

Call for papers: Cooperatives in Times of Conflict and War: Robustness, Resilience, and Recovery

Guest editors

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Rationale and contribution

Cooperatives have long served as robust businesses for bringing together people with common aims, as well as for community economies to thrive. Cooperatives have also been organizational anchors and lifelines for communities facing conflict or war, offering democratic, member-driven mechanisms of survival, resilience, and social reconstruction (Birchall and Ketilson, 2009; Gordon Nembhard, 2014). From worker-recuperated enterprises in Argentina during economic collapse (Vieta, 2010; 2020; Azzellini and Vieta, 2026), to community cooperatives responding to state withdrawal during crises in Italy (Bianchi and Vieta, 2019), to pandemic survival and recovery (Merrien et al., 2023), ecological transitions of the economy (Huybrechts and Mertens, 2014; Bigi, Lomuscio and Vieta, 2026), and to the current situation in Ukraine (Ukraine Recovery Conference, 2025), scholarship consistently shows that cooperatives can stabilize local economies, rebuild trust, and foster inclusive development during periods of intense disruption (Birchall and Ketilson, 2009; Lewis and Conaty, 2012; Costa and Delbono, 2023; Equal Times, 2025).

Severe conflict—ranging from occupation, invasion, and armed conflicts—poses an even more acute set of challenges and opportunities. Recent documentation from Ukraine highlights how war destroys infrastructure, displaces citizens, disrupts supply chains, and intensifies financial and logistical precarity; yet it also reveals striking robustness and resilience within the cooperative sector and an emergent role for cooperatives in reconstruction efforts (Kutsyk et al., 2023; Bohdanov, Lazakovych and Savin, 2025; Ukraine Recovery Conference, 2025). This resilience builds upon a strong pre-conflict foundation of cooperative development in Ukraine's agricultural sector, which includes integrated dairy and grain supply chains, digital infrastructure, and

international organic markets (Bezus and Bilotkach, 2018; Volovyk and Pugach, 2018; Amelina and Bezus, 2020; Bezus et al., 2020). These experiences resonate with other global case studies—such as in Rwanda, Bosnia, Colombia, Syria—demonstrating that cooperatives can help rebuild socio-economic infrastructures and support recovery and peacebuilding by fostering trust, democratic governance, economic reintegration, and cross-community and even transnational collaboration (Emmanuel and MacPherson, 2007; Cooperatives Europe, 2019; COPAC, 2025; United Nations General Secretary, 2025).

As the global community navigates an era of acute and intersecting crises, conflict, and war, the cooperative model requires urgent, highly contextualized scholarly attention. The ongoing war in Ukraine highlights a profound reality: amidst the destruction of physical infrastructure, the severing of supply chains, and the deep, ongoing trauma of displacement, communities frequently turn to cooperative structures not merely as economic tools, but as essential mechanisms for localized agency, mutual care, and survival (Ukraine Recovery Conference, 2025). This lived reality of cooperative endurance under extreme precarity resonates with other profound global crises where cooperative networks undertake the arduous, everyday work of economic reintegration, and cross-community solidarity.

This special issue calls on researchers, cooperative practitioners, and policymakers to contribute empirical papers, case studies, and practice-oriented contributions on how cooperatives address and can help move beyond moments and places in crises, especially in times of conflict and war. The special issue will also dialogue with recent theoretical contributions on this theme, including research on cooperative resilience in crisis (Birchall and Ketilson, 2009; Costa and Delbono, 2023; Merrien et al., 2023), cooperative practice and theory from around the world (Gupta and Nath, 2024; Molefe, 2024), and revived interest in cooperatives as post-crises, alternatives-to-capitalist, or commons-based institutions (De Peuter and Dyer-Witthof, 2010; Vieta and Lionais, 2022). It builds on *JEOD's* historical engagement with cooperatives, crises, and community development (Vieta and Lionais, 2015; Campbell and Sacchetti, 2017; Sacchetti, Hammond Ketilson and Borzaga, 2023; Lomuscio, Raffaelli and Tortia, 2024) while contributing a timely, global, and multi-disciplinary perspective on cooperatives in contexts of war, conflict and post-conflict reconstruction.

