

Towards a New EU Multiannual Financial Framework

The Cooperative Response



POSITION PAPER



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I. Introduction: The New EU Budget Proposal

On 16 July 2025, the European Commission presented its proposal for the new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) – the EU long-term budget for **2028–2034**. The proposal announced a budget of almost **EUR 2 trillion** for the next seven-year period, representing 1.26% of the EU's gross national income (GNI). While this technically represents an increase compared to the current budget (EUR 1.3 trillion or 1,13% GNI), this amount also includes the necessary repayment of the “NextGenerationEU” fund created during the pandemic.



This proposal aims to equip the Union with an investment budget to deliver on its objectives while adopting a **“simpler, more flexible and more strategic” approach**. This new approach responds to two emerging developments: the Commission’s renewed focus on competitiveness and security, and the need to address the limitations of the previous MFF, namely (i) its lack of flexibility in the face of geopolitical or economic crisis, and (ii) a too complex and fragmented structure.

Several reports and communications have highlighted these limitations and called for greater streamlining and simplification of the EU budget. Most notably, the *Draghi Report, The Future of European Competitiveness*, points to the budget fragmentation (over more than 50 programmes) and calls for a refocusing of EU resources on strategic priorities, including competitiveness. Similarly, the *Letta Report, Much More Than a Market*, describes the forthcoming MFF as a “critical juncture” for delivering new strategic priorities. In the same vein, the mission letter of the Commissioner for Budget, Piotr Serafin, calls for a simpler, more targeted and more responsive budget capable of effectively addressing the EU’s priorities - an emphasis echoed across many other Commissioners’ mission letters.

The MFF's New Architecture

The budget proposal adopts a simplified approach, replacing a more fragmented programme-by-programme design. The three main pillars are:



Simplification and Reduction of Administrative Burdens

Cooperatives Europe recognises the need for a simpler and more agile budget. We appreciate the efforts to reduce the administrative burdens and reporting requirements for beneficiaries, an element that was highlighted in our response to the public consultation on EU Funding for Competitiveness in April 2025.

We particularly welcome the merging of **30 online portals and dashboards** into a single-entry point – the **Single Gateway portal** – improving transparency and access to clear, uniform information. These reforms could reduce beneficiaries' burdens associated with monitoring and reporting and facilitate access to EU funds, particularly for smaller cooperatives.

⚠ While we acknowledge the need to balance limited resources, flexibility, and competing budgetary priorities, several elements of this new proposal have raised significant concerns among the cooperative movement, which are outlined in the following sections.

II. Policy Centralisation Through the NRPPs

The creation of the National and Regional Partnership Plans (NRPPs) raises important questions regarding priority setting, funding allocation, territorial representativity, and international solidarity. The NRPPs centralise management at the national level and merge together **14 existing funds**, including the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the Cohesion Funds, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) as well as the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

By absorbing multiple programmes and merging their objectives, the funding allocation across priorities within the NRPPs becomes unclear and largely subject to Member State discretion. This approach risks eliminating clear earmarking and ring-fencing safeguards, while potentially reducing budgets for key priorities such as the CAP and social spending.

a) Social Cohesion and Rural Development

The merger introduced through the NRPPs raises serious concerns regarding the future of social cohesion and rural development policies, as well as its impact on cooperatives entities and their ecosystems across Europe. Programmes like **EAFRD and LEADER** have been key in supporting economically active and socially valuable initiatives in rural areas – such as village shops, regional supply structures, energy communities, and cooperative enterprises – which are vital for the stability and sustainable development of rural regions.

Similarly, **targeted public investments in community energy projects must be guaranteed as they deliver strong and far-reaching results**, helping reduce regional imbalances and support the least favoured regions.



Around 74% of energy communities pursue social goals. In times of fiscal constraints, their strong leverage factor stands out. Every €1 of public subsidy can trigger €40–60 in citizen capital, which stays in the region.*

Moreover, the new MFF proposal signals a **shift towards the re-nationalisation of the EU budget**, which will exacerbate identity politics within Member States and undermine the overall objectives of the Cohesion Policy.

The centralisation of policies, even those that are currently dealt with at regional levels, puts at risk the role of regions and cities, which are best placed to understand and address the specific needs of their territories. This may further widen the gap between the EU and regional or local communities and increase territorial disparities in the long run.

