

OUTPUT FACT SHEET

Strategies and action plans

Version 2

Project index number and acronym	CE 1345 SIV
Output number and title	O.T4.1 Strategy for Capacities in Scale and Scope
Responsible partner (PP name and number)	PP 5 Caritas of the Archdiocese Vienna PP10 Vienna University of Economics and Business (WU)
Project website	www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/SIV-.html
Delivery date	31.05.2022

Summary description of the strategy/action plan (developed and/or implemented), explaining its main objectives and transnational added value

The period of the project was marked by various social developments that could by no means be foreseen when the application was submitted and which had a significant impact on the labour market as well as on the economic situation in Europe, worldwide and thus also in Austria. These are the Corona pandemic on the one hand and the war in Ukraine on the other. These crises have shown once again that first and foremost vulnerable groups are particularly hard hit by the effects and that there is a need for innovative measures to provide comprehensive support to these population groups. At the same time, there is a pronounced shortage of skilled workers in some labour market sectors.

The Austrian voucher model aims to support people in gaining a foothold in one of these areas, the IT sector, and offers coding training courses lasting 6-8 months. In order to be able to support the participants comprehensively - beyond the technical training - an attempt was made to generate private funds in addition to public funding.

Caritas Vienna, together with 3 SIV partners (PP1, PP2 and PP3) and an external partner (Caritas Munich), participated in the creation of the transnational fund. The attempt to find a suitable legal form for it turned out to be more difficult than expected. This is partly due to the fact that transnational actions are not well regulated in the EU for non-profit

organisations (EPRS, 2021)¹. On the one hand, this relates to the non-profit status as well as legal and administrative hurdles for transnational donations on the other.

The current solution of a trust agreement is a first starting point, but not a sustainable solution in the medium or long term. Here it would be important to find a suitable vehicle.

The search for philanthropic donors also turned out to be difficult, which was due to

- thematic reasons - labour market issues are traditionally seen very much as a task of the state, in Austria there are hardly any good examples for private investments in this regard.
- the pandemic and the associated restrictions made it difficult to meet and convince potential "investors" of the importance of the issue. Online meetings are not a suitable form for this.
- the delay in establishing the transnational fund (see above). Therefore, we had just a few months to convince potential investors after the legal solution was implemented and the communication platform for the transnational fund was in place

The acquisition and investment strategy of the fund is defined in the funding strategy paper and its operations executed by the fund acquisition team.

In order to make the voucher models more visible, we developed the following communication activities for the fund:

1. Next Access platform www.next-access.org:
On this website, the voucher models and the transnational fund are presented and potential donors addressed
2. Donation via Impactory.org
Payment and settlement process for interested institutional and private donors
3. Newsletters, Social media posts and direct mailings to communicate the platform
4. Presentation of the fund in impact investment conferences, webinars and workshops by all partners

NUTS region(s) concerned by the strategy/action plan (relevant NUTS level)

The focus was on Wien (AT13) We also addressed institutional and private donors in all regions of Austria and in other countries

¹ EPRS (2021): European Parliament Research Studies: A statute for European cross-border associations and non-profit organisations, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_STU\(2021\)662630](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_STU(2021)662630), (last accessed: 24th May 2022)

Expected impact and benefits of the strategy/action plan for the concerned territories and target groups

By increasing the funds, more participants could attend the training courses. The IT sector is one of the areas of growing importance in the future. By scaling up the funds and transferring the Voucher Model to other regions and territories, we expect to increase the number of unemployed people to get trainings and find jobs as software developers.

It is also crucial to work closely with potential employers to further develop the training. If the training matches the demand of the employers, their willingness to contribute to the training costs might increase. This would support the idea of a revolving fund.

By cooperating with Microsoft in the mentoring programme, we integrated the needs of potential employers in order to increase the job perspective of trained persons. In addition, we gained relevant stakeholders in the industry to further extend the program.

Amount eligible to be granted to a beneficiary:

- Minimum: EUR 10.- Euro
- Maximum: EUR no limitation
- Median expected: 100.- Euro

Sustainability of the developed and/or implemented strategy/action plan and its transferability to other territories and stakeholders

The main feedback and point of critique of potential donors to the fund was the lack of a clear and transparent alignment of the fund. The different Voucher Models represented in the transnational fund and their diverse structures impede the clear communication of specific impact and benefits.

Therefore, for the follow-up phase we aim to establish a single-issue fund that only addresses **one** Voucher Model that is scaled up in different countries. By focusing on a sector with skills shortage such as IT, care or tourism, the probability of refunding by employers could be increased and a lack of qualified employees on the labour market reduced.

Furthermore, a suitable legal form for the transnational fund would facilitate scaling to other countries, by enhancing trust and possibilities for tax reductions.

References to relevant deliverables and web-links If applicable, pictures or images to be provided as annex

References to relevant deliverables:

- D.T1.2.5. Report and Infographics for Target Group Segmentation
- D.T1.1.2. Country Report on Social Impact Investment
- D.T4.3.1 Growth forecast calculation

Relevant Communication Platforms:

www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/SIV-.html

<http://next-access.org/> platform of the transnational fund

<https://impactory.org/spendenzweck/next-access-austria> donation platform

Annex1: O.T4.1 Strategy for Capacities in Scale and Scope

Picture transnational fund with the related 4 country projects