



IOM International Organization for Migration

National Contact Point Austria within the European Migration Network

Austrian contribution to the European pilot study  
"The Impact of Immigration on Europe's Societies"

# THE IMPACT OF IMMIGRATION ON AUSTRIA'S SOCIETY

A Survey of Recent Austrian Migration Research



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within the European Migration Network

## **The Impact of Immigration on Austria's Society**

A Survey of Recent Austrian Migration Research

Austrian contribution to the European pilot study

*“The Impact of Immigration on Europe's Societies”*

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## Foreword

In 2002, the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior designated the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Vienna as the National Contact Point Austria within the European Migration Network (EMN). The objective of the European Migration Network is to create a systematic basis for data compilation and analysis of migration and asylum issues in each European country. As National Contact Point Austria, IOM Vienna is compiling updated data on migration and asylum issues and is conducting in-depth research and analyses on the topic (*see <http://www.emn.at>*).

The present publication “*The Impact of Immigration on Austria’s Society*” is the result of our work as the National Contact Point Austria and is the Austrian contribution to the European report on “*The Impact of Immigration on Europe’s Societies*”, which will compile the contributions carried out in a parallel manner by the other contact points within the European Migration Network. This survey of recent research literature on the impact of immigration in the individual segments of European societies is based on an initiative by the European Commission.

The present survey is the result of the committed and profound scientific cooperation of the below mentioned persons and the continuously expanding network of Austrian migration scientists, whose expertise greatly enhanced our work as the National Contact Point in Austria. We would like to express our gratitude for this complaisant and enriching cooperation. With this survey, we hope to offer a comprehensive analysis that will also provide the broader interested public with an overview of existing research literature and the impact of immigration in Austria.

In Austria, Mag. Sophie Hofbauer (IOM Vienna) was in charge of the general scientific coordination of the study, which she mastered with scientific accuracy and with the necessary care. Mag. Brigitte Schütz (IOM Vienna) edited the chapter on the factors affecting immigrants in Austria, and her precise scientific work greatly enriched our activities. Dr. David Reizenzein (IOM Vienna) helped expand the network of researchers on asylum and migration issues in Austria, who in turn provided their assistance in editing the pilot study with publications and scientific feedback. As the first Researcher-in-Residence at the NCP

Austria, Mag. Yves Carl contributed to the elaboration of the chapter on Austrian immigration history.

Working as Researchers-in-Residence at IOM Vienna, Seena Moongananiyil, Noelia Díaz and Cristián Alejandro Ferreri significantly contributed to the pilot study by conducting literature research and compiling and commenting the bibliography.

Dr. Bernhard Perchinig (Austrian Academy of Sciences, Commission for Migration Research) looks back on years of experience as a migration researcher in Austria and provided consultation on the chapters on the political and cultural impact of immigration. The content of the historical part of the study was revised for its accuracy and completeness by ao. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Michael John (University of Linz, Department of Social and Economical History).

The only part of the study that was out-sourced was the economic chapter, which was written by ao. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Gudrun Biffl (Austrian Institute of Economic Research, WIFO), who has accompanied and supported the work of the National Contact Point from the start. We thank her for her continuous support of our work and her precise scientific input. Her colleague, Mag. Julia Bock-Schappelwein (WIFO), thoroughly researched and edited the commented bibliography of the economic chapter. Lydia Wazir of Quality Translations revised the linguistic aspect of the final version.

Our thanks go to all of them.

Dr. Erika Laubacher-Kubat

IOM Vienna

Project Manager for Austria – Head of the National Contact Point Austria

## **Executive Summary**

The pilot study “*The Impact of Immigration on Austria’s Society*” is the contribution of the National Contact Point Austria within the European Migration Network (EMN) to the more expansive report on “*The Impact of Immigration on Europe’s Societies*”. It is a first attempt at assessing the actual impact of immigration from different angles in an interdisciplinary approach, keeping in mind the broad range of topics and research questions such an undertaking implicates. In order to perform such an assessment, it is necessary to provide an overview of the status quo of migration research and to point out the research gaps among the existing secondary literature. This was therefore an undertaking with a two-fold aim: first, to test the already existing network of migration researchers and experts on the national, respectively on the European level and second, to answer the predetermined questions as they were agreed upon within the EMN. The templates with regards to content and length were clearly defined, whereby a certain margin for specifications according to the country’s characteristics in migration issues was allowed.

Regarding the geographical situation of Austria and its long history of immigration, one is tempted to say that Austria has a certain tradition of immigration. Yet, until today, this has neither been recognized officially nor has it encroached upon the conscience of the general public. Irrespective of the influx of immigrants during past decades, due to wars, political uprisings in the former communist countries or the intake of foreign “guest workers” for economical reasons, the Austrian self-understanding is not that of an immigration country.

In Austria, migration is generally understood and equated with labour migration that began in the early 1960s, when additional labour force was needed. In the early years of immigration, migrant workers guaranteed economic growth. The so-called “guest worker” scheme was introduced, bringing a considerable number of mostly young, male workers from former Yugoslavia and Turkey to Austria, who were supposed to leave the country after a few years on a basis of rotation. Yet, this concept did not work – the majority decided to stay longer and bring their families to Austria. During the 1980s and 1990s, the number of foreign residents rose considerably in the wake of the fall of the Iron Curtain and the war in ex-Yugoslavia, but also due to the economic upswing and the need for foreign manpower. This increase in immigration also had effects on the Austrian immigration law. In the early 1990s, the former “guest worker” scheme was replaced by a yearly quota system for new residence permits,

which reduced the net immigration into Austria. Moreover, the different legal status of foreign workers vis-à-vis nationals introduced a social and economic stratification new to Austria, leading to a deterioration of equity in many different aspects. From an economic point of view, not only the large numbers but above all the composition of the inflows became a matter of concern. Immigration to Austria has changed its character from a guest worker programme to one of immigration proper. Today, the majority of foreign workers have become permanent residents, many have become naturalised and are an integral part of the Austrian population.

Migration research in Austria has to be understood in this historical context. Yet, institutional and financial fundamentals of this branch are often not sufficient; and a problem that is often mentioned in the academic discourse is the incompleteness, lack of representativeness or simple non-existence of relevant data. The impact of immigration on Austria's society has not yet been researched as such in a comprehensive manner, taking all the different aspects into consideration. The actual impact is comparatively easy to measure, when we have statistics and numbers at our disposal, which allow for concrete findings. For this reason, relatively extensive literature can be found on topics that serve a specific economic interest; but when it comes to the question whether immigrants have an impact on society in a cultural, political and social context, literature is scarce. Until the 1990s, when the social, economic, and legal exclusion of immigrants gained more relevance in the political discourse, they had not been perceived as social, political and cultural actors. This potential has been of hardly any interest to researchers and policy makers for some time, and it is only in recent years that this has begun to change.



## 1. Introduction

### **1.1 Immigration in the Austrian context: terminology and current situation**

Contrary to the public discourse in Austria, where the understanding of the terms “migrant”, “guest worker”, “foreigner”, “asylum seeker” and “refugee” is often blurred, the academic discourse clearly differentiates between these groups. One important criteria of distinction is the legal status, followed by the *cause* of migration, which both clearly separate refugees and asylum seekers from the former “guest workers” who came to Austria during the 1960s and 1970s. In migration sociology, the classification into the so-called “first generation” of immigrants and into their descendants, the “second and third generation”, has become widely accepted. The difference lies in the place of birth and the citizenship, which in Austria is rather difficult to obtain, since Austria follows the “*ius-sanguinis*” principle. According to this principle, a foreign child receives the nationality of its parents, contrary to the “*ius-soli*” principle, where the *place* of birth is the decisive factor for obtaining the country’s nationality. This is one of the reasons for the relatively high share of foreign nationals living in Austria compared to other EU states: With a share of 8.9% foreign nationals in the total population, Austria ranks fourth along with Germany after Luxembourg, Liechtenstein and Switzerland (census 2001; Lebhart 2003: 259).

As already mentioned, citizenship is the crucial criterion when it comes to the question of whether a person with a migration background falls under the same provisions of rights and duties as Austrian citizens. Due to the new EU citizenship, nationals of the Member States enjoy the same legal status as Austrians in many areas, while so-called “third country nationals”<sup>1</sup> require different permits. These legal definitions implicate remarkable differences regarding the living situation of the foreign population in Austria.

The present study focuses on third country nationals who have been legally residing in Austria for more than twelve months (“*long-term migrants*”). Where it was necessary for the overall understanding respectively the correctness of statistical data, we made a distinction between the term “immigrant” – referring here only to the first generation – and “migrant”,

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<sup>1</sup> Third country national: any person who is not a national of an EU Member State (up to the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2004) and who is granted legal residence in the territory of a Member State.

comprising also persons of the second and third generation, disregarding their status of nationality. The problem of finding an adequate term that would be always applicable could not be solved.

Asylum seekers, refugees, citizens with dual nationalities and students from abroad would de facto fall under the general definition of long-term migrants as well, but in the Austrian context the term “migration” is generally equated with “labour migration”. In the Austrian scientific literature a clear separation between labour migration and forced migration can be found, whereby the majority of the existing studies deal with labour migrants and not refugees or asylum seekers.<sup>2</sup>

With regards to the current foreign and foreign-born population in Austria, the most recent data are those of the census 2001. As already mentioned, the percentage of foreign nationals of the total registered population is currently 8.9%, which corresponds to approximately 710,000 persons (total number in May 2001: 710,926). The percentage among males (9.6%) is higher than among females (8.1%), due to the fact that almost 53% of all foreigners living in Austria are male. Citizens of the classical source countries, (former) Yugoslavia and Turkey, add up to almost two thirds of the foreign population, the most important groups being nationals of Serbia and Montenegro (133,000, 18.7%), Turkey (127,000, 17.9%) and Bosnia-Herzegovina (108,000, 15.2%). Even though Germans are the fourth largest group (72,000, 10.2%), compared to other European countries the total percentage of EU citizens of the foreign population in Austria is rather low at only 14.9% (106,000 persons) (Waldrauch 2003: 3).

The varying legal status of the foreign population in Austria, is regulated by the Austrian Legal Migration System in three areas: admission (entry), stay (residence and settlement) and termination of stay (return) (cf. Circo/Vilics 2003). Foreigners are subjected to two different laws in Austria: the *Aliens' Law* and the *Law on the Occupation of Aliens*. Without dwelling on the legal details here, Circo/Vilics state that “*Austria is implementing a highly restrictive policy in the area of labour migration, also when it comes to the different permits that one can be granted and to the conditions to be fulfilled for the granting thereof.*” (Circo/Vilics

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<sup>2</sup> The actual impact of asylum seekers and refugees on Austria’s society is difficult to track down not only because of the missing data and research studies, but also because of their current situation of limbo: the Austrian asylum system is currently in the process of fundamental reform. Therefore and for the purpose of this study, the topic of asylum seekers and refugees was kept out of the discourse.

2003: 16). Based on the motto “*Integration before New Immigration*”, which was introduced in the mid 1990s, there is a tendency to separate those immigrants who have been in the country for more than five years and those who have stayed for a shorter period. The Aliens’ Law 1997 should leverage the underlying principle of this motto, “*that is to restrict further immigration on the one hand, and on the other hand to solidify the residence permit of long-term residents also in cases where problems may emerge.*” (König/Stadler 2003: 231, own translation). This issue will be examined further in the following chapters.

## 1.2 Type of material collected and analysed

The study “*The Impact of Immigration on Austria’s Society*” had a two-fold aim: first, to compile all relevant academic literature of the last six years on the possible impact of immigration, at the same time establishing an overview of the status quo of migration research in Austria. Second, to answer the specific questions of interest by examining and interpreting the data according to the guidelines set forth by the European Migration Network. In light of the large quantity of literature, a balance had to be struck between the relevance of the specific material for the purpose of this study and the comprehensiveness of existing literature. Yet, August Gächter is one of the many scientists who criticised the lack of possibilities in the area of migration research due to the ongoing academic deficiencies (cf. Gächter 2000: 163).

The “*Austrian Report on Migration and Integration. Demographic Developments – Socio-Economic Structures – Legal Framework*” (Fassmann/Stacher 2003) has to be pointed out in particular. It was conceived as “*a response to the deficit in comprehensive information and research on migration and integration processes in Austria*”.<sup>3</sup> It is the most recent and comprehensive publication of the last years on migration research and aims at closing the information gap in the long-term; a regular update of the report (every three to five years) is planned.<sup>4</sup> This multidisciplinary report covers the period of the last 20 years bringing together data and information including legal, demographic and economic as well as xenophobic and security issues. It provides an overview of all relevant life spheres of the foreign resident population, which are covered by the corresponding experts in the specific fields.

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. <http://www.icmpd.org/default.asp?nav=research&folderid=-1&id=101> (accessed in July 2004)

<sup>4</sup> This publication is funded by the Austrian Federal Ministries of Interior, and Education, Science and Culture and is based on a former research report written by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development.

The type of material collected for our pilot study differs according to the respective research topics. While the majority of analysed material on economic and political issues are studies relying on already established data (e.g. the census 2001) and on surveys conducted ad hoc, it is difficult to find academic research in the cultural context. Nevertheless, especially in the field of humanities, a quantitative rise of diploma theses dealing with cultural issues of migration can be observed.

### **1.3 Problems concerning the collection and analysis of material: research gaps**

A problem often mentioned in academic discourse is the lack of relevant data in the context of immigration. Furthermore, Gächter (2000) has been very critical of the status quo of migration research in Austria with regard to the methodological aspect. By discussing four studies on the expected number of immigrants or commuters after the entry into force of labour mobility following the eastern enlargement of the EU, he wanted to show that the results of these studies are worthless due to methodological shortcomings and problems with the handling of the data.

