



LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION OF THIRD-COUNTRY NATIONALS IN AUSTRIA



Maria-Alexandra Bassermann

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EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK

The European Migration Network (EMN) was launched in 2003 by the European Commission by order of the European Council in order to satisfy the need for a regular exchange of reliable information in the field of migration and asylum at the European level. Since 2008, Council Decision 2008/381/EC has constituted the legal basis of the EMN and National Contact Points (NCPs) have been established in the EU Member States (with the exception of Denmark, which has observer status) plus Norway.

The EMN's role is to meet the information needs of European Union (EU) institutions and of Member States' authorities and institutions by providing up-to-date, objective, reliable and comparable information on migration and asylum, with a view to supporting policymaking in the EU in these areas. The EMN also has a role in providing such information to the wider public.

The NCP Austria is – pursuant to an agreement with the Federal Ministry of the Interior – located in the Research and Migration Law Department of the Country Office for Austria of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The IOM office was established in 1952 when Austria became one of the first members of the Organization. The main responsibility of the IOM Country Office is to analyse national migration issues and emerging trends and to develop and implement respective national projects and programmes.

The main task of the NCPs is to implement the work programme of the EMN including the drafting of the annual policy report and topic-specific studies, answering Ad Hoc Queries launched by other NCPs or the European Commission, carrying out visibility activities and networking in several forums. Furthermore, the NCPs in each country set up national networks consisting of organizations, institutions and individuals working in the field of migration and asylum.

In general, the NCPs do not conduct primary research but collect and analyse existing data and information. Exceptions might occur when these are not sufficient. EMN studies are elaborated in accordance with common study templates in order to achieve comparable results within the EU and

Norway. Since the comparability of the results is frequently challenging, the EMN has produced a glossary, which ensures the application of similar definitions and terminology in all national reports.

Upon completion of national reports, the European Commission with the support of a service provider drafts a synthesis report, which summarizes the most significant results of the individual national reports. In addition, topic-based policy briefs, so-called EMN Informs, are produced in order to present selected topics and compare national results in a concise manner. All national studies, synthesis reports, informs and the Glossary are available on the website of the European Commission Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs.

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SUMMARY

Effective integration of migrants into the host society is one of the major challenges and a precondition for successful migration. One of the key elements of migrant integration is labour market integration. This study provides an overview of Austria's policy strategies and practices relating to the labour market integration of third-country nationals. The target group of the study consists of third-country nationals with the right to work in Austria and who regularly reside here. Beneficiaries of international protection, asylum seekers, and students and researchers are not included in the study.

When examining the pattern of immigration to Austria in the period of 2014–2017, a striking rise in the influx from third countries is seen for the first two years. After subsiding somewhat in 2016, the trend continued in 2017, when the number of immigrants (52,777) was similar to the 2014 level. Asylum seekers represent the largest category of third-country migrants to Austria, followed by individuals seeking family reunification and others migrating from third countries.

In the Austrian Integration Act of 2017, “integration” is defined as “a process involving all sections of society, whose success depends on all people living in Austria and is based on personal interaction” (Art. 2 para 1 Integration Act). Legislation and policies in recent years have shown an increasingly clear tendency. There is a growing expectation for migrants to integrate, while at the same time greater control is being exercised over the progress of migrants' integration. Austria has no integration policy that explicitly and exclusively targets the category of individuals examined in this study. Rather, an overall strategy for integration policy has been defined in the 2010 National Action Plan for Integration.

In Austria, a wide range of stakeholders are involved in integration, specifically in labour market integration. Similarly, all levels of the State, meaning the federal, provincial and municipal governments, have responsibilities related to integration. Each level provides integration measures directly or funds institutions mandated with such measures. The main stakeholders are: the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and

Consumer Protection, as well as the Austrian Integration Fund and the Public Employment Service.

Although Austria has no separate strategy for the labour market integration of individuals belonging to the category examined in this study, the integration of third-country nationals into the labour market is a key aspect of Austria's integration strategy as detailed in the National Action Plan for Integration under the field of action entitled "Work and employment". The central goals within work and employment as defined in the National Action Plan for Integration include: the increased labour market integration of people with a migration background, stronger involvement and advancement of young people and women with a migration background, and vocational training for these groups.

Asked about the political priority of this topic in Austria, the experts interviewed for this study stated almost unanimously that the Austrian government puts no special focus on the labour market integration of this target group, compared with other policy areas or categories of individuals (e.g. long-term unemployed persons). The experts did, however, add that in Austria a certain political priority is assigned to labour market integration in general as a key component of the integration process. It is also observed that the integration of people with a migration background, and specifically labour market integration, generally plays a prominent role in political and media discussions in Austria.

When considering the challenges involved in integrating individuals belonging to the target group, various issues can be identified, including how to deal with the volume of immigrants, which has grown rapidly in a short period, and how to accommodate the varying socio-demographic features of this group during language acquisition. In relation to labour market integration, the major challenges identified include labour market discrimination against third-country nationals and "dequalification", in other words the inadequate utilization or devaluation of an individual's professional skills.

Drawing on recommendations by Austrian integration experts, the study identifies four examples of effective measures for integration or specifically labour market integration.

The integration agreement is a legislative measure laid down in the Integration Act of 2017, which aims to encourage third-country nationals legally residing in Austria to improve their language skills and become better

oriented in society. The general goal is to have third-country nationals commit themselves to acquiring German language skills and a knowledge of the democratic system when first obtaining a residence title.

The Berufsanerkennung.at platform is a statutory measure set out in the Recognition and Assessment Act. This public web portal is open for everyone to use, regardless of nationality and residence status. The website summarizes all important information relating to the recognition of professions and provides an online guide.

Mentoring for Migrants is a long-term programme that has been offered since 2008. Aimed at people with a migration background, the programme is run jointly by the Austrian Economic Chamber, the Austrian Integration Fund and the Public Employment Service. In the project, prominent individuals with experience in business are teamed up as mentors with former migrants, the mentees.

The **Contact Points for Persons with Qualifications from Foreign Countries** were enshrined in the Recognition and Assessment Act in July 2016. This measure targets individuals residing in Austria who have qualifications acquired in foreign countries. The contact points are a voluntary service, free of charge and multilingual, where individuals receive information, advice and guidance when applying for the recognition and assessment of qualifications.

In summary, it can be concluded that Austria has no special policy strategy for the labour market integration of the target group examined in this study. Rather, such measures are embedded within the general integration strategy. Another observation is that, from 2014 onwards, previously existing measures aimed at defining and implementing integration, or labour market integration, have been progressively enshrined in law. This is subsequently resulting in harmonised, structured measures for all of Austria, a development also viewed as a response to the challenges raised by the migration flows in the period of 2014–2016.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and objectives

Effective integration of migrants into the host society is one of the major challenges and a precondition for successful migration. The integration of third-country nationals, while often a lengthy process, offers many advantages for both the third-country national as well as the host Member State and the European Union (EU) in general. According to the 2017 International Migration Outlook of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the success of integration policies is a marker for the overall success of migration policies. Integration is a mutual process that requires efforts from migrants as well as from the host society (OECD, 2017:7).

Well-managed integration policies are essential tools for effective integration which also contribute to the prevention of negative public perceptions. According to the European Agenda for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals, integration policies can act as a driver for “economic development and social cohesion” (European Commission, 2011:2). One of the key elements of migrant integration is labour market integration. An effective integration policy can also help to improve the management of labour migration. As a key feature of contemporary labour markets, labour migration is a high priority on national and international agendas. At the same time, there is a need on the part of the Member States to improve the protection of migrant workers and foster labour market integration (ibid.:5).

The study aims on the one hand to update and supplement the information previously available on the labour market integration of third-country nationals in Austria.¹ On the other, the study is intended to describe good-practice examples leading to successful labour market integration of target group members.

1 See Koppenberg, S., *Integration of Beneficiaries of International Protection and Holders of Humanitarian Residence Titles into the Labour Market: Policies and Measures in Austria* (IOM, Vienna, 2015). Available at www.emn.at/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/EMN_Integration2015_AT_EMN_NCP_en.pdf (accessed on 4 June 2018).

This firstly entails providing an overview of the situation of third-country nationals in Austria and describing details such as categories of immigration and of paid employment (see chapter 2). The following chapter gives details on the general legal and policy framework in the EU and Austria (see chapter 3). Policy strategies aimed at labour market integration in Austria are then discussed in the next section, including details such as institutional structures in Austria, significant changes since 2014 and monitoring mechanisms (see chapter 4). Chapter five presents the political and public discussions that are taking place over labour market integration, and chapter six describes the challenges in this area. Finally, four integration measures, either of a general nature or specifically relating to labour market policy for third-country nationals in Austria are presented as examples. The focus here is on promising labour market measures that have been either implemented or modified since 2014.

1.2 Definitions

1.2.1 Target group

The target group consists of first-generation third-country nationals with the right to work in Austria and who regularly reside here. The group also includes individuals from third countries who belong to the families of third-country nationals or of EU citizens. The group under study here does not comprise beneficiaries of international protection or asylum seekers, as the EMN prepared a study back in 2015 on the labour market integration of individuals entitled to international protection or having a humanitarian residence title.² Also not falling within the scope of the study are measures and strategies specifically aimed at students and researchers; this topic is to be covered in a 2018 EMN study.

2 EMN, *Integration of beneficiaries of international/humanitarian protection into the labour market: policies and good practices – Synthesis Report for the EMN Focussed Study 2015* (European Commission, Brussels, 2015). Available at www.emn.at/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/emn-studies-00_integration_of_beneficiaries_of_international_protection__eu_2015_en_final.pdf (accessed on 5 July 2018).

1.2.2 Terminology

The study makes use of the following definitions, which are taken from the Asylum and Migration Glossary,³ of the European Migration Network unless specified otherwise in footnotes:

Beneficiary of international protection: A person who has been granted refugee status or subsidiary protection status.

Employee: Worker holding an explicit or implicit employment contract, which gives them a basic remuneration that is not directly dependent upon the revenue of the unit for which they work.

First generation third-country nationals: Third-country nationals born outside the EU.

Integration: In the EU context, a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States.

Labour market integration: It is a two-ways process by which, over time, immigrants will tend to show the same range of labour market outcomes as the native population. It is intended in terms of access and participation in employment and vocational training, also including actions to promote early integration into the labour market and migrant entrepreneurship.⁴

Labour migration: Movement of persons from one State to another, or within their own country of residence, for the purpose of employment.

Legal entry: In the global context, the entry of an alien into a foreign country in compliance with the necessary requirements for legal entry into the receiving State.

In the Schengen context, and for a stay not exceeding three months per six-month period, the entry of a third-country national into a Schengen Member State in compliance with Art. 5 of the Schengen Borders Code.⁵

3 See European Migration Network, *EMN Glossar zu Asyl und Migration 5.0* (EMN, Brussels, 2018). Available at www.emn.at/de/publikationen/glossar/ (accessed on 13 August 2018); Migration and Home Affairs, *Glossary*, available at https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/glossary/index_a_en (accessed on 13 August 2018).

4 As defined in: Migration and Home Affairs, *Integration in the labour market*, available at https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/legal-migration/integration/integration-labour-market_en (accessed on 3 August 2018).

5 Regulation (EC) No 562/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2006 establishing a Community Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (Schengen Borders Code), OJ 2006 L 105/5.

Legal migration: Migration in accordance with the applicable legal framework.

Long-term resident: A third-country national who has long-term resident status as provided for under Arts. 4 to 7 of Council Directive 2003/109/EC (Long-Term Residents Directive)⁶ or as provided for under national legislation.

Mandatory integration programme: Comprises measures or conditions third-country nationals have to comply with in order to enter, reside or stay in a Member State. These measures or conditions may take different forms, such as tests or classes or long-term commitment, and are made compulsory by law or regulation. If third-country nationals do not comply with mandatory integration measures or conditions, different types of sanctions are organized by the Member States. These sanctions can be constituted by the refusal to issue a residence permit or to renew it, the withdrawal of financial or social support, etc.⁷

Entry and travel (pre-departure) stage: In the context of the Study, this stage is followed by the positive migration application decision, when the migrant is preparing to leave the country.⁸

Residency (post-arrival) migration stage: In the context of the Study, this stage is followed by the pre-departure stage, when the migrant arrives in the country of destination.⁹

Pre-departure or Pre-entry measures: In the context of the Study, action provided by the country of destination or future employers, and course of action taken by the third-country nationals that is a condition for entering the territory of destination country.¹⁰

6 Council Directive 2003/109/EC of 25 November 2003 concerning the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents, OJ 2004 L 16/47–48.

7 As defined in: Pascouau, Y., *Measures and Rules Developed in the EU-Member States Regarding Integration of Third Country Nationals – Comparative Report* (European Policy Centre, Brussels, 2014), available at www.epc.eu/documents/uploads/pub_6519_reportintegrationschemesfinalversionpdf-en.pdf (accessed on 9 August 2018).

8 As defined in: Migration and Home Affairs, *Terms of reference for A Study in support of a Fitness Check and compliance assessment of existing EU legal migration Directives*, available at https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/legal_migration/tor-fitnesscheckstudyv15-clean-annex_i-v_en.pdf (accessed on 9 August 2018).

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.

Qualification: covers different aspects:

- a) **Formal qualification:** the formal outcome (certificate, diploma or title) of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards and/or possesses the necessary competences to do a job in a specific area of work. A qualification confers official recognition of the value of learning outcomes in the labour market and in education and training. A qualification can be a legal entitlement to practice a trade;
- b) **Job requirements:** the knowledge, aptitudes and skills required to perform the specific tasks attached to a particular work position.¹¹

Recognition of foreign qualifications: A formal acknowledgement by a competent authority of the validity of a foreign qualification with a view to access to educational and/or employment activities.

Residence permit: Any authorization issued by the authorities of an EU Member State allowing a non-EU national to stay legally in its territory, in accordance with the provisions of Regulation 265/2010 (Long Stay Visa Regulation).¹²

Third-country national: Any person who is not a citizen of the European Union within the meaning of Art. 20(1) of Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union¹³ and who is not a person enjoying the Union right to free movement,¹⁴ as defined in Art. 2(5) of the Schengen Borders Code.¹⁵ According to this definition, nationals of Norway, Iceland,

11 As defined in: European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training, *Qualification*, available at www.eqavet.eu/eu-quality-assurance/glossary/qualification (accessed on 9 August 2018).

12 Regulation (EU) No 265/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 March 2010 amending the Convention Implementing the Schengen Agreement and Regulation (EC) No 562/2006 as regards movement of persons with a long-stay visa, OJ 2010 L 85/1-4.

13 Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, OJ C 326/47.

14 Right to free movement: The right of EU citizens and legally resident third-country nationals (in accordance with the Treaty establishing the European Community) to move and reside freely within the territory of the EU Member States (Migration and Home Affairs, *EMN Glossary – right to free movement*, available at https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/content/right-free-movement_en (accessed on 3 August 2018)).

