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COMMUNAUTÉ EUROPÉENNE DES COOPÉRATIVES DE CONSOMMATEURS
EUROPEAN COMMUNITY OF CONSUMER COOPERATIVES



WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

CONSUMER CO-OPERATIVES WORLDWIDE (CCW)

PART OF THE INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE ALLIANCE

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ACTIVITY REPORT 2010



European Community of Consumer Cooperatives
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*Euro Coop is the **European Community of Consumer Co-operatives**, whose members are the **national organisations of consumer co-operatives** in 17 European countries.*

*Created in 1957, Euro Coop today represents over **3,200 local and regional co-operatives**, the members of which amount to more than **29 million consumers** across Europe.*

*Consumer Co-operatives are **enterprises owned by consumers**, acting mainly in food retail. Their overall turnover amounts to more than **€73 billion**, with **36,000 points of sale** and **400,000 employees**.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

In 2010 Euro Coop continued to develop its work on three main areas of action: sustainability, food retail and co-operative issues. As such, it followed the main European debates surrounding these topics and managed to increase its overall weight and influence towards the European Institutions.

One of the main topics in 2010 was the discussion regarding the functioning of the retail market and, in particular, of the food supply chain. This is an important topic for consumer co-operatives which are important actors in this market. Through Euro Coop it was possible to present to the European institutions the particular view of co-operatives in this topic that, thanks to their values and principles, is more balanced and equitable than that of other stakeholders. The culmination of this work and the recognition of the important role of consumer co-operatives was the invitation to Euro Coop to participate as a member of the High Level Forum for the Food Chain.

In food retail, another important development is the discussions surrounding the reformulation of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) after 2013. The shape of the Cap after 2013 will have a significant impact on the way the food market and food policies are organised and therefore it indirectly impacts on the activities of consumer co-operatives.

On sustainability, it is important to highlight the production of the first report on members initiatives concerning the fight against Climate Change. This work compiles different actions in different countries that cover a huge variety of areas and show that fo consumer co-operatives fighting against Climate Change is one of their major priorities.

Finally, on co-operative issues, it is important to highlight the production of a booklet with the history of Euro Coop that was founded in 1957 and is one of the oldest NGO's based in Brussels.

This report shows, once again, that although with limited resources, Euro Coop managed to address the main priorities of its members and have a positive influence and impact on European policies.

Enjoy your reading!

2. EUROPEAN REPRESENTATION

SUSTAINABILITY POLICY



CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY

Climate Change continued to be a top priority in 2010. The Euro Coop Sustainability Policy Working Group (SPWG) worked during the three meetings it has regularly held during the year (March, June and October 2010) on the first follow-up report to the project: “Climate Change and Consumer Cooperatives: Taking the Challenge Forward”¹, which was officially launched on 14th December 2010.



In 2010, Euro Coop also continued its collaboration with the Transatlantic Consumer Dialogue (TACD) Climate Change Working Group. In such framework, it participated in the 11th TACD annual meeting, which was held from 26th to 28th April in Washington (USA). In that occasion, it gave a speech on the subject “Greening the market for consumers: the role of standards and regulation”, in which it highlighted the role that consumer co-operatives are playing in achieving sustainable consumption and production through the standards they support or develop.

In addition to that, on 27th September 2010, Euro Coop published a memorandum containing ideas and expectations for the newly created DG Climate Action², which was presented to the relevant EU institutional contacts. On 25th November 2010 it then put forward a comprehensive reply to the EC consultation on an EU roadmap for a low carbon economy by 2050³, which illustrated Euro Coop’s standpoint on the broad concept of sustainable economy.

¹ http://www.eurocoop.coop/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=376%3Areport-2010-on-the-project-qclimate-change-and-consumer-co-operatives-taking-the-challenge-forward&catid=83%3Areports-memos&Itemid=176&lang=en

² http://www.eurocoop.coop/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=346%3Acombating-the-climate-change-threat-euro-coops-ideas-and-expectations-for-the-new-dg-climate-action&catid=41%3Aenvironmental-policy&Itemid=193&lang=en

³ http://www.eurocoop.coop/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=373%3Aeuro-coops-response-to-the-ec-consultation-roadmap-for-a-low-carbon-economy-by-2050&catid=41%3Aenvironmental-policy&Itemid=193&lang=en

Against this background and as a means of concrete commitment, Euro Coop continued to collaborate in 2010 with the Belgian NGO initiative “CompenCO2”⁴ to offset the CO2 produced by its staff when travelling. Through this initiative, it has kept on submitting quarterly reports to CompenCO2 for calculation and later payment.

SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION (SCP)

Sustainable Production and Consumption was in 2010 at the core of the Euro Coop’s sustainability policy action. All along the year, Euro Coop has participated in and given regular input to the works of the Food Sustainable Production and Consumption Round Table (SCP RT). It took part in the SCP RT Steering Committee as well as in the work of the SCP RT Working Groups on Environmental Information Tools (WG2), Continuous Environmental Improvement (WG3) and International initiatives and other aspects of sustainability (WG4). As a concrete result, the RT formally adopted on 13th July 2010 on the occasion of its Plenary meeting the “Guiding Principles on voluntary environmental assessment and communication of environmental information along the food chain, including to consumers”⁵.

In 2010, Euro Coop has also kept on participating and giving regular input to the work of the Retail Forum for Sustainability. In this regard, it put forward several commitments in the framework of the Retailer’s Environmental Action Programme (REAP) database⁶ and actively participating in the drafting of the issue papers on Marketing and Effective Communication, Timber and Environmental Life Cycle Information for Products Used Every Day in Households⁷. On the occasion of its 7th meeting, held on 9th November in Brussels, Euro Coop, together with the European Commission and other stakeholders, was also invited to give a presentation about its position and best practices on labelling in the retailing sector, thereby taking the opportunity to influence the debate at EU level on this most topical subject.

