CICOPA

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION OF
INDUSTRIAL AND SERVICE COOPERATIVES

A portrait of **CICOPA Network:**

A data-driven overview of industrial and service cooperatives (2022-2023)

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Published in January 2026
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Methodological Note

This report is based on data collected from **31 of the 46 CICOPA members** who responded to the quantitative survey between 2022 and 2023. The survey collected quantitative data on cooperatives affiliated with national federations that are CICOPA members, as well as on individual cooperatives that are directly affiliated with CICOPA.

In addition, secondary data from **42 of the 46** targeted members are considered, including information from members' websites, reports on activities, national statistics, and other sources. The accuracy of this data has consistently been verified by members.

The report presents data from the **28 countries**, including Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brasil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, Colombia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, India, Iran, Italy, Japan, Malta, Paraguay, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Romania, Spain, Tanzania, the United Kingdom, the United States, Uruguay, and Vietnam.

As CICOPA members have very heterogeneous data, this report attempts to provide an overview of the most consistent and reliable data received. All the data collected were compiled and aggregated where possible; details can be found in the footnotes. Due to the absence of a relevant breakdown, figures from Iran have not been included in the overall figures, but additional information has been provided to explain them.

Prior to this one, CICOPA published its last data collection report in 2017 [1]. Since then, the methodology for data collection and analysis and the network itself have changed. Therefore, we consider that the numbers are not totally comparable. However, some of the trends identified in previous reports are also visible in the data collected for this report. This allows us to revisit some of the considerations made in 2017 and apply them to our current analysis.

Finally, while the data collected in this report are limited to CICOPA membership, there is evidence that cooperatives in the industry and service sectors are present in larger numbers around the world.

1. Industrial and Service Cooperatives: Global Report 2015-2016 (CICOPA, 2017)

Terminology

The cooperatives for which data were collected have been regrouped into three main categories, as defined by CICOPA:

1

Worker cooperatives are democratically managed and owned by the workers. Refer to the definition given in the World Declaration on Worker Cooperatives for further clarification [2].

2

Social cooperatives have as their primary mission to provide goods and services of general interest (social, cultural, educational, or environmental). Many social cooperatives provide work integration as a service of general interest, regardless of the types of goods or services they produce. Refer to the World Standard of Social Cooperatives for further clarification.

3

Cooperatives of self-employed producers' or referred to as shared-services cooperatives. They are also defined as artisans, freelancers, cooperatives of independent producers/workers according to the identity of the producers/members.

2 This report considers labour cooperatives, which are present in large numbers in India and the Philippines, as a subgroup of worker cooperatives, as identified in the Report on Cooperatives in the Industrial and Service Sectors in the Asia-Pacific Region (ICA Asia Pacific and CICOPA, 2019). Additionally, this report considers producer cooperatives, as defined in the most recent 'Industrial and Service Cooperatives: Global Report 2015-16 (CICOPA, 2017), to be considered either as a subgroup of worker cooperatives or as self-employed producers.

