

Centri ponovne uporabe

THE INNOVATION JOURNEY

Marinka Vovk is a socially responsible entrepreneur, innovator, founder of the first reuse centre and the first social enterprise in Slovenia.



Figure 1. Marinka Vovk is always looking for new ways - a furnished workspace with reused products that was set up in a former shipping container.

The first Reuse Centre was opened in 2009 in the rural municipality of Rogaška Slatina, where support from the local level (mayor, municipal company) was important. In 2014, the network of reuse centres began to expand, and they were involved in the opening of six more centres in Slovenia. After a few years of support, most of the reuse centres were gradually handed over to local actors for independent management.

THE INNOVATION IMPACT

Today, they operate four reuse centres - three in rural municipalities and one in Ljubljana. Each centre has its own "specialisation" (e.g. repair of electronics, upholstered furniture), but there is cooperation and exchange of goods and products between them. They currently employ 32 people. Most of the

employees are women. The employees are trained for the work as many of them are long-term unemployed and people with disadvantage in the labour market, especially women.

Half of the income comes from the sale of products and the other half from various projects. The most recent project is the breeding of silkworms for medical purposes, which they see as an opportunity to integrate people who are disadvantaged on the labour market into work with higher added value.

Marinka is involved in the development of waste management legislation, social entrepreneurship and the management of innovative projects to promote environmental and social sustainability.

She believes that their work has helped to change attitudes towards waste. She is proud that they have managed to achieve a shift from selling individual products to offering reusable products. For example, they use modular shipping containers to demonstrate the reuse of products and use them as offices for co-working". Marinka sees the greatest added value in giving people who are disadvantaged in the labour market the opportunity to lead a normal life. She is characterised by the efficient adaptation of her business model and the constant search for new solutions.

USEFUL LINKS

[Center ponovne uporabe - official website](#)
[Facebook Center ponovne uporabe](#)