



GEC

Annual Plenary Meeting

Updates from the GE WG CoopsEurope

11 December 2024





Gender equality efforts in Europe

EU Policies

The **EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025** presents policy objectives and actions to make significant progress by 2025 towards a gender-equal Europe

The **EU Gender Action Plan III 2021-2025** aims to mainstream gender equality and women's empowerment in all areas of EU external action through a gender-transformative and intersectional approach

Cooperatives Europe is committed to fostering an inclusive and equitable environment for all in line with the core cooperative values and principles.

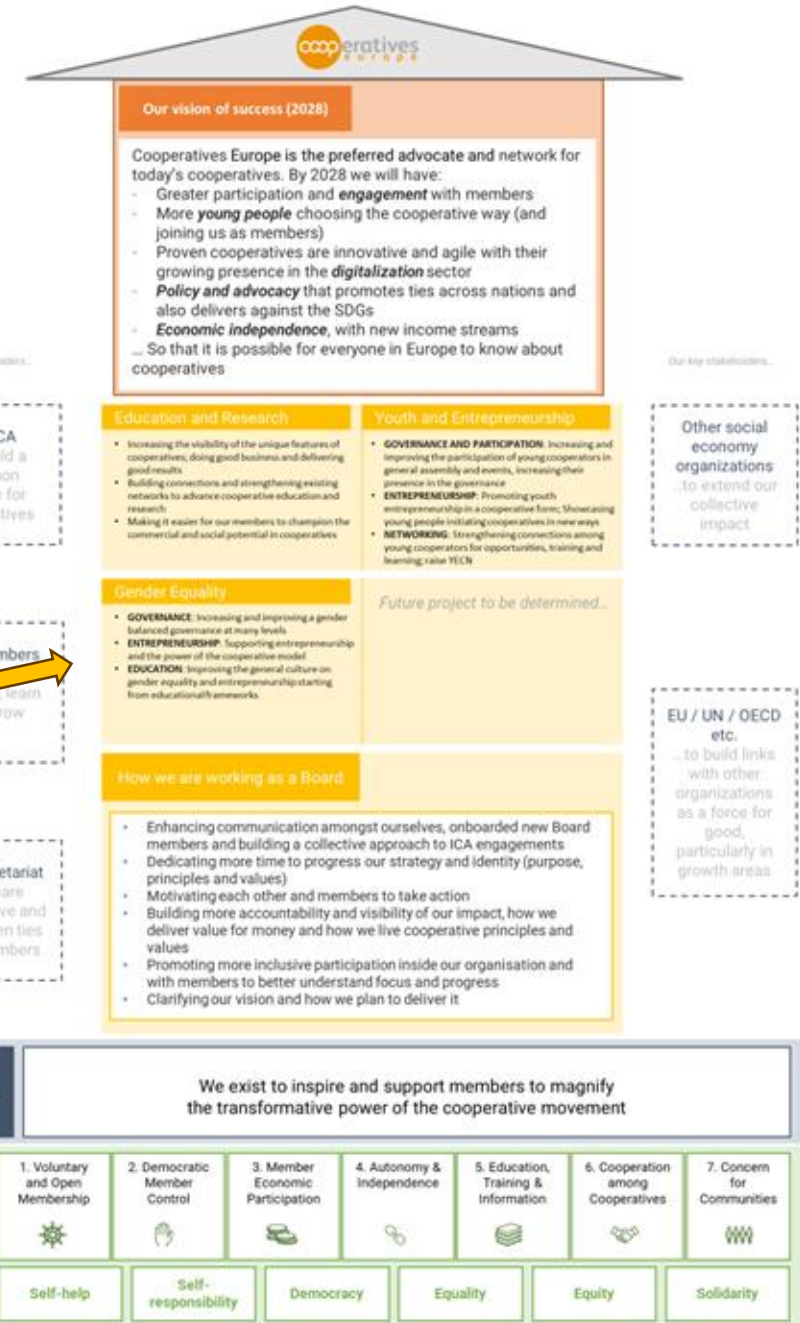
Cooperatives Europe's board has identified gender equality as one of its strategic working themes - "lighthouse".

In this thematic area, we work to ensure that all individuals, *regardless of their gender*, have equal opportunities to contribute to and benefit from cooperative enterprises.

How CE's Board works to achieve gender equality

Our goal: to make diversity and inclusion a tangible reality in all our actions and initiatives.

