Towards Harmonized Statistics of Cooperatives and Other Social and Solidarity Economy Organizations

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Why is it important to produce statistics on Coops and the SSE?

Important part of the economy (± 10% of employment)
Important roles: market failures; internalization of social costs; collective and trust goods and services; accessibility to marginalized people; job creation; responsible and long-term asset management; democratization of local development; innovative role responding to new needs (recovery and recycling, renewable energy, food security); etc.

However difficult to prove without empirical evidence
Statistics are needed to justify public support and to calibrate policy in support of cooperative and SSE development

What is not counted does not count.
Why do we need specific tools for Coop and SSE measurement?

Part of the economy, but also a different form of economy
Enterprises and organizations at the service of needs and aspirations of peoples and their communities who democratically control them
Specific economic behaviour, buying at fair price, selling at cost price, creating quality jobs… prior to making profits
More equitable distribution of wealth: people and communities first

Statistics = Standards for measuring and comparing phenomenon
Questions: What should be counted? What should it be compared to?

“Everything that counts cannot necessarily be counted.”
Albert Einstein
Growing interest for statistics on cooperatives and other SSE organizations
Background

Many countries lack harmonized data on cooperatives and other SSE organizations
- Various definitions and methodologies
- Diversity of economic and political contexts
- Different traditions, legal and administrative frameworks
- Difficulty to compare or aggregate data
- Under the radar of national statistics offices (NSOs)

International interest for measuring cooperatives and the SSE
- Importance of measurement for mutual and public recognition, and for public policy
- Recommendations ICA, ILO, UNTFSSE, European Parliament, European Commission, GECES, etc.
- Significant work over the past decades CICOPA, CIRIEC, Euricse, ICA, ILO, COPAC, UNSD, UNRISD, etc.
International Mappings

Nonprofit and voluntary organizations
- 1991 Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project

Social economy as a family of organizations
- 1997 Eurostat Report on the Cooperative, Mutualist and Associative Sector in Europe

Cooperative as a specific form of organization
- Since 2012 ICA Euricse World Coop Monitor
- 2014 Global Census on Cooperatives

Social enterprise
- 2014 & 2017 EC Mappings of Social Enterprises in the European Union
Conceptual frameworks

Nonprofit and voluntary organizations
- 2003 UN Handbook on Nonprofit Institutions in the System of National Accounts

Social economy as a family of organizations

Cooperative as a specific form of organization
- 2018 ILO Guidelines for statistics concerning cooperatives

Nonprofit and voluntary extended to some social economy organizations
- 2018 UN Satellite Account on Nonprofit and Related Institutions and Volunteer Work
Entities Covered by Frameworks

- Cooperatives & Mutual societies
- Collective "social enterprises"
- Nonprofit associations & Foundations
- Non collective "social enterprises"
- Voluntary work
ILO Conceptual framework and guidelines for statistics of cooperatives
Stepping stones towards ICLS and ILO adopting Guidelines

In 2002, ILO adopted the *Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation* (No. 193), stating that national policies should “seek to improve national statistics on cooperatives with a view to the formulation and implementation of development policies” (ILO, 2002).

In 2013, the 19th ICLS adopted the *Resolution concerning further work on statistics of cooperatives* (ILO, 2013a).

Follow-up work by the ILO and partners included global mapping of cooperative statistics in sixty-nine countries (Galhardi, 2016), eleven country case studies (Eum, 2016a; Carini et al., 2017), as well as use of statistics on cooperatives in national policy making (ILO, 2017a).

In 2016, the UN COPAC formed a Technical working group on cooperative statistics.

In 2017, the ILO published a *Conceptual framework on cooperative statistics*.

In 2018, the ICLS adopted the *Guidelines concerning statistics of cooperatives*. 
From legal to conceptual definition

Legal definition of a cooperative
“A cooperative is defined as 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." ILO Recommendation 193.

Conceptual definition of a cooperative
- Enterprise with legal identity and specific functioning principles
- Member-based organization with a shared identity of members-users
- Specific objectives and functions related to members-users needs and aspirations

ILO 2017, Adapted from Fauquet 1935 and Vienney 1980
From conceptual to operational definition

Structural-operational criteria

- **Association of members**: Membership of the cooperative should be voluntary and non-restrictive

- **Enterprise**: A cooperative should be a formally established institutional unit (non-financial corporation, financial corporation or non-profit institution)

- **Ownership**: A cooperative should be controlled democratically by its members according to the principle that each member has an equal vote

- **Usage**: Distribution of profits or surpluses among the members is not directly linked to the capital contributed by each member

Types of cooperatives based on member’s main interest

- **Producer cooperative**: production activity
- **Worker cooperative**: work
- **Consumer cooperative**: consumption
- **Multi-stakeholder cooperative**: more than one interest
Specific economic functions of cooperatives

Examples of cooperatives’ functions:
Maximize the value of members’ products, services or savings
Minimize intermediation costs for members’ purchases of products, services or loans
Insure the availability and reduce risk to members of managed resources or held assets
Core entities and hybrids

Source: adapted from ILO 2017, inspired by Desroche 1983 and Bouchard et al. 2008
Further work
### Ongoing and upcoming work

#### Cooperatives
- Testing of Guidelines (ILO)
- International Handbook on Cooperative Statistics (ILO)
- World Cooperative Monitor (ICA & Euricse)

#### Social and solidarity economy
- Current state practices for SSE statistics
- Mapping of mappings of SSE
- Policy recommendations (UNTFSSSE, UNRISD & CIRIEC)

#### Conceptual advances
- Limited lucrativity (EESC)
- Sustainable Development Goals (UNTFSSSE, UNRISD)
List of main references


ILO 2018, Guidelines concerning statistics of cooperatives, ICLS, Geneva


UNTFSSE/ UNRISD upcoming 2020, Bouchard M. J. & G. Salathé-Beaulieu, Current state of practices in producing statistics on SSE; Sak, B., C. Compère, J. Shoenmakers, Mapping of SSE mappings; Chaves, R., Policy recommendations for SSE statistics, Geneva
THANK YOU
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