



EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF CO-OPERATIVE BANKS The Co-operative Banking Difference

28 March 2017

CO-OPERATIVE BANKS: looking ahead to drive societal and economic growth

Dear Participant,

We would like to personally welcome you to the 7th Convention on Co-operative Banks, organised by the European Association of Co-operative Banks (EACB). We hope that the 7th edition of this landmark event will trigger new thinking: illustrating the strategies of our banks in adapting to regulatory and technological developments with a keen proposition to remain key actors in their local communities. We also hope that the closing panel on the future of Europe can be a constructive contribution to reaffirm the support of co-operative banks to the European project, in line with our values and role in the economy.

With 4.050 local banks, co-operative banks are major players in the European Banking Union. They have a distinctive model that is based on proximity to local communities, members/clients ownership, network organisation with internal solidarity systems and stable deposit and customer basis focus. This specific model has been crucial to their resilience during the financial crisis and to continue supporting the sustainable developments of the regions they belong to, while constantly innovating the relationship with members-owners.

However the international and European regulatory initiatives are often not taking into account the co-operative banks specificities. The aim of our discussion today is to address those specificities, while debating the key topics for the co-operative banking sector. Our views and expectations on the future of Europe, the regulatory and supervisory framework and digitalisation are put forward in the "7th Convention's Declaration" distributed in your folder.

It is also with great pleasure that today we will be honouring the laureates of the fifth EACB award for young researchers on co-operative banks. We kindly invite you to join us for the award ceremony.

We hope that this 7th Convention on Co-operative Banks will be stimulating and will encourage a better understanding of the role of co-operative banks in driving societal and economic growth.

We thank you warmly for your participation and wish you a great 7th Convention.

Gerhard HOFMANN

President

Herve GUIDER

General Manager

The voice of 4.050 local and retail banks | 79 million members | 210 million customers

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