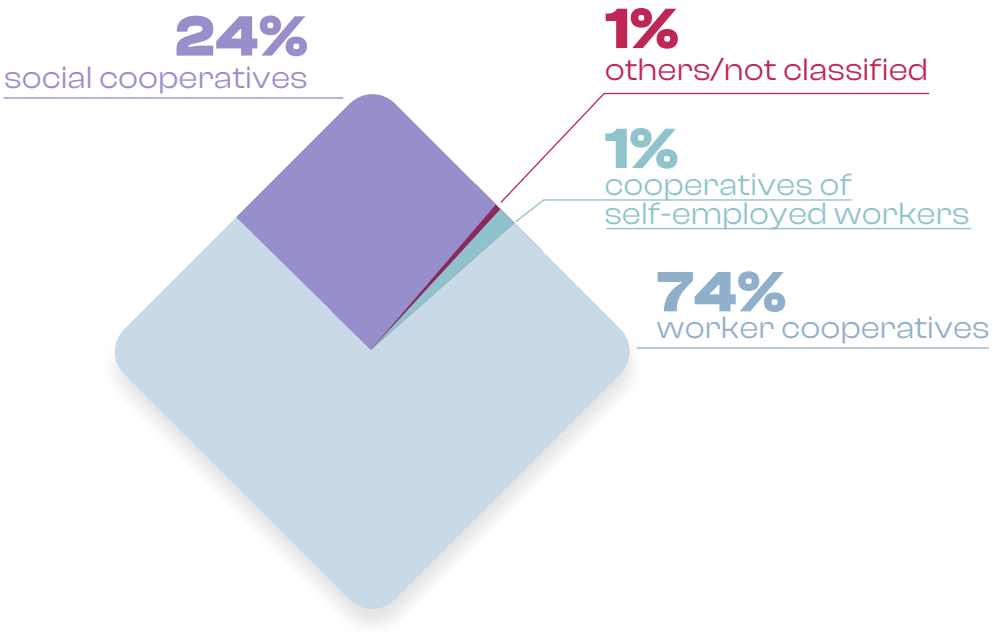
CICOPA Network: Main Figures

CICOPA represents approximately **52.767 cooperatives** across the world [3].
The CICOPA network comprises a diverse range of cooperatives, operating in various sub-sectors of industry and services, with varying sizes, locations, memberships and workforces.

Most cooperatives affiliated with CICOPA's members are **worker cooperatives (74%)** and **social cooperatives (24%)**. Additionally, there is a modest but growing number of cooperatives composed of self-employed workers [4].

Within the CICOPA network, cooperatives employ over **2.1 million workers**[5].
A significant proportion of these employees, 76%, are workers-members. This means that they are members and co-owners of their enterprise and have an active role in the governance and control of major entrepreneurial and financial decisions[6].

Typology of cooperative



3. The data reported in this chapter does not include cooperatives affiliated with the Iranian Chamber of Cooperatives (ICC), for reasons explained in the methodological note. Please refer to the Focus Window for information on cooperatives in Iran's industry and service sectors. **4.** There is evidence that the number of self-employed producers' cooperatives is higher. However, the ways in which national laws define self-employment change from country to country and in many countries, they are simply identified as worker cooperatives, making it difficult to have specific data on this typology. **5.** The data presented here is based on the responses of all the 42 organisations for which data could be collected directly via the survey or via secondary sources. **6.** The data presented here is based on the responses of 24 of the 31 organisations surveyed, complemented with secondary data from 4 organisations. The percentage therefore was calculated considering the answer of those who provided complete information.

52.767 cooperatives

2.1 million workers

90% SMEs

around **90% of cooperatives** are small and medium enterprises[7].

769 workers buyout

769[9] cooperatives are the result from workers buyouts of existing enterprises (either after bankruptcy, liquidation or business succession).

444 secondary cooperatives

444 are secondary cooperatives, meaning cooperatives in which members are, in turn, cooperatives.

85b turnover[8]

