

Expert Council for Integration

INTEGRATION
IN THE CONTEXT OF
THE CORONAVIRUS
PANDEMIC



Integration Report 2021

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Foreword

BY THE FEDERAL MINISTER FOR WOMEN,
FAMILY, YOUTH AND INTEGRATION

For over a year now, the coronavirus crisis has been affecting our lives significantly and demanding huge sacrifices from us. The pandemic is also a great challenge for integration. Interpersonal exchange, the basis for successful integration, was severely curtailed by the necessary contact restrictions. Many people in Austria also experienced heightened uncertainty. This year's Integration Barometer conducted by the Austrian Integration Fund shows that the economic situation as well as job and education prospects were at the top of the list of people's worries.

However, every crisis is also an opportunity to come together and grow as a society. The federal government has developed a comeback plan to soften the economic and social effects of the pandemic and create prospects for a better common future. The integration of migrants and refugees is an intersectional issue in this regard – from the labour market to education, health and social policy.

People with a migrant background contribute significantly in system-relevant jobs; at the same time, they also frequently work in sectors that were hit particularly hard by the pandemic. In general, the situation of migrants in the labour market has worsened, with unemployment rates above 50% for refugees, and women being particularly affected. My aim is to promote migrants' ability to sustain themselves. On the one hand, this requires providing course offerings and measures; on the other hand, migrants must also take advantage of these. Integration is not a one-way street but a mutual process based on a concept of promoting and demanding. The health care and nursing fields in particular are areas where opportunities for a successful and sustainable integration in the labour market exist for migrants, in light of the lack of skilled labour; these opportunities must not be wasted.

The road to successful integration necessarily requires migrants to actively make an effort and contribute positively to our society. Voluntary engagement grants migrants the opportunity to get involved in Austrian society while improving their German language skills, forging vital networks and gather practical experience for the labour market. In my eyes, however, the most important effect of voluntary work is the strengthening of the feeling of belonging to Austrian society. By being active in associations or municipalities, migrants quickly forge connections and so get the chance to see themselves as part of our society. The upswing following the coronavirus crisis is the perfect time for migrants to actively contribute to Austrian society and take their integration into their own hands.

German language skills are the foundation of successful integration. That is why we address this issue at the earliest stages of children's education; the large proportion of pupils whose everyday language is not German and the low level of education of many migrant parents are a major challenge – particularly in large urban centres. The pandemic has increased the danger of a further widening of the learning gap for children with a migrant background.

To counter this trend, we have expanded various language improvement measures. In addition to already implemented measures such as the German support classes and mandatory training, in 2021 summer schools will be held for the second time running. These prepare non-regular pupils with poor German skills and children in need of support for the next school year. We are also increasing the focus on the parents and their obligation to support their children on the latter's educational career in Austria. The Austrian Integration Fund thus offers courses for parents, running in parallel to the summer schools, that provide guidance on the Austrian school system and show the parents how best to support their children on their educational path in Austria. Furthermore, following the pandemic the Austrian Integration Fund's broad range of German language programmes for children and parents was made digitally accessible, and its more than 1,000 online courses have attracted more than 75,000 participants. The course offerings for refugees and migrants were also extensively developed. In over 720 online seminars across the country, subjects such as health, strengthening and promoting women, social cohesion and the prevention of radicalisation were addressed.

A particular focus for me is the qualification of girls with a migrant background, because girls and women are multipliers and driving forces behind integration in education and in the transmittance of values to their families and communities. My aim is to strengthen the autonomy of girls and women and their ability to sustain themselves – patriarchal roles and structures frequently stand in their way and make them more prone to be victims of violence. Mechanisms of oppression with cultural and religious connotations have no place in Austria. The equality of women and girls – with or without a migrant background – must be strengthened in all areas of life.

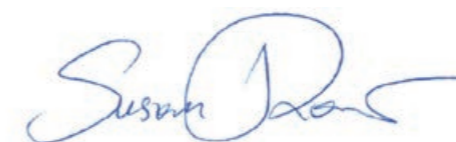
The identification with essential values like equality, freedom, the rule of law and democracy as a common foundation of our society is the precondition for peaceful coexistence in Austria. The rule of law and the values of the Austrian state must be respected by all who live here. When migrants feel little attachment to their host country, foreign influences and anti-democratic ideologies find fertile ground to spread, resulting in the rise of parallel societies. Anti-democratic worldviews like Political Islam are a serious threat in this regard. The riots in the Favoriten district of Vienna and the terrorist attack in November 2020 make clear that parallel structures are already a sad reality in Austria and that we must urgently strengthen prevention work. The newly founded Documentation Centre for Political Islam is a milestone not just in Austria but globally in identifying the networks of Political Islam and studying them academically.

In conclusion, the more than one year of integration work during the coronavirus crisis has shown once again that integration – whether in the labour market or in education – absolutely requires interactions and interpersonal exchange between migrants and the majority society. In accordance with the principle of “promoting and demanding”, successful integration requires, on the one hand, the provision of offers by the state; on the other, success also depends on migrants actively seizing the opportunities afforded to them in Austria and interiorising the social values and norms.

Despite the solid integration infrastructure, several challenges remain. In times of crisis, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, it is all the more important to strengthen social cohesion through comprehensive efforts at integration and so to promote a sustainable future. Once the pandemic has been overcome and social contacts can again occur to the full extent, we must see a comeback in integration, because integration will still remain a central challenge in the future. To be able to set up targeted measures, integration policy requires close collaboration with academia and research as well as thorough data analysis and contextualisation.

In this report, the Expert Council for Integration presents a fact-based situation report on the state of integration in Austria, gives insights into current developments and, with its analysis and recommendations, provides an important basis for all stakeholders in the field. Its bundled expertise thus makes a significant contribution to evidence-based integration policy.

In conclusion, I would like to express my sincerest thanks to the Expert Council for Integration and to its Chairperson, Univ.-Prof. Dr. Katharina Pabel, for this very informative Integration Report 2021. I look forward to our continued fruitful collaboration and wish all readers an insightful reading.



MMag. Dr. Susanne Raab
Federal Minister for Women, Family,
Youth and Integration

Vienna, 2021



Foreword

BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE EXPERT COUNCIL
FOR INTEGRATION

Since March 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic has placed its mark on the political, economic, social and cultural life of everyone in Austria, Europe and the world. The various measures enacted to fight the pandemic reached into all areas of our coexistence, including integration. When it is necessary to reduce social contact, integration work needs to change and faces new challenges. Integration as a social process requires contacts and communication between migrants and the host society – and the pandemic made this process very difficult. This is why we must, in the post-coronavirus phase, resume and nurture social exchange and the meeting of people with and without a migrant background. Integration should be viewed as an important goal for society as a whole in all policy areas that are now focused on addressing the challenges born from the pandemic – in particular labour market, education, health and social policy.

In light of this, the 2021 Integration Report addresses integration in the context of the coronavirus pandemic and focuses in particular on the labour market, education and training. The effects of the pandemic are felt by all, regardless of where they come from. The Integration Report analyses the specific effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and of the measures enacted to fight it on people with a migrant background living in Austria. It bases its analysis on current figures, data and facts around integration. Special attention is given to the consequences of the crisis for women.

On this basis, measures to overcome the coronavirus pandemic and its consequences can include the goal of integration across disciplines, especially since successful integration work will make a significant contribution to the success of social cohesion and social peace during the aimed-for economic and social upswing. The 2021 Integration Report presented by the Expert Council according to its mission lays out the figures from the Integration Monitoring, analyses and contextualises them and carries out a current integration policy analysis on their basis.

As Chairperson of the Expert Council, I would like to once again thank all members of the Expert Council for Integration, who invested great care and effort in drafting this report. I am also grateful to the Advisory Committee on Integration for providing the Integration Monitoring data. This report would not have been possible without the active and appreciative support of the members of the Directorate-General for Integration of the Federal Chancellery. They, too, have my heartfelt gratitude.

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Katharina Pabel
Chairperson of the Expert Council for Integration

Vienna, 2021

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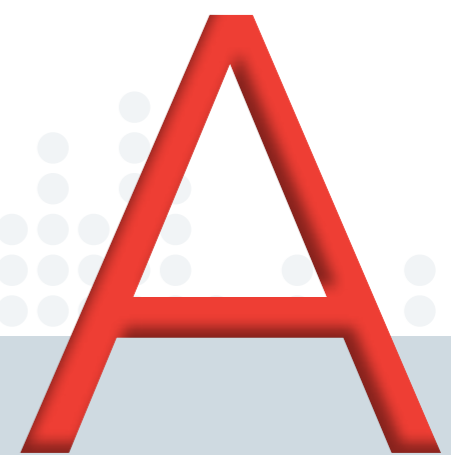
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CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS



Integration in times of necessary contact restrictions

It will hardly come as a surprise that the Integration Report 2021 will largely deal with the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. The measures enacted to stem it influence the social, cultural, economic and political life in Austria in many ways, and so also affect the integration processes of people with a migrant background. The coronavirus crisis thus also affected the work of the Expert Council for Integration.

The Covid-19 pandemic and the measures taken to counter it led to wide-reaching changes and challenges for integration work in Austria. As defined in the concept of integration in the Integration Act, integration is a process affecting the whole of society, whose success depends on the cooperation of all people living in Austria and requires personal interaction. But it is precisely these interpersonal exchanges that had to be reduced as much as possible to prevent the spread of the virus. Contacts and interactions between people with a migrant background and those without such a background were therefore severely curtailed. People largely withdrew to their private surroundings and restricted their external contacts to a minimum to comply with the measures. Social contacts, interactions between people and mutual exchange were thus enormously reduced, removing the basis for a successful integration process.

The current Integration Barometer shows that the integration climate is viewed negatively by a majority of Austrians: 51% of those surveyed assessed coexistence with immigrants to be rather poor or poor, while the coexistence with refugees and between Muslims and non-Muslims was assessed as rather poor to very poor by 59%. There were no major changes compared to the results of the Barometer surveys of recent years. The coronavirus crisis therefore so far appears not to have had a strong negative influence on the integration climate. When asked about the contribution of migrants to overcoming the pandemic, 45% of those surveyed answered positively.¹

The Expert Council for Integration already published a position paper in 2020 on the subject of integration in the context of the coronavirus, in which the areas of education, the labour market, voluntary work, and cultural integration, amongst others, were addressed. The Integration Report 2020 also highlighted the initial consequences of the coronavirus crisis on integration. The pandemic has now been influencing our daily lives for more than a year. It is as yet unclear when and in what form we can go back to normal. In any case, the consequences of the pandemic will continue to challenge Austria, the other countries of the European Union and the world for a long time. Integration must therefore be continued in the future as a task for the whole of society, with a special focus on the consequences of the pandemic and of the measures taken to control it on the integration process and on the social and economic conditions.

¹ ÖIF (2021), Integrationsbarometer 1/2021, pp. 12 and 15.

LABOUR MARKET AND EDUCATION

The Integration Report 2021 focuses on the subject of labour market integration, on the one hand because the integration of people with a migrant background in the labour market is an important measure of successful integration, and on the other hand because the restrictions implemented to control the Covid-19 pandemic left their mark on precisely this labour market. We must therefore analyse whether and to what extent the challenges in the labour market also, or especially, affect people with a migrant background and what specific measures could help them quickly (re-) enter the labour market.

This process should also ensure that labour market integration occurs to the extent possible in areas in which migrants can use their qualifications and that are sustainable and so promise to be relatively stable jobs. At the same time, the digitisation of the labour market, which brings with it new requirements for the qualifications of skilled labour in the digital field, is also an opportunity for people with a migrant background to get a foot in the door of the labour market with the corresponding training.

There are many studies with lots of data on the labour market; however, these mostly differentiate according to nationality, not migrant background. As a result, persons with a migrant background who have the Austrian nationality are generally not visible in the statistics, making it difficult to reach conclusions about their degree of integration in the labour market. This restriction must be taken into account when deriving integration policies.

Education and training are central requirements for the successful integration of children and adolescents with a migrant background and are thus a major factor of the development of society as a whole. The pandemic, and the measures taken to control it, negatively affected the education of children and adolescents, especially those with a migrant background. The suspension of physical classes together with restrictions on freedom of movement and on social contacts hindered or prevented the learning and practicing of German – there are good grounds to fear that language acquisition stagnated in this period, or perhaps even fell back. Homeschooling requires not just the technical infrastructure but also a minimum of language skills and family support; for many pupils with a migrant background, these conditions are not fulfilled. Furthermore, the restrictions occasioned by the coronavirus measures hindered the transition from school to apprenticeship or professional life. The summer schools for children with a learning lag, first offered in 2020 and expanded in 2021, and the accompanying courses for parents with a migrant background, are important measures to compensate for the expected increases in the educational lags, which partly already existed before 2020.

Future surveys of the educational level and the PISA survey that was delayed until 2022 will show just how strongly the measures to control the pandemic affected the learning and education success of children and adolescents with a migrant background and what specific measures should be taken.

In 2020, the Austrian Integration Fund for the first time also offered easily accessible and place-independent digital programmes to enable refugees and immigrants to improve their German language skills despite the restrictions on physical classes. Over 1,000 online courses have been held since April 2020, with more than 75,000 participants. The high level of interest is also reflected in the figures for the expanded online seminars. Across Austria, more than 720 seminars with some 17,000 participants addressed subjects regarding society and coexistence, strengthening and promoting women, health (including Covid-19 advice) and preventing radicalisation.

The restrictions in education and in the labour market enacted during the pandemic resulted in an enormous push towards digitisation. In places where digitisation provided additional or improved offerings, the innovations should be continued once the immediate health crisis has been overcome.

HEALTH

A subject that brought home the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic particularly strongly is the health situation of people with a migrant background and their access to health facilities.

There were several discussions in the media about whether, statistically speaking, people with a migrant background were more likely to get infected with the coronavirus or to require intensive care than people without a migrant background. At the moment, there is no clear data on this for Austria. Surveys are only available on the number of coronavirus infections by nationality, not by migrant background. Such data cannot be used to derive conclusions, as neither the testing frequency by nationality nor the age structure of the various population groups or the socioeconomic background are known. Assumptions about whether the worse social conditions, on average, of people with a migrant background (e.g. professions with a high risk of infection, living in close quarters and/or in conditions that are harmful to health) had an effect on the rate of infection can neither be confirmed nor denied with the available data. But beyond the special situation of the Covid-19 pandemic, better data would be necessary to develop targeted measures to provide better health care to people with a migrant background. What is the health situation of people with a migrant background, during the pandemic and in general? Is their access to the health system assured, and how is it used? The Expert Council for Integration recommends a detailed academic study of these issues and will focus more intently on these areas in the future.

WOMEN

As in previous years, the Expert Council for Integration focuses strongly on women with a migrant background. The integration of women is an interdisciplinary subject that cuts across almost all facets of integration work, but always requires special attention.

In labour market integration, for instance, one should focus on increasing the employment rates of women with a migrant background. Increasing the qualification of women for MINT professions and making jobs in health and social care more attractive could be important contributions in this regard. An improved offering of kindergartens open all day or year-round, as well as afternoon school care, are also required.

The continuing Covid-19 pandemic and the necessary counter-measures have had a major effect on women with and without a migrant background. The results of qualitative expert interviews with representatives of support and counselling institutions show that domestic violence increased during the pandemic and was triggered or strengthened by living in close quarters and social isolation. Experts described a trend towards particularly patriarchal role models in economically weak people with lower educational achievements from specific areas of origin such as North Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, Iran, Central and South Asia (especially Pakistan and Afghanistan) and Turkey. It is expected that there will be a "backlog" in the number of reported cases of domestic violence after the Covid-19 crisis. Experts predict a strong increase in the figures in the near future.² It will be important in the coming years to observe what influence the massive reduction in social contacts outside the family between March 2020 and summer 2021 will have had on the experiences of violence of women and children with a migrant background.

DISINTEGRATIVE PROBLEMATIC ENVIRONMENTS

As in previous years, the Expert Council looked at the possible danger of developments commonly referred to in the media as "parallel societies". Of particular relevance to the integration context are de-integrative sub-environments among immigrants, which became particularly visible in the context of the riots in Vienna's Favoriten district in summer 2020 and the terrorist attack in Vienna on 2 November 2020.

Disintegrative environments in which problematic worldviews or religious attitudes are shared and that reject those of the host society are a problem from an integration perspective. According to the Integration Barometer 2021, in September 2020 66% of surveyed Austrians stated that they perceived parallel societies in Austria – in the first quarter of 2021 that number even rose to 73%.³ The extent to which such shifts in perception are actually due to developments in certain immigrant environments should be the subject of further research in the future. The Expert Council also discussed this subject with external experts. It has repeatedly pointed to the problems associated with social and normative segregation and extensively addressed the issues of cultural and emotional integration as well as of integration into the social fabric.

² Flotzinger, Michael et al. (2021), Gewalterfahrungen von Frauen mit Migrationshintergrund im Kontext von Covid-19.

³ ÖIF (2021), Integrationsbarometer 1/2021, p. 22.

An indicator-based early warning system to evaluate disintegrative tendencies in migrant environments in Austria is currently being set up and a corresponding report is being drafted. The two will serve as a foundation for the early identification of disintegrative or parallel society structures and to develop countermeasures. This is also the context for the establishment of the Fund for the Documentation of Religiously Motivated Political Extremism in 2020⁴, whose task is the academic study of the phenomenon of Political Islam and other religiously-motivated extremism and their associated networks and structures. The Expert Council for Integration will continue to monitor the topic of disintegrative sub-environments in the future. The increasing emergence of conspiracy theories and anti-Semitism must also continue to be observed. The results of the studies on the development of disintegrative, parallel society structures and the findings of the Documentation Centre will, along with other approaches, form an important basis for a future detailed investigation by the Expert Council, which will derive conclusions for integration policy from the findings, including through exchange with the stakeholders involved.

VOLUNTARY ENGAGEMENT

In the view of the Expert Council, the inclusion of people with a migrant background in voluntary work has great integrative potential in terms of language acquisition and exchanges with people without a migrant background. This is especially true in the phase of qualification before the first job or during a period of unemployment. At the same time, voluntary work also brings people without a migrant background into contact with migrants.

The current Integration Barometer shows that the coexistence with immigrants is generally assessed more positively in the presence of personal contacts. The opposite is the case when those surveyed only have an anonymous group as mental reference. Voluntary work can help strengthen immigrants' feeling of being part of Austrian society and also the feeling of the majority society that they are a part of it. This contributes to the feeling of belonging. Especially in a time following the direct threat of Covid-19, in which social contacts become possible again but in which common efforts are needed to resume and strengthen social, cultural and economic life, voluntary service that includes people with and without a migrant background can make an active and important contribution to the cohesion of Austrian society. Supporting those voluntary work projects that are initiated by migrants or that specifically include them can be a form of integration support that should also counteract the formation of parallel societies.

INTEGRATION IN THE POST-CORONAVIRUS PHASE

The effects of the pandemic are felt by all people living in Austria and influence every area of life. They therefore also affect the integration of people with a migrant background. Every measure taken to overcome the pandemic should also consider the overall societal goal of integration. It is also once again clearly visible that integration is an interdisciplinary subject that has an impact, to differing degrees, on almost every area of society. Integration policy is therefore a part of education, economic and labour market policy, of health and social policy, and of security policy both in the strict and in the wider sense.

In a post-pandemic context in which many people in Austria, regardless of their origins, will face great personal challenges, it is important to understand integration aspects as part of a larger upswing in various areas of society. Undoubtedly, other social groups also require special attention. An overemphasis on explicit integration measures would not do justice to the broad scope of the pandemic's effects, and there is a danger of playing off particularly vulnerable groups against each other. However, if this important target group is ignored when devising the measures, there is a risk of losing the progress achieved in integration and so an increased danger of "losing" people with a migrant background. In the post-coronavirus phase, integration should therefore be considered as an imminent building block in all areas (particularly in labour market, education, health and social policy).

In particular the contact restrictions required to fight the pandemic hindered the social exchange between immigrants and host society that is so important for integration. Migrants thus saw their possibilities to develop their social networks and improve their German language skills curtailed. As the protective measures are eased, personal contact and exchange should therefore once again be placed centre stage.

The following sections will first provide an overview of current available data related to integration. These primarily include figures that are reported annually as part of the legally prescribed Integration Monitoring and that the Expert Council contextualises and prepares for the Integration Report in accordance with its mission. This includes demographic data (immigration and asylum) and data on education and social assistance. Monitoring data related to the labour market are treated in Section C – the main section of this report.

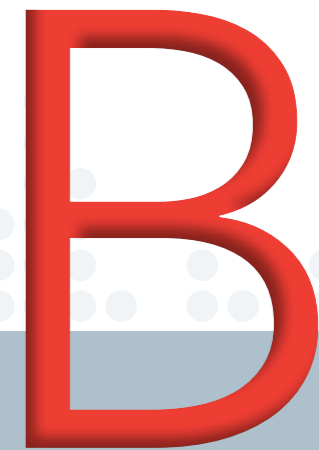
⁴ Austrian Fund for the Documentation of Religiously Motivated Political Extremism (Documentation Centre for Political Islam)

INTEGRATION IN NUMBERS

Immigration, population structure
and asylum

Education and training

Social aspects



B

Immigration, population structure and asylum

The population in Austria is growing, and through immigration it is becoming more culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse. At the start of 2021, 8,932,664 people lived in Austria, some 31,600 (or +0.36%) more than at the start of 2020. The population growth in 2020 was thus slightly slower than in the previous year (2019: +42,289 people or +0.48%). Over the entire previous decade (2011–2021), the population grew by 557,500 people (+6.7%). At the same time, the share of people with a migrant background grew from 18.7% to 24.4%.

IMMIGRATION AND EMIGRATION

The main factors affecting demographic growth are the population movements. On the one hand, the net migration of people directly increases the population. On the other, in following years immigration also increases the birth rate as it is mainly young adults who enter the country, of which many will bring children to the world.

For many years now, the immigration of Austrians and foreigners to Austria has been much higher than emigration. In 2020, a total of 136,343 people immigrated from abroad; this included 121,311 foreign nationals and 15,032 Austrian citizens⁵. This represents a decrease of 9% from 2019. In the same year, 96,279 people left the country, including 79,410 foreign nationals and 16,869 Austrians. Compared to 2019, emigration therefore decreased by 12%. Although due to the coronavirus both inflow and outflow decreased, the net migration sum of foreigners dropped by -3,055 to +41,901 in 2020 compared to 2019 (-7%).

In 2020, as in the previous years, immigration was dominated by people from other EU states (81,980). The main countries of origin in the EU were Germany (19,013), Romania (17,479) and Hungary (10,098). The immigrants from third states came primarily from Serbia (5,308) and Syria (3,729). Emigration was dominated by Austrians and other EU nationals. As illustrated by the net migration sums (immigration minus emigration), cross-border migration tends to increase the population of foreigners, while the number of Austrians living here decreases (Fig. B.1).

⁵ These are mainly returning Austrians and only very few people of Austrian nationality born abroad and who are coming into the country for the first time.

MIGRATIONS TO AND FROM AUSTRIA

by nationality*



Fig. B.1; * In the category EU accession states since 2007, Croatia is also included for 2010, 2020 "pre-2004 EU states/EFTA" incl. GB; Source: Statistik Austria (2021), Wanderungen mit dem Ausland (2010 – 2020); own illustration

RESIDENCY PERMIT

The residency permits in Austria for people from third countries are divided into various categories, each with its own conditions and entitlements, in particular with regard to the right to work and the duration of stay. The reason for these differences is the differentiation according to reason for immigrating (e.g. job, education or family reunion). An important factor here is the categorisation of the residency permits by right to work.

