



AGINTZARI

A co-operative umbrella for social services

www.agintzari.com



SPAIN
BILBAO



START DATE:
1977



LEGAL FORM:
Social co-operative



N° EMPLOYEES:
728

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

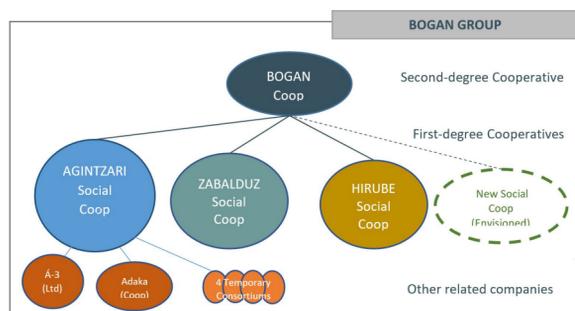
Agintzari is a social co-operative based in Bilbao which provides social services in four areas:

- community intervention: socio-education services;
- fostering and adoption;
- residential care for minors: centres, shelters and emancipation flats, including for young migrants;
- domestic violence, abuse and relationship conflicts: telephone and web helpline, socio-educational services, residential care and psychology.



In Basque, agintzari means 'promise'. The organisation started life as an association in 1977, and converted to become the first social co-operative in the Basque Country in 1991. In 2000 the Basque government declared Agintzari to be of public utility, and growth has been steady since then.

As a result of the economic crisis of 2008-14, Agintzari faced the threat of for-profit companies moving into the Basque social services market.



Agintzari's response to this has been to develop a modular growth model – to divide into several separate but co-ordinated companies. Its aim was to occupy all the niches of the market, while maximising agility, flexibility and innovation capacity. Its strategy is based on taking over and turning round social service companies that are in trouble, by transforming them into worker co-operatives. To co-ordinate the actions of the various co-operatives, in 2019 it has established an umbrella co-operative called Bogan (which means 'rowing').

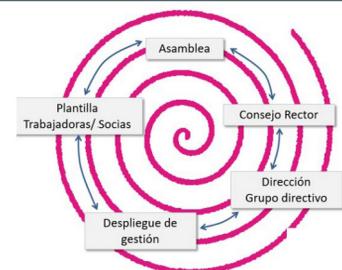
GOVERNANCE MODEL

Horizontality and participation are core values of the co-operative. The governance model is based on three intertwined areas:



- values and culture: these include maximum co-operativisation, transparency and accountability, social commitment, social, economy, equality and interco-operation;
- governance and participation: all members spend at least 40 hours in each year in participation fora such as: 2 or 3 assemblies per year, for strategic decision-making; informal spaces open to all staff; the governing council, elected by all members, management teams, committees, project teams, strategic think tanks, reflection and action groups;
- the management model: this is based on reconciling the needs of three groups of stakeholders: staff, users and public bodies. This relies on excellence, serving the collective interest, finding win-win solutions, and sharing commitment.

Governance and Participation



Out of the current workforce of 728, 257 workers (35%) are members.

SOCIAL IMPACT

Agintzari has achieved a leadership position in social services in the Basque Country. It has expanded its geographical coverage to the four provinces of Vizcaya, Gipuzkoa, Álava and Navarra, and in 2017 served nearly 29,000 people – nearly 59% of all women and minors in the population. Over the last ten years the number of jobs it provides has risen by 228% from 222 to 728, and working conditions are better than the collective bargaining agreement (as regards salary, social benefits, work-life balance etc.)

The co-operative's economic impact has also multiplied, with turnover having risen by 264% from €7 million to €25 million over the same period.



The co-operative group also includes a number of smaller complementary co-operatives and companies. The group now turns over €25 million a year.

STRENGTHS

- Thoroughly thought-out strategy for growth by acquisition.
- Recognition of public utility by the region.



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