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| Call for papers  **fifth euricse workshop**  **on**  **cooperative finance and sustainable development**  19-20 June 2014, Trento, Italy |

Euricse (European Research Institute on Cooperative and Social Enterprises) announces the organization of the Fifth Euricse Workshop on Cooperative Finance and Sustainable Development. The workshop, organized in collaboration with Federcasse (Italian federation of Cooperative Credit Banks) and with the support of EACB (European Association of Co-operative Banks), will be held in Trento, Italy on June 19th and 20th, 2014.

# I. Introduction

Both structural changes and the recent financial crisis have created a context where, at least at the local level, the model of financial intermediation that credit co-operatives follow is encouraged to flourish: there are certain sections of the population that face increased difficulties to gain access to the financial system, while some peripheral communities and sectors are confronted with a more restricted set of options. Such a context is indicative of the role that credit co-operatives can play in “plugging the gap between local need and the mainstream services”. A cooperative bank’s internal evaluation should not focus only on their capacity to make profits and surpluses, but also on the effects on the territory of their activity, conciliating business efficiency and regional efficiency.

This framework has opened ample opportunities to cooperative banks: to translate and implement in a modern way the constitutive principles of the cooperative movement; to demonstrate the strength of a third way of organising economic activities, different even if not completely alternative, but complementary to the market and the State; to experiment new institutions and efficient organisation more consistent with grass-root initiatives and values; to favour competitiveness and quality of life within the territories and local societies.

However we cannot just pretend that the crisis is over: while the steam engine of global growth seems to be located in the emerging economies of the developing world (the BRICS, etc), most of the so called “developed world” is rather found in a positive but unstable development trend. The financing of local economies under the current circumstances is regarded as a critical parameter for sustaining a promising path out of recession along with a necessary condition for defending and/or redefining the socioeconomic opportunities of local societies. Although there seems to be an increasing consensus that in most cases the cooperative banks, at least in Europe, out-performed their rivals in channelling funds to local economies: further research is needed to specify their contribution and shed light to their actual performance.

# II. Research Themes

The organizers are then inviting papers that explore the following themes:

1. **Analysis of the contribution of coop banks to the real sector and of their actual performance;**
2. **Regulation, competition policy and forced changes for coop banks: levelling or distorting the playing field;**
3. **Making membership meaningful: revisiting the concept and procedures of retaining or re-establishing the link with local societies;**
4. **Governance issues for coop banks deriving from de-mutualization, re-mutualization and the use of hybrid structures.**
5. **Cooperative Banks in social finance: the current state of knowledge, best practices and future development potential deriving from coop banksʼ engagement in social finance to encourage sustainable development and social economy in Europe;**
6. **Searching for fertile ground for the diffusion of the cooperative banking model: prerequisites, socio-economic coincidence and need within and beyond the European level.**

**III. Conference** **Scientific Committee**

* Silvio Goglio, University of Trento, Italy (chair)
* Yiorgos Alexopoulos, Agricultural University of Athens, Greece
* Giovanni Ferri, Lumsa University of Rome, Italy
* Hans Groeneveld, Rabobank, the Netherlands
* Panu Kalmi, University of Vaasa, Finland
* Juan Lopez, Federcasse, Italy

# IV. Conference Methodology

The methodology of the conference is interdisciplinary and integrative. There will be only plenary sessions in order to stimulate interaction, exchange of ideas and debate. The Scientific Committee will not only examine the paper by their scientific and innovative value but it will try to achieve a balance between the conference themes. In the final session the appointed rapporteurs will identify the key learning points, the key controversies, new practices and new areas for research. This presentation will be discussed jointly by all the participants. The accepted papers will be published in the site of Euricse.

**V. Scholarships**

A limited number of scholarships designed to encourage participation will be offered. For more details please visit our web site [www.euricse.eu](http://www.euricse.eu) or write to organizational secretary [conference@euricse.eu](mailto:conference@euricse.eu) after 31st December 2013.

**VI. Important dates**

All abstracts should be prepared in A4 format (Times New Roman, size 12 fonts, single-spaced) and be no more than 500 words length. Authors’ full title, name, address, organization and email address should be included at the end of the abstract. Abstracts are invited up to **January 15th 2014** to the following email address: [conference@euricse.eu](mailto:conference@euricse.eu). The Scientific Committee will carefully review the applications and advise the selected authors to extend the abstracts into the full papers which must be sent to the organizers by the end of **March 2014**. The authors of accepted papers will be notified by the end of **April 2014**.

For more information about the Conference please contact: conference@euricse.eu.

**VII. About Euricse**

Euricse was founded by the Federazione Trentina delle Cooperative, the University of Trento, Cooperatives Europe, the Province of Trento, and the Foundation Cassa di Risparmio of Trento and Rovereto. It is devoted to the study of co-operatives and social enterprises, along various disciplinary perspectives. Euricse is a centre for analysis and debate with a high scientific profile open to collaboration with the scientific community and, in particular, young researchers. The Institute also interacts directly with cooperatives and social enterprises themselves (see [www.euricse.eu](http://www.euricse.eu)).

**VIII. Information**

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