- A temporary residency permit is granted for a temporary stay without intention to permanently settle (e.g. students, employees on secondment, volunteers).
- A settlement permit is granted, depending on its type, for a temporary stay for freelance work, restricted or no access to the labour market.
- The title "family members" is granted for spouses, registered partners and single minor children (including adoptive and step-children) and grants access to the labour market.
- With the red-white-red card, qualified workers with access to the labour market in the listed fields of work can stay temporarily.
- The "blue card EU" may be granted to particularly qualified academics for a temporary stay with restricted access to the labour market.
- A red-white-red card plus is granted when a red-white-red or a "blue card EU" is extended, for family members who join immediately and for later family reunions with holders of such red-white-red or blue EU cards. It includes a temporary right to stay and unrestricted access to the labour market.
- The temporary stays can be extended. After five years of uninterrupted actual residence in Austria (except temporary residency permit) and if Module 2 of the Integration Agreement is fulfilled, the "permanent EU" residency permit may be granted. This residency permit grants the right to settle indefinitely, with an unrestricted right to work. The "permanent residency EU int. beneficiaries of protection" is granted to recognised refugees if they have uninterruptedly been beneficiaries of asylum or protection for the past five years or if the asylum authority decides it.⁶

ISSUED FIRST RESIDENCY PERMITS

2011 – 2020

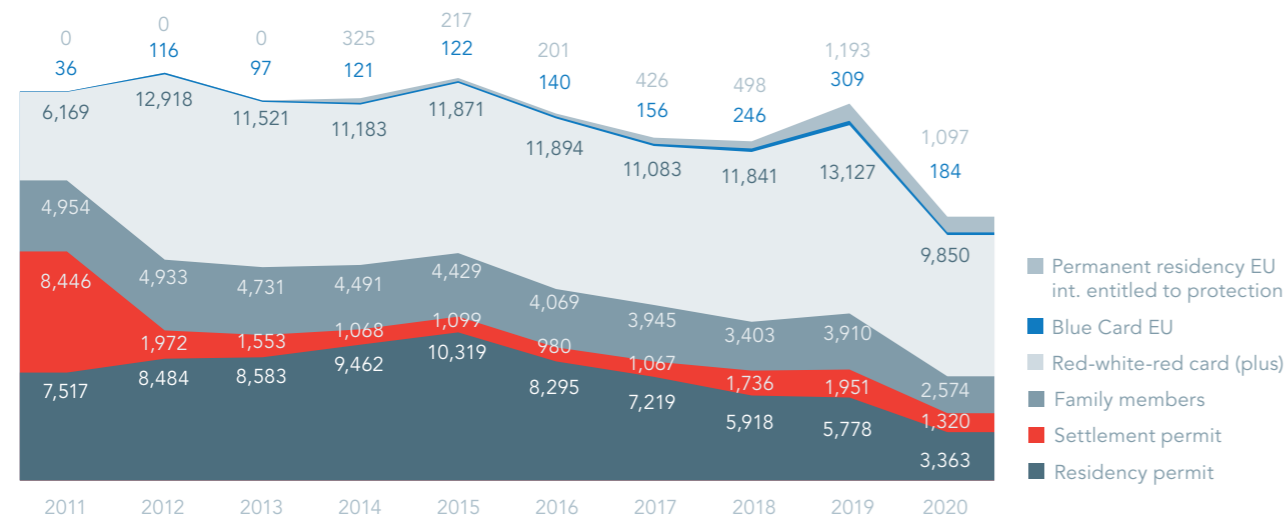


Fig. B.2; Source: BMI (2012 – 2021), Niederlassungs- und Aufenthaltsstatistik; own illustration

Nationals of countries not in EU/EFTA (so-called third-country nationals) need an individually granted residency permit in Austria before being allowed to reside here. In 2020, there were 480,100 valid residency permits in Austria – some 4,900 (-1%) less than in the previous year. For integration policy, the number of first residency permits is important, as it informs on the settlement of third-country nationals. In 2020, 18,400 people received their first residency permit. Due to the coronavirus, the number of first residency permits decreased significantly from the previous year, with 7,900 less (-30%). These are on the one hand independent permits that enable

⁶ For more information on the individual residency permits see https://www.oesterreich.gv.at/themen/leben_in_oesterreich/aufenthalt/3/2.html.

third-country nationals to reside here and work, study or complete an apprenticeship. This includes red-white-red cards (1,274) and blue EU cards (184). There are also derived permits entitling third-country nationals to family reunion or to immigration following marriage or to immigrate together with a person with an independent permit. These include amongst others first-time red-white-red plus cards (8,576).

An assessment of the first-time residency permits issued in Austria in 2010–2019 by the European Statistical Office found that immigration from third countries was primarily not into the labour market but for family reasons (marriage migration and family reunions) or humanitarian reasons (asylum).⁷ Since persons who immigrate to Austria through the above pathways do not receive their permits based on their qualifications or a specific job offer, integration policy must constantly monitor this development and prepare to act accordingly.

ASYLUM

A smaller share of immigration in 2020 was by asylum seekers and their families. In 2020, 13,416 first applications⁸ for asylum were submitted in Austria or counted as such. This figure is significantly smaller than in the years 2011–2017, but higher by 2,407 than in 2019. The countries of origin in 2020 were similar to those in the previous years. Some 60% of all asylum applications were submitted by Syrian (37.9%) and Afghan (21.1%) nationals. Almost half of all statistically determined first applications were for minors, mainly children born in Austria whose mother or parents⁹ mostly had already received protection status.¹⁰

The growth in the statistically demonstrated asylum number in Austria went against the overall European trend. In total, in 2020 the number of first asylum applications in the EU and EFTA states dropped by a third from 2019 to 417,000. Besides Austria, with-in the EU only Romania (+3,600), Bulgaria (+1,400), Croatia (+200) and Slovakia (+50) saw more cases statistically counted as asylum applications than in the previous year.

FIRST ASYLUM APPLICATIONS

Applicants 2019 and 2020 by most common nationalities

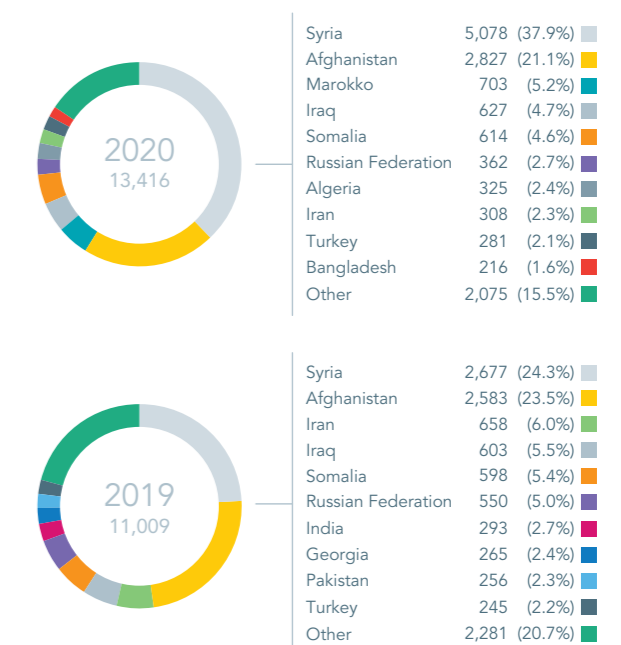


Fig. B.3; Source: BMI (2020 and 2021), Asylstatistik 2019 und 2020; own illustration

⁷ See https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/migr_resfirst/default/table?lang=de.

⁸ For a total of 14,775 asylum applications.

⁹ Such an automatic first application for asylum depends on the current status of the mother. If only the father is a beneficiary of protection or in the asylum process, no asylum application is submitted for the child.

¹⁰ Quantitative Abschätzung beruhend auf Parlamentarische Materialien (2021), Anfragebeantwortung 4970/AB zur schriftlichen parlamentarische Anfrage 4990/J und Beilage zu PA 4985/J vom 15. Jänner 2021.

The following factors were decisive for these trends in the asylum figures in 2020:

- » In 2020, asylum applications in Europe from Latin America – particularly Columbia and Venezuela – decreased significantly, although this had no effect on trends in Austria as these countries of origin play very little role here.
- » Due to its geographical situation, Austria was and remains affected by illegal immigration from the Balkans, even if to a much smaller extent than between 2014 and 2018. In addition, the controls at the Austrian border by Germany due to the coronavirus hindered further travel to Western Europe, resulting in people submitting an application for asylum who actually wanted to reach another European country.
- » The growing population of people benefitting from a protected status in recent years results in a statistical increase in the number of asylum applications due to a) children being born here from asylum seekers who arrived in the past and b) positive conclusions to asylum procedures opening the door to family reunions, as both are counted administratively and statistically as first applications. These first applications however are not predicated on irregular entry or on being taken up by the relevant authorities.

Since 2017, the total number of legally decided or concluded asylum applications has been dropping. In 2020 it was 30,041¹³ cases (-3,925 compared to 2019). At the same time the “backlog” that formed between 2014 and 2016 was reduced, as in each of the past four years more asylum applications have been concluded than new ones have been submitted, or were already concluded due to automatic application following family reunion or birth in Austria.

POPULATION WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND

In 2020, some 2.14 million people with a migrant background lived in Austria – an increase of some 68,000 (+3.2%) compared to 2019. Of these, 1.58 million were born abroad (1st generation) while almost 560,000 people born here (2nd generation) had two immigrant parents. The share of 1st generation immigrants in the general population was 18%, that of their children (2nd generation) 6.4%.¹⁴ In total, at 24.4% people with a migrant background made up almost a quarter of the population of Austria (Fig. B.5).¹⁵ Of the 1st generation immigrants, 42% had been living in Austria for less than 10 years, 21% since 10 to 20 years and 37% since more than 20 years (Fig. B.5).

DECISIONS ON INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION IN AUSTRIA

2015 – 2020

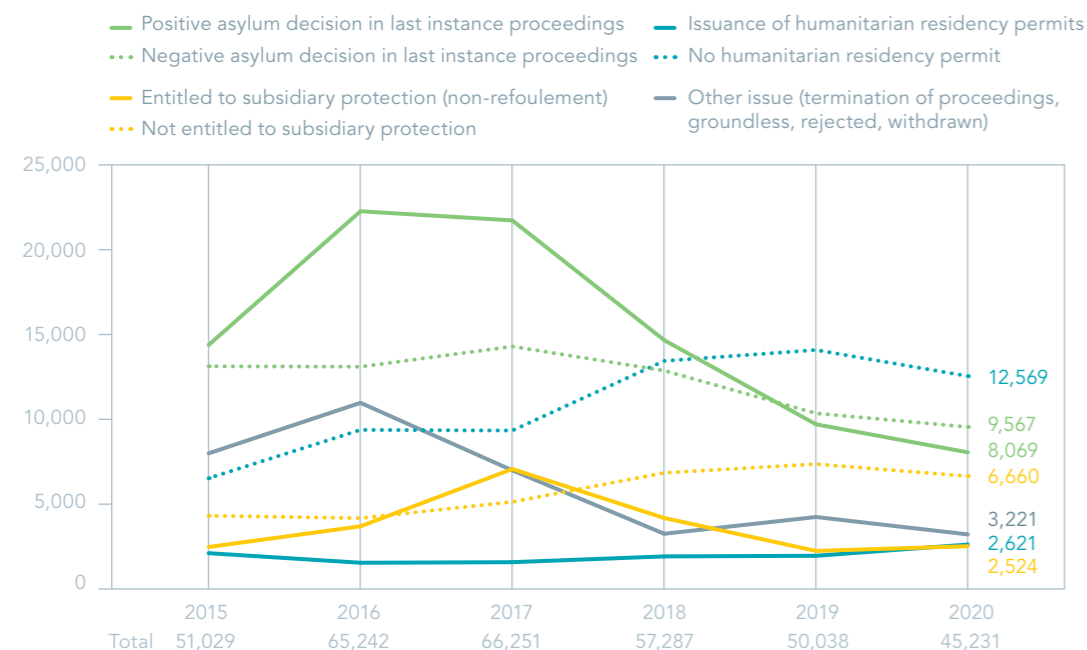


Fig. B.4; Source: BMI (2016 – 2021), Asylstatistik 2015 – 2020

In 2020, 8,069 people were granted asylum in Austria, another 2,524 subsidiary protection. In 9,567 cases, asylum applications were rejected in last instance. For 3,221 people, the asylum procedure ended due to “other termination”. Of the people receiving protected status in 2020, 3,220 were new-borns born here, 1,845 were minors under 14 years of age and 665 minors aged between 14 and 18.¹¹ Of the minors who received protected status in 2020, 186 were unaccompanied.¹²

11 New-borns and entering minors under 14 years of age in total asylum status: 3,738, subsidiary protection: 787, residency permits based on exceptional circumstances: 540. Entering minors aged between 14 and 18 in total asylum status: 351, subsidiary protection: 200, permits based on exceptional circumstances: 114; Parlamentarische Materialien (2021), Anfragebeantwortung 4970/AB zur schriftlichen parlamentarische Anfrage 4990/J und Beilage zu PA 4985/J vom 15. Jänner 2021.
 12 Of which 37 under 14 and 149 between 14 and 18.

POPULATION WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND

Annual average 2015 – 2020 by immigration generation, place of birth and nationality

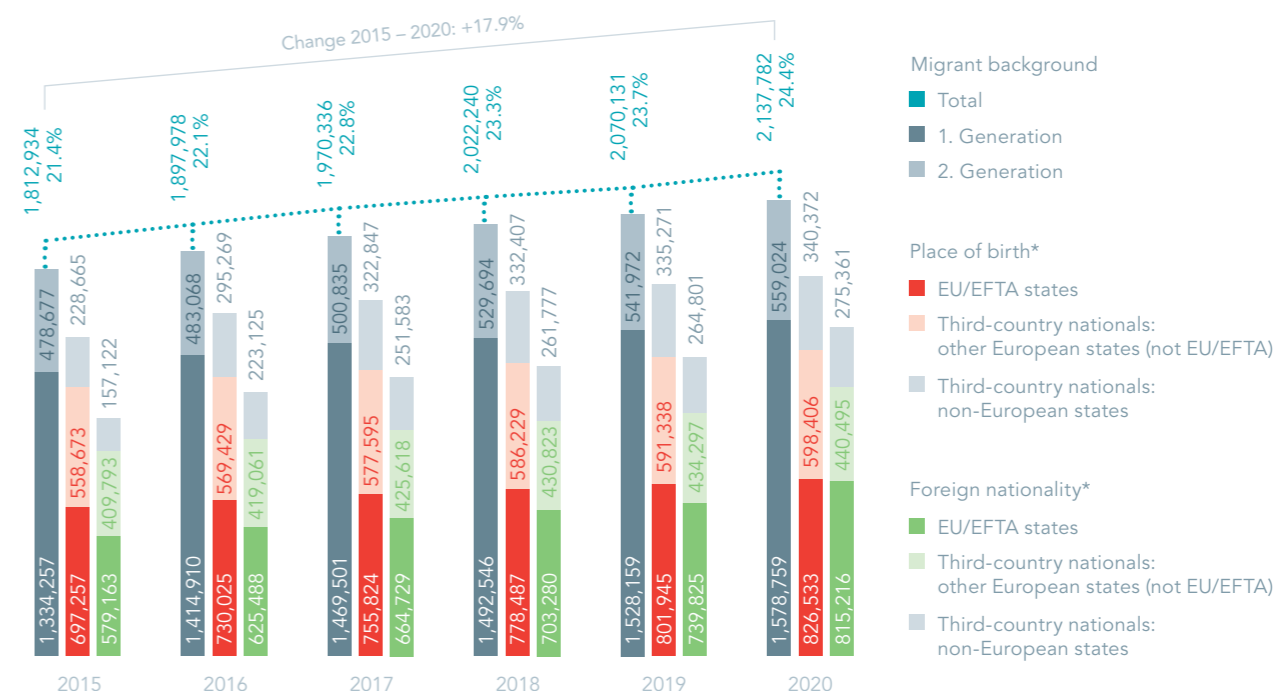


Fig. B.5; * each on 01/01 of the year, 2020 EU/EFTA states incl. GB; Source: Statistik Austria (2021), Bevölkerungsstruktur, own illustration

13 Without humanitarian right to stay.
 14 According to Statistik Austria, only people with two parents born abroad are considered 2nd generation.
 15 People who work in Austria with social security but have no permanent residency are not included in the population with a migrant background or in the foreign population. In 2020 this included in particular 116,500 border-crossers and 10,831 seasonal workers in agriculture.

Furthermore, the statistics for 2020 included a further 187,000 people who were born abroad. These are on the one hand people born abroad and who have at least one parent born in Austria without a migrant background, and on the other hand both Austrians and foreigners who have moved here and do not live in private households (nursing homes, asylum centres, prisons).

IMMIGRANT POPULATION (1ST GENERATION)

2011 and 2021 by most common countries of birth, change in percent

| 2011 | | | 2021 | | | |
|------------------------|--|---------|------------------------|--|---------|--------|
| Germany | | 196,885 | Germany | | 244,989 | +24% |
| Turkey | | 158,535 | Bosnia and Herzegovina | | 172,396 | +15% |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | | 149,679 | Turkey | | 159,026 | +/-0% |
| Serbia | | 130,931 | Serbia | | 144,552 | +10% |
| Romania | | 64,505 | Romania | | 134,208 | +108% |
| Poland | | 57,764 | Hungary | | 83,947 | +114% |
| Czechia | | 43,634 | Poland | | 76,649 | +33% |
| Croatia | | 39,320 | Syria | | 52,048 | +1609% |
| Hungary | | 39,251 | Slovakia | | 44,880 | +73% |
| Kosovo | | 27,135 | Afghanistan | | 42,106 | +400% |
| Russian Federation | | 26,432 | Italy | | 35,929 | +43% |
| Slovakia | | 25,986 | Russian Federation | | 35,828 | +36% |
| Italy | | 25,166 | Czechia | | 35,520 | -19% |
| North Macedonia | | 21,134 | Kosovo | | 33,521 | +24% |
| Slovenia | | 18,442 | Bulgaria | | 32,210 | +120% |

Fig. B.6; Source: Statistik Austria 2021, Bevölkerung zu Jahresbeginn 2002 – 2021 nach detailliertem Geburtsland; own illustration

In Austria, at the beginning of 2021 more than half of the immigrant population came from just five countries. And this has barely changed over the past decade. The major country of origin was and remains Germany, followed by Bosnia-Herzegovina, Turkey, Serbia and Romania. While the number of residents born in Turkey and in Serbia has hardly changed in the past decade, there was a significant increase for some other countries. In absolute figures, the growth was strongest for people born in Romania (+69,703), in Syria (+49,002) and in Germany (+48,104). This was followed by Hungary (+44,696) and Afghanistan (+33,678) (see Fig. B.6). The number of people born in Romania in Austria doubled in the past ten years, while the relative growth in persons from Afghanistan and Syria was even larger given their low numbers in 2011.

Compared to other European countries, Austria is one of the countries with a relatively large share of its population born abroad.¹⁶ In 2020, the share of immigrants was much higher in small states like Luxembourg (48.2%), Malta (23.1%) and Cyprus (21.6%), whose situation is very different from Austria's. Of the larger states in Europe, Switzerland had the highest proportion of immigrants (29.2%). In Sweden (19.5%), Germany (18.1%), Belgium (17.6%) and Ireland (17.6%), see Fig. B.7) the proportion was similar to that in Austria.

PROPORTION OF IMMIGRANT POPULATION (1ST GENERATION)

in total population in selected EU/EFTA/GB 2020 in percent

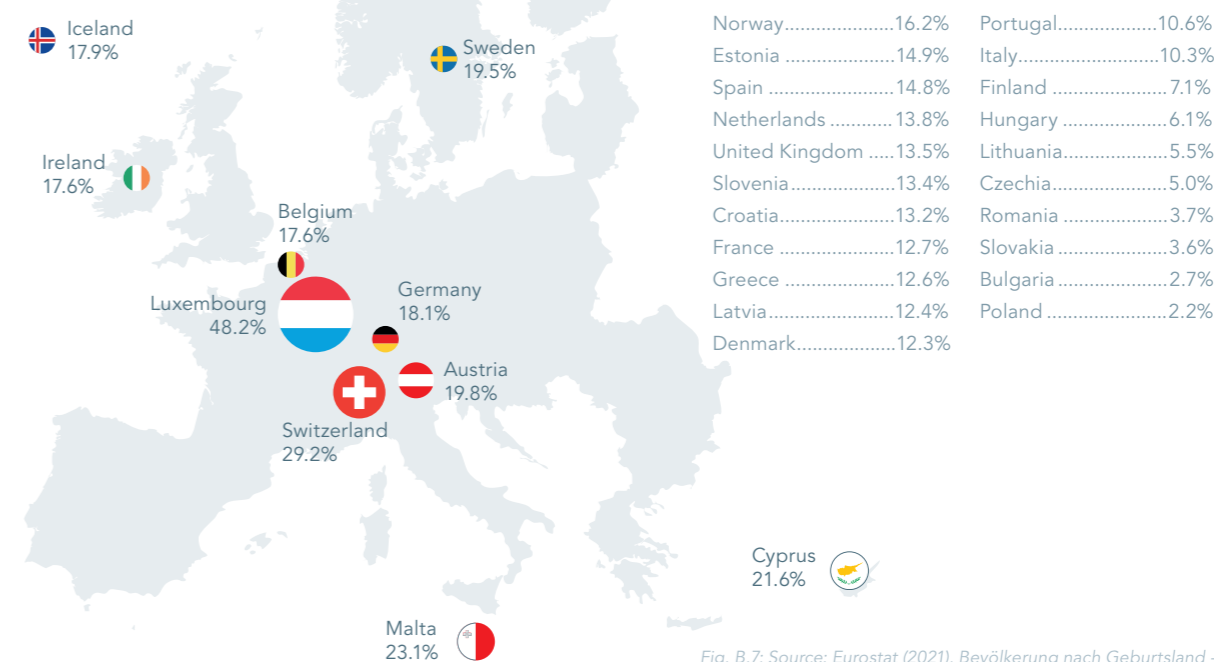


Fig. B.7; Source: Eurostat (2021), Bevölkerung nach Geburtsland - Im Ausland geborene Personen; own illustration

FOREIGN NATIONALS

At the start of 2021, 1,531,072 people with a foreign nationality lived in Austria. Compared to 01/01/2020, their share increased by 44,849 persons (+3%), while the number of Austrian citizens decreased during the same period (-13,294; -0.2%). There are two reasons for this. 2020 was an exceptional year. The birth rate in Austria was a bit lower (-1.6%) and the number of deaths significantly higher (+9.8%) than in the previous year. Due to the age structure, this mainly affected nationals and so reduced their numbers.¹⁷

As a consequence of this shift, the share of foreign nationals in the overall population grew to 17.1% (16.7% on 01/01/2020). In 2020, more than four fifths of the growth in foreign nationals was due to citizens of the EU, and only 18% due to third-country nationals. The growth was especially strong among German (+8,739) and Romanian (+8,365) nationals, which were also, as in previous years, the two largest groups of foreign nationals in Austria.¹⁸

¹⁶ Due to the efforts of the European Statistical Office to render comparable the figures of member states with different definitions, different sources may show different numbers – see share of 1st generation 2020 in Austria, 18% according to Statistik Austria and 19.8% according to Eurostat.

¹⁷ Statistik Austria (2021), Geborene/Gestorbene.

¹⁸ Statistik Austria (2021), Bevölkerung nach Staatsangehörigkeit und Geburtsland.

NATURALISATIONS

It is not just net migration and the births/deaths ratio that affect the size of the foreign population, but also naturalisations that took place in the country. While current migration surpluses (= more immigration than emigration of foreign nationals) and birth surpluses (= more new-born than deceased foreign nationals) grow the existing foreign population, naturalisations have the opposite effect. However, the change in nationality has no influence on the size and composition of the population with a migrant background.

In 2020, there were 8,796 naturalisations in Austria. Compared to 2019, this is a decrease of 1,704 (-16.2%). Almost two thirds of naturalised persons were born abroad (5,622 persons),¹⁹ while just over a third were persons who were born here as foreign nationals (3,174). Of the naturalised persons, only one-sixth (17.1%) previously held another EU nationality. The large majority (82.1%) were third-country nationals. There was also a small group of previously stateless people (0.8%).²⁰

Assuming that the large majority of immigrant foreigners only fulfil the naturalisation requirements after a ten-year stay, in 2020 the effective naturalisation rate of first-generation immigrants was around 0.74%, and for those born here but with a foreign nationality (second generation) it was 1.7%.

NATURALISATIONS IN AUSTRIA

2020 by previous nationality with change from 2019

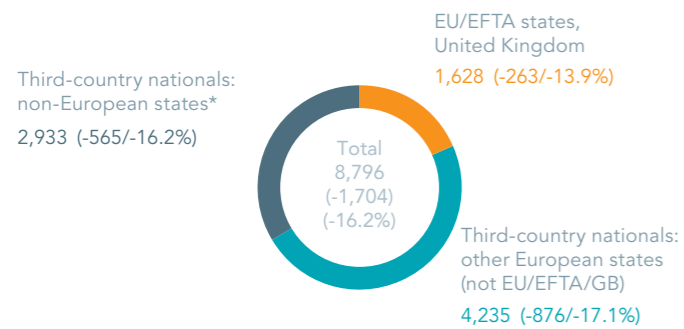


Fig. B.8; * incl. stateless, unknown and unclear; Source: Statistik Austria (2021). Eingebürgerte Personen seit 2010 nach ausgewählten Merkmalen; own illustration

At least two factors explain the relatively low number, in an EU comparison, of persons who recently received the Austrian nationality: on the one hand, Austrian naturalisation law and naturalisation practice were interpreted more restrictively in the past 15 years, while other European countries saw a trend towards facilitating naturalisation.²¹ In particular, the requirement that one generally must give up one's previous nationality prior to naturalisation presumably reduces interest in obtaining Austrian citizenship. On the other

hand, the majority of immigrants come from other EU states. They, and their children born here, have less interest in obtaining Austrian citizenship because apart from the right to vote, they have more or less the same rights as citizens. This reduced interest applies especially to citizens of Western European states. At the same time, it is clear that the majority of immigrants to Austria from other EU states stay here for less than ten years²² and so do not fulfil the most important requirement.

