

RISTO 3



Executive Summary

Risto 3 is a worker cooperative founded in the late 70s thanks to the initiative of a group of women in a bid to join forces as well as competences within the catering field after having lost their jobs. Initially of small dimensions, the cooperative has progressively expanded and developed over the years, increasing its employees and becoming **the biggest catering cooperative in Trentino**. Its ability to rapidly and professionally respond to the changes of the needs of the territory has allowed Risto 3 to establish itself, not only within school and company canteens, but also within the healthcare sector and hospitals.

Today, the volume of sales of Risto 3 is **€40 million** and it has **more than 1000 employees**, of which 90% women, distributed throughout Trentino. It has extended its offer of services to private customers for managing catering events.

Risto 3 distinguishes itself for its **constant attention to the well-being of its employees**, thanks to several initiatives funded by specific local financing programs aimed to support the wellbeing of people with special needs and their families, or providing facilities and opportunities such as the creation of a Risto 3 library; offering discounts on season tickets for the theater, scheduling flexibility to allow a better work-life balance.

Risto 3 has also been the **pioneer cooperative within the field of recycling** on an industrial level, and today it maintains a high level of respect towards the environment, especially by choosing high quality and local raw materials when possible.

Section 1: Description of the case

1.1. CONTEXT AND HISTORY

Risto 3 is the result of the unification of the Cooperative catering's section within the Province of Trento.

Indeed, Risto 3 is the fusion of two collective catering cooperatives: CO.RI.SO. “Cooperativa Ristorazione Sociale” (Social Catering Cooperative) of Trento and CO.R.I.P. “Cooperativa Ristorazione Perginese” (Pergine Catering Cooperative) of Pergine, which merged in 1990 in order to adjust the activity to a provincial scale. **This union gave birth to RISTO 3 "Ristorazione del Trentino" (Trentino Catering)**, whose activity officially started on January, 1st 1991. Over the years, the cooperative has grown, it has affirmed itself in several catering sectors, and has started dealing also with the private sector, increasing its dimensions as well as its professionalism. Risto 3 has what it takes to compete on an even footing with national enterprises and multinationals , and stands out as leader collective catering enterprise within the territory.

*After 20 years
since its
establishment,
more than 1000
employees*

The elements that today distinguish the cooperative mission have been divided into three categories:

1. Members and partners:

- Ensure partners and employees' career continuity by improving their working, professional and economic conditions;
- Develop a dynamic and harmonious cooperative by promoting self-management through involvement, participation, education and information;
- Promote women's job opportunities and social achievements to facilitate the integration of workers belonging to weaker categories.

2. Territory and Community:

- Consolidate the cooperative roots in Trentino and develop cooperative models in neighboring areas;
- Contribute to the economic, social, and environmental improvement within areas of competence;
- Form alliances, sign agreements and promote collaborations with institutional bodies and companies, giving priority to the cooperative

sector.

3. Service, Clients, Market:

- Improve service qualitative standards to ensure client satisfaction;
- Strive for the highest level of food safety;
- Give preference to local products of quality.

1.2. LIFE CYCLE

i. Conditions which allowed start up and founding as well as implementation

The history of Risto 3 began in 1979, when a group of cooks founded the cooperative CO.RI.SO (Cooperative of Social Catering) after the dissolution of the school charity they worked for in a bid to keep their jobs.



ii) organisational design—why was the legal form chosen, why were certain governance models chosen, stakeholders, etc.;

Few years later in 1982, some employees of the company managing the Centro di Cottura (catering kitchen) in Vigalzano near Pergine, formed the cooperative CO.RI.P. in order to compete with the Centro di Cottura's expiring contract. After a period during which they operated separately and autonomously, these two cooperatives merged together on January 1st 1991 and formed the RISTORAZIONE DEL TRENINO cooperative, which subsequently changed its name into RISTO 3.

iii) growth and expansion of the SE, focusing on the various resources (finance, voluntary, etc.) mobilized at each stage;

Thanks to an internal reorganization, Risto 3 rapidly affirmed itself as a real social enterprise and pioneer in its field, managing to **buy its first self-service restaurant in the early 90s**. Initially active only in the field of catering for school and company canteens, it progressively expanded its areas of competence also to healthcare structures and hospitals. In order to partially emancipate from the “Public” client, it started opening “fast restaurants” and established **relationships with private companies**. In order to implement this new strategic plan, necessary in order to reach the goals set, Risto 3 made massive economic investments.

Risto 3 has undergone a progressive development not only in terms of numbers but more importantly in terms of professionalism, of attention to the product, of service quality and of fulfilling people at a social and cultural level. Over the years, Risto 3 has established itself as leader cooperative within the sector of catering, with its members and employees providing clients with excellence in food, preparation and distribution.