As indicated earlier, research gaps in Austria are numerous. Economic impact analyses of migration tend to focus on monetary effects, which are the result of market transactions. This is also the case in Austria. Many aspects that affect the material well-being of a society but are not organised through the formal market economy are neglected. The main topics of research in Austria centre around the impact of migrants on economic growth, productivity and technical progress and the labour market – in particular labour market segmentation, employment opportunities of migrants and natives, the impact of migrants on wages and unemployment; and lately also on the balance between contributions to and receipts from the social security system by migrants. In the last few years, in view of rapid population aging and technological change, the focus of analysis has turned to the potential benefits of immigrants, particularly the highly skilled, for sustainable economic growth (cf. Biffel 1998; Biffel/Walterskirchen 2001). On the other hand, the role of migrants as consumers and their impact on inflation or the balance of payments have hardly been examined.

When it comes to political issues and the question whether the participation of immigrants in political parties, trade unions and other mainstream political organisations has had an impact

we only have few statistical surveys at our disposal. Waldrauch/Sohler explain this gap in data by reasoning that migrants have not been perceived as social and political actors until the 1990s, when their social, economic and legal exclusion gained more relevance in the political discourse (2003: 13). Only few internationally comparative studies on the political integration of immigrants exist in Austria. Unfortunately, there exist neither studies on the role and influence of immigrants within the political parties, nor on the transnational political mobilisation among other immigrant groups.<sup>5</sup> Traditionally, the political potential of immigrants has been of no interest to researchers and policy makers and only in recent years has this changed. Due to the growing numbers of naturalisations, political parties began to discover the potential of immigrant votes in elections in recent years and started placing naturalised immigrants on their lists (cf. Kutzenberger/Matzka 2003).

The chapter on the cultural aspects lacks the most academic discourse. Here, it was only possible to indicate some of the initiatives that have been taken and publicly documented, but hardly any official research can be found in this regard. Thus, the discourse often stays confined to a general discussion of the impact of migration on Austria's society and neglects the input of immigrants into the development of culture, media and the arts. Yet, the topic of cultural diversity and multiculturalism has found its way into the Austrian debate. In recent years, this is a theme that has aroused considerable interest in the academic milieu on the one hand and official integration policies on the other hand. Despite the growing interest in issues of cultural diversity in the academic debate, very little empirical research in this field has been conducted in Austria. The impact on food, arts, sports and fashion has hardly been touched upon, whereby it is interesting to note that several research papers exist with regard to media. This is sometimes brought in connection with the participation of ethnic minorities in the media sector.

In general, it can be said that immigrants have not yet found their place in the public picture of "Austrian culture". A thorough empirical evaluation of the impact of immigration on cultural life in Austria would not only help to overcome this marginalisation, but could also lead to a more realistic public image of contemporary Austrian culture. To conclude, it is safe to say that compared to other fields, the impact of immigration in a cultural context is a grossly under-researched topic.

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<sup>5</sup> Given the fact that third country nationals can only participate in elections of the Chamber of Labour and the Foreigners' Advice Councils and that there are no data available on the political participation of naturalised immigrants, it is not possible to report in detail about immigrants' political mobilisation.

A thematic area where more material is readily available is the issue of integration. Parallel to the European Migration Network, a European Integration Network is emerging, which for Austria is situated in the Federal Ministry of the Interior, cooperating with the National Contact Point Austria.

Two final remarks can be added to the general problem of lacking research literature: first, the gender perspective is – with few exceptions – neglected to a large extent and second, research that takes the immigrants’ perspective into consideration is still missing to a great part.

## 2. Overview of immigration history and development in Austria (1945 – 2004)<sup>6</sup>

*(In consultation with ao. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Michael John, University of Linz, Department of Social and Economical History)*

Concerning secondary literature on the period after World War II, we have several studies at our disposal; nevertheless, the surveys that exist have mainly been conducted by sociologists and political scientists. The important topic of labour migration in Austria that began in the 1960s has never been a focus in historical research until today. Without question, there is a lack of profound research from a historical point of view on this topic; hardly any studies that present long-term perspectives from the industrialisation period to the present can be found (cf. John 1996; Kraler/Stacher 2002).

### **2.1 The post-war period and the bi-polarisation of Europe**

After WWII, approximately 1.4 million foreigners lived in Austria, including former slave labourers, displaced persons, prisoners of war, and war refugees; but the process of repatriation or resettlement of civilian foreigners began quickly. However, hundreds of thousands of men and women – mostly so-called “*Volksdeutsche*” (ethnic Germans), exiles and refugees from Eastern and Southeastern Europe (1948: 465,000) – stayed in Austria (cf. Stieber 1995). They served later as a substitute for a development that began to occur in Western European countries during the business cycle upswing of the 1950s. In Austria, however, it was not until the 1960s that any significant immigration of foreign labourers was observed (John 2003: 5-6). Regarding the geographical situation of Austria, bordering on

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<sup>6</sup> Due to spatial limits, the following chronological history only includes the major developments.

three Eastern European states and with a relatively permissive asylum policy, the country became a major destination for refugees from communist dominated countries. There were three major inflows resulting from political crises in the communist countries: In 1956, as result of the political uprising and the ensuing repression in Hungary, over 180,000 Hungarian refugees entered Austria. While the large majority of these persons were quickly resettled in other Western countries, about 20,000 were granted asylum and stayed in Austria. In the aftermath of the “Prague Spring” of 1968, about 162,000 Czechoslovakians entered Austria, the vast majority travelling on to other Western states. Finally, the crushing of the “solidarnosc” movement and the imposition of martial law in Poland in 1981 and 1982 triggered an inflow of about 150,000 Poles, again the majority of them refugees in transit (Jandl/Kraler 2003: 2; Reiz 2003; Zierer 1995; Vales 1995).

## **2.2 The immigration of so-called “guest workers” (1960s – 1980s)**

The emigration of Austrian workforce to Germany and Switzerland continued throughout the 1950s and therefore led to a labour shortage in Austria. The “*Raab-Olah Agreement*” between entrepreneurs and trade unions in 1961 authorised new labour migration (Böse/Haberfellner/Koldas 2001: 3-4). The so-called “guest worker” immigration with fixed annual “contingents” was promoted by contract labour programmes and organised by state agencies similar to those in Germany. The first contract was established in 1962 with Spain, followed by Turkey in 1964 and two years later by Yugoslavia. Between 1961 and 1972, a total of 265,000 immigrants came to Austria, peaking between 1969 and 1973 (Münz/Zuser/Kytir 2003: 22). Yugoslav nationals formed the biggest share of the guest workers with 78.5 % in 1973, followed by Turks with 11.8 % (Biffel 1995, tables 11, 12). The main principle of the guest worker system was based on “rotation”: immigrants were supposed to stay for a couple of years and then return to their home countries. However, this system never worked as expected, because the mostly male immigrants decided to stay longer. 1974 and 1975 marked a turning point in the Austrian immigration policy (cf. Parnreiter 1994). The consequences of the international economic crisis and the fact that Austrians who had been working abroad returned home, resulted in an increased competition on the labour market. Hence, the authorities tried to reduce the number of foreign workers: Like Switzerland and Germany, Austria stopped the recruitment of foreign workers and the Law on the Occupation of Aliens was implemented by Parliament in 1975. According to this law, after eight years of continuous employment, a foreigner could obtain a so-called “Certificate



of Exemption” (“*Befreiungsschein*”), which allowed him freedom on the labour market, before he was bound to an employer. The share of employed migrants in Austria decreased about 40% between 1974 and 1984, but the percentage of foreign residents remained almost at the same level, because the number of returning immigrants was compensated by the incipient family reunions (Münz/Zuser/Kytir 2003: 23).

### **2.3 The changes of the 1990s**

Between 1989 and 1993, the growing need for immigrants due to the economic upswing, the dismantling of the Iron Curtain, and the wars in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina led to a doubling of the number of foreigners living in Austria, rising from 387,000 persons to 690,000. Consequently, the percentage of employed immigrants climbed from 5.9% in 1988 to 9.1% in 1993. During the same period, unemployment increased from 149,200 persons (thereof 10,000 foreigners) to 195,100 (thereof 27,100 foreigners). In 1989, the net immigration amounted to +64,600 immigrants and in the following three years it passed the level of +80,000 a year (Münz/Zuser/Kytir 2003: 25-26).

Besides the immigration from the former Communist regimes, 60% of these immigrants arrived from the traditional migration countries, Turkey and former Yugoslavia. The government introduced a quota for work permits in 1990 (“*Bundeshöchstzahl*”), defined as a maximum share of foreign workers of the total workforce. The yearly fixed quotas vary from 8% to 10% of the total workforce (Böse/Haberfellner/Koldas 2001: 5). For the conflict refugees from former Yugoslavia, Austria - like other European states - instituted a so-called “temporary protected status” outside the normal procedure.

Considering the new situation, the Austrian government tightened its immigration policy and enacted a series of new laws in 1992/1993. The guest workers scheme was replaced by a yearly quota system for new residence permits, which reduced continuously the net immigration into Austria. Between 1993 and 2001, the net immigration amounted to 159,000 persons, which means that the yearly net immigration did not exceed 20,000 persons during the nineties (Münz/Zuser/Kytir 2003: 27).



## 2.4 Recent history and actual situation

The years from 1997 until 2002 were characterized by a massive increase in asylum applications, 2000 being the only year with a regression in the number of applications. In 1997, 6,719 persons applied for asylum, whereas the number rose to 39,354 in 2002; the number of applications demonstrate nearly a six-fold increase in 6 years time. In 2003, the number of applications dropped to 32,364. The overall recognition rate for the asylum applications continually climbed from 8.1% in 1997 to 28.4% in 2003. In 1999, this quota exceptionally rose to 50.7%, to a large extent due to the crisis in Kosovo. In 2004, the basic social care agreement (“*Grundversorgungsvereinbarung*”) was adopted according to Paragraph 15a of the Austrian Federal Constitutional Law (*B-VG*), which brought new responsibilities for the federal states regarding the accommodation of asylum seekers and has lead to conflicts between regional and federal governments since its entry into force.

In 2000, after thirteen years of a “big coalition” between the Austrian Social Democratic Party (SPÖ) and the Austrian People’s Party (ÖVP), the ÖVP formed a coalition with the right-wing Freedom Party (FP), which has as its main proposal in its diverse election programmes the cut of immigration to Austria and the end of “excessive foreign presence” in Austria (John 2003: 25). While under the big coalition in its last year of government 298,000 foreign workers were officially registered in Austria, since then the figure has permanently risen under the new coalition and reached a peak in July 2004 with 379,000 foreign workers (Statistische Übersichten 2004). This is in part due to the fact that Austria is part of the EU (especially the number of foreign workers from EU Member States has grown), because the European development has certainly diminished the national range for anti-immigration policies. On the other hand, it is partly due to the facilitation of the recruitment of seasonal workers, who are allowed to stay up to one year and to reapply after a two months break.

As a result of globalisation, the number of migrants from non-European countries is rising as well (cf. Statistics Austria, census 2001). The last census of 2001 shows that 12.5% of the Austrian population was born outside the country, which is a higher proportion than in the USA. In 2003, Statistics Austria observed an “*absolute naturalisation record*” in its “Population Trend”: for the first time in Austrian history more than 40,000 foreign nationals (precisely 44,694) were granted Austrian citizenship. A similar figure is expected for 2004 – in the first half of the year already 21,586 foreigners were naturalised (cf. [www.statistik.at](http://www.statistik.at)).

Yet, Çinar states that this is not due to a new more liberal policy in this field: the new record has to do primarily with the long lasting residence of migrants in Austria, who are normally granted citizenship after ten years (Waldrauch/Çinar 2003: 282). Therefore, from a demographic point of view it is clear that Austria is a country of immigration, while *“The official line continues to be that Austria is not a traditional country of immigration, and recent immigration policies reflect that ambivalence. On the one hand, there is the curtailment of traditional labor migration and family reunification programs that followed public discontent over immigration in the early 1990s. Added to the mix since that time are new integration measures, the country’s accession to the EU and its regime of more open borders, and the admission of thousands of temporary seasonal workers.”* (Jandl/Kraler 2003: 7).

The history of the guest worker rotation system demonstrates that temporary migration has the tendency to become permanent and can influence the size and composition of the country’s immigrant population (cf. Jandl/ Kraler 2003). *“Looking ahead, immigration appears likely to continue to capture the attention of both public and policy makers for many decades to come.”* (Jandl/Kraler 2003: 7). Considering the trend of the last 15 years, researchers like Rainer Münz expect a young population with a much more multiethnic background in the future than Austria had before (Münz 2003: 59).

### 3. The impact of immigration on Austria’s society: the economy<sup>7</sup>

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#### **3.1 Taxes, pensions and impact on the welfare system<sup>8</sup>**

This topic was not an issue in the early years of immigration, when unemployment was low and migrant workers, mainly target workers without family members, guaranteed economic growth. It was obvious that they were paying more into the welfare system than they took out, as they were mainly prime age workers. In the 1980s, however, as domestic labour supply

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<sup>7</sup> As the chapter on economy was written by an external author, the differentiation between the terms “immigrant” and “migrant” as indicated in the introduction is not applicable here.

