

**"Cooperative principles and gender equality in
Portugal - the relevance of gender quotas"**



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INTRODUCTION



Cooperatives

Gender equality

- Deep and intimate connection between the legal status of cooperatives and gender equality
 - Empowerment (ICA)



INTRODUCTION

Promoting gender equality is part of the history of the international cooperative movement.

The Rochdale Society of Equitables Pioneers, of 1844, included in its statutes, the principle of equal admission of men and women and participation in the cooperative's activity.



INTERNATIONAL TENDENCIES

- COOPERATIVES AS AN ATTRACTION TO WOMEN PARTICIPATION
 - to achieve entrepreneurial goals
 - to access products or services
 - to participate in an organization with equality values and principles (Senent Vidal, 2011)
- PROMOTION OF GENDER EQUALITY IN COOPERATIVES BY ICA

Strategy “Promoting Gender Equality” → Alliance’s Gender Equality Committee

Specific recommendations “Co-ops for 2030”



IN PORTUGAL

- HISTORICALLY: COOPERATIVES CONTRIBUTES TO GENDER EQUALITY

“all people, irrespective of sex, who are over 14 years old, can be members, provided they meet all the conditions stated in the statutes.”

(Lei Basilar do Cooperativismo, of 2nd July 1867, Article 7)

- GENDER INEQUALITIES IN THE BROADER CONTEXT

Specially in work field and decision-making dimensions (CIG, 2017)



IN SOCIAL ECONOMY SECTOR IN PORTUGAL

- Lack of data on the situation of gender equality in national cooperatives
- Studies (Campos Franco, 2015, Martinho and Parente, 2015) reveal tendencies of gender inequalities in the social economy
- Women tend to occupy "non-places" in decision-making spaces (Parente and Martinho, 2018)



METHODOLOGY

Study's objectives:

- In what way does the legal regime of cooperatives contribute to the construction and strengthening gender relations based on the idea of parity or balance?
- Is there a balanced representation of men and women in management and supervisory positions in the Portuguese cooperatives?



METHODOLOGY

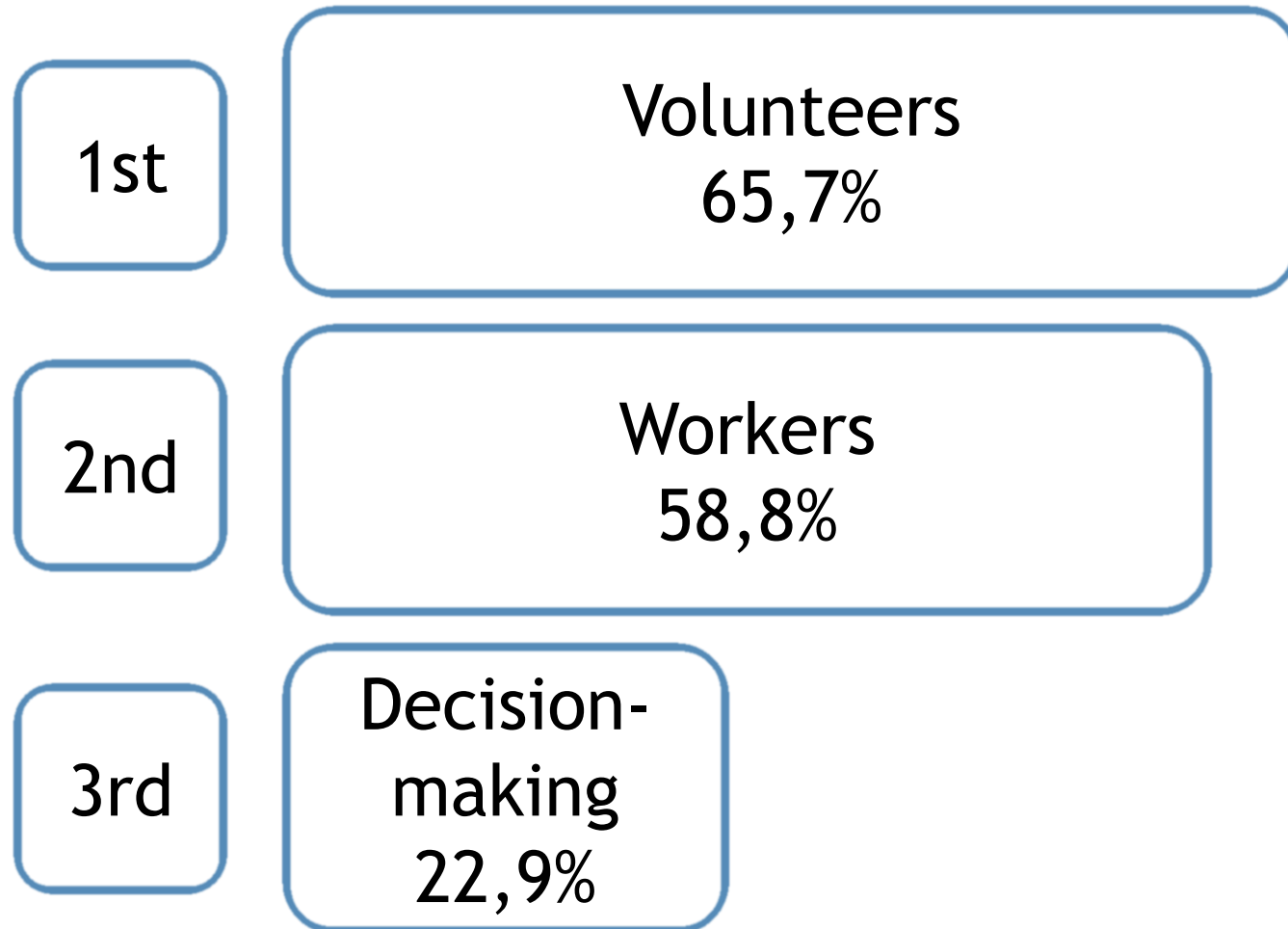
- Bibliographical research - analysis legislation
- Documental analysis of the Credential Portal made available by *CASES - Cooperativa António Sérgio para a Economia Social*.