- **GOVERNANCE:** Increasing and improving a gender balanced governance at many levels
- **ENTREPRENEURSHIP:** Supporting entrepreneurship and the power of the cooperative model
- **EDUCATION:** Improving the general culture on gender equality and entrepreneurship starting from educational frameworks





Our main focus

*Cooperatives Europe **Gender Equality Charter** outlines our vision and concrete steps to address gender disparities.*

- Promoting **gender balance** within our organisation and the broader cooperative movement, across all levels of **decision-making**
- **Supporting initiatives** that empower women in cooperatives, prioritising **women-led cooperatives**
- Collecting and **improving accessibility** of best practices towards a **gender balanced participation**, including through resources and training to **cultivate a more inclusive cooperative culture**
- **Sharing experiences** on specific topics (*diversity management, work-life balance, people well-being, equality, women entrepreneurship in difficult situations, contrasting violence, etc.*), also in educational frameworks



Digital workshop: Gender balance in the governance

COOPERATIVES' ACTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

IMPROVING THE GENDER BALANCE IN BOARDS

WEBINAR
open

13 May 2024
10h-11:30h CEST

register
at coopseurope.coop/events

The graphic features a grid of 12 squares. Some squares contain portraits of diverse individuals, while others are solid colors in shades of orange, purple, and yellow. The Cooperatives Europe logo is visible in the top right corner of the graphic.

Format: focus group discussion

Target: Cooperatives Europe's Members who

- are dealing with gender (in)balance in their governance and boards
- are interested in learning from each other's good practices, finding common solutions and actions to be taken.

Other participants: EU Commission representatives, cooperators & other stakeholders.



What is happening in and around Europe to promote gender equality and cooperation?



I - Germany & Austria (DGRV in Europe)

The **DGRV**, the **German Association of Agricultural Cooperatives**, is launching a **network of female leaders** in agricultural companies (mainly cooperatives).

AIMS:

- to strengthen women in management positions in the cooperative sector and in the agricultural sector
- to create a strong network for exchange and mutual support.

The initiative follows successful work in both the Austrian and the South Tyrolean cooperative movements.



II - Germany (DGRV outside Europe - international cooperation)



Approach: a strong focus on supporting women and youth in cooperatives.

Financed by the German Ministry for Agriculture, a new project started in **Türkiye**.

Aim: to strengthen the role of women in agricultural cooperatives in selected provinces of Turkey.



III - Türkiye (collaboration with UN and governments)



Context: Türkiye is hosting more than 3.7 million Syrian refugees which makes it the host country with the largest refugee population in the world.

Partner: FAO Türkiye has been implementing the EU-funded project *"Building Resilience of Syrians under Temporary Protection and Host Communities in Türkiye through Supporting Socioeconomic Integration and Creating Livelihood Opportunities"* in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, with a large involvement of the Cooperative Movement.

AIM: *improving the skills of agriculture workers to increase their employment opportunities while promoting local integration and social cohesion.*



IV - Coops participating in FAO's FFS

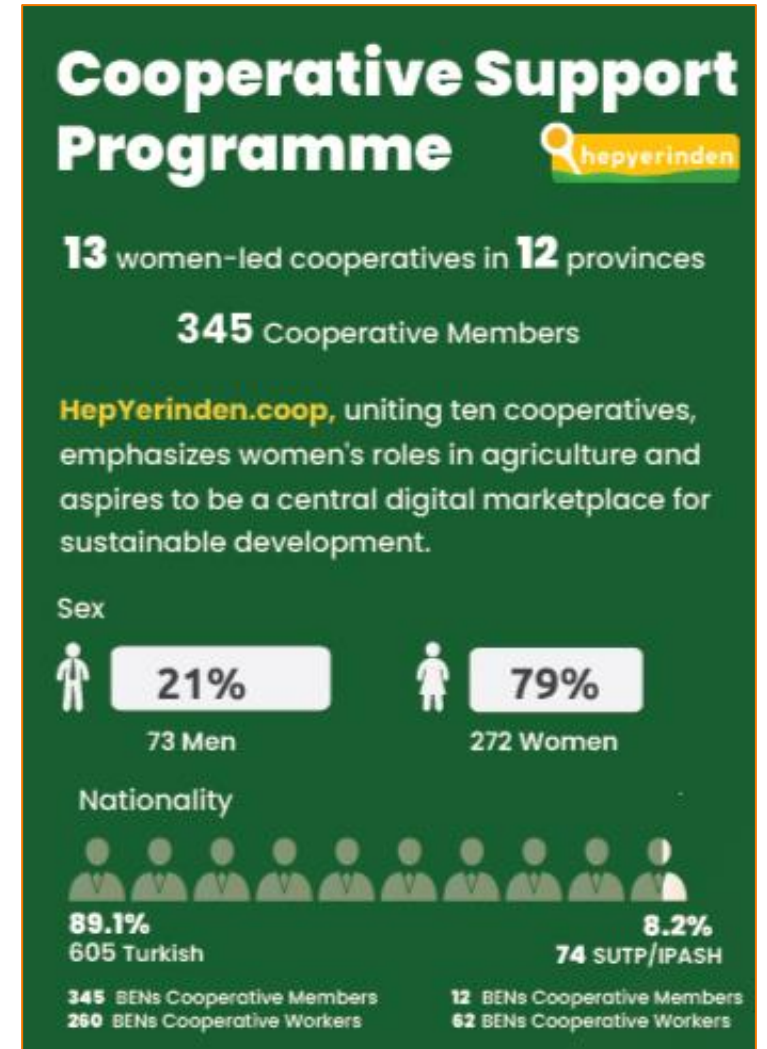
The FAO Farmer Field School is a non-formal learning method.