<sup>8</sup> Welfare system: refers to the contributory social insurance programs that protect those who contribute to them against loss of income and unplanned expenditures because of illness, accident, old age or disability, and unemployment; as well as to the non-contributory social compensation programs that provide tax-financed social welfare (such as health care, pension, and other benefits) to those who perform a public service to society.

growth picked up – a consequence of the baby-boom generation entering the labour market – and as immigration continued, increasingly as a result of family reunion and refugee intake, questions about the effect on welfare budgets surfaced. They became an issue of public debate, and in consequence of research, during the 1990s. The research has to be understood in the context of substantial inflows of migrants, workers as well as refugees in the wake of the fall of the Iron Curtain and, thereafter, the war in Yugoslavia (Biffl 2002a, Biffl et al. 1998, Biffl et al. 1997, Walterskirchen 1998). Not only the large numbers but above all the composition of the inflows became a matter of concern. Immigration to Austria had changed its character from a guest worker programme to one of immigration proper, not dissimilar to traditional immigration countries with a large humanitarian intake (Fernández de la Hoz/Pflegerl 1999, Fassmann/Stacher 2003, Hintermann 2000, Gürses/Kogoj/Mattl 2004, Walterskirchen 1998). This had implications for the welfare system. Research indicates that, on average, payments of migrants into the social security system and receipts from the system were more or less balanced in the 1990s. The analyses differentiate between the various elements of social protection, e.g., unemployment insurance, public housing contributions, child benefits, retirement benefits, health care services etc. The contributions of migrants to the public household are primarily social security contributions, wage and value added tax.

Migrants have on average a lower annual income than natives – in the 1990s it was some 85% of the national mean. This is due to the combination of various factors: their on average lower skills, their concentration on low wage industries, the high proportion of seasonal work, and their limited opportunities to join the core work force of enterprises (insider-outsider problem, cf. Biffl 2000). Given the progressive tax system, their social security contributions and wage taxes were 24% below the national average.

Contributions to unemployment insurance constitute part of social security payments. As migrants are mostly in low wage industries and occupations, their contributions to the unemployment benefit system are below average – 16.3% below the national average during the period 1989-1999. The returns in terms of unemployment benefits (active and passive labour market policy measures) are somewhat higher than for nationals. This is mainly the result of the above average incidence of unemployment of migrants, which results not only from the types of jobs they occupy but also from the employment protection of indigenous workers. This is a longstanding feature of Austrian labour law and dates back to the thirties. Accordingly, a foreign worker is the first to be laid off if the enterprise reduces its work force.

However, the average duration of unemployment benefit receipt is shorter in the case of migrants as they are not generally able to access long-term benefits – only permanent permit holders are treated equally with Austrians –, thus keeping the positive differential in total benefit receipts of migrants minimal.

In contrast, foreign workers pay into a public housing fund without very often being able to draw benefits from it as long as they are aliens. The legislation on these matters is regional and no comprehensive statistical information is available on a national basis (Czasny/Hartig/Schöffmann 1999, Deutsch/ Spielauer in Biffel et al. 1997, Biffel et al. 2002).

Contributions to the public pension system do not differ between natives and foreign workers at any particular point in time and there is no distinction between the pay out of pensions to migrants and natives. If pensions are transferred abroad, it may be a pension to an Austrian or a former migrant worker. As migrants, particularly foreign workers from the traditional source countries, tend to settle in Austria, retirement pay is increasingly spent in Austria. As contributions to the public pension system are on a pay-as-you-go basis, pay-outs follow after a considerable time lag. It was not until the mid 1990s that a larger number of migrant workers, namely those who came to Austria in the first wave of the 1960s, began to enter the retirement system.

The composition of migrants at a particular time informs us only about the balance of the social transfer system at that time. In order to know more about the longer term relationship, these partial analyses need to be complemented by dynamic process analyses. This calls for longitudinal data of migrants and natives over the life cycle. In such a generations model, it becomes necessary to take into account the number of children, their use of educational resources, the income of immigrants, their health status and their life expectancy. If, for example, an immigrant has no or only one child over the life cycle and earns an above average income, then they are a net contributor to the social budget during the working life. When entering retirement, the situation changes, particularly if the period of retirement is long. Simulations of various phases in life would need to be made for the various categories of immigrants, low income earners with many children, high income with few children, retirees staying or returning to their country of origin etc., and compared with natives.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Simulations of that kind (overlapping generations models) are starting to be undertaken in Austria, see Karin Mayr (2004).

As the composition of immigrants and natives changes over time, so does their impact on social budgets. The balance in the transfer budget is reached when child benefits and retirement benefits are compensated by the contributions paid into the social policy budget over the life cycle. A comprehensive cost-benefit analysis of migrants in the context of social transfers has to take the generational transfers into account as well as the impact of migrants on educational, health and care infrastructure, and not only direct transfer payments like child benefits and retirement pay. If we do this, migrants tend to contribute more to social budgets than they take out. This may not come as a surprise as the Austrian welfare system is contribution based and has a relatively small redistributive capacity.

Migrants have on average a higher fertility rate than natives, but the educational resources spent on migrant children are below average (Biffl/Bock-Schappelwein in Fassmann/Stacher 2003; Biffl 2004b). As for the health status of migrants – they are healthier when young and upon arrival but become a vulnerable group of people when getting older. The lower than average educational attainment level of migrants and the associated above-average physical and often also mental and psychological strain in the workplace, are the main explanatory factors for the weaker health of older migrants.

This insight should trigger more focused medical attention on occupational diseases and their impact on health conditions throughout the life cycle. It may well be that a different organisation of work in enterprises, i.e. job rotation, flexible work arrangements, reduction of shift work with age and the like, can help reduce health problems of older workers. Given the large proportion of migrants in unskilled and semi-skilled occupations, this may be rather difficult (Biffl 2003a).

The bad health record of older migrants adds yet another dimension to the already daunting task of providing adequate care for an aging Austrian population. This implies that health care institutions will be faced with caring for people with special needs due to often chronic and multi-morbid health problems as well as different languages and cultural backgrounds. This may imply institutional adjustments, e.g. intercultural training for care personnel and medication and equipment (Pochobradsky et al. 2002; Dogan/Reinprecht/Tietze 1999).

## **3.2 Immigrants as consumers**

This is an area that is under-researched in Austria. Of course, there is a general understanding that immigrants are consumers and as such raise the demand for goods and services and in so doing boost economic growth – unless migrants’ consumption patterns affect economies of scale and so promote productivity. This raises the question of the effect of immigration on productive investment.

A growing population requires higher capital expenditure on social infrastructure (housing, roads, schools etc.). Investment in social infrastructure is linked with capital widening rather than deepening. This means that, apart from economies of scale, productivity growth will hardly be boosted. Only if the employment of migrant workers is coupled with the implementation of new technology, thus promoting restructuring of the economy towards more efficient production modes (especially directed to export markets) will immigration be linked with capital deepening and increasing productivity. This is clearly not the case in Austria.

Migrants in Austria tend to be at the lower end of the income scale, which implies that a high proportion of their income goes into satisfying their basic needs. In addition, a certain amount of their savings is repatriated as they send remittances to their countries of origin (cf. Biffi Sopemi reports). At the same time they import food and life style from their countries of origin and enrich the quality of life in Austria, not least by diversifying the cuisine, crafts and arts (ethnic entrepreneurs, see Gollner 2001; Cahit 2001, Haberfellner 2000, also Haberfellner/Betz 1999a and b, Haberfellner/Böse 1999). Thus, there has been a revival of sheep farming, as demand for lamb was boosted with the inflow of Turks. However, it is arguable that this is not the result of immigration but rather the consequence of changes in consumer tastes and/or of globalisation that has resulted in an increasing diversity of food in Austria.

## **3.3 Immigrants and employment**

This is, not surprisingly, a well researched area, as immigration in Austria is strongly rooted in labour migration with the social partners as the major institutional players. At the outset, in the early 1960s, Austria chose a foreign worker model of migration rather than an immigration model, as such migrant workers were supposed to reduce labour scarcities and

promote the flexibility of the labour market. In the 1960s and early 1970s, this objective was achieved in that only workers without family members came to Austria; thus, the share of foreign workers in total employment amounted to 6.1% in 1971, while the share of foreigners in the total resident population amounted to only 2.8%. However, during the 1970s and 1980s, family reunion was instituted, and the share of foreign workers in employment and the share of aliens in the total population converged to 5% and 4% respectively in the mid 80s.

Towards the end of the 80s a new wave of immigration took place as a result of a combination of push and pull factors. The civil war and ethnic cleansing in the region of former Yugoslavia represented the major push factor for immigration to Austria. The reunification of Germany, on the other hand, resulted in a prolonged cyclical economic growth phase in Austria due to an exceptional rise in export demand from Germany. This constituted the major pull factor for foreign workers. It did not only open up employment opportunities for Bosnians, Serbs and Kosovars, the major foreign worker groups in Austria, but also for Turks, the second largest single nationality of foreign workers in Austria. Furthermore, persons from Central and Eastern European countries, for the first time after the fall of the Iron Curtain, could take up jobs in Austria in larger numbers. By 2002, about 750,000, somewhat less than 10% of the population, and 335,000 – or 10.6% of all employees – were aliens. Today, the majority of foreign workers have become permanent residents and many have become naturalised, particularly less skilled migrants from the traditional source countries (Biffli 2002).

The impact on the employment sector can only be understood in the context of the original policy objective, which was to enhance the competitiveness of export industries. The Austrian migration system channels migrants mainly into industries, which produce tradeables, e.g. manufacturing with a low capital to labour ratio, in particular, labour intensive industries like clothing, leather and textiles as well as tourism. To a lesser extent, migrants flow into non-tradeables, in particular construction, personal, health and domestic services (Biffli 2003b).

The economic rationale for the employment of migrant labour differs between the production of tradeables and non-tradeables. Migrants tend to flow disproportionately into export oriented industries that use labour intensive technology in the production of goods, in order to promote export growth. In the non-tradeable sector, pressure to keep costs down is the major rationale for migrant labour. Personal services tend to have limited possibilities for



productivity growth in the technical sense, i.e. the ratio of inputs to outputs – e.g. the patient/nurse ratio or the consumer/hairdresser ratio – cannot be reduced by technology to the same extent as business oriented services or the production of manufactured goods, if the quality of the service is to be preserved. Thus, the costs of these labour intensive services relative to manufactured goods tend to increase over time if wage disparities are not to exceed conventional social norms of fairness. In those occupations in which wages do not rise in line with the rest of the economy, labour supply may become scarce. In order to ensure sufficient labour supply, migrants are employed, i.e., migrant labour represents a means to keep costs of non-tradeables low. This explains why migrants are employed disproportionately in low wage/low skilled jobs in the area of non-tradeables, e.g. cleaning, nursing and domestic services.

The rationale for employing migrant workers translates into wage and/or unemployment effects of migrants relative to natives. In summary, it can be said that the pressure on wages and employment opportunities increases with the elasticity of substitution of migrant versus resident labour. This is to say that in occupations and jobs, in which migrants are complementary to natives, natives profit from migrant labour in terms of job opportunities and relative wages. In contrast, in jobs where migrants and natives are substitutes, the wages and employment of natives are adversely affected.

Empirical research suggests that direct competition between immigrants and residents is relatively small in Austria as a result of pronounced segmentation of work (Winter-Ebmer/Zweimüller 1995, 1999; Biffl in Husa/Parnreiter/Stacher 2000). Immigrants tend to be concentrated in certain labour market segments, which are generally not favoured by the resident work force. In Austria, mostly unskilled and semi-skilled workers face increased competition from migrants, which is mainly evident in the negative wage impact on blue-collar workers (Hofer/Huber 2001, Biffl et al. 2002). The different legal status of foreign workers vis-à-vis nationals introduced a social and economic stratification new to Austria, leading to a deterioration of equity in labour markets.

Research into the effect of migration on unemployment is not conclusive as to the impact on native workers. Migrants tend to have higher unemployment rates than natives. The difference is to a large extent a result of the concentration of migrant employment in manufacturing industries, very often in tasks complementary to Austrians. Both technological developments



and increased reallocation of elements of production in a value added chain to CEECs account for severe employment declines in these segments of the labour market.

Micro-economic reform and restructuring entails above average job losses for unskilled workers, the group in which migrants are more than proportionately represented. But reallocation of production to neighbouring countries in the 1990s increasingly affects medium skilled national tradesmen. Thus, while in the past migrants contributed to employment stability of natives in tradeables by ensuring the competitiveness of exports, this is less the case in Austria in the 1990s.

Immigrants of earlier generations entered labour markets during the phase of rapid industrialisation with rising labour demand for low and medium skilled workers. Today, de-industrialisation and expansion of service activities is affecting both the structure and the nature of employment. The number of traditional jobs with standardised work processes from the era of mass production has declined (quantitative loss of jobs). Flexible specialisation is gaining weight. The demand for labour may change on an ongoing basis in a quest to adapt to consumer demands (market and client-orientation). Firms are entering into flexible supplier-producer relationships, whereby formal and informal sector activities may be intertwined (qualitative change of jobs). Non-traditional working hours, contract labour, casual work, flexworkers, homeworkers are becoming a feature of the Austrian labour market. These economic and social conditions add to the integration problems of migrants.

In addition, the informal sector is gaining weight. In the case of Austria, the informal sector is estimated to have increased from some 3% of GDP in the early 1970s to 15% in the mid to late 1990s. The rising share of informal labour in total employment is associated with other elements of greater flexibility in the formal labour market generated by the forces of demand and supply. These flexibility elements are compatible with what already prevails in the informal economy – workers employed by informal enterprises, domestic workers, outworkers, homeworkers, part-time and casual workers – and thus facilitate the movement from one economy to the other. Migrants play an important role in the informal sector, particularly in situations where access to formal sector jobs is difficult due to quota regulations and other institutional barriers to entry.

An oversupply of labour may not always take the form of higher unemployment. It may instead be the source of labour in casual and part-time employment, marginal occupations and

as fringe self-employment outside the core economy at lower wages. Peripheral workers drift in and out of employment, while a core of highly skilled workers continues to retain stable jobs and high wages. This is increasingly becoming a feature of the Austrian labour market.

### **3.4 Immigrants as ethnic entrepreneurs<sup>10</sup>**

There is no comprehensive statistical information on ethnic entrepreneurs in Austria and their role in the economy. As migrants are facing more and more difficulties in finding employment in manufacturing, they are increasingly turning to self-employment. This is a relatively new feature of migration in Austria. Until now, the proportion of self-employed migrants has been significantly lower than of natives, contrary to countries like France and the UK.

