

# Mondragon University, chosen to assess the Cooperative Training Institute of South Korea

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Mondragon University has been chosen to assess the setting up and development of the Cooperative Training Institute of Seoul, called Magic Bridge Co-operative Management Institute (HBM): an initiative promoted by approximately 400 small and micro-SMEs in South Korea, nearly all of them belonging to the food sector and which have set up themselves up as cooperatives. The aim is to sow the seeds of cooperativism in the country, train both companies and workers in the field of cooperativism and promote the creation of cooperatives by young unemployed people.

To seal this collaboration, an agreement was signed last Friday in Seoul, at the headquarters of this institute, between both entities. The agreement was signed by the Rector of Mondragon University, Iosu Zabala, and the President of the HBM Institute, Park Kyung-seo.

The cooperative values of Mondragon University and its experience in cooperativism as an innovative business model which allows the worker to be the owner of the company in which he/she works, have been some of the factors valued by the Cooperative Training Institute of Seoul in selecting Mondragon University in this project. The aim? To use as a model the experience of the cooperatives of Mondragon for the development of cooperatives in South Korea. Together with this, the particular educational model of the university and the research transfer have been other key factors in evaluating the offer of Mondragon University.

## Lines of collaboration

As from now, teachers from Mondragon University will train workers from South Korea in various questions related to Cooperativism: start up strategies, methods to implement cooperativism, etc. In addition, the agreement signed also contemplates the possibility of the training being extended to workers in East and South-east Asia.

Mondragon University is faced with an interesting challenge, that of sowing the seeds of cooperativism in a country without experience of working there and also of promoting in this society the entrepreneurial spirit necessary to start up new companies, services and ideas. In short, to transform the mentality of the country from an economic productive point of view to a more social model of economy.

Toward this end, the staff of Mondragon University will develop a training programme that adapts to the professional needs of the Korean workers and share with them experiences and good practices in the cooperative movement to contribute to training and strengthening the cooperative movement in Korea with a view to 2030.