This secondary source represents 749 cooperatives with a valid credential as of November 30, 2018: information relating to 2017 work of the cooperative - regarding number of members in General Assembly, number of members in management body, number of members on supervisory board, with data separated by gender



RESULTS:

HIERARCHY OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION



COMPOSITION OF GOVERNING BODIES

Dimension (total number of workers)	General Assembly Board					Administrative Bodies					Supervisory Bodies				
	F		M		Total	F		M		Total	F		M		Total
	n	%	n	%	n	n	%	n	%	N	n	%	n	%	n
0	88	27,2	232	71,8	323	97	21,7	349	78,3	446	67	21,7	242	78,3	309
1-9	155	21,8	557	78,2	712	184	19,2	770	80,7	954	126	18,6	551	81,4	677
10-24	107	23,9	340	76,1	447	124	23,4	405	0,8	529	104	24,9	313	75,1	417
25-49	70	21,8	247	77,2	320	73	16,5	370	83,5	443	64	19,6	263	80,4	327
50-99	53	25,4	156	74,6	209	109	33,0	221	67,0	330	76	21,4	139	64,6	215
100-249	33	37,1	56	62,9	89	41	28,3	104	71,7	145	24	27,3	64	72,7	88
+ de 250	5	35,7	9	64,3	14	5	25,0	15	75,0	20	4	28,6	10	71,4	14
Total	511		1597		2108	633		2234		2867	465		1582		2047



FREQUENCY OF COOPERATIVES WITH WOMEN IN GOVERNING BODIES

No. of women in total in the composition of the 3 governing bodies	Cooperatives	
	n	%
0	230	30,7
1	162	21,6
2	119	15,9
3	81	10,8
4	43	5,7
5	29	3,9
6	27	3,6
7	22	2,9
8	19	2,5
9	7	0,9
10	4	0,5
11	2	0,3
12	1	0,1
13	1	0,1
14	0	0
15	0	0
16	0	0
17	2	0,3
Total	749	100



FINAL REMARKS

- It's necessary to build a factual equality which reduces the distance between formal equality and real equality in the access to the administrative and supervisory bodies of cooperatives.
- It's necessary to discuss the need for cooperatives to adopt, by statutory or regulatory means, or through the elaboration of equality plans, positive measures, such as gender quotas, to accelerate parity democracy, ensuring a balanced representation of both women and men in the administrative and supervisory bodies of cooperatives.