Migrants in Austria tend to set up business in services, in particular cleaning, restaurants, food production and retail trade as well as in manufacturing, above all in clothing, leather ware, shoes and textile production and repairs. These developments have not yet been formally researched due to lack of survey data. Students, often of migrant background, are starting to examine this subject in essays and diploma theses (Gollner 2001; Cahit 2001, Haberfellner 2000; also Haberfellner/Betz 1999a and b; Haberfellner/Böse 1999).

### **3.5 Highly qualified immigrants<sup>11</sup>**

In the wake of globalisation and the opening up of CEECs, the skill composition of migrants in Austria has changed somewhat. Highly skilled migrants from industrialised countries, and to a large extent also from CEECs, came to Austria during the 1990s, very often not with the intention to settle but as a result of increased internationalisation of business. As a result, the skill composition of the foreign population has become somewhat bipolar, with strong concentrations at the lower end of the skill segment and an above average proportion in the highest skill segment. This is in stark contrast to Austrians, who tend to cluster in the middle and upper medium skill segment. Highly skilled migrants tend to be concentrated in business

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<sup>10</sup> Ethnic entrepreneurs: the term refers to the activities of Europe's immigrant entrepreneurs and the businesses, mainly small and micro-enterprises, owned by immigrants or people with immigrant background. Ethnic businesses show a wide variety, ranging from catering to textile production to arts-and-crafts etc.

<sup>11</sup> Highly qualified immigrants: refers to the international mobility of highly skilled people, that is, individuals with particular expertise, talents and often high education levels. This term usually refers to information technology (IT) experts, doctors, academics, etc. It generally does not include domestic personnel, catering, service providers etc.

oriented services, in particular banking, insurance, information-communication technology, in utilities, in particular as electrical engineers, as well as in education and research (Biffl 2003c).

The number of highly skilled migrants remains very small, however, in spite of the implementation of a quasi open ceiling in the quota of highly skilled workers in the amended immigration law of 1997 (Alien Law). It remains to be seen if the most recent amendments to the foreign worker law (BGBI.I Nr. 133/2003, BGBI II Nr. 469/2003), according to which distinguished highly skilled persons and researchers are able to access the labour market without a prior test of labour market needs, will boost the inflow of highly skilled workers to Austria. Also, the facilitation of employment of foreign graduates from Austrian universities, a common practice in traditional immigration countries – and introduced in Austria in 2003 – could promote settlement of skilled migrants in Austria (Biffl/Bock-Schappelwein 2004). This may all the more be a viable option for increasing skilled human resources as Austria is among the OECD countries with a net-inflow of students from abroad. In 1998, Australia had the largest net-inflow (12%), followed by Switzerland (11.4%) and Austria (7.1%) (Biffl 2004a).

In summary, it is safe to say that Austria has not yet been able to attract highly skilled workers in large numbers either because of limited demand for these skills or because of perceived or real bureaucratic hurdles and red tape. The migration system does not appear to encourage the recruitment of highly skilled people from third countries. This may be the result of path dependence of migration policy – Austria has tended to recruit workers with trade skills or less; family reunion with these core migrants tends to promote the inflow of the same skills – and/or half hearted reforms of migration legislation and institutional ramifications. The latter implies that increased competition at the lower and medium skill level is condoned by migration policy while increased competition at the higher skill level does not find the support of the major players of migration policy.

### **3.6 Impact of immigration on specific economic sectors**

As noted earlier, foreign workers tend to be concentrated in industries and occupations that are at the bottom end of the wage scale. Those industries experience high competition in the

national and global market either because of relatively common (global) technology and skills of workers and/or due to a limited concentration/market power of the industry.

In these industries, migrants often occupy unskilled and semiskilled jobs or specialised medium skilled jobs. This is largely the result of the need on the part of employers to quickly understand and evaluate the competences of the migrants. Thus migrants often have traditional craft skills, e.g., sewing, tailoring, leather processing; or relatively low skills, as these skills are almost by definition easily transferable. Thus, migrants are more than proportionately employed in textiles, leather goods and apparel production, in food production and processing; and they have contributed to the survival of these industries as well as to certain low to medium-tech industries. They are also disproportionately represented in construction industries, tourism, personal services, cleaning and nursing, as well as harvesting in agriculture. Increases in the wages of unskilled workers and tradesmen have been restrained by international trade pressures on the one hand and migrant labour on the other.

Few migrants find employment in industries with a high capital/labour ratio and limited international competition. These are mainly banking, real estate and insurance, telecommunication and transport services, the high skill segment of health and education and the like. These sectors do not only offer employment security but also above-average and rising wages. They have been protected from market pressures and external competition, at least until the early to mid 1990s. In contrast, industries with a large share of migrant workers are not only at the low end of the wage scale but exhibit significant cyclical and/or seasonal employment instability.

A special case is the construction sector, which pays comparatively high wages to migrant and native workers alike. This is the result of the high degree of union density and thus the result of institutional rather than market forces.

The segmentation of employment by country of origin and industry is partly the result of market forces but also the objective of migration policy to promote exports and to restrain inflationary tendencies resulting from labour scarcities. However, migration policy increases labour supply only in the lower to middle skill segment. Thus, highly skilled native workers face comparatively little competition. This is to the disadvantage of society at large because it tends to retard the development and application of new technology and encourages inflationary pressures. This is in stark contrast to policy in traditional immigration countries

like Canada and Australia, which give priority to migrants with high and scarce skills, in order to ensure that migrants do not only contribute to population growth but above all to productivity increases.

### **3.7 Impact of immigration on exports and imports**

The international economic and political environment in Austria changed in the late 1980s following the opening up of the neighbouring CEECs to international trade, and again in the mid 1990s, in the wake of the integration of Austria into the EU. Both factors increased competition suddenly and significantly, the former in labour intensive export industries – in particular consumer goods production – the latter in quasi public sector services.

The change in the competitive position of Austria's export industries and the opening up of sheltered services to competition (telecom, banking and insurance, postal services) did not only give rise to unemployment but also boosted international trade (measured in terms of imports as a percentage of GDP) and to labour immigration (measured as a percentage of total employment). The share of the foreign work force in total employment increased from 6.3% in 1980 to 11% today. The share of imports/exports in percentage of GDP increased over the same time span by more than 10 percentage points to 52% of GDP. The major factor for this increase was increased trade with CEECs (Biffi 2003b). The sequencing of factor and goods mobility differed. Migration had a head start and subsided as trade gained momentum in the mid 1990s. This was not so much the result of market forces but rather the result of an explicit policy preference in favour of trade rather than migration. This may be deduced from the timing of the signing of the so-called Europe Agreements. It took place in 1991, well before Austria's membership to the EU, thus effectively liberalising trade between Austria and the CEECs, while clamping down on migration flows at the same time.

Trade liberalisation resulted in greater specialisation in production, both in Austria and abroad; labour-intensive and low to medium technology-intensive stages in production tended to be transferred abroad while higher value added production remained and expanded in Austria. Costs of relocation of production and transport costs of intermediate goods in the production process were more than compensated by the lower production costs in CEECs, given their ample supply of significantly cheaper labour in the required skill segments. Major restructuring and specialisation occurred in five industries – the chemical industry, which is

intensive in human capital and natural resources and medium in technology; the construction material, cement, stone, glass and ceramics industry which is natural resource intensive; printing, paper, pulp, food processing; manufacturing of equipment and machines in the mature, medium-tech field with high labour intensity in production; and, of course, the labour intensive textile and clothing industry.

The restructuring of the industry in the 1990s resulted in winners and losers. Workers employed in industries specialising in human skill and advanced technology intensive production of goods and services were the winners, and workers in medium-tech and low to medium skill intensive production the losers. The least productive firms in the industries affected by increased imports went out of business, often as a result of the relocation of stages of production in the value added chain of the more productive enterprises in that industry. The production activities that were transferred to CEECs employed disproportionate numbers of migrants. Employment declined in the industries, which underwent substantial restructuring – between 1990 and 2002, employment in manufacturing industries (excluding mining) declined on average by 2.1% annually. Firms in these industries invested either in labour saving technology or specialised in production higher up in the quality ladder or in the marketing of the final product.

The result of these massive structural developments in the 1990s was that certain occupations in the medium skill segment (tradesmen, i.e., persons with apprenticeship education) and unskilled labourers were most affected by job losses. Thus, unemployment increased more than proportionately for persons with medium skills in manufacturing, followed by unskilled and semi-skilled labour. Unemployment of unskilled nationals increased between 1989 and 2001 by 8%; for migrants, the number more than doubled. In the case of medium skilled nationals (apprentices), unemployment increased by 30% while unemployment of foreign tradesmen quadrupled between 1989 and 2001.

In the medium skill segment, migrants bore the brunt of labour adjustments, since their chances for retraining were lower than for Austrians, either due to language barriers or limited financial means to invest in human capital. They did not only experience a significant rise in unemployment but also a growing wage gap relative to indigenous workers. While wages of migrants in the late 1980s were on average 11% lower than of natives (men: -15%, women: -10%), the differential increased to 21% in the early 1990s. As industry restructuring gained

momentum and migrants either dropped out of the labour market or moved into the non-tradeable sector, wage differences between migrants and natives declined again to the levels of the mid 1980s.

As job opportunities in the traditional trade skill segment dried up during the 1990s, migrants concentrated even more in certain industries. Thus by 2002, 25.3% of the work force in low wage manufacturing industries and agriculture were foreign workers. In tourism, their share even reached 28.1%. Large numbers of laid off migrants also took up jobs in the non-tradeable sector, often in tasks in which they are unable to fully utilise their original occupational skills; in particular, in cleaning services, trade and repair work, in domestic and personal services and the construction industry.

### **3.8 Cultural diversity<sup>12</sup> and competitiveness**

Cultural diversity in the private business sector has increased as a result of immigration, more so since the opening up of CEECs. The latter effect has been both through increased commuting – to a large extent from East to West – and socio-economic regional re-integration. The public sector, in contrast, has hardly taken to employing migrants – with the exception of nursing and other health care services and to a lesser extent teachers and social workers. The latter found access to these jobs mainly as helpers or specialists to promote the integration of migrants.

Recently, political parties, particularly the Green Party, began to diversify their representatives by giving voice to immigrants, thus acknowledging the increasing political weight of immigrants in Austria (Appelt 1999).

The economic impact of increased cultural diversity has not been researched in Austria. In the circumstances, it is sufficient to say that Austria's economic success is closely linked to the fortunes of its major trading partners and their socio-economic development. The increasing internationalisation of Austria's economy inevitably leaves an imprint on the Austrian society

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<sup>12</sup> Cultural diversity: Culture can take diverse forms across time and space. This diversity is embodied in the uniqueness and plurality of the identities of the groups and societies that make up humankind. Cross-border population flows, such as migration, lead to increased cultural diversity within societies (co-existence of a difference in behaviour, traditions and customs, etc.) that can serve as a source of exchange, innovation and creativity.

through its immigrants who contribute to the character and the competitiveness of the Austrian economy.

#### 4. The impact of immigration on Austria's society: the cultural context

*(In consultation with Dr. Bernhard Perchinig, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Commission of Migration Research)*

##### **4.1 Cultural diversity and the debate on multiculturalism**

Over the past years the terms "cultural diversity" and "multiculturalism" have become key words in the political discourse on migration and integration policies. Contrary to the discourse of the 1970s and 1980s, which saw cultural homogeneity as a precondition for social cohesion, cultural diversity today is not seen as a threat, but as a resource for society. The problem of defining "culture" and "cultural identity" as homogenous and static principles is one of the main arguments in the academic discussion about multiculturalism (cf. Bauböck 2001b: 3; Wagner/Schwinghammer/Hüttler 2003: 15). It is a theme that has aroused considerable interest in the Austrian academic milieu in recent years. According to some scholars, the debate has been characterised by a reduction of immigration to cultural issues: *"The scarf, the roast mutton, the kebab and the multicultural food festivities became the preferred topics of discussion and conflict. For some, migrants meant a 'cultural enrichment', for others a 'cultural threat'."* (Bračić 2001: 519).

The renowned Austrian political scientist Anton Pelinka has also criticised the tendency to reduce the concept of multiculturalism to ethno-national conflicts or to migration questions (Pelinka 2001: 164). According to him, the concept of multiculturalism primarily describes a political programme that must not be limited to a deontological formulation. On the contrary, the term should, in order to be effective, present a clear picture of reality that includes the ideas of functionality of culture, the connection between culture and power, and the diversity of identities not exclusively founded on ethnicity grounds (ibid. 165).

From a similar perspective, Rainer Bauböck deals with the debate on the "end of multiculturalism" that has been proclaimed by some scholars after September 11, 2001



(Bauböck 2003a: 21). He argues that the understanding of multiculturalism as mosaic with clearly delimited parts does not comply with reality, which is characterised by an unquestioned dominance of national cultures and the overlapping and transitions of languages, religions, and origins (Bauböck 2001a: 31). Stressing that immigrants should not be considered a menace to the social cohesion of the receiving state, provided that shared values and identities are promoted, Bauböck argues in favour of the inclusion of immigrants' cultures and history into the national narrative as a way of changing the exclusive self-understanding of immigrant societies (Bauböck 2003a: 22).

Diversity has also become a buzzword within the European Union. Referring to the EU-slogan "unity in diversity", critical voices have become loud pointing to the paradox relationship between cultural "unity" and cultural "diversity", which itself creates mechanisms of exclusion on a European level. Therefore, cultural diversity should rather be seen as a dynamic principle to be constantly renegotiated on a transversal level (cf. Kaufmann 2003: 2). Moreover, it should be kept in mind that ethnic groups show wide differences among themselves. Alex Demirovic has sharply criticised an unreflected use of culture as social category: "*Differentiating migrants or refugees according to their culture alone, and regarding this culture as an ethnic characteristic, is a symbolic act of violence*" (Demirovic 1997: 2, own translation).