Identification of research gaps and original contribution

This special issue advances organizational studies by challenging three critical gaps in how the academy understands conflict, resilience, and recovery, specifically regarding cooperatives:

- Existing literature largely observes cooperatives from the stability of the Global North or retrospective financial crises. This issue addresses the research gap surrounding acute, unfolding “polycrises”. By centering the lived realities of active war zones and displacement—particularly in Ukraine and other zones of war and conflict—we aim to document how cooperatives protect uprooted members and rebuild complex agricultural networks, IT infrastructures, and supply chains while crises and conflicts are actively raging (Volovyk and Pugach, 2018; Amelina and Bezus, 2020; Bezus et al., 2020).
- Post-conflict research typically focuses on macro-level state interventions or fleeing capitalist enterprises, leaving a blind spot where actual community resilience lives. We demonstrate that democratically run, grassroots organizations are not just temporary stopgaps. When states are overwhelmed and traditional markets fail, cooperatives provide the foundational scaffolding for sustainable socio-economic recuperation (Kutsyk et al., 2023; Prylipko, 2026).
- Historically, academic inquiry into war and conflict zones risks treating traumatized populations as passive subjects. By structurally uniting North American theorists with front-line Ukrainian cooperative practitioners the guest editors ensure a trauma-informed collection that recognizes those navigating crises and conflict not as data points, but as the active authors and architects of their own recovery.

Scopes and themes

The special issue will invite theoretical, empirical, practical, and policy-oriented contributions on topics such as:

- **Cooperative resilience during different types of conflict**, including maintaining production; coping with displacement; safeguarding physical and digital assets; and ensuring member, community, and territorial well-being.

- **Post-conflict reconstruction and recovery**, including cooperatives' role in rebuilding social balance, re-creating livelihoods and the economy, and supporting inclusive local governance.
- **Cooperatives and social cohesion**, drawing on interdisciplinary frameworks including cooperative and social and solidarity economy studies, economics and business, anthropology, sociology, political economy, development studies, and peace and conflict studies.
- **Gendered experiences** in conflict and war-affected cooperative development, particularly the roles of women's cooperatives in recovery.
- Cooperative practice and theory from around the world.
- **Policy frameworks, enabling environments, and ecosystems** for cooperative stabilization, and post-conflict and post-war reconstruction, including UN, ILO, and ICA recommendations.
- **Case studies** of cooperatives in Ukraine and other countries in Eastern Europe, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East.

Expected impact

This special issue aims to provide the first comprehensive, comparative body of scholarly work on cooperatives in conflict, war and post-conflict settings in *JEOD*, filling a significant gap in cooperative studies and related fields. It will bring visibility to emerging research communities—especially in Ukraine and other war-affected regions such as Eastern and Sub-Saharan Africa—while enriching theoretical debates on resilience, governance, and cooperative diversity. The issue aligns closely with *JEOD*'s mission to explore organizational diversity and the socio-economic contributions of democratic enterprises across varied contexts.

Submission process

The deadline for submission of extended abstract of 1,500 words (excluding references) is the 10th of January 2027. They should be submitted to the JEOD Editorial Office (jeod@euricse.eu). Please indicate in the headline that the submission is for the Special Issue "Cooperatives in times of conflict and war".

There will be an online informative meeting about the Special Issue and publication details after the evaluation of abstracts. Potential contributors are highly encouraged

to participate in the meeting, although participation is neither a guarantee nor a confirmation of acceptance of full-length papers for publication in the Special Issue.

Following the meeting, the deadline for submission of full-length papers, which will undergo an ordinary double-blind peer review process, is the 31th of May 2027 through Editorial Manager (www.editorialmanager.com/jeod). The Special Issue will be published in June 2028. All manuscripts should comply with submission guidelines and ethical standards of JEOD. Questions and informal enquiries on the Special Issue or submission procedures should be directed to the JEOD Editorial Office.

Important dates

Deadline for submission of extended abstracts (min. 1,500 words)	10 January 2027
Communication on evaluation of extended abstracts	31 January 2027
Deadline for submission of full papers	31 May 2027
Publication of Special Issue	June 2028

About JEOD

JEOD is an international scientific journal published by EURICSE since 2012. Distinguished by an interdisciplinary approach, it deepens and expands the study of different enterprise types and organizational models, including (but not limited to) social enterprises, cooperatives, mutuals, nonprofit organizations and foundations. It places strong emphasis on their institutional and socio-economic contexts, as well as on their organizational features, practices, stakeholders and the development of communities and localities.

JEOD is indexed in Scopus and published in a free open access format on its [website](http://jeod.euricse.eu).

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Monday 28th of September 2026