During its annual event, which was held on 24th June, the Retail Forum launched the “Code for environmentally sustainable business”⁸, i.e. an initiative aimed at reducing retailers’ environmental footprint on issues ranging from energy use to sustainable sourcing of fish and timber. Euro Coop formally signed up to the Code on 15th October 2010.

FAIR TRADE

In 2010, Euro Coop kept on collaborating on a permanent basis with the Fair Trade Advocacy Office, i.e. the main representation of the Fair Trade movements before the European Institutions. In this framework, it took part on 9th June and 30th November in the works of the Fair Trade Working Group of the European Parliament (EP FT WG). This WG, of which Euro Coop was back in 2003 one of the founding members, gathers Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and



⁴ <http://www.compenco2.be>

⁵ http://www.food-scp.eu/files/Guiding_Principles.pdf

⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/industry/retail/reap/browse_en.html

⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/industry/retail/issue_papers.htm

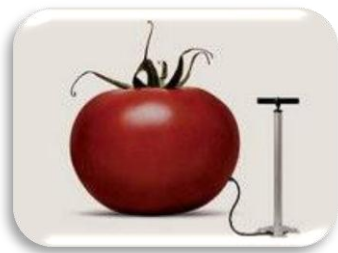
⁸ <http://www.errt.org/uploads/Retail%20Environmental%20Sustainability%20Code%20-%20June%202010.pdf>

stakeholders with an interest in Fair Trade and aims at raising awareness about FT amongst the EU Institutions as well as at increasing the presence of FT products in the European Parliament's premises.

On 17th November 2010, Euro Coop organised then in the premises of Copa-Cogeca the workshop: "Consumer Co-operatives' contribution to International Development"⁹. The aim of the meeting was to analyse and discuss with Cooperatives Europe, Fair Trade Advocacy Office and European Commission representatives the EU institutional framework in the field of international development. During the event, three case studies by ANCC/Coop (Italy), FDB (Denmark) and the Co-operative Group (UK) were presented.

Against this background, the Euro Coop SPWG delivered an update of the Euro Coop Declaration on Fair Trade's annex¹⁰ of the thereby highlighting continuous commitment and progress on this most topical issue.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS (GMOs)



In 2010 and jointly with the Food Policy Working Group (FPWG), Euro Coop continued to follow the GMO dossier. In particular, it put forward on 9th July a position expressing concerns over the European Commission's (EC) plans to reintroduce the subsidiarity clause for GMO approval.¹¹ On 14th July, Euro Coop also presented a press release on the same subject¹².

In addition to that, all along the year Euro Coop kept contacts with several NGOs working on the GMO dossier, including Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace, with the aim of developing common positions on ad hoc subjects. In this respect, it contributed to the publishing of a joint press release¹³ calling the EU Institutions to carry out better safety checks as well as socio-economic impact studies when authorising new crops.

Finally, the GMO issue was also thoroughly explored on the occasion of the third meeting of the SPWG, which took place on 28th October in Brussels. In that occasion in fact Euro Coop invited the EC official Mr. Sébastien Goux, who is in charge of the GMO dossier, to discuss future EC policy scenarios on the issue. The members of the SPWG could therefore take advantage of a direct exchange of positions and ideas for future action on such issue.

⁹ http://www.eurocoop.coop/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=365%3Aconsumer-co-opertives-contribution-to-international-development&catid=69%3Aconference&Itemid=170&lang=en

¹⁰ http://www.eurocoop.coop/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=388%3Aeuro-coop-declaration-on-fair-trade-update-of-the-annex-june-2010&catid=41%3Aenvironmental-policy&Itemid=193&lang=en

¹¹ http://www.eurocoop.coop/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=334%3Aeuro-coop-expresses-concerns-over-the-ec-proposal-to-let-member-states-decide-on-gmo-approval&catid=41%3Aenvironmental-policy&Itemid=193&lang=en

¹² http://www.eurocoop.coop/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=339%3Aeuro-coop-reiterates-concerns-over-the-ec-proposals-to-let-member-states-decide-on-gmo-approval&catid=46%3Aenvironmental-policy&Itemid=183&lang=en

¹³ http://www.eurocoop.coop/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=363%3Athe-politics-behind-the-proposals-the-ongoing-story-of-gmos-in-europe&catid=46%3Aenvironmental-policy&Itemid=183&lang=en

ORGANIC FARMING

In 2010, Euro Coop kept on following the works of the Technology Research Platform ‘Organics’¹⁴, of which Euro Coop is member. In this context, it attended the conference “TP Organics presents its Strategic Research Agenda”, which was held on 9th June 2010, and disseminated information related to the work carried out in the framework of the TP Organics exercise.

In addition to that, Euro Coop contributed through its expert from the Swedish Kooperativa Förbundet, Mr. Per Baumann, to the works of the of European Commission Advisory Group on Organic Farming.

Lastly, on 19th October 2010, Euro coop participated in a civil society NGOs internal strategy debate organised by IFOAM, the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements, to discuss future orientations of the participants on a wide range of issues spacing from GMOs to CAP and animal welfare. The meeting confirmed the good collaboration of Euro Coop with the Brussels NGO scene and its commitment to work with it on an ad hoc basis.

SUSTAINABLE FISHING

Following up to the position paper on the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) which Euro Coop published on 18th December 2009¹⁵, the SPWG worked in 2010 on an annex to add to such position showcasing Euro Coop’s members best practices in the fish sustainability area. The annex is available at the Euro Coop Secretariat upon request and was used for lobbying purposes.



In mid-2010, Euro Coop also joined the CFP Alliance, formed by WWF, AIPCE (the European Fish Processing Association) and EuroCommerce. The Alliance issued a joint position on the reform of the CFP¹⁶ as well as a brochure¹⁷ on the same subject ahead of the conference on the CFP reform organised by the European Commission which took place on 16th November 2010. Always together with the Alliance, Euro Coop contributed to the organisation of an evening social event on sustainable fishing, which took place in Brussels on 12th October 2010. The event gathered representatives of the EU institutions, interested stakeholders and civil society NGOs with the aim of raising awareness on the sustainability of the CFP reform.