15 Regulation (EC) No 562/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2006 establishing a Community Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (Schengen Borders Code), OJ 2006 L 105/5.

Lichtenstein and Switzerland are not considered to be third-country nationals. This is also consistent with Art. 2(6) of the Schengen Borders Code.

Voluntary integration programmes: May be of the same nature as mandatory measures and conditions (classes, long-term commitment, etc.). However, such programmes are voluntary, which means there is no obligation for third-country nationals to engage with one of them. In addition, no sanctions weighing on the residence permit or status are organized where persons do not properly attend integration programmes. However, incentives may have been introduced to motivate third-country nationals to participate in integration programmes.¹⁶

1.3 Methodology

The present study was conducted by the National Contact Point (NCP) Austria in the EMN within the framework of the EMN's 2017–2018 Work Programme. The study follows a common study template with a predefined set of questions developed by the EMN, in order to facilitate comparability of the findings across all Member States.

Legislative texts, national and international publications, press releases and websites were used as sources. The study was also able to draw on continuous media monitoring information provided by the Country Office for Austria of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Statistical data from a variety of sources were used, specifically from the Statistic Austria databases,¹⁷ the migration & integration statistical yearbooks, and from the “bali” website¹⁸ operated by the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection.

16 As defined in: Pascouau, Y., *Measures and Rules Developed in the EU-Member States Regarding Integration of Third Country Nationals – Comparative Report* (European Policy Centre, Brussels, 2014), available at www.epc.eu/documents/uploads/pub_6519_reportintegrationschemesfinalversionpdf-en.pdf (accessed on 3 August 2018).

17 Statistics Austria, *STATcube – Statistische Datenbank*, available at www.statistik.at/web_de/services/statcube/index.html (accessed on 5 June 2018). Statistics Austria, *STATcube – Statistische Datenbank*, verfügbar auf www.statistik.at/web_de/services/statcube/index.html (accessed on 5 June 2018).

18 BMASGK, *Willkommen bei Bali*, available at www.arbeitsmarktpolitik.at/bali/ (accessed on 28 June 2018).

To supplement the information obtained from secondary research, qualitative semi-structured face-to-face interviews were conducted with experts active in the field of labour market integration in Austria, with additional information being requested in writing in some cases. The experts listed below participated, either through personal interviews or written responses to questions:

- Martin Kienl, Head of Department VIII. 2 (Integration Coordination), Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs;
- Margit Kreuzhuber, Migration and Integration Officer, Department of Social Policy and Health, Austrian Economic Chamber;
- Heinz Kutrowatz, Head of the Staff Unit for International Labour Market Law (Directorate VI/Departments 7 and 8), Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection;
- Azem Olcay, Organization, Coordination and Service Unit, Austrian Trade Union Federation;
- Johannes Peyrl, Labour Market and Integration Department, Vienna Chamber of Labour;
- Representatives of Knowledge Management and International Affairs Team, Austrian Integration Fund.

The study was compiled by Maria-Alexandra Bassermann (Research Associate, IOM Country Office for Austria) under the supervision of Julia Rutz (Head of Research and Migration Law, IOM Country Office for Austria). Legal issues were addressed by Martin Stiller (Legal Associate, IOM Country Office for Austria).

The interviewees mentioned above deserve special thanks for sharing their knowledge and experience through personal interviews and written responses. The author wishes to thank Arpad Fa (Media Intern, IOM Country Office for Austria) for assistance in various matters and for research contributions.

The study was prepared in close cooperation with the Federal Ministry of the Interior.

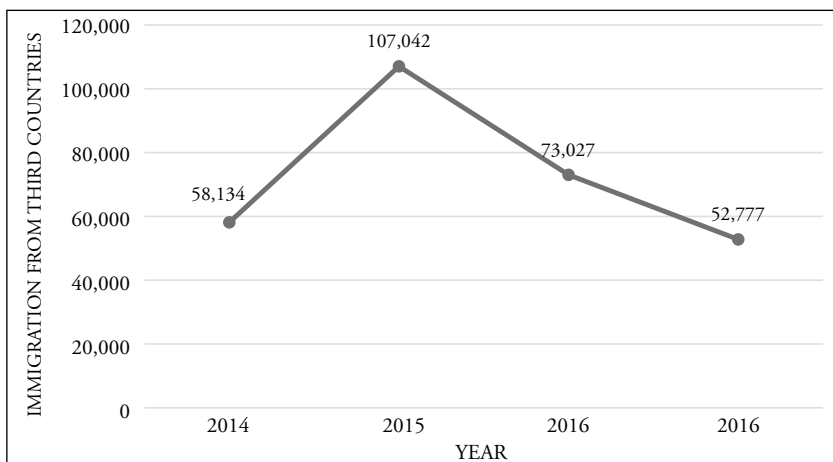
2. OVERVIEW: THIRD-COUNTRY NATIONALS IN AUSTRIA

To better appreciate the situation of third-country nationals in Austria, the following section presents statistics on immigrating third-country nationals and describes categories of immigration as well as changes occurring in 2014–2016 and 2017. The common template also requires an examination of statistics on foreign nationals in the Austrian labour market. The final section describes the main challenges in integration that Austria is currently seeking to resolve.

2.1 Categories of immigration

When examining the pattern of immigration to Austria in the period of 2014–2017, a striking rise in the influx from third countries is seen for the first two years, from 58,134 in 2014 to 107,042 in 2015. This trend subsided in 2016, with only 73,027 third-country nationals immigrating. In 2017 the number of immigrants fell to 52,777, below the level seen in 2014.

Figure 1: Immigration to Austria from third countries 2014–2017

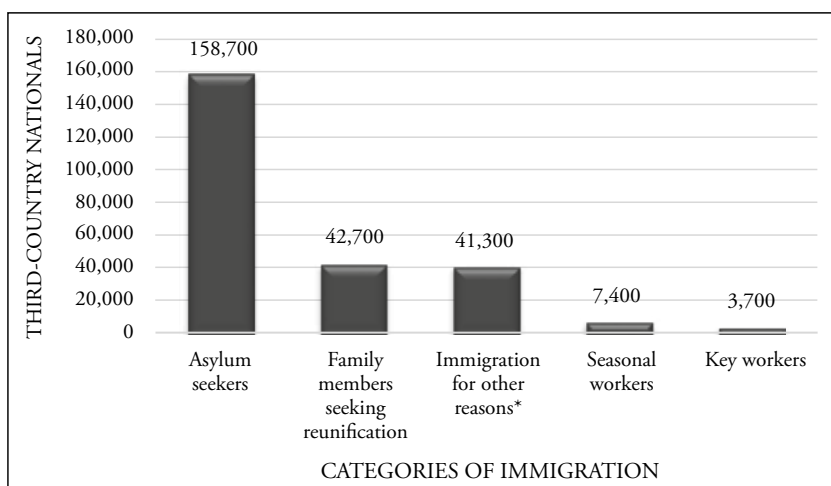


Source: Statistics Austria, *STATcube – international migration*, extracted on 5 June 2018, representation by author.

The striking rise in immigration from third countries can be attributed mainly to the strong increase in asylum applications in 2015, which becomes clear when comparing the various categories of immigration.

Asylum seekers represent the largest group of third-country migrants to Austria. Specifically, about 158,700 asylum seekers entered Austria between 2014 and 2016, followed by individuals seeking family reunification (42,700) and by other individuals from third countries (roughly 41,300). Seasonal workers at 7,400 and key workers at about 3,700 represent much smaller groups of third-country immigrants.

Figure 2: Categories of third-country immigration to Austria 2014–2016



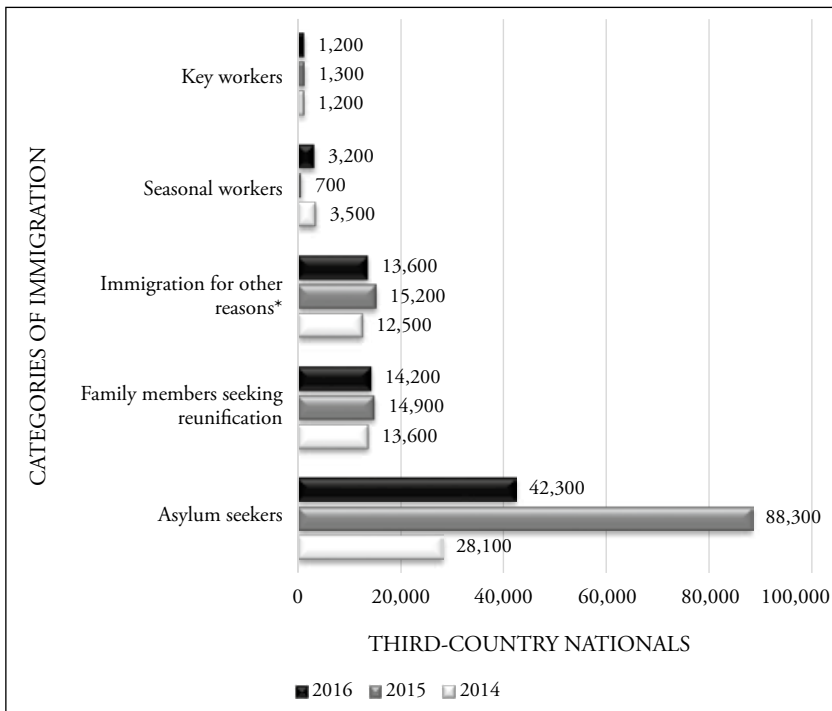
Source: Statistics Austria, *migration&integration – zahlen, daten, indikatoren 2014/2015/2016*, 2015:39; 2016:41; 2017:41, representation by author.

Note: The data are based on migration statistics published by Statistics Austria, settlement and residence statistics and asylum statistics collected by the Federal Ministry of the Interior, as well as labour market data furnished by the Public Employment Service. Including first-time residence permits for temporary stay issued to students, researchers, au-pairs or others.

As mentioned above, the relative proportion in 2015 is especially prominent when compared with other years. On the one hand, a strong increase can be seen with asylum seekers, from 28,100 in 2014 to 88,300 in 2015, after which the number fell back to 42,300 in 2016. There was also a sudden drop in the number of seasonal workers, which plummeted from 3,500 to 700 between 2014 and 2015 but later climbed back up to 3,200 in 2016. Otherwise, the relative proportion of immigration categories

changed only marginally over time. The number of immigrating key workers, for example, remained at a level of about 1,200 between 2014 and 2016. Family members seeking reunification rose slightly from 13,600 in 2014 to 14,200 in 2016, while immigration for other reasons similarly increased from 12,500 to 13,600.

Figure 3: Changes in categories of third-country immigration to Austria 2014–2016



Source: Statistics Austria, *migration&integration – zahlen, daten, indikatoren 2014/2015/2016*, 2015:39; 2016:41; 2017:41, representation by author.

Note: The data are based on migration statistics published by Statistics Austria, settlement and residence statistics and asylum statistics collected by the Federal Ministry of the Interior, as well as labour market data furnished by the Public Employment Service. Including first-time residence permits for temporary stay issued to students, researchers, au-pairs or others.

The data shown here are taken from the migration statistics made available by Statistic Austria (figure 1) and from the *migration & integration* statistical yearbooks (figure 2 and 3) published by Statistic Austria as part of the *Integration Report* (see section 4.4). The figures in the statistical yearbooks are derived from various sources (including Statistic Austria, the

Federal Ministry of the Interior and the Public Employment Service) and are collected using differing methods. Correspondingly, the statistics in figures two and three are approximations. In addition, the statistical yearbook for 2018 has not yet been published, so no comparable figures are available for 2017.

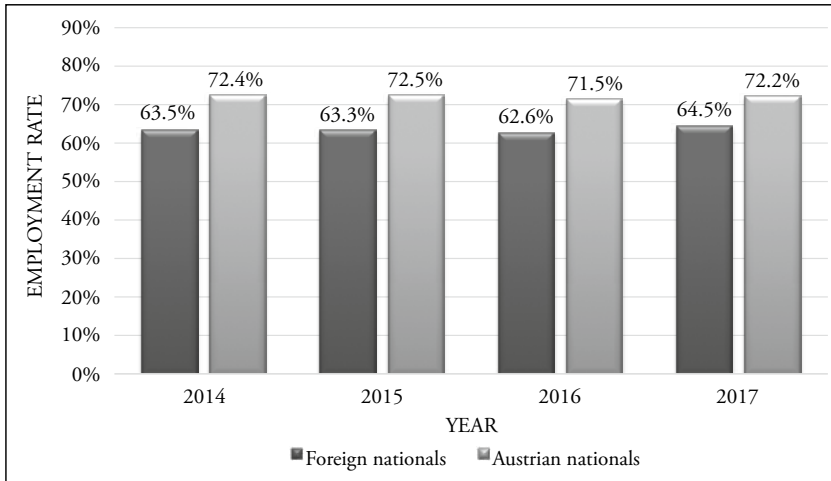
2.2 Foreign nationals in paid employment

In keeping with the common study template, attention is briefly given at this point to the labour market situation of foreign nationals, in other words non-Austrian citizens.¹⁹ A brief glance at the statistics on the employment of foreign nationals in Austria reveals that people in this category hold paying jobs to a lesser degree than Austrian citizens (Statistics Austria, 2017:54). This is shown by the employment rate,²⁰ which for Austrian citizens aged 15 to 64 ranged between 72.4 per cent and 72.5 per cent in 2014 and 2015; after falling slightly to 71.5 per cent in 2016, it again climbed to 72.2 per cent in 2017. The employment rate for foreign nationals, in contrast, was 63.5 per cent in 2014, then declined to 63.3 per cent in 2015 and 62.6 per cent in 2016, only to climb back up to 64.5 per cent in 2017. Thus, the employment rate among foreign nationals in Austria is about 10 per cent below the level for Austrian citizens. The rate for both groups was relatively stable in the period of 2014 to 2017.

19 Statistics Austria, *Bevölkerung mit Migrationshintergrund im Überblick (Jahresdurchschnitt 2016)*, available at www.statistik.at/web_de/statistiken/menschen_und_gesellschaft/bevoelkerung/bevoelkerungsstruktur/bevoelkerung_nach_migrationshintergrund/033240.html (accessed on 15 June 2018).

20 The employment rate is defined as the “percentage of employed persons aged 15 to 64 within the population of the same age” (Statistics Austria, 2017:117).