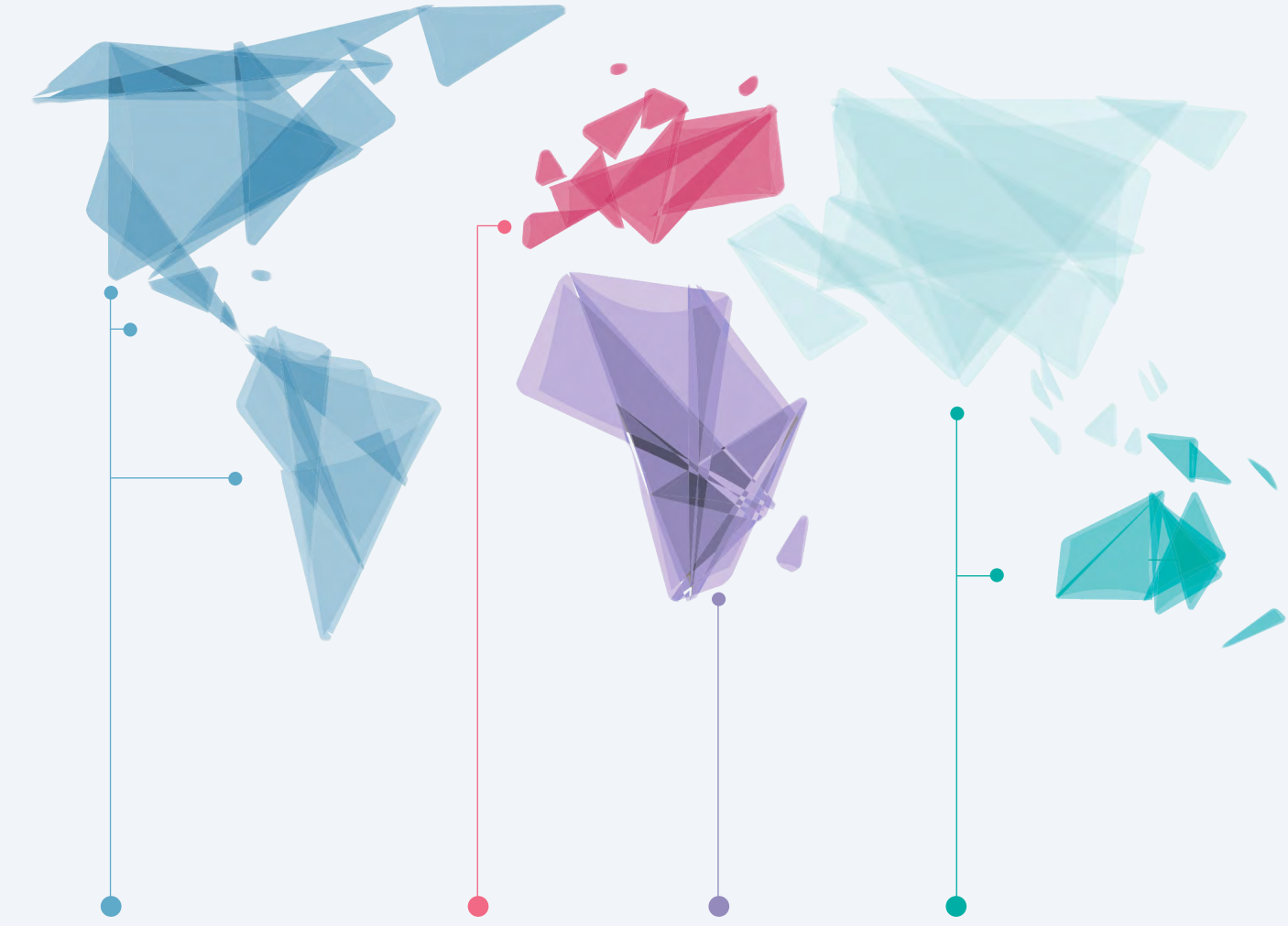
Focus Window - IRAN

In addition to the general figure, a separate consideration must be done for data coming from Iran. The iranian Chamber of Cooperatives (ICC) alone counts 67,550 cooperatives active in the industry and services sectors and 520,742 workers employed in these cooperatives.

7. Respondents were asked to provide this information based on the definition of small and medium enterprises in their country. 8. The data presented here is based on the responses of 29 of the 42 organisations for which data could be collected directly via the survey or via secondary sources. 9. Countries that provided the data on worker buyouts are Argentina, Australia, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, France, Italy and United States. However, we know this phenomenon is present also elsewhere

Geographical Redistribution

When considering the geographical distribution of cooperatives in industry and services, excluding those from Iran, Europe represents the largest share.
Although cooperatives in the Asia-Pacific region remain modest in number, membership of CICOPA from the region has increased considerably in recent years. A lack of data negatively impacts the numbers from the Americas and Africa. Additionally, the small number of industrial and service cooperatives in Africa is explained by the low number of CICOPA members from the region.