¹⁴ <http://www.tporganics.eu/index.php/members.html>

¹⁵ http://www.eurocoop.coop/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=83%3Aeuro-coop-position-on-the-european-commission-green-paper-on-the-reform-of-the-common-fishery-policy&catid=41%3Aenvironmental-policy&Itemid=193&lang=en

¹⁶http://www.eurocoop.coop/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=333%3Awwf-and-its-allies-call-for-real-reform-in-european-fisheries&catid=41%3Aenvironmental-policy&Itemid=193&lang=en

¹⁷ http://www.eurocoop.coop/dmdocuments/Press/Press_environmental/WIN-LOSE_16_Nov_2010.pdf

TIMBER

In 2009, the EPWG expressed its willingness to give a closer look to and be more active on sustainable timber related matters. To this aim, Euro Coop invited on the occasion of the WG which was held in Brussels on 28th October 2010 an official in charge of the timber dossier, Mr. Roland Beck, so to discuss about EC policy on sustainable timber and possible ways of joint co-operation. At that meeting, the SPWG could present the position paper¹⁸ it had previously drafted on this issue, which is also supplied with an annex showcasing Euro Coop members' best practices on the sustainable timber field.

WASTE

During the 2nd and 3rd meeting of the SPWG (June and October 2010), the WG discussed about a comprehensive draft position on waste put forward by Mr. Per Baumann. The position is still currently under discussion and will be finalised in 2011.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION

All along the year, Euro Coop informed the SPWG about the main developments on the above-mentioned topics taking place both at EU and single consumer co-operative level. This task has been accomplished through a dedicated SPWG mailing list. In addition to that, several meetings with EU officials including MEPs have been carried out during the year so to effectively put forward Euro Coop's positions before EU institutions. Euro Coop also attended several conferences and meetings with the same aim. Finally, the Secretariat took care of responding to ad hoc questions and requests arising from the SPWG members regarding sustainability-related issues so to provide them with a tailor-made service.

¹⁸http://www.eurocoop.coop/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=348%3Aeuro-coops-position-qsustainable-timberq&catid=41%3Aenvironmental-policy&Itemid=193&lang=en

FOOD POLICY



FOOD INFORMATION TO CONSUMERS

The dossier on the provision of food information to consumers was still high in the agenda in 2010. Last March, indeed, the European Parliament Committee on Public health and the Environment (ENVI) voted on the report MEP Sommer had presented late 2009. After the first reading vote in the European Parliament, which took place on the 16th June 2010, the dossier officially went into the Council hands. Euro Coop followed closely the debate at ENVI Committee and Parliament level, explaining the view of its Members – in particular as far as national scheme, legibility provision and mandatory nutrients were concerned. Euro Coop was also active during the Council negotiations, in which the Belgian Presidency played a key role. In fact, just before the end of the year the Council reached an agreement and endorsed its position. Euro Coop provided its members with a punctual analysis of the Council document.



Thanks to the members' co-operation, Euro Coop prepared some background documents covering their experiences and common practices on food and nutrition labelling. This was helpful for lobbying actions to MEPs and European institutions.

In 2010 Euro Coop's involvement in the FLABEL project (i.e. Food Labelling to Advance Better Education for Life) continued. In particular, Euro Coop attended FLABEL General Assembly and ad hoc meetings focussing on presentation of mid-term results of the project. Euro Coop also followed the progress of the researches made in the framework of the project, both through scientific papers and webinar.

EU PLATFORM FOR ACTION ON DIET, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND HEALTH

2010 was a crucial year for the Platform: DG SANCO, in fact, hired an external consultancy in order to conduct an evaluation of the Platform's functioning in its fifth year anniversary. Euro Coop took part in this project, firstly compiling a written questionnaire and secondly meeting the evaluator. The evaluation was very broad in scope and rather to investigate on the Platform's achieved results, was more about the Platform's scope and modus operandi, without forgetting the monitoring part



and the sometimes difficult interaction among stakeholders. Results of the evaluation were discussed in one of the four usual meetings of the Platform, which Euro Coop regularly attended.

Another important item of discussion for 2010 was the mid-term review of the European Nutrition Strategy. Indeed the last Platform meeting of the year was jointly organized with the Belgian Presidency and WHO and was a good occasion for Euro Coop to learn about others' initiatives in the field of tackling obesity.

In the 2009 Platform annual report, Euro Coop is present with its three commitments carried on by Eroski (about the elimination of trans-fatty acids in own-brand products, a campaign to prevent obesity in children, and the labelling initiative on 2000 Eroski products). Also in 2010 Euro Coop was involved in the plenary meetings with the presentation of one of its 2010 commitments, i.e. "Club 4 – 10" developed by Coop Italia. This commitment was one of the few in the category "reformulation", therefore there was great interest from both the Commission and all Platform members to hear how Coop Italia had developed such a healthier line of products for the youngest.

In the second part of the year, Euro Coop was very busy in the collection of data concerning its members' initiatives in the field of nutrition, education and fight against obesity in general. Euro Coop database groups all these different types of action, from marketing campaigns to product reformulation, from education to lifestyle and physical activity. The initiatives are classified per country/member association, and per type of action, following the scheme of the European Commission's Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health. This database will indeed represent, as of 2011, Euro Coop's commitment to the Platform and it will be updated regularly with most recent initiatives, being they conducted at local or national level.

Euro Coop's engagement in the field of obesity and nutrition in 2010 is highlighted also by the invitation to intervene at two important conferences: the European Snacks Association summit, where Euro Coop presented its approach on responsible food marketing, and the ECOG (European Childhood Obesity Group) congress, where it presented the experience of the "Club 4-10" line developed by Coop Italia.