Figure 4: Average employment rate by citizenship (Austrian and foreign) among persons aged 15 to 64, 2014–2017

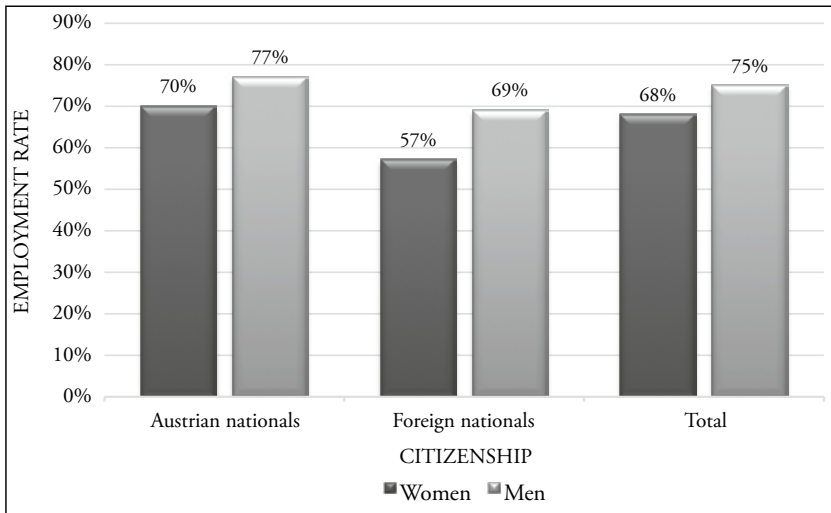


Source: Eurostat, *Employment rates by sex, age and citizenship (%) [lfsq_ergan]*, extracted on 19 June 2018, representation by author.

Note: The data were compiled from quarterly statistics and rounded to one decimal place.

The differences in employment levels between Austrian and foreign citizens become especially visible when the data is broken down by sex. In 2016 for example, 68 per cent of women aged 15 to 64 held jobs, while the comparable rate for men was 75 per cent. Here the difference between Austrian males (77%) and Austrian females (70%) is smaller than between foreign men (69%) and foreign women (57%). The difference in employment rate is largest between Austrian men at 77 per cent and foreign women at 57 per cent.

Figure 5: Average employment rate by sex and citizenship (Austrian and foreign) among persons aged 15 to 64 in 2016



Source: Eurostat, *Employment rates by sex, age and citizenship (%) [lfsq_ergan]*, extracted on 19 June 2018, representation by author.

Note: The data were compiled from quarterly statistics and rounded to one decimal place.

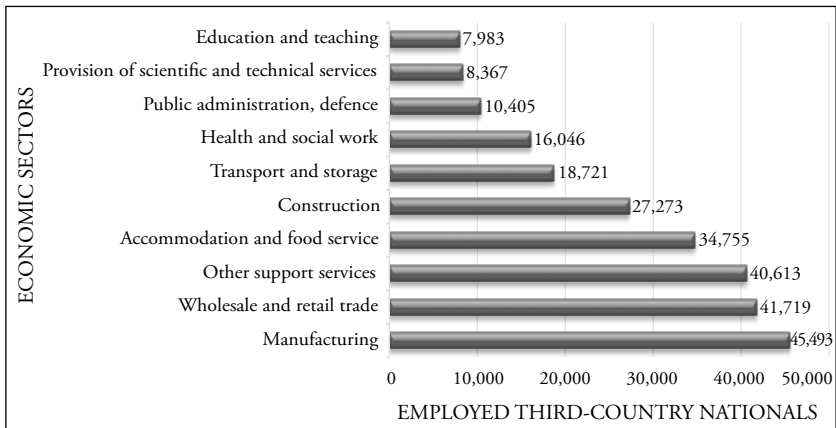
The wide diversity within the category of foreign workers nonetheless needs to be kept in mind when comparing employment data on this group (Statistics Austria, 2017:52). The figures for 2016 are analysed in detail here by way of an example, since data for that year are given in the *migration & integration* statistical yearbook and the indicators relevant for Austria can be considered. The diversity within this category becomes apparent when EU citizens and third-country nationals are compared. Here it is seen that the employment rate for individuals from EU or EFTA countries in 2016 was close to the Austrian rate, at 73 per cent, compared with about 56 per cent for individuals from third countries. Differences also emerge when the main regions and countries of origin of third-country nationals in Austria are examined. Examples here include individuals from non-EU countries formerly belonging to Yugoslavia,²¹ with an employment rate of almost 64 per cent, while the same rate is 55 per cent for Turkish citizens and 51 per cent for other third country nationals (Statistics Austria, 2017:54–55).

21 Hereinafter referred to as former Yugoslavia (outside of the EU).

2.3 Main sectors employing third-country nationals

When asked about the sectors of the economy in which migrants are employed for the most part, the experts interviewed for this study typically mentioned manufacturing, food service, wholesale and retail trade, support services (such as cleaning) and construction.²² A glance at the figures of 2017 confirms this impression. According to these, the largest numbers of third-country nationals are employed in manufacturing (45,493), followed by wholesale and retail trade (41,719), and other support services in third place with 40,613 persons employed.

Figure 6: Top 10 economic sectors for dependently employed third-country nationals 2017



Source: Federal Ministry for Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection/bali, *Employees – annual average(s) 2017*, extracted on 5 July 2018, representation by author.

Note: The data consist of statistics collected by the Public Employment Service and the Association of Austrian Social Security Institutions.

As seen from figure six, third-country nationals also represent significant numbers of workers in accommodation and food service, construction, transportation and storage, health and social work, and in public administration and defence, making these sectors important for the target group in Austria.

22 Written input by Heinz Kutrowatz, Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection, 25 May 2018; interview with Azem Olcay, Austrian Trade Union Federation, 18 Mai 2018; interview with Margit Kreuzhuber, Austrian Economic Chamber, 22 May 2018.

2.4 Main challenges in the field of integration

Within integration, Austria is mainly focused on encouraging migrants to quickly acquire a sound command of the German language at an early stage in order to promote swift labour market integration, in particular with the goal of enabling them to support themselves. Education in the values of the Austrian host society also plays a central role;²³ this is aimed especially at increasing the number of third-country women and girls participating in the labor market, according to an expert of the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection.²⁴

Various challenges arise in meeting these objectives. For example, varying sociodemographic factors and in particular diverse educational backgrounds need to be considered when helping migrants acquire German. Another example, related to the labour market, is the challenge of identifying and assessing skills and qualifications, especially in the case of women.²⁵ According to experts from the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs and the Austrian Integration Fund, the issue of values plays a role in all areas, particularly if migrants are to successfully coexist with others in society.²⁶

One representative of the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs also sees successful integration as depending on the number of individuals to be integrated. In other words, the country's capacity to integrate migrants is affected when large numbers arrive within a brief period.²⁷ Another main challenge at present, cited by a representative of the Austrian Integration Fund, is coping with the integration of persons granted asylum and of beneficiaries of subsidiary protection.²⁸

23 Written input by Heinz Kutrowatz, Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection, 25 May 2018; interview with Martin Kienl, Federal Ministry of Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 4 June 2018; interview with representatives of Knowledge Management and International Affairs Team, Austrian Integration Fund, 9 May 2018.

24 Written input by Heinz Kutrowatz, Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection, 25 May 2018.

25 Interview with Martin Kienl, Federal Ministry of Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 4 June 2018.

26 Interview with Martin Kienl, Federal Ministry of Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 4 June 2018; interview with representatives of Knowledge Management and International Affairs Team, Austrian Integration Fund, 9 May 2018.

27 Interview with Martin Kienl, Federal Ministry of Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 4 June 2018.

28 Interview with representatives of Knowledge Management and International Affairs Team, Austrian Integration Fund, 9 May 2018.

3. LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

As a prerequisite for understanding the legal and policy context of integration, or specifically labour market integration, the following section first details the relevant framework within the EU. The term “integration” is then explained with reference to its use in Austrian legislation and in Austria’s principal policy strategies for integration.

3.1 Legal and policy context in the EU

Even though the integration of migrants is a goal common to all EU Member States, up to now each has defined its own national legal and policy framework for integration. Despite the EU’s limited legislative powers for defining a common agenda on the issue, gradual progress has been made towards an EU legal framework for integration in recent years. For instance, the issue has been made the subject of various agreements and programmes, and over the years a number of policy documents discussing integration in detail have been drafted. The main items of these initiatives are briefly summarized in the following.

Entering into force in 1999, the Treaty of Amsterdam²⁹ marks the beginning of progress towards a common immigration and asylum policy in the EU. In relation to integration, the Treaty nonetheless limits legal responsibilities to combating discrimination against migrants.³⁰ The Treaty of Lisbon,³¹ becoming effective in 2009, for the first time introduced a legal basis at EU level specifically for promoting integration (Art. 79 para 4 Treaty of Lisbon). Yet, the EU’s powers in this regard are limited to measures supplementing action by the Member States.

29 Treaty of Amsterdam amending the Treaty on European Union, the Treaties establishing the European Communities and certain related acts, 2 October 1997, available at www.europarl.europa.eu/topics/treaty/pdf/amst-en.pdf (accessed on 28 June 2018).

30 Ibid. p. 32.

31 Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community, signed at Lisbon, 13 December 2007, 2007/C 306/01.

The Stockholm Programme³² was adopted in 2009, which included a programme for integrating migrants. The document calls for support for Member States' integration policies, through the further development of structures and tools for knowledge exchange and coordination with other relevant policy areas (European Council, 2009:30). The Commission is specifically called upon to support Member States' efforts by developing a coordination mechanism. The Programme also invites the Commission to identify modules to support the integration process and to develop core indicators for monitoring the results of integration policies (ibid.).

In addition to the above, several policy documents dealing in detail with integration have been published. The 2003 Commission Communication "on immigration, integration and employment"³³ represents the first EU policy document to report in detail on the status of integration in the EU. The "European Agenda for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals",³⁴ published in 2011, lists items including measures required for improved integration of migrants in local and national settings. Another such document is the 2016 "Action Plan on the integration of third-country nationals",³⁵ which outlines policy priorities and tools for supporting integration in the EU.

32 European Council, *The Stockholm Programme — An open and secure Europe serving and protecting citizens*, (2010/C 115/01), available at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:C:2010:115:FULL&from=EN> (accessed on 28 June 2018).

33 European Commission, *Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on immigration, integration and employment*, COM(2003)336 final, 3. June 2003, available at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52003DC0336&from=EN> (accessed on 11 July 2018).

34 European Commission, *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – European Agenda for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals*, COM(2011) 455 final, 20 July 2011, available at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52011DC0455&from=en> (accessed on 27 June 2018).

35 European Commission, *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals*, COM (2016) 377 final, 7 July 2016, available at https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/20160607/communication_action_plan_integration_third-country_nationals_en.pdf (accessed on 11 July 2018).

These and other policy documents, as well as the agreements and programmes mentioned above, have helped to create a framework for a common European integration policy.

3.2 The term “integration” in legal and policy context

This section is devoted to providing a definition of integration as used in Austrian legislation and policy documents, as the strategies and measures described in this study presuppose this usage.

The term “integration” is defined in the first sentence of Art. 2 paragraph 1 of the Austrian Integration Act of 2017.³⁶ This act is Austria’s first piece of federal legislation on the concept of integration.³⁷ Integration is defined here as “a process involving all sections of society, whose success depends on all people living in Austria and is based on personal interaction” (Art. 2 para 1 Integration Act).

With regard to the concept of integration, the act subsequently details related requirements. Immigrants are called upon to “actively participate in this process, accept the integration measures offered, and acknowledge and respect the fundamental values of a democratic European country” (Art. 2 para 1 sentence 2 Integration Act). State institutions at federal, provincial and municipal levels are expected to “make their contribution towards a successful integration process by systematically offering integration measures within their areas of competence” (Art. 2 para 1 sentence 3 Integration Act). Finally, it is noted that integration, as a process involving all sections of society, demands “concerted action by the various actors of the state and of civil society” (Art. 2 para 1 sentence 4 Integration Act).

The integration measures referred to in Art. 2 paragraph 1 of the Integration Act are subsequently described in detail in paragraph 2, with these measures cited as being intended to enable individuals to participate in social, economic and cultural life in Austria. This legislation attributes a major role in integration to factors such as participation through paid work and access to and acceptance of educational programmes. Such measures

36 FLG I No. 68/2017.

37 Integration Act, Government Proposal, Explanatory Notes, p. 2, available at www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/II/I_01586/fname_624803.pdf (accessed on 29 March 2018).

are aimed at facilitating rapid labour market entry and thus at enabling migrants to soon be able to earn their own living, a factor referred to as key for successful integration.³⁸

The Austrian definition of integration as given in Art. 2 of the Integration Act is largely based on the Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy.³⁹ This document was adopted within the context of EU integration as a guideline consisting of 11 non-binding Common Basic Principles (CBPs) intended to aid EU Member States when laying down their integration policies.⁴⁰ These principles state for instance that: integration is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation (CBP 1); integration implies respect for the basic values of the European Union (CBP 2); and employment along with a basic knowledge of the host society's language and history are key parts of the integration process (CBP 3 and CBP 4). The first principle (CBP1) is reflected in Art. 2 of the Integration Act, for example, which states that integration depends on mutual effort on the part of all people living in Austria. The Austrian legislation also concurs with CBP 3 and CBP 4 in recognizing additional factors such as employment, language skills and educational opportunities as playing a key role in integration.⁴¹

Legislation and policies in recent years have shown an increasingly clear tendency, which is associated within Austria's integration policy with the principle of *Fördern und Fordern*,⁴² that is, support is provided in return for achievement (or encouragement and demand). There is a growing expectation for migrants to integrate, while at the same greater control is

38 Integration Act, Government Proposal, Explanatory Notes, p. 2–3, available at www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/II/I_01586/fname_624803.pdf (accessed on 29 March 2018).

39 Council of the European Union, *2618th Council Meeting, Justice and Home Affairs*. Press Release, Brussels, 19 November 2004, available at www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/jha/82745.pdf (accessed on 12 July 2018).

40 European Migration Network (EMN), *Asylum und Migration Glossary 2.0*. Available at www.emn.at/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/EMN_Glossary_EN_Version.pdf (accessed on 22 January 2018).

41 Integration Act, Government Proposal, Explanatory Notes, p. 2–3, available at www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/II/I_01586/fname_624803.pdf (accessed on 29 March 2018).

42 Integration Act, Government Proposal, Explanatory Notes, p. 1, available at www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/II/I_01585/fname_624796.pdf (accessed on 9 January 2018).

being exercised over the progress of their integration (see for example Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 2015:5). Measures related to this tendency include the integration agreement (Art. 7 Integration Act), considering applicants' efforts towards integration when assessing whether to renew or issue residence titles (see for example Art. 67 para 2 Asylum Act 2005)⁴³ and, ultimately, sanctions for non-compliance (Art. 6 para 2 Integration Act). Such tendencies are even more strongly pronounced in the work programme⁴⁴ of the recently elected Federal Government. Specifically, individuals are called upon to “make active efforts towards their integration into society” and “integration through achievement” is cited as requiring state programmes. State programmes are to be contingent on the individual's obligation to “actively participate – or otherwise receive reduced social benefits” (Austrian Federal Government, 2017:37). Integration is correspondingly regarded as less a responsibility of society overall and more a process which, while to be supported through state measures, depends primarily on migrants' own initiative, and where refusal to comply can even result in sanctions.

