



## Addressing homelessness through recycling



**SLOVENIA**  
LJUBLJANA



### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

*Stara roba, nova raba* – which means ‘old things, new use’, is Slovenia’s first second-hand shop. It was set up in Ljubljana by homelessness charity Kralji ulice (Kings of the street). Today, as well as running the second-hand and antiques shop, the co-operative operates a moving and cleaning service. This span out of the second-hand business since the co-operative acquires items that are unwanted when people move house.

The enterprise was launched with the help of a €200,000 European Union grant. During the two-year project period it trained 12 people and created jobs for three of them. Since 2012 it has been self-supporting, working under the wing of Kralji ulice, and registered formally as a co-operative in 2016.

The shop sells pre-owned items such as books, clothes, furniture, toys, kitchen equipment and art which are donated by individuals and companies. Through the training and work experience it offers, the co-operative prepares homeless people for the labour market. Of its 16 workers, 14 are from disadvantaged groups, including the homeless, and between five and ten volunteers are also involved.

The co-operative turns over approximately €50,000 a year.



### GOVERNANCE MODEL

*Stara roba, nova raba* is registered as a co-operative and a social enterprise. Its sovereign body is the general assembly, which meets annually. Its president is the legally responsible person. There is an executive board and a supervisory board. The manager controls day-to-activities and also gives psychological and social support to the other workers.

All workers participate in operational decisions by means of two weekly meetings: one of these is for the six of workers who are members – those working in the shop – while the other is for the ten workers in the moving and cleaning service who are contract workers and do not have a vote. Both groups attend and speak in the assembly meetings, but only the

members have a vote. In fact the general assembly is open to the public, who again may not vote, but may speak – especially on the future development of the co-operative.

A monthly meeting is also held with an adviser (a psychologist) who helps the team to improve their communication skills.

The co-operative has no relationship with the trade unions.

Workers feel that the co-operative theirs and that they are working for themselves and for the common good. The governance model encourages slow, stable and sustainable growth and a strong social impact.



START DATE:  
2010



LEGAL FORM:  
Social co-operative



N° EMPLOYEES:  
16



## SOCIAL IMPACT

Stara Roba, nova raba represents a social innovation since it harnesses free and hitherto wasted resources to address the social problem of poverty and homelessness.

The second-hand shop provides employment and social integration for homeless people, reduces waste, raises environmental awareness, and enables people of limited means to buy items at affordable prices.



## STRENGTHS

- Strong involvement with local and wider community, and 'Kings of the Street'.
- Recognition by public, media and antiques trade.
- Inclusive and transparent decision-making.



## WEAKNESSES

- Low level public and institutional support limits the amount of support that can be offered to the workers.

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