

# First Austrian Social Impact Bond: PROSPECT:EMPLOYMENT – economic and social empowerment of women affected by violence ("PERSPEKTIVE:ARBEIT – Ökonomisches und soziales Empowerment von gewaltbetroffenen Frauen)

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**Organisation:** Austrian Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection

**Country:** Austria

**Level of government:** Central government

**Sector:** General public services, Social protection

**Type:** Public Service

**Launched in:** 2015

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# Description

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The Social Impact Bond pilot in Upper Austria is working with women affected by violence. It aims at placing them in long-term jobs that allow them to earn a living on the primary labour market as well as to secure/develop existing jobs that pay a living wage so that they will be able to permanently leave abusive situations. The participating women are given a safe environment and after going through intensive counselling, the women are ultimately placed in jobs and are also given ongoing follow-up support. The appropriate type of support is determined on an individual basis by working closely with existing services and programs offered by the Austrian Public Employment Service (AMS) and women's organizations.

Collaborating with companies serves, on the one hand, to place women in jobs on the primary job market and, on the other hand, consulting and supporting companies should also help raise awareness about violence against women in the business community.

The payment by results contract means that the Government will only pay if the project achieves 100% of the required outcomes. The clearly formulated provisions regarding the goals to be achieved and the characteristics of the target group guarantee that the success of the project can be definitively measured. Since the upfront financiers assume the default risk, the project partners' work is reliably secured for the entire duration of the project.

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## Why the innovation was developed

- In its work program for 2013 to 2018, the Austrian Federal Government expressed its commitment to trying out innovative approaches in the area of social policy through the use of social impact bonds.
  - The aim is for new initiatives and projects to be used to address current challenges, close potential gaps, and strengthen social cohesion within Austrian society.
  - The pilot project addresses a service gap for a very delicate target group. Often women affected of violence are disadvantaged in their careers and public lives, thus making them financially and socially dependent on their partners.
  - In addition insufficient job experience and skills, low educational qualifications, and a lack of childcare as well as support and counselling services for affected children make it difficult to enter or return to the workforce and thus permanently get out of abusive relationships or put them at greater risk of losing their jobs.
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## Objectives

Improve access, Improve service quality, Improve social equity

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## Main beneficiaries

General population, Government bodies, Government staff, High-risk populations, Other

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## Existing similar practices

N/A

In other countries' public administrations

N/A

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# Results

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## Effectiveness

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## Service quality

Accessibility:

# Development

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## Design

Because of the innovative nature of both the proposed services and the payment by results funding mechanism, it was agreed that the initiative would be implemented as a time-limited pilot.

The pilot project “Economic and social empowerment for women affected by violence” was initiated by and developed within the Austrian Federal Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, and Consumer Protection and launched together with Juvat gemeinnützige Gesellschaft mbH (a non-profit subsidiary of Benckiser Stiftung Zukunft) in cooperation with the state of Upper Austria and the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education and Women's Affairs. Design time: 18 month(s)

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## Testing

- An auditing firm conducts a neutral evaluation to determine whether the goals have been successfully achieved.
- The project is also subjected to an additional process evaluation by a university research institution that will provide important insight into the functional mechanisms, the potential, and the implementation of a social impact bond.
- Another research institute is also accompanying the project and evaluating the effectiveness of the measures defined for the project.

Testing time: 36 month(s)

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## Implementation

### Tools used:

- Legal advice to develop the contract between the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection and the Juvat gemeinnützige Gesellschaft mbH.
- Evaluation has been commissioned, to document the lessons learned from the pilot.
- An independent assessor has been appointed to determine whether the goals have been achieved.
- A sounding board led by the Federal Ministry and consisting of members of all relevant partners has been established which meets twice a year to monitor the project's progress and assist in identifying and addressing potential problems in time.

### Resources used:

- The costs to fund the pilot will be EUR 804.688 only in case of success.
  - The responsible department in the Federal Ministry worked on the development of the pilot for a period of 18 months until September 2015.
  - The same team now maintains oversight of the pilot and manages the contractual relationship between the Federal Ministry, Juvat gemeinnützige Gesellschaft mbH and the project partners and also leads the sounding board.
  - External research and analysis experts have been commissioned to undertake the process evaluation of the pilot, and independently assess the pilot outcomes.
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## Diffusion

- The Social Impact Bond pilot is an entirely new model for the Austria, and no decision has been made whether to or not to extend the social impact bond approach more widely.
  - N/A
  - N/A
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## Partnerships

### Juvat gemeinnützige Gesellschaft mbH (Non-profit subsidiary of Benckiser Foundation Future)

Academics and Research Bodies, Civil Society, Other, Other Public Sector, Private sector

As the intermediary Juvat is the contractual partner of the Ministry of Social Affairs. As part of its social commitment, Juvat assumes its role within the social impact bond at no cost. It negotiated and concluded the contract with the Austrian Federal Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, and Consumer Protection, brought upfront financiers on board, involved the project partners responsible for the operational implementation, and commissioned the evaluation by the auditing firm jointly selected with the Austrian Federal Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, and Consumer Protection. As the official intermediary, Juvat is managing the implementation of the pilot project in Upper Austria.

Center for Protection Against Violence Upper Austria (Gewaltschutzzentrum Oberösterreich) and Women's Shelter Linz (Frauenhaus Linz)

The two project partners entrusted with the operational implementation of the social impact bond cooperate with the Austrian Public Employment Service (AMS) and suitable organizations at the local level to bring together target group-specific modules in the areas of support and assistance for

## Lessons Learned

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