Key Risks of Centralisation

- Elimination of clear earmarking and ring-fencing safeguards
- Reduced budgets for CAP and social spending
- Weakened role of regions and cities in fund management
- Increased territorial disparities in the long run

According to Article 6 of the proposal for a regulation establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security (known as the “NRP regulation”), Member States must implement a comprehensive partnership for the NRP Plans, in line with the **principle of multilevel governance and bottom-up approach**. Yet the effective participation of regions and social partners is still not guaranteed, while other key representative organisations, such as social economy and cooperatives, are regrettably absent from the Regulation. The effectiveness of the partnership principle will depend on the willingness of the Member States to involve a wide variety of partners.

Achieving genuine multilevel governance, therefore, requires establishing collaborative mechanisms that guarantee a strong and balanced implication of the regions and social partners, including national and regional cooperative federations, throughout the process. This involvement must be underpinned by clear guarantees or legal provisions defining their role in fund management.

In February 2026, 54 national and EU-level civil society organisations wrote *an open letter* to the Commission and Member States, calling for transparency and involvement of stakeholders in the drafting of the NRPPs. We call for Member States to take this call into consideration, especially as most have still not held any public dialogue or consultation with stakeholders regarding their NRPPs – a worrying sign, considering that the first full drafts of the Plans are due in June 2027.

*A study from the Occitanie region shows that every €1 of public support invested in energy communities can generate around €50 for the local economy (SRIA 2024, p. 46, FEDARENE, available at https://fedarene.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/SRIA-2024_Final-Digital-version_compressed.pdf. See also [REScoop.eu](https://rescoop.eu) which has prepared *national factsheets on energy communities*, highlighting their contribution to regional cohesion, rural development, and energy affordability

Recommendations

Multilevel Governance

Ensure strong multilevel governance in the NRPPs through collaborative mechanisms and clear legal provisions defining the role of regions, social partners, social economy and cooperatives umbrella organisations in the fund management. This includes activating existing Multilevel Climate and Energy Dialogues, set up by Member States under the Governance Regulation, as fora for stakeholder dialogues on the NRPPs.

Rural Development

Preserve a distinct and clearly identifiable objective for rural development within the new MFF architecture with ring-fenced or earmarked funding, including for the LEADER programme, at least at current levels adjusted for inflation.

Social Economy Support

Ensure dedicated support for social economy actors, including energy communities and housing cooperatives, particularly in less developed and just transition areas.

Social Inclusion

Include "social inclusion" under the horizontal principles (Article 7) of the NRP Regulation to guarantee investments for social cohesion.

b) Maintaining Social Spending for the Social Economy

The strength of the European model lies in its ability to combine competitiveness and social cohesion – two objectives that go hand in hand. The EU faces growing social challenges including **growing inequalities, an ageing population, the housing crisis, and labour and skills shortages** that must be addressed in the proposal. **A genuine social dimension is required to deliver on the European Pillar of Social Rights and the European Action Plan on Social Economy.**

Social Spending at Risk...

The NRP Regulation integrates the European Social Fund (ESF+) into the national plans, **removing it as a stand-alone instrument and eliminating dedicated, ring-fenced budget lines** in favour of a 14% social spending target with a total envelope of approximately EUR 100 billion.

This is, in reality, a **reduction compared to the previous MFF** as it must be adjusted to inflation. For comparison, the current ESF+ budget was EUR 95.8 billion at the start, and when adjusted for inflation, it would exceed EUR 110 billion.

In addition to a reduced budget, the NRPPs must also cover a wider range of priorities, beyond the traditional ESF+ investment. For instance, the 14% target will fund up to 40% of infrastructure investments (such as schools, hospitals, or housing), previously covered by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). In other words, the 14% social spending target will cover more with fewer resources.

⚠ The increased flexibility creates a risk that resources may be diverted away from social inclusion to other priorities like defence capabilities or preparedness.

... and the Social Economy is at Stake

The proposed new ESF Regulation reflects these shifts and **risks undermining the development of the social economy**, an essential ecosystem that generates more than EUR 912 billion in turnover across the EU. As highlighted in the OECD's recent report *Social Economy in Europe, contributing to Competitiveness and Prosperity*, social economy enterprises and cooperatives need long-term funding options to provide affordable and secure services like sustainable housing and long-term care for instance.

By **removing the existing 25% minimum allocation** safeguard for social inclusion, the proposed ESF Regulation threatens the very existence of many social economy enterprises and marks a clear step backward.

