

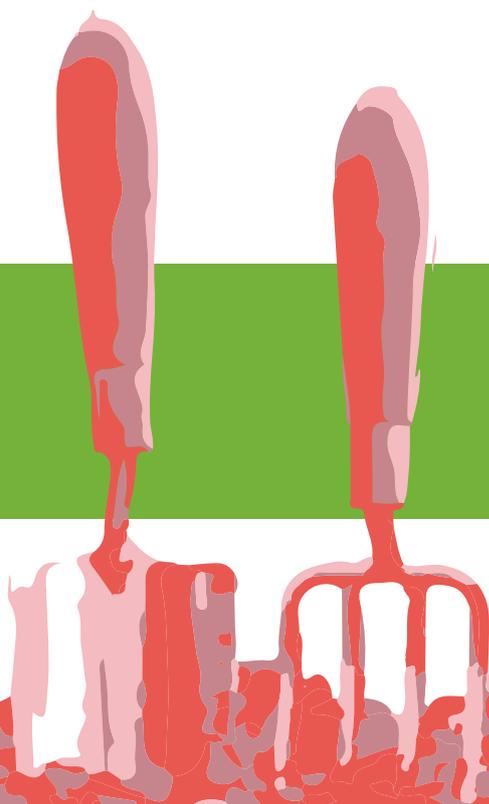


UGAIN

Urban **G**Ardens for the social
INtegration of migrants

Activity:

Nähwerkstatt – sewing studio





Regular work days to improve sewing skills and generate money to cover the garden association's cost through collective marketing of the produced items.



Activity file

1. Name of the activity

Nähwerkstatt – sewing studio

2. Type of activity

Arts & crafts

3. Description of the activity

Once per week, the two organisers invite people to come to their private homes to sew and upcycle products together. Between 12 and 20 people come on a regular basis. Everybody who is interested can participate: neighbors, migrants, who are also active in the garden, other migrants, "old locals" and friends meet there every Tuesday. There are different products (neck cushions, yoga pillows filled with herbs and spelt from dinkel wheat, bags, wallets, etc.) with different steps of processing made. Depending on the donations and materials they have available at the time, it is then decided what to work on. Steps can be split up in different levels of skills required: from sorting buttons to sewing pillows. Many migrants are well educated sewers, because they did this as a profession in their home countries.

Mainly women come together to these events. There is a lot of chatting, eating and having fun in between. The finished products are stored in the cellars and sold at the next possibility or by request. This generates the main income for the association, which provides the basis for supporting the migrants. Costs for German classes, education material, train tickets, ect. can be

covered by this money.

4. Competences and training needed

Some basic sewing skills and a passion for sewing and joy for this kind of work are a big advantage. People need organisational skills to plan the working steps. The organisers should be able to acquire the material donations and support which is needed. They need to trust strangers and have the openness for letting people into your private rooms.

5. Steps for the implementation of the activity

- Organise some sewing machines and tools (scissors, pens, centimeter,...) and a room suitable for sewing together with others.
- Get some donated raw materials (fabric, old clothes, leftovers from factories, buttons, zippers) which are out of use / would have been thrown away.
- Weekly invitation of people who are interested.
- Decide on what to work on.
- Upcycle the materials to new products (pillows, bags, wallets,...).
- Sell products among interested people at markets or exhibitions.

6. Materials and methods

- **Infrastructure:** Room, electricity, sewing machines and tools, space for storage.
- **Materials and human resources:** Raw materials (fabric, ect.), suitable tools, sewing descriptions/drawings of the products, Time and effort of sewers.
- **Time/Workload:** 1x/week for some hours: This is a continuous activity where there is no defined end. The workload depends on how many products they want to produce.
 - 1-2 hours for organising/week.
 - 1-2 hours for selling the products/month.
- **Costs:** Costs are very low because of donations of sewing machines and fabric. The only costs are for electricity and some food, which can be cooked together in the end.

7. Learning outcomes for the participants

Through the open sewing studio activity, the participants improve their sewing skills. Furthermore they learn how to work, organise and make decisions in a team. They also gain self-confidence, when producing something with their own hands. As the migrants also sell the upcycled products on the markets, they interact with Austrians and learn how to cope with challenging situations where they can't predict the situation exactly. This leads to empowerment and feelings of success.

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