

*Pre-School
The Elderly
The Disabled
The Mentally III
Minors
Young People
and Drug Addicts
Employment
Policies*

Arca



Arca
COOPERATIVA SOCIALE



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Presentation

The Arca cooperative was established in 1983 and is concerned with the management of social, welfare and educational services which it designs and provides privately or part funded by public administrations. Arca operates in the provinces of Florence, Livorno, Lucca and Pistoia, with services aimed at the elderly, minors, the disabled, drug users, pre-school children and people with psychiatric problems.

Through its many projects and programmes, the Arca cooperative pursues the general well-being of the community and the promotion and integration of its citizens. It is organised as an enterprise which combines the principles of cooperation, participation and democracy.

To that effect, it has taken shape over the years as a non-profit social enterprise, recognized at both national and EU level for its implementation of social policies attentive to local needs and promotion of new employment.

Arca is a member of the Metropoli consortium which unites type A and B cooperatives ^{1*} in the metropolitan area between the provinces of Florence, Prato and Pistoia. The objective of the consortium is to promote its cooperative members by taking care of their project planning and management. In addition, the cooperative is also a member of Pegaso, which was created to form a stable network for development and innovation among the Tuscan cooperatives. It strives to boost the greatest resource of the cooperatives in Tuscany, namely the broadness and diversification of the type A and B cooperatives that operate in the region to build welfare community strategies in a dynamic and active relationship with the local areas.

1 Type A cooperatives manage social, health and educational services; Type B cooperatives perform activities to enable disadvantaged people to find work.*

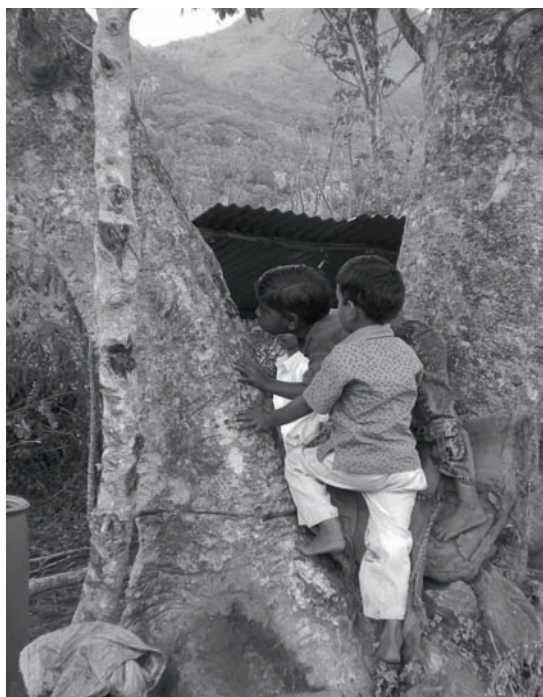
Arca Cooperative is a member of the National League of Cooperatives and Mutual Aid Associations.

Arca has promoted and sponsored the establishment of two type B cooperatives - Ulisse and Nuova Chianti - whose aim is to get disadvantaged people into the world of work.

