

icos Co-op Progress

February



2012

2012 - Year of the Co-op

2012 has been declared by the United Nations as the International Year of Co-operatives

“Since the foundation of the Irish co-operative movement by Sir Horace Plunkett in 1894, Ireland has developed a long and proud tradition of co-operative enterprise,” said Pat McLoughlin, President of ICOS.

Today, ICOS represents co-operatives whose associated businesses have a combined turnover in the region of €12 billion, with some 150,000 individual members and employing 12,000 people in Ireland.

“In as much as 2012 offers us the opportunity to embrace a proud past, as a sector we must also share and widely promote the key attributes that have contributed to the success of co-operatives enterprises in Ireland. Moreover, we must grasp this occasion to further advance and strengthen the business of co-operation for the future,” McLoughlin added.

ICOS Chief Executive, Tom O’Callaghan said, “2012 provides the opportunity for all co-operatives to actively highlight to their members, customers and their communities at large the essential role that co-ops have to play in stimulating economic growth and societal well being across Ireland for the future,” said O’Callaghan.

International years are declared by the United Nations to draw attention to and encourage action on major issues. The **International Year of Co-operatives** is intended to raise public awareness of the invaluable

contributions of cooperative enterprises to poverty reduction, employment generation and social integration. The Year will also highlight the strengths of the co-operative business model as an alternative means of doing business and furthering socioeconomic development.

Co-operatives demonstrate that it is possible to pursue economic viability, prosperity and social responsibility as mutual priorities. Co-operatives are business enterprises owned and controlled by the members that they serve. Their member-driven nature is one of the most clearly differentiating factors of co-operative enterprises. This means that decisions made in co-operatives are balanced by the pursuit of profit, and the needs and interests of members and their communities. Co-operatives take many forms and operate in all sectors of society. Most share a unique set of principles which keep them attuned with their member-driven ethos.



vision | leadership | value



ICOS Represents 130 Co-operatives in Ireland

ICOS member co-ops and their associated businesses employ approximately 12,000 employees in Ireland, and a further 24,000 overseas. The combined turnover of these companies is €12 billion.



97% of Ireland's Milk is produced by members of a co-operative

Irish dairy farmers produce 5.4 billion litres of milk per annum. The ambitious targets of Harvest2020 estimate a potential capacity 50% within the Irish dairy sectors over before 2020.



The UN has designated 2012 as the International Year of the Co-operative

~320 million people worldwide own shares in companies, over 1 billion people own shares in co-ops.



1 in 3 Europeans are members of Co-ops

There are three countries in Europe in which >50% of the population are members of co-ops: Ireland (70%), Finland (~60%) & Austria (~60%).



Irish Credit Unions are Co-ops

With over 490 branches, three million people in Ireland are members of Credit Unions.



Champions League Winners Barcelona is a Co-op

The most successful soccer club in Europe in recent years, Barcelona is also a co-operative – owned by 170,000 members, who elect a new president every four years.



The global Dutch bank Rabobank is a Co-op

Rabobank continues to have the highest rating of all privately owned banks in the world.



Irish Co-ops – Evolving from Agricultural Roots

The involvement of Co-operatives within Irish Dairy & Livestock sector extends beyond the local Dairy Co-operative, Livestock Mart Co-operative and Breed Societies. The diagram to the left illustrates how prevalent the co-operative is within all aspects of the farm operation.

ICOS – Serving the Irish Co-op Sector

ICOS is also strengthening the services it provides to the co-operative industry sector, having re-aligned our business around a number of core economic areas including:

- Service related Co-ops
- Community, Culture & Leisure Co-ops
- Food & Fishing Co-ops
- Store & Trade Co-ops
- Advisory & Education Co-ops
- Livestock related Co-operatives
- Multi-purpose Dairy Co-ops

ICOS intends to target a range of initiatives including the encouragement of new co-operative development over the coming year. With experienced staff and resources, ICOS has a wealth of governance and business experience, technical expertise, lobbying and representative strength and an extensive network to promote the development, funding and expansion of co-operative enterprise in Ireland.

ICOS provides a broad range of services to its members. Such areas of service include:

1. Providing a Co-operative Voice
2. Co-op Development & Co-op Registration
3. Co-op Rules & Governance
4. Lobbying & Representation
5. Sectorial Expertise
6. Training & Education
7. Networking & Synergy
8. Communication
9. Promoting Overseas Development
10. Researching Funding Opportunities

COPA-COGECA

copa * **cogeca**

european farmers european agri-cooperatives

COPA-COGECA is the umbrella group for 76 farming and co-operative organisations from across all the EU member states. ICOS retains its position as the only Irish co-operative representative organisation in COPA COGECA.

COGECA currently represents the general and specific interests of some 40,000 farmers' co-operatives employing some 660,000 people and with a global annual turnover in excess of €300 billion euros throughout the enlarged Europe. COGECA is recognised by the European Institutions as the main representative body for the agricultural and fisheries co-operative sector.

Co-operatives in Europe



Co-ops play a role in European Business & Life. Co-ops are recognised by the EU as a 'key component of European economic life and industry'.

- There are 250,000 Co-ops in Europe
- Owned by 163 million Europeans
- Employing 5.4 million people
- 1 in 3 Europeans are co-op members

Starting a Co-operative

ICOS background and knowledge in the co-operative sector benefits those wishing to set up new co-operatives. In fact we try to make setting up a co-operative as easy as A,B,C.

The following steps help assess the viability and practicality of setting up a co-operative. If you have questions about starting a co-operative please do not hesitate to contact us.

- Pull together the group of people (min. of 7) to ascertain, and define the common economic need.

Approach



- Draw up a comprehensive business plan for the proposed cooperative enterprise.

Business plan



- On the basis of the business plan is the co-op commercially viable? Will it at least breakeven annually?

Commercially Feasible



- Determine the level of financial commitment from the group members of the co-op

Determination of Commitment



- What is the proposed financial input by the individual members?

Enlisting Member Support



- Seek the assistance of ICOS to determine the suitability of the proposed enterprise as a co-operative

File a request with ICOS



The following ICOS Expert Committee focuses on Co-op Development

Chairman: Seumas O'Brien (IFAC)

Jim Russell - CentenaryThurles Co-operative, Liam Williams - Clare Marts, Oliver Manley - Cork Marts, Pat Ruxton - Corduff Corrahara GWS, Dan Joe O'Donovan - FDC, Pat Murphy - IFAC, Michael John O'Donovan - Drinagh Co-operative, James O'Donnell - NCFRS, Brendan O'Mahony - NFGWS, John Ahern - North Cork Co-op, Michael Spellman - Roscommon Mart

Committee Secretary: Conor Mulvihill