made to bring greater transparency to lobbying?*

If we want the lobbying to be a **legitimate part of the democratic system**, the transparency of the activities is obviously essential. But the lobbying cannot be “all activities carried out with the objective of influencing the policy formulation and decision-making processes of the European institutions (Green paper II. 1. definition and basic framework). These activities should respect a code of conduct as defined in point 3.2 of the document.

- *Do you agree that lobbyists who wish to be automatically alerted to consultations by the EU institutions should register and provide information, including on their objectives, financial situation and on the interests they represent? Do you agree that this information should be available to the general public? Who do you think should manage the register?*

YES, on every point but not on the financial situation. We think it is sufficient to know the interests they represent in regard of the transparency on lobbying. The fact that we know the financial situation is not relevant for us, and concerns the audit disposals in the different member states [NB: the trade unions are exempted to provide their accounts which is completely logical: in case of a strike, they pay the indemnity to their affiliated members. If we would know the amount of their financial reserves, we could implement a strategy which would be harmful: trade unions could only pay during X days, postponing until then the negotiations]. The Social and Economic European Committee, which gathers the different stakeholders involved in the lobbying (employers organisations, trade unions organisations, cooperative and social economy organisations, etc.) should have a specific role in the system supervision to be implemented.

- *Do you agree to consolidating the existing codes of conduct with a set of common minimum requirements? Who do you think should write the code?*

YES. Again, the Social and Economic European Committee should have an important role to play in the drafting of this text, possibly by an exploratory opinion.

- *Do you agree that a new, inclusive external watchdog is needed to monitor compliance and that sanctions should be applied for any breach of the code?*

YES for a new inclusive organisation, if it is a European public institution and not a private institution under a call for tender. For the sanction, yes since every rule which is not sanctioned is not a standard but a simple wish.

- *In your view, has the Commission applied the general principles and minimum standards for consultation in a satisfactory manner? You may refer to the individual standards (provided, for ease of reference, in Annex 2). Please give reasons for your reply and, where appropriate, provide examples.*

[National GECOP members' opinion is particularly necessary here].

According to us, the general principles seem to be respected, but the impact of the opinions expressed by the different stakeholders in the consultations on the elaboration of the *Community acquis* (acquis communautaire) is not always very clear for us, and neither the criteria used by the Commission concerning the use of these opinions.

*Questions:*

- *Do you agree that it is desirable to introduce, at Community level, an obligation for Member States to make available information on beneficiaries of EU funds under shared management?*

YES

- *If so, what information should be required at national level? What would be the best means to make this information available (degree of information required, period covered and preferred medium)?*

[National CECOP members' opinion is particularly necessary here].

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