7,1%
North and South Americas

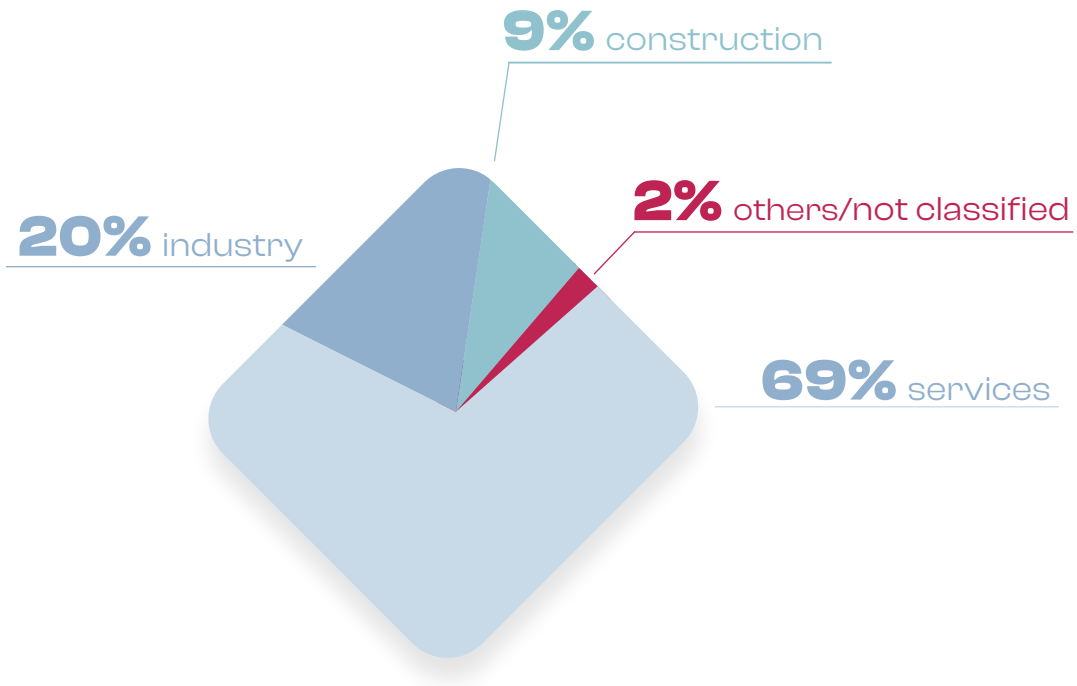
81,4%
Europe

0,2%
Africa

11,3%
Asia and Pacific

Our Cooperatives at Work: Key Sectors

The CICOPA network comprises a diverse range of cooperatives active in industry and services, operating in various economic activities[10].



The majority of cooperatives in CICOPA's network operate in the **service sector (69%)**, while **20% are in the industry sector** and **9% are in construction**.

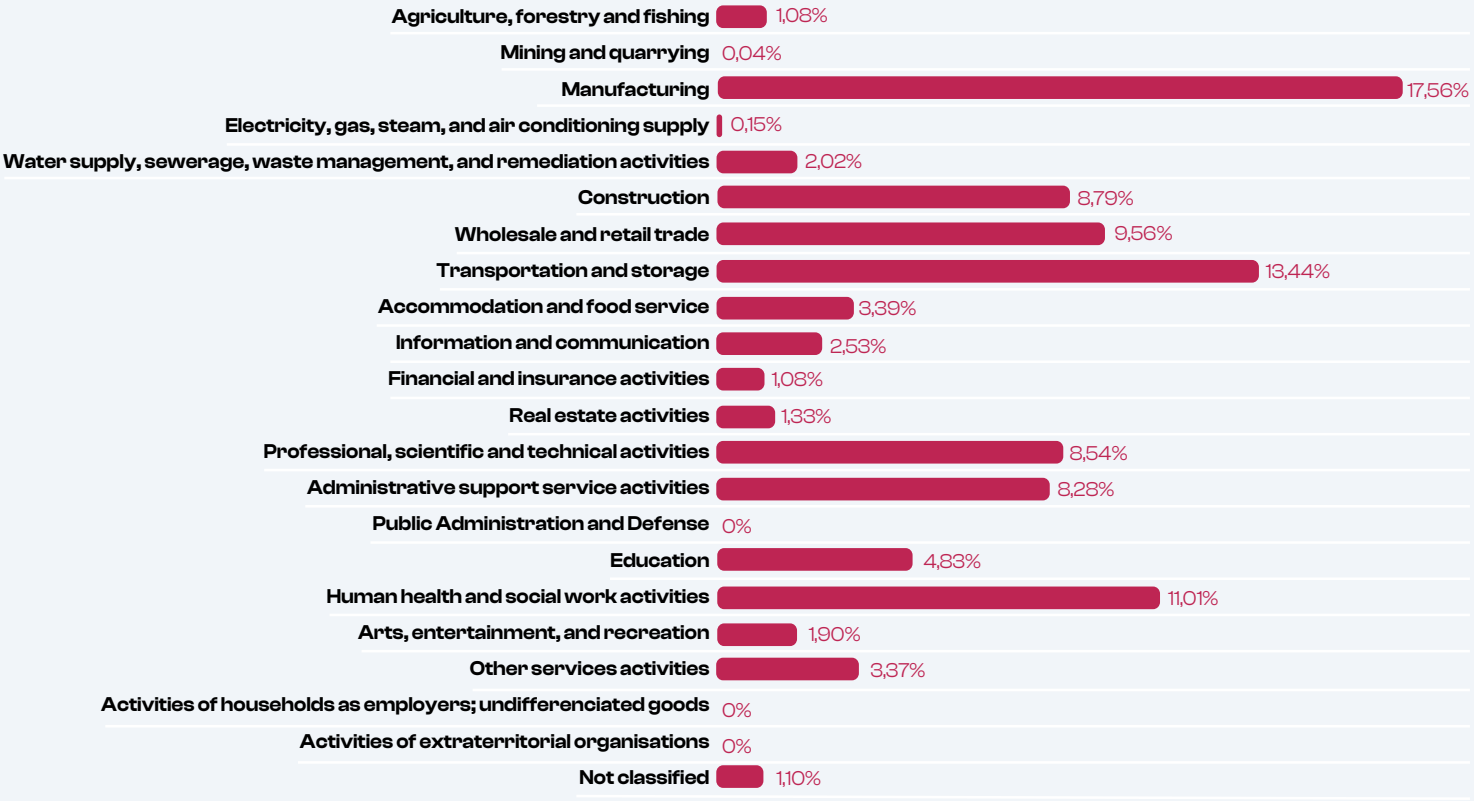
The service and industrial sectors are highly diverse in terms of economic activities, as illustrated in the graph 'sector details' in the next page.

