



CERTIFICATE 2022

Objective

Forum Ethibel is a Belgian not-for-profit organisation and recognised as an expert in **rating, independent control and certification** of products that meet ethical, societal, ecological and good governance standards. This audit and certification is carried out on behalf of Ressources.

RESSOURCES is the federation of social economy enterprises active in **waste reduction** through the **recovery, reuse and valorisation** of resources in a **circular economy**.

The Solid'R label is an ethical label for companies within the **social economy sector** active in the recycling, collection and sale of **second hand textiles and goods**. The label was created to differentiate from private players in the reuse and recycling market. RESSOURCES launched the Solid'R label for organisations that voluntarily respect certain ethical and solidarity principles and are audited annually. In 2018, Solid'R has been launched on **European level** in order to promote these solidarity principles and to apply the social economic criteria.

Verification

Cooperativa Ruah

Cooperativa Impresa Sociale Ruah was founded in 2009, operates in the Bergamo region. The organisation's mission is to (re)integrate vulnerable foreign citizens and Italians. Ruah aims this by (1) offering hospitality to whom need (temporary) housing, by (2) organizing literacy and Italian language courses and by (3) running a second hand shop which stimulates circular economy and which creates work experience for people facing challenging on the regular job market.



Scope

Practical information regarding audit:

- Type:
 - On Site
 - Remote
- Date: December, 2022

Criteria(*)	CONTROL
1. Social purpose	✓
2. Autonomous management	✓
3. Sustainable development	✓
4. Organisation's interest versus general interest	✓
5. Non discrimination	✓
6. Democratic control	✓
7. Solidarity & responsibility	✓
8. Transparency & communication	✓
9. Integrity & moral	✓

Activities: Triciclo, the branch responsible for clothing collection and sales, developed the past year into an educational centre that enhances the awareness of the importance of circular economy.

Employees: The employee policy is detailed in outlining the rights and duties including training and admission procedure to become a member. All training hours were shared. A whistleblowing procedure is in place.

Governance: The admission of members is determined by the Board of Directors. Candidates are evaluated based on their interaction with the cooperative and their motivations which they can set forth during an interview with the board members. Prospective members are offered to attend a training session organized by the Social Commission of EcoDevelopment in order to consolidate their motivations to join the cooperative. Ruah's General Assembly consists of employees, volunteers and representatives of partner organisations. The organisation is undergoing a structural reform to simplify the decision-making structure and management. A breach with Solid'R criterion 6.2 (see below) was detected in the statutes of Ruah regarding voting power. Article 12 of the statutes allow the voting power to exceed the 5% limit that is set out in the Solid'R charter. In practice, there was no shareholder going over this %-age in 2021. This should be further specified for the audit of next year.

Documentation and additional information was transparently shared with the auditor.

Result

No all requested documents were delivered and not all questions were answered in full. Forum Ethibel declares that, for the year 2021, the **activities of Cooperative Ruah are compliant with remarks** with the SOLID'R Ethical Charter that is based on the **European criteria of social economy**.
The non-compliant criteria must be met before the next audit.

Date: 16/12/2022

Forum ETHIBEL asbl,



Remi Leroy
Research officer



Kenny Frederickx,
Director



Notification

Societal value

The principles and criteria queried and checked during the audit are set out by RESSOURCES. The importance of this audit is to make the public aware of the ethical, social and ecological principles that the organisation in question strives entirely voluntarily.

Based on the audit and the resulting certificate, RESSOURCES determines whether the Solid'R label could be assigned to the concerning organisation (or not).

Procedure

Organisations that want to receive the Solid'R label for the **first time** are subject to an on-site audit. In the following years, a **remote audit** is carried out.

For 'old' member organisations, an on-site audit will be organised **every three years**. For the smallest organisations this is replaced by a skype call. This is important to discuss whether new developments or changes have taken place in terms of vision, strategy or long-term objectives.

By alternating on site audits and remote audits, a balance is respected between maintaining **in-depth views** about the organisations and pursuing **cost-efficiency**.

Underlying indicators (*):

1 The primacy of the people and the corporate purpose over the capital.	1.1 The social goals are defined and the way of meeting them is evaluated at least once a year (activity or management report). 1.2 Limitation of the return on capital to a dividend of max. 6%. 1.3 In case of commercial companies shares transfer, the revaluation in relation to the nominal value may not exceed the rate of inflation of the European consumer price. 1.4 In the event of cessation of activity, the net assets may not be distributed among the partners in any case, but must be transferred to a social economy company.
2 Managerial Autonomy.	2.1 The majority of the shares or votes at the general meeting cannot be held by one or more public or capital/private sector partners.
3 The majority of surpluses are assigned to the achievement of objectives that promote sustainable development and serve members and the general interest.	3.1 Surplus assignment in priority to the reserve or equity funds, investments for the maintenance of the production tool and the improvement of working conditions, and support of social goals. 3.2 No gross remuneration (statutory and extra-legal benefits included) greater than 5 times the structures' lowest salary.
4 Conciliate the interests of the members and the users, and the general interest.	4.1 Compliance with the social, tax, and environmental legislation.
5 Voluntary-based and open-based membership.	5.1 No restrictions may be applied to the admission of a partner, worker or staff member for political, philosophical or religious reasons.
6 Democratic control by its members (with the exception of foundations that lack such democratic control).	6.1 No physical person can hold more than 50% of the capital. 6.2 The general meeting decisions are taken according to the rule 'one person, one vote' or by limiting the votive power to 5%. 6.3 The workers are represented at the general meeting or are invited to be a member. 6.4 Workers are regularly informed and consulted on the results of the organization and its strategic choices. 6.5 Workers have the opportunity to attend training courses in both their own and their organizations' interest.
7 Defense and application of solidarity and responsibility principles.	7.1 Each member is obliged not to put in place any strategy likely to harm the activity of another member. He is obliged to consult with the other members concerned.
8 Transparency and communication on the annual accounts/financial statements.	8.1 Keep regular accounts/financial statements and prepare the statutory annual accounts: presentation of annual accounts including balance sheets, profit and loss. This must be specified in the activity report. 8.2 Transparency concerning the means used; the provenance and allocation. 8.3 Transparent communication and accounts accessible for donors; inform donors on how information is accessible. The information must reflect reality and make it possible to know both the sources and the allocation of resources.
9 Be a honest structure with moral integrity.	9.1 To guard against fraud and malfeasance and to make sure that the structure is honest.