CONCLUSION

The ethno-cultural and religious diversity of the Austrian population has increased in the past decades. The causes are the growing number of people with a migrant background and the increase in quantitatively relevant countries of origin, native tongues and imported values. Half a century ago, the population of people born abroad consisted mainly of deported people in the post-war period and of recruited workers from Yugoslavia and Turkey. Together, they made up just 8% of Austria's population. Today around one sixth of Austria's population was born abroad. Almost a quarter has a migrant background (1st and 2nd generation).

The people who have immigrated since 2000 come primarily from other EU states. However, they and their children are not the primary focus of integration policy and integration work - they generally have good job prospects and mostly do not stay permanently. The focus is rather on the offspring of the workers recruited from the former Yugoslavia and from Turkey, on refugees, whose numbers have increased since the 1990s, and on persons who immigrated to Austria in recent years and decades due to marriage or as part of family reunions.

Immigration to Austria will be marked by the following factors in the coming years. On the one hand, there will be less demand for more foreign labour than in 2015-2019, due to the economic collapse in 2020/2021 as a result of various measures to stem the Covid-19 pandemic that resulted in an increase in unemployment and short time (see sub-section "The labour market during times of high unemployment and short time"). On the other hand, similar trends in other countries will likely result in more people trying to secure their livelihood by moving to Austria.

The Austrian Integration Act defines the obtention of the Austrian nationality as the end point of a comprehensive and successful process of integration (IntG § 2 para. 2). A large number of foreign nationals with settled residency status and a growing number of persons born and raised here without Austrian citizenship demonstrate that this goal of the integration process has frequently not been achieved. In light of this, the Expert Council for Integration will dedicate itself to the subject of naturalising third-country nationals, looking in particular at the reasons that lower the willingness to obtain Austrian citizenship in those people who formally fulfil the requirements.

¹⁹ Including 1,022 recognised refugees.

²⁰ Statistik Austria (2021), Einbürgerungen.

²¹ Stiller, Martin (2020), Möglichkeiten des Staatsbürgerschaftserwerbs durch Fremde in Österreich.

²² Forstner, Klaus et al. (2019), Erwerbsverläufe von Migrant/innen aus der EU, aus Drittstaaten und von Flüchtlingen aus Syrien, Afghanistan und der Russischen Föderation im Vergleich.

Education and training

CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS IN SCHOOLS BY EVERYDAY LANGUAGE

In the school year 2019/2020, some 1.12 million children and adolescents attended school in Austria or participated in homeschooling as a result of the pandemic prevention measures.²³ Of these, just over a quarter had another language than German as their first language. Available data show that insufficient German language skills frequently cannot be compensated by the education system. Children and adolescents with another first language on average do worse at school and have more difficulties transitioning to the labour market.

EVERYDAY LANGUAGE OF SCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN

2019/20 in percent

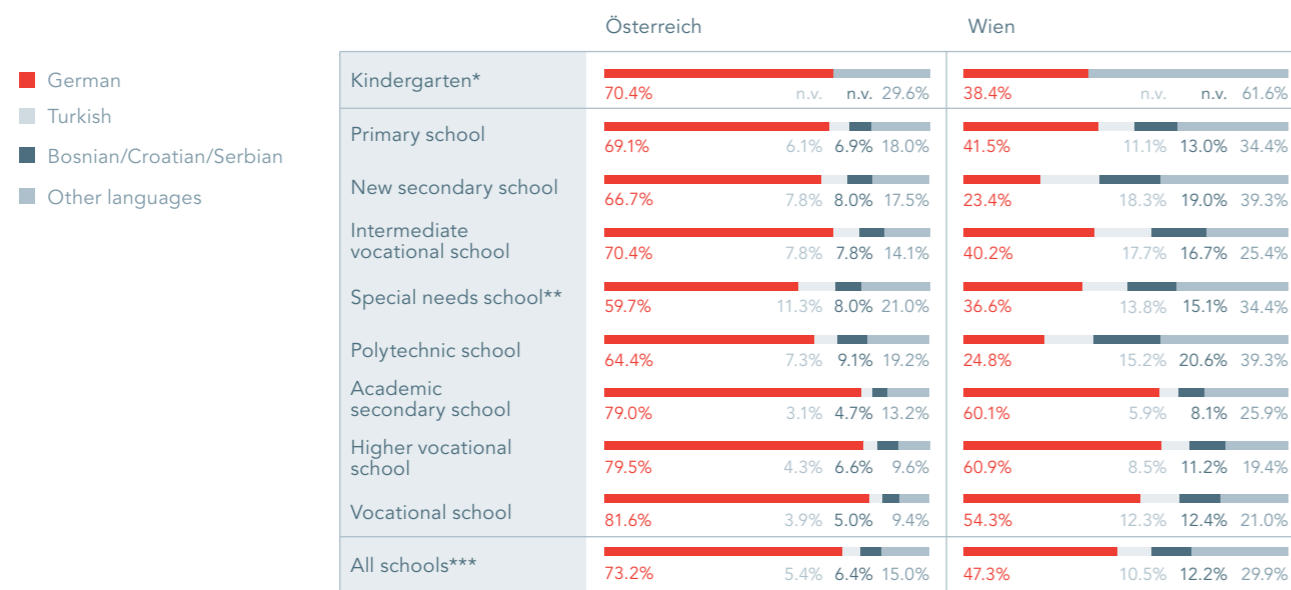


Fig. B.9; * estimated values for Vienna, without Styria; ** including children and adolescents who are taught in a regular school but with the curriculum of a special needs school. *** including federal sports academies and other general and vocational (statute) schools, without schools and academies in health care. Source: Statistik Austria (2021), Schulstatistik und Kindertagesheimstatistik; own illustration

Almost three quarters of these children and adolescents (73%) used German in their everyday activities and at home.²⁴ Just over one quarter used another language (27%). Of those, 6% spoke Bosnian, Croatian or Serbian (BCS) at home, 5% spoke Turkish and 15% another language.²⁵ Another 196,000 pre-school children attended kindergarten. Of these, 70% spoke German in their everyday activities and at

²³ Of these, the large majority were full residents here. There is also a smaller number of minors who visited an Austrian school from abroad.

²⁴ This also includes children and adolescents with a migrant background whose parents speak German at home. This is relevant from a quantitative perspective because people from Germany form the largest group of immigrants in Austria (see sub-section "Immigration, population structure and asylum").

²⁵ This also includes Austrian children and adolescents without a migrant background that belong to a recognised ethnic group and whose parents speak Slovenian, Croatian, Hungarian or Romani at home.

home, 30% another language. 21,000 of these children from non-German-speaking families – or a little over one third – attended kindergartens in Vienna, another 37,000 in the other federal provinces.

The everyday languages reported by the kindergartens and schools do not necessarily mean lacking or poor German skills, but they are a clear indication that such skills cannot simply be assumed and that the education system may potentially be required to provide significant assistance.

The number and proportion of children and adolescents who do not use German as their everyday language varies between school types. The proportion of pupils who do not use German as their everyday language is below average at academic secondary schools (21%) and higher vocational schools (20%), but also in vocational schools (18%), so at all upper secondary education schools that prepare adolescents for the school-leaving examinations or apprenticeship certificates.

On the other hand, the proportion of pupils who do not use German as their everyday language is above average at primary schools (31%) and new secondary school (33%), but also in vocational intermediate school (33%) and polytechnic schools (36%) as well as special needs school (40%)²⁶, so at schools that primarily teach pupils under the age of 15. This imbalance indicates that children and adolescents who do not use German as their everyday language are less likely to go to upper secondary school.

The strong differences in the proportions of pupils who do not use German as their everyday language based on school type are also a clear indication for the educational, and thus also social, segregation between children and adolescents with and without a migrant background. For the majority of pupils with a migrant background, it is less likely that they will be accepted by an academic secondary school at the age of 10 or switch from a middle school to an upper secondary school and so obtain their school-leaving exams. The above-average share of adolescents who do not use German as their everyday language in polytechnic schools shows that they are less likely to obtain a qualification and start an apprenticeship after the 8th grade.

There are also large differences between the federal provinces. In 2019/2020, Vienna had the largest proportion of children and adolescents from families with other languages, with Vorarlberg a distant second. The lowest proportions were in Carinthia and Burgenland.

²⁶ It also includes children and adolescents who are taught in regular school but according to the schedule of a special needs school.

CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS OUTSIDE REGULAR INSTRUCTION

Insufficient German language skills make it more difficult to participate in classes and prevent successful learning. The situation is hardest for children and adolescents who immigrate from a foreign non-German-speaking country (generally with their parents) and so enter the Austrian education at a relatively advanced age. They are treated as non-regular pupils until they have achieved the requisite language level. In the school year 2019/2020, this was the case for 33,644 school-age children and adolescents who did not participate in regular classes. The majority were from refugee countries like Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq. In 2019/2020, 12.3% of school-aged children and adolescents with the Afghan nationality, 18.5% of those with the Iraqi nationality and 20% of those with the Syrian nationality spent at least part of the year as non-regular pupils and did not participate in regular classes.

Children and adolescents of schooling age may improve their language skills in German support classes for a maximum period of two years. In the school year 2019/2020, 12,371 children and adolescents were enrolled in such classes. Another 19,479 attended a language improvement course (when those took place in 2020). There were large regional differences here. The largest number of pupils receiving support in German support classes and improvement courses was in Vienna (12,466) and Upper Austria (5,960), the lowest numbers were in Burgenland (429) and Carinthia (1,230).

NON-REGULAR PUPILS

School year 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 by nationality

| | Total number of pupils | Non-regular pupils | Share of non-regular pupils |
|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ■ 2018/19 | | | |
| ■ 2019/20 | | | |
| Austria | 919,444 914,224 (-0.6%) | 10,892 9,683 (-11.1%) | 1.2% 1.1% |
| Foreign | 182,918 190,384 (+4.1%) | 27,802 23,961 (-13.8%) | 15.2% 12.6% |
| Turkey | 15,259 14,937 (-2.1%) | 1,889 1,812 (-4.1%) | 12.4% 12.1% |
| Romania | 13,624 15,182 (+11.4%) | 2,892 3,083 (+6.6%) | 21.2% 20.3% |
| Serbia | 12,705 13,119 (+3.3%) | 1,740 1,493 (-14.2%) | 13.7% 11.4% |
| Bosnia-Herzegovina | 10,117 9,971 (-1.4%) | 933 877 (-6.0%) | 9.2% 8.8% |
| Syria | 12,292 13,181 (+7.2%) | 4,591 2,633 (-42.6%) | 37.3% 20.0% |
| Afghanistan | 10,174 10,451 (+2.7%) | 1,860 1,287 (-30.8%) | 18.3% 12.3% |
| Iraq | 2,896 2,986 (+3.1%) | 2,154 551 (-74.4%) | 25.6% 18.5% |

Fig. B.10; * incl. stateless and unknown; Source: Integration Monitoring pursuant to IntG; own illustration

The Expert Council welcomes the start of the academic assessment of the German support classes and courses prescribed by the government programme and commissioned by the Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Research.²⁷ This is the foundation and precondition for the further development of this language promotion model as well as a contribution to methodology research with regard to language promotion in children and adolescents. Good language promotion in

27 Parlamentarische Materialien (2021), Anfragebeantwortung 4127/AB zur schriftlichen parlamentarische Anfrage Nr. 4084/J-NR/2020.

children and adolescents is a central key in reducing origin-based education inequalities. The further development of the promotion methods through the collaboration of academia and practice can make an important contribution here and should be supported. Successes in integration can be seen in the fact that the proportion of non-regular pupils with Afghan, Iraqi and Syrian nationality at all schools dropped in 2019/2020 compared to 2018/2019, even if the absolute numbers increased, mainly due to family reunions.

PUPILS IN GERMAN SUPPORT CLASSES AND COURSES

in school year 2019/2020 by federal province

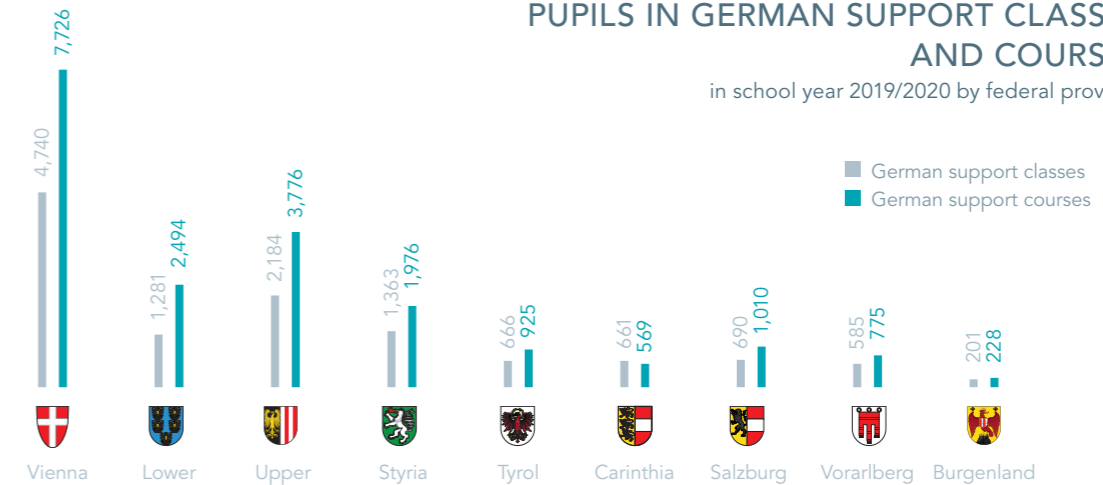


Fig. B.11; Source: Integration Monitoring pursuant to IntG; own illustration

The situation in special needs schools requires particular attention. It is striking that a proportion of pupils far above the average for all schools uses another language than German as their everyday language. The legal requirement to receive special pedagogical support is that a pupil cannot follow the classes in primary, middle or polytechnic schools without special pedagogical support as a result of a physical, mental or psychological functional impairment that is not just temporary. This is generally not the case for children who require language support. From an integration perspective, it is important that children who need language support but are otherwise fully cognitively functional receive tailored support, for instance in the form of German support classes or improvement courses.

The switch from the special needs school to the normal school system should take place once the special educational needs are no longer there. However, the National Education Report 2018 found that especially in the transition to the 9th grade, German-speaking adolescents much more frequently succeed in making the switch from the special needs school than those who do not speak German.²⁸ Non-German-speaking children who were found to require special pedagogical support are therefore more at risk of ending their schooling without labour market-suitable qualifications. The Expert Council therefore recommends assessing the determination of special pedagogical support requirements in children whose first language is not German.

28 See BMBWF (2021), Sonderschule und inklusiver Unterricht.

APPRENTICESHIP

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic and the economic collapse, the number of adolescents and young adults in apprenticeships grew from 109,000 (2019) to 123,000 (2020), so around 13%. In both years, around 15% of these apprentices had a foreign nationality. As more than half of people born in Austria with a migrant background (2nd generation) has the Austrian nationality, the share of foreign apprentices is not particularly meaningful as an indicator of integration success.

DEVELOPMENT OF APPRENTICE NUMBERS

2020 by nationality, change from 2019 in percent

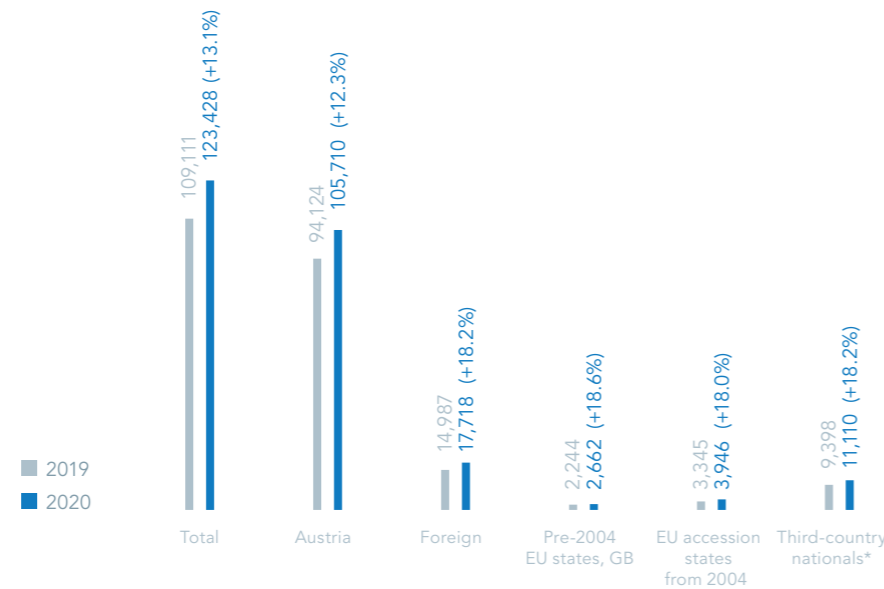


Fig. B.12; * incl. EFTA, stateless and unknown; Source: Integration Monitoring pursuant to IntG; own illustration

LEARNING DEFICITS AND PROBLEMATIC ENTRY INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

Since 2011, the Austrian Education Act defines results orientation, sustainable development of competences and targeted individualised support as binding education principles. This is verified through regular tests of representative samples of pupils.²⁹ These show that pupils with a migrant background generally have lower educational competences than those without such a background.

Recent results before the start of distance learning due to the Covid-19 pandemic confirm this for pupils in the 8th grade (13 to 14 years old). One third of the pupils with a migrant background (34%) only partially fulfils the standards and only understands short texts of a low complexity. Another third of adolescents with a migrant background fails the learning goals (35%): they have comprehension difficulties even with texts that are short and not complex (adolescents without a migrant background: 12%).³⁰ In maths, one third of adolescents with a migrant background (35%) only partially achieve the age-relevant standards. Another 30% are hardly capable of solving even simple mathematical tasks, even those that are short and not very complex and were typically repeated frequently in class (adolescents without a migrant background: 11%).³¹ It should be noted that adolescents born abroad (1st generation) generally have greater educational deficits than those born here with a migrant background (2nd generation).

²⁹ Education standards according to § 17 SchUG and Ordinance on the Education Standards (Federal Law Gazette II No. 1/2009, 82/2011).

³⁰ Breit, Simone et al. (2017), Standardüberprüfung 2016. Deutsch, 8. Schulstufe, p. 45.

³¹ Schreiner, Claudia et al. (2018), Standardüberprüfung 2017. Mathematik, 8. Schulstufe, p. 47.

These results make clear that the standards that were enshrined into law in 2011 were already being failed in school years 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 before the start of distance learning. This is certainly one reason for the low proportion of children with a migrant background attending upper secondary schools and obtaining school-leaving diplomas or successfully completing apprenticeships.

The consequence of this development is a comparatively high proportion of adolescents and young adults with a migrant background who at the ages of 15 to 24 are neither employed nor in education nor completing a training (NEET). In 2020, their share in that age group was 13%, more than double that of adolescents and young adults without a migrant background (6%). In 2020 children and adolescents whose parents came from other EU/EFTA states had an only slightly lower NEET share (12%) than those with parents from third countries (13%).

The 2020 NEET share was especially high in those of this age group who came to the country as children or adolescents (1st generation: 17%), and significantly lower in those who were born in Austria to immigrant parents (2nd generation: 9%).

PROPORTION OF NEETS IN 15–24-YEAR-OLDS

2013 – 2020 by nationality

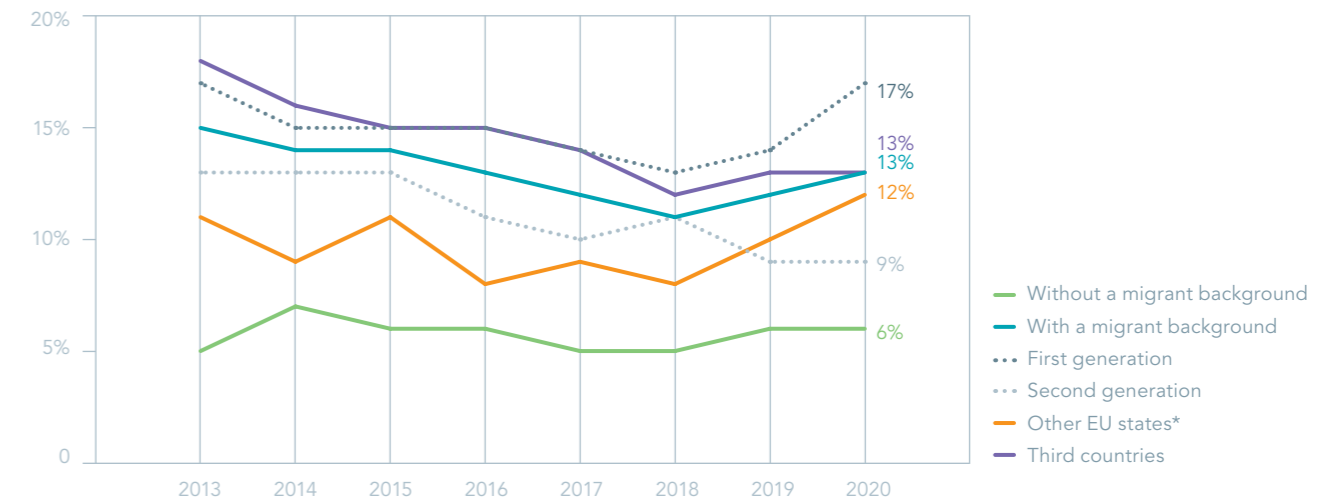


Fig. B.13; * From 2017 incl. EFTA states, from 2020 incl. GB; Source: Statistik Austria (2014–2021), migration & integration; own illustration

CONCLUSION

Education and training are key to the successful integration of children and adolescents with a migrant background. One quarter of pupils uses another language than German for everyday use. This does not automatically mean that their German skills are lacking, but it does signal that a potential need for support exists. The great differences by school type in the proportions of children with languages other than German as their everyday languages illustrate the educational segregation between children and adolescents with and without a migrant background.

As the results of education assessments show, pupils with a migrant background generally have poorer educational competencies than children without a migrant background. Defined standards, for instance for reading comprehension or for solving mathematical problems, are clearly not being achieved. These learning gaps then result in fewer children of migrants successfully completing apprenticeship or attending upper secondary schools and graduating. A special focus of integration work should be on those adolescents with a migrant background who are neither in education nor employed (NEET). In 2020 their proportion was more than double that of children and adolescents without a migrant background.

Targeted support measures can help counteract learning deficits as early as possible and so increase the opportunities for a successful educational and professional career.

VALUES AND ORIENTATION COURSES

PARTICIPATION IN VALUES AND ORIENTATION COURSES

2020 by most common nationalities and sex

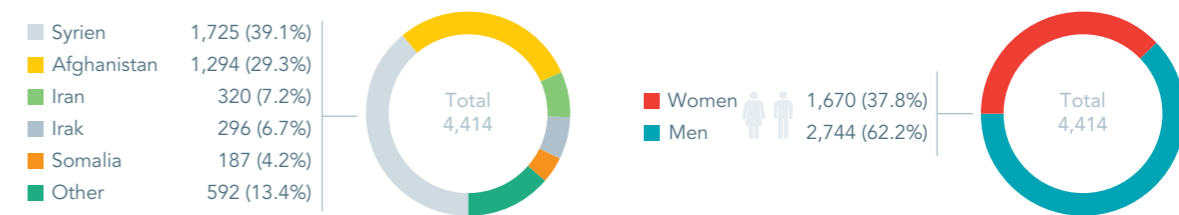


Fig. B.14; Source: Integration Monitoring pursuant to IntG; own illustration

Since 2015, the Austrian Integration Fund has been providing one-day values and orientation courses. Their central contents are the basic values of the Austrian constitution such as equality between men and women, human dignity and democratic principles. Focal issues are the importance of German language skills and education for life in Austria and everyday knowledge for successful integration.

The values and orientation courses are offered to people above the age of 15 who are entitled to asylum and subsidiary protection or asylum seekers whose application was approved for submission. The courses are in German, and interpreters for the most common languages of origin, such as Arabic, Farsi/Dari, as well as English, are on hand for participants whose German is still too weak. The learning materials for the course are available in simple German as well as in Arabic, Farsi/Dari, Pashto, English and Russian.

The number of participants in last year's values and orientation courses must be viewed in the context of the official measures enacted against Covid-19 and the associated lapse of several months in physical classes in the past year. The rest of the time, values and orientation courses were held under observance of the infection protection measures, requiring a reduction in the number of participants per class. In 2020, 4,414 persons from the cited target groups took part in values and orientation courses, of which almost 40% were Syrian and almost 30% were Afghan nationals. The number of participants is much lower than the statistical number of first asylum applications and the positively concluded asylum procedures. This is partly because in 2020 a total of 5,730 minors were granted subsidiary protection, including a majority of children born here to refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection (see section "Immigration, population structure and asylum"). They clearly do not (yet) belong to the target group of the values and orientation courses.

