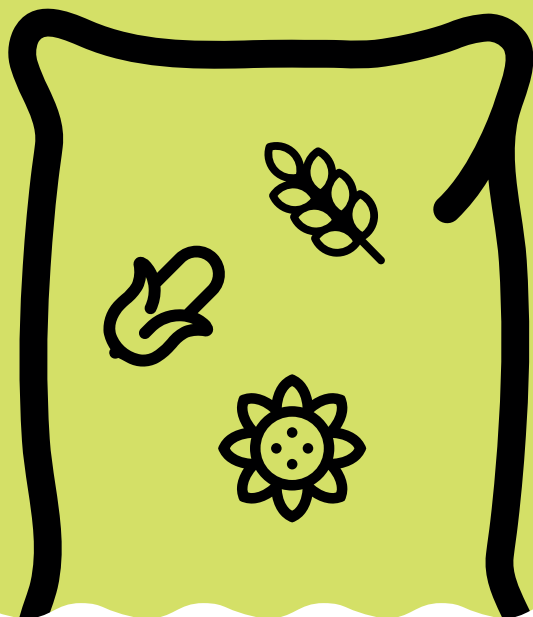


COOPERATIVE
UTRO



ADDRESS/COUNTRY

Town Belene, 119 Djimum Str., Municipality
Pleven - BULGARIA

**LEGAL
ORGANISATIONAL
FORM**

Agricultural cooperative

CONTACTS

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CONTEXT

/

INFO**YEAR OF CREATION**

1996

DESCRIPTION/MAIN ACTIVITIES

The Utro Production Cooperative, is located in the town of Belene, in North-Western Bulgaria.

The main activities of the cooperative concern:

- » the production of cereals;
- » the trading of agricultural products.

MAIN STAKEHOLDERS

member, clients, producers

Members, landlords and customers

GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

1-service/goods production; 2-markets/consumers/beneficiaries

The cooperative is located in Pleven municipality and it deals with the production, storage and sale of agricultural products. In 1996, Utro cooperative cultivated 1 500 decares agricultural land, in the present cultivates more than 3 000 decares agricultural land.

It has its own agricultural machinery and equipment and a modern material and technical base. In 2011, the cooperative bought a new combine harvester for the needs of its work.

REVENUE

The estimated revenues were about 260 000 leva (around 130 000 euros) in 2019.

**STRUCTURE/
OWNERSHIP**

OWNERSHIP STRUCTURE

who/how many: shareholders/owners/members/worker members/ donors, ...

The cooperative uses a rental base. It cultivates about 3650 decares of land, of which 150 own and 3500 with lease and rental agreements. The cooperative has 110 voting members and employs 9 people.

VOTING PROCESS

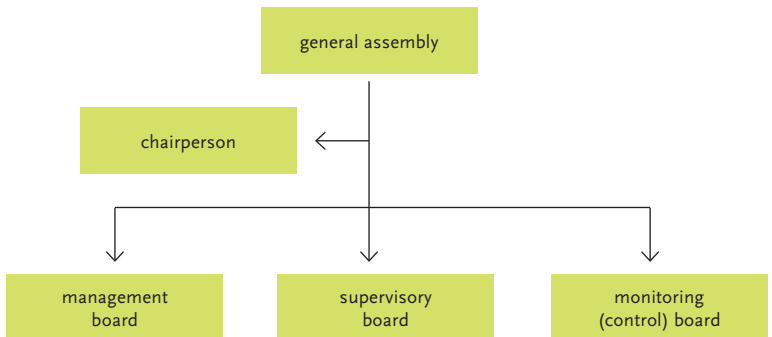
The voting and decision-making processes are carried out by the General Assembly by an absolute majority. The Chairperson is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the decisions taken and for informing the members about them.

BENEFITS OF BEING MEMBERS

Being members of the cooperative guarantees security and stability.

**GOVERNANCE
AND MEMBERS
PARTICIPATION**

STRUCTURE/ORGANISATION CHART



Main governing body - General Assembly.

Other bodies are the Management Board with five members, the Supervisory Board with three members and the Chairman of the Management Board.

ASSEMBLIES

how many, how, other assemblies than the General one

General Assembly includes all members in the cooperative.

BOARD COMPOSITION AND ORGANISATION

The Management Board is made up by 5 members, and the Supervisory Board by three members.

**COOPERATIVE
PRINCIPLES
BEST PRACTICES**

*Principles for which
the coop represents
a good practice*

PRINCIPLE 3. MEMBERS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

All members of the cooperative have equal shares of capital, regardless of the contributed assets. This makes the distribution of dividends meaningless; thus part of the profit is distributed as a bonus depending on the size of the shared land.

At least part of that capital is usually of common property of the cooperative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on subscribed capital as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing their cooperative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefitting members in proportion to their transactions with the co-operative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

PRINCIPLE 4. AUTONOMY & INDEPENDENCE

The cooperative was established under a project of Caritas - Switzerland. In 2007, Caritas resigned and since then the cooperative has been self-governing. The emergence and adoption of standards or procedures in industries is a type of public good. The early history of cooperatives in grading farm commodities for members demonstrates a mechanism of principles-as-constraints in making provision of this public good feasible.

PRINCIPLE 5. EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION

The cooperative provides education and training for its members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their co-operatives. They inform the general public - particularly young people and opinion leaders - about the nature and benefits of co-operation.

In the school year 2018 - 2019 in the cooperative were held about 30 open school hours with students from 6th and 7th grade from the school "Vasil Levski" – Belene.

PRINCIPLE 6. COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES

The cooperative serves its members most effectively and strengthens the cooperative movement by working together through local, national and regional structures.

For example, the cooperative helps individual farmers and also its members benefit from scale economies to lower their costs of acquiring inputs or hiring services such as storage and transport. The cooperative also supplies its members with agricultural inputs, credit and timely market information. It is a priority to provide training and support to all members and farmers.

PRINCIPLE 7. CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

The cooperative has a strong social responsibility approach in the municipality of Pleven. It provides social services and public goods to the population around.

The activities of the cooperative are focused on social and ecological innovation. Such as agro-ecological farming, good practices preserving the biodiversity and land shaft. The cooperative works more directly for poverty alleviation, environment sustainability, helping small farmers and businesses to diversify their activities, including innovative processes in their work.