When we compare the current trends with those identified by CICOPA in 2017, we see that there has been an increase in the service sector (+10%) and a considerable decrease in industry and construction (-12.9%)[11]. While this can be partly explained by changes in CICOPA's membership, it also reflects a broader economic shift towards an expanding services sector, confirming a trend that CICOPA already identified in 2017.

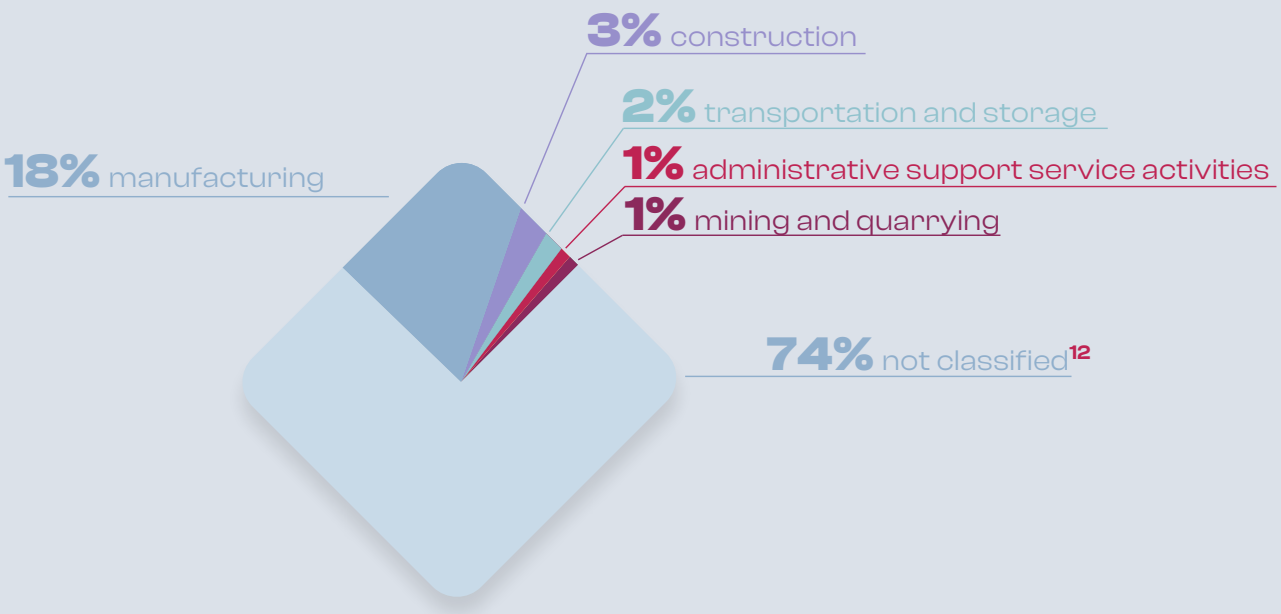
In addition, IT and environmental-related activities were identified as newly emerging sectors in 2017. While it is not possible to compare data, the trend of recognising these as growing sectors seems to continue.