INCOME AND RISK OF POVERTY

In Austria, the social situation of immigrants (1st generation) and of people born here with a migrant background (2nd generation) typically differs based on origin and status. Immigrants generally have a lower income, are more at risk of poverty, and are relatively more frequently dependent on welfare benefits.

- » In recent years people who came to Austria from the western EU/EFTA states and from other western countries had the best situation. They generally immigrated either to take up a job or to study. The qualification and income level of these persons is usually above that of the national population. The median length of their stay in Austria last was less than ten years.
- » In second position were people from eastern and southeastern EU states. Their qualifications and income tended to be below those of the local population, but they consistently demonstrated rapid integration into the labour market and high employment rates.
- » In third position were immigrants from third countries who came to the country through regular routes or as asylum seekers, and their offspring born here with this migrant background (2nd generation). Their qualifications, income and employment rates were lower than those of the local population. In contrast to the first two groups, their integration into the labour market (those aged 15–65) took longer on average, which was reflected in lower employment rates and a higher dependence on welfare. In the 2nd generation the below-average educational achievements (see section “Education and training”) reduced their employment and income opportunities. At the same time, migrants from third countries and their children were very likely to stay in Austria for a long time or permanently, so that integration measures are especially important for them.

Between 2010 and 2019, Austrians as well as foreign nationals saw their real income grow on average. In 2020 this was not the case, as a result of short time, higher unemployment, less overtime and reduced income from self-employment.

In 2019, the available median income (weighted by household structure) of Austrian citizens was € 27,749, while nationals of other EU/EFTA states earned € 21,977 and third-country nationals only earned € 19,090 (Fig. B.14).³² While the nationals of EU member states that acceded before 2004 had income similar to that of Austrian nationals, the income of those from states that acceded to the EU between 2004 and 2013 was significantly lower (around € 21,100), similar to that of Turkish nationals. The gap between Austrian nationals on the one hand and EU nationals on the other was therefore 26%. The gap between Austrian nationals and third-country nationals was just over 45%. Compared to the start of the last decade, this represents a decline in the difference between Austrian and other EU nationals (2010: 32%), but a slight increase in the difference between Austrians and third-country nationals (2010: 42%).³³ A comparison across the EU reveals that this income gap was particularly large in Austria in recent years.³⁴ The main factors driving this continued income gap are a low level of education (especially for third-country nationals) and thus a lower average income and lower employment rates, partly due to the educational level.

EQUIVALISED AVAILABLE MEDIAN ANNUAL INCOME

2015 – 2020, 18- to 65-year-olds by nationality

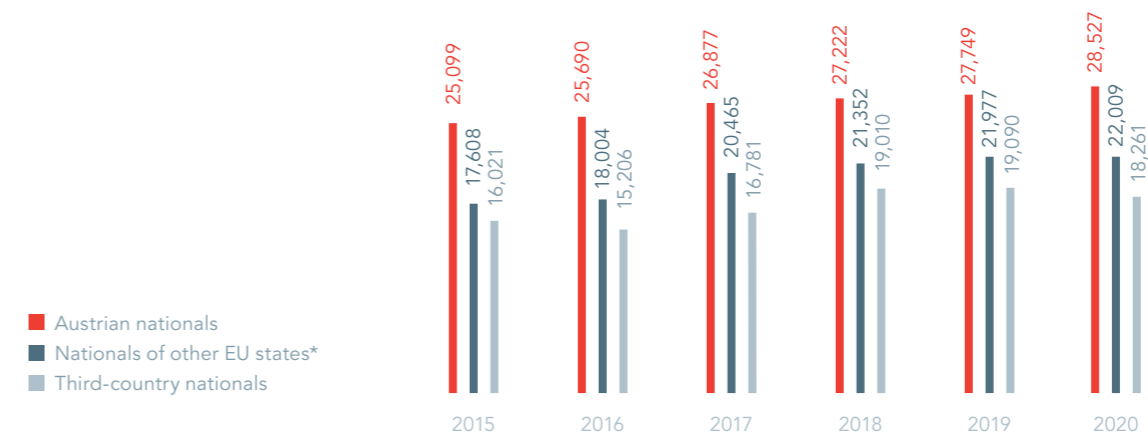


Fig. B.15; * 2020: without United Kingdom; in the weighting, the first adult in the household counts for 1.0, every further adult as well as adolescents above 14 years for 0.5 and children under 14 years for 0.3; Source: Eurostat (2021), Mean and median income by broad group of citizenship (population aged 18 and over), in Euro; own illustration

³² For the weighting, the first adult in the household counted for 1.0, every further adult and adolescents above 14 years for 0.5 and children under 14 years for 0.3; see Eurostat (2021), Glossary: Equalised income.

³³ The respective lower value equals 100%.

³⁴ Eurostat (2021), Migrant integration statistics.

Some two thirds of the nationals of other EU states at risk of poverty, and half of the third-country nationals at risk of poverty, were self-employed in 2019 or lived with a working partner.

Austria has a wide range of monetary social benefits. The major existence-securing welfare benefits include:

- » Social security, especially unemployment pay, unemployment assistance, sick pay and maternity allowance;
- » Payments from the family assistance fund, in particular family allowance, paid leave and child support;
- » Payments by the federal provinces, in particular nursing allowance, housing benefits, heating allowances and social assistance.
- » Income is also supported by the direct payments from the EU's agricultural aid to agriculture and forestry.

Low available income from employment or from retirement or widow's pensions results in a higher risk of poverty.³⁵ For local adults,³⁶ in 2020 this risk was 18% before receiving welfare, and was reduced to 9% by social benefits. For naturalised persons above the age of 18, this risk was 34%, reduced by social benefits to 21%. Adult nationals of other EU/EFTA states had a higher poverty risk than Austrian nationals. In 2020, this risk was 39% before receiving social benefits and was reduced by these payments to 25%. The highest risk of poverty was among adult third-country nationals. Before social benefits, it was 63% in 2020, reduced by social benefits to 45% (Fig. B.15).

RISK OF POVERTY

2020 by nationality

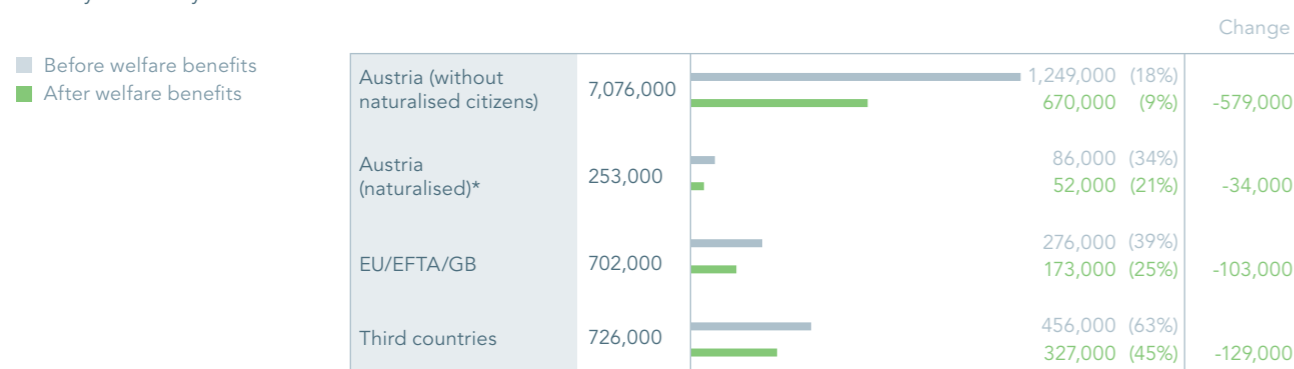


Fig. B.16; * not EU/EFTA/GB; Source: Statistik Austria (2021), Statistik Austria (2021), Armutsgefährdung vor und nach sozialen Transfers nach soziodemographischen Merkmalen 2020; own illustration

In 2020, after redistribution through taxes, duties and transfer payments, some 1.2 million people in Austria were at risk of poverty. These included 670,000 locals, 52,000 naturalised persons, 173,000 foreign nationals from EU/EFTA states and 327,000 third-country nationals.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and to the measures taken to slow it, in 2020, Austria witnessed the greatest fall in its GDP since the Second World War (see also the sec-

35 Persons at risk of poverty are those whose available income, weighted by household structure, is below 60% of the Austrian average. This figure considers income after taxes, duties and transfer payments; see Eurostat (2021), Glossary: At-risk-of-poverty rate.
36 Austrian nationality from birth.

tion "The labour market during times of high unemployment and short time").³⁷ To fight poverty in the post-coronavirus phase, Austria, like other EU countries, devised a bundle of measures as part of the recovery and resilience plan. It has access to funds from the EU rebuilding fund "NextGenerationEU".³⁸ The development of the poverty risk in Austria, but also in other EU countries, requires close observation, particularly in the post-coronavirus phase.

WELFARE BENEFITS

Households of persons with and without a migrant background benefit to differing degrees from Austrian welfare. Age and social structure, as well as the legal requirements for eligibility, mean that nursing allowances, housing allowances and direct payments in the agricultural sector primarily flow to Austrian nationals.

In 2020, the annual sum of social assistance recipients³⁹ in Austria⁴⁰ decreased by -0.2%, or -500, to 281,600 compared to the previous year. The proportions of foreign social assistance recipients lay between 45% and 60% in almost all federal provinces, significantly above their share of the population. The highest proportion was in Tyrol (60%), followed by Vorarlberg (59%). Of note was the significant proportion of recognised refugees among the social assistance recipients. This was highest in Carinthia (42%), followed by Tyrol (40%) and Vorarlberg (38%). With a year-on-year increase of 600 recipients, the proportion of asylum and subsidiary protection beneficiaries in the annual totals of the federal provinces excluding Vienna and Burgenland was 36%. In Vienna, the annualised average for 2020 was 37%, with an increase of 600 recipients. Nationals of EU/EFTA states and of the United Kingdom made up 7% of social assistance recipients each.

NUMBER OF ALL SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS

2020*

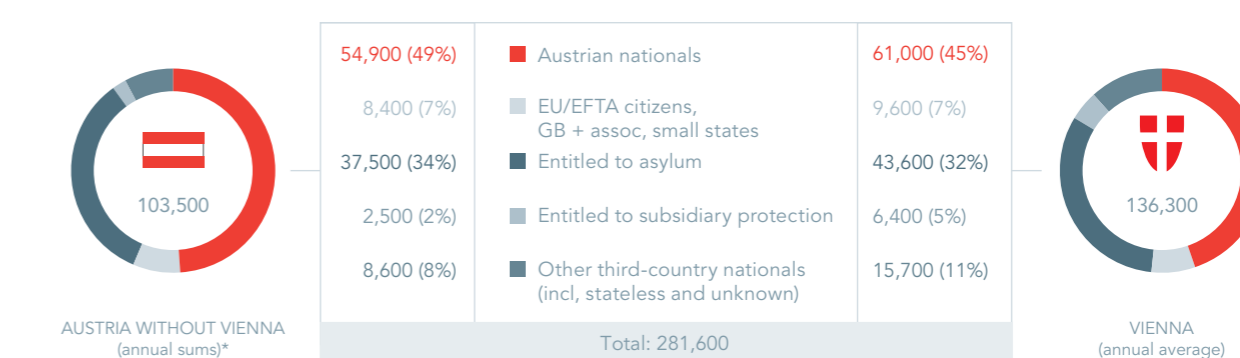


Fig. B.17; * without Burgenland, as no data was transmitted by the time of going to print; Source: data from federal provinces collected as part of Integration Monitoring pursuant to IntG; own illustration

37 Statistik Austria (2021), Wirtschaft im Jahr 2020: Historischer Rückgang von -6,6 %.

38 BMF (2021), Österreichischer Aufbau- und Resilienzplan 2020-2026, p. 36, 39 and 40.

39 In the following, the term "social assistance recipient" includes persons who receive minimum benefits based on provincial laws and those who receive social assistance based on social assistance implementation laws.

40 Excluding Burgenland, as no data was provided by the time of printing.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS

2020 by federal province; compared to 2019 in abs. numbers*

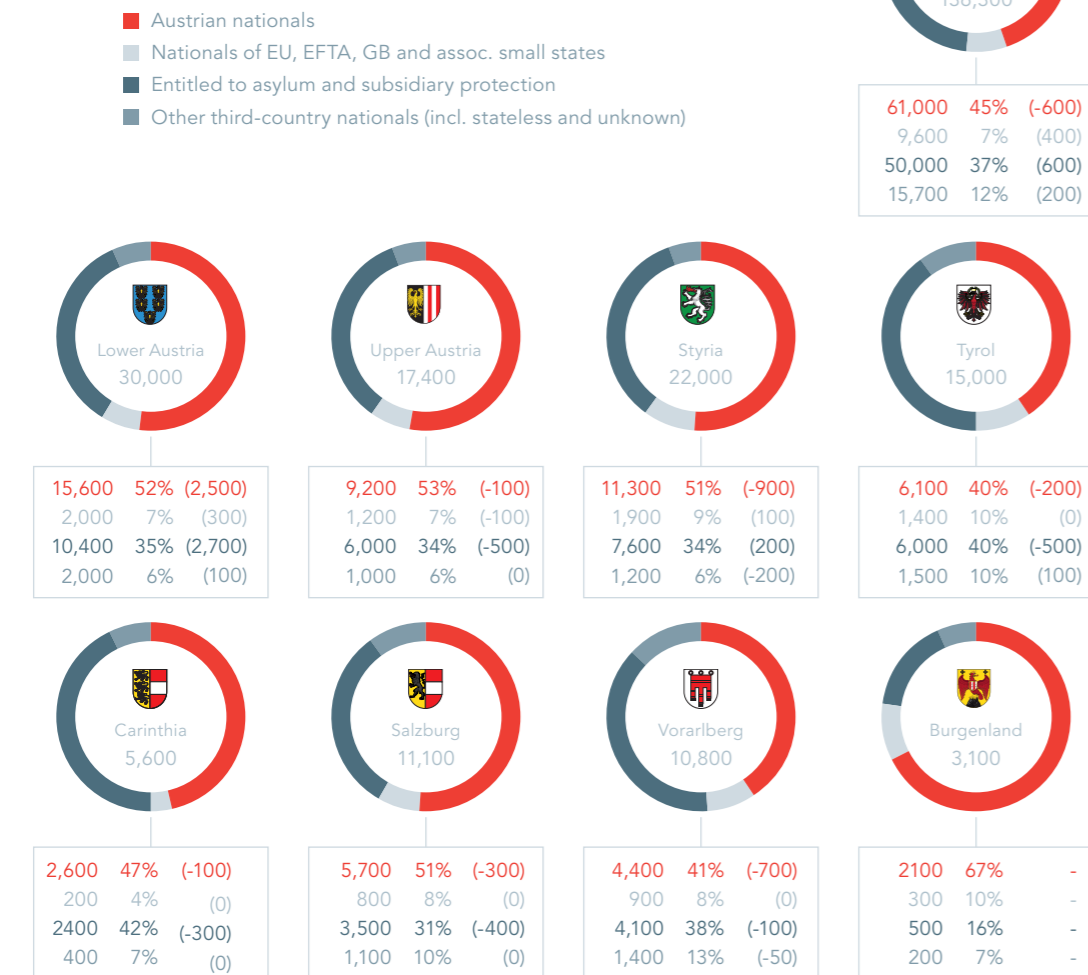


Fig. B.18; * Vienna based on annual averages, other federal provinces on annual totals. Burgenland: data for 2019, as no data was transmitted by the time of going to print. Due to differing collection methods and received benefits, the data from the federal provinces are only somewhat comparable; Source: data from federal provinces collected as part of Integration Monitoring pursuant to IntG; own illustration

It is also clear that social assistance payments relative to the total population varied between states. 60% of all social assistance recipients lived in Vienna, 11% in Lower Austria and 8% in Styria. In relation to the total population of the respective federal province, in 2020 the payments were highest in Vienna (9.1%), followed by Vorarlberg (2.8%) and Tyrol (2.0%) They were lowest in Carinthia (1.1%). However, a comparison between federal provinces is only possible to an extent, because there are differences in how the provinces account for the benefits and what they disburse.⁴¹

⁴¹ Vienna transmits annual averages, the other provinces annual totals. In addition, heating allowances are provided as part of the guaranteed minimum income in Vienna but are separate in other provinces.

CONCLUSION

The examination of the social situation of immigrants yielded a varied picture: there are clear differences between different groups of nationalities. In available median income the gap between Austrian nationals and third-country nationals was especially wide. While in 2019 the available median income (weighted by household) of Austrians was € 27,749, it was just € 19,090 for third-country nationals. Main factors for the continued existence of this large gap include a lower level of education and a lower employment rate.

In total, the social benefits payments reduced the number of persons at risk of poverty in 2020 by over 845,000, of which 579,000 were local, 34,000 were naturalised, 103,000 were foreign nationals of EU/EFTA states and 129,000 were third-country nationals.

The total number of social assistance recipients in Austria⁴² dropped slightly in 2020 from the previous year. The proportions of asylum and subsidiary protection beneficiaries however remained high. In total, in 2020 more than half of social assistance recipients in Austria were foreign nationals. In Vienna the proportion of 55% was slightly above the figure of 51% in the other seven federal provinces (excluding Burgenland).

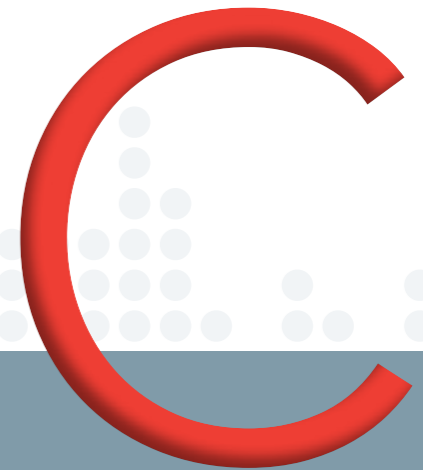
⁴² Excluding Burgenland, as no data was transmitted by the time of printing of this report.

INTEGRATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PANDEMIC

The labour market during times of
high unemployment and short time

Challenges in the field of education
and youth due to the coronavirus crisis

Effects of the coronavirus crisis
on women



The labour market during times of high unemployment and short time

CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

In reporting year 2020, the developments in the labour market were marked by the measures to stem the coronavirus pandemic. The two coronavirus-caused lockdowns, the first in spring and the second, staggered, in late autumn, as well as further measures, caused a collapse in the economy and in employment. In an annualised average for 2020, Austria's economic output (GDP) decreased by -6.6% from the previous year. The number of non-self-employed workers dropped by -2.1% (-80,100).

The fall in real gross domestic product was somewhat stronger in Austria than the EU27 average (-6.6% compared to -6.2%). Countries that were affected more severely than Austria by the economic collapse include the southern European states of Spain (-11%), Italy (-8.9%), Greece (-8.2%), Croatia (-8.4%) and Portugal (-7.6%) as well as France (-8.1%). With drops in GDP of around -3% compared to 2019, the situation was much better in the Scandinavian countries, Switzerland, and some eastern European countries like Poland and the Baltic states. In the Netherlands (-3.8%) and Germany (-4.9%) the situation was better than in Austria but worse than in the Nordic countries. The economic collapse in Austria was greater during the pandemic year of 2020 than during the economic and financial crisis of 2009 (-6.6% from the previous year compared to -3.8%). The loss of employment was also stronger (-80,100 or -2.1% year-on-year versus -49,600 or -1.5%).

The differences in the economic development of the individual EU member states, which are also reflected in their relative labour market results, are due to how differently individual economic sectors were affected and to their weight in the respective economy. The following sectors were most affected by the collapse in production and employment as a consequence of the measures to stem the pandemic: tourism and hospitality, culture and sport, transport, and some areas of industrial production, particularly the manufacture of clothing, leather and leather goods, print products, and cars and car parts. While these sectors underwent severe production and employment declines, others, like the health care system, experienced a surge in demand and at times came close to its capacity limits.

The individual sectors in Austria were affected differently by the production and labour stoppages in 2020 due to the coronavirus. On annualised average, the number of non-self-employed workers diminished by -80,100 or -2.1% compared to the previous year; there were stronger declines in the hospitality sector, with -19.2% (-42,400), followed by other economic services (-7.5%; -17,200) – contract workers, travel agencies and cleaning services were hit particularly hard, and these are all sectors in which an above-average number of foreign workers and persons with a migrant background are active. However, some sectors also hired more, especially health care and social services (+2.1%; +5,600) and ICT (+3.9%, +4,000). While the health care sector needed more workers mainly to handle the additional load due to Covid-19, hiring also took place in all areas where more digital work methods were required. These include the education and school sectors (homeschooling)

and the provision of freelance scientific and technical services (+1%; +1,900), public administration and social security (+0.2%; +1,400) and power and water supply (+1.3%; +500).

COLLAPSE IN EMPLOYMENT AND SHORT TIME

Over the course of 2020, the collapse in employment and the increase in unemployment followed the two phases of the lockdown, as illustrated in Fig. C.1. When Austria entered the first lockdown on 16 March 2020 as a reaction to the first wave of coronavirus patients, employment in March dropped suddenly by -187,000 (-5%) compared to the previous year (to 3.6 million) while the unemployment rate increased abruptly from 8.1% in February to 12.3% in March.⁴³

EMPLOYMENT DURING COVID-19

by nationality

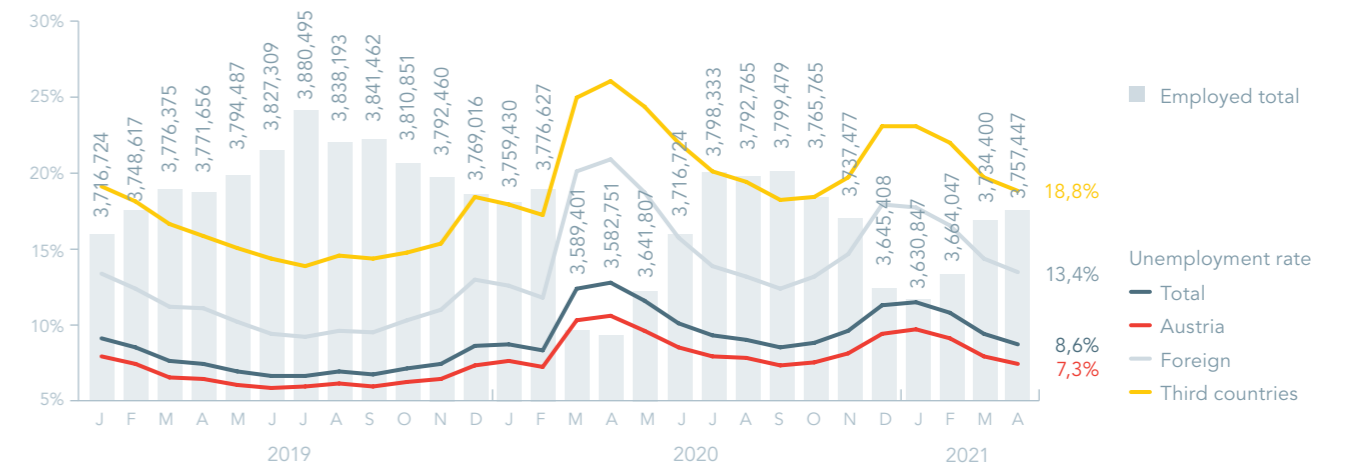


Fig. C.1; Source: labour market database of the BMA (2021), Bali; own illustration

⁴³ Traditional Austrian accounting method based on the registered unemployed and on employment with social security.

Furthermore, companies made use of the option of short time – at the end of April 2020, one million employees were registered in short time and half a million were unemployed (522,300; +226,000 or +76.3% compared to the previous year). In the summer of 2020 the employment situation recovered as the pandemic-fighting measures were relaxed, but the rate of employment remained below the previous year's. The second phase of lockdowns starting in November 2020 ("soft" lockdown from 03/11 till 17/11, followed by "hard" lockdown till 06/12/2020) deepened the gap with the previous year by December 2020 to -123,600 (-3.3%).

The employment situation was strongly supported by the use of short time over the course of the year. In 2020 a total of 1,242,300 employees received short time support. The highest rates of short time were in Upper Austria (13.6%), followed by Salzburg (13.3%) and Vorarlberg (12.8%), the lowest were in Carinthia (8.7%) and Tyrol (9.7%).

