



European Commission

Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs

Fostering Europe's prosperity and industrial transformation:

Cooperatives as drivers of change

18 March 2025, Brussels

La Vallée, Rue Adolphe Lavallée 39, 1080 Brussels, Belgium

Initiated by the United Nations, the '[2025 International Year of Cooperatives](#)' represents a valuable opportunity to highlight the cooperative model on a global stage.

The event will feature several plenary sessions and workshops designed to foster dialogue among cooperatives representatives, academia, and policymakers about the role of cooperatives in promoting a more prosperous and sustainable economy in the European Union. [Further updates will be available on the website.](#)

Date: Tuesday 18 March 2025

Time: From 8:15 to 17:30 (CET)

Interpretation available during Plenaries in **English, French and Spanish**. Workshops in **English only**.

Metro: Line 1, 5 (Ribaucourt), 2 and 6 (Comte de Flandre)

Tram: 51 (Ribaucourt/Comte de Flandre)

Bus: 20, 51 (Comte de Flandre) and 86 (Ribaucourt/Comte de Flandre)

8:15-9:00	Welcome Coffee and Registration
9:00-9:40	Opening session <i>Main hall</i> Introduction by the Master of Ceremony, Filip De Rycke . <u>High-Level Panel:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Stephane Séjourné, Executive Vice-President of the European Commission for Prosperity and Industrial strategy [TBC]– Oliver Röpke, President of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)– Member of the European Parliament [TBC]– Petar Stefanov, President of Cooperatives Europe
9:40-10:00	Plenary <i>Main hall</i> Fireside chat - Resilience of the cooperative model in times of economic uncertainty, and environmental and social challenges, a researcher's perspective. <u>Moderator:</u> Filip de Rycke <u>Panellists:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Sybillie Mertens, Researcher, ULiège (Belgium)– Ifigeneia Douvitsa, Researcher, Hellenic Open University (Greece)
10:00-11:00	Parallel Workshops – Session 1

	<p>Getting the right skills for tomorrow <i>Room 1</i></p> <p>Scale-up and grow: Boosting Investment and finance opportunities <i>Room 2</i></p> <p>Clusters and Hubs: Uniting for Strategic Empowerment <i>Room 3</i></p>
11:00-11:30	Coffee Break
11:00-11:30	<p>Parallel Workshops – Session 2</p> <p>Boosting youth cooperative entrepreneurship <i>Room 1</i></p> <p>Exploring Opportunities with the European Cooperative Society <i>Room 2</i></p> <p>Innovation and Digitalisation: How can cooperatives lead the way? <i>Room 3</i></p>
12:30-14:00	Lunch
14:00-14:40	<p>Plenary <i>Main hall</i></p> <p>Fireside chat - How can public authorities support the development of cooperatives?</p> <p>Moderator: Filip De Rycke</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Timothée Duverger, Researcher, Territoires de l'ESS (TerrESS) Chair, Sciences Po Bordeaux (France) – Petri Honkonen, Member of the Finnish Parliament for Central Finland [TBC] – John Shine, Principal Officer, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Republic of Ireland
14:40-15:40	<p>Parallel Workshops – Session 3</p> <p>EU Reindustrialisation: Paving the way to a Net-Zero and Circular Economy <i>Room 1</i></p> <p>Advancing a Just Energy Transition: The role of Housing and Energy Cooperatives <i>Room 2</i></p> <p>Global Trade: The Cooperative Way <i>Room 3</i></p>
15:40-16:00	Coffee Break
16:00-16:45	<p>Plenary session <i>Main hall</i></p>

	<p>What future for cooperatives in the European Union? A dialogue with stakeholders.</p> <p>Moderator: Filip De Rycke</p> <p><u>Panellists:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Giuseppe Guerini, President of CECOP and Member of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) - Anna Loscalzo, President of the Young European Cooperative Network (YECN) - Lennart Nilsson, President of the General Confederation of Agricultural Cooperatives (COGECA)
16:45-17:00	<p>Closing session</p> <p><i>Main hall</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agnieszka Dziemianowicz-Bąk, Minister of Family, Labour, and Social Policy of the Republic of Poland [TBC] - Hubert Gambs, Deputy Director General, DG GROW - Simel Esim, Head of Cooperative & Social and Solidarity Economy Unit, International Labour Organisation (ILO)
17:00-17:15	<p>Musical performance – Chamber Music for Europe</p> <p><i>Main hall</i></p>