The impact of cultural minorities on cultural diversity was a major focus of a report written by Austrian scholars for the Council of Europe. The report "*Transversal Study: Cultural Policy and Cultural Diversity. Country Report Austria*" (2000) examines the legal status and participation in Austrian cultural life of immigrant ethnic groups and the six officially recognised autochthonous ethnic minorities<sup>13</sup> at provincial and federal level. The report states that the Austrian provinces have a tendency to strongly support regional cultural traditions of the German-speaking majority (Baumgartner/Ellmeier/Perchinig 2000: 40). Federal policies do not differ much from this attitude: "*In general, there is no organised response to the cultural diversity of immigrant groups in Austria and cultural activities mainly have to rely on private initiatives and funding. (...) Cultural policy towards immigrant groups thus directly reflects the exclusionist tradition of Austria's immigration policy and its general policy towards immigrants already living in this country*" (ibid. 41).

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<sup>13</sup> Croats, Czechs, Hungarians, Roma, Slovaks, and Slovenes

On the provincial level, the debate on diversity has influenced the policy vis-à-vis immigrants in Vienna. In 2002, the city of Vienna commissioned a comprehensive study entitled *"Migration, Integration, Diversity Policy"*, which analyses the status quo of integration in Vienna and its changing circumstances. Furthermore, it examines best practices in European, Canadian and US-American cities, and gives concrete recommendations for a future diversity policy. According to the authors, the great advantage of a diversity policy consists in the overcoming of the pre-definition of immigrants as a "problem group" (Stadt Wien 2002: 8). Moreover, *"a diversity policy rather supports social cohesion and opens the doors for economic and cultural potential that is inherent in a population that has international points of reference"* (ibid. 8, own translation).

Whereas the academic discourse has shifted towards a positive evaluation of cultural diversity, this attitude was not reflected in the public discourse until recently. In 1998, a survey entitled *"Migration and Xenophobia"* was undertaken on behalf of the Ministry of Science and Transportation on facts, opinions and attitudes of Austrian nationals towards international migration, foreign population and the national migration policy in Austria. It showed that 31% of the 2,000 interviewed citizens saw foreigners as an enrichment of the Austrian culture, but 40% felt like "foreigners in their own country" (Lebhart/Münz 1999: 79). Yet, as a later survey in the year 2001 showed, in some integration and socio-political areas the attitude of the Austrian population reflected a greater open-mindedness than in the early 1990s (Gisser 2003: 54; Lebhart 2004: 86). As a matter of fact, the strong negative attitude in regard to the presence of foreigners and their "foreign culture" decreased remarkably between 1992 and 2001 (1992: 32%, 1998: 25%, 2001: 11%) (Lebhart 2004: 86).

#### **4.2 Immigrants and the cultural context: food, sports, fashion, arts and media**

Considering the spatial limits of this study and the broad definition of the following subchapters, the overview given here can only be fragmentary. Interesting sectors like music and film had to be left out due to the limited amount of space. The presented projects are an exemplary selection of what has been taking place in the Austrian cultural sector during the last decade. However, the impact of immigrants has not been dealt with sufficiently in scientific research, and data collections such as the *"First Report on Creative Industries in Austria"* (2003) do not specify on immigrants or persons with a migration background.

#### 4.2.1 Food

The role of ethnic food as an indicator for growing cultural diversity is a topic that has hardly been touched by researchers until now, although it should be mentioned that Austria is a member of the International Commission for Ethnological Food Research. Yet, the impact of immigration is visible to everyone, as the growing number of Turkish, Asian, and Latin American restaurants, especially in cities, demonstrates. Bernhard Fuchs calls attention to the long tradition of foreign recipes in Austrian history: “*Multicultural cuisine is the name of the current trend in domestic gastronomy. Austria’s top chefs are combining local specialties with exotic delicacies. But most of the traditional dishes of our country are likewise results of an active appropriation of foreign food culture.*” (Fuchs 1997: 41, own translation). At the same time, he alleges that the niche for ethnic gastronomy in Austria appears to be still too narrow, if one does not only look at the larger cities. That is why exotic food is sometimes only risked in combination with familiar food in so-called “*Mischlokalen*” (mixed restaurants) (ibid. 39). Nonetheless, the modern trend towards ethnic gastronomy as an indicator for more tolerance among the native population has also been examined critically: “*Döner has become a German word. However, it would be naïve to regard the adoption of ethnic food or music by the native population as a sign of cultural openness.*” (Bauböck 2001b: 12).

From an economic point of view, ethnic food stores and restaurants often are the starting point for the development of ethnic business, which at first mainly caters for the own community and later extends to the general population. According to the latest available figures, 3.7% of all self-employed persons in Austria were foreign nationals in 1999. In Vienna, the share of foreign nationals of all self-employed was 10% (Volf/Bauböck 2001: 75).<sup>14</sup>

#### 4.2.2 Sports

In the field of sports, academic and public debates can be found especially in the realm of xenophobia and the integration of foreigners: Two theses on immigrant football players have been published at the University of Vienna (cf. Tunst 2004; Kordik 1994), and in 2002 / 2004,

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<sup>14</sup> In 1991 (latest available figures), former Yugoslav and Turkish citizens held a share of 16.9% and 30% respectively in the retail industry and of 28.7% and 30% respectively in the restaurant trade in Vienna (Europaforum 2002: 211). Yet, most companies in these sectors are characterised by a lack of capital and entrepreneurial knowledge and hold a marginal position in their respective sector (ibid.).

lectures under the title *"Global Players. Culture, Economy and Politics of Football"* were held at the university department for International Development. It has been observed that also in the field of sports, cultural differences play an important role (cf. Fanizadeh 2000: 6). Overall, the situation of foreign football players is ambivalent: on the one hand, sportive activities offer a good opportunity for successful integration as research studies on the relation between Austrian and foreign players have shown (cf. Fischer 2000: 201). On the other hand, it is a field where xenophobia and racism are openly demonstrated (Tunst 2004: 80).

Since the European Year against Racism 1997, the Austrian football campaign *"Fair Play. Many Colors. One Game"* deals with the conception and implementation of anti-discriminatory, anti-racist and integrative measures in sports, especially in football (cf. <http://www.vidc.org/vidc/organisation/vidc.htm>, access in July 2004). The project also aims at promoting research with respect to football, which will be interesting to follow in the context of immigration and sports.

#### 4.2.3 Fashion

In recent years, fashion design in Austria has become more important especially from an economic point of view (regarding the business location Vienna in connection with fashion cf. Kalchmann 2001). A national survey on fashion culture in Austria and its respective internationalisation commissioned by the Austrian Federal Chancellery (*"Österreich in Mode. Bundesweite Untersuchung zur Internationalisierung österreichischer Mode"*) in 1999 has led to a new national policy of finance and the establishment of fashion offices (*"UNIT F – büro für mode"*, *"fashionOffice.org"*) with the aim of supporting young fashion designers. This has definitely changed the fashion design landscape in Austria, thereby also affecting the considerable number of foreign fashion artists. However, there exists a large research gap, when it comes to fashion and immigration. Besides an ephemeral political debate on the veils worn by women as a sign of their Muslim affiliation, there has been no discussion – neither academic nor public – in this domain.

Nevertheless, the impact of immigrants in this regard should not be neglected. Atil Kutoglu, who was born in Turkey and began his career in Austria, is one of the few internationally successful and appreciated fashion designers of today. According to Andreas Bergbauer<sup>15</sup>, the

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<sup>15</sup> Assistant at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna and co-founder of *UNIT F – büro für mode*

impact of immigrants on fashion is especially noticeable in the field of education: the percentage of third state nationals studying fashion at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna is remarkably high. He also stressed that the foreign influence of these students from an aesthetic point of view is clearly observable in their creations and drafts.<sup>16</sup> Fashion has also become a topic within the immigrant-youth association “*Echo*”, which includes fashion in its activities and articles in its magazine.

#### 4.2.4 Arts

On the occasion of 40 years of work migration in Austria, the historical museum of Vienna together with the NGO “*Initiative Minderheiten*” organised in 2004 two comprehensive exhibitions and a film series entitled “*Gastarbeiteri – 40 Years of Work Migration / Media and Migrants / Migrants in the Film*”. In 2003, the international exhibition “*Crossing the Line. Human Trafficking*” was shown in Vienna, contributing to the public discussion on illegal migration, smuggling and trafficking.

A field where much has been done by and for immigrants is the theatre sector. There are two well-established theatres in Vienna (“*Interkulttheater*”, “*Theater des Augenblicks*”), which are directed by persons of Turkish origin, and there exists a large number of theatre projects and small companies off the mainstream, which have increasingly put the issue of migration in a cultural context. “*Lalish-Theaterlabor*”, “*Die Fremden*”, “*Die Menschenbühne*” and “*Reiches Afrika*” are some of the migrant companies in Austria (cf. Wagner/Schwinghammer/Hüttler 2003). The book “*Theatre. Encounter. Integration?*” (2003) edited by the Society for Theatre-Ethnology is a first inventory of theatre groups and projects of ethnic and religious minorities in Austria, where academics and persons working in the field reflect upon whether intercultural theatre can contribute to the process of communication, respect and understanding for (and of) the “Other”. The common critique of the authors is directed towards the Austrian cultural policy in general, which “*lacks the fundamental willingness to create a sustainable infrastructure for the development and establishment of a ‘migrant-culture’. Multicultural events degenerate often to happenings with carnival-character, where culturally active migrants are presented like exotics in former times.*” (ibid. 180, own translation).

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<sup>16</sup> Telephone conversation, June 17, 2004

#### 4.2.5 Media

The media sector has enjoyed the most attention in the framework of cultural research. In recent years, the research perspective has slightly shifted from the already existing focus on the recognised autochthonous minorities to the “new minorities” following post-war immigration. In this context, one has to take into account the high degree of concentration on the Austrian media market (radio, TV, print media)<sup>17</sup>, which seriously hampered the development of immigrant ethnic media. Legal restrictions and the late opening of the market to private TV and radio stations also contributed to this situation (cf. EUMC 2002: 312). Following a legal reform in 2001, the Austrian public service broadcasting station ORF is since then obliged to provide an adequate extent of programmes in the languages of the autochthonous ethnic minorities. Yet, these regulations do not include immigrant groups (cf. Busch/Kogoj/Peissl 2001; ORF law of July 31, 2001).

For ethnic minority groups, the ORF offers broadcasts in minority languages on the radio<sup>18</sup> as well as on TV<sup>19</sup>, and the department for Ethnic Projects runs a news homepage devoted to issues of minorities and immigrants<sup>20</sup>. However, various authors have criticised that minorities and immigrants only play a marginal role in the Austrian media, that furthermore the media and programmes specifically targeting minorities and immigrants are of limited reach, and that, in addition, the opportunities for immigrants to participate in media production and presentation are often restricted (cf. EUMC 2002: 313; Volf 2001: 126).

In this context, the radio – specifically the private, free and non-commercial sector – is of great relevance for immigrant groups. Radio stations like *Radio FRO*, *Radio Orange* or *Radiofabrik* offer immigrants the possibility to create and produce their own programmes in various languages. These opportunities have contributed to the production of minority programmes targeted at the majority population (cf. Böse/Kogoj 2002: 300-302; Kogoj

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<sup>17</sup> Data cf. <http://www.media-analyse.at>, accessed in July 2004

<sup>18</sup> The local ORF radio station in Vienna (*Radio Vienna*) broadcasts a half-hour radio show on minority issues each Sunday evening. The radio station *Radio 1476* runs regular broadcasts in the languages of the Austrian official ethnic minorities and some immigrant groups. The radio station is a project of the ORF, that makes its studio infrastructure and a medium wave sender disposable also to NGOs and independent producers. (<http://1476.orf.at>)

<sup>19</sup> The TV programme “*Heimat, fremde Heimat*” produced by the minority department of the ORF broadcasts regular information on minority issues half an hour weekly on Sunday noon on channel ORF 2. In Carinthia and Burgenland the broadcast is sent in the language of the respective ethnic minorities living in the province and concentrates on their issues; in the rest of Austria the broadcast is sent mainly in German and concentrates on the situation of immigrants.

<sup>20</sup> <http://volksgruppen.orf.at/volksgruppen/integration>

2002c: 42-43). The internet has become an important tool as well: In the last years, several internet sites run by immigrant organisations or religious groups have been put online.<sup>21</sup> Nearly all organisations and associations in the field of integration run their own homepages, which sometimes are bi- or tri-lingual.<sup>22</sup> Several projects aimed at the second generation also have their own internet sites, which do not only display their projects but also serve as a discussion forum.<sup>23</sup> “MONA” (*Migration Online Austria*) is an internet platform that provides viewers with the latest news and projects on migration, integration and anti-racism issues.<sup>24</sup>

Migrants’ print media are, according to Böse/Haberfellner/Koldas (2001: 10-11), limited to papers of individual associations as well as to information leaflets of migrant organisations in Austria. “*Stimme von und für Minderheiten*”, “*Die Bunte Zeitung*”, “*Zebratl*” are examples of magazines for and by migrants published in German, “*Echo*” and “*Top One*” are magazines for and by the second generation.

In general, academics do not only criticise poor media offers for minorities and immigrants, but also the lack of “minority topics” in mainstream media, and the way minorities and immigrants are presented in mainstream programmes. Analysing the minority programmes of the ORF, Böse/Kogoj criticise a marginal position even for the recognized minorities focusing on cultural traditions and folklore, sometimes presenting minorities as “exotic” groups (cf. Böse/Kogoj 2002: 299-300; 306; cf. Schruiff 1999). However, the ORF minority department is a partner in the recent EU-sponsored project “*Online/More Colour in the Media*”, which aims at increasing the representation of minorities in the mainstream media.