Tourism took the lead in sectors that made use of short time (30.4%), followed by arts, entertainment and sports (27%). In goods production and trade the share was 17.8% and 17.2%, respectively, of the actively employed. From April to October 2020 the number of workers on short time diminished, before increasing again slightly in November. However, the increase was only temporary, as in December 2020 the number of people on short time decreased again, reaching a comparatively low figure similar to that at the start of 2020 by February 2021. As shown in Figure C.2, from spring 2020 to autumn 2020 more men made use of short time than women, at times significantly more. In November there was a switch, with more women than men in short time. Over the course of 2020 a total of 543,500 women and 702,400 men were in short time. This means that 32% of non-self-employed women and 35% of non-self-employed men were in short time at least temporarily in 2020.

EMPLOYED IN SHORT TIME

2020 by sex and nationality

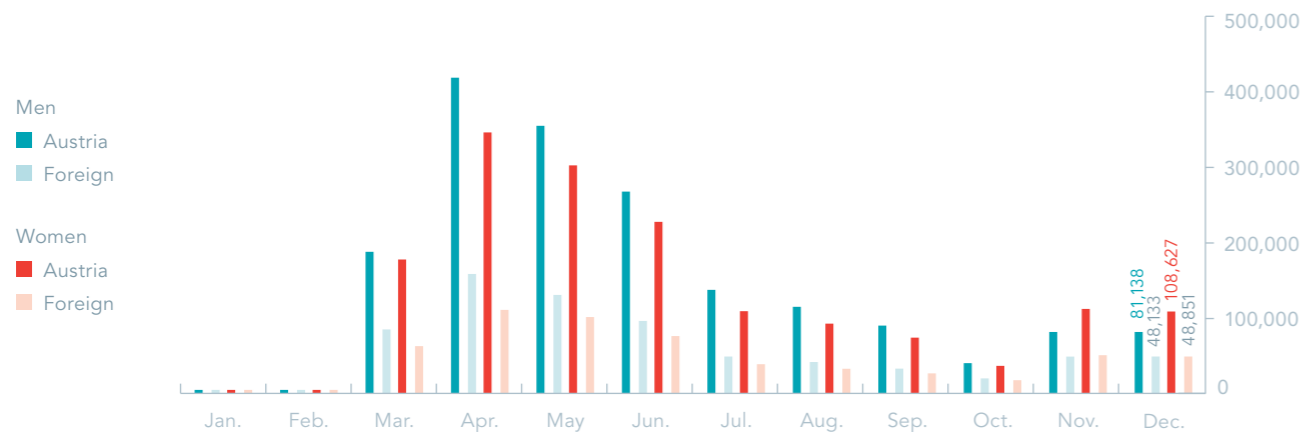


Fig. C.2; Source: AMS (2021), special assessment; own illustration

Foreign workers also made use of short time, with the gender trends over the year following those for nationals. Overall, the proportion of foreign workers in short time was 27%. This means that foreign workers were more affected by short time than nationals, 43% compared to 31%.

In 2020 the labour market tool of short time was made use of much more frequently than during the recession of 2009. Then 67,000 employees went into short time over the course of the year, or 2% of the non-self employed, while in 2020 42% of all employees were in short time over the course of the year. In the pandemic year 2020 the share of women was also much higher than in the recession of 2009 (45.4% compared to 19.4%) due to the employment areas that were heavily affected employing a higher share of women.

FOREIGN LABOUR

Overall, the employment of foreign labour dropped in 2020 by -22,200 (-2.8%) to 777,300 persons, compared to a decrease among local labour by -57,900 (-1.9%) to 2,939,900. Workers from states that acceded to the EU in 2004 were most affected by job losses (-11,900; -5.3%), followed by workers from third countries (excluding persons from the refugee countries of origin Afghanistan, Syria, Russian Federation, Iran, Iraq and Somalia), with a decrease of 11,900 or 4.3% (Fig. C.3). Job losses were somewhat lower for persons from pre-2004 EU states and from EFTA states and the United Kingdom (-1,600; -1%) and for nationals from the EU expansion in 2007 (Bulgaria and Romania), at -800 or -1%. On contrast, the employment of workers from Croatia and the refugee countries of origin cited above increased, by 2,000 for each; this represents a plus of 5.8% for Croatians and 5.2% for people from refugee countries of origin. In the case of Croatia, the comparatively mild cross-border restrictions on mobility probably supported employment. The slight increase in employment of recognised refugees and subsidiary protection beneficiaries is likely due in part to the support for employment in agriculture and forestry and in nursing and care.

FOREIGNERS EMPLOYED AND SELF-EMPLOYED

2020 by nationality, annual average compared to previous year

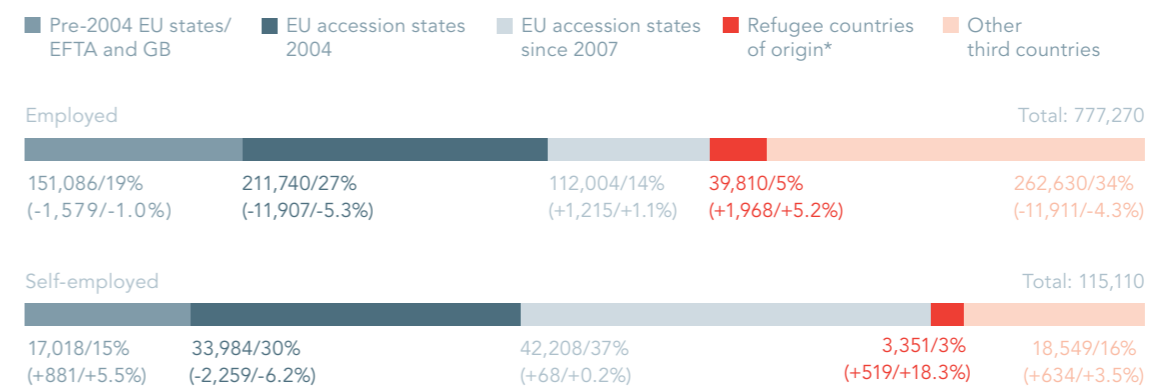


Fig. C.3; * Refugee countries of origin: Afghanistan, Syria, Russian Federation, Iran, Iraq and Somalia. This is an estimate; on the one hand, not all nationals of these countries are refugees, and on the other, refugees from other countries were not included; Source: labour market database of the BMA (2021), Bali; own illustration

For the first time in over 10 years, in 2020 the number of self-employed in Austria decreased, by 3,600 (-0.7%) to 485,850 persons. Foreign self-employed persons were mainly nationals from states that acceded to the EU in 2004 (-2,300, -6.2% to 34,000) and Bulgaria and Romania (-548, -1.5% to 35,400). Only the number of self-employed from EU14/EFTA/GB (+600, +3.9% to 17,000), from Croatia (+300, +4.2% to 6,800) and from third countries (+900, +4.4% to 21,900) increased. The highest share of self-employed amongst the professionally active continued to be amongst nationals of the states that acceded to the EU in 2007 (Bulgaria and Romania); these are mostly women working in Austria as independent 24-hour carers. Amongst these, the share of self-employed decreased from 33.9% in 2018 to 31.9% in 2020. In second place were persons from the EEA with a share of 19.4% in 2020, from 18.2% in 2018. In 2020 third country nationals had the lowest ratio of self-employed to active population at 6.8%, with a slightly increasing trend.

The cross-border mobility barriers in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic resulted, in certain areas, in shortages in the labour market, especially for seasonal labourers in agriculture (pickers) and cross-border care.

According to the figures of the AMS on persons with temporary quota approvals, the designation for foreign seasonal workers, in 2020 a total of 10,831 approvals for foreign seasonal workers were granted in agriculture and forestry, some 331 (+3.2%) more than in the previous year. In addition to the seasonal workers in agriculture from abroad, a schooling programme for job-seeking asylum and subsidiary protection beneficiaries was initiated by the Austrian Integration Fund in collaboration with the Vienna employment agency, the Viennese Chamber of Commerce and the Higher Federal College for Wine and Fruit Growing in Klosterneuburg. In 2020, it was thus made easier for refugees to enter this special sector of the labour market. The Federal Ministry for Women, Family, Youth and Integration in the Federal Chancellery additionally promotes, together with AMS and Austrian Integration Fund, the training of migrants, especially job-seeking asylum and subsidiary protection beneficiaries, in the nursing and care sector.⁴⁴

The experience of 2020 once again showed clearly that there is a dearth of local labour both in agriculture and forestry and in nursing and care, particularly in 24-hour care. The Expert Council therefore suggests investing more in the schooling and further training of job-seeking refugees in these professions with shortages.⁴⁵

DIFFERENCES IN JOB LOSSES BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN

In the longer term, the number of unemployed men is always higher than that of women, both Austrian and foreign. In an economic crisis, men are also generally relatively more affected than women. This was not the case in the most recent crisis caused by the coronavirus: in 2020 the number of female unemployed increased by 38% (+51,000) to 185,700, while it increased by 34% (+57,300) to 223,969 in men. The gender-specific reaction in the labour market illustrates the special nature of the current crisis compared to an economic crisis like the one in 2009.

On average across the economy, the labour market reaction in 2020, measured by the unemployment rate, was much stronger than during the economic crisis of 2009 (Fig. C.4). In 2020 the unemployment rate increased to 9.9% (from 7.4% in 2019), compared to an increase from 5.9% to 7.2% in 2009. The unemployment rate of women in 2020 increased to 9.7% (from 7.1% in the previous year), that of men to 10.1% (from 7.6% in the previous year).

Amongst foreign workers, the number of unemployed women (47% from the previous year) also grew more than that of men (45% from the previous year). This gender-specific development of employment and unemployment was due to the fact that employment in most industries in which men are overrepresented, such as construction, industry and trade, information and communication and energy and water supply, decreased below the average or even increased. In contrast, many industries and activities with an above-average share of women, such as hospitality, personal physical services like hairdressers, and cleaning services, were hit particularly hard by the measures to stem the pandemic. As a result, the unemployment rate of foreign women increased to 16.8% (2019: 11.8%) and that of foreign men to 14.3% (2019: 10.0%).

UNEMPLOYMENT

2005 – 2020 by sex and nationality

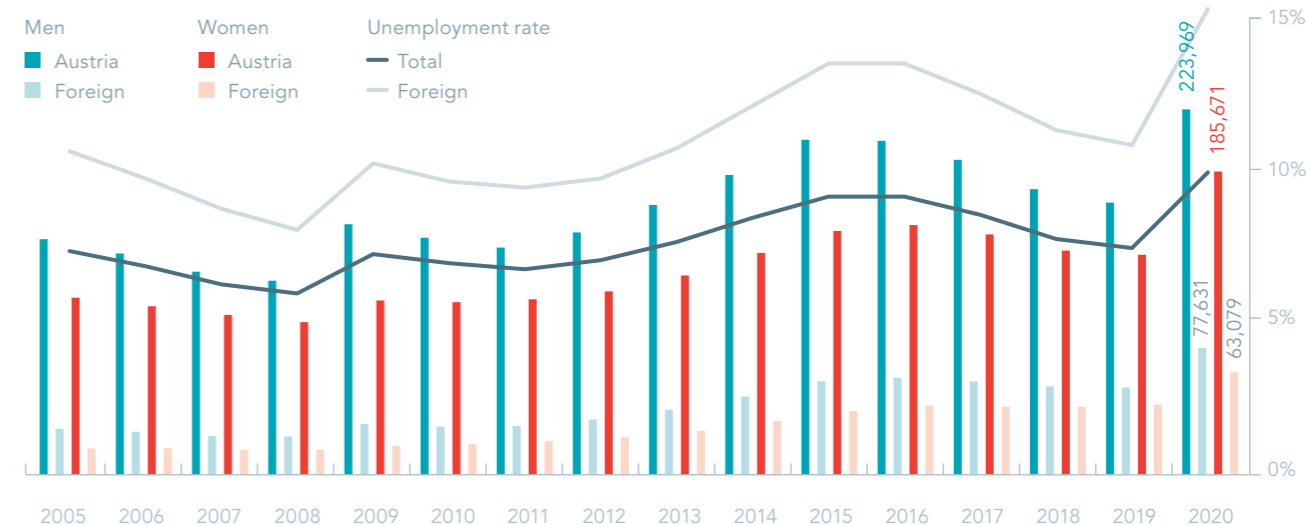


Fig. C.4; Source: AMS (2021), special assessment; own illustration

44 More details at <https://www.caritas-wien.at/hilfe-angebote/asyl-integration/ausbildung-arbeit/beratung-begleitung/migrants-care/>.
45 See Expert Council for Integration (2020), Positionspapier des Expertenrats für Integration zur Corona-Krise.

In some sectors, foreign workers saw a better employment trend than locals, for instance in information and communication, in energy and water supply, in construction, in trade and repairs and in health and social care. However, in other areas they were sometimes affected much more strongly by job losses than locals. These areas include hospitality, arts, entertainment and sports, cleaning services and contract work of all sorts, personal services and agriculture and forestry. In many of these areas, foreign workers represent an above-average share of the labour force (Fig. C.5).

WORKING POPULATION

2020 by sector, nationality and sex

| | Employed | Change from previous year | Share of women | Foreigners |
|---|------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Total* | 3,643,933 | -76,108 -2.0% | 1,660,510 45.6% | 777,272 21.3% |
| Manufacture of goods | 619,522 | -9,475 -1.5% | 155,216 25.1% | 124,281 20.1% |
| Hospitality | 178,025 | -42,395 -19.2% | 99,531 55.9% | 89,895 50.5% |
| Retail; Maintenance and repair of vehicles | 548,822 | -4,830 -1.0% | 297,112 54.1% | 110,894 20.2% |
| Provision of other economic services | 211,076 | -17,159 -7.5% | 90,489 42.9% | 95,838 45.4% |
| Construction | 271,077 | -253 -0.1% | 33,951 12.5% | 81,464 30.1% |
| Transport and storage | 194,995 | -7,738 -3.8% | 41,754 21.4% | 52,185 26.8% |
| Health care and social work | 276,851 | 5,608 +2.1% | 210,166 75.9% | 45,105 16.3% |
| Provision of freelance, scientific and technical services | 187,954 | 1,873 +1.0% | 100,074 53.2% | 33,768 18.0% |
| Public administration, defence, social security | 583,155 | 1,356 +0.2% | 353,480 60.6% | 32,186 5.5% |
| Education and teaching | 110,263 | 106 +0.1% | 66,897 60.7% | 25,438 23.1% |
| Agriculture and forestry, fishing | 24,804 | -323 -1.3% | 8,979 36.2% | 13,190 53.2% |
| Other | 437,389 | -2,879 -0.7% | 202,861 46.4% | 73,028 16.7% |

Fig. C.5; * excl. military conscripts and parental leave; Source: labour market database of the BMA (2021), Bali; own illustration

In 2020 both immigrants from the EU and third-country nationals from all regions saw a rise in unemployment. However, women with Bulgarian and Romanian citizenship were particularly affected, with an increase in their unemployment rate of 7 percentage points to 19.7%, followed by female and male nationals of third countries (+5.3 or +5 percentage points to 21.8% and 20.4%, respectively). In comparison, local men and women saw the lowest rates of increase (+2 percentage points for both, to 8.8% for men and 8% for women).

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

2015 – 2020 by sex and nationality

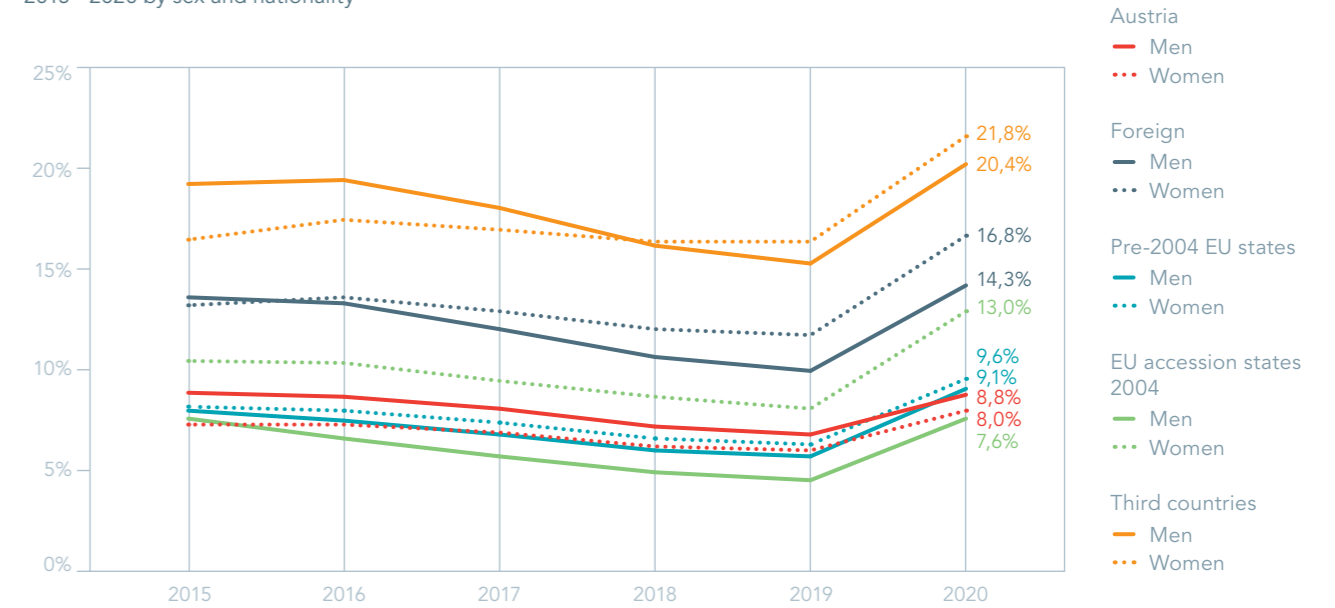


Fig. C.6; Source: labour market database of the BMA (2021), Bali; own illustration

UNEMPLOYMENT AFFECTED DIFFERENT GROUPS DIFFERENTLY

In 2020, the number of unemployed increased in all population groups of active age: for men and women, for migrants and long-term Austrians and for persons of all educational levels. In total, the number of unemployed reached 409,600, the highest level since the Second World War.

Women with a master craftsman's certificate in apprenticeship professions were most affected by the rise in unemployment (+58% from the previous year). This was a result of the high concentration of women in apprenticeship jobs like hairdressing, hospitality, trade and clerical work – precisely those areas that were hit very hard by the pandemic-induced lockdowns. However, graduates of other higher institutions of learning (+48%), who very frequently are employed in tourism, agriculture and forestry, and in social and elementary education, also suffered strong job losses. Baccalaureate graduates (+42%) and graduates of middle technical-professional schools (+41%) also saw an above-average loss of jobs.

The lowest increase in the number of unemployed was among those with a university degree, followed by teachers (pedagogic academies etc.), men with a master craftsman's certificate and people who graduated from an intermediate commercial school. In absolute figures, the unemployment of people with unskilled worker qualifications (at most compulsory school) was highest (179,700), followed by people with an apprenticeship without a master craftsman's certificate (123,000) and people with an intermediate education, tied with university graduates (21,700).

Foreign workers of all qualification and origin groups – with the exception of academics with subsidiary protection – saw a clear increase in unemployment (Fig. C.7). It was strongest among unskilled workers and those with completed apprenticeships.

UNEMPLOYED OR JOB-SEEKERS IN TRAININGS

2020 by nationality or residency permit and degree of education; by categories compared to previous year

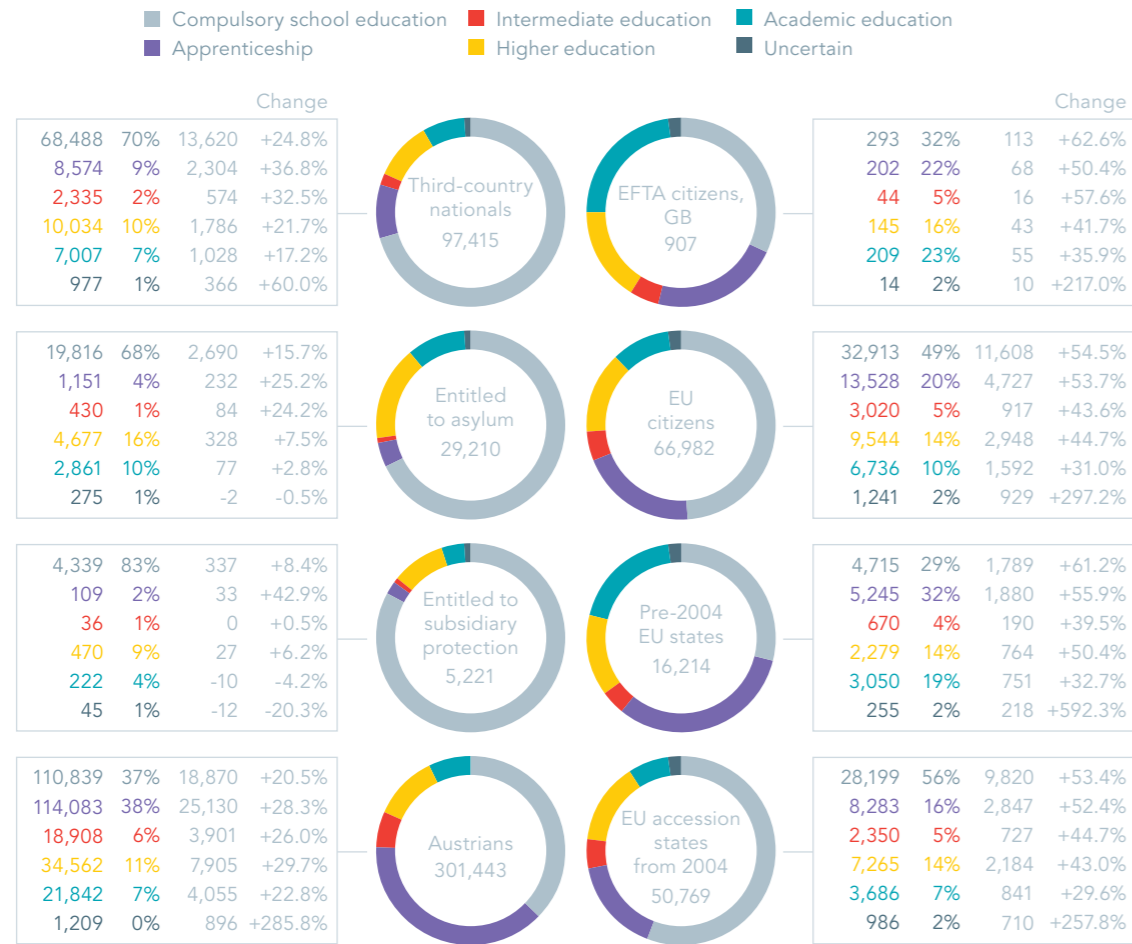


Fig. C.7; Source: Integration Monitoring pursuant to IntG; own illustration

While in 2020 the total number of unemployed increased on average by 36% (+108,300) compared to the previous year, to reach 409,600, among youths (15-24 years) it increased by 44% (+13,200) to 43,500. Young women were more affected by unemployment than young men (+47% compared to +41%).

Foreign youths were much more affected than the average (+50%; +8,900), especially men and women aged between 20 and 24 (+55%). While those aged 15 to 19 were still largely covered by (inter-company) apprenticeships, future employment or their first step into professional life remain a big challenge. This is true for youths in general, regardless of their nationality. Female youths with the Austrian nationality faced more difficulties in the labour market than males; among foreign youths the difference between genders was not as marked, while the increase in unemployment was stronger in both genders. Females under 19 are likely to face difficulties in finding an apprenticeship position and then a job in light of the strong concentration of apprenticeships on person-related professions (e.g. hairdressers) and tourism. Since foreign youths less frequently undertake an apprenticeship than their Austrian counterparts, the rise in unemployment among those aged under 19 was weaker (Fig. C.8).

At the same time, foreign workers of middle age⁴⁶ were disproportionately affected by job losses (Fig. C.8). This could be due not just to the high concentration of employment in specific sectors that were particularly strongly affected by the measures to stem the pandemic, but also to the high proportion of migrants in this age group with primary and middle qualifications.

Over the course of 2020, the lockdown resulted in strong fluctuations in employment. As a consequence, workers lost their jobs more frequently than in the previous year, but were often able to resume them after the first relaxations of measures. This was observed equally in women and men from here and from abroad. The fluctuation in employment was strongest in people from third countries, followed by Austrians. Among third-country nationals, Iranian men witnessed especially strong fluctuations, followed by Turkish and Syrian men. They were evidently active in areas that were particularly affected by the lockdowns, but were often able to find another job within the year.

