

Case Challenge

Co-financing for social business projects in Austria and  
Europe

gain&sustain: europe

Verein zur Förderung von Kulturaustausch und  
Nachhaltigkeit in Europa

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## **Background**

The association "gain&sustain:europa" was founded in 2009 in Graz, Austria, and consists at the moment of fifteen enthusiastic young people at the age between 25 and 35 years. The organisation aims to support social, economic and ecological sustainability in Europe and developing countries all over the world.

We develop our services with heart and mind and are competent partners in funding consulting, project development and implementation as well as mediation and youth work. Our services are open to all people and offered in a networked context. In doing so, we value methodology and interdisciplinary thinking and acting. The active participation of representatives and partners from different stakeholder groups and perspectives enables a multidisciplinary approach and sustainable, win-win effective strategies for all involved.

In the centre of our activity stands the desegregation of politics, society and economy. We work with youngsters in global context and step into open dialogue and generate valuable common strategies for the present and the future. As our major task we see the interlinking and consultation of youngsters in connection with international, multicultural events and EU projects to promote a raise of awareness in the direction of tolerance, EU citizenship and cultural diversity with the generation of tomorrow. The main objective of the association is the interlinking of single organisations and individuals, above all youngsters, around subjects like sustainability and social entrepreneurship in order to give space to innovation & creativity and to allow a cultural exchange.

## **Mission**

- Promotion of solidarity through common activities of young people from different EU member states
- Creation of an alliance between politics, society and art for charitable projects related to awareness-raising within the EU
- Creation of a nation-connecting conversation base for European-wide campaigns and projects in the area of youth work

## **Activities**

- Coaching-programs and talent analysis for young people
- Mentoring
- Participation and organisation as well as hosting of „ERAMSUS+“- programs
- Workshops for social entrepreneurs
- Cooperation with Social Impact Award (WU Vienna)- workshops for idea creation

## **Reference project: chance giving- chance living!**

The mentoring project „Chance giving chance living“ is a way for young people to live their professional dream. To get the job that pleases them and to be able to work with their own talents. This supported by a mentor in which they feel in good hands. Together mentor and mentee realize the arrival in the dream job. „Chance giving chance living“ is a program that initiates and promotes mentor and mentee learning from each other. The recipe for success in this context is: Young people's curiosity and straightforwardness meet expertise and experience and a true win-win situation emerges. This leads to exchange and mutual understanding.

The project „Chance giving chance living! is one the one hand a Mentoring program for socially underprivileged youngsters at the age between 15 and 25 years, and, on the other hand, a management training-program for social competence. Corporate Social Responsibility is thereby associated with the solution of concrete challenges in European society. The project itself aims on one side at the strengthening of Soft Skills and social competence of executives in European enterprises, on the other side an improvement of the life perspectives of young people in critical situations especially in the field of juvenile offenders.

In particular, the programme focuses on the fight against poverty and social exclusion experienced by discriminated, socially underprivileged youngsters by originating a new communication base between two social classes. More solidarity between "the poor and the rich" and a real situation WIN-WIN for all partners is the expected result. Long-lasting jobs are created for the youngsters, so that as a consequence the poverty risk and the criminal activity rate is probably lowered. More tolerance and security is promoted in the European society by the social inclusion of youngsters in risk of poverty.

### **Project-related results:**

- Job creation for the involved youngsters and decreasing of juvenile crime
- Improved social competence of management executives.
- More tolerance and solidarity in the European society for socially underprivileged people.
- Strengthening of the middle class by decreasing poverty.

The project has been implemented since 2010 in the region of Styria and Carinthia. The following awards were awarded for "Chances - opportunities live":

- Constantinus Award 1st place
- Trigo's nomination
- Woman Award in the category equal opportunities, 3rd place
- Award as best disseminated project in the framework of the EU project DIVA
- Honoring the Minister of Social Affairs Rudolf Hundstofer as a project for the active reduction of poverty in Austria
- Press conference with the then Minister of Justice Beatrix Karl as supporter of the project

## **BEST – Boosting Entrepreneurial Skills as Tool of integration of migrants to labour market**

The project BEST is a project funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund from the European Commission, DG for Migration and Home Affairs, for the integration of the Third-Country Nationals, under the priority “Promote swift integration of Third Country Nationals (TCNs) into the labour market through strengthened cooperation and mobilisation of employers and social and economic partners”.

The objectives are:

- Promote early and effective integration in the labour market of third-country nationals, by creating effective transnational partnerships with all actors concerned and in particular social and economic partners, employers, public and private employment services and national and local authorities to foster the development of tools, methods, capacity building and exchange of experience;
- Raise awareness about the conditions for early and effective labour market integration of third-country nationals, as well as of its economic and social benefits and mobilise employers and other key actors to become active on this topic.

### About BEST

BEST project is a joint endeavour of 8 partners from Austria (Gain&Sustain, FH Joanneum), Slovenia (ZRC SAZU), Croatia (CPS, Impact HUB Zagreb) and Italy (FINN, OIKOS) that have the common motivation of improving the effective integration of third-country nationals (TCN) into the labour market through cooperation between public and private institutions.

The project idea emerged while working on projects focused on economic and social integration of migrants that detected the need of offering specific strategies to TCN who would like to become self-employed and/or open their own businesses. Self-employment is one of the most successful tools to create long-term labour integration, creating a win-win situation for all the players and increasing the integration of TCN on different levels.

Through BEST, the consortium will implement social entrepreneurship trainings in each partner-country and establish effective cooperation with public key-stakeholders, aiming to facilitate the management of migrant integration and designing a tailored training program with blended learning; deliver better and customised services matching the specific needs of TCN; define and implement more efficient integration strategies at local level for a sustainable inclusion of migrants and a fact-based public perception of migration; involve the different key actors on the integration of TCN into labour market in formal and informal level to enable their participation; build capacities and transfer the outcomes on European level by giving access to outputs and materials in several European languages on an open source online basis.

The BEST project offers an opportunity to intensify and deepen the existing relationships between TCN, public authorities and NGOs while parallelly implementing European integration policies and leveraging the long-term economic potential of TCN.