

Co-operantics

Co-operative skills for everyone

Different types of co-operative

WORKER CO-OPERATIVE: Owned and controlled by its employees. Members participate in the co-operative by working for it.

CONSUMER CO-OPERATIVE: Owned and controlled by its customers. Members participate in the co-operative by purchasing goods and/or services from it.

FOOD CO-OPERATIVE: Not a very precise term, but generally a small, local and often relatively informal bulk-buying consortium.

CO-OPERATIVE CONSORTIUM: Owned and controlled by users of the services provided. Members participate by using the services, possibly paying some sort of annual fee or contributing their labour on a rota basis. Examples include actors agencies and taxi-drivers co-ops.

AGRICULTURAL or FISHING CO-OPERATIVE: Varieties of co-operative consortium, providing marketing, purchasing or equipment hire services.

CREDIT UNION: Savings and loans co-operative owned and controlled by savers and borrowers.

HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE: Owned and controlled by the tenants. Members participate by living in the co-operative's property. Housing co-ops seek to benefit their members by providing good quality, reasonable cost housing.

TENANT MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATIVE: A form of housing co-operative where the co-op does not own the property but manages it under contract (usually on behalf of a local authority or a housing association).

COMMUNITY CO-OPERATIVE: Owned and controlled by those members of a community who participate in a business serving the whole community or a large part of it. It is the element of "self-help" (crucial to co-operative identity) which distinguishes a community co-operative from a community business.