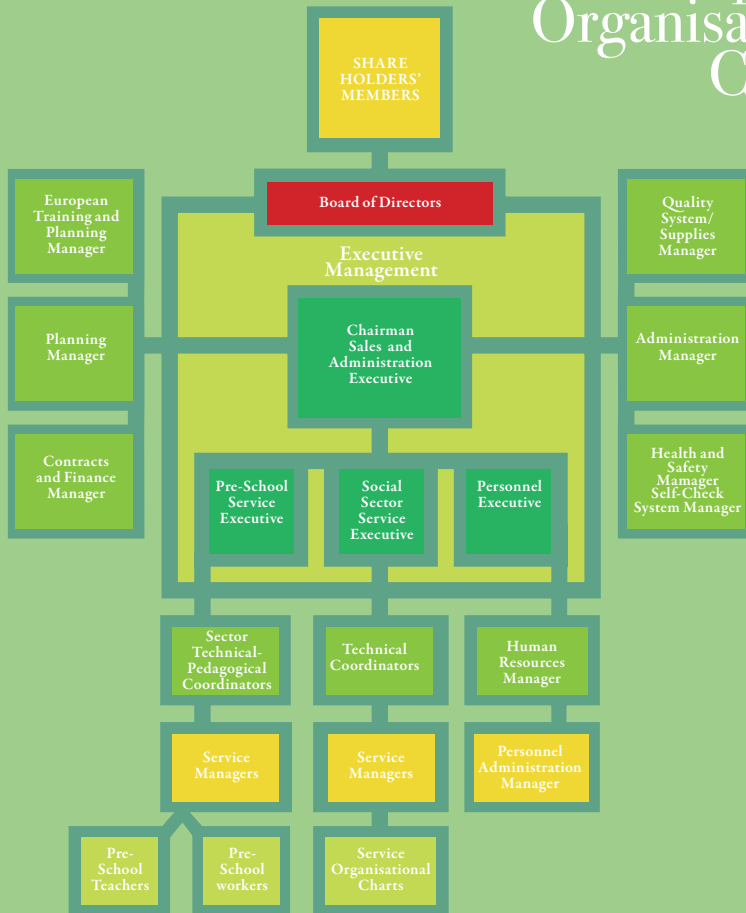
Responsibility and quality. These are the basic factors underlying an activity – the management of social, health and educational services – that has been going on for more than twenty years. Responsibility regards: the cooperative staff who are aware that they perform services that have a profound influence on the quality of life of a large part of the beneficiaries; the organisation and management of the services, as can be seen by the staff training, minimum levels of turnover and guarantee of top health and safety conditions for everyone. As a result, we get a high-quality service, which is not just what the cooperative says, it is recognised and perceived by its users. Responsibility and quality. This is what sets Arca Cooperative apart as a reliable partner for the whole community in the creation of a sustainable welfare project.

Arca draws up its financial statements each year with an eye on responsibility, transparency and the involvement of its shareholders and the community.

*No matter how insignificant the thing
you have to do, do it as well as you can,
give it as much of your care and attention
as you would give to the thing you regard
as most important. For it will be by those
small things that you shall be judged.
(Mahatma Gandhi)*



Company Organisation Chart



Arca employs around 800 people, most of whom are shareholders in the cooperative. To manage its services, the cooperative employs personnel with the professional qualifications required by the regional and national standards. Furthermore, Arca Cooperative also pays extreme attention to training and refresher courses to increase its staff's level of professionalism, making investments in both economic and human terms.

Quality Policy

In view of providing the services' end users with an absolute guarantee of high-quality service planning and provision processes, Arca has UNI EN ISO 9001:2008 quality certification. The system adopted guarantees that the client institutions can effectively keep check on the service management. At the same time it guarantees maximum transparency in the service provision thanks to back-up from operational protocols and survey tools built according to the contents of the UNI EN ISO standard. Principally, Arca's quality system complies with the regional and national laws and all the other standards applicable to its service management:

The Arca cooperative has come up with a departmental set-up to ensure the overall governance of the services that it runs. At the top management level (which sets the quality goals) specific attention is paid to monitoring the overall performance of the services provided. This concerns the following areas:

- Staff vocational training/refresher courses, starting with "obligatory" training;
- Project continuity and limiting staff turnover;
- Safety and prevention of risks in the workplace;
- Flexible organisation;
- Exploring the degree of satisfaction on the part of clients and users;
- Quantity and importance of involving local resources;
- Creating general corrective/preventive measures for specific problems;

Certification body	Aim of certificate
UNITER (certificate N°525)	Planning, management and provision of educational services aimed at pre-school children; residential, semi-residential and learning support services for the disabled; residential and semi-residential services for people with mental problems; meeting centres for minors and young people; residential and semi-residential services for the elderly; residential services for people with addiction problems; home help services for disadvantaged people (the elderly, disabled, handicapped, mentally ill and minors), services aimed at job placement for disadvantaged people.

