

Editorial

Welcome to the second issue of the Journal of Co-operative Studies to be published in association with the Plunkett Foundation.

Our paper on Rural Co-operation gives a review of the competition provisions of the Treaty of the European Union and national legislation and discusses their impact on the development and structures of agricultural co-operatives.

Included this issue I am pleased to extend the mutual activity using communications technology theme, started last time around by Malcolm Corbett. On this occasion, Bob Allen's response to the UK government's consultation exercise on knowledge funding may defy strict definition as a 'short' article, but readers should find it both extremely accessible and thought provoking.

Masao Ohya provides a fascinating review of latest developments within Japanese co-operatives, as they respond to shifting demographics. This was originally presented at the ICA's research conference in the far east during June 2000. The paper reports on health-care and well-being initiatives targeting the older generation and as the author notes, should be of interest to a wider international audience.

The last of our shorter articles provides an account of a study tour from Moscow to Beijing, taking in a number of co-operative experiences and exchanges along the way! Rowland Dale provides many interesting anecdotes from this part of the world. Rowland has played an important role in the work of this Society for a number of years.

The refereed section starts with Katarina Frieberg's paper on her research on the development of consumer co-operative membership in Malmo in Sweden and Newcastle upon Tyne in the North East of England.

Christian Kamlott and Dirk Schiereck have contributed a refereed paper in which they seek to measure the relationship between participation and performance in German co-operative banks, as mediated by the size of the organisation.

Our book review features Rita Rhodes with a lively analysis of Barbara Blaszac's 'The Matriarchs of England's Co-operative Movement'. Rita admits that her preconceived doubts prove unfounded, before describing the text as a 'heavyweight co-operative history.'

Once again, the journal is not short on variety. Enjoy !

James Bell
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