INCREASE IN UNEMPLOYMENT

2020 by age group, sex and nationality; change from previous year in percent

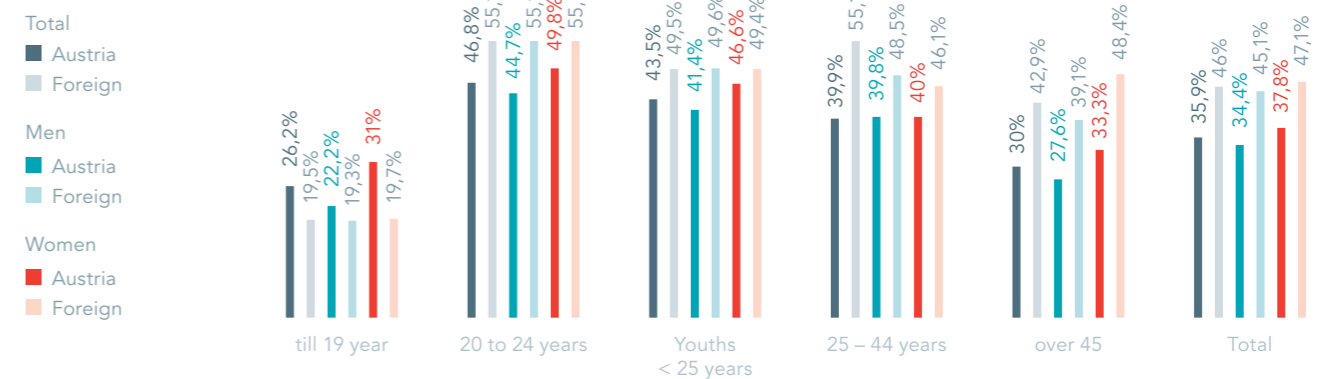


Fig. C.8; Source: AMS (2021), special assessment; own illustration

TRANSITION RATE FROM UNEMPLOYMENT TO WORKING POPULATION *

2020 by sex (comparison to previous year in percent)

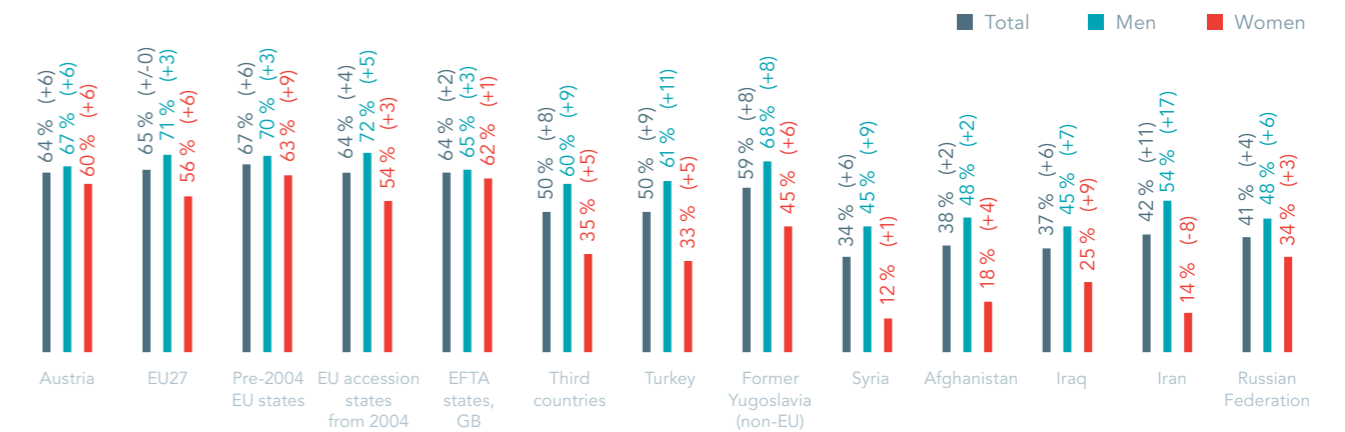


Fig. C.9; * Transition to working population in percent of all departures from unemployment; Source: Integration Monitoring pursuant to IntG; labour market database of the BMA (2021), Bali; own illustration

EMPLOYMENT RATE OF THIRD-COUNTRY NATIONALS

The degree of integration into professional life varies between places of origin. Over the long term, one sees that the employment rate of women is tending upwards, while that of men remains constant. To date this was especially true for men and women born in Austria (Fig. C.10). Men on average had higher employment rates than women whether they were born here or abroad. However, there was a clear gap between the mobile labour force from the EU27/28 and from third countries.

While the labour force from the EU of both genders generally had higher employment rates than Austrian men and women, the situation was rather unstable over time for nationals of third countries, indicating strong fluctuations in immigration and in employment. On average, the employment rate of men and that of women was lower than those of people born in Austria. The difference was especially strong for women.

It is noteworthy that in 2020, during the pandemic, the employment rate of third-country nationals decreased slightly, from 73% to 72.3%, while it increased for women and men from the EU27/28, from 78.9% to 82%. Whether this was due to mobility barriers that were harder for third-country nationals than for people from other EU states to cross, or whether the employment opportunities diminished more strongly for third-country nationals residing long-term in Austria than they did for locals and EU citizens requires a deeper examination.

EMPLOYMENT RATE

2015 – 2020 by sex and country of birth, 15 – 64-year-olds in 3rd quarter of respective year

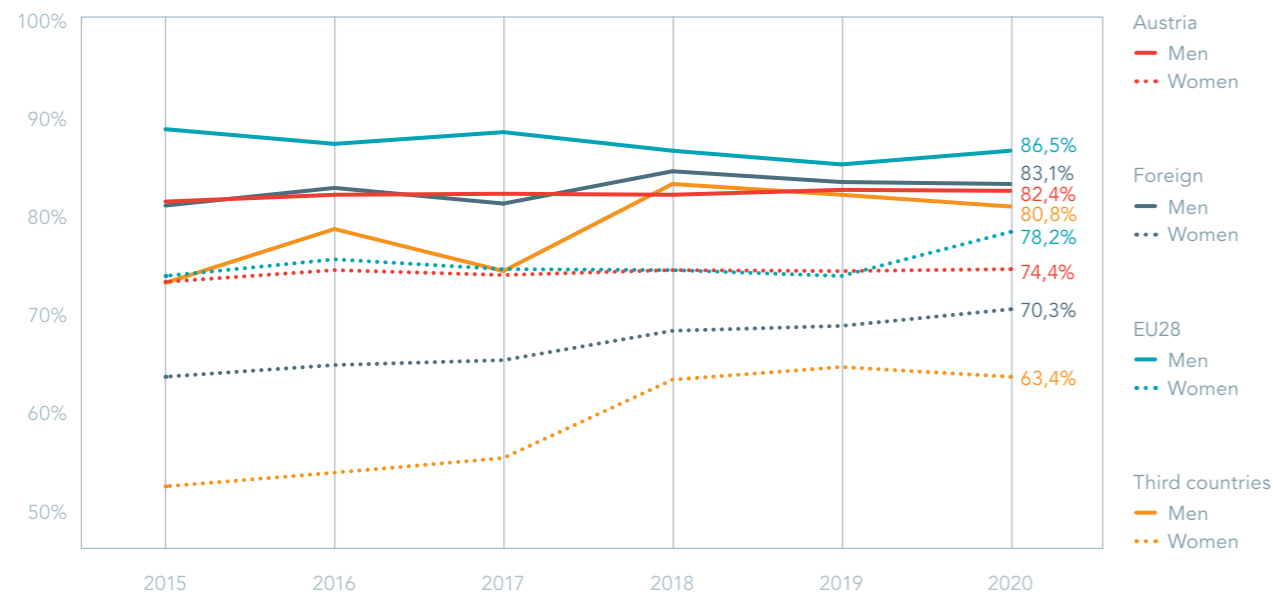


Fig. C.10; Source: Eurostat (2021), employment rates by sex, age and country of birth; own illustration

CONCLUSION

The negative developments in the labour market affect relatively more people with a migrant background because they are overrepresented in economic sectors that were strongly affected by unemployment and/or in low-qualification areas. People with a migrant background were already less integrated in the labour market than those without a migrant background before the crisis. Given a generally tight labour market situation, one can therefore assume that it is harder for workers with a migrant background to resume an activity than it is for those without a migrant background. The (re-) entry into the labour market will be especially difficult for youths making the transition to professional life and for the long-term unemployed with a migrant background.

In order for people with a migrant background to be able to quickly benefit from an upswing following the coronavirus crisis, it is important to focus on their qualifications. Special attention should be given to those sectors, like IT and health care, that will play a major role in the future. Health professions should be made more attractive by improving work conditions. The coronavirus crisis triggered a digitisation drive in many areas of society. This will continue to affect us after the direct health danger of the coronavirus is overcome and will generate new opportunities in the labour market which can also benefit the long-term unemployed with a migrant background. As part of the national recovery and resilience plan, incentives for retraining and further education are being put in place through qualification programmes. Such qualification programmes reach many more people with low qualifications than other educational measures, so they are a particularly good measure for people with a migrant background. Youths should receive more targeted support in their transition from school to training/job. Specific mentoring programmes addressing the specific situation of school graduates could also particularly benefit youths with a migrant background.

In 2020 the federal government reacted to the challenges in the labour market with well-funded support measures. The "Corona Job Offensive", funded with 700 million euros, aims to optimally prepare people for the expected upswing and the associated need for qualified workers through qualification measures and ensure a fast (re)integration into the labour market. The offering is targeted at the unemployed as well as at people in short time. Women and people returning to active life after family-related interruptions, unemployed youths without certifications, and people with language-induced employment difficulties or complex mediation restrictions should particularly benefit from this measure. Thematically, the focus is on practice-oriented and future-proof qualifications such as in digitisation, MINT or care.⁴⁷ The Expert Council recommends that people with a migrant background also be taken into consideration for this measure and that specific qualification programmes be developed.

⁴⁷ BMA (2020), Die Corona-Joboffensive.

The Expert Council has repeatedly highlighted the importance of German language skills for integration into the labour market and beyond. The necessary restrictions on social contacts had the side effect of restricted social exchanges and so also restricted opportunities to improve language skills. For this reason, since the start of the crisis the Austrian Integration Fund has increasingly adapted its German language offerings to the digital requirements and has expanded the language portal. It thus provides a wide variety of possibilities to maintain and improve German language skills even during the crisis, e.g. with material for independent learning or with online German courses. From December 2020, subject-specific online German courses for the hospitality and tourism sectors were held daily in collaboration with the Viennese Chamber of Commerce.

As the Expert Council noted in last year's report, the uneven distribution of open positions and unemployed persons (with and without a migrant background) across regions poses a challenge that existed before the coronavirus crisis and that deserves more attention in the context of the expected economic upturn. During the crisis the situation changed because the western federal provinces, in which there previously was a larger supply of open positions, were much more strongly affected by the increase in unemployment than the south and east of Austria. At the same time, companies in certain regions have great difficulty in filling open positions with adequate skilled workers because generous state measures to finance short-time work and postponed bankruptcies reduced the regular fluctuations of the workforce. In the context of promoting mobility, further aspects should be considered for job searches across province borders in addition to open positions. These include the housing and family situation. Currently the pilot project "Ticket2West", coordinated by the AMS and the Labour and Economic Chamber, supports job-seekers through a programme for cross-regional mediation. This includes amongst others provide help with finding housing and covering a large share of the ancillary costs of housing and the course. In accompanied coachings and multi-week trainings, the participants are prepared for potential jobs. Companies searching for skilled workers will also be supported by the programme. Should the pilot project receive a positive evaluation, more measures could follow. This could be an especially promising form of mobility promotion for job-seeking immigrants who recently arrived in Austria and who are not yet strongly rooted in a region.

Challenges in the field of education and youth due to the coronavirus crisis

What makes the pandemic so special for children and adolescents is the potentially long-term effect on education and career decisions and so on life outlooks.

EXPERIENCES WITH HOMESCHOOLING

The school day of children and adolescents during the pandemic was marked by the cessation of in-person classes, the switch to digital distance learning and repeated adaptation of the classes to the necessities of the fight against the pandemic. There were and remain significant differences in schools with regard to the quality of digitally supported homeschooling; the sheer number of internet platforms and communication tools that were used made any assessment difficult. The survey by the IHS of more than 4,000 teachers found that a comparatively high percentage of children and adolescents could not be reached in the distance learning phase during the first lockdown (spring 2020) by the teachers, in part because the digital infrastructure was not available in socially weak households.⁴⁸

According to the Social Disadvantage Index⁴⁹, the number of socially disadvantaged pupils depends on the confluence of four factors: the pupils from families in the bottom income quintile (bottom 20%⁵⁰), pupils with parents who have at most compulsory education, pupils with a migrant background, and pupils who exclusively use another language than German in their everyday. The higher this index value, the higher is the share of pupils from socially weak households at the respective school site. According to the National Education Report 2018, in 2015 one quarter (24%) of all primary school pupils displayed one or more of the risk factors; in 4th grade the figure was 18,700 pupils. This included 3,100 grade school children who are first-generation migrants, 9,300 who are second-generation migrants and 6,300 without a migrant background.⁵¹ At the primary level, a full 40% of socially disadvantaged children could not be reached with digital learning offerings during the first lockdown, according to the survey from the Institute for Advanced Studies. Digital presence for chats or videoconferences, and so the digital interaction, were also comparatively low. Children in the lower grade of academic secondary school had an especially low digital attendance rate for individual questions (27%), compared to 41% of pupils in the new secondary schools (Neue Mittelschulen, NMS).

HOMESCHOOLING IN AUSTRIA

Share of pupils who could not or could barely be reached during first distance learning phase in spring 2020

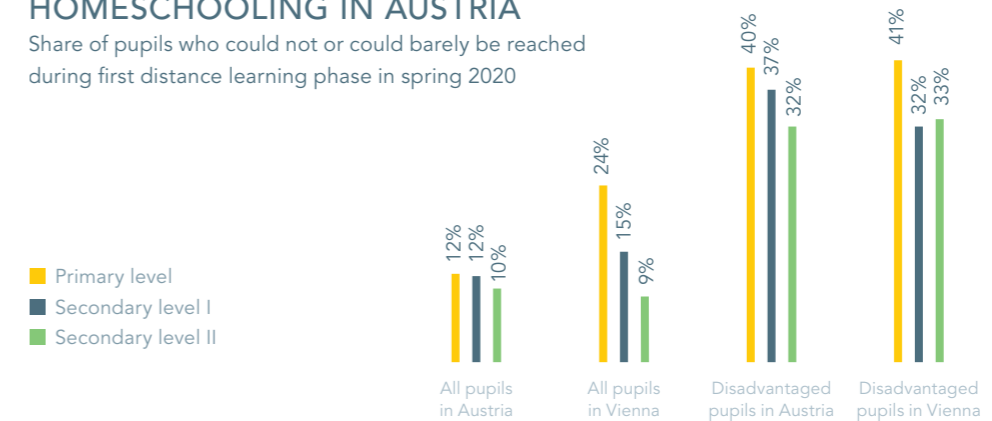


Fig. C.11; * Disadvantage based on an estimate by the teachers of the support/encouragement by the parents, the material situation, the technical equipment at home and the private housing situation of their pupils; Source: Mario Steiner et al. (2021), COVID19 und Home-Schooling. Folgt aus der Gesundheits-nun auch eine Bildungskrise?, own illustration

Research to date confirms that the social selectivity in education increases when private learning support within the family is more important.⁵² The cessation of in-person classes during the fight against the pandemic and the switch to distance learning have increased even further the importance of the cultural and material resources of the families for children's learning success. Under pandemic conditions, the parental home has a special role. According to the study conducted in spring 2020 by Steiner et al., 61% of parents stated that they were struggling with homeschooling. The percentage increased to 86% in disadvantaged households. Furthermore, 80% of disadvantaged pupils stated that they were struggling – compared to 33% of all pupils. The teachers therefore also believed that in all likelihood 68% of socially disadvantaged pupils would not manage the year's material – compared to 26% of all pupils. An analysis shows that "the greater the deficit in the support system, the greater are the hurdles for teachers and pupils, and the higher the share of children with a migrant background, the higher is the expected loss of competencies".⁵³

To this must be added that migrants often have a lower level of formal education and are more frequently active in sectors that could not switch to working from home during the pandemic, so that this fact alone meant less support with homeschooling for their children. Overall, the incomes of many households with persons with a migrant background tend to be lower, the housing situation tighter and the equipment poorer.⁵⁴ This combination of factors raises the risk that the learning success of children with a migrant background will be even poorer with homeschooling than that of children without a migrant background.

48 Steiner, Mario et al. (2021), COVID19 und Home-Schooling.

49 For more on the index of socially disadvantaged pupils see Oberwimmer, Konrad et al. (2019), Nationaler Bildungsbericht Österreich 2018, p. 15 and Oberwimmer, Konrad et al. (2019), Daten und Material zu Indikatoren A: Kontext des Schul- und Bildungswesens.

50 The HISEI (Highest International Socio-Economic Index of occupational status) is a normed value for the highest professional status of both parents.

51 Data from Oberwimmer, Konrad et al. (2019), Daten und Material zu Indikatoren A: Kontext des Schul- und Bildungswesens.

52 For an overview see Biffl, Gudrun (2011), Bildung und Familie (Education and Family).

53 Steiner, Mario et al. (2020), COVID19 und Home-Schooling.

54 Statistik Austria (2020), Migration und Integration.

The size of the gap in individual children and adolescents is yet to be seen. It is difficult to estimate how many in-person hours were lost in the various lockdowns and at every school and grade. The study by the University of Vienna, "Learning under Covid-19 Conditions" (Lernen unter Covid-19 Bedingungen) indicates that between March and year's end 2020 pupils only spent 78 of 167 days in school; however, the full picture is still missing. The study by Steiner et al. on the first distance learning phase in spring 2020⁵⁵ suggests that the distance learning introduced as a measure to stem the pandemic may generate longer-term challenges in education. An analysis presented in May 2021 by Linz University on assessment studies from Germany and German-speaking Switzerland delivers cautiously optimistic findings. The examination of the learning development of pupil cohorts in 2020 and earlier years revealed that the learning deficiencies were either hardly observable or were less drastic than frequently feared.⁵⁶ Whether these results will also hold for Austria, and to what extent there are differences between pupil groups, for instance those from socially weak households, cannot be said as of yet and requires in-depth studies.

Already before the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the learning gaps identified in learning standard assessments and PISA tests and the recognisable problems with the labour market integration of youths with a migrant background and another language than German in everyday use were clearly visible. One can assume that the cessation of in-person classes in schools across the country for a total of more than four months (between March 2020 and April 2021) as well as longer closures in individual regions and in many schools will have exacerbated existing deficiencies. It must be observed how the pandemic can influence the education and professional career of children. Everything possible must be done to ensure that the progress achieved in the fight against early school termination is not lost due to the pandemic. This would entail not just personal costs, but also substantial consequences for the entire economy, as Kocher and Steiner (2020)⁵⁷ clearly illustrate.

The lack of social interaction outside the family unit is especially problematic for children and adolescents who do not speak German at home. The cessation of school classes and the other numerous restrictions on social exchange (store closures, closed sports, culture and leisure locations) reduced their opportunities to interact in German, hindering both language acquisition and the maintenance of existing knowledge. Possible long-term effects due to the limited offering of kindergartens and other child care facilities should be observed.

55 Steiner, Mario et al. (2020), COVID19 und Home-Schooling.

56 Helm, Christoph (2021), Wie wirken die coronabedingten Schulschließungen im Frühjahr 2020 auf die Leistungsentwicklungen von Schüler*innen?

57 Kocher, Martin G. und Steiner, Mario (2020), Kosten von Schulschließungen zur Pandemiebekämpfung.

PROMOTION AND SUPPORT PROGRAMMES

Promotion programmes should differentiate between different school locations and react to the sometimes very different composition of the pupil body in terms of risk factors. The promotion of socially disadvantaged children is a necessity from an education and integration policy perspective. This is the only way to prevent these children and adolescents from falling behind the educational level of children who are not in any risk group as a consequence of the pandemic. These children should be supported as much as possible to catch up on the learning material. Based on this recognition, in August 2020 the Education Ministry set up a voluntary compensation programme for children and adolescents in the form of two-week summer schools.

In order to involve parents more strongly in the education career of their children, the Austrian Integration Fund additionally created courses for parents. The courses presented basic information on the Austrian school system, the importance of supporting their children's education, and tips on how to provide this support. Initial assessments of the courses indicate that the participants were very satisfied. A majority of those surveyed would recommend the course to acquaintances (70% "definitely") and had their expectations about the course fulfilled (90% "completely" and "rather").⁵⁸

In 2021, the summer schools and courses for parents will be continued and partially expanded. This offering will contribute to somewhat counteract the inequalities, to reduce the pressure on children with large learning gaps, and at the same time to prevent children with smaller learning gaps from becoming bored. Additionally, the German-speaking environment during the holidays is a form of language promotion for children who need German language support.

In addition to the summer schools, other approaches are in place to catch up on missed learning material. One possibility is to offer additional lessons on Saturdays or during holidays - this would help especially the group of disadvantaged pupils, and therefore many migrants, catch up on any gaps. These lessons should achieve minimum standards in the core subjects of mathematics, German and English, but also in subsidiary subjects. Another possibility would be to catch up on the missed learning material, especially in the central subjects. This would most likely mean that subjects like art, music, ethics or civic education would be neglected, which would be detrimental to personal development.

The promotion programme announced by the Education Ministry for 2021 for all school grades should enable around three million additional (individual) support hours for those pupils whose learning gap is especially large. During semester and Easter holidays, and in addition to the already approved summer schools, grade schools, the lower grades of academic secondary schools, middle and special needs schools should offer learning support, especially in German, mathematics and foreign languages, in the form of a voluntary additional class. The Expert Council welcomes this measure and calls on the language needs of pupils with a migrant background, but also their possible learning gaps in other subjects, to be given special attention. In the longer term one will have to assess whether and in which form such special support programmes will still have to be implemented.

58 OGM/ÖIF (2021), Evaluierungsbericht Elternkurse als Ergänzung zur Sommerschule. Pilotjahrgang 2020.

In this context, schools with special challenges will receive support as part of the pilot project “100 Schools – 1,000 opportunities” that was initiated by the Education Ministry. Schools will receive targeted support through an index-based distribution of resources. Possible measures include increasing the number of teaching staff, social workers, school psychologists, or structural measures. The programme will be accompanied and assessed scientifically by the University of Vienna in order to enable a future implementation of successful measures in more schools.⁵⁹

It will be important to learn from the positive experiences with new digital learning concepts gathered during the pandemic and to include this experience in improving the school situation and educational offerings in the post-pandemic phase. In areas where the use of electronic media in schools, so essential during the restrictions on school operations during the coronavirus crisis, was found to be positive, it should continue to be used as a supplement to in-person classes. This will require a systematic assessment of experiences. The development of guidelines and good practice models for the different age groups and subjects would make the results of such studies useful to all schools and teachers. It is important to keep an eye on the children and adolescents from households with a low level of education, who do not have adequate technical equipment, who have difficulties with the German language and/or whose parents cannot help them. Technical as well as personal support should be provided in these cases.

Important steps to improve the equipment of pupils, teachers and even schools in the future were taken in the 8-point plan for digitisation reform of the Education Ministry. Besides the provision of new devices, teaching contents and new software are also addressed: learning apps should be tested and provided with a quality label.⁶⁰ Children with lacking German skills should receive the best support possible during practicing and learning. Some of them hardly had the chance to speak German due to the coronavirus-induced withdrawal into their families. Enhancing in-person classes with digital means of communication could be considered here. One example from good practice is the innovative speech robot “Elias” from Finland: it masters 22 languages and not only interacts with the pupils but is also an important partner to the teachers.⁶¹ The recovery and resiliency plan also foresees funds for digitisation in education.

In this light, the pandemic will possibly also have driven forward changes in the education system. With regard to the optimal opportunities for the development of all pupils (with and without a migrant background), it appears recommendable to focus more on the individual strengths and weaknesses of the pupils and to address their social development as well as the transfer of knowledge. In accordance with the education and development goals anchored in Art. 14 para. 5a B-VG (Austrian Federal Constitutional Law, Bundes-Verfassungsgesetz), independence, self-confidence and tolerant communication should be taught at school.

PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

The youth sacrificed a lot during the pandemic. In addition to the challenges of e-learning, they had to adapt to new conditions in their private lives and did without the social contacts which are so important to this age group. They had to restrict their lifestyle and refrain from things that had been matter of course, yet they showed empathy and responsibility for their fellow humans, whether in their own family, elderly people in their surroundings or society as a whole.⁶² While the changes demanded a lot from the youth, many of them made huge advancements during this period in self-organisation and in independent and solution-oriented working. As a result, youths may also have gained useful experiences for their future from this crisis and may have become more resilient to future (life) crises.

However, we should consider that there are developmental phases in children and adolescents in which their perspectives on life are marked. This is especially the case with transitions from one school system to another. In this light, the effects of the uncertainty around the school and learning situation due to the pandemic for 13- to 15-year-olds and for graduating classes in intermediate and upper schools are especially important. This was also revealed by surveys conducted on pupils during the second lockdown in autumn 2020: especially older pupils, suffering under the pressure to perform felt by many pupils in front of the screen and from the uncertainty, lost their ability to learn and even in part to enjoy life.⁶³

Targeted support is also necessary for children who suffered psychologically due to the cessation of in-person classes, who had a high incidence of the virus in their environment, whose teachers were not as able to organise distance learning well and gave little or no feedback. The long-term consequences of the sudden switch in learning forms to very little in-person classes and the difficulty in reaching some pupils have not yet been thoroughly studied. To counteract any psychological effects on pupils due to the coronavirus situation, the expansion of psychosocial support could provide a further important form of support during the pandemic.

