



Co-operative care for children



ITALY
MILAN



BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Spazio Aperto Servizi in Milan is a type A social co-operative, which provides social services. It span off from Spazio Aperto, a type B social co-operative providing work integration, in 1993. In 2016 it merged with another social co-operative, Aurora 2000.

It organises recreational and educational activities in 100 schools, promotes fostering, and counsels victims of trauma and child abuse. It provides home support to distressed adults and mediates in conflicts between parents and children. For people with disabilities, it provides residential and day care, summer camps, holidays and respite care.

80% of employees are women, and most work part-time. The working environment favours interpersonal relationships and sharing. The co-operative provides an attractive range of fringe benefits such as flexible working, early maternity leave and help with public transport season tickets and mortgage payments.

The co-operative has invested a lot in training, in both operations and management.



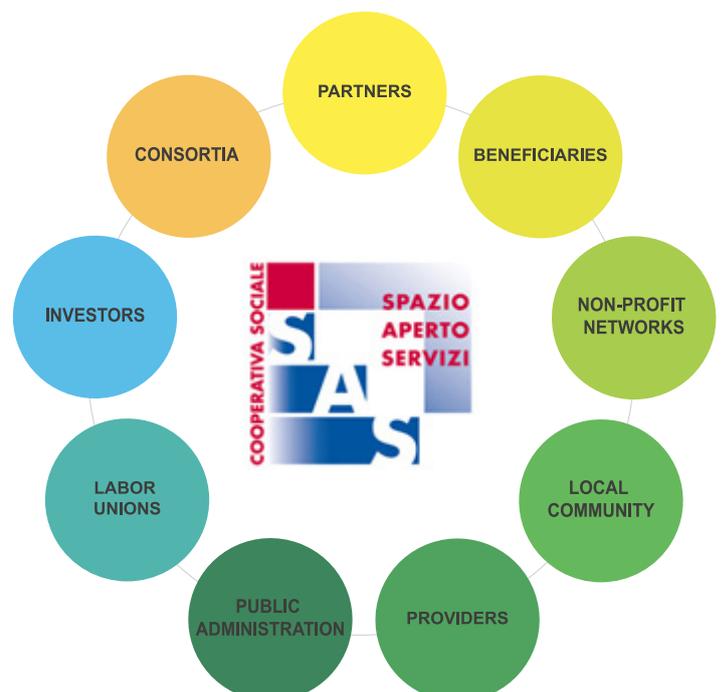
GOVERNANCE MODEL

SAS has 700 members, who work as educators, psychologist, consultants etc., and 150 volunteers. The sovereign body is the general assembly, which elects board members for three-year mandates.

Stakeholder participation is fundamental to the cooperative's entrepreneurial and social development. The cooperative considers as stakeholders everybody who is involved in its services and their development. The main objective is the co-creation and co-planning of services.

Internal stakeholders have the main role of contributing directly to the development of the cooperative. External stakeholders have the role of co-designing the services and products that the cooperative offers to meet our common goal.

Members' participation in the definition of the business plan helps to increase their motivation and commitment to pursuing the objectives set out in the plan, reduces absenteeism, staff turnover and burn-out, and increases the quality and customisation of the services the co-operative provides.





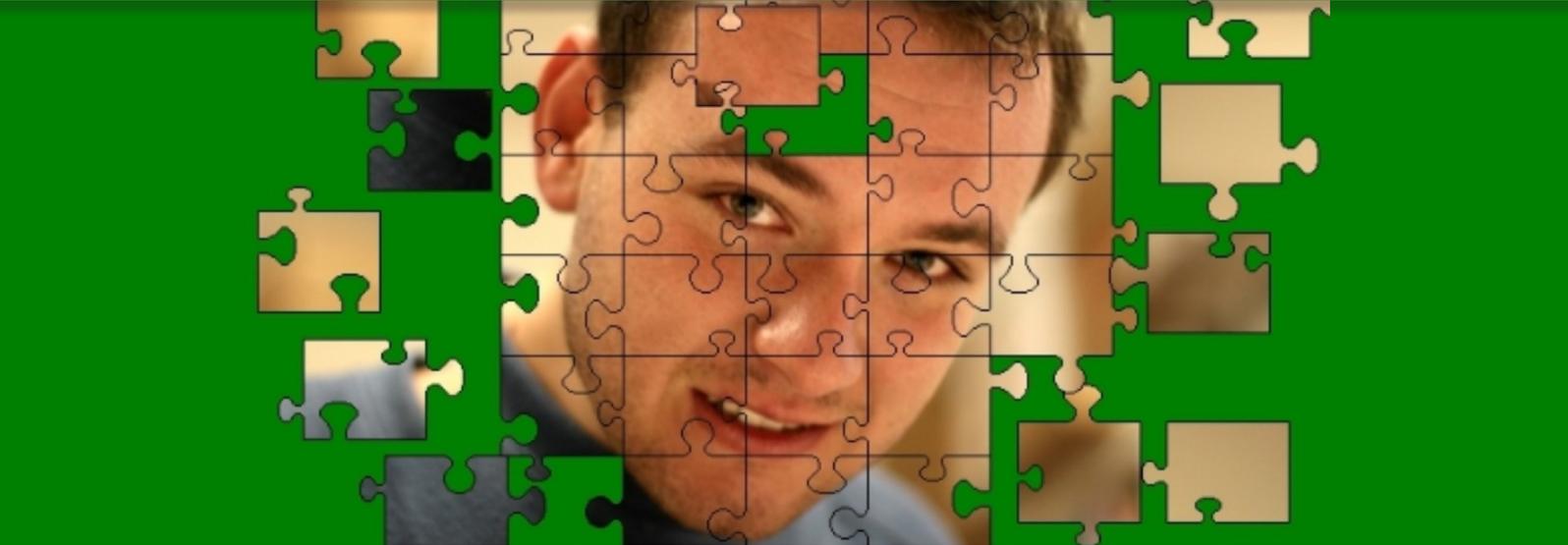
START DATE:
1993



LEGAL FORM:
Type A social co-operative



N° EMPLOYEES:
600



Beneficiaries are involved in the management of the service through a continuous dialogue, which aims to:

- Offer a personalised service which meets the real needs of the beneficiaries;
- Improve the service;
- Discover new business needs;
- Develop new activities which are co-designed with the beneficiaries in response to their needs, and carried out with their active participation.

SAS encourages worker participation by organising both the formal activities laid down in the rules, as well as informal activities to promote both socialisation and activity planning. Over the years it has also organised internal co-planning processes to collect proposals from all workers who wish to contribute. A very important aspect for the growth of the cooperative over its 25-year life has been the enhancement of each worker's specific skills and relationships.

In 2018, SAS held three formal assemblies, as well as a meeting to share the co-operative's new direction with members and local stakeholders. The best way to involve future members is for them to discuss its activities with the existing members. It offers new workers an induction course covering what it means to be a member of a social co-operatives, and of SAS in particular.



SOCIAL IMPACT

SAS improves the wellbeing of over 1,500 people every year, including adults with disabilities, children and young people in difficulty and parents.



STRENGTHS

- Has created 100 jobs and prevented rural depopulation.
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