3.3 National policy strategies for integration

Austria has no integration policy explicitly and exclusively aimed at the target group described in this study, that is, third-country nationals with regular residence status in Austria and an employment permit, with the exception of beneficiaries of international protection, asylum seekers, students and researchers. Rather, the integration policy strategies developed in Austria are for the most part all-inclusive, geared equally towards all categories of migrants. The 2010 National Action Plan for Integration (NAP.I)⁴⁵ provides the basis for Austria's national integration policy. Integration is referred to here as a horizontal policy matter and as a process

43 FLG I No. 100/2005, in the version of FLG I No. 145/2017.

44 Austrian Federal Government, *Zusammen. Für unser Österreich. Regierungsprogramm 2017 – 2022*, available at www.oevp.at/download/Regierungsprogramm.pdf (accessed on 7 May 2018).

45 Austrian Federal Government, *Nationaler Aktionsplan für Integration – Bericht*, available at www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Zentrale/Integration/NAP/Bericht_zum_Nationalen_Aktionsplan.pdf (accessed on 7 May 2018).

involving the whole of society (Austrian Federal Government, 2010:7–8). NAPI sets out general guidelines for integration policy and identifies seven fields of action:

- 1) Language and education;
- 2) Work and employment;
- 3) Rule of law and values;
- 4) Health and social issues;
- 5) Intercultural dialogue;
- 6) Sport and recreation;
- 7) Housing and the regional dimension of integration (Austrian Federal Government, 2010).⁴⁶

NAPI targets the following groups: society at large, foreign nationals settled permanently in Austria and Austrian citizens born in another country, as well as people with a migration background (Austrian Federal Government, 2010:7). While the national action plans provide a framework for integration in Austria,⁴⁷ a legal basis was enacted when the Integration Act entered into force in 2017 (see section 3.2).

46 For further information please see Koppenberg, 2015:23–34.

47 See: Federal Ministry of Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs and the Expert Council for Integration, *50 Punkte – Plan zur Integration von Asylberechtigten und subsidiär Schutzberechtigten in Österreich*, available at www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Zentrale/Integration/Publikationen/Integrationsplan_final.pdf (accessed on 4 July 2018); Austrian Federal Government, *Nationaler Aktionsplan für Integration – Bericht*, available at www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Zentrale/Integration/NAP/Bericht_zum_Nationalen_Aktionsplan.pdf (accessed on 7 May 2018).

4. LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION: POLICIES AND ORGANIZATION

To facilitate an understanding of how individuals belonging to the target group are integrated into the Austria labour market, a description of the related institutional framework and principal stakeholders is initially given, followed by a detailed presentation of Austria's strategies for labour market integration. A brief review is also provided of the changes introduced since 2014, in particular in response to the migration flows in the period of 2014 to 2016. The final section discusses the methods used in Austria to assess integration and make the phenomenon measurable.

4.1 Institutional framework and stakeholders

The organization chart below provides a rough overview of the responsibilities related to labour market integration and the main stakeholders involved. It is not possible, however, to fully cover here the many stakeholders and responsibilities at federal, provincial and municipal levels, as such a presentation would exceed the scope of this study.⁴⁸

The large number of parties involved is related to the fact that in Austria integration is regarded as a horizontal policy matter⁴⁹ that touches on various areas of policymaking. Similarly, all levels of the State, meaning the federal, provincial and municipal governments, have responsibilities related to integration. Each level provides integration measures directly or funds institutions mandated with such measures (Koppenberg, 2015:8). At federal level, the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs is responsible for the overall coordination of measures.⁵⁰ As a fund under the

48 For a detailed description of the responsibilities at federal level, please see Koppenberg, 2015:32–34.

49 Integration Act, Government Proposal, Explanatory Notes, p. 1, available at www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/1/I_01586/fname_624803.pdf (accessed on 5 May 2018).

50 Interview with Martin Kienl, Federal Ministry of Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 4 June 2018.

Republic of Austria, the Austrian Integration Fund is active nationwide as an integration service provider and as a partner of the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs. The fund specifically acts as a partner for implementing the Federal State's national integration strategy and, for example, provides information and counselling while being responsible for applying the Integration Agreement in practice (Expert Council for Integration, 2015:19–20).

In labour market integration, the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection⁵¹ plays an important role, especially in matters relating to labour law, the labour market and social affairs (part 2C of the annex to Art. 2 of the Federal Ministry Law 1986).⁵² As a service company under public law, the Public Employment Service Austria is mandated by the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Affairs, being responsible in particular for job placement as well as providing counselling and information, skills training programmes and promotion.⁵³ The advisory board of the Public Employment Service is made up of representatives of the social partners, specifically the Austrian Economic Chamber, the Austrian Chamber of Labour, the Austrian Trade Union Federation and the Federation of Austrian Industries. These bodies play a major role at all levels of the Public Employment Service, that is, in the nine provincial organizations and in the 98 regional organizations.⁵⁴

Other groups play a part alongside those mentioned above, especially in the implementation of integration measures. These include the provinces and municipalities as well as numerous civil society organizations such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private associations and church-affiliated organizations (Koppenberg, 2015:30).⁵⁵

51 Until December 2017, Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection.

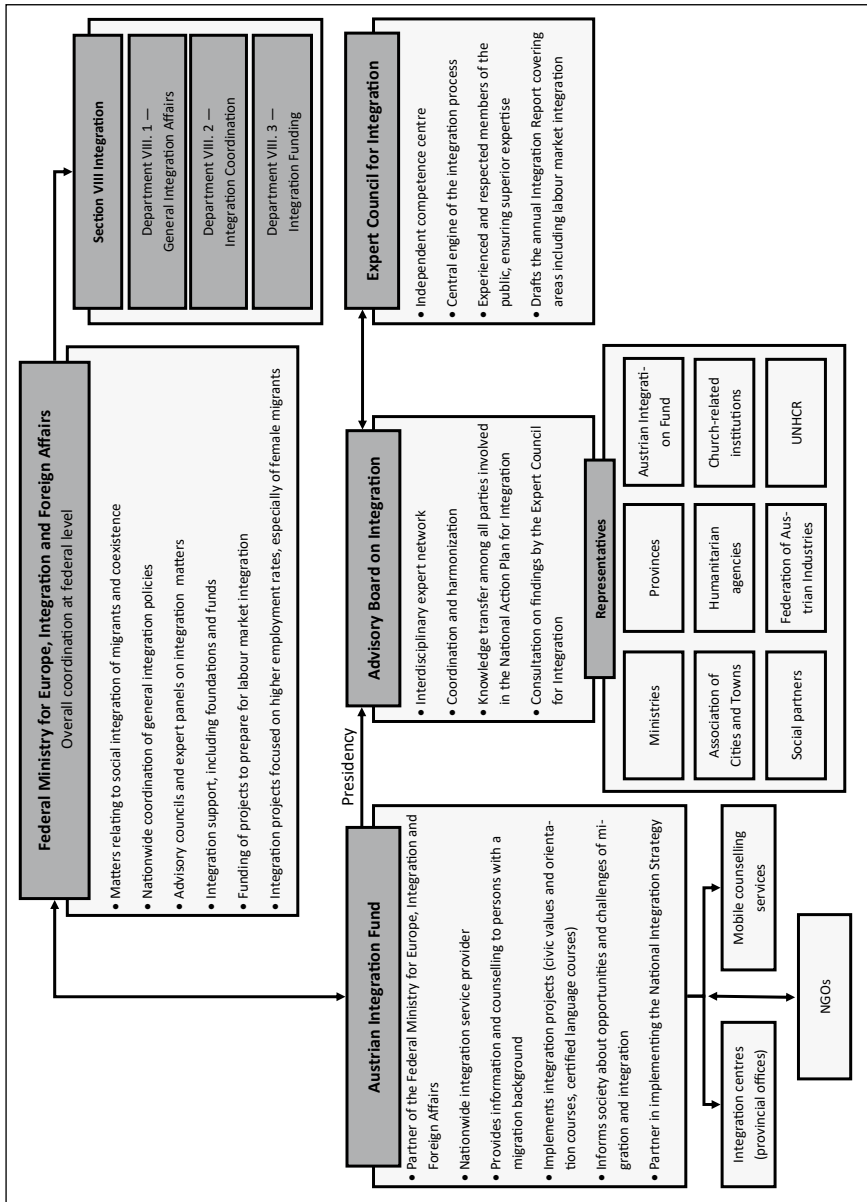
52 FLG No. 76/1986, in the version of FLG I No. 164/2017.

53 Public Employment Service, *Daten & Fakten*, available at www.ams.at/ueber-ams/ueber-ams/daten-fakten (accessed on 6 June 2015).

54 Public Employment Service, *Die Organisation des Arbeitsmarktservice*, available at www.ams.at/ueber-ams/ueber-ams/daten-fakten/organisation (accessed on 5 June 2018).

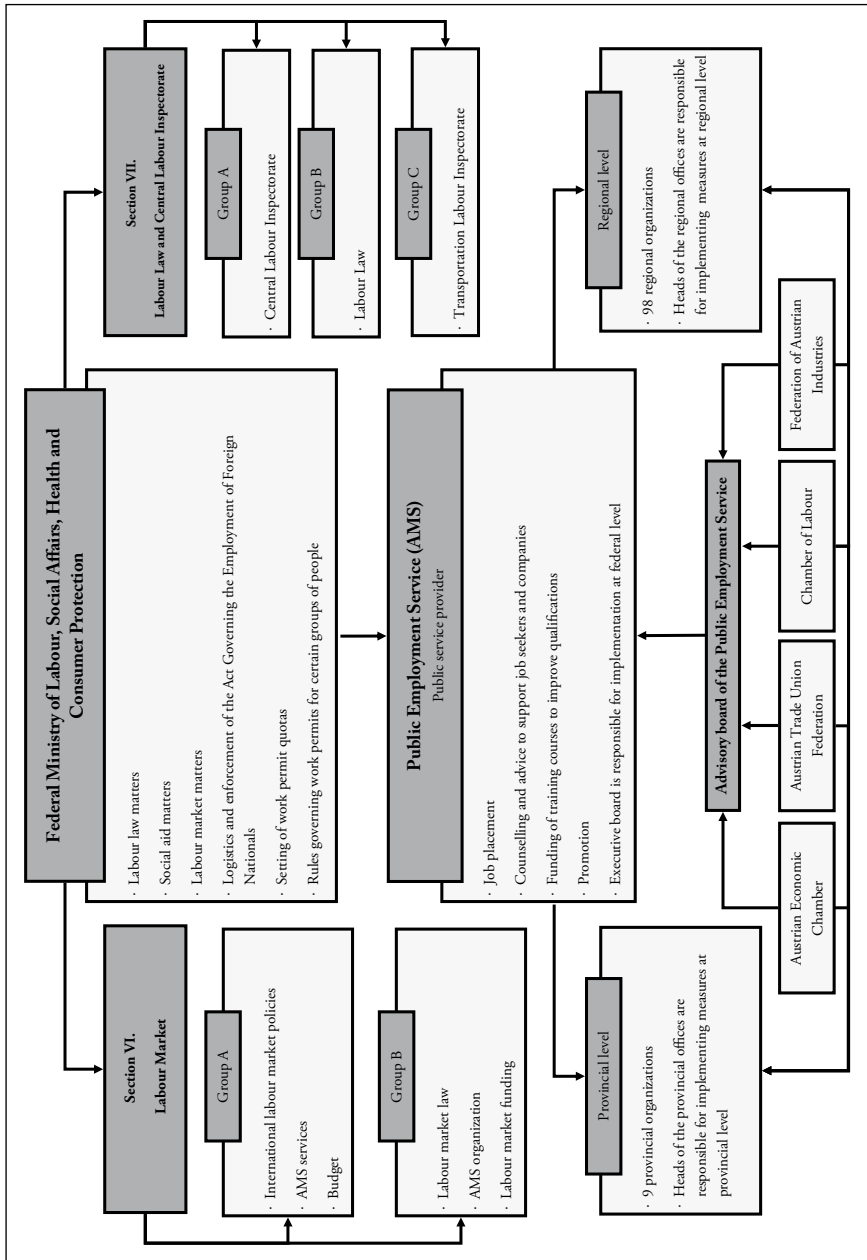
55 For further information please see Koppenberg, 2015:32–34.

Figure 7: Chart showing organization of (labour market) integration in Austria



Source: Representation by author.

Figure 8: Chart showing organization of labour market integration in Austria



Source: Representation by author.

4.2 Labour market integration policies – the National Action Plan for Integration

Austria has no separate strategy for the labour market integration of individuals belonging to the target group of this study, that is, third-country nationals with regular residence status in Austria and an employment permit, with the exception of beneficiaries of international protection, asylum seekers, students and researchers. Nonetheless, the integration of third-country nationals in general into the labour market is a key aspect of Austria's integration strategy as detailed in NAPI under the field of action entitled "Work and employment". The NAPI general guidelines for integration policy refer to the permanent integration of migrants in the labour market as a prerequisite for the future coherent development of Austria's economy and society (Austrian Federal Government, 2010:8). In the principles under the "Work and employment" field of action, employment is referred to as "the key to a successful integration process" (Austrian Federal Government, 2010:20).

The central goals of NAPI for work and employment include the increased labour market integration of people with a migration background, for example through targeted vocational language training and action against wage and social dumping. Reference is also made here to stronger involvement and advancement of young people and women with a migration background and vocational training for these groups, as well as to promoting self-employment among migrants (Austrian Federal Government, 2010:22–23).

Work is also a subject addressed within the first field of action, entitled "Language and education". Here, promoting proficiency in German is defined as a "major prerequisite for success at school and for later integration in working life" (Austrian Federal Government, 2010:12). Specific goals mentioned in this context include: language, education, vocational education and training and apprenticeships, identification and recognition of qualifications, counselling, and cultural orientation (Austrian Federal Government, 2010:14–18).⁵⁶

In summary, labour market integration in Austria is treated as a main component of the integration process. Rather than being defined more closely under a separate field of action, it represents a constant factor in

56 For further information please see Koppenberg, 2015:24.

integration-related areas, strategies and policies, which are not usually aimed at a specific target group.⁵⁷ It needs to be noted that, within the Austrian context, the category of persons targeted in this study presents itself as a highly diverse group of individuals. According to the experts surveyed, it would generally not be considered useful to develop a separate strategy that does not differentiate based on factors such as length of stay, level of education, country of origin and profession.⁵⁸

4.3 Major developments and influence of the migration flows in 2014–2016

The introduction of the Integration Act⁵⁹ in October 2017 was a major change in the wake of the stronger migration flows during the period of 2014–2016 (see section 3.2). Among the reasons for enacting the law was to respond to the new challenges related to integration. One of the goals was to redefine the variety of integration policy measures introduced to cope with the increased influx of asylum seekers, by systematizing the programmes and making them independent of specific institutions.⁶⁰ In introducing such a legal basis, it was also intended to avoid any possible administrative “redundancies” along with any “inefficient use of public funds”.⁶¹ Similarly, experts from the Austrian Integration Fund have recognized within integration policy developments since 2015 a stronger tendency to harmonize and structure measures. This has also led to an emphasis on quality assurance particularly in the case of the German and integration courses. This has also resulted in a more structured exchange of information with significant stakeholders such as the Public Employment Service.⁶²

57 Beneficiaries of international protection are an exception to this. In 2015 a separate labour market strategy was developed for this group within the 50-Point Plan for the integration of persons granted asylum and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection status in Austria.