In 2011, from the few initial members, Risto 3 already boasted **1000 people employed** in the cooperative catering sector within the province of Trento. Thanks to its members, employees and collaborators, today Risto 3 is **the biggest worker cooperative in Trentino, managing 6 self-service restaurants in Trento, 2 in Rovereto, one in Borgo Valsugana, and one in Feltre, for a total 200 kitchens.**

In 2001, the cooperative's mission was reviewed not only for stylistic reasons, but also in order to make its elements even clearer and sharper. The management of the cooperative and the attention to its staff, clients and community allowed Risto 3 to continue as an enterprise whose economic values are at the service of individual social development. To this end, it is of paramount importance to have an approach that enables people to work together to establish new economic and value systems together with their colleagues, the community, and the local territory.

iv) any crisis (small or large) moments along the way? or moments that were not a crisis but required some changes? How were these resolved/addressed?

It is not possible to speak of a particular or single moment of crisis. However, it is possible to identify some elements that have led the cooperative to make changes. Firstly, during the last few years Risto 3's reference market - that is, **the catering market - has changed much faster than in the past** (e.g. the request of more and more professionalism, the sanitary standards, the need to consider the increasing food intolerances and allergies).

Moreover, after the **recent normative change** - which provides for a higher involvement of enterprises in local invitations to tender - the cooperative had to find a balance between the high quality standards characterising its core-business and the competitive price policies of other companies.

Finally, Risto 3 had to face the recent economic crisis. Still now, a lot of its female collaborators have to economically support their families, as most of their partners and husbands who used to work in the housing sector are currently unemployed or redundancy workers. For this reason, Risto 3 has decided to provide subsidies to its employees, as for example the Solidarity Fund (see paragraph 2.1).

1.3 CORE BUSINESS MODEL

Company strategy has always been to provide services that are required in the local territory, by employing local resources (0km foods, primary goods, etc.), and welcoming disadvantaged categories (immigrants, women, ..etc.) to become member workers. Fine quality of service and materials is essential to the cooperative mission, which also guarantees a firm foundation on the market and so a competitive standing. Risto 3 operates locally with both public and private sectors mainly within the region of Trentino in the following areas:

- commercial catering (self-service restaurants, cafés);
- catering for businesses and conventions (for employees of partner companies);
- catering in the health sector (for hospitals);
- catering for the elderly (private and public residential facilities, *meals on wheels*, meals provided in homes for the elderly);
- school catering (for students and employees of schools, colleges and universities);
- catering (private and public events, anniversaries) for both individuals and companies;
- support services and consultancy services (for public and private).



1.4 INSTITUTIONAL /GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The strong division between the socio-political part and the technical-operative one

The most important body of the cooperative is the *Assemblea dei soci* (members' assembly) which elects the *Consiglio di Amministrazione* (the Board) every 3 years. In turn, the Board elects the President and one or two Vice-Presidents.

Risto 3 is characterized by **a clear division between a socio-political part and a technical-operative one**, led by the General Manager who is appointed/confirmed every 3 years. In order to facilitate a permanent link between the political part (CDA) and the technical-operative one, a *Comitato di Presidenza* (Presidency Committee) has been established, which calls for the participation of both the President and the General Manager. Other important roles are: Area Managers, Service Supervisors, coordinators (who function as link between the central offices and the operative structures distributed on the

territory), managers of each structure, and the operative staff.

1.5 EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Point of strength: the network, built over the years - with other activities present in the territory

Risto 3's geographic area of reference is Trentino, in which it was founded and which represents the main source of its turnover. The cooperative works together with **public** (schools, Comunità di Valle¹, Azienda Provinciale per i Servizi Sanitari², healthcare facilities) and **private bodies** (companies, residential facilities for the elderly, private clients). The cooperative structure, consisting of coordinators deployed around the Trentino region, allows Risto 3 to efficiently manage all its branches.

Moreover, Risto 3 is member of the **Federazione Trentina della Cooperazione (Trentino Cooperative Federation)**, which represents, assists, protects and checks the cooperative movement in the Province of Trento. It is also member of **Consorzio Lavoro Ambiente**, a cooperative consortia of worker cooperatives aimed at creating job opportunities for its members by supporting them from a technical-commercial, organizational, legal, and economic point of view. Finally, Risto 3 also carries out their activity outside Trentino.

