



Social enterprise turns round a failing business



CZECH
REPUBLIC
PRAGUE



BRIEF DESCRIPTION

In 2011, the Atlant association, which provides work and housing for mentally disabled people, contacted the mental health charity Fokus Praha to take over a laundry business which was no longer profitable. Fokus took over and renovated the premises, installed new equipment, and created a team comprising some of the existing employees along with some new members.

The business now employs 14 people, of whom 11 have a mental handicap and two a physical handicap. It carries out washing, pressing, ironing and minor mending, catering both to the neighbourhood and also to customers further afield through a collection and delivery service.

Trading income is €52,000 a year, which covers 47% of costs, with the balance being made up by €56,000 a year in support from the Job Centre.



GOVERNANCE MODEL

The laundry is a department of Fokus Praha, an NGO which delegates management to its Centre for Social Enterprises. The manager works closely with the deputy manager and the duty manager, and reports to the director of the Centre for Social Enterprises.

The jobs within the team include a supervisor, a deputy supervisor, a duty manager, an assistant and a driver. The only non-handicapped person is currently the laundry supervisor, and all the other employees participate actively in the operational activities. All employees are in direct contact with customers. They receive regular information on how the company is performing, and have a chance to express their opinions. Participation is encouraged through informal events such as excursions and Christmas parties. They are allocated jobs that match their capacities, and are paid according to their work results.

Communication within the company is based on an

ethical code, which is obligatory for all employees. Disabled employees are recruited in the local area, and there are no formal admission criteria. If an employee wishes to leave the laundry, he or she can get help to find another job from Fokus's employment support team, or may be offered a place in another of Fokus's social enterprises (Fokus also operates a sewing, assembly and packaging workshop and a gardening workshop).

The disabled employees benefit from medical and social services provided by Fokus Praha.

Stakeholders other than employees, such as customers, are not formally represented in the enterprise's governance.

No data on social impact are collected.



START DATE:
2011



LEGAL FORM:
Department within an
association



N° EMPLOYEES:
14



SOCIAL IMPACT

The laundry provides jobs for people with a mental disability.



STRENGTHS

- Provides jobs for people with a mental disability
- Made a failing business profitable
- Good location
- Personal relationships with customers
- Support from Fokus Praha's Centre for Social Enterprises



WEAKNESSES

- Cramped premises
- Dependence on Job Centre support

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