FOOD CHAIN

The topic of a balanced and fair food chain was of great interest for all stakeholders and policy makers involved in agriculture, retail and commerce in 2010. In fact, following the food crisis and prices fluctuation, food operators and retailers in particular were under scrutiny by the European Commission and Parliament. Therefore, Euro Coop decided to focus its annual spring conference on this topic, organizing a top event at the European Economic and Social Committee on the 31st of March entitled "Building a fair food retail market in Europe". All major stakeholders took part in the discussion, from the European institutions - MEP Marc Tarabella (S&D), Mr. Mattia Pellegrini from V.P. Tajani Cabinet, Ms. Madi Sharma from the EESC - to the food chain's actors - Mr. Rodrigo Gouveia for Euro Coop, Mr. Paulo Gouveia for Copa-Cogeca, Mr. Francesco Pizzagalli for the CIAA and Mr. Xavier Durieu for Eurocommerce.

Euro Coop's engagement on these issues and the key role consumer co-operatives have on the retail market were recognized by the Commission, which invited Euro Coop to be part of the High Level Forum on the Food Chain. Organized through a sherpa and four more technical platforms (B2B contractual relations, food price monitoring tool, competitiveness in the agro-food industry, agro-logistics). Euro Coop is represented in the Sherpa meeting, which met for the first time in October, and in the B2B contractual relations, which met in November. The High Level Forum also had a High Level meeting in November in which Euro Coop took part represented by its President.

In this framework, Euro Coop also kept strong links with other stakeholders and the Commission, DG Enterprise in particular, following the debate about the role of private labels in the competitiveness of the food chain.

Euro Coop took part in the **"Food Chain in Europe"** Conference that was held on the 4th of June in Valencia, Spain and hosted by the European Economic and Social Committee and the AVA Organisation in the framework of Spanish EU Presidency. The Conference brought together more than 300 persons of the agribusiness. Euro Coop also participated in two other conferences related to the topic of the functioning of the food supply chain and the fairness of the retail market, both held in Brussels in October and November.

EUROPEAN FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY (EFSA)

In 2010, the cooperation with the European Food Safety Authority continued. Euro Coop attended the three annual meetings organised by the European Agency in April, June and December, which focused on all the most relevant food safety-related topics. Specific burning issues were the health and nutrition claims dossier, consumers' approach to food risk and EFSA's image and communication strategy, BPA and EFSA's role in risk assessment and risk monitoring.

Also this year Euro Coop involved its members for the participation to the call on Scientific Experts and followed the different consultation processes launched.

Furthermore, in 2010 Euro Coop attended two additional meetings organized by EFSA: indeed, together with a small number of other stakeholders, Euro Coop took part in the ad-hoc working group set up for improving the relations between EFSA and its stakeholders. The meetings were held in Parma and in Brussels, and as a result a paper with the main findings was prepared and will be discussed by the stakeholders Platform.

ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE

Euro Coop attended DG SANCO regular stakeholders working group meetings, being therefore updated on the developments of the EU Animal Health strategy, and other relevant subjects.

Euro Coop was particularly active on the issue of pig(let)s castration, participating to an ad-hoc stakeholders group set up by DG SANCO and attended by producers, animal welfare, manufacturers organizations as well as Member states representatives.

In 2010 Euro Coop also continued its co-operation with other NGOs opposing the cloning of animals and their offsprings. In this framework different lobbying actions were undertaken.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS

Also in this field, Euro Coop maintained its contacts with the environment NGOs and the Greens group of the EP. Euro Coop attended regularly the NGOs organized meetings in Brussels discussing common strategies and the latest policy developments.

As regards internal exchange of information for Euro Coop's members, a table gathering the main aspects of consumer co-operatives approach to GMOs was prepared.



NANOTECHNOLOGIES

In 2010, nanotechnologies were stable in the European political agenda. Euro Coop continued to work on this following latest scientific development and attending focused meetings organized by the Commission. The subject of nanotechnologies is gaining more and more interest from all sides (industry, consumers, public authorities) and Euro Coop monitored the evolution of the debate very carefully, intervening when possible.

COMMON AGRICULTURE POLICY (CAP) AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS QUALITY POLICY

The CAP was one of the topics on which Euro Coop was more active in 2010; besides strengthening the relationships with other relevant stakeholders and the CAP NGOs network, Euro Coop attended important conferences organized by the European Parliament (in particular by the ALDE and the Greens groups) and the Commission. The most important conference was surely the July conference on the CAP post 2013, which was followed by another conference on the same topic in October. In between, Euro Coop participated to the consultations on the future of the CAP proposed by the Commission and published a detailed position paper on the issue. At the beginning of October, Euro Coop intervened also at the European Farmers Congress, which was organized in Brussels by Copa Cogeca.

Euro Coop continued to attend the Advisory meeting on agricultural products quality organized and chaired by DG AGRI, following the developments of this broad policy area.

CO-OPERATIVE ENTERPRISES POLICY



EC COMMUNICATION ON A BETTER FUNCTIONING FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN IN EUROPE & HIGH LEVEL FORUM ON THE FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN

Following the publication of European Commission new Communication on a better functioning food supply chain in Europe at the end 2009, Euro Coop actively contributed in promoting consumer co-operatives particular interests and views on this highly sensitive dossier throughout the year 2010.

First and foremost, Euro Coop has drawn a position paper¹⁹ on this issue in order to present to EU institutions consumer co-operatives peculiarities in the retail market in regard to the establishment of balanced and fair contractual terms with suppliers.

Second, on the 31st of March 2010, Euro Coop organised a conference dedicated to this topic with the support of the EECS (European Economic and Social Committee). The conference, entitled “Building a fair food retail market in Europe” gathered members of the European Commission, the European Parliament, the EECS, representatives of agricultural cooperatives and consumer cooperatives, as well as private retailers and other stakeholders of the agro-food industry. This event has been very successful as it provides different actors of the food chain with the opportunity to express their views, exchange best practices, dialogue with EU representatives on this particular issue, as well as propose concrete actions to meet the objectives laid down in the Communication.

