



CROATIAN CENTRE FOR COOPERATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Celebrates

The 2016 International Co-operative Day

‘Co-operatives: The power to act for a sustainable future’

Croatian Centre for Cooperative Entrepreneurship an apex organisation of Croatian cooperative movement organised an International Conference and International festival of cooperative products on the occasion of **International Cooperative Day** on 1st and 2nd July, 2016 at Zagreb. The Conference addressed the theme of this year celebration **‘Co-operatives: The power to act for a sustainable future’**.

Conference gathered more than hundred participants, all representatives of cooperatives, cooperative associations and other relevant institutions. The main goal of this annual event was to raise awareness about cooperative entrepreneurship and its importance to economy and to the local community. Three main topics of conference were **taxation treatment of cooperatives**: presentation of good practice in some of EU countries and stressing out the difficult position of cooperatives in Croatia due to discriminating tax treatment; **increasing visibility of cooperative products**: marking cooperative product with label *coop*, and the **involvement of youth in cooperatives**: presentation of school cooperatives and first student cooperative.



The eminent speakers and distinguished guests were:

- Dr.Sonja Novković, Committee Chair, The Committee on Co-operative Research ICA (CCR – ICA)
- Rosario Altieri, President, Associazione Generale Cooperative Italiane (A.G.C.I.), Italy
- Klaus Niederlander, former Director of the Cooperatives Europe
- Ilda Stanojević, Director, Croatian Centre for Cooperative Entrepreneurship (CCCE), Croatia
- Tonino Picula, Member of the European Parliament
- Antonio Lucidi, President, Associazione Generale Cooperative Italiane Abruzzo (A.G.C.I. Abruzzo), Italy
- Pilar Alguacil, Professor of Financial and Taxation Law, Universitat de València, Spain
- Dr.Andreas Wieg, Head of the Executive Staff Department at German Cooperative and Raiffeisen Confederation (Deutscher Genossenschafts- und Raiffeisenverband; DGRV), Germany
- Lordan Ljubenkov, President, Cooperative Alliance of Dalmatia, Croatia
- Blanka Horvat Dragojević, Secretary, Croatian association of student cooperatives (HUUZ), Croatia
- Josipa Vurnek, Director, Fabric8 co – op, first student cooperative in Croatia
- Marinela Tomić, Senior Expert Advisor, Croatian Centre for Cooperative Entrepreneurship (CCCE), Croatia

Chairman and Managing Directors of National level Alliances, officials of the Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Crafts, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds, City of Zagreb, representatives of educational institutions etc. were also present besides the representatives of cooperatives in Croatia.

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Speaking on the occasion **Mr Rosario Altieri, President of Associazione Generale Cooperative Italiane** in his introduction said: 'There are less rich who get richer, and more and more of the poor who are getting poorer. It is becoming unsustainable. And therefore cooperatives in its center place the man and the creation of wealth that all members of the cooperative share together as cooperatives tends to the common good.'

Committee Chair of The Committee on Co-operative Research ICA, Dr.Sonja Novković told that it is important support cooperatives to educational level, and to the universities, and that is a specialty of cooperatives that it was a movement for young people.

'In Croatia there are 1,302 cooperatives and 21,462 cooperative members, and in these cooperatives operate 2,744 employees, which is 0.17% of the total number of employees in Croatia. In the world number of employees in cooperatives makes 3-10% of the total number of employees. Our annual revenue is 1.6 billion. By industry, 41% of our cooperatives are focused on agriculture and forestry' - presented the **Director of Croatian Centre for Cooperative Entrepreneurship, Ilda Stanojevic**.

MEP Tonino Picula pointed out that the associated producers are the foundation of good stories about the association and obtaining a quality label EU. Continued by the **former Director of the Cooperatives Europe, Klaus Niederländer** saying: 'The cooperative principle - working together towards a common goal. Whatever you do, you can find the basis for the cooperative. A basis of the cooperative movement are the individual effort and solidarity, the principle of give and take.'



As a part of the International Day of Cooperatives, was also held an International Festival of cooperative products. The Festival, with the aim of promoting cooperative movement, gathered more than 40 different types of cooperatives: agricultural, students, social, energy, ethics and others.