Aim: These “schools without walls” bring together experts, facilitators, master trainers and producers, and help them learn by working directly in the field, and solving the problems they encounter. It includes new agricultural technologies and more efficient usage of natural resources.



Result: 13 women-led local cooperatives received technical support on business development, marketing, and better and more efficient production methods.

To ensure the sustainability of their activity, the programme also helped the cooperatives develop **links with local and national markets.**





V - Italy (1)

The National Committee for cooperative managers of **Confcooperative** organized the **TRAINING: "Talented, Innovative women, attentive to conciliation"**

Work and training pillars:

- WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT & REPRESENTATION
- CONCILIATION TIMES
- LABORATORY

Results:

3 Editions, 40 hours, 60 women involved, mainly in the South of Italy

Final restitution workshop: 8 hours, 24 participants



The Equal Opportunities Committee in **Legacoop** promoted in November a **2-day discussion** and work on the topic of **"Gender equality, diversity and inclusion"** to open up dialogue with institutions, associations and organizations.

Format

- A first day of public discussion open to everyone,
- A day of **co-design laboratory** form with the members of the Equal Opportunities Committee.

Result: Discussion on the situation in the country, within the EU framework, of the regulations in force and to analyze tools, common strategies and good European and non-European practices.

V - Italy (2)

COMBAT GENDER VIOLENCE

National Campaign **#fattisentirecontro la violenza** ("speak out against violence") in the framework of the active and concrete path of the national campaign. - A new stage.

Publication of the national call Confcooperative Development Fund for cooperatives and against gender violence (25th November 2024) - Aims:

- To promote and support the presence of cooperative CAV (Anti-Violence centers), the management of anti-violence services and enhance interventions to support escapes from violence
- To organise knowledge and training activities for operators
- To support training, awareness and prevention activities.



V - Italy (3)

La Libellula awarded for their actions in «The Microcredit of Freedom», promoted by the National Microcredit Body together with the Department for Equal Opportunities

Aim: the social and financial inclusion of *women who have suffered violence*, acting on economic violence

Target: women assisted by anti-violence centers who would not easily find access to traditional bank credit to cover social or entrepreneurial expenses.

The “**La Libellula**” Anti-Violence Center in the center of Italy

- managed by the *Horizon Service Social Coop*
- awarded by the National Microcredit Body as the Anti-Violence Center which in Italy has well understood the potential of the freedom microcredit tool by promoting it among its beneficiary.



Pictures from the campaign «Silence is never neutral», with the participation of men



VI – Spain – Initiatives from Coceta

CAPSE PROGRAM - Collective Action for Parity in the Social Economy

Aim: COCETA is participating in the European project alongside other entities from the European social economy. The objective of this project is to achieve greater parity in the governance and leadership bodies of the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) in Europe.

Target: Women in the Social and Solidarity economy in Europe



The group of women leaders in the social economy:

This group has been created by the Ministry of Labor and Social Economy through the Special Commissioner for the Social Economy.

Aim: to highlight the important role of women at the highest levels of the social economy, leading companies and entities in the Social Economy, as well as to underscore the need to continue advancing toward effective equality in the business world of the social economy.

Target: Women Leaders in the Social and Solidarity economy in Europe



GE WG Next steps in 2025

- **Mapping** themes and partners at EU level
- **Communication**: statements and publications
- Membership **engagement**
- Practices for **self assessment for members** (how they are gender supportive? What each can share or improve)
- A series of **focus group events**: an open space for discussion and sharing
- Stronger focus on **gender in international cooperative development**

Thank you!

<https://coopseurope.coop/contact-us/>