Third, Euro Coop participated in November in the High Level Forum on the Food Supply Chain first meeting, which gathered the four EU Commissioners in charge of Enterprises Policy, Internal Market, Health and Consumer Policy and Agricultural Policy, several national ministers in charge of food issues, as well as other representatives of the food supply chain. Euro Coop was able to voice its opinion on topics of direct concern for consumer co-operatives, namely transparency and equity of contractual practices in the food supply chain.

In parallel, Euro Coop followed with close attention discussions at the European Parliament on the European Commission on the report on fair revenues for farmers, which consisted in analysing the overall functioning of the food supply chain in Europe. Euro Coop thus met the Rapporteur José Bové

¹⁹ http://www.eurocoop.coop/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=113%3Aa-fair-and-balanced-food-supply-chain-in-europe&catid=45%3Aenterprises-policy&Itemid=190&lang=en

(Green, France) to make sure that the final resolution adopted by the European Parliament takes into consideration consumer cooperatives' views on this dossier.

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION RETAIL MARKET MONITORING REPORT

On July 2010 the European Commission adopted a report, called "Towards more efficient and fairer retail services in the internal for 2020". The purpose of this initiative is to identify a series of issues potentially hampering more efficient and fairer retail services within the Internal Market, e.g. unfair commercial practices, lack of information and transparency on pricing.



In order to make its views available for consideration by EU institutions, Euro Coop first contributed to the public consultation²⁰ to highlight consumer cooperatives' particular capacities in operating in the retail market as responsible actors whilst respecting equity principles on the contrary to other retailers.

Further to that, Euro Coop met the European Parliament Rapporteur on this dossier, MEP Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (EPP, Sweden) in order to make sure that the draft report of the Rapporteur, scheduled for adoption in Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee in April 2011, fully integrates Euro Coop views. As follow-up to this action, Euro Coop sent a letter to the European Parliament, stressing the cooperative difference in the retail market in terms of values, ethical practices with both suppliers and consumers.

EU 2020 STRATEGY CONSULTATION

At the beginning of 2010 the European Commission launched a wide consultation on the future EU 2020 strategy. The purpose of this initiative was to collect institutions and stakeholders' views on how the EU could reshape its long-terms strategy and set new key priorities to ride the effects of the economic crisis whilst ensuring the development of a sustainable social market economy.

Considering the list of new challenges the European Commission intends to address in the coming years, Euro Coop participated in the public consultation ²¹ to draw EU institutions attention to cooperatives' sustainable social activities.

In the document provided to the European Commission, Euro Coop laid emphasis on cooperative enterprises particular capacities in contributing to economic, social and environmental objectives of the EU 2020 strategy, by acting as sustainable economy actors in the market.

Furthermore, Euro Coop focused on key concepts specific to cooperative enterprises such as self-help based on solidarity whose implementation allows progress in terms of social cohesion.

²⁰ http://www.eurocoop.coop/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=342%3Aretail-market-monitoring-report-towards-more-efficient-and-fairer-retail-services-in-the-internal-market-for-2020&catid=45%3Aenterprises-policy&Itemid=190&lang=en
²¹ http://www.eurocoop.coop/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=115%3Aconsultation-on-the-future-geu-2020q-strategy&catid=45%3Aenterprises-policy&Itemid=190&lang=en

MEMBERS' PARTICIPATION

In 2010, Euro Coop started to focus on an important issue for most cooperative enterprises: members' participation. While the importance of this issue is widely recognised by members, Euro Coop thus decided to elaborate a detailed report analysing current trends in terms of formal and informal participation.

First and foremost, Euro Coop collected a series of information such as recent analysis data, reflecting members' participation patterns in the different member organisations.



Then in June, Euro Coop jointly organised with Hispacoop a conference intended to directly address this subject with view to identifying possible solutions. This conference also provided member organisations with the opportunity to discuss and share their experiences and best practices contributing to strengthening relationship with members and as direct consequence enhancing members' participation.

On the basis of the above-described initiatives, the Secretariat proceeded to the redaction of a dedicated report to be published in 2011. As a final result, this report identifies the ways members participate and the processes that lead them to do so. In addition, it includes a series of recommendations whose application should enable consumer cooperatives to enhance members' participation in the coming years.

STATE AID AND EUROPEAN COMPETITION LAW

Like in previous years, Euro Coop continued to participate in the works of the EU Coordination Committee of Cooperatives Europe specific legal working group on state aid. Having regard to the European Commission's particular opinion on Spanish agricultural cooperatives tax regime, qualified as state aid, Euro Coop along with other co-operative organisations issued a position with the overall aim of ensuring adequate recognition of cooperative enterprises in European competition law, including tax regime.

This opinion was forwarded to the European Commission following approval by the EU Coordination Committee of Cooperatives Europe.

Euro Coop also participated to the Conference "**A competitive Europe? The case for co-operatives**", on the 16th of November at the European Parliament. Euro Coop was able to make a presentation on consumer co-operatives. It underlined the successes of the co-operative business model as well as the main challenges that consumer co-operatives have to face. This was the occasion to call for an ambitious policy at European level for the promotion of co-operative societies.

THE STATUTE FOR EUROPEAN COOPERATIVES SOCIETIES (SCE)

In view of a possible revision of the SCE, Euro Coop took a keen interest in participating in the final conference of the SCE Project, which took place in October in Brussels. The main objective of the conference, which gathered cooperative organisations and EU representatives, was to present the results of the study analysing the degree of success of the implementation of the Regulation 1435/2003 on the Statute for a European Cooperative Society, as well as providing the European Commission with a list of recommendations suggesting changes to the Regulation. Euro Coop also participated in a round-table discussion with other co-operative sectors and researchers on the topic of improving European co-operative Law. This meeting was held in Brussels on the 26th of March.

ACCOUNTING STANDARD

Euro Coop participated to Cooperatives Europe's Accounting Working Group to closely follow the discussion on the project on financial instrument with characteristics of equity with regard to membership and forms of economic involvement in a cooperative.

