



## **Open Data Guide**

**Explanatory notes for using  
Co-operative Open Datasets**

# Thousands of businesses, one network

Co-operatives UK is the network for Britain's thousands of co-operatives. It works to promote, develop and unite member-owned businesses across the economy. From high street retailers to community owned pubs, fan owned football clubs to farmer controlled businesses, co-operatives are everywhere and together they are worth £38 billion to the British economy.

## Co-operative Economy Open Data

Following extensive work on data over recent years, we are pleased to release the data behind the co-operative economy report as Open Data. We welcome the engagement of our members and partners in furthering the development of this dataset as a resource for the entire co-operative community.

## The Open Data Guide

This guide is a practical tool for users of the Co-operative Economy Open Dataset. It is designed to help you understand the methodology used to create the dataset as well as explain the limitations in its use.

If you have any questions about this guide, the dataset or our wider work on co-operative intelligence, please contact [data@uk.coop](mailto:data@uk.coop).

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## Sources of data

The dataset is compiled from the following sources:

- Annual returns submitted by registered societies to the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA)
- Annual returns and accounts submitted by companies to Companies House. Data may come direct from Companies House or via an intermediary, such as Endole.
- Statements of accounts published on organisations' websites
- Annual returns submitted by Co-operatives UK members
- Department of Education data on school finances
- Prudential Regulation Authority data on credit unions finances
- From federal organisations and other collaborating organisations, including the Community Shares Unit and Co-operative College.

Where possible the source of economic data is identified in the dataset. For some historical data, where this was not recorded, the dataset will identify the source as 'Historical'.

For a very small number of organisations the data we use in our published aggregate statistics is not openly available and we do not have permission to publish it. For example, unincorporated co-ops, whose accounts are not submitted to a registrar. In these cases we redact the entry from the dataset and include an aggregate total of all such data.

## Frequency of issue

"2022-06" is the current issue, the twentieth public release of the datasets. The next planned update is December 2022.

Updates are published at [uk.coop/resources/open-data](https://uk.coop/resources/open-data).

## Limitations of the dataset

Co-operatives UK utilises many different sources of information and seeks to identify and monitor all co-operatives. As there is no single legal definition of a co-operative in the UK, we may not be aware of all co-operatives registered under different corporate forms. As a consequence, there may be some co-ops missing from the dataset.

### **Dormant, dissolved and deregistered co-operatives**

Where a co-operative has voluntarily deregistered, this is included in the data alongside the date of removal from the register.

Where a co-operative has been removed from the mutuals register by the FCA the deregistration date does not usually represent the date that the organisation ceased trading. These are often the result of a purge of the register, causing misleading spikes in historical trends. To prevent this, these organisations are excluded from all years in the dataset.

Where an organisation is shown as dormant by the registrar it is usually not possible to pinpoint when it ceased trading and so it is excluded from all years in the dataset.

### **Comparison with previously published figures**

To maintain the accuracy and coverage of the dataset, Co-operatives UK constantly revises historical figures as new or more recent data becomes available. This may include adding or removing organisations from the dataset. If you are performing comparisons, it is recommended that you only compare within the same edition of the dataset. Comparisons between different editions of the dataset or with previously published data may distort time-series trends.

### **Year of reporting**

The reporting year runs from 1st February to 31st January.

Where organisational figures for a reporting year are not available, the data is substituted for the next most recent data. For example, if data for the 2018 financial year has not yet available, it would be substituted with 2017.

There is a delay between an organisation's financial year end and the data being published by the registrar. For the FCA this is up to 7 months, for Companies House it is up to 9 months.

## **Explanation of Datasets and Indicators**

Co-operatives UK publishes 2 datasets, Co-operative Organisations and Economic Data

### **Co-operative Organisations Dataset**

This dataset contain data on co-operative organisations in the UK and includes the following indicators.

#### **CUK Organisation ID**

This is Co-operatives UK's unique identifier for the organisation. This is the primary ID used to link between datasets and trace updates. Where ever possible is should be retained in an data used and not amended.

#### **Registered Number**

The unique identifier allocated by the legal registrar. Note that this is not necessary unique in the dataset as different registrars use different numbering systems.

#### **Registrar**

Derived from the legal form, this indicates who the registrar for the organisation is.

#### **Registered Name/Trading Name**

Registered name provides the name of the organisation as recorded by the legal registrar. The trading name maybe different if the organisation provides good/services under a different name.

#### **Legal Form**

Indicates the registered legal form of the society

#### **Registered address, country and region**

The country and region that accompanies each organisation is determined from the organisation's registered address. This indicates only where the organisation is registered and not the country/region where trade was transacted.

UK Nation indicates the devolved nation the organisation is registered in (i.e. England, Wales, Scotland, NI or Channel Islands).

### **Sector**

Where possible, organisations are classified using UK 2007 standard industry classification codes. For convenience, the code is accompanied by the appropriate code description, with up to 5 levels of detail.

The source of the classification code may be:

- The most recent annual return or statement of accounts submitted to a registrar
- Keyword analysis of the organisation name
- Co-operatives UK knowledge of organisation

Detailed information about UK SIC 2007 can be found at the [Office for National Statistics](#).

### **Sector - Simplified, High Level**

To complement the sector, which uses hierarchical SIC codes, Co-operatives UK produces a simplified, high level and non-hierarchical form of classification. It highlights areas most prominent in the co-operative sector and is subject to review and change over time.

This classification is derived from the SIC code and contains the following categories:

- Agriculture
- Arts and Culture
- Digital, Media and Communication
- Education
- Energy and Environment
- Finance
- Food service, Accommodation and Pubs
- Health and Social Care
- Housing
- Manufacturing
- Membership Associations, Social Clubs and Trade Unions
- Professional and Legal Services
- Retail
- Sports and Recreation
- Transport
- Other

### **Website**

Where available, a link to the organisation's website.