In its social service management, Arca is in line with the provisions in the regional regulations on accreditation (Regional Law no. 82 dated 28/12/2009 "Accreditation of facilities and services to citizens in the integrated social system")

Social accreditation is a system to guarantee high-quality services. Its aim is to maintain and improve quality and it is the public recognition that Arca possesses the quality requirements set out by the law.

Operational Sectors



Specially for Children

Pre-school

Arca Cooperative has been running nurseries, educational playgroups, parent and child centres, childminding services, corporate crèches and other additional services both on behalf of numerous municipal administrations and privately since 1989. It manages a total of around 60 services.

Over the years, Arca has built up strong planning skills which have put it in the position to provide an ever-better response to the needs and requests from the local institutions and the families themselves. It promotes innovative services which combine a high quality of education with flexible and wide-ranging solutions.

Arca Cooperative has expanded through initiatives whose common denominator is the desire to create top quality projects integrated into the community, while striving to assume increasingly broad management responsibility.



*All grown-ups were children
first. (But few remember it).
(Antoine de Saint-Exupéry)*

The Education Project

Arca Cooperative's education project supports the idea that children are active individuals, who make their own experiences. It is based on the following methodological pointers:

Constant attention to the functions and organisation of the educational setting

Every environment specifically aimed at pre-school children has to take into account the children's needs and skills and provide corresponding elements and opportunities. The features and characteristics of the setting help both to generate experiences lived in safety and trust and to stimulate the children's natural tendency to tackle new experiences.

Attention to timetables and routines during the day

The day is organised into well-defined moments to offer stability and regularity for children and parents. By respecting a pattern of different moments in the day fitting in with the children's routines, they learn and acquire new skills in a situation that is both pleasant and productive.

Socialising among the children

Children begin to interact at an early age. This interaction, as well as the development of the children's identities and affections, is made part of the process of structuring and acquiring knowledge.

Settling in the children and their families

The process to discover and get to know the new setting has to take place in a gradual and progressive way, in small groups supported by a person who is a figure of reference. Some significant elements such as the layout of the environment, routines and experiences will encourage relationships with other adults and children. They make the passage from the family to the new setting easier while respecting the time needed for the children and their families to settle in.

Family participation as a fundamental element in fulfilling the project

Ongoing and reciprocal interaction between the different contexts where the children grow up becomes an essential factor in fulfilling the project. As a result, the child's life experiences can be integrated in the project and a network of relationships created that support them in their growth.



Links with the community

Raising awareness of the education project among the whole community through shared experiences can help to spread an infant culture based on dialogue and seeing differences in a positive light. The services become an open educational community.

Carrying through the education project to infant school

Carrying through the education project from pre-school services to infant schools lays the foundations for creating an ongoing programme for the 0-6 age group.

Observation, documentation and verification

The tools adopted as the basis of the educational work are observation (observational method and active listening), documentation (first, for the project and then, as a log book) and verification (for information and sharing).

These three inseparable factors make up a log book to promote and add to the experiences gained and to lead to comparison between the various educational experiences.





Senior citizens



The Elderly

The cooperative runs various facilities for the elderly, with a total of around 10 services. They include nursing homes, care homes and day centres, with particular attention on the problems connected with Alzheimer's and senile dementia.

In many municipalities, Arca runs home help services for elderly people who are both self-sufficient and not (around 1000 users). The priority goal is to maintain the old people's link with the local area, family and friends.

Arca Cooperative is also part of the network of offices providing information for the elderly operating in various municipalities in the province of Florence.

*What we receive enables
us to survive, but what we
give enables us to live.
(Carl Gustav Jung)*

The Disabled

Arca organises and runs programmes aimed at the integration of disabled people through rehabilitation projects both in the family and in external facilities (1 home and 5 social centres).