SOCIAL ECONOMY INTERGROUP

Within the social economy intergroup, there was the presentation of MEP Toia (ALDE, Italy) report on social economy at European Parliament in October 2010 with participations of EU representatives from Commissioners Tajani and Barnier,

as well as MEPs drawn from different political parties with a common interest in social economy. Euro Coop attended this hearing organised in support of 400 university professors and researchers whose overall aim was to call for concrete policies in support of cooperative and social enterprises.

CONSUMER POLICY



EUROPEAN CONSUMER CONSULTATIVE GROUP (ECCG)

Like previous year, Euro Coop attended all four meetings of the European Commission European Consultative Group. Basically, the Group dealt with ongoing/upcoming European initiatives of interest to consumers, namely negotiations on Consumer Rights Directive, European Contract Law Project, Single Market Act as well as the new consultation on Collective Redress. Members also focused on several additional dossiers such as origin marketing, health claims, Alternative Dispute Resolution.

Further to this, the Group exchanged views and opinions for improvements and correct implementation of consumer information and education tools developed at European level. Members also discussed on specific issues in line with the European market surveillance and consumer protection activities such as the revision of General Product Safety Directive. Last but not least, the Group made suggestions regarding the improvement of indicators of the Consumer Market Scoreboard.

TRANSATLANTIC CONSUMER DIALOGUE (TACD)

In 2010 Euro Coop actively participated in the Transatlantic Consumer Dialogue (TACD), which took place from 26th to 28th April in Washington. Euro Coop contributed to discussions focused on food policy, nanotechnology, climate change, intellectual property and financial services and information society. In particular, emphasis was given to the necessity to strengthen efforts to co-operate with the US in the fields of hygiene, marketing to children, obesity as well as sustainable consumption and production and climate change.

In addition to that, on 28th April Euro Coop participated in a conference entitled “Can Consumers Save the Planet from Climate Change? Achieving the Low-Carbon Economy: Consumer Challenges and Solutions”. Euro Coop took the opportunity to give a speech on the subject “Greening the market for consumers: the role of standards and regulation”, in which it highlighted the role that consumer co-operatives are playing in achieving sustainable consumption and production with particular regard to the standards they implement. More information on the event can be found at: <http://www.tacd.org>

CONSUMER RIGHTS DIRECTIVE

In 2010 the European Parliament's Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee started to debate on the highly controversial European Commission directive proposal on consumer rights.

Euro Coop carefully monitored the evolution of interinstitutional negotiations on this important legislative proposal that would consist in merging 4 existing directives related to unfair contract terms, sales and guarantees, distance selling and doorstep selling. From consumer perspectives, main focus was given to MEP Andreas Schwab (EPP, Germany) report on this dossier, which advocates maximum harmonisation for information requirements.

CREDIT EXCLUSION

On the 16th of March, Euro Coop intervened as an expert for Group III in the **Study group Accessing consumer and household credit: abusive practices** of the European Economic and Social Committee. Euro Coop contributed to the final opinion of the EESC.

CONSUMER SUMMIT



Euro Coop participated in the 2010 Consumer Summit, held in Brussels on 18-19 March. The Summit focused on services for consumers and in particular on access, fairness and choice. It was divided into six workshops: how can we help consumers to choose the right service provider; web 3.0: challenges and opportunities for consumers; bank account fees; car hire; green energy and urban transport.

HEALTHY AGEING

On the 18th of October, Euro Coop took an active part in the Consumers Workshop organised by the European Commission's Directorate General for Health and Consumer Policy in the context of a reflection on Healthy ageing.

This event consisted in three one-day workshops, each of them addressing a specific topic: adapting health systems to the future demographic; meeting the health needs of older people through innovations and technology and keeping older consumers active.

3. CO-OPERATIVE ACTIVITIES

HISTORY OF EURO COOP



Founded in 1957, Euro Coop has a long and rich history being one of the oldest nongovernmental organisations based in Brussels. In 2009, Euro Coop decided to commission a publication of its history to the Cooperative College (UK) to be able to better remember and preserve it.

“Together we are stronger: a celebration of Euro Coop” was issued in February 2010. An official presentation of the publication was organised on the 30th of March on the occasion of a cocktail reception followed by a dinner for Board members.

COOPERATIVES EUROPE

In 2010, Euro Coop maintained its membership of Cooperatives Europe and therefore continued to participate in the different structures of the organisation, including the General Assembly and Board. Euro Coop was active in the European Union Coordination Committee (EUCC) and the different working groups (state aid, accounting standards, etc.) thus dealing with several topics of interest to the whole of the European co-operative movement.



THE INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE ALLIANCE (ICA) AND CONSUMER CO-OPERATIVES WORLDWIDE (CCW)

In 2010, Euro Coop continued to provide secretariat support for CCW. Euro Coop, on behalf of CCW, participated in the meetings of the Sectoral Organisations Liaison Committee (SOLG) and its joint meetings with the ICA Governance Committee.



In 2010, Euro Coop started planning on the **UN International Year of Co-operatives 2012**. It gathered members' propositions of activities to be implemented throughout 2012 at national and international levels and a report will be presented in 2011.

FLARE INITIATIVE

The FLARE Initiative is a network of NGOs who fight against corruption and organised crime. Euro Coop supports the aims of this network, in particular the confiscation of assets from organised crime and their social reuse namely through co-operative enterprises.

On the International Anti-Corruption Day (9 December), Euro Coop attended the Conference **“Organised crime, corruption and illegal economies: confiscation and social reuse as a European countermeasure”** organised by the FLARE Network (Freedom, Legality and Rights in Europe) and Transparency International in the premises of the European Parliament. On that occasion, they asked the EU to adopt a directive to make social purposes of confiscation a juridical tool. The promoters of the initiative suggested that the measure should feature in the package of EU internal security strategy launched the month before.

On the following day, the Human Rights Day, Euro Coop also took part in the seminar **“Voices of human rights defenders”** organised by FLARE and Global Human Right Defence”.

EUROPEAN CITIZENS’ INITIATIVE

On the 18th of January, Euro Coop contributed to the European Commission’s consultation on a European Citizens’ Initiative²². Euro Coop welcomed this democratic right provided to the European citizens and advocated for a simple application of this right in order to stimulate such initiatives on the part of citizens.