Recommendations

Maintain the European Social Fund as a Stand-Alone Instrument

To support employment, skills, social inclusion, social economy enterprises and cooperatives, in line with the European Pillar of Social Rights and the Social Economy Action Plan.

Guarantee Protected Minimum Allocations for the Social Economy

With explicit mentions in both the NRP Regulation, in particular in the specific objectives of the Fund (Article 3), and the European Social Fund Regulation.

c) Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

The proposed MFF structure represents a **significant reduction in the CAP budget which fails to reflect current needs and ambitions**. In a context where agriculture stands at the forefront of economic, social, geopolitical, and climate transitions, reducing its share to **below 15% of EU expenditure** appears disconnected from present realities.

The dismantling of the CAP's two-pillar structure further undermines coherence and predictability. Merging the EAGF and EAFRD into a single fund, while ringfencing only part of the support, risks sidelining rural development, investment, competitiveness, sustainability, and territorial cohesion. Rather than simplifying implementation, the proposed single national plan approach is likely to increase complexity, administrative burden, and costs linked to this reorganisation, creating uncertainty for both farmers and cooperatives. In parallel, the introduction of differentiated co-financing levels and greater reliance on national contributions may distort competition and weaken farmers' incomes. Added rigidities in the approach to area-based income support, particularly degressivity and capping, also overlook the diversity of farmers and their contributions to food security.

Finally, the MFF proposal weakens farmers' position in the food supply chain, as more sectors will compete for fewer resources, while the increased flexibility through additional national contributions could widen disparities across Member States, among EU's farmers, cooperatives and Producer Organisations. Ultimately, failing to secure a strong and well-funded CAP risks eroding EU's strategic autonomy and increasing its external dependencies.

Recommendations

Maintain Adequate and Dedicated CAP Budget

With a renewed commitment for an autonomous budget line that is inflation-adjusted to ensure stable resources for European agriculture.

Maintain the Two-Pillar Structure

Through (i) the EAGF, 100% EU-funded and managed annually to support active farmers' income; and (ii) the EAFRD, co-financed by the EU and Member States for rural development, innovation, and generational renewal.

Support All Active Agricultural Holdings

Without discrimination based on size or production type, while recognising the role of cooperatives, as well as maintain the area-based payments and reject mandatory capping.

III. European Competitiveness

This proposal aims to put in place the conditions required to boost Europe's competitiveness and innovative capacity. Industry and core strategic sectors must remain at the heart of the EU's economic growth and social cohesion, backed by a budget that supports vital investments in R&D, innovation, scale-up, and skills development.

a) Cooperatives' Contribution to Competitiveness & industrialisation

Reindustrialisation & Decarbonisation



Cooperatives, many of which are SMEs, play a key role in enhancing the EU's competitiveness. They operate across all sectors, including capital-intensive industries such as renewable energy, transport, housing and construction, or agri-food.

Guided by the cooperative principles and values (namely, "care for the community" and "social responsibility"), cooperatives actively contribute to Europe's reindustrialisation, decarbonisation, and innovation objectives through a more social and democratic lens.

Cooperatives drive innovation not only in advanced technological and digital sectors, but also through their distinctive governance models. Through democratic governance and broader stakeholder inclusion, cooperatives promote the emergence of new forms such as platform cooperatives, energy communities or multi-stakeholder cooperatives* to address the limitations of the current system (absence of workers' protections in the gig economy, fossil fuel energy dependency, underinvestment in services of general interest, etc.). **These dimensions of innovation should be fully recognised in the European Commission's approach to innovation policy.**

Innovation In All Its Forms



Territorial Anchoring



As businesses deeply rooted in local economies and accountable to their communities, cooperatives are strongly committed to sustainable territorial development. In the context of reindustrialisation, **the cooperative model plays a crucial role in preserving economic activity and employment by retaining EU-added value in their territories, thanks to their inner "asset lock mechanism", and by preventing company closures or relocations through worker buyouts (business transfers to employees under the cooperative model).**

**Platform cooperatives refer to cooperatives that provide goods or services via a website or app, but that are directly owned and managed by their members (workers, users, or producers). It is the cooperative response to the rising prominence of platform work. Energy communities are citizen-driven actions (often through cooperatives) in an energy-sector related activity based on open and democratic participation and governance. Multistakeholder cooperatives are cooperatives that are owned by several types of stakeholders, such as workers, consumers, local authorities, etc.*

Cooperative Enterprises at the Forefront of European Competitiveness

Cefla is an industrial cooperative founded in 1932 in Imola, Italy, operating across three business units: engineering, finishing, and medical equipment. It is a global leader in automatic industrial finishing lines, supplying systems for painting and surface treatment to clients in Europe, Asia and North America. The group employs over 1,900 people, operates 22 sites worldwide, and generates around EUR 600 million in turnover.