58 Interview with Margit Kreuzhuber, Austrian Economic Chamber, 22 May 2018; interview with Azem Olcay, Austrian Trade Union Federation, 18 May 2018; interview with Johannes Peyrl, Vienna Chamber of Labour, 1 June 2018.

59 FLG I No. 68/2017.

60 Integration Act, Government Proposal, Preamble and Impact Evaluation, p. 3, available at www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/II/I_01586/imfname_624802.pdf (accessed on 6 June 2018).

61 Ibid.

62 Interview with representatives of Knowledge Management and International Affairs Team, Austrian Integration Fund, 9 May 2018.

According to the experts surveyed, the migration flows between 2014 and 2016 resulted in a stronger focus on the integration of beneficiaries of international protection.⁶³ Nonetheless, no increased funding to one group at the expense of another is reported to have occurred. Rather, the target group under study here is said to have benefited from several of the programmes that were either introduced or expanded.⁶⁴ An example mentioned in this regard is the modified system for recognizing qualifications.⁶⁵ The Recognition and Assessment Act⁶⁶ of 12 July 2016 is intended in particular to promote labour market integration and the employment of individuals at a level corresponding to their education.⁶⁷ Among other things, the act establishes two service institutions, simplifies the assessment procedure and results in more equal treatment of third-country nationals compared with EU citizens (AT EMN NCP, 2017:9–10).

At an early stage, in July 2015, the Expert Council for Integration⁶⁸ concluded when presenting the integration report that the majority of integration policy measures (and especially those aimed at the labour market) were applicable to third-country nationals in general (Expert Council for Integration, 2015:68; Koppenberg, 2015:25–26). While the migration flows between 2014 and 2016 shifted the focus of such measures to individuals granted international protection, experts now see the situation as having returned to normal to some extent, with a correspondingly restored balance in terms of the priority given to certain groups.⁶⁹

63 Interview with Martin Kienl, Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 4 June 2018; interview with Representatives of Knowledge Management and International Affairs Team, Austrian Integration Fund, 9 May 2018.

64 Ibid.

65 Interview with Martin Kienl, Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 4 June 2018.

66 FLG I No. 55/2016.

67 Recognition and Assessment Act, Government Proposal, Preamble and Impact Evaluation, p. 1, available at www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/II/I_01084/fname_524423.pdf (accessed on 6 June 2018).

68 Established in the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and International Affairs, the Expert Council for Integration consists of experienced and respected personalities from public life. Its goal is to support and guide the development of Austrian Integration policies (for further information please see: Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, *Expertennrat*, available at www.bmeia.gv.at/integration/expertennrat/ (accessed on 6 June 2018)).

69 Interview with Martin Kienl, Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 4 June 2018.

4.4 Monitoring and integration indicators

No periodic reporting in Austria exclusively discusses the labour market integration of the target group under study. There is, however, an annual Integration Report, which has been presented by the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, the Expert Council for Integration, and representatives of Statistic Austria since 2011. The Integration Report summarizes developments in the field of integration and consists of three sections: the integration monitoring report, which is prepared jointly by Statistic Austria and the Commission for Migration and Integration Research at the Austrian Academy of Sciences; a publicly accessible database covering integration policy measures; and the report by the Expert Council (Expert Council for Integration, 2016:8–9; AT EMN NCP, 2017:27–28; Koppenberg, 2016:31).

The Expert Council report varies in structure and content depending on the topics, which were identified as relevant indicators for the particular year. The report for 2015, for example, discusses the field of action of “Work and employment” in a separate section. The potential for improvement in labour market integration in Austria is discussed in the 2015 report, under the heading of “Key thoughts for the future” (Expert Council for Integration, 2015). The report published in 2016, in contrast, is devoted almost exclusively to the integration of persons entitled to asylum or subsidiary protection in Austria (Expert Council for Integration, 2016). In 2017, the report again contains a section focusing on the integration of third-country nationals not having international protection status (Expert Council for Integration, 2017).

Unlike the report by the Expert Council, the statistical yearbook has the same structure each year, enabling year-to-year comparisons of the most significant indicators. The 25 integration indicators found here are based on those in NAPI (Statistic Austria, 2017:8). Within these categories, there are five key indicators, including the employment rate by age and migration background and the unemployment rate by citizenship (*ibid.*:15). Within the “Work and employment” field of action, the indicators listed below are examined in detail:

- Employment rate by age, sex and migration background;
- Self-employment rate by sex and migration background;
- Unemployment rate by citizenship and education;

- Persons employed broken down by citizenship and highest level of education completed;
- Long-term unemployment by citizenship;
- Unemployment of young people by citizenship.

The indicators above are related to the Zaragoza indicators adopted in 2004.⁷⁰ Austria is consequently one of eleven EU Member States that have developed and periodically report indicators based on the Zaragoza indicators (FRA, 2017:35). Austria is also one of five Member States that cover the subject areas detailed in this context, specifically: employment, education, social inclusion and active citizenship (ibid.:36).

Both quantitative and qualitative methods are used in the reports. The statistical data presented in the reports are compiled by Statistic Austria using various sources and supplemented with other available data (Statistic Austria, 2017:4). Data are collected using a variety of methods. The figures on migration background, to name an example, are projections based on a (microcensus) survey sample. The summarized data on migration and asylum, in contrast, are derived from official registers.⁷¹

70 European Commission, *European Web Site on Integration – EU ‘Zaragoza’ Integration Indicators: AUSTRIA*, available at <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/librarydoc/eu-zaragoza-integration-indicators-austria?lang=de> (accessed on 10 August 2018).

71 Statistics Austria, *Statistisches Jahrbuch für Migration & Integration 2017: Bevölkerung Österreichs mit Migrationshintergrund wuchs 2016 um 85.000 Personen*. Press Release, Vienna, 23 August 2017, available at http://statistik.at/web_de/presse/113946.html (accessed on 6 June 2018).

5. POLITICAL AND PUBLIC DISCUSSIONS

The following section describes the political and public discussions taking place in Austria concerning labour market integration. The focus is on the target group examined here, consisting of third-country nationals with regular residence status in Austria and an employment permit (excluding beneficiaries of international protection, asylum seekers, students and researchers). The chapter therefore summarizes the political priority given to the subject as well as debates in the media and in the public arena.

5.1 Political priority

As regards to political priority, the experts interviewed for this study almost unanimously expressed the view that, for the Austrian government, labour market integration of the target group has no special political priority over other policy areas or categories of individuals (e.g. long-term unemployed persons or elderly unemployed persons).⁷² Representatives of the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs and of the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection additionally noted that labour market integration was regarded in Austria as a key factor in the integration process overall and, as such, was given a certain amount of political priority.⁷³ Measures (to encourage or prepare) for labour market integration are therefore regarded as a focus area within the integration sector when the latter is looked at separately.⁷⁴

72 Interview with Martin Kienl, Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 4 June 2018; interview with Margit Kreuzhuber, Austrian Economic Chamber, 22 May 2018; interview with representatives of Knowledge Management and International Affairs Team, Austrian Integration Fund, 9 May 2018; interview with Azem Olcay, Austrian Trade Union Federation, 18 May 2018; interview with Johannes Peyrl, Vienna Chamber of Labour, 1 June 2018.

73 Interview with Martin Kienl, Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 4 June 2018; written input by Heinz Kutrowatz, Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection, 25 May 2018.

74 Written Input by Martin Kienl, Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 27 July 2018.

Representatives of the social partners – specifically the Austrian Trade Union Federation, the Chamber of Labour and the Austrian Economic Chamber – underscored the special attention that their particular organization gives to the labour market integration of the target group under study here.⁷⁵

5.2 Public discussion

Integration – and to some degree labour market integration – is regularly the focus of debates among politicians and in the media in Austria. Yet, such discussions usually centre on the integration of individuals in general who have a migration background, which includes third-country nationals, while the focus since 2015 has been specifically on beneficiaries of international protection (Koppenberg, 2015:9).

Subjects discussed in this context in the media are usually related to legal or policy changes or to specific measures. Among the topics discussed were for example the introduction of the Integration Act⁷⁶ and, with particular reference to the target group, the changes to the integration agreement.⁷⁷ Criticism was levied at things such as the monopoly exercised by the Austrian Integration Fund in administering German courses. An organization named Netzwerk SprachenRechte observed that the Austrian Integration Fund played several incompatible roles, simultaneously acting as both the designer and administrator of exams as well as the certifying body for other institutions.⁷⁸ Statements on the draft legislation were submitted by numerous

75 Interview with Margit Kreuzhuber, Austrian Economic Chamber, 22 May 2018; interview with Azem Olcay, Austrian Trade Union Federation, 18 May 2018; interview with Johannes Peyrl, Vienna Chamber of Labour, 1 June 2018.

76 FLG I No. 68/2017.

77 Die Presse, *Alle Macht dem Integrationsfonds?*, 26 March 2017, available at <https://diepresse.com/home/innenpolitik/5190265/Alle-Macht-dem-Integrationsfonds> (accessed on 7 June 2018); Salzburger Nachrichten, *Was das neue Integrationspaket bedeutet: Von Deutschkurs bis 0-Euro-Job*, 28 March 2017, available at www.sn.at/politik/innenpolitik/was-das-neue-integrationspaket-bedeutet-von-deutschkurs-bis-0-euro-job-6922006 (accessed on 6 June 2018).

78 Netzwerk SprachenRechte, *Stellungnahme zu dem Ministerialentwurf betreffend ein Bundesgesetz, mit dem ein Integrationsgesetz und ein Anti-Gesichtsverhüllungsgesetz erlassen sowie das Niederlassungs- und Aufenthaltsgesetz, das Asylgesetz 2005, das Fremdenpolizeigesetz 2005, das Staatsbürgerschaftsgesetz 1985 und die Straßenverkehrsordnung 1960 geändert werden*, 9 March 2017, available at http://sprachenrechte.at/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/20170307_NWSR_Stellungnahme-Integrationsgesetz.pdf (accessed on 7 June 2018).

other organizations and associations, including the Austrian Red Cross, the Arbeiter Samariterbund, the Austrian Trade Union Federation and the Austrian Economic Chamber. While such an Integration Act per se was received positively, several aspects were criticized. These included imposing sanctions for failing to comply with the integration agreement⁷⁹ and the question of how to define and verify the values taught in integration courses.⁸⁰

Certain topics relating to labour market integration were also aired repeatedly in public discussions: the Red-White-Red Card⁸¹, the list of shortage occupations,⁸² the need for foreign immigrants to fill jobs in Austria⁸³ and unemployment among migrants originating from certain countries such as Turkey.⁸⁴

79 Austrian Red Cross, *Stellungnahme zum Bundesgesetz, mit dem ein Integrationsgesetz und ein Anti-Gesichtsverhüllungsgesetz erlassen sowie das Niederlassungs- und Aufenthaltsgesetz, das Asylgesetz 2005, das Fremdenpolizeigesetz 2005, das Staatsbürgerschaftsgesetz 1985 und die Straßenverkehrsordnung 1960 geändert werden (Integrationsgesetz 2017)*, 8 March 2017, p. 1–2 available at www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/SNME/SNME_09558/imfname_621707.pdf (accessed on 7 June 2018).

80 Austrian Trade Union Federation, *Stellungnahme von: Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund (ÖGB) zu dem Ministerialentwurf betreffend ein Bundesgesetz, mit dem ein Integrationsgesetz und ein Anti-Gesichtsverhüllungsgesetz erlassen sowie das Niederlassungs- und Aufenthaltsgesetz, das Asylgesetz 2005, das Fremdenpolizeigesetz 2005, das Staatsbürgerschaftsgesetz 1985 und die Straßenverkehrsordnung 1960 geändert werden*, 8 March 2017, p. 2, available at www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/SNME/SNME_09522/imfname_621546.pdf (accessed on 7 June 2018).

81 Der Kurier, *Zuwanderung: Warum die Rot-Weiß-Rot-Karte floppt*, 24 August 2017, available at <https://kurier.at/politik/inland/zuwanderung-warum-die-rot-weiss-rot-karte-floppt/282.380.639> (accessed on 5 July 2018); Die Presse, *Rot-Weiß-Rot-Karte künftig auch für Bachelorabsolventen*, 25 November 2016, available at <https://diepresse.com/home/innenpolitik/5124344/RotWeissRotKarte-kuenftig-auch-fuer-Bachelorabsolventen> (accessed on 5 July 2018); news.at, *Rot-Weiß-Rot-Karte künftig auch für Bachelor- und Doktoratabsolventen*, 25 November 2016, available at www.news.at/a/rot-weiss-rot-karte-kuenftig-auch-fuer-bachelor-und-doktoratabsolventen-7703173 (accessed on 5 July 2018).

82 Die Presse, *Wirtschaftskammer: Stöger ignoriert Personalsuche des Tourismus*, 22 December 2016, available at <https://diepresse.com/home/wirtschaft/economist/5138036/Wirtschaftskammer-Stoeger-ignoriert-Personalsuche-des-Tourismus> (accessed on 5 July 2018); Kleine Zeitung, *Warum die Liste der Mangelberufe für großen Wirbel sorgt*, 22 December 2016, available at www.kleinezeitung.at/wirtschaft/wirtschaftktnhp/5138030/Fachkraefteverordnung_Warum-die-Liste-der-Mangelberufe-fuer (accessed on 5 July 2018).

83 Salzburger Nachrichten, *Österreich braucht viele Zuwanderer*, 27 November 2014, available at www.sn.at/wirtschaft/oesterreich-braucht-viele-zuwanderer-2968177 (accessed on 6 June 2018).

84 Die Presse, *Türken sind die Sorgenkinder am Arbeitsmarkt*, 28 March 2017, available at http://portal.kantarmedia.de/rest/pdf/1002283/3456868723/6573d65c38ac42fc15296a73e5b960c4ceb0a427/de_DE (accessed on 7 June 2018).

The topic of integration or labour market integration of third-country nationals was also the issue in a number of questions raised in parliament in recent years. Among the topics of the questions raised were: fulfilment of the integration agreement,⁸⁵ participants with a migration background in courses offered by the Public Employment Service,⁸⁶ grants for labour market policy and integration measures,⁸⁷ and statistics relating to the sectors of employment for third-country nationals and unemployment levels within this group.⁸⁸

This demonstrates the prominent role played by the topics of integration and labour market integration in political and media discussions in Austria. Yet such discussions do not usually target a specific group. The exception to this is the category of beneficiaries of international protection. A correspondingly marginal role is played by the target group of this study in public discussions.

