



Co-operative care for children

www.spazioapertoservizi.org



ITALY
MILAN



START DATE:
1993



LEGAL FORM:
Type A social co-operative



N° EMPLOYEES:
600

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.



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.



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.

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

- Offer and improve a personalised service which meets the real needs of the beneficiaries;
- Discover new business needs and 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.



STRENGTHS

- Collaboration with various external stakeholders to meet citizens' needs.
- Involvement of workers by sharing development processes.
- Synergies with other companies through creating territorial alliances to manage services.



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