²² http://www.eurocoop.coop/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=114:euro-coops-contribution-to-green-paper-on-a-european-citizens-initiative&catid=43&Itemid=168&lang=en

4. MEMBERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE



1) GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND BOARD MEETINGS

The General Assembly met in Florence on the 22nd of June. On that occasion the activity and financial reports of 2009 were adopted. The General Assembly also approved the budget and membership fees for 2011 and proceeded to the election of the Board members for the mandate 2011-2012. Mr. Aldo Soldi (ANCC Italy) was elected as President, Mr. Zoltán Zs. Szöke (AFEOSZ Hungary) and Mr. Thomas Bagge Olesen (FDB Denmark) were elected as Vice-Presidents. The other representatives to the Board were elected as proposed. Mr. Ralph Nicolaisen, a senior financial officer from KF Sweden, was nominated auditor unanimously.

The Board met two times in Brussels: on the 31st of March and on the 17th of November to discuss issues related to the administration of the association.

2) MEMBERSHIP

There were no changes in membership in 2010.

3) EURO COOP WORKING GROUPS

Euro Coop reformed its three existing Working groups. The Food Policy Working Group was transformed into the Food Retail Working Group and its areas of intervention for 2010 were labelling, health and nutrition, food security and food safety. The Environment Policy Working Group became the Sustainability Working Group but no major changes occurred regarding the topics. Finally, the Cooperative Enterprises Working Group is now known as the Co-operative Identity Working Group and had worked in 2010 on three main topics: co-operative governance, the co-operative legislation and the co-operative values and principles.

The Co-operative Identity Working Group met three times in 2010: on 21 January in Brussels, on 16 June in Barcelona and on 2 November in Brussels.

The Sustainability Working Group met three times in 2010: on 18-20 March in Oslo, on 3-4 June in Florence and on 28 October in Brussels.

The Food Retail working group met once in 2010: on 3 March in Brussels.

4) EURO COOP PRESIDENCY

Euro Coop presidency met four times in Brussels in 2010: on 9 February, 30 March, 25 May and 30 September. The President, the two Vice-presidents and the General Secretary had advanced discussions about the preparation of the Board meetings, as well as the General Assembly, the Conference of the 31st of March or the International Year of Co-operatives 2012 between other topics.

5) EURO COOP'S SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Euro Coop, as an organisation of the cooperative movement, develops its activities taking into account social responsibility criteria and the social responsibility indicators of the ICA that apply to an organisation of this nature:

PEOPLE

During 2010 the Secretariat maintained a stable and friendly working environment, strictly following all Belgium regulations regarding safety, health, employment and social rights regarding its staff. All employees have a permanent contract except for the first year of work. All interns develop their internship within the framework of an agreement between Euro Coop and their University and are covered by insurance and a monthly allowance.

PRODUCTS

In its purchases, the Secretariat privileges products which have sustainability logos such as organic (e.g. catering for meetings), eco-labelled (e.g. detergents, paper), Fair Trade (e.g. tea) or others. The Secretariat will progressively change its suppliers according to these criteria when possible.

ENVIRONMENT

In 2010 the Secretariat maintained the agreement with the Belgium NGO “CompenCO2” and made the offset of carbon emissions of all the travelling of its staff.



All recyclable materials (paper, plastic and glass) are collected separately and sent for recycling.

All electric and electronic equipment is purchased taking into account a high level of energy efficiency and is switched off when not in use.

DEMOCRACY

Euro Coop is a democratic organisation following the cooperative tradition – one member, one vote – independently of the amount of financial contributions. This principle applies to all of its governance and member participated structures.

5. PUBLICATIONS AND MEDIA



1) PUBLICATIONS

NEWSLETTER

Euro Coop published its monthly newsletter “Euro Coop Flash” containing relevant information for the members and external audiences on the key policy areas.

POSITION PAPERS, SPEECHES, REPORTS AND GENERAL PUBLICATIONS

During the year Euro Coop issued several documents such as position papers, press releases, letters, reports and others on the different policy fields.

These publications are available on our website: www.eurocoop.coop or, for a complete listing, by contacting the Secretariat.

WEBSITE

In 2010, Euro Coop revisited and redesigned its website to make it more accessible and interactive. The documents are now available in French, English and Italian. It is not only a source of information but a real working tool. Indeed, members can register to meetings and have access to meeting documents on-line and to all the reports and publications issued by Euro Coop.

2) CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

On 31 March, Euro Coop organised the conference “**Building a fair food retail market in Europe**” with the support of the Group III of the European Economic and Social Committee. The event highlighted the great expectations concerning the High Level Group – Food Supply Chain Forum future activity. The conference was also the occasion to urge the Commission to coordinate its services for delivering a European policy for food.

The conference on **Euro Coop members' participation** organised by Euro Coop and Hispacoop was held in Barcelona on 17-18 June. The aim of the conference was to enhance a greater co-operation between members and to exchange best practises.

On 17 November, Euro Coop organised in the premises of Copa-Cogeca the workshop "**Consumer Co-operatives' contribution to International Development**". The event was divided into two parts: the institutional framework for international development and the consumer co-operatives' contributions to international development.

Euro Coop also participated in numerous conferences organised by other organisations. For a complete list of attended events please contact the Secretariat.

3) EURO COOP IN THE MEDIA

During 2010, Euro Coop received large media cover on the vast majority of the issues it tackled, in particular by the specialised European press.

Articles about Euro Coop's activities and positions were printed in all the main European written press but also on national newspapers and specialised publications.