⁵⁹ BMBWF (2021), 100 Schulen – 1.000 Chancen.

⁶⁰ For more information see <https://digitaleschule.gv.at/>.

⁶¹ For more information see <https://fobizz.com/10-dinge-die-am-finnischen-schulsystem-besonders-sind/>.

⁶² See Calmbach, Marc et al. (2020), SINUS-Jugendstudie 2020.

⁶³ Schober, Barbara et al. (2021), Wie erging es den Schüler*innen im zweiten Lockdown?

Effects of the coronavirus crisis on women

The coronavirus crisis has made clear that women deliver an exceptional performance: they are the majority of workers in trade, in nursing professions and in health care. They are thus responsible for holding up the system in these challenging times and keep society running. Women play a central role in integration processes – both in times of crisis and otherwise – because they are an important multiplier and have particular influence on the integration processes of their children. Supporting women with a migrant background therefore serves not just to protect and strengthen women, but also as an investment in the next generation. The Expert Council has repeatedly highlighted that the integration into the labour market of women with a migrant background strengthens their individual ability to sustain themselves and that of their families. It also creates opportunities for cultural integration and strengthens their self-confidence. The figures cited above show that women with a migrant background were especially affected by the measures to stem the pandemic in terms of job losses, due mainly to their overrepresentation in certain fields and professions.

During the coronavirus pandemic, these circumstances also contributed to them being subjected to particular pressures. On the one hand, they frequently lost their jobs due to the collapse in demand in tourism, hospitality, to an extent in retail and in personal services; on the other hand, they were subjected to increased physical and psychological pressure at work in the health care and nursing fields, but also in certain areas of retail and of cleaning services due to the specific requirements in the pandemic. In the educational field, where women are also overrepresented, the switch to homeschooling brought with it new challenges.

A large proportion of women work in so-called system-relevant activities, many of them migrants. As the collection of Covid-19 prevalence of Statistik Austria⁶⁴ makes clear, 68% of working women could not work from home according to the November 2020 survey and had to go to their place of work. The state offered emergency day care for especially affected families, and the costs for families were also partly covered (for instance by a hardship fund for employees who had lost their job due to the coronavirus crisis or had gone into short time, or a crisis fund for families who already received unemployment benefits or emergency assistance before the crisis) and additional child care days provided in the event of sickness.

Those women who could work in home-office may benefit from the experience in the long term, because a growing number of companies has realised that an in-person culture is not of itself a precondition for successful work. However, it must be ensured that external, affordable and high-quality child care and school support for children are the norm. To support workers in the short term during the crisis, a legal right to special child care time enabled a release from work for up to 4 weeks to care for children up to 14 years old, people with a handicap or relatives in need of care.

64 Statistik Austria, Medizinische Universität Wien und BMBWF (2021), Covid-19 Prävalenz, November 2020.

Women with a migrant background work especially frequently in the sectors that were most affected by the pandemic (Fig. C.12). Alone in the sectors of other economic services, cleaning services and contract work, 45.2% of the women employed in 2020 were foreigners; the share of foreign women was just as high in the hospitality industry. And in agriculture too, almost half of female workers have a foreign nationality. But the share of foreign women was also higher than the average rate of female employment in so-called system-relevant activities like education, at 20% compared to 18.7% of the female employment in 2020.

NON-SELF-EMPLOYED WOMEN

2020, by sectors and proportion of foreign women

| | Total | Change from previous year | Foreigners | Change from previous year |
|---|------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Total * | 1,660,510 | -33,099 -2.0% | 311,333 18.7% | -8,008 -2.5% |
| Manufacture of goods | 155,216 | -2,853 -1.8% | 30,978 20.0% | +183 +0.6% |
| Hospitality | 99,531 | -23,357 -19.0% | 44,954 45.2% | -12,151 -21.3% |
| Retail; Maintenance and repair of vehicles | 297,112 | -4,146 -1.4% | 54,827 18.5% | +1,224 +2.3% |
| Provision of other economic services | 90,489 | -5,330 -5.6% | 40,888 45.2% | -1,748 -4.1% |
| Construction | 33,951 | +109 +0.3% | 4,275 12.6% | -31 -0.7% |
| Transport and storage | 41,754 | -1,437 -3.3% | 8,368 20.0% | -148 -1.7% |
| Health care and social work | 210,166 | +3,219 +1.6% | 34,586 16.5% | +1,803 +5.5% |
| Provision of freelance, scientific and technical services | 100,074 | +995 +1.0% | 16,496 16.5% | +753 +4.8% |
| Public administration, defence, social security | 353,480 | +2,704 +0.8% | 23,220 6.6% | +1,745 +8.1% |
| Education and teaching | 66,897 | +285 +0.4% | 14,449 21.6% | +450 +3.2% |
| Agriculture and forestry, fishing | 8,979 | -71 -0.8% | 4,039 45.0% | +27 +0.7% |
| Other | 202,861 | -3,217 -1.6% | 34,253 16.9% | -115 -0.3% |

Fig. C.12; * excl. conscripts and parental leave; Source: labour market database of the BMA (2021), Bali; own illustration

The effects of the coronavirus crisis on the labour market integration of women, in particular migrant women, clearly show that women only have more stable job opportunities when their spectrum of jobs is expanded. There should in particular be a focus on improving access to technical and scientific fields, which would lead to an improvement in income opportunities and job security. However, as it appears to be more difficult for women to get a foot in the door in these fields, it may be helpful to target the education and further training of women, in particular of migrant women, in technical, digitised fields. Children with and without a migrant background should be introduced early to technology and the digital world. Creative possibilities can help reach girls and so ease their way into technical areas.

The coronavirus crisis has however also shown that those jobs that are often done by women (health care/nursing/teaching) may be system-relevant but will only remain attractive options in the future if the work conditions are made more appealing. This could further aid the realisation of gender equality.

It should be investigated whether the pandemic resulted in a return to traditional gender roles and division of labour in Austria. Due to a lack of valid data, no statement can be made on whether gender differences in housework and family duties have increased. However, surveys conducted in Germany on this topic indicate that the difference in families with children under the age of 16 decreased in the pandemic year 2020.⁶⁵ According to these figures, men contributed more to household work during the lockdowns than previously.

Generally speaking, a more equal gender distribution of tasks in close social quarters is more successful in those partnerships that have an egalitarian view of family and relationships. In those partnerships, patriarchal gender roles have a smaller influence. Sociocultural environments and cultural ideals of gender roles influence both the choice of occupation, the biography, and the career of women and their general decision to engage in a full-time or part-time occupation at all and combine it with family tasks. Personal attitudes and norms are more relevant in such decisions than the degree of education or financial factors. High rates of part-time work among working migrant women and a low compensation furthermore create different forms of dependence on spouses and other relatives, with the end result being that an autonomous life is often not, or hardly, possible.⁶⁶

Traditional gender roles lay the foundations for unequal power relations in relationship and family structures and lead to economic dependencies. However, experience from work with migrant women shows that for many of them, the freedoms, possibilities for development and egalitarian attitudes to partnerships in the majority society open up new perspectives that reflect positively on their self-image. While these opportunities are largely liberating for women, they may be threatening to male members of a culturally patriarchal environment. Gender segregation is one of the "orientation values" that privileges and advantages men from patriarchal environments as long as they submit to the collectivist rules of the community and demonstrate their loyalty. These different perceptions of gender roles and freedoms in the majority society are a neuralgic point in the development of violent potential, as breaks with the traditional gender roles are sanctioned by the family and/or community.

The criminal statistics reveal that in 2020 the Austrian police had to intervene 9,689 times against mostly male threats. And the official statistics probably underestimate the true extent of domestic violence, as even in "normal" times only around a third of women who experience such violence report it to the authorities.

A survey of experts from various support and counselling institutions who through their work as representatives of women's shelters, protection from violence centres, associations or counselling centres for women and/or migrants are in direct contact with migrant women affected by violence, revealed that domestic violence had also increased in families with a migrant background as a result of the lockdowns and social distancing rules or was strengthened by close quarters living and social isolation. According to the study's authors, the pandemic thus made breaking free from a violent relation more difficult.⁶⁷

Financial dependence on the partner is a major reason why migrant women do not report violence and remain in violent relationships. Fear, low self-confidence and traditional views of gender roles prevent migrant women from daring to take the step towards freedom and living an autonomous life. The general uncertainty and economic crisis following the coronavirus pandemic worsen these problems. Furthermore, many victims of violence feel shame and fear the scandal of not complying with the traditional gender role of women and are also afraid of being persecuted and punished should they leave the community. These specific challenges make it even more difficult for migrant women to turn to women's counselling centres and attempting to leave violent relationships.⁶⁸ As the pandemic also made it more difficult to gain information on the family situation of people, there is a worry that migrant women from traditional-minded environments have been even more controlled by their male relatives and could be restricted in their freedom of movement. Fear and uncertainty therefore make victims especially reluctant to turn to counselling centres. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) estimates that the coronavirus pandemic will lead to a worldwide increase in violence against women, child marriages and female genital mutilation until 2030.⁶⁹

A specific form of domestic violence is forced marriage, in which one or both spouses are forced to enter into the marriage through enormous pressure or the threat or application of violence. There are no valid figures for Austria to date, but experts estimate there to be around 200 victims of forced marriages per year.⁷⁰ Victims are mostly girls or young women, but men can also be pressured into entering into marriages. Forced marriages mostly affect young people with a migrant background, many of whom are already 2nd or 3rd generation immigrants living in Austria, but also migrants who grew up in another country and were forced to marry someone in Austria. Austrian law bans participating in a forced marriage, including if the marriage is concluded abroad. In addition to the legal punishment, prevention measures should aim at increasing the self-confidence of potential victims, especially girls and young women, to dare live an autonomous, independent life.

⁶⁵ Bujard, Martin et al. (2020), *Eltern während der Corona-Krise*, p. 53.

⁶⁶ See Schmidt, Eva-Maria et al. (2020), *Frauen in der Arbeitswelt*.

⁶⁷ Flotzinger, Michael et al. (2021), *Gewalterfahrungen von Frauen mit Migrationshintergrund im Kontext von Covid-19*.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁶⁹ UNFPA (2020), *Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Family Planning and Ending Gender-based Violence, Female Genital Mutilation and Child Marriage*.

⁷⁰ ÖIF (2021), *Gegen Gewalt an Frauen und Mädchen. Handlungsmöglichkeiten und Präventionsmaßnahmen*.

The expansion of services in domestic violence protection and psychosocial aid, like virtual and telephone counselling or emergency shelters open around the clock, in order to provide comprehensive support even during the coronavirus pandemic, is a welcome development. Furthermore, awareness campaigns are also needed to inform of the availability of measures to protect against violence and ensure that every woman knows where she can turn to. New alarm systems and simpler reporting methods should enable victims to seek aid without being discovered by the perpetrators, for instance through warning mechanisms in the form of SMS, e-mails, online chats or code words in public spaces.

In addition to support measures for women, it is also necessary to look at work with adolescents and men in the context of integration. In prevention work with adolescents and men from honour cultures, it is necessary to recognise socially-induced controlling behaviour and violent tendencies and to reject them, without however formulating this as a "culture war". The point is a process of adaptation to the norms of the host society; this must be requested in order to secure equal coexistence and inclusion regardless of gender, cultural background, religion or sexual orientation. Adolescents and men with an immigration history are often caught between traditions, the cultural and social background of the parents and communities, and the values and requirements of the majority society. As a result, some are confronted with ambivalent feelings for which there are insufficient stress management strategies. Patriarchal ideals of masculinity and behaviour patterns play a major role in the education of adolescents of both genders and have a negative effect on the free development of their personalities and views of their future.⁷¹

The Ministry for Women and Integration increased the funding for projects last year, and funds were provided for additional protection from violence projects. As part of a package of measures against domestic violence during the coronavirus crisis, the expansion of online counselling for women at risk of violence was pushed forward and support and information offerings in various languages were made available.

Reacting to the increase in domestic violence, the Ministry for Social Affairs has developed a "Victim Protection Toolbox" that provides members of the health care professions with practical guidelines for identifying and helping people, mostly women and children, affected by violence.

Besides the increase in violence against women, we have seen since the start of the pandemic that especially groups of youths, both with and without a migrant background, in Austria and abroad, repeatedly resorted to violence to let off steam. This could be seen in the riots in Dijon, Stuttgart, Rotterdam or Vienna. The events in the Favoriten district of Vienna in the context of a demonstration in summer 2020 and the acts of vandalism around the New Year bring home the fact that youths should be a particular focus of prevention measures against violence and against radicalisation.

For integration and the work on rigid views of masculinity to succeed, strategies for stress management need to be devised, social support must be provided in counselling offices for men, and positive attitudes towards gender equality and equality of opportunity should be transmitted. This is favoured by a feeling of belonging to the majority society, as its reactions play a major role in the field of emotional integration. Conversely, a lacking connection to cultural norms and values, both of the country of origin and of the host country, can be a risk factor for delinquency and violent behaviour.⁷²

The Expert Council has in the past repeatedly stressed the importance of a common foundation of values based on the constitution for all people living in Austria. In this context the cultural integration and emotional identification take on a particularly important role. The desire to belong to the host country and to feel at home is a central aspect in this regard. Integration measures that take these aspects into account can contribute positively to the resilience of youths.

71 Kurzmann, Michael und Saric, Emina (2021), *Erhebungen und Ergebnisse aus der Praxisarbeit: Heroes Steiermark*.
72 Oerter, Rolf (2013), *Der Aufbau kultureller Identität im Spannungsfeld von Enkulturation und Akkulturation*, p. 76.

UPSWING OF
THE INTEGRATION
PROCESS



Upswing of the integration process

In the past year, integration work, like other social areas, was affected by the measures taken to stem the coronavirus pandemic. Personal contacts and social exchanges, which are vital for the integration of people with a migrant background, had to be reduced to a minimum to fight the pandemic. People's withdrawal into their own four walls and among their families resulted in fewer opportunities to improve language skills, build social networks and acquire new qualifications. Even though many stakeholders involved in integration work tried to make their offerings available online, these cannot fully compensate for the personal factor. In the wake of the expected upswing, close attention should therefore be paid to social exchange and "going towards the other" between people with and without a migrant background.

LABOUR MARKET

The labour market crisis as a result of the pandemic affected a large proportion of working people in Austria: men and women, young and old, people with and without a migrant background, people of all educational levels, employees and the self-employed. The analysis of the labour market shows that the most decisive factor for how severely a group was affected by unemployment was the economic sector. The effects of the pandemic hit some sectors especially hard, while others were less affected. Some hardly witnessed any drop in employment, and some even hired more.

People with a migrant background were more affected by the negative developments in the labour market when they work, or worked, in sectors that were particularly restricted by the lockdowns and other measures. This includes in particular the hospitality industry, but also some service sectors like cleaning companies and personal services like hairdressers. People with a migrant background were and are therefore relatively strongly affected in certain sectors and qualification groups. These include low-skilled employees outside industrial manufacturing.

For certain groups of people with a migrant background, especially from outside the EU, the labour market situation was already unfavourable prior to the pandemic. In a generally difficult situation one can therefore assume that workers with such a migrant background will have more difficulties finding another job than workers without a migrant background or those from other EU states. This is the case especially for youths transitioning from school to training or a job and for the long-term unemployed.

Every measure taken against unemployment in the phase of economic rebuilding must also consider the goal of integrating people with a migrant background into the labour market. And this should always take into account that they do not form a homogenous group. The majority of workers with a migrant background are persons who benefit from the freedom of movement within the EU and who generally come to the country due to their specific opportunities in the Austrian labour market, a specific job offer or remain here after graduation. Integrating them into the labour market is usually not problematic. In addition, there are persons from third

countries who have been living in Austria for longer periods and are well integrated, and others who came here not based on their qualifications but through marriage, family reunion or asylum. Adolescents and young adults with a migrant background who have completed most or all of their schooling here but have no certificates or could not acquire sufficient competences during their schooling require special attention. For them, integrating into the labour market is difficult even when economic conditions are good.

People differ in age, education and training as well as in their professional experience, and as a result various factors can ease or hinder their integration into the labour market. This reality makes it necessary to develop a differentiated approach to help people with a migrant background get a foothold in the labour market.

Deficits in the German language and in required qualifications should be addressed. This may require providing more offerings in addition to the already existing ones. The goal for the unemployed with a migrant background should be (post-) qualification for jobs that have a future. The IT sector in particular currently offers good perspectives in the labour market. The digitisation drive triggered in part by the pandemic and the measures taken to stem it created a great demand in technology/IT/EDP professions at all levels of qualification.

To improve the labour market integration of women, especially those with a migrant background, their professional horizons should be expanded to include technical and scientific areas, including the IT sector. Measures that arouse that interest in female pupils should be continued and if necessary expanded. Education and professional guidance counselling should be used to inform women of their opportunities in these professions. Targeted education and further education measures in technical and scientific areas for women, including and especially those with a migrant background, not only improve labour market integration in future-proof sectors but also address the lack of skilled labour in these fields. However, this requires more female adolescents with a migrant background attending upper secondary schools.

The health care and nursing sector also offers good opportunities for entry into the labour market. The demand for workers in health care and nursing was already well-known before the pandemic, but it was illustrated even more starkly by the pandemic. In this sector too, offers should be provided so that people with and without a migrant background can make up for missing qualifications if necessary. As part of its online offering for people with a migrant background, the Austrian Integration Fund has provided information and a guideline for interested persons on entering the health care and nursing professions, as well as basic knowledge about the health care system. Furthermore, information was distributed - again, online - about the possibilities of accreditation and evaluation of foreign qualifications in the health care and nursing sector. The seminars were very well attended. They should be continued and, if need be, expanded. However, people with a migrant background should not be seen as a cheap reservoir of labour for activities in the health care and nursing sector. That is also true for workers who commute to Austria for work in health care and nursing, for instance 24-hour care. Rather, the activities and job profiles must become more appealing to workers. The conditions, including

pay, of work in health care and nursing should be adequate for all people working in this sector to compensate for the qualifications, the physical and mental stress and the responsibility.

In cases where language deficits are a hindrance to entry into the labour market, they should be addressed as part of the (post-) qualification of people with a migrant background. Accordingly, the language courses offered by the Austrian Integration Fund for the restaurant, hotel and tourism sectors are a meaningful measure that provides specific language skills targeted at a future profession and practice typical communication situations in that field. The Expert Council calls for expanding this form of language teaching tailored to a specific professional group to other sectors.

It is particularly true for labour market integration that in addition to the focus on lacking qualifications or language skills the motivation and self-organising capacity of immigrants should be focused on to make them useful to successful integration.⁷³ Generally speaking, measures could be developed using more input from migrants – from an individual perspective, a potential-oriented approach promises stronger activation.

A potential-oriented approach is especially well suited for measures to promote the labour market integration of adolescents and young adults. For them, the transition from school to training or job is especially difficult in light of the restrictions on normal school operations and the general situation in the labour market due to the measures to fight the coronavirus pandemic. The Expert Council therefore suggests further expanding mentoring programmes that support adolescents and young adults individually in this transition phase.

It is noteworthy that the number of people entering into an apprenticeship increased in 2020. Yet people with a migrant background were significantly under-represented among the apprentices. One cause for this is the lacking competencies in reading, writing and mathematics, as well as, sometimes, lacking school-leaving certificates after 8th grade. Increased information work by AMS and education and job counsellors in graduating classes and in transition classes to upper secondary schools is helpful. But it can only point to concrete professional perspectives and to e.g. apprenticeships, especially in scientific and technical professions, as fruitful opportunities if sufficient formal qualifications and content have been acquired. Only then can such approaches serve to strengthen the confidence of youths with a migrant background in their future in Austria.

⁷³ Huber, Peter et al. (2021), *Migration und Integration*, pp. 764-765.

EDUCATION

The consecutive lockdowns in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic resulted in the partial or complete interruption of in-person classes in Austrian schools and in a move to digital learning. This posed a major challenge for pupils, parents, teachers and the Austrian education system as a whole. The great personal commitment of teachers and parents and the pupils' willingness to come to terms with the situation meant that a replacement to usual classes could function – sometimes well, sometimes not so well.

The coronavirus crisis shone a spotlight on existing weaknesses in the Austrian school system. These include the insufficient equipment of children, adolescents and teachers with digital devices and stable Internet connections, the general inexistence of standardised and approved electronically viewable course materials, the lack of digital platforms on which to make the course materials available, and finally a lack of digital competence among some of the teaching staff. Nonetheless, a majority of pupils, parents and teachers displayed high degrees of initiative and flexibility in adapting to the new conditions.

This situation calls for a number of measures that could close the gaps in education arising from the restrictions on usual school operations while making the school system future-proof. From an integration policy perspective, it is important to increase the low education success identified in children with a migrant background compared to that of those without a migrant background.

With regard to the improvement of the educational success of children and adolescents from socially deprived, low-education and non-native-German-speaking families, the Expert Council suggests using the flexibility gained during the coronavirus-induced restrictions on in-person school operations and the shift of knowledge transfer online as a starting point to make use in the future of the times of the day, week and year that to date were generally not used (afternoon, Saturday, school holidays and class-free days) to transmit knowledge. The summer schools introduced in 2020 should be maintained as a constant fixture over a longer period of the summer as well as during other holiday periods. After all, the aim is to make up for the learning gaps that emerged from the restrictions on in-person classes at schools for the four to five months of various national and local lockdowns by intensive support. In addition to improving German-language skills, promoting competences in other main subjects – especially mathematics and English – as well as digital competences at those summer schools would be a good idea. The learning camps organised by various federal provinces as well as by numerous private providers during the summer holidays could serve as a template. Corresponding support measures should be offered to all pupils who need them, including and especially those with a migrant background. To strengthen language skills, it would make sense for children and adolescents of school age from families who speak a language other than German to more often and regularly use afternoons without regular classes to interact in German. This should be made an integral component of afternoon care at schools. It is important to also offer this care for children/adolescents with a migrant background whose mothers do not work.

The Expert Council also calls for assessing the necessary use of electronic media during the pandemic-induced restrictions of in-person classes at schools. Those elements of digital teaching and learning that are evaluated positively should also be maintained as additions to in-person classes after restrictions are eased. The development of guidelines and best-practice models for different age groups and subjects would make the results of such studies usable by all schools and teachers. Gaps in the required equipment in schools, among teachers and among pupils should gradually be closed. This includes better equipment with powerful Internet and digital devices as well as the development of future-ready teaching and learning concepts for the digital school. The positive effects of homeschooling will include that some pupils have made progress in independent learning and self-organisation. These skills should continue to be promoted in in-person classes.

In the medium and long term, further measures will be required. These should make it easier for recently immigrated children and adolescents to enter the Austrian education system (so-called lateral entrants). The focus here is on all measures that enable fast learning of the German language, so on German support classes and courses. The Expert Council will include the results of the commissioned evaluation in its work.

Furthermore, measures are needed that prevent children and adolescents from socially deprived, low-education and non-native-German-speaking families from not achieving the learning goals within the first eight years of schooling. The data presented in the section "Education and training" shows that – including when compared to other European countries – a disproportionate number of children and adolescents from such families have poor school performance and fail to graduate. Measures to increase the learning success of children and adolescents from socially deprived, low-education and non-native-German-speaking families should begin at kindergarten. The Expert Council believes that children from non-German-speaking families should attend kindergarten from the age of three if possible. And a longer stay in kindergarten is just as important. Especially children with insufficient German language skills should spend part of their afternoon at kindergarten if possible. This possibility should also and especially exist for children with a migrant background whose mothers do not work. The second compulsory kindergarten year, which the Expert Council has repeatedly advocated, would be an important step in making kindergarten even more central to early education. In this context it would also be necessary to further develop the education plan at Austrian kindergartens, which when compared internationally is not very oriented towards the transfer of formal education (reading, writing, counting – knowledge for future education).

Parents should receive targeted information about the (voluntary) support offerings in kindergarten and at school. They should be informed of the importance of German language skills and generally of education for the future of their children. Parents should be made aware of their responsibility for the education of their children and should, with their duties and responsibilities, be included as education partners in the collaboration between school and child. Even if the parents are lacking the necessary qualifications (e.g. German language skills), they are still responsible for the education of their children. At the same time, the education system should accept that not all parents and families can help their children with the learning material and that this should therefore not be taken for granted.

Finally, increasing the number and share of teachers with a migrant background would be desirable. This would strengthen the competence of Austrian schools in their dealings with the consequences of immigration for the education system and also create positive role models for children and adolescents with a migrant background.