### **Statistical Geographic Areas**

The data is obtained from [postcodes.io](#) and is subject to additional licencing restrictions, which can be viewed at [postcodes.io/about](#)

For more details about the geographic areas, please see <https://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/geography/ukgeographies>

## Ownership Classifications

Indicates who the members of the co-operative are. The following classifications are used:

Member type	Description	Examples
Co-operatives	The members of the co-operative are themselves co-operatives	Co-operatives UK
Community of Interest	The members are individuals or organisations who have a common interest or characteristic that defines their membership, which may or may not be a geographical community	Energy co-operatives, community shops, local asset purchasing co-operatives, supporters trusts
Consumers	The members are individuals who purchase goods or services from the co-operative	Consumer retail societies, social clubs and societies, sports clubs
Employee Trust	The members are employees with at least a 75% stake in ownership via a trust or similar legal entity	Often but not always employee buyout schemes
Enterprises	The members are legal entities (excluding self-employed individuals) that use the co-operative to collectively support or conduct their business activities	Agricultural co-operatives
Multi-Stakeholder	The membership is made up of multiple member categories, including individuals and/or businesses who join the co-operative to collectively work towards a common aim	School trusts, leisure trusts, housing associations
Self-Employed	The members are individuals who use the co-operative to collectively support or conduct their business activities	Freelancer co-operatives, collective business services purchasing
Tenants	The members are individuals who rent directly, or have shared ownership in a property or multiple properties	Tenant-run housing co-operatives, residents' associations
Workers	The members are individuals who work for and share ownership of the co-operative	Retail worker co-operatives

## Registered Status

Live or Dead. Dead organisations are only included if they were live in the last 5 years.

## Incorporation Date

For incorporated organisations, the date the organisation was officially incorporated as reported by their registrar.

## Dissolved Date

For incorporated organisations that have ceased to exist, the date the organisation was officially dissolved/liquidated as reported by their registrar.

## Co-operative Economy Dataset

This is a time-series dataset containing the most recent 5 years of economic data for many co-operative organisations. It should be used in conjunction with the Co-operative Organisations dataset using the CUK Organisation ID field to relate the two datasets.

### Turnover

The annual sales volume net of all discounts and sales taxes.

Where turnover is represented by commission, the figure is substituted with throughput. Throughput is the total of the gross income on which the commission was earned. This is to ensure that it is possible to compare organisations in different sectors.

### Profit before tax

The amount of profit after payment of all expenses and distributions, but before payment of corporation tax.

### Member/shareholder funds

The net assets comprising the value of share capital plus the accumulated reserves.

### Memberships

The number of memberships is calculated using the total number of members for all organisations where the totals are available.

### Employees

The headcount of employees, incorporating both part-time and full-time employees where the figures are available.

### Is Most Recent?

Indicates that this is the most recent year of data for this organisation in the dataset.

### Year End Date

The year end date of the accounting period for which the figures were reported.

### Economic Year

The year of the Co-operatives UK economy report in which the data are included. Where previous year's figures have been used in the absence of more up to date numbers, a record is provided for each year the data were used.

### Source

The original source of the economic data, typically the registrar or direct contact with the organisation.

### GVA(beta)

GVA seeks to measure the value added through intermediate consumption involved in production/service provision against the sales value of the product. (operating profit (pre-tax) + Employee costs + depreciation)



## License

The dataset is made available under the Open Data Commons Attribution Licence (ODC-By v 1.0.) By accessing the dataset you are agreeing to accept this license.

The license can be viewed at [opendatacommons.org/licenses/by/1-0/](https://opendatacommons.org/licenses/by/1-0/).

## Suggestions

The release of the co-operative economy dataset as Open Data is the result of extensive work over recent years to improve the accuracy and coverage of data on the co-operative sector. This work continues and future releases will see further improvements in the quality of the dataset. We welcome any feedback and any corrections to [data@uk.coop](mailto:data@uk.coop).

## Changes and Releases

2015-06	Initial public release
2016-06	Second release <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Gross Sales indicator, which was only reported for 20 societies, has been removed.</li><li>• Additional indicators have been added for: Ownership Classification, Sector - Simplified, High Level, Legal Form, Registrar and Administrative Areas.</li><li>• The CSV has been split into economic and organisational datasets</li><li>• A new outlets dataset published</li></ul>
2017-06	Third release
2017-10	Fourth Release
2018-03	Fifth Release <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Economic data for individual Credit Unions removed.</li></ul>
2018-06	Sixth Release
2018-09	Seventh Release
2018-12	Eighth Release
2019-03	Ninth Release
2019-06	Tenth Release
2019-08	Eleventh Release <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• GVA measure added</li><li>• Financial data and organisational births/deaths after 31 Jan of the current financial year no longer included to bring the year in line with previous economic years.</li></ul>
2020-01	Twelfth Release <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Addition of website field to organisation dataset</li><li>• Reverted to including birth/deaths after 31 Jan.</li><li>• Addition of Outlet ID field to outlet dataset</li></ul>
2020-03	Thirteenth Release
2020-06	Fourteenth Release
2020-09	Fifteenth Release

## Changes and Releases

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|---------|---------------------|---|
| 2020-12 | Sixteenth Release   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Addition of various geographic values to organisation dataset</li></ul> |
| 2021-03 | Seventeenth Release |   |
| 2021-06 | Eighteenth Release  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Administrative Areas and Outlets datasets removed</li></ul>             |
| 2021-09 | Nineteenth Release  |   |
| 2022-06 | Twentieth Release   |   |