



European Research Institute on Cooperative and Social Enterprises

**EURICSE International WORKSHOP**

**IN PARTNERSHIP WITH**



**UNIVERSITY OF TRENTO - Italy**  
**Department of Economics and Management**  
**Department of Sociology and Social Research**

**“Co-operation as Coordination Mechanism: consequences on the interpretation of the cooperative enterprise”**

**TRENTO, 4-5 December 2017**

**Venue: Department of Sociology and Social Research, University of Trento**

**Workshop organizers:**

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## “Co-operation as Coordination Mechanism: consequences on the interpretation of the cooperative enterprise”

### ABSTRACT

The economics of co-operative enterprises, both traditional and new forms, such as social cooperatives, needs deep revision and refinement following the evolution of economic theory over the last decades. Traditional approaches are still often based on incoherent or inadequate premises and do not give a convincing view of co-operation as coordination mechanism and as organizational form. The critical review of the economic theory is in line with institutionalism and with new approaches and methodologies, which have spread over recent decades, especially evolutionary and behavioral economics.

A new approach would aim at creating a new framework of analysis, at overcoming unsolved problems and unanswered questions, and at offering new guidance to empirical and experimental research. The final aim of the workshop is to create a new integrated framework in which co-operation is understood as a unifying concept, more specifically as one of the most relevant coordination mechanisms of economic activity, and as foundation of the working of co-operative enterprises. It is also understood as a relevant, albeit partial and concurrent, coordination mechanism in the working of investor-owned and publicly-owned enterprises.

One fundamental seminal contribution is found in Elinor Ostrom’s approach to the governance of common pool natural resources. In our work, an initial attempt to pin down such themes and develop a new coherent framework was carried out in the paper “Co-operation as coordination mechanism. A new approach to the economics of co-operative enterprises” (Borzaga and Tortia, 2017).

Participants in the EURICSE workshop in Trento will each present papers dealing with one of the following main themes:

- The nature and sustainability of co-operation as coordination mechanism of economic activity, as compared with the two dominant coordination mechanisms, i.e. market exchange and hierarchy;
- In what way co-operation as coordination mechanism can help (or halt) the explanation of co-operative enterprises as specific and non-conventional organizational forms, and what is the role left for market and hierarchy in this organizational form;
- How these theoretical premises help explain specific forms of co-operative enterprises (supply side such as worker and producer co-operatives, demand side such as consumer and credit co-operatives, mixed and multi-stakeholder such as social co-operatives etc...) and some institutional features of co-operatives (locked assets, capitalization, governance, productivity, management etc.).

**Due to limited room available, non-speakers desiring to attend the workshop should contact the organizers (Ermanno Tortia and Carlo Borzaga) in advance.**

## PROGRAM

**Monday December 4<sup>th</sup>**  
**10:00 A.M.**

**10:00-10:30.** Introduction and salutation

**10:30-12:30**

**Carlo Borzaga and Ermanno Tortia.**

*Co-Operation as Co-Ordination Mechanism. A new approach to the economics of co-operative enterprises*

Discussants: **Michele Grillo, Michael L. Cook**

**Simon Cornée**

*Governing Common-Property Assets: The Case of Farm Machinery Co-operatives*

Discussant: **Ivana Catturani**

**Johnston Birchall**

*Co-Operation as Co-Ordination Mechanism and Co-operative Governance*

Discussant: **Marco Faillo**

**12:30 – 14:00. LUNCH**

**14:00-16:00**

**Michael L. Cook**

*The Design Principles: Ultimate and proximate causations in food and agriculture*

Discussant: **Simon Cornée**

**Giacomo Degli Antoni**

*Propensity to Co-operate of Social Co-operatives' Workers and Volunteers: evidence from a field research*

Discussant: **Spencer Thompson**

**Murray Fulton**

*The Elements of Co-operation*

Discussant: **Giacomo Degli Antoni and Benedetto Gui**

**16:00 - 16:30. COFFEE BREAK**

**16:30-18:00**

**Carlo Borzaga, Silvia Sacchetti and Ermanno Tortia**

*The Institutions of Livelihood and Social Enterprise Systems*

Discussants: **Lorenzo Sacconi**

**Silvio Goglio and Ivana Catturani**

*Local Public Goods and Cooperation: How the local context might impact on their supply*

Discussant: **Samira Nuhanovic**

**20:00 DINNER**

**Tuesday December 5<sup>th</sup>**

**9:00 A.M.**

**9:00-11:00**

**Anna Grandori and Santi Furnari**

*The Role of Democratic Governance in Different Types of organization*

Discussant: **Giovanni Ferri and Benedetto Gui**

**Spencer Thompson**

*Towards a Social theory of the firm: Worker cooperatives reconsidered*

Discussant: **Vladislav Valentinov**

**Pier Angelo Mori**

*Community Co-operation: Beyond government, market and traditional mutuality*

Discussant: **Murray Fulton**

**11:00 – 11:30. COFFEE BREAK**

**11:30-13:00**

**Lorenzo Sacconi and Ermanno Tortia**

*The Formation of Co-operative Governance. A psychological game theory approach*

Discussant: **Pier Angelo Mori**

**Marina Albanese**

*Social and Relational Variables in Cooperative Firms. Implications in terms of efficiency, job saving and social capital*

Discussant: **Johnston Birchall**

**13:00 – 14:00. LUNCH**

**14:00-15:30**

**Giovanni Ferri**

*On the Implications of Upper-Level Networks for the Structure of Lower-Level Cooperatives*

Discussant: **Michele Grillo**

**Federico Perali**

*The Role of the Social Co-operative in the Process of Social Innovation*

Discussant: **Silvia Sacchetti**

**15:30-16:00**

**FINAL ROUNDTABLE AND DISCUSSION ON THE PROSPECTS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**