Its strong territorial focus is reflected in its reliance on local suppliers—over 90% from the Imola district—and long-term partnerships with SMEs, alongside collaborations with universities, research centres, and community initiatives. As a cooperative enterprise, Cefla demonstrates a long-term approach built on innovation and sustainability. Its ability to adapt while remaining rooted in cooperative principles has enabled them to maintain global competitiveness.

b) SME Cooperatives in the European Competitiveness Fund


Cooperatives Europe welcomes the creation of a Competitiveness Fund (ECF) and its focus on developing industrial capacities and technologies in key sectors like cleantech, industrial decarbonisation, and energy infrastructure.

However, we regret that the need for flexibility led to merging a dozen individual programmes, resulting in the **loss of specific earmarks for SMEs** as previously established in COSME, the Single Market Programme, or the SME Window of InvestEU. To represent SMEs' specific interests, we call for the establishment of a dedicated Comitology Committee on SME matters with regular consultation of relevant SME stakeholders, including cooperative ones, ahead and during the management of the fund.

We are also concerned with the integration of the LIFE Clean Energy Transition program into the ECF. The LIFE program encourages bottom-up, innovative projects on energy, involving citizens, local authorities, businesses and other stakeholders. Particularly the LIFE ENERCOM program, which specifically supports energy communities, has been instrumental in crowding-in private capital to local renewable energy projects. We insist on the maintenance of the LIFE CET program as a standalone, direct management program, calling for Article 33 ("LIFE Activities") to be supported with a distinct budget, and predictable multi-year work programmes.

Regarding investments, the EU Competitiveness Fund must **mobilise public and private investments for all kinds of SMEs using financial instruments tailored to their needs, including those of the small and medium social economy enterprises and small and medium cooperatives**, as outlined in the Social Economy Action Plan.

This is essential as cooperative enterprises often struggle to access the necessary funding, particularly private capitals, to grow and scale up their operations, despite their above-average survival rates. This is partly due to their specific ownership structure and democratic governance, which limits the possibility of equity dilution and transfer of decision-making powers to external investors, therefore reducing their attractiveness towards conventional equity financing. Cooperatives prioritise reinvestment of surpluses and long-term resilience over short-term profit maximisation, thus limiting the scope for high financial returns sought by venture capital funds.

 Cooperative enterprises often struggle to access necessary funding, particularly private capital, due to their specific ownership structure and democratic governance, which limits equity dilution and transfer of decision-making powers to external investors.

We therefore encourage **guarantee instruments combined with management by specialised social economy financial intermediaries**, which have proven highly effective under the previous EIF's InvestEU programme in mobilising loans, equity, and quasi-equity from public sources, as well as additional private resources from cooperative funds, banks and foundations.

Finally, we encourage **the integration of strong social conditionalities in the European Competitiveness Fund**. In doing so, the EU can require beneficiaries to respect fair working conditions and labor rights, encourage participatory practices in the workplace, and therefore align itself with the objectives of the Quality Job Roadmap.

Recommendations

1	Ring-Fence SME Funding As Article 29 calls for it, covering all different business models, including cooperative enterprises.
2	Dedicated SME Comitology Committee Establish a dedicated Comitology Committee on SME matters and ensure consultation of relevant SME stakeholders to take into account all SMEs' interests.
3	Quasi-Equity Funding Instruments Promote the use of quasi-equity funding instruments, more adapted to the cooperative business model (outside of regulated sectors such as banking) and further channel resources from the European Investment Fund to social economy financial intermediaries that work towards improving social economy enterprises' capitalization.
4	LIFE CET Programme Budget Ensure adequate budget for the LIFE CET programme – or at least the "LIFE Activities" foreseen under Art. 33 of the ECF Regulation – as a standalone, direct management programme.
5	Social Conditionalities Integrate social conditionalities for financial support to companies in the Competitiveness Fund.
6	Workers' Buyouts Promote workers' buyouts in the European Competitiveness Fund by providing funding for the transfer of businesses to employees, as a powerful tool against deindustrialisation.
7	SME Window in ECF InvestEU Maintain an SME window in the new ECF InvestEU instrument, building on the experience of the previous InvestEU programme.

