



PRESS RELEASE

The EACB Welcomes CrelanCo as New Member



Almeria, 16 December 2025 – As part of the continued strengthening of its European network, the European Association of Co-operative Banks (EACB) welcomed **CrelanCo**, the leading Belgian cooperative bank, as a new member during its 57th General Assembly organised in the context of the 50th anniversary of “Las Palmerillas” in Almeria.

CrelanCo’s membership further reinforces the EACB’s representation of cooperative banking within the European Union, strengthening its role as the voice of cooperative and mutual financial institutions in regulatory and supervisory discussions at EU and international level.

Priscille Szeradzki, EACB President, stated:

“We are very pleased to welcome CrelanCo to the EACB. CrelanCo’s strong cooperative roots and close ties to local communities perfectly reflect the values we promote. Their experience and perspective will further enrich our work as we continue to advocate for a proportionate and sustainable regulatory framework for cooperative and mutual banks.”

CrelanCo is a cooperative enterprise and the main shareholder of the Crelan bank, the largest cooperative bank in Belgium, with a long-standing tradition in serving retail customers, entrepreneurs, and the agricultural sector. In 2025, CrelanCo served 307.900 members and had 1.27 bn in cooperative capital. Built on a cooperative ownership model and a dense network of local agents, CrelanCo plays an important role in financing the real economy and supporting local communities across Belgium. Its business model is firmly anchored in proximity banking, long-term relationships, and sustainable development.

Benoît Bayenet, CrelanCo President, commented:

“Joining the EACB is a natural step for CrelanCo. The EACB plays a key role in representing cooperative banks at European level, and we look forward to actively contributing to its work. Together with other cooperative institutions, we want to ensure that the specificities

The voice of 2.400 local and retail banks, 91 million members, 228 million customers in Europe



of our model are well understood and appropriately reflected in regulatory and supervisory frameworks."

Isabelle D'haeninck, Director Cooperative Bank of Crelan:

"CrelanCo has a long cooperative history dating back to the 1960s. Two years ago, Crelan decided to emphasise its cooperative identity and reinforce its cooperative strategy. Since 2023, Crelan has developed a number of cooperative initiatives and embedded cooperative principles more firmly in its policy and business. We look forward to being further inspired from the cooperative activities of other EACB members and to sharing experiences and knowledge."

The accession of CrelanCo further consolidates the EACB's role as the representative body of cooperative and mutual banks in Europe, underlining the continued relevance of values-based banking models in supporting financial stability, sustainability and inclusion.

Nina Schindler, CEO of the EACB, added:

"We are delighted to welcome CrelanCo as a new member of the EACB. Their commitment to cooperative values and proximity banking strongly aligns with our mission. At a time of ongoing regulatory change, CrelanCo's expertise and engagement will be a valuable asset in strengthening the collective voice of cooperative and mutual banks in Europe."

EACB Contact:

CEO: Nina Schindler
Nina.Schindler@eachb.coop
Lead Communication: Luce Jacqmin
Luce.jacqmin@eachb.coop

About the EACB:

The European Association of Co-operative Banks ([EACB](https://www.eachb.coop)) is the voice of the cooperative banks in Europe. It represents, promotes and defends the common interests of its 26 member institutions and of cooperative banks in general. Cooperative banks form decentralised networks which are subject to banking as well as cooperative legislation. Democracy, transparency and proximity are the three key characteristics of the cooperative banks' business model. With 2,400 locally operating banks and 36,200 outlets cooperative banks are widely represented throughout the enlarged European Union, playing a major role in the financial and economic system. They have a long tradition in serving 227 million customers, mainly consumers, retailers and communities. Cooperative banks in Europe represent 90 million members and 720,000 employees and have a total average market share of about 20%.

Website: www.eachb.coop

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EACB AISBL – Secretariat • Rue de l'Industrie 26-38 • B-1040 Brussels
Tel: (+32 2) 230 11 24 • Enterprise 0896.081.149 • lobbying register 4172526951-19
www.eachb.coop • e-mail : secretariat@eachb.coop