The measures introduced since March 2020 to stem the pandemic, particularly the lockdowns, whose stated aim was the reduction of social contacts, hindered the integration process of immigrants. Personal encounters and contacts between people with and without a migrant background are a precondition for successful integration. As everything reopens and possibilities for social interaction return, such encounters and contacts can again be (better) experienced, and integration can again be perceived as a mutual process and continued through the personal exchange of people with and without a migrant background.

ANNEX

From the National Action Plan
to the Integration Report 2021

The members of the Expert Council
for Integration

The Expert Council's concept of integration

List of abbreviations

Glossary

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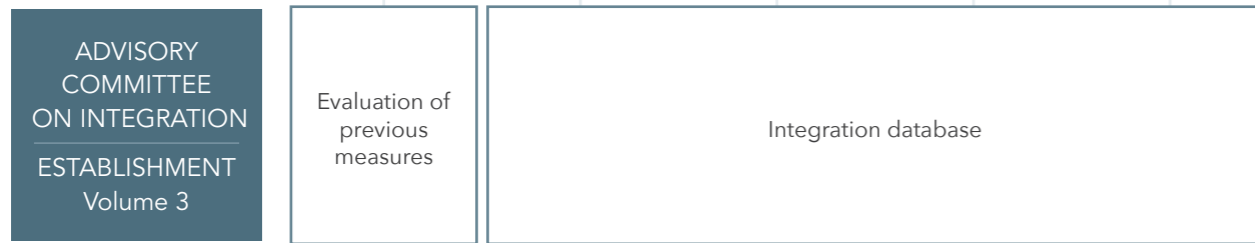
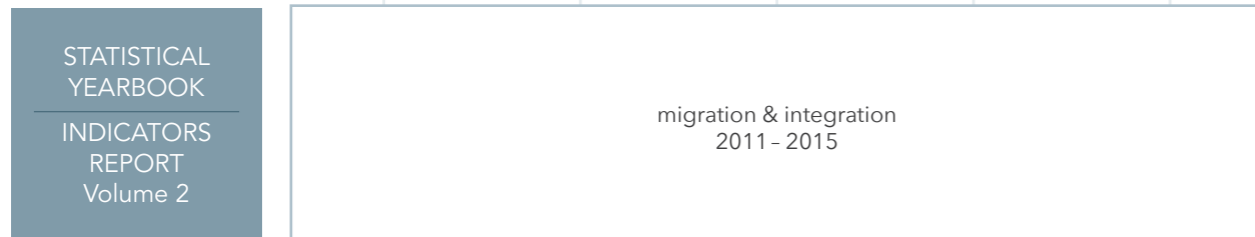


From the National Action Plan to the Integration Report 2021

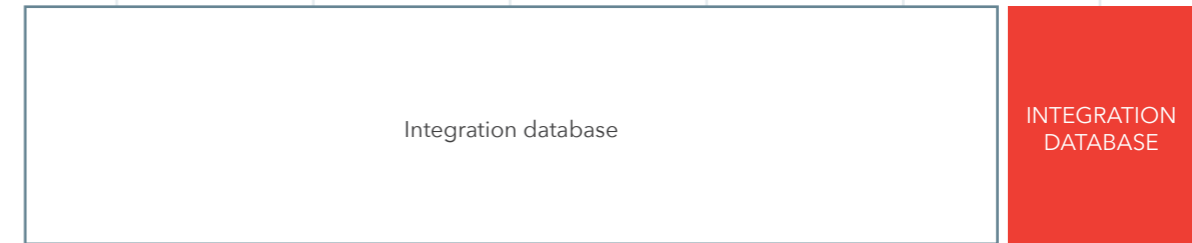
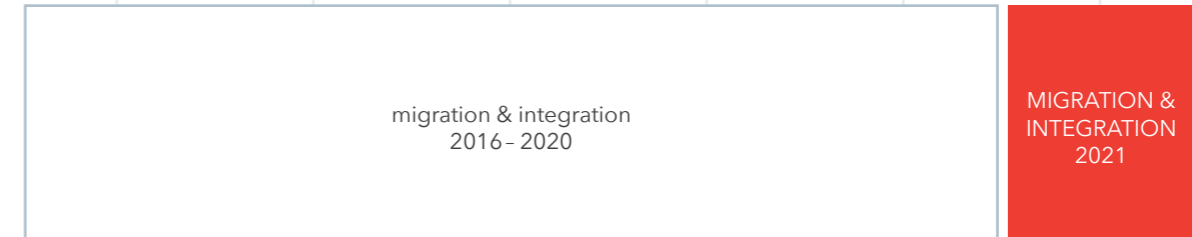
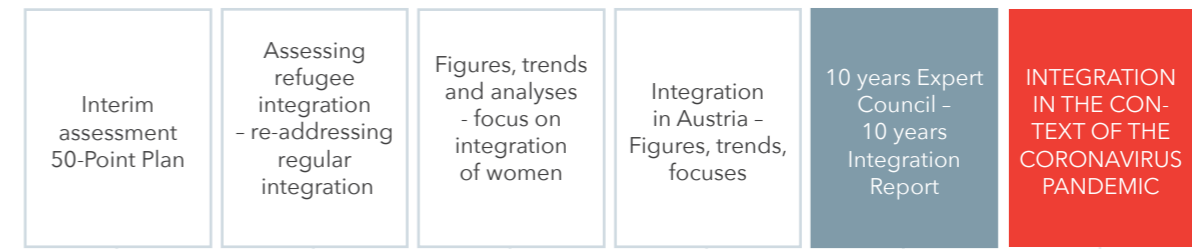
CREATION
PROCESS



NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR INTEGRATION (NAP.I)



2011 2012 2013 2014 2015



2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021

INTEGRATION REPORT

The members of the Expert Council for Integration

CHAIRPERSON



Univ.-Prof. Dr. Katharina Pabel

After holding positions at the universities of Bonn, Graz and Vienna University of Economics and Business, from 2010 to 2020 Dr. Pabel was university professor for public law at Linz University and (from 2015 to 2019) Dean of the Faculty of Law. Since 2020 she is university professor at the Institute for European and International Law at Vienna University of Economics and Business. She is the author of numerous publications on various aspects of constitutional and administrative law; one focus of her research is on the national and international protection of human rights. She has been chairperson of the Expert Council for Integration since February 2018.

MEMBERS



Univ.-Prof. iR. Mag. Dr. habil. Gudrun Biffl

Prof. Biffl is associate member of the Department Migration and Globalisation at Danube University Krems. From 2008 to September 2017 she was chair for migration research and head of the Department Migration and Globalisation, and from 2010 to 2015 she was dean of the Faculty of Economics and Globalisation. From 1975 to 2009 she worked as a researcher at the Austrian Institute for Economic Research (WIFO). Her research focuses are in labour market, education, migration, gender, industrial work relations, institutional change and work-related illnesses. Since 2010, Prof. Biffl has been a member of the statistics council of Statistik Austria, from 2015 to 2020 as its chair; she is a member of the scientific council of the Sir Peter Ustinov Institute for studying and fighting prejudices, a member of the scientific council of the OÖ Zukunftsakademie and a member of the "expert group on migration" of the OECD.



Rasha Corti

Rasha Corti, born on 20 July 1982 in Raqqa. After graduating from school in Raqqa she studied literature in Aleppo and trained as a TV moderator in Cairo. Beside her studies, she worked at the French Cultural Centre in Damascus and produced documentaries about Syria with various media (BBC, Al Jazeera). In 2009 she moved to Vienna, where she works as a tour guide and translator. She is also actively involved in various integration projects.



Mag. Dr. Eva Grabherr

Mag. Dr. Grabherr majored in History and Jewish Studies at the universities of Innsbruck and Vienna and did her doctorate at the Department for Hebrew and Jewish Studies of the University College London. From 1989 to 1990 she was a lecturer at the University of Hull (GB) and from 1990 to 1996, she was the director for the set-up of the Jewish Museum in Hohenems. From 1996 to 2001 she conducted research and taught in Vienna, London, and Innsbruck and organised exhibitions and projects on Jewish studies, museology, Austrian history and contemporary politics. Since 2001 she has worked as director of the province-wide project office "okay. zusammen leben" for immigration and integration in Vorarlberg. She also holds conferences and seminars, including for the migration management course at Danube University Krems.



Dipl.-Soz. wiss. Kenan Güngör

Kenan Güngör, Dipl. Soz., owner of the Büro für Gesellschaft | Organisation | Entwicklung [think.difference] in Vienna. One of the most renowned experts on issues of integration and diversity in Austria, he counsels and supports public and non-governmental organisations at the federal, provincial and municipal level. Amongst others, he has headed many studies and integration-related mission statement processes at the provincial and municipal levels. As strategic consultant, he supported the city of Vienna over many years on integration and diversity issues and was guest professor at Vienna University. Furthermore, he is a member of the Independent Expert Council of the Austrian government. He was chairperson of the expert forum on prevention, deradicalisation and democratic culture of the city of Vienna and in this role accompanied a comprehensive prevention programme for violence- and fear-free schools in Vienna. Focus issues: societal transformation, integration, participation, diversity, integration policy strategy development & communication, organisational development, urban sociology, youth, identity, conflict analysis, devaluation and radicalisation.



Prof. MMag. Dr. Ilan Knapp

Prof. Knapp, born in Tel Aviv/Israel, completed a music pedagogy degree in Israel and Vienna as well as a degree in business administration, economic education and business psychology at the Vienna University of Economics and Business. Founder and director of important public institutions including in education (JBBZ Jüdisches berufliches Bildungszentrum 1995) and research (ÖIBF Österreichisches Institut für Berufsbildung Forschung 1970). Lecturer at TU Wien. He has been the official representative of the Jewish Agency for Israel (Sochnut) in Austria since 2014. Prof. Knapp also taught for many years at Vienna University, WU Vienna and FU Berlin. He has also directed EcoPlus and the NÖG Niederösterreich and was a parliamentary advisor for labour market, economic, youth, social and education issues. In 2018, Prof. Knapp was awarded the Austrian Cross of Honour for science and art 1st class.



Prof. Dr. Klaus Lugger

Prof. Dr. Klaus Lugger, born on 07/03/1948, was managing director of NEUE HEIMAT TIROL Gemeinnützige WohnungsGmbH (114 million euros construction volume p.a., 34,000 managed units of which 17,571 rental and ownership apartments) from 1989 to 2016 and director of the commercial subsidiary INNSBRUCKER STADTBAU GMBH from 2004 to 2016. From 1995 to 2016 he was chairperson of the supervisory board of the Austrian association of non-profit building associations (Österreichischer Verbande gemeinnütziger Bauvereinigungen - Revisionsverband) and Austrian representative at CECODHAS HOUSING EUROPE, the EU lobby for non-profit housing construction.



Univ.-Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Mazal

Prof. Mazal, born in Vienna, studied law at Vienna University, graduating in 1981. Since 1992 he is a professor there, at the Institute for Labour and Social Law. In addition to wide-ranging teaching, research and publication activities amongst others in Vienna, Graz, Linz, Innsbruck, Beijing and Kyoto on topics of labour law, social law, medical law and family affairs, Prof. Mazal is currently vice-chairperson of the Institute for Labour and Social Law at Vienna University, director of the Austrian Institute for Research on the Family (Österreichisches Institut für Familienforschung) at Vienna University and vice-president of the board of the agency for quality assurance and accreditation AQ.Austria.



Dir. Dr. Arno Melitopoulos

Dr. Melitopoulos, born in Innsbruck, completed his degree and doctorate studies in law in Innsbruck. Since January 2020 he has been director of the Tyrol office of Österreichische Gesundheitskasse (previously TGKK) and director of the area health system and economics at Österreichische Gesundheitskasse, from August 2011 till 2019 he was director of Tiroler Gebietskrankenkasse (TGKK). He is also the coordinator of Zielsteuerung Gesundheit in Tyrol. Previously he was director of Gesundheit Österreich GmbH (GÖG) in Vienna from 2008 to 2011. Between 2005 and 2008, Dr. Melitopoulos was the head of the department for strategy and law at TGKK, as well as being the managing director of the Tiroler Gesundheitsfonds (TGF) from 2006. Between 2003 and 2005 he was advisor to the Health Minister for the health reform of 2005. Dr. Melitopoulos is a university lecturer for social law, public health and health system studies and has lecturing positions at the Medical University of Innsbruck, at the Management Center Innsbruck as well as at UMIT TIROL.



Univ.-Prof. Dr. Rainer Münz

Rainer Münz currently teaches at the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna and at the Central European University in Budapest/Vienna. From 2015 to 2019 he was Senior Advisor for Migration and Demographics at the European Political Strategy Centre, the think tank of EU Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker. From 2015 to 2019 he was chairperson of the Migration Advisory Board of the UN Organisation for International Migration (IOM) and since 2014 he is one of the people responsible for the World Bank programme "Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development" (KNOMAD). Previously, Rainer Münz headed the research department at Erste Group and was Senior Fellow at the Brussels think tank Bruegel, at the Hamburg Institute of International Economics (HWWI) and at the Migration Policy Institute (Washington DC). In 2000-2001 he was member of the commission to reform immigration policy of the German federal government (Süssmuth Commission). From 2008 to 2010, Rainer Münz was member of the reflection group "Horizon 2020 - 2030" of the European Union (so-called "EU Eminent Council")



Prof. Emina Saric, MA

Emina Saric, prof., MA born in 1969 in Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina, studied German language and literature at the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo, Montessori training at the Pädagogische Hochschule in Graz, and gender studies at the University of Graz. Chairperson of the supervisory board of the Austrian Fund for the Documentation of Religiously Motivated Political Extremism. Many years of project work in German as a second/foreign language and in intercultural learning. In 2011, cofounder of the women-focused counselling office Divan, where she worked until 2018 as counsellor and deputy project manager. She currently teaches at the training centre for social professions (Ausbildungszentrum für Sozialberufe), works as a lecturer and education manager at Kirchliche Pädagogische Hochschule in Graz and is active in the association for men and gender issues in Graz as project manager of the project "Heroes Steiermark". She independently provides consultancy and seminars in the area of integration and researches and works on issues of: violence in the name of honour and tradition-bound forms of violence in gender relations. She has been awarded the Intercultural Achievement Award 2020, the special prize "Integration in Österreich" and the Human Rights Award of the Province of Styria 2021 for her work.



Ao. Univ.-Prof. DDr. Christian Stadler

Prof. Stadler is a lawyer and philosopher. Since 2000 he has been visiting university professor at the Institute for Legal Philosophy of the Faculty of Law of Vienna University. He is a member, amongst others, of the science commission (strategic security council) at the BMLV. Prof. Stadler regularly holds guest lectures at the security academy of BM.I (.SIAK, Vienna or Wiener Neustadt), at Theresianische Militärakademie military academy (MilAk, Wiener Neustadt) and at the Landesverteidigungsakademie defence academy (LVAK, Vienna). He is currently director of the research project "Polemologie und Rechtsethik" at the Landesverteidigungsakademie defence academy in Vienna (in collaboration with Vienna University). The focus of his work includes: political philosophy of modernity (rationalism, idealism, political romanticism), ethics of public security, political philosophy of international relations, polemology and geopolitics and European legal and constitutional culture.



Dr. Hans Winkler

Hans Winkler is a freelance journalist, columnist for the daily Die Presse and guest author for Kleine Zeitung and other media. From 1995 to 2007 he was head of the Vienna edition and deputy chief editor of Kleine Zeitung. He studied law at Graz University.



Mag. Renate Winter

Mag. Renate Winter was appointed judge in 1981 in Austria. Her areas of expertise include women's and youth rights, war crimes, crimes against humanity, gender issues, organised crime and restorative justice. As part of the UN mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), Mag. Winter served as an international judge in Kosovo's supreme court. In 2002 she was appointed to the special tribunal for Sierra Leone, also holding its presidency. In 2013 she was appointed member of the UN Committee for the Rights of the Child (CRC) and was elected president of this Committee. Mag. Winter also served as consultant in legal issues for governments and international bodies in more than 40 countries. Until February 2021 she was president of the CRC, she is a member of the Residual Court of Sierra Leone (RSCSL) and team leader of an EU project to promote the rule of law in Georgia.

The Expert Council's concept of integration

The Expert Council views integration into the host society as an empirically measurable, ideally equal-opportunity participation in the central areas of social life, so in pre-school facilities, school education, professional training, work and housing, in the voluntary work field, in politics and in the various protection and care systems in the welfare state and the state of law, that should intentionally be promoted, as well as the acknowledgement of Austrian values and the identification with them.

Integration-promoting measures are all efforts to enable ideally equal-opportunity participation and to counter existing fears and prejudices. German language skills, educational and professional qualifications, but also explanatory and symbolic political measures are important to increase the opportunities of immigrants to participate. On the other hand, the Expert Council views the increasing integration competence of the institutional basic structures of the state, which should also be intentionally promoted, as a further important precondition for successful integration. School, the AMS, the authorities, hospitals, civil society and other important institutions should increasingly be enabled to develop intercultural (communication) skills.

The Expert Council thus locates the concept of integration not in a semantic scale between assimilation on the one hand and integration as a patchwork of different population groups, each possessing and living their own cultural and value systems, on the other hand, but rather places itself above this. In its understanding of the concept, the Expert Council also moves aside an unclearly defined and ideologically burdened concept of culture. A static and essentialist concept of culture would not live up to the reality of a pluralistic and changing immigrant society. The end goal is neither a perfectly assimilated society, nor an alienated patchwork of various social groups, but a pluralistic coexistence that needs to be permanently renegotiated. Both sides in an immigration society must therefore develop something like a pluralism competence in addition to an acceptance and integration competence, because over time society is becoming both more similar and more diverse. Accordingly, integration continues to be viewed as a mutual process whose functioning requires effort.

The immigrants are as responsible for successful integration as the population that is already here. Both sides of the immigration society act within a framework defined by governmental policy, which can promote or prevent processes. The required adaptation effort is not symmetrically distributed; from the logic of quantity alone, the immigrating population is more challenged than the host society. This needs to be stated to avoid illusory misunderstandings. However, it is also true for the host society that "making space" is the precondition for "taking space". Without a willingness for openness on both sides and without mutual acceptance of the supposed "other", the integration process cannot work. This is something that a goal-oriented integration policy must always bear in mind.

List of abbreviations

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| AHS Allgemein bildende höhere Schule [academic secondary school] | BMI Bundesministerium für Inneres [Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior] | NAPI Nationaler Aktionsplan für Integration [Austrian National Plan for Integration] |
| AMS Arbeitsmarktservice [Public Employment Service] | BMS Berufsbildende mittlere Schule [intermediate vocational school] | NEET Not in Education Employment or Training |
| Bali Datenbank für Budget-, Arbeitsmarkt und Leistungs- bezugsinformationen des BMA [Database for Budget, Labour Market and Beneficiary Infor- mation System of the BMA] | Covid-19 Coronavirus disease 2019 | ÖIF Österreichischer Integrationsfonds [Austrian Integration Fund] |
| BFA Bundesamt für Fremdenwesen und Asyl [Austrian Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum] | EFTA European Free Trade Association | PISA Programme for International Student Assessment |
| BHS Berufsbildende höhere Schule [higher vocational school] | ECHR European Human Rights Convention | |
| BKA Bundeskanzleramt [Federal Chancellery] | EU European Union | |
| BMA Bundesministerium für Arbeit [Austrian Federal Ministry of Labour] | EEA European Economic Area | |
| BMBWF Bundesministerium für Bildung Wissenschaft und Forschung [Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research] | GB United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | |
| BMF Bundesministerium für Finanzen [Austrian Federal Ministry for Finance] | GRC Geneva Refugee Convention [Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees] | |
| | IntG Integrationsgesetz [Austrian Integration Act] | |
| | NAG Niederlassungs- und Aufenthaltsgesetz [Settlement and Residence Act] | |

Glossary

ENTITLED TO ASYLUM OR RECOGNISED REFUGEES

People entitled to asylum or recognised (convention) refugees are persons whose asylum application had a positive conclusion. Asylum applications are to be concluded positively when the conditions of the Geneva Refugee Convention are satisfied. If asylum applicants can credibly state that they are at risk of individual persecution in their home country due to their race, religion, nationality, or belonging to a certain social group, or due to their political ideas, and that they cannot rely on their home state for protection, they should be recognised as entitled to refuge. They at first receive a definite residency permit in Austria ("temporary asylum") for three years. This is extended by an indefinite period if the conditions for a procedure to remove the status are not present or if such a procedure is halted. The status of asylum should for instance be removed if the reasons for flight no longer exist or if a severe crime was committed. People entitled to asylum have equal rights to Austrian citizens in many aspects, for instance access to the labour market, to welfare or to universities.

ASYLUM PROCEDURE

At the start of the asylum procedure a check is made to see whether Austria or another EU state is responsible for processing the asylum application (eligibility procedure or Dublin procedure). If Austria's responsibility is confirmed, the procedure can continue in Austria. A "fast track" procedure is conducted when an asylum applicant submits an asylum application from a safe country of origin. Safe countries of origin are states in which no political persecution or inhumane or degrading punishment occur.

ASYLUM APPLICANT

The term asylum applicant refers to a person during the ongoing asylum procedure. For the duration of the procedure, asylum applicants are legally entitled to reside in Austria, although they generally must remain in the assigned district during the eligibility procedure.

NON-REGULAR PUPILS

See German support classes and German support courses.

GERMAN SUPPORT CLASSES AND GERMAN SUPPORT COURSES

Pupils for whom it is not possible to follow classes due to lacking knowledge of the language of instruction or to other factors may be assigned the status of "non-regular pupil" following a standardised test. The categorisation as non-regular pupil is possible for at most two years. Non-regular pupils with lacking knowledge of the language of instruction receive intensive language lessons during this time in accordance with a separate schedule, but they also attend regular classes in selected subjects (e.g. sports, art, music etc.) depending on individual and organisational conditions. After the first semester of such a German support class, the language level is evaluated again. Depending on the level achieved, the pupil may join regular classes with additional German support course for at most two years or may switch to regular classes with the status of "regular pupil".

INTEGRATIONSGESETZ (INTG) – AUSTRIAN INTEGRATION ACT

The Integration Act governs, in the fields of language and orientation, the central conditions for the integration of persons entitled to asylum and subsidiary protection and legally resident third-country nationals by determining integration offerings and duties of collaboration. Integration offerings for people entitled to asylum and subsidiary protection include German and values courses, while legally resident third-country nationals must provide evidence of their German skills as part of the integration agreement.

INTEGRATION MONITORING

The Integration Act of 2017 introduced Integration Monitoring, according to which the responsible members of the Advisory Committee on Integration provide legally prescribed non-personal data every year for the purpose of interdisciplinary connection. The data cover the areas of asylum and residency, school and adult education, welfare benefits, labour market, German courses, values and orientation courses and science. In the Integration Report, the Expert Council discusses and contextualises the annual trends on the basis of the Integration Monitoring.

MIGRANT BACKGROUND: FIRST AND SECOND GENERATION

According to Statistik Austria, persons have a migrant background when both parents were born abroad. This group can then be divided into an immigrating generation (persons who themselves were born abroad) and a second generation (children of two parents born abroad but who themselves were born here). This definition of migrant background follows the "Recommendations for the 2020 censuses of population and housing" of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR INTEGRATION (NAP.I)

The NAP.I presents the integration strategy of the Austrian federal government. Its objective is to optimise, consolidate and systematically develop the measures for successful integration taken by the federal government, federal provinces, cities, local authorities, social partners and civil society organisations. The National Action Plan is the basis for further measures in the seven key action areas: language and education, work and profession, rule of law and values, health and social affairs, intercultural dialogue, sports and leisure, housing and the regional dimension of integration.

ENTITLED TO SUBSIDIARY PROTECTION

When a person cannot credibly claim persecution within the meaning of the GRC (see entitled to asylum and recognised refugees), their asylum application should be rejected. Due to the European Human Rights Convention (EHRC), which was ratified by Austria and is anchored in its constitution, a person can nonetheless not be expelled if their life and health are threatened in their country of origin due to war or torture ("non-refoulement"). Such persons are designated as entitled to subsidiary protection and receive a residency permit restricted to one year and that can be (repeatedly) extended by two years. The status can be revoked under certain circumstances (e.g. because of a crime). People entitled to subsidiary protection do not necessarily have the same rights as people entitled to asylum; in individual cases they have lesser rights.

VALUES AND ORIENTATION COURSES

At the centre of the values and orientation courses is the transfer of Austrian values and lifestyle to third-country nationals - in recent years especially people entitled to asylum and subsidiary protection from the refugee wave of 2015/2016. The taught contents include the fundamental values of the Austrian constitution, such as gender equality between men and women, human dignity, the separation of religion and state, democracy, freedom of opinion, the rule of law, but also everyday knowledge of life in Austria. Since June 2017 participation is obligatory by law.

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