- 85 Federal Ministry of the Interior, *Beantwortung der parlamentarischen Anfrage betreffend „Erfüllung der sogenannten Integrationsvereinbarung“ 5679/AB vom 07. September 2015, 5974/IJ (XXV.GP)*, available at www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/AB/AB_05679/imfname_463844.pdf (accessed on 5 June 2018); Federal Ministry of the Interior, *Beantwortung der parlamentarischen Anfrage betreffend „Erfüllt die Regierung die sogenannte Integrationsvereinbarung (IV)?“ 9554/AB vom 19. September 2016, 9994/IJ (XXV.GP)*, available at www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/AB/AB_09554/imfname_560239.pdf (accessed on 5 June 2018).
- 86 Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, *Beantwortung der parlamentarischen Anfrage betreffend „Migrationshintergrund von AMS-Schulungsteilnehmern“ 9796/AB vom 15. November 2016 zu 10276/IJ (XXV.GP)*, available at www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/AB/AB_09796/index.shtml (accessed on 7 June 2018).
- 87 Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, *Beantwortung der parlamentarischen Anfrage betreffend „Aufwendungen für Integration“ 12527/AB vom 13. Juli 2017, 13130/IJ (XXV.GP)*, available at www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/AB/AB_12527/index.shtml (accessed on 7 June 2018).
- 88 See e.g. Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, *Beantwortung der parlamentarischen Anfrage betreffend „AMS-Männer/Frauen-Arbeitslosigkeit“, 9719/AB vom 10.11.2016, 10153/IJ (XXV.GP)*, available at www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/AB/AB_09719/imfname_570519.pdf (accessed on 7 June 2018); Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, *Beantwortung der parlamentarischen Anfrage betreffend „AMS-Beschäftigungssektor 31. Juli 2016“ 9721/AB vom 10.11.2016, 10157/IJ (XXV.GP)*, available at www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/AB/AB_09721/index.shtml (accessed on 7 June 2018).

Coverage of the Austrian labour market in Serbian and Bosnian media

The largest group of third-country nationals employed in Austria is made up of individuals originating from non-EU countries of former Yugoslavia (Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection, 2018). A survey of media in these countries reveals frequent discussions of the Austrian labour market and the shortage of skilled workers. The subject of shortage occupations plays a prominent role,⁸⁹ with discussion given to potential salary ranges.⁹⁰ Attention is drawn to the fact that highly skilled workers are in demand, mainly with qualifications in building and technical trades. Readers of these media are also informed about various matters related to taking up employment in Austria. Examples include: acquiring a Red-White-Red Card, official procedures for the recognition of diplomas (while referring to the www.berufsanerkennung.at website) and the language requirements to be met for employment in Austria.⁹¹ Serbian and Bosnian media have published articles about the Regulation for Skilled Workers and reported on seasonal employment opportunities existing in each of Austria's provinces for individuals with low skills levels (in tourism, food service and accommodation).⁹² Certain newspapers report for example a demand for 30,000 seasonal workers in Austria.⁹³ This brief survey of the media landscape in (non-EU) countries of former Yugoslavia shows that access to the labour market and measures for labour market integration in Austria are topics of public discussion in this region, from where third-country nationals in Austria originate.

- 89 Foreign nationals can be admitted as skilled workers in shortage occupations (Art. 12a Act Governing the Employment of Foreign Nationals). For this purpose, the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and International Affairs issues an annual regulation setting forth a list of shortage occupations in which foreign skilled workers may be employed. The shortage occupations listed for 2017 are primarily in technology, construction and medicine, which are among the ten economic sectors most frequently employing third-country nationals.
- 90 Radio Sarajevo (BiH), *Austrija traži radnike: Plaće i do 4.400€*. [Translation: Austria is looking for workers: Salaries of up to EUR 4,400], 5 February 2018, available at www.radiosarajevo.ba/vijesti/euphoria/austrija-trazi-radnike-place-i-do-4400-eura/290209 (accessed on 8 June 2018).
- 91 Kurir (SRB), *Austrija traži radnike: Deficitarno čak 27 zanimanja, a minimalac je 1.500 evra!* [Translation: Austria is looking for workers: Scarcity in as many as 27 occupations, with a minimum wage of EUR 1,500], 5 February 2018, available at www.kurir.rs/planeta/austrija/2989503/austrija-trazi-radnike-deficitarno-cak-27-zanimanja-a-minimalac-je-1-500-evra (accessed on 8 June 2018).
- 92 Blic (SRB), *Austrija traži kuvare i sobarice. Plata oko 2000 evra ali zu jedan bitan uslov*. [Translation: Austria is looking for chefs and chambermaids. A salary of about EUR 2,000, but there is one important requirement], 3 October 2017, available at www.blic.rs/slobodno-vreme/vesti/austrija-trazi-kuvare-i-sobarice-plata-oko-2000-evra-ali-uz-jedan-bitan-uslov/smjyffk (accessed on 8 June 2018).
- 93 TNT Portal (BiH), *Austrija traži 30.000 radnika: Plate su i do 1.850 eura, a nude se ovi poslovi!* [Translation: Austria in search of 30,000 seasonal workers. Income up to 1,850€ and these jobs are offered], 11 January 2017, available at <http://tntportal.ba/2017/01/austrija-trazi-30-000-radnika-plate-su-i-do-1-850-eura-a-nude-se-ovi-poslovi/> (accessed on 8 June 2018).

6. MAIN CHALLENGES

A number of challenges for developing and implementing measures and strategies aimed at labour market integration have been identified. A representative of the Social Affairs Ministry sees a general challenge in coping with the impact on labour market integration that has resulted from the migration flows in 2014–2016 and from the continued migratory pressure originating in the EU Member States that joined the Union in 2004.⁹⁴

Specifically, in relation to the target group, that is, third-country nationals with regular residence status in Austria and an employment permit (excluding beneficiaries of international protection, asylum seekers, students and researchers), particularly prominent challenges have emerged in two specific areas: labour market discrimination of third-country nationals; and other challenges relating to recognition of skills and qualification. These specific topics are discussed briefly in the following.

6.1 Labour market discrimination

One challenge that has frequently been addressed in the context of labour market integration involves the issue of discrimination, and specifically how to consider this issue early on when developing strategies and measures.

In principle, third-country nationals in Austria have equal access to the labour market, with the same wage conditions and social insurance provisions applying to this group as to workers with Austrian citizenship, according to a representative of the Social Affairs Ministry. Third-country nationals are equally eligible for example for the services and grants provided by the Public Employment Service and, in the event of joblessness, for unemployment insurance benefits.⁹⁵ People with a migration background

94 Written input by Heinz Kutrowatz, Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection, 25 May 2018.

95 Ebd.

are nonetheless often confronted with more difficult conditions in the labour market (Wolf, 2017; Peucker 2010). Specifically, this group is more strongly affected by unemployment (see section 2.2) and more frequently compelled to accept precarious employment, which in some cases involves poorer wages (Wolf, 2017:155).⁹⁶ According to Wolf (2017:155), a low level of education and training along with poor German skills are the factors that largely account for the difficult conditions under which migrants in Austria work. Wolf nonetheless sees this explanation as overly simplified and maintains that here, as in other areas of living, the factors at work are multi-dimensional (ibid.). Barriers are observed to exist at both individual and structural levels, while factors such as nationality, level of education, employment sector, sex and religious affiliation can play a role.

Research has additionally shown that discrimination and unequal treatment in employment, as practised for example in hiring and setting wages, raise the barrier that migrants must overcome to enter the job market (see, for example: Wolf, 2017:161; Hofer et al., 2013; ZARA, 2018:64). As Hofer et al. (2013) explain, particularly during recruiting, migrants can be disadvantaged as a result of prejudice rooted in stubborn stereotypes. Such observations were confirmed by the experts interviewed for this study, who recognized challenges such as prejudice at work, which can lead to employees being excluded from interactions with co-workers, as well as prejudice early on, during job placement and when applying for employment. An example cited involves women from certain countries, who in job placement are automatically classified in the low-wage sector without any regard to their qualifications.⁹⁷

The importance of taking action against discrimination and racism in employment was a subject of the 2010 National Action Plan for Integration (Austrian Federal Government, 2010:21). An official with the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs has stated the need to coordinate measures against discrimination with those aimed at improving German language skills and qualifications, with these factors being given more consideration in job applications.⁹⁸ Experts with the Chamber of

96 Interview with Johannes Peyrl, Vienna Chamber of Labour, 1 June 2018; interview with Azem Olcay, Austrian Trade Union Federation, 18 May 2018.

97 Ibid.

98 Interview with Martin Kienl, Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 4 June 2018.

Labour and the Austrian Trade Union Federation, on the other hand, see a need to define specific objectives aimed at combating discrimination, even when planning measures and integration strategies, and to take more action at a structural level against discrimination and racism in employment.⁹⁹

6.2 Recognition and qualification

Another special challenge identified in labour market integration was how to deal with, or counteract, the phenomenon referred to as “dequalification”.¹⁰⁰ Dequalification is defined as the inadequate utilization or devaluation of an individual’s professional skills.¹⁰¹ Migrants who have completed advanced education often work at jobs that do not match their qualification levels. On the one hand, this is strongly related to the problem of a lack of German proficiency, according to an expert with the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs.¹⁰² An expert with the Austrian Trade Union Federation sees a relationship with another factor, namely that low-wage sector employers prefer to hire employees with low qualification levels, as they assume that, compared with poorly educated individuals, employees who for example hold a university degree are more aware of their rights and would enforce them. Thus, migrants apparently make no mention of their qualifications in many cases for fear of not finding employment. This problem, while reportedly observed in the case of individuals having no migration background as well, more frequently affects among migrants.¹⁰³

99 Interview with Johannes Peyrl, Vienna Chamber of Labour, 1 June 2018; interview with Azem Olcay, Austrian Trade Union Federation, 18 May 2018.

100 Interview with Martin Kienl, Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 4 June 2018; interview with Azem Olcay, Austrian Trade Union Federation, 18 May 2018.

101 Duden, *Eintrag zu Dequalifizierung, die*. Available at www.duden.de/rechtschreibung/Dequalifizierung (accessed on 5 June 2018).

102 Interview with Martin Kienl, Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 4 June 2018.

103 Interview with Azem Olcay, Austrian Trade Union Federation, 18 May 2018.

7. MEASURES TO PROMOTE LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION – EXAMPLES FROM PRACTICE

This chapter is intended to provide some more detailed examples of labour market integration measures in Austria. Another focus is on measures that are frequently applied or that particularly target the group examined here, that is, third-country nationals with regular residence status in Austria and an employment permit (excluding beneficiaries of international protection, asylum seekers, students and researchers). The measures presented here have been selected on the basis of recommendations made by integration specialists in Austria. An attempt has also been made to select measures from various areas, as well as various types of measures that have been either introduced or modified since 2014, and are initiated and implemented by the State, and/or the recipients of state funding.

The integration agreement (measure 1) was described by specialists from the Austrian Integration Fund as a relevant and important measure,¹⁰⁴ and is also considered a key integration instrument in Austria for third-country nationals before and shortly after immigration. The anerkennung.at platform (measure 2) has been highlighted by specialists from the Austrian Integration Fund and the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs as an example of good practice,¹⁰⁵ and the platform is also intensively used by the target group.¹⁰⁶ The Mentoring for Migrants project (measure 3) has been described by many parties as a successful project and was also nominated for the 2011 Integration Award.¹⁰⁷ The measure Contact

104 Interview with representatives of Knowledge Management and International Affairs Team, Austrian Integration Fund, 9 May 2018.

105 Interview with representatives of Knowledge Management and International Affairs Team, Austrian Integration Fund, 9 May 2018; interview with Martin Kienl, Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 4 June 2018.

106 Interview with Azem Olcay, Austrian Trade Union Federation, 18 May 2018.

107 Interview with Martin Kienl, Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 4 June 2018; interview with representatives of Knowledge Management and International Affairs Team, Austrian Integration Fund, 9 May 2018; written input by Heinz Kutrowatz, Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection, 25 May 2018.

Points for Persons with Qualifications from Foreign Countries (measure 4) was highlighted by the Social Affairs Ministry as an example of successful practice and given an especially positive rating in an evaluation conducted in 2016.¹⁰⁸ Lastly, it should be remembered that the measures described here are only a selection and by no means an exhaustive listing of the examples of good practice in the field of integration, or specifically labour market integration, in Austria.

7.1 Measure 1 – Integration agreement

Table 1: Overview of integration agreement

Measure 1	
Name	Integration agreement
Type	Legislative/structural measure
Area	Enhancement of (soft) skills (<i>e.g. work-based language courses or other language courses to improve opportunities in the labour market, computer literacy, self-development</i>)
Access and target group	Specific measure for legally resident third-country nationals (excepting persons granted asylum and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection)
Coverage	National
Funded by	Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs
Link	www.help.gv.at/Portal.Node/hlpd/public/content/12/Seite.120500.html

Source: Representation by author.

The integration agreement is a legislative measure laid down in Part 2 Integration Measures of the Integration Act,¹⁰⁹ and in the Regulation of the Federal Minister for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs concerning the Integration Agreement (Regulation on the Integration Agreement 2017),¹¹⁰ which aims to encourage all third-country nationals legally residing in Austria to improve their language skills and become better oriented in society. Asylum seekers, persons granted asylum and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are not addressed by the measure.¹¹¹

108 Written input by Heinz Kutrowatz, Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection, 25 May 2018.

109 FLG I No. 68/2017.

110 FLG II No. 242/2017.

111 Austrian Integration Fund, *Was ist die Integrationsvereinbarung?*, available at www.integrationsfonds.at/sprache/integrationsvereinbarung/integrationsvereinbarung-2017/was-ist-die-integrationsvereinbarung/ (accessed on 26 July 2018).

7.1.1 Key features and access criteria

The general goal of the integration agreement is to require third-country nationals, on first obtaining a residence title,¹¹² to commit themselves to acquiring German language skills and a knowledge of the democratic system over a period of two years.¹¹³ The measure therefore places a particular focus on the first two years after the immigration of third-country nationals. Key activities here consist of two modules, the second building on the first. The first module is designed to teach German to level A2¹¹⁴ in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages¹¹⁵ while providing instruction in the fundamental values of the Austrian legal and social system. This module is mandatory and must be completed within two years. This can be achieved by taking an exam, for example, or by submitting a school-leaving certificate showing general university eligibility. Residence permits are normally not renewed where an individual is solely responsible for failing to complete module one. In addition, a return decision could be issued or a fine imposed (Peyrl, Neugschwendtner and Schmaus, 2017:204). The second module teaches

112 This applies for the following residence titles: “Red-White-Red Card” (fulfilled ex lege); “Red-White-Red Card Plus”; “Settlement Permit”; “Settlement Permit – Gainful Employment Excepted”; “Settlement Permit – Dependant”; “Family Members”; “Settlement Permit – Artist Mobility”; “Settlement Permit – Special cases of gainful employment”.

