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STATISTICS ON COOPERATIVES

COUNTRY IN FOCUS: TURKEY¹

This country in focus note is part of the **Statistics on Cooperatives series** produced by the *International Labour Organization (ILO)* and the *Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC)* in support of a larger initiative to increase understanding of the ways in which countries around the world are producing and using statistics on cooperatives. Currently reliable and comparable statistics on cooperatives are missing in most countries of the world. These statistics are essential to measuring the impact of cooperatives on members, workers and the economy as a whole.

Cooperatives in Turkey

Modern cooperatives started with the 'Country Funds' (Memleket Sandiklari), bodies similar to agricultural credit cooperatives that were established in 1863. The first significant development of cooperatives in the country occurred during the Republican Period, especially between 1920 and 1938, under the leadership of Ataturk.

Today, there are 53,259 cooperatives with a total membership of 7,422,994. The 30 cooperative types fall under the mandate of one of the three key responsible ministries according to their main sector of activity (the **Ministry of Customs and Trade**², the **Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock**³ and the **Ministry of Environment and Urbanization**⁴).

How are statistics on cooperatives generated in Turkey?

In Turkey, all cooperative enterprises are considered as partnerships with legal status. Cooperatives are therefore subject to strict registry legislation. Unlike other commercial partnerships, permission from the relevant government authorities is also necessary to establish a cooperative enterprise, and a ministry representative must be present at general assembly meetings, or the business could risk dissolution.

These regulations and registry procedures result in updated and accurate official records that create valuable data sources for cooperative statistics. The ministry in charge assigns a representative to attend the general assembly meetings of cooperatives that gather membership and financial data, which is then added to electronic databases at provincial directories of the relevant ministries. Provincial directories also update their databases whenever they grant permission for the establishment of a cooperative. Each Ministry generates its own statistics by interpreting those databases.

Cooperative unions also keep financial and operational data in order to maintain their governance over cooperatives. These data are used internally and are not processed or analysed to produce periodic statistical reports. They are, however, submitted as raw data to the Ministry of Customs and Trade for analysis in the annual cooperative report.

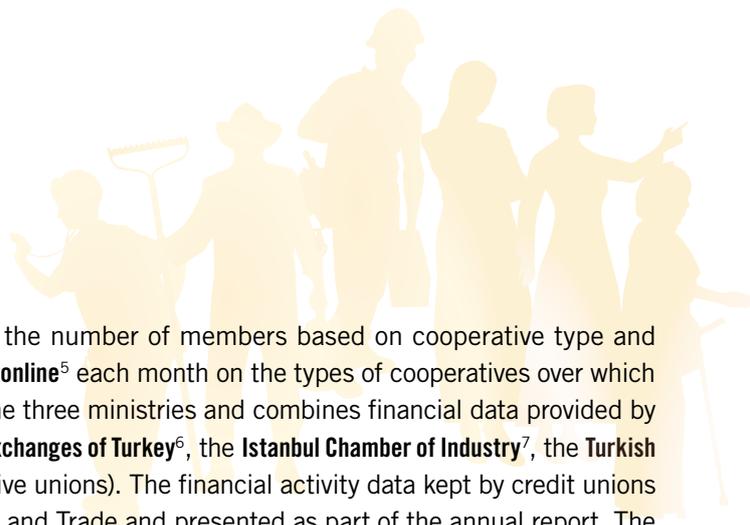
¹ This note was written by Fatih Polattimur, Deputy Expert at the Turkish Ministry of Customs and Trade, Republic of Turkey. Inputs were provided by Hakan Tuncagil, Expert at the Turkish Ministry of Customs and Trade.

² <https://gtb.gov.tr>

³ <http://www.tarim.gov.tr>

⁴ <https://www.csb.gov.tr>





What statistics are available?

The statistical reports cover the number of cooperatives and the number of members based on cooperative type and location (province-district). The three ministries publish reports **online**⁵ each month on the types of cooperatives over which they hold authority. An annual report compiles statistics from the three ministries and combines financial data provided by different public institutions (the **Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey**⁶, the **Istanbul Chamber of Industry**⁷, the **Turkish Exporters Assembly**⁸) and private institutions (banks and cooperative unions). The financial activity data kept by credit unions and agricultural unions are collected by the Ministry of Customs and Trade and presented as part of the annual report. The annual report is **published online**⁹ by the Ministry of Customs and Trade.

The annual report covers the number of cooperatives, number of members, amount of credit and total beneficiaries served by credit cooperatives, the amount of agricultural products produced by agricultural cooperatives, the structures owned by housing cooperatives, the sectors in which cooperatives operate and a list of the biggest industrial cooperatives in Turkey's top 500 list.

