



Expansion into multiple activities for work integration



ITALY
MILAN



BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Spazio Aperto, based in Milan, offers public authorities and private companies an integrated service system to help them to integrate socially disadvantaged people into society.

The cooperative was founded in 1984 by a group of parents, operators and volunteers, who met through the National Association of Families of Children and Subnormal Adults (ANFFAS), and shared the daily problems of people in difficult situations, and in particular those with severe mental handicaps. Following the introduction of Law No. 381 of 8 November 1991, in 1992 it became a type B social co-operative, focusing on employing disadvantaged people to produce goods and services. Social service activities were spun off into a separate co-operative, Spazio Aperto Servizi.

The co-operative turns over €17.7 million, a figure which grew by 11% in 2018. The share of sales to the private sector has continued to grow, and is now three-quarters. It structures its services into nine areas:

- Throw & Use: waste management service for businesses
- Resource Platform: ecological platforms for public authorities, including waste collection, open space management and of environmental education and awareness initiatives for schools and citizens.
- Social Hub: 'Share Now' car-sharing, fleet management, parking and intermodal systems
- WellnessLinks: a 'butler' service to ensure employees' welfare and work-life balance by carrying out personal services such as home repairs, laundry, document collection, paying fines, shopping, car management and personal care
- Cleaning: design and delivery of cleaning services
- Social Poles: assembly and packaging of small items such as electronics, ball bearings, gadgets, cosmetics, jewellery, games and stationery
- Technology & Products: equipment, maintenance and products for cleaning and accident prevention
- Skilled at the Right Place: design of the work inclusion process for disadvantaged people
- Global Service: facilities management including office management, reception, archiving, data

entry, handymen, maintenance and security
The two largest sectors are cleaning and mobility.

In its activities, two production processes go along in parallel: the production of commercial services and the integration of people with difficulties. In recent years, more and more people are being referred to Spazio Aperto suffering from multiple problems, which makes the job of integrating them more complex. The co-operative devises an individualised integration path for each person, which is designed to develop:

- the interpersonal skills need to enter and remain in a complex work environment
- work, learning, task execution and results monitoring skills appropriate to the co-operative's activities
- professional skills
- personal autonomy
- a sense of responsibility with respect to the operational tasks and the organisational areas in which the person is inserted

It works with other enterprises to expand into new activities, such as social farming, which broaden the range of insertion opportunities it can offer, and thus help it serve more people.





START DATE:
1984



LEGAL FORM:
**Work integration social
co-operative**



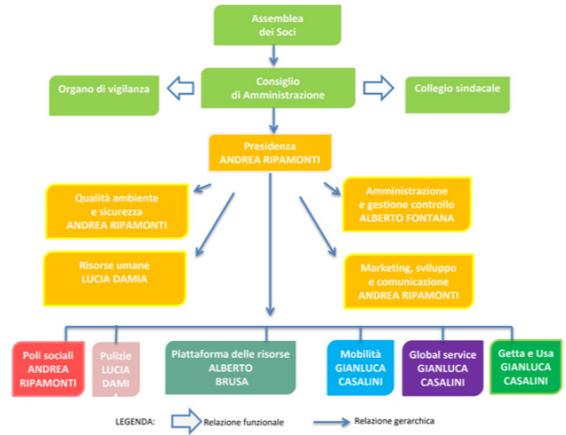
N° EMPLOYEES:
739



GOVERNANCE MODEL

Spazio Aperto has 248 members, of whom 236 are workers in the co-operative, 11 are volunteers, and the remaining one is an organisation. There are also 503 employees, bringing the total workforce to 739. The workforce grew by 86 between 2017 and 2018. 216 workers are legally defined as disadvantaged.

The co-operative has a board of directors comprising five members, and an audit committee, both of which are elected for periods of three years. In 2016 it also created a supervisory body. Members receive a wage bonus, bonuses for children, discounted public transport and free baby hygiene products. The co-operative also provides its employees with free psychological support interviews, reduced-rate bank loans, and higher medical reimbursements.



SOCIAL IMPACT

Spazio Aperto uses its comprehensive social report (bilancio sociale) as a tool to raise quality, to plan, and to monitor its performance.

It offers individually tailored integration paths, and guarantees working conditions that respect individual dignity.

The co-operative has achieved certification for both the ISO 9001 quality standard and the ISO 14000 environmental standard. It contributes to the sustainable development of the community, by promoting cohesion, social inclusion and volunteering.



STRENGTHS

- operates in multiple activities to provide a wide range of insertion opportunities that suit beneficiaries' needs
- ability to work in co-operation with other companies has enabled it to build supply chains and expand into new activities
- all employees receive corporate benefits and continuing education



WEAKNESSES

- need to keep the balance between the efficient production of high-quality services and the effectiveness of the workers' social integration
- need to improve services and innovate

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