10. The data reported in this chapter does not include cooperatives affiliated with the Iranian Chamber of Cooperatives (ICC), for reasons explained in the methodological note. A classification by sector of Iranian cooperatives, where possible, was done separately in the focus window. **11.** Industrial and Service Cooperatives: Global Report 2015-2016 (CICOPA, 2017)

Sector details



Focus window: Iranian cooperatives sectoral classification



12. The non-classified cooperatives are active mostly in the service sector and in particular: wholesale and retail trade, information and communication, administrative and support service activities, arts, entertainment and recreation, education, professional scientific and technical activities.

Stable, Inclusive and Empowering Workplaces

By their very nature, the cooperatives in CICOPA's network work towards achieving equity and inclusion in the workplace. This is linked to the core values of worker cooperatives, which prioritise the interests and satisfaction of their workers, and to the mission of social cooperatives, which focus specifically on vulnerable workers. Although incomplete, some interesting data has been collected regarding the representation of disabled people, women and young people.

People with disabilities

In Bulgaria and the Czech Republic, 33% of workers employed with our members' cooperatives are people with disabilities.

Women

In some countries, more than half of the workers in cooperatives affiliated with our members are women:

% of female workers

Most of these women are also members of the cooperative, as well as being workers. In France, 70% of female workers are members of their cooperatives, compared to 66% and 55% in Italy and the Czech Republic respectively. This means that they play an active role in the governance and control of the enterprise.

When it comes to female representation in the cooperative governing bodies, the percentage of women represented varies significantly from country to country. For example, it is high in Romania (67%) and Spain (54%), but low in Italy (40%), France (30%) and the Czech Republic (30%).

Focus window - INDIA

The SEWA Cooperative Federation, India, has the mission to empower through work women in the informal sector. The Federation represents 67 women-led cooperatives employing more than 7.000 women worker - members. This means that the women own and manage the cooperative they are employed in.

Being aware of the general gender gap at the workplace, many of our member organisations, national federations, have implemented programs and organisational structures designed to empower, promote, and encourage women in leadership roles.

Youth

The limited data available on the representation of young people among workers in cooperatives in our network confirms the intergenerational gap that many of our members have identified as one of the cooperative movement's main future challenges. In Belgium, Japan and India, the average percentage of young people employed in cooperatives is around 18%[13].

Notably, the ULSCC in the Philippines reports that 95% of worker members in its affiliated cooperatives are young people.