Cooperative statistics were one of the key areas of action identified under the **Turkish National Cooperative Strategy and Action Plan of 2012-16**¹⁰. The aforementioned three ministries are planning to widen cooperative statistics by including employment, revenue and turnover data to unveil cooperatives' role in economic and social development. A central database called the "Information System for Cooperatives" is expected to coordinate the official records held by the three ministries and match up production, employment, social security and tax records from a variety of public and private institutions. To achieve this, Turkey has established a working group of representatives from the three ministries, **revenue administration**¹¹, **social security administration**¹², the **national statistical institute**¹³ and cooperative unions.

The working group is following '**The Generic Statistical Business Process Model**'¹⁴ to include cooperative statistics in the official national statistical programme. The National Statistical Institute provides guidance on international statistical standards and a legal framework for collecting and processing personal data.

Reflections on Turkey's approach to cooperative statistics

Keeping detailed official records on many topics is an asset for producing statistics. Turkey has taken advantage of this since the beginning of the 20th century. Cooperative records were digitized in 1989 and have been handled automatically by officials since. The range of variables tracked across the cooperative economy could be improved, as currently the number of cooperative enterprises and number of members are the only statistics that cover the whole cooperative business area.

There is no doubt that the implicated government ministries and cooperative movement have critical roles to play in the production and use of statistics on cooperatives. However, without a comprehensive statistical approach and established analytical framework, it is not possible to monitor trends and understand sectoral bottlenecks in a harmonised and comparative manner.

Naturally, strict official regulations and usage of information technologies can help smooth out statistical procedures. Coordinating between the different organisations of the working group and harmonising non-uniform data from different sources remain as challenges to achieving meaningful outcomes. .

5 Ministry of Customs and Trade: yayinlar/istatistik-bultenleri
Ministry of Food Agriculture and Livestock: <http://www.tarim.gov.tr/sgb/Belgeler/SagMenuVeriler/TRGM.pdf>
Ministry of Environment and Urbanisation: <http://yapikooperatifportal.csb.gov.tr/Home/istatistik>

6 <https://tobb.org.tr>

7 www.iso.org.tr

8 www.tim.org.tr

9 Annual reports are available at <http://koop.gtb.gov.tr/yayinlar/kooperatifciilik-raporu>

10 <http://english.gtb.gov.tr/commerce/cooperatives/cooperative-development-strategy-and-action-plan-of-turkey-20122016>

11 www.gib.gov.tr

12 www.sgk.gov.tr

13 www.tuik.gov.tr

14 <https://statswiki.uncece.org/display/GSBPM/Generic+Statistical+Business+Process+Model>





The 19th Session of the **International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS)**¹⁵ in 2013 included cooperatives in the Conference agenda for the first time in its history. The discussion converged towards the need for accurate, reliable, relevant and comparable statistics on the economic and social impact of cooperatives on the economies. A Resolution was passed with a view to carry out further developmental work on the measurement of cooperatives and carry out pilot studies in a number of countries to test various measurement approaches on collecting data on cooperatives.

The initiative on statistics on cooperatives is a collaboration between the ILO, COPAC, the cooperative movement, UN agencies, national statistics offices, government agencies and academic institutions to improve the quality and accessibility of statistical data on cooperatives. The outcome of this work will be guidelines for discussion at the 20th ICLS in October 2018.

COPAC is a multi-stakeholder partnership of global public and private institutions that promotes and advocates for people-centred, self-sustaining cooperative enterprises, guided by the principles of economic, social and environmental sustainable development. The current members of COPAC are the ILO, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Co-operative Alliance and the World Farmers' Organisation.

To find out more, please visit the **ILO COOP**¹⁶, **ILO Department of Statistics**¹⁷ or **COPAC**¹⁸ websites.

15 <http://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/meetings-and-events/international-conference-of-labour-statisticians/19/lang--en/index.htm>

16 http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/cooperatives/areas-of-work/WCMS_550541/lang--en/index.htm

17 <http://www.ilo.org/stat/lang--en/index.htm>

18 www.copac.coop

Other Country in Focus Notes in the Statistics on Cooperatives series

- **Brazil:** <http://www.copac.coop/brazil-country-in-focus-on-statistics-on-cooperatives/>
- **Canada:** <http://www.copac.coop/canada-country-in-focus-on-statistics-on-cooperatives/>
- **Islamic Republic of Iran:** <http://www.copac.coop/islamic-republic-of-iran-country-in-focus-on-statistics-on-cooperatives/>
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- **Mainland Tanzania:** <http://www.copac.coop/tanzania-country-in-focus-on-statistics-on-cooperatives/>
- **United Kingdom:** <http://www.copac.coop/united-kingdom-country-in-focus-on-statistics-on-cooperatives/>

Contact information

**Cooperatives Unit
Enterprises Department**
International Labour Office
(ILO)
4, route des Morillons
1211 Geneva 22
Switzerland
tel : +41 22 799 7095
coop@ilo.org

**Committee for the Promotion
and Advancement
of Cooperatives
(COPAC)**
copac@copac.coop