According to different authors, the communication of misleading images as well as ethnic and racial stereotypes is due to the lack of media employees (journalists, reporters, presenters etc.) with migration or minority backgrounds (cf. Volf 2001: 126). Moreover, immigrants/minority members should not only report on immigrant/minority issues, but also be represented in mainstream programmes, reflecting the cultural diversity of society. Berghold/Menasse/Ottomeyer (2000: 15) assert the necessity of representation of immigrants in the public sphere (in the media, as civil servants etc.), contributing to the reduction of prejudices and biased imaginations.

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<sup>21</sup> e.g. [www.jedinstvo.at](http://www.jedinstvo.at), [www.jogoton.com](http://www.jogoton.com), [www.Turklook.at](http://www.Turklook.at), [www.islam.at](http://www.islam.at), [www.jbbz.at](http://www.jbbz.at)

<sup>22</sup> A comprehensive link list can be found at [www.wif.wien.at](http://www.wif.wien.at)

<sup>23</sup> e.g. [www.echo.non.at](http://www.echo.non.at), [www.interface.or.at](http://www.interface.or.at), [www.topone.at](http://www.topone.at)

<sup>24</sup> [www.migration.cc](http://www.migration.cc)



Today, a slight change may be noticed, particularly regarding the TV sector: persons with a migration background are not exclusively presented in relation to minority/immigrant topics anymore, but are shown as recognised and participating groups in society. On ORF, presenters with migration background are increasingly deployed in mainstream broadcasts or shows for young people. To give an example, the first nation-wide private broadcaster ATV+ offers a broadcast (*"Unkürrekt"*), produced and presented by members of the second generation.

## 5. The impact of immigration on Austria's society: the political context

*(In consultation with Dr. Bernhard Perchinig, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Commission of Migration Research)*

### **5.1 Participation of immigrants in the administrative-political system**

When it comes to the impact of immigrants in political parties, trade unions and other mainstream political organisations, we only have few statistical surveys at our disposal. Yet, in the Austrian academic discourse it is commonly agreed that third country nationals are to a large extent constrained from political participation. Academics have pointed out that the lack of opportunities to participate in electoral politics is a serious problem for democracy in Austria (Wiener Integrationsfonds 2003b; Fassmann/Stacher 2003; Wiener Integrationsfonds 2001). Furthermore, there is consensus that a long-term exclusion of a part of the population of the political decision-making process infringes upon the democratic principle of *"quod omnes tangit de omnibus approbetur"* ("what concerns all shall be approved by all") (Bauböck 2003b: 26), affecting not only the excluded part of the population, but society as a whole.

#### 5.1.1 The political opportunity structure: voting rights

Several authors, such as Rainer Bauböck, are in favour of the extension of local voting rights to third country nationals (2003b: 34), as they do not have the right to vote and to stand for elections at any of the three levels of political representation (municipal councils, provincial parliaments, national parliament). Political participation in trade unions and representations of



interests is possible but restricted: third country nationals possess active, but not passive suffrage. As pointed out by König/Stadler (2003: 250) Austria is still the only state within the European Economic Area, where third country nationals do not have passive voting rights to Work Councils. An exception are Turkish nationals due to the EEC-Turkey Association Agreement of 1963: As recently decided by the European Court of Justice (C-171/01, 8.5.2003), Turkish nationals have the right to vote and to stand for election in Workers' Councils, the Federal Chamber of Labour ("*Arbeiterkammer*"), and the Austrian students' representation "*Österreichische Hochschülerschaft*". Interestingly enough, the membership in legal representational bodies, such as the Chamber of Labour, is compulsory by law for *all* employees, irrespective of their nationality.

In 2002, the Viennese City Council introduced the right to vote at the district level<sup>25</sup> for third country nationals after five years of residence. Following a complaint at the Constitutional Court lodged by several city councillors of the Austrian People's Party and the Freedom Party, the Court eventually declared the introduction of district voting rights for third country nationals unconstitutional (VfGH 30.06.2004, G 218/03-16). Thus, any future amendment of the electoral law extending the voting rights to third country nationals will have to be based on a constitutional change requiring a qualified majority of two thirds of the votes in parliament.

Matthias Tschirf brings it to the point: "*Citizenship is a crucial criterion*" (Tschirf 2002: 439, own translation). Electoral rights are (with the mentioned exceptions) tied to the acquisition of the Austrian citizenship, putting an end to the integration process in a legal sense. This citizenship-centred perception of migration leads to a paradox: Once they obtain the Austrian citizenship, immigrants gain the right to articulate themselves politically, but they are no longer considered immigrants at that point.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> The City of Vienna is composed of 23 districts with elected district councils. As in Vienna, the City Council also acts as the provincial parliament; Union Citizens exercise their right to vote at the local level by participating in the district elections.

<sup>26</sup> It is a general problem that at the moment of naturalisation immigrants can no longer be traced in the official statistics (cf. Reinprecht 2003: 213) but this will change with the establishment of the new population register POPREG in the near future.

### 5.1.2 The political opportunity structure: naturalisation

In many countries of immigration, the traditional route of immigrants' political participation is naturalisation. Conditions for naturalisation in Austria are rather strict.<sup>27</sup> Between 1981 and 2001, some 275,000 immigrants were naturalised (Waldrauch/Çinar 2003: 277). The total number of naturalised persons with migration background living today in Austria can only be estimated: it amounts to about 408,500 persons (Lebhart 2003: 265). According to a recent survey among immigrants in Vienna, naturalised immigrants had a turnout rate of 48% at the local elections in 2001, which was far below the total turnout rate of 65% (SORA 2002: 62). As no studies on the voting behaviour of naturalised immigrants in other provincial or in general elections are available, it is not possible to comment on the effect of naturalisation on political participation and activities of immigrants in general.

In the parliamentary elections of 2002, 29 persons with immigrant backgrounds ran for office. In accordance with the principle of the reservation of public offices for Austrian citizens (Art. 3, *Staatsgrundgesetz*), all were naturalised immigrants. In the municipal elections in 2001, four naturalised immigrants were elected to City Councillors and more than 30 to District Councillors in Vienna (Grasl 2003: 144). In 2004, the Green Party in Vienna elected a Greek-born City Councillor as the head of their group in the City Council. Yet, there are neither figures on the number of naturalised immigrants elected for other municipal councils or the provincial parliaments, nor do studies exist on immigrants in political parties or special interest organisations. An exception is the study by Alexandra Grasl (2002) on district and city councillors with migration backgrounds in the city of Vienna, which showed that their perception of ethnicity and their respective self-understanding as naturalised immigrants play an important role in their political engagement.

### 5.1.3 The political opportunity structure: other forms of participation

In order to overcome the legal obstacles to political participation of immigrants, elected "Foreigners' Councils" ("*Ausländerbeiräte*") who have advisory functions to the local

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<sup>27</sup> Immigrants acquire a legal claim to naturalisation only after thirty years of residence. Naturalisation based on administrative discretion can be obtained after ten years, and, if the applicant can prove enduring professional and personal integration, after six years of residence. Sufficient and stable income and housing, absence of convictions to more than three months of imprisonment and knowledge of German are the major preconditions for naturalisation. Austria does not accept dual nationality, thus applicants have to prove that they have given up their previous nationality whenever possible.

council, have been set up in several cities. The first Foreigners' Council was set up in Linz in 1996. In the province of Styria, the provincial parliament introduced a bill in 1999 (Stmk. LBGl. 1999/82) obliging all cities with more than 1000 resident foreign citizens, to hold elections of Foreigners' Councils. The resident foreign citizens in Kapfenberg, Knittelfeld and Leoben elected their Foreigners' Council in 2000 and those in Graz in 2003, albeit with a rather low turn-out rate (Graz 2003: 14.26%<sup>28</sup>). Several smaller towns like Dornbirn in the province of Vorarlberg or Krems in Lower Austria are currently considering setting up a Foreigners' Council as part of a local integration strategy developed within the framework of an EQUAL-funded project<sup>29</sup>. Unfortunately, the effect of these Councils on the self-organisation and political claims of immigrants has not yet been analysed.

In the city of Vienna, the so-called "*Integrationskonferenz*" was installed in 1999. This integration conference is a regular meeting (2-3 times per year) of immigrant associations invited by the City Councillor for Integration to discuss current political issues, but it does not have a legal mandate.

#### 5.1.4 Political mobilisation of immigrants and their impact

According to a recent survey of immigrants in Vienna (SORA 2002), around 60% of the respondents were interested in Austrian politics, and around 50% were interested in the politics of their or their parents' country of birth (ibid. 55). Decisive factors influencing the degree of interest in Austrian politics were the level of education and fluency in German. Interest was significantly higher among naturalised immigrants than among third country nationals (68% vs. 54%). According to the same survey, 70% of the third country nationals within the sample stated that they would attend the local elections if they were entitled to (ibid. 63).

There is no data available on the political interest and participation of resident asylum-seekers, but a study conducted by the Austrian Caritas shows that recognised refugees are highly interested in Austrian politics: 67% of the respondents answered that they either were interested in politics in Austria and their country of origin or only in Austrian politics, whereas 4% were only interested in the political situation of their country of origin (Caritas 2002: 78).

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<sup>28</sup> [http://www.graz.at/x\\_wahl2003/erg/alwahl.htm](http://www.graz.at/x_wahl2003/erg/alwahl.htm), accessed in July 2004

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.equal-noe-lak.at/frames.php?startpage=1>, accessed in July 2004

In the May 2004 elections for the Chamber of Labour, several migrant candidate parties such as “*Bündnis Mosaik*”, “*Bunte Demokratie für Alle*”, and “*Neue Bewegung für die Zukunft*” were on the ballot, but only gained little attention (result for “*Bunte Demokratie für Alle*” in Vienna: 1.0%<sup>30</sup>). Thus the majority of immigrants voted for the main political parties. In most provinces, naturalised immigrants with a Turkish migration background ran as candidates for the migrant political parties.

The perception of immigrants’ political mobilisation in Austria by the Austrian population is an under-researched issue. Yet, with the existing studies undertaken by the Institute of Demography of the Austrian Academy of Sciences in the years 1992, 1998, and 2001, a positive tendency in the area of integration policy has become evident since 1992: According to the survey “*Migration and Xenophobia*” of 1998, 42% of the Austrian population agreed to the statement that any political activity of foreigners residing in the country should be prohibited (Lebhart/Münz 1999: 72; cf. Hintermann 2001). In 2001, this percentage decreased to 35% (minus 7 percentage points), while those in favour of the political mobilisation of foreigners rose from 36% (1998) to 40% (2001) (Lebhart 2004: 101).

Immigration itself has not triggered the political debate on post-national forms of political integration, but the impact of immigration has increasingly become noticeable in the ongoing academic discourse. Appelt (2001: 7; 13) asserts that, if democratic forms of politics want to survive the next century, democracy with its fundamental principles of freedom and equality for *all* its citizens must be conceived anew. Although demarcations and differentiation between citizens and foreigners are common features of a nation-state democracy, the crucial question is *how* the boundaries between these groups are drawn (Reiterer 2000: 55). Bauböck has proposed a “*reinvention of urban citizenship*” (Bauböck: 2001c) as a solution, suggesting that the notion of citizenship at local level should be based on residence and disconnected from nationality, as has already been realised for Union Citizens. His main argument is that “*we should conceive of the city as a political space inside the territorial nation-state where multicultural and transnational identities can be more freely articulated than at the provincial or national level.*” (ibid. 3). Consequently, he suggests that states, and especially European Union member states, should adopt a non-discrimination clause, allowing permanently resident third country nationals to acquire political rights in the municipality where they dwell (ibid. 17).

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<sup>30</sup> [http://www.gpa-fsg.at/content/akwahl2004/wien\\_sora.htm](http://www.gpa-fsg.at/content/akwahl2004/wien_sora.htm), accessed in July 2004

## 5.2 Self-organisation of immigrants in Austria

Although migrant associations are a traditional form of immigrants' participation in public life (Waldrauch/Sohler 2003: 16), their role and function for political integration was not researched until the end of the 1990s. In 2003, a comprehensive empirical study on migrant associations in Vienna, conducted by the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research (Waldrauch/Sohler 2003), was finished. Besides giving a quantitative overview of 544 migrant organisations and an analysis of their structure, fundamental aims, activities and orientations, a good overview of already existing research literature was given as well. Another survey on migrant organisations, offering an overview of 447 migrant organisations outside of Vienna, has been produced within the EQUAL-funded project "MIDAS" aiming at the improvement of immigrants' self-organisation.<sup>31</sup> Thus, a total of approximately 1000 migrant organisations may be found in Austria, but not all have the same degree of relevance in a political sense of self-organisation.<sup>32</sup>

Voluntary work as a form of self-organisation was examined in a study by Margit Grilz-Wolf and Charlotte Strümpel within the framework of the European programme "*Migrant and Ethnic Minority Volunteering*," compiling all existing data of civil engagement of migrants in Austria and giving examples of best-practices as well as recommendations for the future (Grilz-Wolf/Strümpel 2003).