72,8%
long-term contract

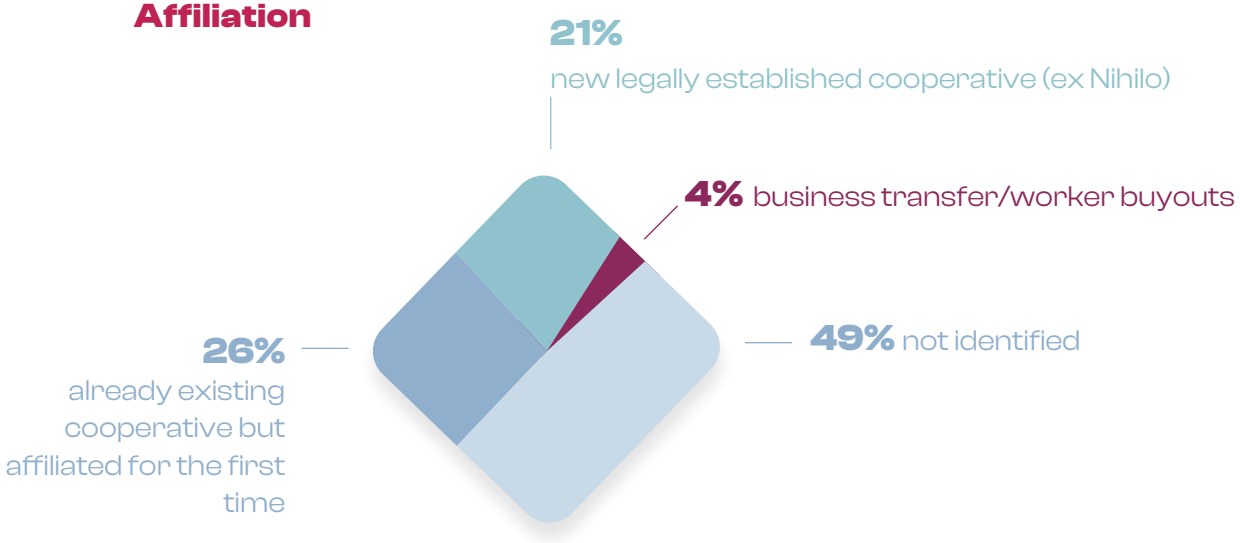
On average, **72.8% of work contracts signed by affiliated European cooperatives are long-term,** confirming that cooperatives provide secure jobs with full access to social security and rights.[14]

13. JWCU, Japan (30%), SMART, Belgium (15%), SEWA, India (10%) **14.** The data presented here is based on the responses of 15 of the 31 organisations surveyed.

Membership Movement: Affiliation and Disaffiliation

Cooperation among cooperatives is key. Affiliating a federation means benefitting from solidarity mechanisms and mutualistic instruments proper to the cooperative movement. Member organisations help their affiliated cooperatives by advising, supporting, developing and representing them vis-à-vis public authorities and other partners.

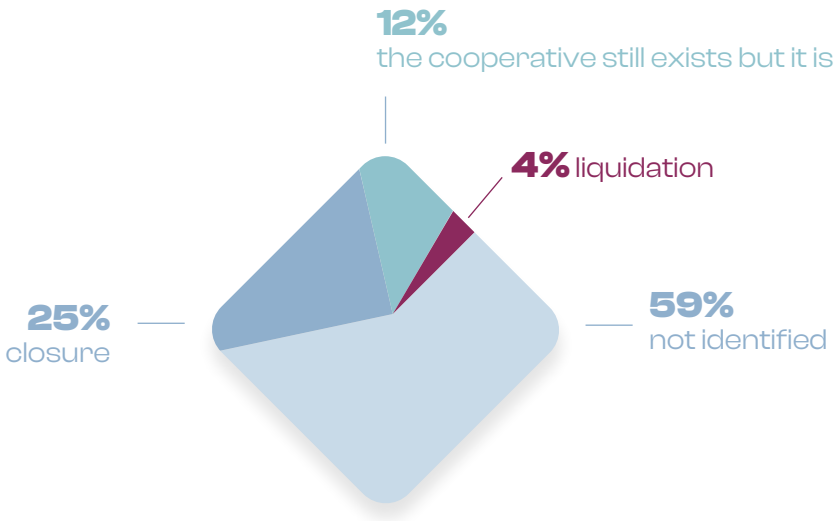
Affiliation



In 2022-2023, approximately 25% of the newly affiliated cooperatives with CICOPA's members are either the result of newly created cooperatives (21%) or of workers buyouts (4%)[15].

Although data reporting the reasons for cooperatives to disaffiliate is only partially available, it shows that most cases occur due to the closure or liquidation of cooperatives rather than dissatisfaction with the federation.