c) Social Economy Recognition in the MFF

⚠ Despite a few mentions of social enterprises, the **ECF Regulation fails to acknowledge the social economy's contribution to EU economic growth and innovation performance.**

The social economy, of which cooperatives belong, generates more than **EUR 912 billion in turnover** and represents **6.3% of employment** in the EU, both in urban and rural areas. The previous Commission's Industrial Policy identified the social economy as one of the 14 industrial ecosystems, with its specificities, its sectoral variety and financing needs. The OECD recent report [Social Economy in Europe, contributing to Competitiveness and Prosperity](#) also highlights the social economy contribution to sustainable economic growth, social innovation and quality jobs. **Its essential role cannot be dismissed and must be supported in the next MFF with dedicated funds within the European Competitiveness Fund**

Terminology Matters

In addition, the term '**social enterprises**' used throughout the Regulation should be replaced by '**social economy enterprises**' to avoid any confusion, ensure the use of a more inclusive and complete term, and to comply with the terminology used in the Social Economy Action Plan and the Council Recommendation on developing social economy framework conditions.

Recommendations

Correct the Terminology

Replace the term 'social enterprises' used throughout the Regulation with 'social economy enterprises' to avoid any confusion and ensure consistency with other EU initiatives.

Dedicated Budget Allocation

Provide within the Competitiveness Fund a dedicated budget allocation for the Social Economy, taking into account all dimensions of innovation including social innovations.

d) European Preference

In line with Europe's objectives of strengthening its competitiveness and strategic autonomy, businesses and entrepreneurship must be supported in a way that ensures the retention of value created within the Union. We believe that the cooperative business model represents a powerful instrument to advance these goals.

Why cooperatives Advance EU competitiveness and strategic autonomy.

- Locally rooted businesses that promote shorter value chains
- Reinvest surpluses rather than prioritising short-term profit distribution
- Democratic governance and meaningful stakeholder engagement creates quality employment and attracts talent
- Inner "asset-lock mechanisms" prevent delocation, protecting European industry

Cooperatives are locally rooted businesses that strengthen local production and promote shorter value chains by reinvesting surpluses rather than prioritizing short-term profit distribution. Their democratic governance and shared ownership structures not only appeal to younger generations and attract talents but also encourage meaningful stakeholder engagement and create quality employment for their communities. Finally, cooperatives' inner "asset-lock mechanisms" actively prevent delocation, protecting European industry and ensuring that the value created remains within the Union.

Enhancing the attractiveness of European markets requires promoting business models that foster ownership and generate EU added value – as cooperatives do. Access to the European Competitiveness Fund and public procurement (as one of its financing tools) should therefore include preferential conditions or incentives for enterprises that meet EU Preference criteria.

Recommendations

Recognise Cooperatives in Article 10

Article 10 of the ECF Regulation should recognise cooperatives as key partners in ensuring EU Preference.

Support SMEs with "Made in Europe"

Provide accompanying support measures to SMEs if a "Made in Europe" requirement is introduced, helping offset supply chain cost increases caused by shifts in public procurement decisions.

IV. International Cooperative Development (ICD) and Global Europe

The MFF proposal reflects the EU's evolving strategic priorities in external action, raising concerns over the limited diversity of private sector partnerships. These changes significantly affect the involvement of cooperatives.



First, the increased emphasis on resilience, competitiveness, energy transition, and value-chain security, while of interest for cooperative businesses, may **disadvantage the so-called “non-bankable” ICD actions**, which prioritise local socio-economic development over financial returns on investments.

In addition, the new infrastructure of the Global Europe Instrument (GEI) risks weakening the mandate of member-based and representative organisations, such as Cooperatives Europe, which play an essential role in decentralising EU development programming. While enhancing flexibility, GEI's new structure – five geographic envelopes and one global pillar – will de facto **intensify competition among long-standing civil society partners, in turn reducing the number of beneficiaries globally**. Furthermore, the new instrument would lead to the removal of key thematic spending targets (climate action, gender equality) and thematic budget lines, including for civil society organisations. In practice, this means fewer entry points for partnership opportunities for cooperative representative networks and cooperative development organisations.