The many activities offered in the facilities respond to individualised projects prepared in partnership with the competent group of professional figures. With specialists and social workers, their aim is to enable the disabled people regain their remaining capacities, maintain basic self-sufficiency, develop autonomy and personal skills and build important relationships.

The home help service is aimed at disabled people who are in physical, mental and family conditions that do not enable them to lead a sufficiently autonomous life. It is part of the set of services aimed at facilitating interpersonal relationships and, as far as possible, at avoiding institutionalisation. As well as home help, the service also includes care activities and learning support inside and outside school.



On Disability



What we need is a cup of understanding, a barrel of love, and an ocean of patience.
(Francesco Guicciardini)

Accepting Diversity



The Mentally III

As part of the residential health care programmes set out by Italian law no. 32/1994, Arca runs social welfare services within the Florence local health authority facilities. In particular, the cooperative operates inside day centres, autonomy groups and residential facilities with a total of around 7 services. The latter are divided into therapy and rehabilitation facilities, social rehabilitation facilities with a high level of care and social rehabilitation facilities with less care assistance. Owing to the complexity of the problem of mental health, a specific Project Objective needs to be drafted to define the specific objectives and the types of intervention. The general aim is to improve the quality of life and social integration of the people with mental illnesses.

Arca also runs home nursing care services for psychiatric patients with the objective of supporting families to avoid institutionalisation and hospitalisation and to promote autonomy and the development of important relationships.



Educate



*There is an island of opportunity
in the middle of every difficulty.
(James Boswell)*

Minors

Arca has a support programme to ensure the right of minors to be educated in the family through prevention, promotion and support activities. The cooperative is committed to increasing the network of hosting facilities, with projects for running educational communities and day centres.

In addition to the home and school educational services, Arca also runs the following residential and semi-residential facilities: “Casa Sassuolo” and “Mandorlo” educational communities for minors



*Man's main task in life is
to give birth to himself.
(Erich Fromm)*

Support

Young People and Drug Addicts

For many years Arca has planned and implemented projects in the field of preventing various forms of youth hardship. It operates in Youth Centres and meeting centres as well as in individual support activities. Arca is also active in the area of drug addiction and runs facilities aimed at the rehabilitation and reformation of drug addicts.

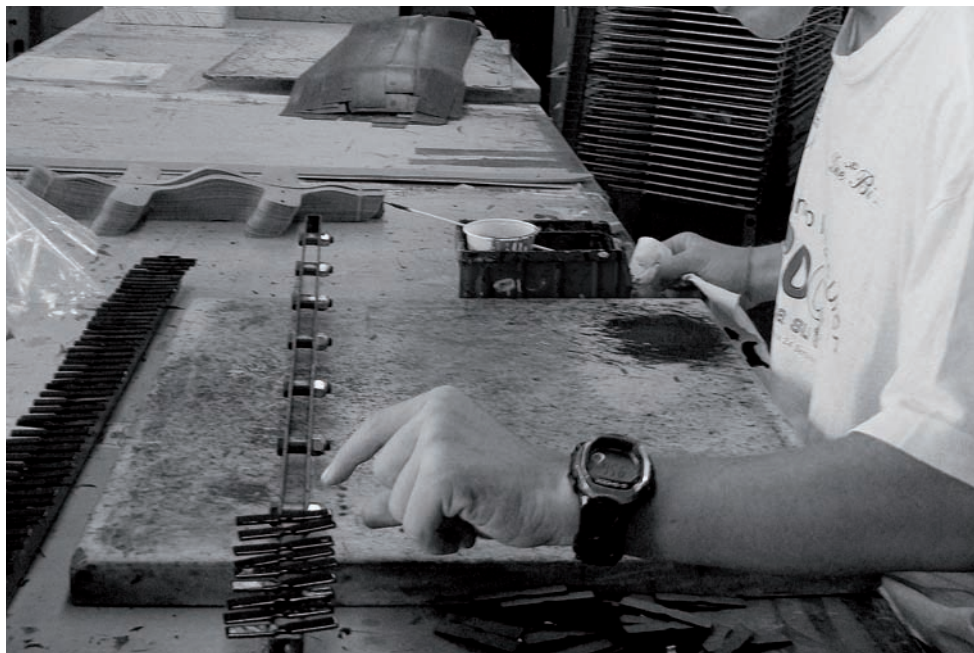


*[...] intense desire creates not only its own opportunities, but its own talents.
(Eric Hoffer)*

