

THE LARGE ITALIAN COOPERATIVES IN 2010

Important aspects

- 1) For the first time, figures have been presented on all the large Italian cooperatives (not only those belonging to Legacoop).
- 2) For the first time, information on production volume and employment has been provided that not only concerns the cooperatives but also all the conventional cooperative-owned

companies, both the consolidated and jointly owned.

- 3) Finally, it is shown that only a part of the cooperatives (61) are considered in the annual Mediobanca survey regarding industrial and service companies. If the Mediobanca companies were the total of the large companies

active in Italy, the cooperatives would make up 13.3% of the total of large enterprises. In reality, we can hypothesize that as a large number of cooperatives has not been considered, many non-cooperative companies have not been shown. The percentage in the text (5.5%) is a cautious estimate.

1 Source, AIDA (Bureau Van Dijk) and Mediobanca reports. Cooperative credit banks, people's banks, mutual and cooperatives in the insurance sector are not included.

2 See "la Cooperazione in Italia", 1° Euricse report, Nov. 2011.

The following notes refer to all the cooperatives operating in Italy which, in 2010, had a production volume (single or group balances) of more than €100 million.

126 cooperative fall into the above group, and in the same year, 18 consortiums (or similar entities) were also operating with a production of over €100 million¹. The latter are dealt with separately, so as to avoid duplicating the volume. Similarly, conventional companies owned by two or more cooperatives are considered in the last part of this note.

In 2010, the total production of the 126 cooperatives amounted to €41.534 billion, employing, in the same year, 125,678 workers. As there are no overall figures available for 2010, we can, nevertheless, observe, taking into account the 2008 Euricse report, that, in 2010, the largest cooperatives accounted for 45.2% of the total production for 2008 and 10.9% of total employment².

It is important to note, however, that many of the cooperatives considered are also owners of and control a certain number of companies that are included in their consolidated balance. There are 87 of these cooperatives, that is, 69.8% of the total.

Looking at the consolidated balances of the 126 cooperatives, we can find a development in their activities significantly larger than that highlighted before. In fact, in 2010, total production reached €52.545 billion. In other words, the overall production was more than that of the sum of the single cooperatives by 26.6%. As well a similar phenomena can be seen for employment, with workers numbering 187,249 (i.e., + 61,771 employees, equal to + 49,0% to workers directly employed by the single cooperatives).

The cooperatives considered operate in different sectors. From the point of view of production, the most important is the retail sector followed by agriculture and food industry and the non-food industry (including construction)

and, finally, the service sector. From the point of view of employment, the sector employing the largest number of workers is, also in this case, retailing, followed by the service sector, agriculture and food industry and the non-food industry.

Tab.I Large cooperatives by macro-sector (2010)

nos in € million

	agriculture and food industry	non-food industry	services and Retailing	other services	total
n° cooperatives	53	18	44	11	126
n° cooperative groups	27	17	35	8	87
Production volume					
single balances	12,285	4,856	22,318	2,079	41,538
single and group balances	14,953	7,117	26,134	4,341	52,545
Employment					
single balances	26,916	10,965	51,403	36,394	125,678
single and group balances	33,918	26,294	66,429	60,608	187,249

Source: drawn up by Centro Studi Legacoop from Aida and Mediobanca data.

If we consider cooperatives according to their type of mutualistic relations (Tab. II), we see that, in terms of production, the most significant sector is where members are entrepreneurs or self-employed, followed by the consumer cooperatives and, finally, the worker cooperatives. Instead, for employment, worker cooperatives lead, employing 46.2% of total employees, followed by the consumer cooperatives and, finally, the cooperatives made up of entrepreneurs and self-employed.

Tab.II Large cooperatives by mutuality (2010)

nos in € million

	worker cooperatives	entrepreneur cooperatives	user cooperatives	total
n° cooperatives	27	87	12	126
n° cooperative groups	25	50	12	87
Production volume				
single balances	6,464	23,753	11,321	41,538
single and group balances	10,989	29,200	12,356	52,545
Employment				
single balances	47,243	31,356	47,079	125,678
single and group balances	86,782	47,973	52,494	187,249

Source: drawn up by Centro Studi Legacoop from Aida and Mediobanca data.

3 Consortiums in the agriculture sector were not included, as they have been considered as cooperatives.

Concerning consortiums (and similar entities), in 2010, 18 recorded a production volume of over €100 million. In total (see Tab. III), their production volume amounted to €10.670 billion, with 3,618 workers³.

Tab.III Large consortiums by macro-sector (2010)					nos in € million
	worker	consumer	retailer	other	total
n° consortiums	5	4	1	8	18
n° consortiums	3	1	1	4	9
Production volume					
single balances	1,590	6,474	808	1,521	10,393
single and group balances	1,649	6,478	871	1,672	10,670
Employment					
single balances	261	2,435	178	210	3,084
single and group balances	359	2,458	179	622	3,618

Source: drawn up by Centro Studi Legacoop from Aida and Mediobanca data.

Moreover, the role of the large cooperatives is underestimated if we only look at the figures presented here. In fact, the enterprises considered, often with the contribution of other smaller cooperatives, control conventional companies which are not included in their financial balances, as each is a relatively small shareholder.

We have identified at least 8 enterprises (each with an annual production of more than €100 million) that are jointly controlled by two or more cooperatives (see Tab. IV)⁴. In 2010, these companies employed 13,608 workers. Therefore, we could estimate that in the same year, the largest Italian cooperatives and consortiums employed, in total, 204,154 workers, i.e. 72,950 more than those directly employed.

4 Differently to other figures, the number of jointly controlled companies (with a turnover of more than €100 mill.) does not correspond to the total.

Tab. IV Other cooperative-owned conventional companies				nos in € million
	agriculture and food industry	services	credit and insurance	total
n° companies	2	3	3	8
employees	2,523	1,835	9,250	13,608

Source: drawn up by Centro Studi Legacoop from Aida and Mediobanca data.

- 5 See "Le società industriali e di servizi italiane", Mediobanca 2011.
- 6 Some Legacoop cooperatives also belong to other cooperative confederations.

It should also be pointed out that in a Mediobanca report⁵, only 61 (5.5% of the companies registered by Mediobanca with a turnover of more than €100 million in 2010) of the 152 cooperative enterprises, consortiums and cooperative-owned companies considered in this note were included.

Finally, it is interesting to note that 60 of the above are Legacoop members (47.6% of the total), accounting for 63.7% of total production volume and 77.4% of total employment⁶. The remaining percentage represents members of the other cooperative confederations or non-affiliated cooperatives.