113 Help.gv.at, *Integrationsvereinbarung 2017*, available at <https://www.help.gv.at/Portal.Node/hlpd/public/content/12/Seite.120500.html> (accessed on 29 May 2018).

114 A2 – Basic User: Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need. (GER, *Gemeinsamer Europäischer Referenzrahmen für Sprachen*, available at www.europaeischer-referenzrahmen.de/ (accessed on 29 May 2018); CEFR, *Global scale – Table 1 (CEFR 3.3): Common Reference levels*, available at www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-1-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-global-scale (accessed on 18 July 2018)).

115 GER, *Gemeinsamer Europäischer Referenzrahmen für Sprachen*, available at www.europaeischer-referenzrahmen.de/ (accessed on 29 May 2018).

German to language level B1¹¹⁶ and conveys values in more detail (Art. 7 para 2 Integration Act). This module is mandatory if the person wishes to obtain the Permanent Residence – EU title or Austrian citizenship.¹¹⁷

The integration agreement is therefore not an optional measure. Access is regulated during the process of first-time obtaining a residence title and by signing the integration agreement. When first granted a residence title, third-country nationals must be notified of their obligation to fulfil the integration agreement; evidence of this notification must be provided (Art. 9 para 1 Integration Act). Accordingly, third-country nationals are informed about the measure when they are issued residence titles and when signing the integration agreement.

7.1.2 Contextualization and development

The integration agreement was introduced in 2003 and is currently still implemented in Austria.¹¹⁸ The original objective was to promote integration before immigration and shortly afterwards by “strengthening integration efforts” and making these obligatory by means of the integration agreement.¹¹⁹ Since then, the agreement has been revised several times, and particularly by aliens law amendments in 2005¹²⁰ and 2011¹²¹, and through

116 B1 – Independent User: Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. (GER, *Gemeinsamer Europäischer Referenzrahmen für Sprachen*, available at www.europaeischer-referenzrahmen.de/ (accessed on 29 May 2018); CEFR, *Global scale – Table 1 (CEFR 3.3): Common Reference levels*, available at www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-1-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-global-scale (accessed on 18 July 2018)).

117 Help.gv.at, *Integrationsvereinbarung 2017*, available at <https://www.help.gv.at/Portal.Node/hlpd/public/content/12/Seite.120500.html> (accessed on 29 May 2018).

118 FLG I 75/1997 in the version of FLG I 126/2002, detailed in the Regulation by the Federal Ministry of the Interior governing the Integration Agreement (IV–V), FLG II 338/2002.

119 Act Amending the Aliens Law 2002, Preamble, p. 24–25, available at www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXI/I/I_011172/fname_000786.pdf (accessed on 29 May 2018).

120 FLG I No. 100/2005.

121 FLG I No. 38/2011.

the introduction of the Integration Act in 2017 (Szymanski, 2017:63; AT EMN NCP, 2015:22–23). With the introduction of this act, the integration agreement was ultimately removed from the Settlement and Residence Act¹²² and simultaneously laid down as part of the newly introduced Integration Act. Responsibility now lies with the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs and no longer with the Federal Ministry of the Interior. The curriculum was also extended to include modules touching on values, and the courses can now only be offered by institutions that have been certified by the Austrian Integration Fund (Szymanski, 2017:63).

Experts from the Austrian Integration Fund view these changes to the integration agreement made as part of the Integration Act additionally as an attempt to unify and structure integration measures, a policy move they consider to also have been made in response to the migration flows from 2014 to 2016.¹²³

7.1.3 Funding and implementation

Responsibility for the integration agreement is borne by the local district administrative authority (Art. 8 para 1 Integration Act in conjunction with Art. 3 and 4 Settlement and Residence Act). Since 2017 the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs has also been responsible for detailed provisions governing the content of modules 1 and 2 (Art. 7 para 3 Integration Act), which gives it a coordinating role. Lastly, the Austrian Integration Fund is responsible for the practical handling of the integration agreement, and the courses are, in turn, held by institutions based in Austria or abroad that have been certified by the fund.

Following the enactment of the Integration Act in October 2017, the integration agreement is now funded by the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs; the agreement was previously funded by the Federal Ministry of the Interior.¹²⁴ The agreement may also incur costs for participants if they take courses from certified institutions to prepare for the

122 FLG I No. 100/2005.

123 Interview with representatives of Knowledge Management and International Affairs Team, Austrian Integration Fund, 9 May 2018.

124 Interview with Martin Kienl, Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 4 June 2018.

integration exam required to complete module 1.¹²⁵ For certain third-country nationals, the Federal State may reimburse participants for at most 300 teaching units or 50 per cent of course fees (Art. 10 para 1 Regulation on the Integration Agreement). Fees are reimbursed only to a maximum of EUR 750, however. In addition, the individual must have attended at least 75 per cent of the course and have completed this course by taking an integration exam within 18 months of the start of the fulfilment period. Reimbursements are provided as vouchers issued by a municipal authority or district commission to eligible individuals.¹²⁶

7.1.4 Evaluation and impact

The integration agreement is intended to promote the integration of third-country nationals legally residing in Austria. The objective of the measure is to “enable them to participate in social, economic and cultural life in Austria” (Art. 7 para 1 Integration Act). The purpose is therefore to improve German language skills and acquire knowledge of the democratic system and associated fundamental principles.¹²⁷ Accordingly, the integration agreement is not an instrument that directly targets labour market integration; instead it is a preparatory measure in terms of language and instilling values, which – among other things – will ultimately help foster successful integration into the labour market.¹²⁸

As part of the language institution certification process, the curriculum and exams in particular are regularly evaluated by the Austrian Integration Fund.¹²⁹ The results and the details of the methodology adopted for evaluation are not made public, however. Moreover, since the changes recently adopted were introduced only as of 19 October 2017 by the Integration Act, there is as of this writing no comprehensive evaluation available for the measure in its current form. Accordingly, no general statements or extensive analysis concerning the impacts and objectives achieved by the measure can be given at this juncture.

125 [Help.gv.at, *Integrationsvereinbarung 2017*](http://www.help.gv.at/Portal.Node/hlpd/public/content/12/Seite.120500.html), available at www.help.gv.at/Portal.Node/hlpd/public/content/12/Seite.120500.html (accessed on 29 May 2018).

126 *Ibid.*

127 *Ibid.*

128 Interview with Martin Kienl, Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 4 June 2018.

129 *Ibid.*

Over the years, however, a number of challenges have been identified in conjunction with the integration agreement. One point repeatedly raised is the mandatory nature of the integration agreement (see for example Scheck, 2003; Netzwerk SprachenRechte, 2005; Austrian Association for German as a Foreign/Second Language, 2005; Plutzar, 2010; Pöschl, 2012). Those raising it argue that compulsion is an obstacle to language acquisition and that the focus of learning is not oriented on learning the language but on passing the examination.¹³⁰ Similar criticisms are voiced about the punishments for not honouring the integration agreement.¹³¹ The Austrian Association for German as a Foreign/Second Language views the “threat of penalties” during the language acquisition process as “counterproductive for language teaching” (Plutzar, 2010; Pöschel, 2012).¹³² Pöschel (2012) also criticizes the fact that a right of residence is linked to language acquisition. Similarly, a representative of the Chamber of Labour considers it problematic that basic rights such as security of residence should be linked to language acquisition. In terms of course content, this observer continues, a greater focus on clarification of participants’ rights in relation to the labour market would be welcome – particularly in modules covering the topic of work.¹³³

Despite these challenges, the integration agreement is and has been acknowledged as a central instrument for promoting the integration of third-country nationals since its introduction in 2003. This continuity, as well as the recent anchoring of the measure in the Integration Act, suggests that this measure will continue to be implemented in Austria in the future.

130 Interview with Johannes Peyrl, Vienna Chamber of Labour, 1 June 2018.

131 Interview with Johannes Peyrl, Vienna Chamber of Labour, 1 June 2018; ÖDaF, *Stellungnahme zur Neuregelung der Integrationsvereinbarung im Niederlassungs- und Aufenthaltsgesetz (NAG) 2005*, April 2005, p. 1, available at http://sprachenrechte.at/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/OEDaF_Stellungnahme-NAG-2005.pdf (accessed on 5 June 2018).

132 ÖDaF, *Stellungnahme zur Neuregelung der Integrationsvereinbarung im Niederlassungs- und Aufenthaltsgesetz (NAG) 2005*, April 2005, p. 1, available at http://sprachenrechte.at/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/OEDaF_Stellungnahme-NAG-2005.pdf (accessed on 5 June 2018).

133 Interview with Johannes Peyrl, Vienna Chamber of Labour, 1 June 2018.

7.2 Measure 2 – Berufsanerkennung.at

Table 2: Overview of Berufsanerkennung.at

Measure 2	
Name	Berufsanerkennung.at
Type	Legislative/structural measure
Area	Training and qualification (<i>e.g. vocational training, recognition of qualifications/skill assessments, combating over-qualification, measures to accelerate integration of third-country nationals into the EU labour market, digital tools</i>)
Access and target group	Generally accessible measure for third-country nationals and EU citizens
Coverage	National
Funded by	Austrian Integration Fund
Link	www.berufsanerkennung.at/

Source: Representation by author.

The Berufsanerkennung.at platform is a statutory measure set out in Art. 4 of the Recognition and Assessment Act.¹³⁴ This public web portal is open for everyone to use, regardless of nationality and residence status.¹³⁵ Alongside EU citizens, the portal also targets third-country nationals in particular (including beneficiaries of international protection); this is seen among other things in the fact that the service is offered in the languages of the major regions of origin for migrants in Austria.¹³⁶ The measure is therefore generally accessible.

7.2.1 Key features and access criteria

The Berufsanerkennung.at website summarizes all information that is important for the recognition of professions and provides an online guide to the recognition of degrees and qualifications acquired outside Austria. The platform's core offering is first and foremost its online guide that helps individuals with degrees and qualifications obtained outside Austria with the process of having their completed education recognized. To do so, users

134 FLG I No. 55/2016.

135 Recognition and Assessment Act 2016, Government Proposal, Explanatory Notes, p. 3, available at www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/II/I_01084/fname_524424.pdf (accessed on 24 May 2018).

136 Ibid.

answer questions about the qualification, the country in which it was obtained and the province in which the profession will be pursued. These data are then used to determine the responsible government authority and which information is then required or which steps are necessary in order to complete the recognition process. The website also provides direct links to application forms.¹³⁷ The platform additionally offers descriptions of 2,000 separate professions and the associated contact points for the recognition of foreign educational or professional qualifications. This is intended to make it easier for migrants to identify the Austrian equivalent of their qualification, thereby facilitating their entry into the Austrian labour market. Alongside information about the recognition of professions¹³⁸ and working¹³⁹ in Austria, the page informs employers about matters that need to be considered if they are planning to hire a foreign employee as well as showcasing several success stories.¹⁴⁰

Users of the platform are not subject to any particular access restrictions, nor is a fee charged for the use of the service. Use is therefore voluntary, free of charge and not linked to belonging to any particular group. Since the platform is also a publicly accessible internet portal, there is also no distinction made between EU citizens and third-country nationals as user groups. Nor can anyone be excluded from the measure.

Moreover, access is also possible at any stage of the migration process. Since it is primarily a source of information about labour market entry and recognition, the measure does focus more on the period before entering Austria and taking up residence. However, the platform also provides additional information about vocational training, and so can also be used after successful integration into the labour market.¹⁴¹

137 Ibid. p. 4.

138 See sections: Procedure for formal recognition, Austrian Recognition and Evaluation Act, Key terms and Financial support.

139 See sections: Entering the employment market, Self-employment, and Further education and training.

140 *Berufsanerkennung.at* in Österreich, *Anerkennungs-Wegweiser*, available at www.berufsanerkennung.at/ (accessed on 24 May 2018).

141 Ibid.

7.2.2 Contextualization and development

Launched in 2012 and operated continuously since then, *Berufsanerkennung.at* is a service provided by the Austrian Integration Fund and the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs.¹⁴² When the site was launched, there was a need to provide an overview of – and guidance to help complete – the official steps required for recognition of foreign educational and professional qualifications in Austria. Talks and cooperation on the part of various stakeholders resulted in an initial version of the *Berufsanerkennung.at* platform.¹⁴³

The site has also been added to regularly since 2012. In 2014, the platform underwent a complete revision. Changes involved streamlining site usability (just six clicks are now required to access key information), the addition of nearly a hundred descriptions of key professions, and the translation of the service into English, Turkish and Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian alongside the original German.¹⁴⁴ As part of the enactment of the Recognition and Assessment Act, further revisions and expansions were made to the site in 2016.¹⁴⁵ Art. 4 of the Recognition and Assessment Act also requires the Austrian Integration Fund to set up an electronic platform (and recognition portal). This serves “the purposes of information, orientation and transparency for applicants in relation to procedures for recognition, assessment and the entitlement to practise a profession” (Art. 4 para 1 Recognition and Assessment Act). The explanatory notes on the act state that the prominent profile and rising demand for the website www.berufsanerkennung.at mean that it should be reworked and expanded.¹⁴⁶ One stated goal was to simplify

142 Austrian Integration Fund, *Information und Förderung von Berufsanerkennung*, available at www.integrationsfonds.at/newsbeitrag/information-und-foerderung-von-berufsanerkennung-896/ (accessed on 23 May 2018).

143 Interview with representatives of Knowledge Management and International Affairs Team, Austrian Integration Fund, 9 May 2018.

144 APA-OTS, *Berufsanerkennung.at: Mit 6 Klicks zur zuständigen Stelle*. Press Release, Vienna, 4 June 2014, available at www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20140604_OTS0059/berufsanerkennungat-mit-6-klicks-zur-zustaendigen-stelle (accessed on 23 May 2018).

145 Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, *Berufsanerkennung*, available at www.bmeia.gv.at/integration/berufsanerkennung/ (accessed on 23 May 2018).

146 Recognition and Assessment Act 2016, Government Proposal, Explanatory Notes, p. 4, available at www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/II/I_01084/fname_524424.pdf (accessed on 24 May 2018).

access to the platform for beneficiaries of international protection by also offering the service in Arabic and Farsi/Dari as the main languages of origin of individuals holding this status.¹⁴⁷ This was also a response to the rise in asylum seekers in Austria during the years 2014 to 2016.¹⁴⁸

7.2.3 Funding and implementation

Art. 4 of the Recognition and Assessment Act sets out the details of how the measure is to be coordinated, structured and implemented. The Austrian Integration Fund is assigned responsibility for setting up the recognition portal (Art. 4 para 1 Recognition and Assessment Act) and reports to the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs (Art. 4 para 5 Recognition and Assessment Act). The project is also funded by the Austrian Integration Fund.¹⁴⁹ In terms of the overall estimated financial impact on the Federal Budget and other public budgets, a total of EUR 180,000 was set aside for the establishment of the portal in 2016. In the following years, a budget of EUR 95,000 was allocated.¹⁵⁰

The Act also requires the respective authorities to provide the Austrian Integration Fund with information relevant for the measure¹⁵¹ within six months of when the act enters into force, followed by annual updates (Art. 4 para 3 Recognition and Assessment Act). The collection of information, as well as its preparation and linking to relevant bodies – i.e. the measure's actual implementation – is the responsibility of the Austrian Integration Fund, while the information itself must be provided to the fund by various authorities and actors.