Other researchers have focused on a specific group of immigrants or ethnic minorities: Sabine Kroissenbrunner has analysed Polish and Turkish self-organisations (1995, 1996, 1997) and has been working on the correlation of migration and religion, especially on forms of organisation of Islam in Austria (2001, 2003). Ljubomir Bratić specialised on the history of self-organisations of persons from former Yugoslavia, making the important differentiation between forms of organisation of "guest workers", which pursue rather folklore and sports activities, and the organisations of political emigrants, which can be considered more as political exile organisations (cf. Bratić 2000, 2001, 2003). He understands the self-organisation of migrants as "*those defensive and participation-oriented groups that*

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<sup>31</sup> <http://www.midasequal.com/de/empowerment/index.html>, accessed in July 2004

<sup>32</sup> This high number should not be overestimated: Most associations are active not in the political, but in the social, cultural and religious fields or in sports, others reach out to immigrants and natives ("mixed associations"). Of the 554 organisations identified by Waldrauch and Sohler in Vienna, only 56 have been identified as "political" (Waldrauch/Sohler 2003: 429). Associations run solely by immigrants are mainly focused on internal aspects of the community concerned, whereas mixed associations show a stronger interest in more general concerns.

*considerably shape the social structure and the political action of migrants*". (Bratić 2004: 64, own translation).

As the data shows, most migrant organisations can be characterised as multi-sectoral and multi-functional (Waldrauch/Sohler 2003: 18; cf. Schröttner/Sprung 2003). While "first generation-organisations" rather focused their activities on immigrants from the same country of origin, the second generation, which is slowly taking the lead, often broadens the context to anti-discrimination and an intercultural perspective (cf. Waldrauch/Sohler 2003). According to the mentioned study on migrant associations in Vienna by Waldrauch/Sohler, the number of Islamic organisations has grown considerably since the 1980s. In the meantime, a dense network of mosques and associations has developed (2003: 284), which does not only cater for the religious needs of the Muslim population, but also offers language courses, childcare and other forms of social support for Muslim immigrants.

Although a rather high number of migrant associations have been identified in Austria, there exists no study on their effect on the overall political integration of immigrants.

### **5.3 Transnational political mobilisation**

Whereas until the 1990s the international and national scientific discourse conceived immigration as a one-way-road from the country of origin to the country of residence, it is now commonly agreed that immigrants don't give up their relations to the country or region of origin. This new focus on transnationalism has led to a reconception of immigration as a status of multiple belonging: "*Transnationalism leads to an institutional expression of multiple belonging: the country of origin becomes a source of identity, the country of residence a source of rights, and the emerging transnational space a source of political action combining the two or more.*" (Kastoryano 2001, in IOM 2003: 20-21). Immigrants "*connect two or more local contexts to new social spaces or transnational communities*" (Akkiliç/Strasser 2003: 17, own translation) and do not give up their linkages with the country of origin, leading to manifold interactions like visiting back home, financial remittances and transnational communication (Fassmann 2003: 437). In this context, the question of transnational political participation has gained growing interest among migration researchers.

A study by Şenol Akkiliç and Sabine Strasser on the Kurdish "*Initiative Munzur*" in Vienna focuses on the transnational function of self-organisations for building bridges between the

country of origin and the country of residence. Analysing the way in which protests against an embankment dam project in Eastern Turkey in 2003 were organised, Akkiliç/Strasser show how immigrants not only engage for changes on the political, social and ecological level in their home country, but also how they become more active in their new surroundings as political participants. According to the researchers' understanding a new form of transnational politics is emerging "*which comprehends direct as well as indirect political participation in the country of origin and attempts to influence institutions in the receiving country through external knowledge*" (2003: 17, own translation).

## 6. Factors affecting the impact of immigrants on Austria's society: provision of support and restrictions

(Mag. Brigitte Schütz, IOM Vienna)

### **6.1 Integration of immigrants**

Irrespective of the influx of immigrants during past decades, the Austrian self-understanding is not that of an immigration country. Until today, there is no general federal competence responsible for policies in the field of immigration and integration in Austria. Yet, in the last decade, the importance of a well-conceived integration policy has come forward on the political agenda in Austria. On federal as well as on provincial level it has been recognised that a successful and sustainable integration depends to a large extent on the economic, political, social, cultural, and legal circumstances immigrants find in the country of immigration.

On the one hand, as of 2004, different ministries and authorities of the provinces carry out numerous projects aiming at an enhancement of mutual co-existence of Austrian nationals and non-Austrian nationals.<sup>33</sup> On the other hand, in 2001, the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research published a major comparative study developing an index of legal discrimination for seven countries (Austria, Belgium, Germany, France, Netherlands, Switzerland, United Kingdom) (Davy 2001, Waldrauch 2001). The study analysed the legal

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<sup>33</sup> The city of Vienna has been pushing forward a peaceful co-existence of the Viennese population and immigrants since 1992 through the "*Wiener Integrationsfonds*" (Viennese Integration Fund). This fund will be replaced by the Administration Department on Integration and Diversity Management in autumn of 2004 (cf. [www.wif.wien.at](http://www.wif.wien.at)).



position of third country immigrants with regard to residence, family reunification, employment, social rights, access to citizenship and civil and political rights, and developed a ranking in these fields based on an elaborate statistical benchmarking system. Waldrauch (2001: 559) states that Austria scored second worst after Switzerland in the overall ranking, and worst in the area of civil and political rights. Yet, in regard to the provisions of the Aliens' Law concerning the residence of aliens, Austria shows less legal barriers for integration than the average (ibid. 560).

Perchinig enumerates equal legal opportunities, equal chances on socio-economic and political level, and cultural diversity as the three important factors of integration policy (2003: 9). For August Gächter, the fundamental components and keywords of integration are inclusion and mobility (cf. Gächter 1999b). He criticises that the political slogan "*Integration before New Immigration*" creates the illusion that integration is a timely limited task of politics, negating the fact that integration is a perpetual process (cf. Gächter 1999b).

Contrary to what has been argued on the political level for a long time, namely, that a successful integration of immigrants depends mainly on their personal will, researchers commonly agree that integration measures are a task also the receiving states have to cope with (cf. Zwicklhuber 2003: 5). Rainer Bauböck defines integration as "*a process of mutual adaptation and change between a receiving group and the received group*": the former has to provide possibilities of participation while immigrants have to set individual efforts within the integration process (Bauböck 2001a: 14, own translation). Yet, it has been criticised by Çinar that "*the political will to integration – contrary to the official rhetoric – is clearly limited and that the legal framework partly holds on to the principle of segregation*" (Çinar 2004: 48, own translation). The legal framework is therefore a crucial factor when it comes to the question of a possible impact of immigrants on society.

## **6.2 Legal norms**

Some experts and persons working in the field criticise that residence permits do not generally grant access to the labour market. A positive exception is the "settlement proof", which was introduced in view of the forthcoming EU Council Directive 2003/109/EC of 25 November 2003 concerning the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents: this unlimited settlement permit was introduced in 2003, granting full access to the labour market

for immigrants legally residing in Austria for at least five years (as to the legal situation see also Wiener Integrationsfonds 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003a; Davy 2001).

The latest modification of the Alien's Act was the introduction of the "*Integration Agreement*", which went into force in January 2003. Immigrants have to accept this agreement, which contains the obligation to learn German within four years in order to receive or extend their settlement permits. The introduction of this amendment was accompanied by a fundamental public discussion and criticised by many experts and NGOs (cf. e.g. www.wif.at; de Cillia 2003). Since January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003, 2,145 migrants have successfully completed a German language course.<sup>34</sup>

Factors restricting the impact of migrants on the receiving society become particularly evident regarding the economic situation. Apart from specific structures of certain economic sectors and lower qualification levels, Biffl points out that the Foreigner's Employment Act (privileging Austrians on the labour market) seems to play a crucial role in legally discriminating non-nationals (cf. Biffl et al. 2002: 281). Volf points out that for immigrants it is not only difficult to get access to the labour market, but job advancement seems to be rather the exception than the rule, even for the second generation of immigrants in Austria. (Volf 2001: 54-55)

The access to social security systems depends on various factors: while recognised refugees are granted the same rights as Austrian citizens and EEA-citizens, there are also differences between different groups of non-EU-nationals. Privileged are those groups, whose countries of origin have signed agreements with the EU (like Turkey) or bilateral agreements with Austria. Those third country nationals who cannot rely on such agreements are disadvantaged compared to Austrians (cf. König/Stadler 2003: 240). Neither do immigrants have equal rights as Austrian citizens regarding family benefits (family allowance, child care benefit), housing benefits, benefits of unemployment insurance, long-term care provision etc. (Wiener Integrationsfonds 2001: 27). Social benefits are not only granted by the federal authority (like child care), but also by the provinces, which means that they may differ regionally.

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<sup>34</sup> Press release of the Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF), September 7, 2004

### 6.3 Health

Volf points out that the cultural context shapes the awareness and consciousness of disease and the human body and its functions in general. In addition, the migration experience may directly affect health status as it may cause stress and a certain pressure (2001: 222). Due to a lack of official data, there is only a small number of studies examining the health situation of immigrants and their access to health care services.<sup>35</sup>

Hypotheses on the health situation of migrants are often based on existing studies on the overall population (IOM Vienna, Ludwig-Boltzmann-Institut für Frauengesundheitsforschung 2003: 28-29). According to a general assumption, there is a relation between the health status and the socioeconomic status (education, profession, income, age etc.). Amesberger/Liegl/Halbmayer (2003: 174-176) stress that there are illnesses (chronicle, stomach/intestinal diseases, psychosomatic disorders), which affect immigrants to a higher extent. Comparing the health situation of immigrant<sup>36</sup> and Austrian women, Wimmer-Puchinger/Baldaszi (2001) conclude that the subjective well-being of Austrian women is significantly better. Apart from information deficits concerning the Austrian health system, immigrants often have greater information deficits about the functions of the human body, certain diseases and health prevention in general (ibid. 21). Relating to the access of immigrants to the Austrian health care system, a study conducted by the Ministry of Health and Women (cf. BMGF 2003) analysing persons who have no state health insurance<sup>37</sup>, showed that non-nationals and persons with a lower educational level may be affected to a higher extent.

Language barriers play a crucial role according to prevention campaigns and medical treatment. Volf proposes, therefore, the amelioration of cultural competence in the health sector (2001: 224-225).

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<sup>35</sup> The most important data sources in this respect are surveys: a special programme within the Mikrozensus survey on health (carried out by Statistics Austria in a more or less consistent manner – the latest in 1999); the health survey of the city of Vienna, carried out on a regular basis. Yet, as studies based on the Mikrozensus survey have already produced astonishing results about immigrants (for example a better health status compared to Austrian nationals), some authors have pointed out the lower average age of the immigrant population in Austria as well as the general over-representation of men (having a lower morbidity risk) within the immigrant population. As there are only German-speaking interviewers, the questionnaire also requires elaborate language skills. In addition, high rates of non-response have to be considered, which may also have an effect on the results (surveys on topics like health may be perceived as a sort of state control). (cf. Amesberger/Halbmayer/Liegl 2003; cf. also Volf 2001: 219-220).

<sup>36</sup> Concentrating on women from Turkey and former Yugoslavia.

<sup>37</sup> About 3.1% of the overall population (205,000) – the majority of these persons does not even have private insurance.

## 6.4 Housing and living conditions of immigrants

Kohlbacher/Reeger (2003) analysed the living and housing conditions of immigrants in all of Austria, but also pointed out that immigration is to a large extent an urban phenomenon. According to the authors, immigrants are disadvantaged on the housing market because of their socio-economic status, legal restrictions and rigid structures of the housing market itself.

The housing conditions of the non-national population has been analysed especially in the context of segregation and regional concentration (in particular the situation in Vienna) (cf. Giffinger/Wimmer 2002; 2003). However, experts do not consider segregation as an exclusively negative phenomenon or integration barrier. “Ethnic quarters” may also be considered as help for incoming migrants to integrate (information, goods etc.) or as vital milieus where ethnic businesses can survive. (cf. Giffinger/Wimmer 2002: 212) Authors like Dangschat (2002) or Fassmann (2002) underline that the main problem is not the phenomenon of segregation itself, but rather its consequences: segregated areas are often socially underprivileged areas reproducing social disadvantages. Another important aspect is the clearly lower living standard immigrants are confronted with, especially in cities like Vienna (cf. Volf 2001: 244-245; cf. Kohlbacher/Reeger 2002a: 192-194)<sup>38</sup>.

There exist a number of studies and articles with a sociological approach on the importance of family relations in situations of migration (Fernández de la Hoz/Pflegerl 1999a and b; Pflegerl 2002) as well as research on the living conditions and the social situation of older immigrants, with a special focus on their health situation and social services (Reinprecht 1999, 2000, 2003; Fernández de la Hoz/Pflegerl 2000).

## 6.5 Poverty and social exclusion

Apart from the fact that there is very little data on immigrants regarding topics such as poverty and social exclusion, experts particularly criticise the quality of survey data (cf. Förster/Heizmann 2003)<sup>39</sup>. However, studies have shown that immigrants have a higher poverty risk and higher poverty rates than the overall population. According to the “National

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<sup>38</sup> To give an example, 56.4% of Turkish immigrants and 64.6% of persons from former Yugoslavia were living in substandard flats compared to 7.8% of the Austrian nationals living in Vienna. Additionally, immigrants have less living space but higher expenses on rents. (cf. *ibid.*)

<sup>39</sup> Surveys such as the European Community Household Panel (ECHP) have been criticised because of their restricted sample size.

Action Plan for Social Inclusion”, the poverty risk rate for non-EU-citizens at 21% clearly exceeds that of Austrian and the EU-15-citizens (11%) (NAP Inclusion 2003-2005: 2).<sup>40</sup> Analysing the household income of Austrian nationals, of the overall population and of immigrants, significant disparities can be found (cf. Gächter in Volf 2001: 208). A study by IHS/SORA (1998) focusing on Vienna concludes that the highest poverty risk rate can be found among Turkish households (27% compared to 5% among Austrian nationals and 17% among immigrant households) (cf. IHS/SORA: 208).