1.6 ECONOMIC DATA

About 60% of Risto 3's sale revenues are generated from commercial relations with the public sector, while the remaining 40% comes from private commissions. Generally speaking, this ratio has been constant over the last years.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Sales Revenue	€38,69 mn	€39,58 mn	€40,53 mn	€40,63 mn	€40,088 mn

2014 – Sales Revenue impact ratio by area

Schools	Restaurants	Companies	Healthcare	Parties /events	Other
39,66%	18,44%	22,19%	13,69%	2,16%	3,85%

1 A sort of separate department of the Autonomous Province of Trento. In the region there are 16 communities that manage the majority of social and education services. On the contrary, health services depend primarily on the province.

2 Trentino's public agency for health and care services. It is organised in basic healthcare districts, departments and hospital units.

1.7 POLICY FRAMEWORK

*Risto 3's
development
and growth
model is unique
in its sector*

On a local level, Risto 3's development and growth model is unique in its sector, while on a national level several enterprises (also cooperatives) were set up before Risto 3. Risto 3 is the **first and biggest enterprise dealing with catering in the Province of Trento**. Today, the market has undergone consistent changes and needs have mutated. There has been an increase in hygiene and health controls to ensure food security and related qualitative standards required. Moreover, Risto 3 **provides Trentino with a substantial font of employment**, especially for women who represent more than 90% of workers. In addition, the cooperative offers flexi-time which is particularly appreciated by the women who are able to balance their work with the demands of a family.

After the recent change in legislation, which provides for a greater involvement of enterprises in local calls to tender, the cooperative aims to keep its high quality level, despite strongly competitive price policies of other companies.



SECTION 2: Analysis of the case

2.1 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Risto 3 is deeply rooted within the territory and offers its services in several areas surrounding the main city of the Province of Trento, with more than 260 branches.

INDICATORS

The cooperative's impact on the territory is measured through a **SOCIAL REPORT**, whose aim is to show and communicate outcomes and spill-over effects to stakeholders. The Social Report is distributed to all members and main clients.

SOCIAL COHESION AND WORKERS' WELL-BEING

The female presence within the cooperative has always been very high - 91% in 2014. For this reason, the conciliation policies between work and family life are of great relevance. Since 2012, Risto 3 is part of the provincial project “**Family Audit**”, and in cooperation with a small and trustable work team is setting down the 2016 action plan. The cooperative offers several initiatives and benefits to its members and employees, among which:

- **Cultural field** (e.g. library, free-registration to training provided by the Ente Bilaterale del Turismo (Provincial Tourism Board), discounts on theater tickets, etc.);
- Establishment of the **Solidarity Fund “Risto 3 Insieme” (Risto 3 Together)** shared by all employees aimed at supporting specific needs expressed by workers;
- Agreements with the **healthcare sector**;
- **Schedules and work flexibility** in order to conciliate work and family;
- Different **saving opportunities** with several local organisations (insurance companies, medical assistance cooperatives).



Several initiatives addressed to employees

Different actions to

reduce waste

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT EVALUATION

Environmental protection is based on the principle of preventive action, aimed at avoiding pollution and waste. To this end, the choice of equipment and raw materials is of paramount importance. In 2014, Risto 3 has been awarded for its commitment to constantly reduce the use of PET plastic bottles for commercial catering services. The cooperative adheres to the local certification ECORISTORAZIONE (Eco-catering), which requires a compulsory presence of certain foods in daily menus, e.g. locally sourced foods, organic foods, tap water, etc.

Finally, Risto 3 collaborates with other local organisations for an optimal management of “food waste”.

2.2 LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE

- **Strengths/opportunities**

*Territory,
employees,
environment
and solidarity*

The cooperative has always been deeply rooted within the territory and part of its mission is to strengthen its development within the autonomous Province of Trento and in neighboring areas.

As it is a worker cooperative, Risto 3 considers **work as an instrument of dignity**, that must be guaranteed to employees, collaborators, members and also non-members to offer people an occupation as a means to produce an added value for the territory.

Risto 3 has always been attentive to **environmental protection**, a field in which it plans to keep investing in and experimenting. 20 years ago, Risto 3 was the first cooperative to start recycling on a large scale.

The cooperative continues to promote the culture of **individual responsibility** in creating one's own job, never forgetting to keep a collective sympathetic eye on colleagues going through hard periods (e.g. Solidarity Fund).

- **Weaknesses/threats**

*Legislative
updates, work
crisis, rapid
market change*

The market of reference for Risto 3 is changing faster than it used to do originally, when company plans were planned over a period of years. For this reason, the will to keep being a leader enterprise within the Trentino catering sector remains strong and well defined.

After the **recent legislative change**, which provides for a greater involvement in local calls to tender, the cooperative that has always aimed to maintain a high

quality now risks to have to lower their standards in order to compete on an ever more aggressive market, or to reduce worker members' salaries.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

Social Report available here: <http://www.risto3.it/bilancio-di-responsabilita-sociale>

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