

**Meeting with Cooperatives Europe**  
**Conference call**  
**26 March**

After a general overview of the work of Cooperatives Europe, the discussion between Cabinet members and Cooperatives Europe focused on the current situation of the covid-19 and the impact on their activities.

Cooperatives Europe is the European cross-sectorial organization representing more than 176.000 cooperative enterprises in Europe, from 34 European countries.

The cooperatives are active in all economic areas such as industry & services, energy, housing, agriculture, banking, consumer and social innovation.

Cooperatives are vehicles to achieve gender equality:

- Promotion of women empowerment by creating employment opportunities
- Facilitation women's access to business capital
- Development of women leadership in science
- Strong commitment against gender pay gap, with pay transparency in certain cooperatives
- Strong commitment against gender based violence, with a policy of zero tolerance toward sexual harassment at the work place.

The COVID19 crisis highlights the challenges women bare in particular such as their precarious employment and contract situation, the shortage of equipment and facilities to carryout their work in the care service or other essential services cooperatives continue to ensure and the increased risk of domestic violence.