Förster/Heizmann point out that the poverty risk is to a high degree dependent on low incomes (2003: 83) due to lower employment rates, low educational and qualification levels, and employment structures among others (cf. economic chapter; cf. Biffl et al. 2002). According to Volf (2001: 208), immigrants are disadvantaged with regard to state measures reducing poverty risks. The Austrian Welfare State provides social security systems, which are tied to employment (social insurance covering risks like illness, unemployment and pension) and social services like family allowances, where the Austrian citizenship or the duration of sojourn (sojourn status) are crucial. This differentiation originates from the former guest worker system. (cf. Volf 2001: 208-209)

## **6.6 Education and language training**

As the guest worker system did not intend family reunification, an education policy targeted towards immigrant children did not seem necessary for a long time (cf. Volf 2001; Biffl/Bock-Schappelwein 2003). Biffl and Bock-Schappelwein (2003: 123-124) underline a bipolar concentration of immigrants in the Austrian educational system: on the one hand they are concentrated on the level of obligatory school years (four years of elementary school and secondary school each) and on the other hand in the university sector. Many of the non-national students are EU nationals; third country nationals studying in Austria mainly come for study purposes. Pupils from the traditional guest-worker countries are more likely to leave school after secondary school: while 93% of the 17-year-old Austrian pupils attend high school, only 60% of Turkish and former Yugoslavian pupils do. This means a high proportion (40%) of 17-year-old juveniles work as unqualified workers in the Austrian labour market. (ibid. 127)

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<sup>40</sup> The National Action Plan for Social Inclusion clearly underlines the need for further improvements in strengthening employment opportunities of immigrants, education and training participation as well as their housing situation. (NAP Inclusion 2003-2005).

Another evident trend is the high concentration of immigrants in special schools for disadvantaged children: many of these pupils in this type of school are non-nationals (23.1% in 1998/1999 compared to 6.3% in 1980/81), the majority coming from Turkey and former Yugoslavia. Referring to the second generation of Turkish and ex-Yugoslavian immigrants, Herzog-Punzenberger assumes a strong discrimination of this group in schools and on the labour market, so that, according to her, one can speak of ethnic segmentation (Herzog-Punzenberger 2003: 47).

Rudolf de Cillia underlines the fact that immigrants, except the autochthonous minorities, are not granted rights related to their language. Furthermore, programmes promoting the development of cultural identity of immigrants only exist in the field of education (de Cillia 2003: 131). Only those naturalised migrants, who speak one of the autochthonous minority languages<sup>41</sup>, enjoy language rights and measures of support. A legal basis for education for immigrant children in their mother tongue<sup>42</sup> in schools was fully established in 1992/1993 since first attempts were made in that direction in the 1970s. Yet, as Fleck notices, the principle behind this policy clearly has changed: while the early attempts to teach immigrant children in their mother tongue were based on the convenience when they return home, today it is based on the principle that this formation in the first language is necessary to support language acquirement and development in general (cf. Fleck 2002; bm:bwk 3/2003). Another measure in child education is “intercultural learning”. Even though experts point out certain deficiencies (school books, teacher formation, etc.) in the implementation of such programmes, it should be stated that the legal basis and the possibilities offered within the Austrian education system in this field correspond to international standards (cf. de Cillia 2003; Fleck 2002).

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<sup>41</sup> Slovenian, Croatian, Hungarian, Czech, Slovak, Romani

<sup>42</sup> Statistical information about education in mother-tongue: bm:bwk 5/2002, 5/2003, 2/2004

## Conclusions

Much more could be said on the respective topics we have examined in this study. Due to the spatial limits, we were only able to focus on selected research material and had to leave out works and issues we would have liked to integrate. The same goes for the enumeration of research gaps: we briefly pointed out the specific topics (according to the template as it was agreed upon in the European Migration Network) that have not been dealt with yet in migration research. Numerous unanswered questions arise when we speak of immigration in a broader context, but to elaborate on all these issues would have gone beyond the scope of this study and its purpose.

The pilot study *“The Impact of Immigration on Austria’s Society”* shows that immigration has had and still has an impact on Austria’s society in many different aspects. The difficulty consists in determining this impact within a few words, when the stance taken should be as objective as possible and consider positive as well as negative perspectives. It would, therefore, make more sense to speak of different impacts according to the respective domain or section within which the impact should be assessed.

In any case, it was not the aim of this study to find a clear-cut answer but to give a first overview of what has been achieved during the last six years in Austrian migration research. The common view is clear: in Austria, migration research as a proper branch lacks institutional as well as financial fundamentals. With regard to the impact of immigration on our society, it is safe to say that Austria has not been able to take full advantage of the potential of its immigrated population. A first step would be to publicly recognise the fact that Austria has become a country of immigration.

Until today, a hindrance for an open-minded approach towards immigration and its impact has been the negative association among a part of the Austrian population when it comes to legally residing third country nationals in Austria. The word “immigration” is often misused on the political floor when it is related in one sentence to problems such as smuggling and trafficking of human beings, unemployment, the difficult situation on the housing market, problems in the education sector, increasing crime rates etc. This has created a climate that has deteriorated during the last decades and resurfaces at every election campaign. In the academic discourse, to the contrary, a more positive stance can be found. This has to do on



the one hand with the fact that researchers can rely on clear numbers that show the opposite of what is often alleged for political reasons. On the other hand, there exists the tendency in migration research to understand the phenomenon of migration in a broader dimension. Therefore, unusual topics (for Austrian circumstances) such as the impact of immigration on food, fashion, sports and arts could be included in this study, though accompanied by the disillusioning recognition that hardly any research has been done in these fields.

When immigration is mentioned in a positive context, it is often by the means of culture and folklore. Yet, this can be dangerous because it limits immigrants to a determined ethnic group, with specific tastes and traditions, which often does not coincide with reality. That is why the “*multiculti*” debate has been substituted by a more extended discussion on cultural diversity. A slow interest by certain media sectors can be observed in reporting on the impact of immigration, even if it is often in a negative (and better selling) manner. Much more has to be done still to transmit a more positive picture of foreigners in Austria besides the usual stereotypical portrayal.

To conclude, immigration and its impact on Austria’s society are topics that deserve much more attention, not only in the general public, but also in the academic field. Meanwhile, many initiatives have been taken in the domain of sustainable integration policies and projects in Austria; nevertheless, it is a big drawback that corresponding literature is scarce.

## Appendix: Statistical Data

Population by citizenship and age 2001

Age groups	Total	Citizenship					
		Austria		EU-14		Third countries	
		Total	in %	Total	in %	Total	in %
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.032.926</b>	<b>7.322.000</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>106.173</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>604.753</b>	<b>100,0%</b>
<b>0-15</b>	1.447.210	1.296.460	17,7%	10.453	9,8%	140.297	23,2%
<b>16-30</b>	1.524.386	1.344.884	18,4%	21.578	20,3%	157.924	26,1%
<b>31-45</b>	1.990.209	1.775.393	24,2%	35.954	33,9%	178.862	29,6%
<b>46-60</b>	1.485.117	1.364.732	18,6%	20.462	19,3%	99.923	16,5%
<b>61+</b>	1.586.004	1.540.531	21,0%	17.726	16,7%	27.747	4,6%

Sources: Statistics Austria, Census 2001

**Asylum applications by citizenship of applicants (selection) 1997-2003**

Citizenship	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Afghanistan	723	467	2.209	4.205	12.955	6.651
Armenia	11	76	180	165	1.235	2.038
Bangladesh	110	167	305	305	949	1.104
China (People's Republic)	14	14	25	53	95	666
Georgia	0	25	38	34	597	1.921
India	253	472	874	2.441	1.802	3.366
Iraq	1.478	1.963	2.014	2.361	2.118	4.466
Iran	502	950	3.343	2.559	734	760
Macedonia	10	19	52	21	947	786
Moldova	7	22	43	107	166	819
Nigeria	202	189	269	390	1.047	1.432
Pakistan	221	242	317	624	486	359
Russian Federation	37	59	122	290	365	2.221
Serbia and Montenegro	1.084	6.647	6.840	1.486	1.637	4.723
Others	1.727	2.283	3.161	2.651	3.126	4.481
Turkey	340	210	337	592	1.868	3.561
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.719</b>	<b>13.805</b>	<b>20.129</b>	<b>18.284</b>	<b>30.127</b>	<b>39.354</b>

Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior (Bundesministerium für Inneres (B.M.I.))

Comments:

2001: qualifying date: 31.3.2002

2002: qualifying date: 28.2.2003

**Immigration and emigration from and to Austria by country of origin/destination country (only non-nationals) 1996-2001**

Year	Country of origin/destination	Gender	Immigration	Emigration	Migration balance
1996	<b>1996 TOTAL</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>57100</b>	<b>48914</b>	<b>8186</b>
		Men	29287	28038	1249
		Women	27813	20876	6937
	EU-14	<b>Total</b>	<b>11445</b>	<b>6924</b>	<b>4521</b>
		Men	6028	3698	2330
		Women	5417	3226	2191
	Ex-Yugoslavia	<b>Total</b>	<b>15454</b>	<b>16509</b>	<b>-1055</b>
		Men	7959	9546	-1587
		Women	7495	6963	532
	Turkey	<b>Total</b>	<b>5885</b>	<b>4761</b>	<b>1124</b>
		Men	3123	3034	89
		Women	2762	1727	1035
	Others	<b>Total</b>	<b>24316</b>	<b>20720</b>	<b>3596</b>
		Men	12177	11760	417
		Women	12139	8960	3179
1997	<b>1997 TOTAL</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>56895</b>	<b>49755</b>	<b>7140</b>
		Men	29523	27952	1571
		Women	27372	21803	5569
	EU-14	<b>Total</b>	<b>11587</b>	<b>7956</b>	<b>3631</b>
		Men	6232	4266	1966
		Women	5355	3690	1665
	Ex-Yugoslavia	<b>Total</b>	<b>14759</b>	<b>16599</b>	<b>-1840</b>
		Men	7701	9354	-1653
		Women	7058	7245	-187
	Turkey	<b>Total</b>	<b>6163</b>	<b>4336</b>	<b>1827</b>
		Men	3227	2799	428
		Women	2936	1537	1399
	Others	<b>Total</b>	<b>24386</b>	<b>20864</b>	<b>3522</b>
		Men	12363	11533	830
		Women	12023	9331	2692
1998	<b>1998 TOTAL</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>59229</b>	<b>44865</b>	<b>14364</b>
		Men	30581	25107	5474
		Women	28648	19758	8890

	EU-14	<b>Total</b>	<b>12117</b>	<b>8164</b>	<b>3953</b>
		Men	6454	4401	2053
		Women	5663	3763	1900
	Ex-Yugoslavia	<b>Total</b>	<b>16684</b>	<b>13695</b>	<b>2989</b>
		Men	8766	7503	1263
		Women	7918	6192	1726
	Turkey	<b>Total</b>	<b>5857</b>	<b>3833</b>	<b>2024</b>
		Men	2916	2333	583
		Women	2941	1500	1441
	Others	<b>Total</b>	<b>24571</b>	<b>19173</b>	<b>5398</b>
		Men	12445	10870	1575
		Women	12126	8303	3823
<b>1999</b>	<b>1999 TOTAL</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>72379</b>	<b>47279</b>	<b>25100</b>
		Men	36566	25760	10806
		Women	35813	21519	14294
	EU-14	<b>Total</b>	<b>13524</b>	<b>8022</b>	<b>5502</b>
		Men	7276	4361	2915
		Women	6248	3661	2587
	Ex-Yugoslavia	<b>Total</b>	<b>22809</b>	<b>16087</b>	<b>6722</b>
		Men	11433	8665	2768
		Women	11376	7422	3954
	Turkey	<b>Total</b>	<b>7208</b>	<b>3666</b>	<b>3542</b>
		Men	3310	2100	1210
		Women	3898	1566	2332
	Others	<b>Total</b>	<b>28838</b>	<b>19504</b>	<b>9334</b>
		Men	14547	10634	3913
		Women	14291	8870	5421
<b>2000</b>	<b>2000 TOTAL</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>65954</b>	<b>44367</b>	<b>21587</b>
		Men	34070	24056	10014
		Women	31884	20311	11573
	EU-14	<b>Total</b>	<b>13609</b>	<b>8374</b>	<b>5235</b>
		Men	7489	4611	2878
		Women	6120	3763	2357
	Ex-Yugoslavia	<b>Total</b>	<b>16283</b>	<b>13452</b>	<b>2831</b>
		Men	8374	7328	1046
		Women	7909	6124	1785
	Turkey	<b>Total</b>	<b>7019</b>	<b>3552</b>	<b>3467</b>
		Men	3426	1874	1552
		Women	3593	1678	1915

	Others	<b>Total</b> Men Women	<b>29043</b> 14781 14262	<b>18989</b> 10243 8746	<b>10054</b> 4538 5516
<b>2001</b>	<b>2001 TOTAL</b>	<b>Total</b> Men Women	<b>74786</b> 39955 34831	<b>51010</b> 28823 22187	<b>23776</b> 11132 12644
	EU-14	<b>Total</b> Men Women	<b>16656</b> 9098 7558	<b>10551</b> 5865 4686	<b>6105</b> 3233 2872
	Ex-Yugoslavia	<b>Total</b> Men Women	<b>20147</b> 10628 9519	<b>15214</b> 8448 6766	<b>4933</b> 2180 2753
	Turkey	<b>Total</b> Men Women	<b>7667</b> 4184 3483	<b>3521</b> 2015 1506	<b>4146</b> 2169 1977
	Others	<b>Total</b> Men Women	<b>30316</b> 16045 14271	<b>21724</b> 12495 9229	<b>8592</b> 3550 5042

Source: Statistics Austria, ISIS database

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# www.emn.at



Information on migrants, asylumseekers, and refugees in Austria (statistics, laws, institutions)



Information on the European Migration Network (Contact Points, networks, researchers)



Current issues in the field of migration in the European context (events, publications, invitations for tenders)

Information also available in [German](#)

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