Accompany

Employment Policies

Arca is involved in creating initiatives and running a series of services whose aim is to get various categories of people into or back into employment: former drug addicts, children in custody, people with physical and mental disabilities, other people in a state of social hardship. The project aims to encourage career guidance, vocational training and job placement, through constant research in the local area into work opportunities and preparation for working life..





Beyond Borders

European fundings

For over 10 years, through the Pegaso training agency, Arca has been running a series of training projects aimed at disabled boys and girls in upper secondary schools (ages 14-19). At the end of the three-year training courses, the young people obtain a professional qualification giving them the possibility of easier job placement in the future. Alongside the vocational subjects, the courses contain moments for behavioural observation, acquisition of transversal skills, career guidance and internships in companies.

Arca takes part in the EU Lifelong Learning Programme. This programme proposes to promote interaction, cooperation and mobility between education and training systems within the European Community so that they can become a hallmark of quality all around the world.



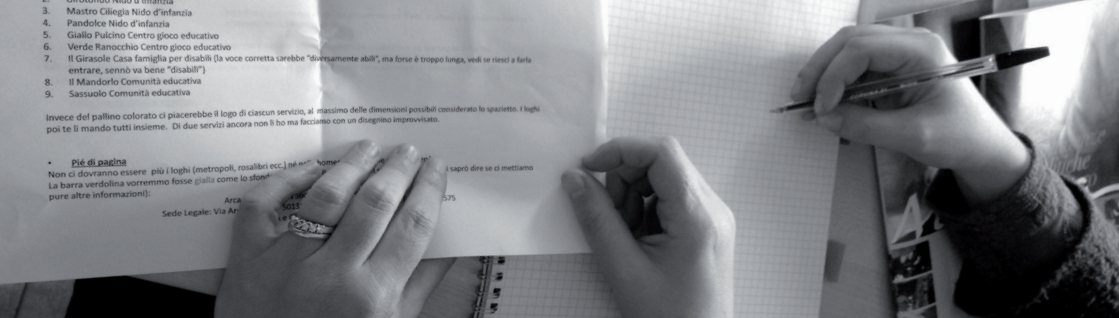
Arca International

The international cooperation and solidarity activities come about as a tool to offer the cooperative's shareholders and workgroups opportunities for comparison with similar organisations in other countries, experiences of international volunteer work and opportunities for training and professional exchanges abroad.

We have also created a project, called "Always on the Children's Side", for local fundraising activities in favour of small organisations from developing countries that are involved in supporting childhood around the world.

In addition, where possible, Arca welcomes within our project and supports university students who need to carry out internships and work experience.





Opportunities and Projects

Work experience and internships

Arca Cooperative has set up agreements with numerous schools and the University of Florence, aimed at providing school goers, university students and post-graduates with work experience and training at the facilities and centres managed by the cooperative.

Project financing

Project financing consists of a financial operation through which public administrations fulfil public works which must be paid for by private individuals in full or in part. It is based on a financial plan to guarantee that the operation can finance itself. Thanks to its solid financial base, Arca has always been involved in investment operations aimed at creating services. One of the possible methods is project financing. Arca has already successfully participated in project financing operations to build and manage services.

