



**GOOD PRACTICE SERVICES:  
PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS &  
RECOVERY IN MENTAL HEALTH**  
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Good Practice services: promoting Human Rights & Recovery in Mental Health

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***The right to work***

In Italy, Social Cooperatives set up in the mid of the '70s. Starting from the experience of deinstitutionalization in the mental health field, in 1972 the first Italian social cooperative called "CLU Franco Basaglia" was born for the inclusion of fragile individuals. This experience, based on knocking down walls and restraints to be replaced by paths of inclusion and democracy in the light of sustainability and social economy, gave rise to a phenomenon that was enshrined in 1991 by Law 381. The first article defines their identity in the following way:

“Social cooperative societies shall pursue the general interests of the community in human promotion and in the citizens’ social integration by managing social, health and educational services or carrying out diverse activities - agricultural, industrial, commercial or service activities - whose purpose is the employment of disadvantaged people”.

The Law 381 set up formally two types of social cooperatives: type A which provides social, health and education services and type B engaged in work integration of disadvantaged people. There were about 16.125 Social Cooperatives in 2015, more than half belonging to type A and the others to type B. In the end of 2018 there were 3.652 Cooperatives of type B. These organizations employed, during 2013, 31.752 disadvantaged persons (detainees, drug abusers, long term unemployed). (there are no reliable recent dates)

The Italian experience of social cooperatives during the last 40 years shows that social economy entities can be «an Effective Model for Social Inclusion of Disabled People”.

In Italy, social cooperatives are successful because they proved to be able to support values like fairness, solidarity or social justice, and to foster social rights, producing as well economic savings.

The Social Cooperatives are the best functioning part of the Third Sector from a business and employment point of view. However, they have to tackle different challenges in the next future:

- the reorganization of the legal framework of the whole non profit and charity sector in Italy, started with the reform of the third sector in 2014, has to be realized, saving the idea of a social economy approach. In the last few years, the European Union has showed a growing interest in social economy by adopting programs and support;

- legal status and salaries need to be revised to ensure that fair employment conditions are guaranteed and discrimination is prevented, also by ensuring that sectors for disabled persons are reserved
- the double social and democratic function of social enterprises has to be safeguarded: the democratic governance system and the working inclusion of disadvantaged people through integration into the community out of a logic of a purely competitive market
- there's the need to move faster in this direction by increasing the resources to develop debates and exchange among the members of social economy.