Disaffiliation

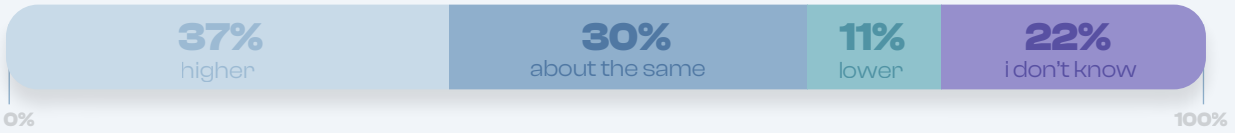


15. The data presented here is based on the responses of 24 of the 31 organisations surveyed.

Economic and Employment Outlook: Trends and Future Prospects

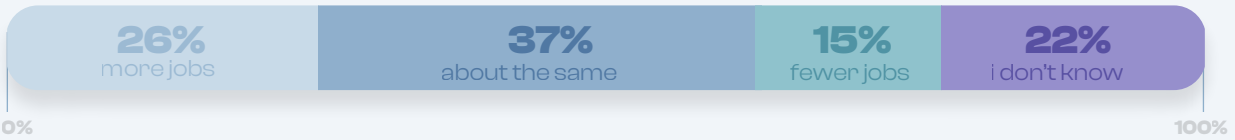
When asked to evaluate the **economic situation** of their affiliated cooperatives, **67% of members** report that their cooperatives are doing better or the same than they did before 2022-2023.

HOW DO YOU EVALUATE THE ECONOMIC SITUATION (PRODUCTION AND SALES) OF YOUR AFFILIATED COOPERATIVES IN THIS FINANCIAL YEAR, COMPARED TO THE PREVIOUS?



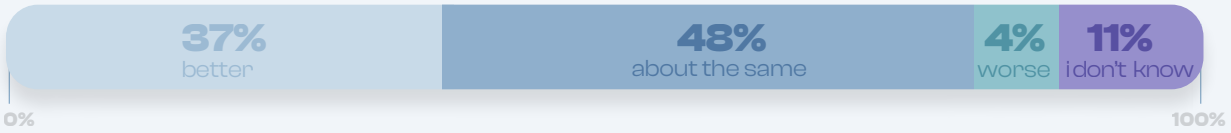
Around 63% of members consider that the employment situation of their cooperatives was higher or stable in 2022-2023 compared to previous years.

HOW DO YOU EVALUATE THE EMPLOYMENT SITUATION OF YOUR AFFILIATED COOPERATIVES IN THIS FINANCIAL YEAR, COMPARED TO THE PREVIOUS?

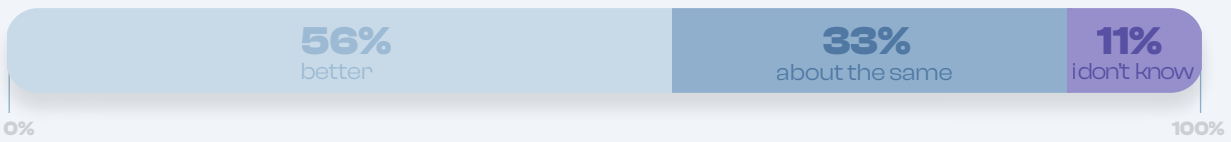


Most of our members expect stability in the future (85%). 37% of them even believe that the economic situation will improve. **89%** consider cooperatives' visibility will be better or stable.

DO YOU EXPECT THE ECONOMIC SITUATION OF YOUR AFFILIATED COOPERATIVES TO BE BETTER OR WORSE IN THE NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR?



DO YOU EXPECT THE VISIBILITY AND RECOGNITION OF YOUR AFFILIATED COOPERATIVES TO BE BETTER OR WORSE IN THE FUTURE?



When compared with data from the 2017 report (which referred to the years 2015–2016), members provided a more optimistic analysis than in previous years. However, they did not provide additional information to help interpret their views on current and future economic prospects.

Despite the negative socio-economic features of 2022-2023 (inflation, rising input and energy costs, supply-chain disruptions, instability in global value chains, higher interest rates, wars, etc.), members report stability for that period and into the future. Cooperative resilience in the event of a crisis appears to be applicable here, although caution and a more in-depth analysis of the effects of the crisis are necessary, particularly with regard to long-term consequences.

About CICOPA

CICOPA IS THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION OF INDUSTRIAL AND SERVICE COOPERATIVES. It represents the voices of worker cooperatives, social cooperatives, and self-employed producers' cooperatives. CICOPA works to create a supportive environment for cooperatives, so that they can operate to their full strength and fulfil their mission of providing sustainable jobs and high-quality services to communities. Our aim is to build a fairer world and contribute to sustainable economic growth, to bring democracy and solidarity to the workplace.

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