Partnership networks

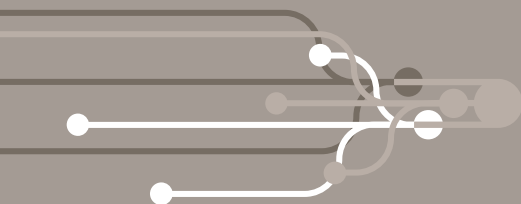
Consorzio Metropoli Società Cooperativa a r.l.: The objective of the consortium is to promote its cooperative members by taking care of the planning and management of their social welfare, educational, health and other activities. The consortium unites the cooperatives which, pursuant to Italian law no. 381/91, pursue the community's interest in terms of the human promotion and social integration of citizens through the management of social, health and educational services and job placement of disadvantaged people.

Pegaso Network della cooperazione sociale Toscana: The Pegaso regional consortium was created to form a stable network for development and innovation among the Tuscan cooperatives. It strives to boost the greatest resource of the cooperatives in Tuscany, namely the broadness and diversification of the type A and B cooperatives that operate in the region to build welfare community strategies in a dynamic and active relationship with the local areas.

Cooperativa Sociale ULISSE – cooperativa di tipo B: Ulisse is a cooperative that was set up in Florence by a joint project between the Health Authority and Arca Cooperative in order to create and develop services for the community, with job placement for disadvantaged persons.

Cooperativa Nuova Chianti – Cooperativa di tipo B: it is an Arca Cooperative project aimed at job placement for disadvantaged persons through innovative entrepreneurial initiatives in the area of Chianti Fiorentino.

Banca Popolare Etica: Arca Cooperative's participation in Banca Popolare Etica comes about from a broader conception of human and social development, where the production of wealth and its distribution are based on values of civil solidarity rather than the imperative of efficiency.



Cooperfidi Italia – Società cooperativa di garanzia collettiva dei fidi: It is the national credit guarantee consortium promoted by the three main cooperatives - AGCI, Confcooperative and Legacoop – so that the subscribing cooperatives can obtain the best conditions from the banking system to access credit.

Consorzio PAN: As a member of Legacoop and Consorzio DROM, Arca Cooperative has subscribed to the PAN national trademark for some of its pre-school facilities. PAN is a national no-profit consortium constituted by Banca Intesa and the three biggest networks of social enterprises – CGM, DROM-Legacoop and FIS – whose aim is to open and increase new pre-school facilities that ensure families high quality standards for all the services offered. The guidelines have resulted in a logo. In order to show this logo, the services must keep to the rules and undergo periodical checks made by a special verification committee.

Rosalibri S.r.l. is a company established in 2000 by Arca Cooperative together with other important Tuscan cooperatives in order to renovate and run 2 facilities: the “A. Ponticelli” residential community for psychiatric patients in Panzano in Chianti and the Rosa Libri nursing home in Greve in Chianti. It was put to work again with the purchase in 2011 of another nursing home, Naldini Torrigiani located in Tavarnelle Val di Pesa.

La società S.I. Vicchio srl, is a real estate company 100% controlled by Arca which is the owner of the property in Vicchio where the “Il Mandorlo” community is located. It is used for Arca’s real estate operations.

Progetti Italo Ungherese No Profit srl, of which Arca holds 51%, is a company established in Hungary, with local members, to take part in EU planning tenders in Hungary or other countries in Eastern Europe. It aims to encourage exchanges regarding the service models and possibly also among operators.



FIN.PA.S s.r.l. – “Finanziaria di partecipazione e servizi” is the Legacoop regional financial company which performs equity activities in the subscribing cooperatives in order to increase their capitalisation for strategic investment projects.

Società immobiliare Sociali – S.I.S. It is the cooperative real estate company that, on the behalf of undertakings, will purchase or build the buildings needed to develop their activities.

It was set up by the three financial arms of Legacoop - Coopfond, CCFS and Cooperare - and by 20 cooperatives, amongst which Arca Cooperative for Tuscany. 30% of each investment will be covered with the company's own means, and the remaining 70% through the means of third parties (bank loans). The establishment of the real estate company fits in with the direction of Legacoop's financial policy, which aims to design specialised tools to respond to the various requirements of the member cooperatives.

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