Finally, the Global Gateway Strategy focuses on investment-based infrastructure development via capital mobilisation by the traditional private sector. EU companies are now the EU's preferential partners, invited to submit investment proposals through the new Global Gateway Investment Hub. While the EU does not specify the type of eligible company nor set a minimal turnover, the internal requirements for the project's submission seem to overlook the untapped potential of cooperative and social economy enterprises, limiting their partnership engagement. Similarly, **the funding modalities** – loans over grants, a EUR10 million minimum contribution, revised EFSD+ eligibility criteria for grants and guarantees – **essentially limit the participation of many cooperatives, both in terms of size and economic sector**.

Cooperatives as efficient and sustainable development partners – why is it important to involve them?



Financial Viability

Cooperatives' democratic and self-managed model strengthens sustainability, reduces aid dependency, and supports fair, locally anchored value distribution. Direct funding to local partners through ICD can strengthen community ownership and preserve local private sectors in EU Partner Countries.



Multiplier Effect

Including cooperatives as partners in Team Europe Initiatives ensures the simultaneous involvement of business enterprises and membership-based associations. Engaging with cooperative rather than traditional private actors guarantees that the EU development agenda embeds democracy, participation, empowerment and sustainability in its actions.



Economic Scale

According to the 2025 World Cooperative Monitor, European cooperatives have a yearly turnover as high as **96 billion euros**, demonstrating their competitiveness and resilience in a market economy, comparable to traditional private sector actors.

Recommendations

Maintain Thematic Programmes and Budget Lines

To strategically support "soft measures" and uphold the EU's 360° approach to international partnerships and poverty eradication.

Guarantee the Diversity of Private Sector's Partnerships

Within the Global Gateway, including revising the funding mobilisation criteria of the Investment Hub, by keeping entry points and financing mechanisms adapted to all types of businesses – including cooperatives – regardless of their size or form.

Revise the governance & membership of the Global Gateway Business Advisory Group

To ensure greater representation of social economy enterprises and cooperatives. Involving cooperatives as partners and not just beneficiaries would enhance the EU's effectiveness and credibility in its external agenda.

Conclusion: A Call for a Cooperative-Friendly MFF

The new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF, 2028–2034) proposal is currently the subject of extensive debate as it will define the overarching direction, scope, and level of ambition of EU policies for the forthcoming seven-year period. In a context where multiple priorities are competing for attention, the elements highlighted in this document are of particular relevance to us. As democratic businesses rooted in their local communities, our distinctive model combines economic performance with social and territorial responsibility, contributing to sustainable supply chains, job creation, and cohesion across regions and sectors.

Cooperative enterprises, if properly supported, can stand as strategic partners and the EU's most effective ally in supporting its territorial development, social cohesion, and economic sovereignty across the Union and its international partnerships.

We therefore call on the European Commission, the European Parliament, and Member States to ensure that the next MFF fully recognises and supports the cooperative business model as a cornerstone of a competitive, cohesive, and sustainable European economy.

Over the coming two years, Cooperatives Europe and its members will continue to closely monitor the negotiations progress and stand ready to contribute to the discussions on the importance of a well- adapted financial framework in Europe.

About us

Cooperatives Europe is the European cross-sectoral organisation representing cooperative enterprises in Europe and the European region of the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA). Its network counts members from 33 European countries, representing 250,000 cooperative enterprises across all business sectors – industry, services, energy, housing, agriculture, banking, consumer, and pharmaceuticals. Cooperatives are enterprises that are collectively owned and democratically managed by their members, contributing to sustainable and inclusive growth by combining economic performance with social progress. Since its creation in 2006, Cooperatives Europe has advocated for an economy that serves people and promotes the cooperative business model as a locally rooted and democratically owned business.

This position paper has been co-developed with Cooperatives Europe’s members and reflects the collective views of the organisation’s membership.

The drafting process was supported by the **EU Coordination Committee (EUCC)**, an internal committee mandated by the Board to support positions on advocacy-related issues. The EUCC brings together European sectoral organisations, national intersectoral cooperative organisations from EU and EFTA member states, as well as national cooperative organisations from candidate countries engaged in accession negotiations with the EU. Through the EUCC, members contribute their expertise, perspectives, and feedback, ensuring that this document represents the shared position of Cooperatives Europe as a whole.





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