



AUTHORITY FOR COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES

THE ROLE AND THE CONTRIBUTION OF COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES IN SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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DEFINITION OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

According to the SBI (SEC(2011)1278), a social enterprise is “an operator in the social economy whose main objective is to have a social impact rather than make a profit for their owners or shareholders. It operates by providing goods and services for the market in an entrepreneurial and innovative fashion and uses its profits primarily to achieve social objectives. It is managed in an open and responsible manner and, in particular, involves employees, consumers and stakeholders affected by its commercial activities.”

UN AGENDA 2030

- The Agenda 2030 was voted by the UN General Assembly in September, 2015
- It includes 17 sustainable development objectives
- Incorporates in a balance way 3 dimensions of sustainable development
 - economic
 - social
 - environmental

COOPERATIVE IDENTITY

- Definition of Cooperative Societies
- Cooperative Principles
- Cooperative Values

DEFINITION OF COOPERATIVE SOCIETY

“An autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically controlled enterprise”.
(adopted in 1995 by the International Cooperative Association -ICA)”

COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES

- Voluntary and open membership
- Democratic member control
- Member economic participation
- Autonomy and independence
- Education, training and information
- Cooperation among cooperatives
- Concern for the communities

COOPERATIVE VALUES

- Democracy
- Equality
- Justice
- Solidarity
- Self-help
- Self-responsibility

The Charter of Principles of the Social Economy

The Charter of Principles of the Social Economy promoted by Social Economy Europe underlines the following defining features of social economy organizations:

- The primacy of the individual and the social objective over capital.
- Voluntary and open membership.
- Democratic control by membership (does not concern foundations as they have no members).
- The combination of the interests of members/users and/or the general interest.
- The defense and application of the principle of solidarity and responsibility.
- Autonomous management and independence from public authorities.
- Most of the surpluses are used in pursuit of sustainable development objectives, services of interest to members or the general interest.

THE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT

The following statistical data are included in the bulletin of the Research Service of the European Parliament published in February, 2019:

- approximately 3 million cooperative societies, worldwide, are active in doing business;
- together, they offer jobs to more than 280 million people (approximately, 10% of the total population worldwide)

THE COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

The following statistical data are also included in the bulletin of the Research Service of the European Parliament published in February 2019:

- approximately 4,3 million people in the European Union (EU) are employed by 131.000 cooperative societies, which are doing business among the Member-States and have a total turn-over of 992 billion euro;
- 123 million members of cooperative societies constitute more than 1/4 of the total population of the European Union.

RECOGNITION OF THE COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES' SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION AT INTERNATIONAL & EUROPEAN LEVEL

- From time to time, the Cooperative Societies' social contribution has been recognized by different International and European Institutions, such as the United Nations, the European Commission, the European Parliament, etc., through a series of various communications, conclusions, resolutions, recommendations, opinions, reports and others.
- Some of the important economic and social aspects that cooperative societies contribute are the following:
 - elimination of poverty,
 - creation of full and productive employment,
 - promotion of local economy and social development,
 - strengthening social inclusion, and
 - equitable and sustainable globalization without exclusions.

Declaration of 2012 by UN as the International Year of Co-operatives

- The declaration of 2012 by the United Nations, as the International Year of Co-operatives is an acknowledgement of the timeless contribution of co-operatives to humanity.
- The ex Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki Moon, presenting the International Year of co-operatives at the General Assembly, stated: "*Cooperative societies are a reminder to the international community that it is feasible to achieve both **economic sustainability and social responsibility***".
- The resolution of the General Assembly and the explanatory report of the Secretary-General note the contribution of cooperatives to the societies of the States and clearly emphasize the need to support the cooperative Institution by all UN Member-States.

Need for more than one business model

It has undoubtedly been proven that the global economy needs more than one business model and company structure in order to ensure a more balanced and a more sustainable model of economic and social development. It has also been proven that the cooperative Institution can serve both business and social objectives in a mutually supportive way.

THE COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES IN CYPRUS - 110 YEARS CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY

The cooperative societies in Cyprus contribute to the extent of their size and their potential in the broader social activity as follows:

- promoting female and youth entrepreneurship,
- tackling urbanism in rural and remote areas,
- providing goods and services of good quality and low cost, particularly for the benefit of economic vulnerable groups of the population,
- facilitating farmers to promote their products to the market without the need of intermediaries, as well as the creation of jobs, particularly for vulnerable groups and broadly to the reduction of unemployment.

ACTION PLAN BY THE AUTHORITY OF COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES

- The modification and revision of the cooperative legislation in order to make it more effective and supportive.
- The participation of the Authority in EU and other competitive co-financed programmes in promoting the cooperative sector in Cyprus.
- The promotion of cooperative culture and practice to young people through various means, including the educational system.
- The coordination of cooperative training programmes addressed to young people who are out of education, training or work (NEETs) through the participation of cooperative societies ,
- The support of establishment coop start-ups in innovative and other economic and social sectors.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
ATTENTION**