6. WHO'S WHO

1) DELEGATES TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PRESIDENT: MR. A. SOLDI, ANCC/COOP (IT)



Vice-Presidents

MR. T. BAGGE OLESEN, FDB (DK)



DR. Z. Zs. SZÖKE, AFEOSZ (HU)



MR	O.R	ANDERSEN, COOP NKL (NO)
MS	L.	BARANANO, HISPACOOOP (ES)
MR	F.	BOSCH, COOPCODIS, (NL)
MR	D.	BOWDLER, Co-OPERATIVE GROUP (UK)
MR	J-L.	CABRITA, FENACOOOP (PT)
MR	I.	CRISAN, CENTROCOOP (RO)
MR	G.	CSOLLAR, COOP JEDNOTA SLOVENSKO (SK)
MR	M.	FIEDLER, ZDK (DE)
MR	Z.	JURACKA, SCMSD (CZ)
MS	K.	KUSMIN, ETK (EE)
MR	L.	LINDE, KF (SE)
MR	P.	ARISTIDOU, ESEL-SPOLP (CY)
MS	A.	SANTAMAKI, SOK ASSOCIATION (FI)
MR	P.	STEFANOV, CCU (BG)

2) DELEGATES TO THE WORKING GROUPS

CO-OPERATIVE IDENTITY WORKING GROUP

Mr	R. Bagni, ANCC/COOP (IT)
Mr	F. Bejnoud, ZdK (DE)
Mr	K. Bull, Coop NKL (NO)
Ms	T. Djurina, CCU (BG)
Mr	S. Eklund, KF (SE)
Mr	R. Gill, The Co-operative Group (UK)
Ms	P. Gomes, Fenacoop (PT)
Mr	F. Martin, Hispacoop (ES)
Ms	H. Raininko, SOK Association (FI)
Ms	D. Tsakova, CCU (BG)

SUSTAINABILITY WORKING GROUP

Ms	G. Artabe Larraskitu, EROSKI (ES)
Mr	P. Baumann, KF (SE)
Mr	D. Bowdler, The Co-operative Group (UK)
Ms	C. Espada, Fenacoop (PT)
Ms	B. Dobрева, CCU (BG)
Ms	S. D. Frese, FDB (DK)
Mr	J. Ilmola, SOK Association (FI)
Mr	K. Lutnæs, Coop (NO)
Mr	F. Russo, ANCC/COOP (IT)

FOOD RETAIL WORKING GROUP

Ms	C. Higgs & Ms F. Woodhouse, The Co-operative Group, (UK)
Mr	T. Roland & Ms I. Husby, FDB (DK)
Ms	J. Pagalday, Eroski, (ES)
Ms	M. J. Lima, FENACOOP, (PT)
Mr	V. Ramazza, Coop Italia, (IT)
Ms	T. Luoma, SOK Association, (FI)
Ms	L. Malm, KF (SE)
Mr	T. H. Gundersen, Coop NKL, (NO)
Ms	I. Alexandrova, CCU, (BG)

7. EURO COOP MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

BULGARIA



C.C.U.

Central Cooperative Union
Rakovsky Street 99
BG -1000 Sofia

Site Web : <http://www.ccu-bg.com>

CYPRUS



ESEL-SPOLP LTD

Union of Limassol co-operative societies and
Cooperative supply organisation of Limassol-Paphos

Achaion 4
3022 Limassol
P.O. Box 50311
CY-3603 Limassol

<http://www.eands.com.cy>

CZECH REPUBLIC



Union of Czech and Moravian Consumer Cooperatives

U Rajske zahrady 3/1912
CZ - 130 00 Prague 3
<http://www.scmsd.cz>

DENMARK



FDB

Faellesfoeningen for Danmarks Brugsforeninger
Vallensbæk Torvevej 9
Dk-2620 Albertslund

<http://www.fdb.dk>

ESTONIA



Estonian Consumers Cooperatives

ETK

Eesti Tarbijateühistute Keskühistu
Kalda 7c
EE-11625 Tallinn
<http://www.etk.ee>

FINLAND



SOK Corporation

Suomen Osuuskauppojen Keskuskunta
Street address : Fleminginkatu 34, Helsinki Finland
Mailing address : P.O.Box 1, FIN 00088 S Group, Finland
<http://www.s-kanava.fi>

GERMANY



ZDK

Zentralverband deutscher Konsumgenossenschaften e.V.
Baumeisterstraße 2
DE-20099 Hamburg
<http://www.zdk.coop>

HUNGARY



AFEOSZ

National Federation of Consumer Co-operatives and Trade Associations (CO-OP HUNGARY)
Könyves Kálmán körút 11.
HU-1097 Budapest
<http://www.afeosz.hu>

ITALY



ANCC-COOP

Associazione Nazionale Cooperative di Consumatori-COOP
Via Guattani, 9
Palazzo delle Associazioni di settori, piano 4
IT-00161 Roma
<http://www.e-coop.it>

NETHERLANDS



Coop Nederland u.a.

Postbox 87
NL-6880 AB Velp
<http://www.coop.nl>

NORWAY



Coop Norge SA.

Box 1173 Sentrum
NO-0107 Oslo
Web-site : <http://www.coop.no>

PORTUGAL



FENACOOP

Federação Nacional Das Cooperativas de Consumidores, FCRL
Av. Santos Dumont, 57, 2º. Esq
PT- 1050-202 Lisboa
<http://www.consumo-pt.coop/>

ROMANIA



CENTROCOOP

National Union of Consumer Co-operatives
46-48 Calea Plevnei
Sector 1,
RO-010233 Bucharest
<http://www.centrocoop.com>

SLOVAK REPUBLIC



COOP Jednota Slovensko, s.d

Slovenská republika
sd, Bajkalská 25
SK - 827 18 Bratislava
<http://www.coop.sk>

SPAIN



HISPACOOP

Confederacion Espanola de Cooperativas de Consumidores y Usuarios
Calle Vallehermoso 15, 1º
ES-28015 Madrid
<http://www.hispacoop.es>

SWEDEN



KF

Kooperativa Förbundet
P.O. Box 15200
SE-10465 Stockholm 15
<http://www.kf.se>

UNITED KINGDOM

The **co-operative**

The Co-operative Group

New Century House
P.O. Box 53
UK - Manchester M60 4ES
<http://www.co-operative.coop/>

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