147 Austrian Integration Fund, *Information und Förderung von Berufsankennung*, available at www.integrationsfonds.at/newsbeitrag/information-und-foerderung-von-berufsankennung-896/ (accessed on 23 May 2018).

148 Recognition and Assessment Act, Government Proposal, Preamble and Impact Evaluation, p. 1, available at www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/II/I_01084/fname_524423.pdf (accessed on 6 June 2018).

149 Written Input by Verena Grünstäudl, Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 13 June 2018.

150 Recognition and Assessment Act, Government Proposal, Preamble and Impact Evaluation, p. 1, available at www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/II/I_01084/fname_524423.pdf (accessed on 6 June 2018).

151 Information relevant for the procedure includes: the documents required for the application; necessary translations and certifications; the costs for the applicant; the maximum duration of the procedure (Art. 4 para 2 Recognition and Assessment Act).

Conclusive data on how actively the platform is promoted was not available. Several authorities, bodies and counselling centres refer clients to the site, however.¹⁵² The platform also appears to be well-known within the communities in Austria and in the countries of origin. The site is mentioned by Serbian and Bosnian newspapers, for example.¹⁵³

7.2.4 Evaluation and impact

Since a comprehensive evaluation of the measure was not possible for the purposes of this study, conclusive statements about the achievement of targets and overall success cannot be made here. However, several specialists interviewed for this study stated that the platform is heavily used by migrants and particularly by the target group investigated by this study.¹⁵⁴ This is also reflected in the anonymous statistics collected by the Austrian Integration Fund. In 2016, for example, demand rose 40 per cent year-on-year to over 210,000 site visits.¹⁵⁵ There are currently no plans to discontinue this measure.

152 See e.g. Public Employment Service Vorarlberg, *Anerkennung ausländischer Qualifikationen*, available at www.ams.at/vbg/service-arbeitsuchende/arbeitsuche/anererkennung-auslaendischer-qualifikationen (accessed on 24 May 2018); Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, *Berufsanerkennung*, available at www.bmeia.gv.at/integration/berufsanerkennung/ (accessed on 24 May 2018); interview with Azem Olcay, Austrian Trade Union Federation, 18 May 2018.

153 See for Serbia e.g.: Kurir (SRB), *Austrija traži radnike: Deficitarno čak 27 zanimanja, a minimalac je 1.500 evra!* [Translation: Austria is looking for labour force: Scarcity in as many as 27 occupations, with a minimum wage of 1,500€], 5 February 2018, available at www.kurir.rs/planeta/austrija/2989503/austrija-trazi-radnike-deficitarno-cak-27-zanimanja-a-minimalac-je-1-500-evra (accessed on 8 June 2018); buka, *Austrija traži radnike: Čak 27 deficitarnih zanimanja, a minimalac je 1.500 eura!*, 6 February 2018, available at www.6yka.com/novost/135260/austrija-trazi-radnike-cak-27-deficitarnih-zanimanja-a-minimalac-je-1-500-eura (accessed on 24 May 2018); Hola posao, *Austrija traži radnike: Nedostaje im 27 profila, a minimalac je 1.500 EUR*, 5 February 2018, available at www.halooglasi.com/clanci/posao/austrija-trazi-radnike-nedostaje-im-27-profil/552169 (accessed on 24 May 2018); novi, *AUSTRIJA TRAŽI RADNIKE, PRILIKA ZA ČAK 27 RAZLIČITIH ZANIMANJA: Minimalac 1500 eura!*, 5 February 2018, available at <https://novi.ba/clanak/181507/austrija-trazi-radnike-prilika-za-cak-27-razlicitih-zanimanja-minimalac-1500-eura> (accessed on 24 May 2018).

154 Interview with representatives of Knowledge Management and International Affairs Team, Austrian Integration Fund, 9 May 2018; interview with Azem Olcay, Austrian Trade Union Federation, 18 May 2018.

155 Austrian Integration Fund, *Information und Förderung von Berufsanerkennung*, available at www.integrationsfonds.at/newsbeitrag/information-und-foerderung-von-berufsanerkennung-896/ (accessed on 23 May 2018).

7.3 Measure 3 – Mentoring for migrants

Table 3: Overview of mentoring for migrants

Measure 3	
Name	Mentoring for migrants
Type	Long-term project
Area	Provision of information and counselling (e.g. enhancement of knowledge about the labour market, career counselling, mentoring, coaching, website, leaflets, IT programmes)
Access and target group	Generally accessible measure for people with a migration background.
Coverage	National
Funded by	Austrian Economic Chamber ¹⁵⁶ and the “go international” internationalization initiative ¹⁵⁷ Personnel and material expense: Austrian Integration Fund ¹⁵⁸ and the Public Employment Service ^{159, 160}
Link	www.wko.at/site/Mentoring/mentoring.html

Source: Representation by author.

Mentoring for Migrants is a long-term project that has been offered systematically since 2008. The programme targets persons with a migration background; this includes third-country nationals (the target group for this study and beneficiaries of international protection) and EU citizens. The target group is also regularly expanded. As one example, attempts have been made since 2015 to reach out to beneficiaries of international protection (Koppenberg, 2015:61), and university graduates with a migration background will also be addressed in the next semester.¹⁶¹ The programme is therefore a general measure for labour market integration. Since participation is possible up to 10 years after immigration, the measure targets the short- to medium-term period following entry into Austria.

156 Austrian Economic Chamber, *Die Wirtschaftskammer*, available at www.wko.at/service/oe/wirtschaftskammer.html (accessed on 22 May 2018).

157 Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy/Austrian Economic Chamber, *go international*, available at www.go-international.at (accessed on 24 May 2018).

158 Austrian Integration Fund, *Österreichischer Integrationsfonds*, available at www.integrationsfonds.at/ (accessed on 22 May 2018).

159 Public Employment Service Austria, *Über AMS*, available at www.ams.at/ueber-ams/ueber-ams (accessed on 22 May 2018).

160 Austrian Economic Chamber, *Mentoring für MigrantInnen – Projektbericht Deutsch 2015*, available at www.integrationsfonds.at/fileadmin/content/AT/Downloads/StipendienFoerderungen/Projektbericht_Deutsch_2015.pdf (accessed on 24 May 2018).

161 Interview with Margit Kreuzhuber, Austrian Economic Chamber, 22 May 2018.

7.3.1 Key features and access criteria

Mentoring for Migrants is a programme run jointly by the Austrian Economic Chamber, the Austrian Integration Fund and the Public Employment Service. In the project, individuals with experience in business are teamed up as mentors with people with a migration background as the mentees. Over a six-month period, programme mentors provide support to mentees in the form of guidance, advice and contacts to facilitate integration into the Austrian labour market.¹⁶²

The Mentoring for Migrants programme is voluntary and is free of charge to participants. While neither nationality nor residence status are relevant for eligibility, mentees should nonetheless meet the following requirements:

- Highest level of education achieved – at least an apprenticeship or similar qualification;
- Job-seeking and “job-ready”;
- Unrestricted access to the Austrian labour market;
- Adequate German language skills (at least level B1);
- Not resident in Austria for longer than 10 years;
- Committed, outgoing and willing to learn.

Mentors need to meet the following conditions:

- Extensive expertise and professional experience;
- Management position or adequate professional experience;
- Social skills.

Mentees are selected via a written application process and a personal interview at the Austrian Integration Fund. Mentors can apply by emailing the Austrian Economic Chamber; they are then notified by telephone and asked to complete a questionnaire. A process involving all of the programme stakeholders – Austrian Economic Chamber, Austrian Integration Fund and Public Employment Service – is then used to match mentors to their mentees. Professional, regional and language-related aspects play a key role here (Neuwirth, 2016:40). Applicants receive confirmation of acceptance only after matching, as a suitable match with a mentor is a prerequisite for participating in the programme.¹⁶³ Participants are informed beforehand

162 Austrian Integration Fund, *Mentoring für MigrantInnen*, available at www.integrationsfonds.at/weiterbildung/mentoring/ (accessed on 22 May 2018).

163 Interview with Margit Kreuzhuber, Austrian Economic Chamber, 22 May 2018.

about the programme timetable and content during information events, and can then get to know one another at an inaugural event (Neuwirth, 2016:40–41). The measure does not envisage any reasons to exclude third-country nationals.

7.3.2 Contextualization and development

Mentoring for Migrants was launched in 2008 and has been expanded continuously since that time. A new semester therefore will start in September 2018. At the time the project was launched, Austria lacked a programme for labour market integration that focused specifically on persons with a migration background and higher educational qualifications (e.g. apprenticeship or university degree). While in Canada as part of a European delegation, representatives of the Austrian Economic Chamber learned of a Canadian mentoring programme for migrants and realized there was an opportunity to establish a targeted measure for this group in Austria. On their return, they worked with the Austrian Integration Fund and the Public Employment Service to develop the Mentoring for Migrants project.¹⁶⁴

7.3.3 Funding and implementation

The Austrian Economic Chamber and the “go international” internationalization initiative fund the programme, while the Austrian Integration Fund and the Austrian Public Employment Service contribute resources in the form of personnel and materials.¹⁶⁵ Since the programme operates both at a federal and state level, and since there are, for example, major differences between the States in terms of scope (a total of 120 mentor/mentee pairs were supported in Vienna last year, with roughly 20 pairs in other provinces), exact data on budgets are not available.¹⁶⁶

The state offices of the Austrian Economic Chamber, Public Employment Service and Austrian Economic Chamber are responsible for project implementation. The Austrian Economic Chamber provides support

164 Ibid.

165 Austrian Economic Chamber, *Mentoring für MigrantInnen – Projektbericht Deutsch 2015*, available at www.integrationsfonds.at/fileadmin/content/AT/Downloads/StipendienFoerderungen/Projektbericht_Deutsch_2015.pdf (accessed on 24 May 2018).

166 Interview with Margit Kreuzhuber, Austrian Economic Chamber, 22 May 2018.

for mentors, while the Austrian Integration Fund and Public Employment Service support mentees.

Before each semester, the Austrian Economic Chamber publishes an invitation to tender and may post adverts in business journals to acquire mentors. The Public Employment Service and Austrian Integration Fund advertise the programme on their website and also make mention of it to potential mentees in counselling sessions.¹⁶⁷ Other counselling centres such as the native-language counselling offered by the Austrian Trade Union Federation also refer people to the project.¹⁶⁸

7.3.4 Evaluation and impact

The goals defined for the mentoring programme extend beyond successful integration into the labour market. Key topics of focus include personal development (e.g. by building up self-confidence and motivation), vocational orientation, achievements and networking (e.g. by creating a career plan and being referred for job interviews), as well as knowledge sharing, communication and the management of conflicts and criticism.¹⁶⁹ From the various evaluations made and the reputation of the project itself, it is clear that these goals have been achieved. Assessments of effectiveness should also take programme coverage into account, however. Although it is a long-term project that has been making an important contribution to the labour market integration of migrants for a good 10 years, the programme can simultaneously handle only a small number of participants.

The Mentoring for Migrants project has been cited as an example of good practice by a number of commentators.¹⁷⁰ The programme also

167 Ibid.

168 Interview with Azem Olcay, Austrian Trade Union Federation, 18 May 2018.

169 Austrian Economic Chamber, *Mentoring für MigrantInnen – Projektbericht Deutsch 2015*, available at www.integrationsfonds.at/fileadmin/content/AT/Downloads/StipendienFoerderungen/Projektbericht_Deutsch_2015.pdf (accessed on 24 May 2018); Austrian Economic Chamber, *Mentoring für Migrantinnen und Migranten–Ergebnisse*, available at www.wko.at/site/Mentoring/Ergebnisse.html (accessed on 31 May 2018).

170 Interview with Martin Kienl, Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 4 June 2018; written input by Heinz Kutrowatz, Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection, 25 May 2018; interview with Representatives of Knowledge Management and International Affairs Team, Austrian Integration Fund, 9 Mai 2018.

received a special prize in 2011 from the European Commission as part of the European Enterprise Promotion Awards, was nominated for the 2011 Integration Prize and has been included in the EU's best practice database for integration (Austrian Economic Chamber, 2012:15).

At the close of each semester, the Austrian Economic Chamber asks mentors to complete a project evaluation survey; the results of this survey are then incorporated into the project's further development.¹⁷¹ Topics addressed by the survey include the effectiveness of the programme as an instrument for labour market integration, the type of support offered, the benefit for mentors themselves or the extent to which migrants make a contribution to improving the state of the economy in Austria.¹⁷²

As examples, the evaluation of the mentoring semester in Vienna/Lower Austria for 2017/2018 revealed that 100 per cent of those surveyed viewed mentoring as a useful instrument for supporting labour market integration, while 79 per cent considered their mentor role as offering a personal benefit and 100 per cent of mentors stated that multilingualism and international knowledge transfer make a contribution to strengthening Austria as a place for doing business.

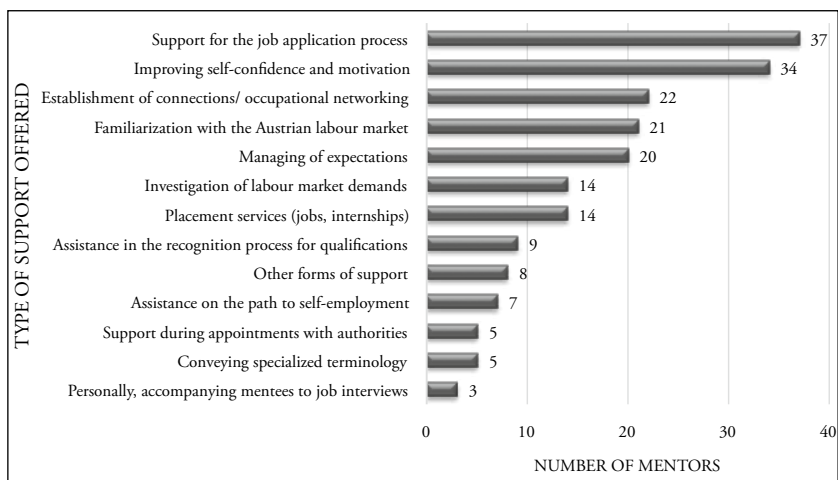
The type of support offered was also surveyed by the questionnaire. From responses provided by mentors, it is clear that the mentors primarily offer their mentees support for the job application process (37%), and in improving self-confidence and motivation (34%). Other important areas where support is offered include networking (22%), familiarizing mentees with the labour market situation (21%) and managing mentee expectations (20%). This has also been confirmed in interviews with mentees themselves.¹⁷³

171 Interview with Margit Kreuzhuber, Austrian Economic Chamber, 22 Mai 2018.

172 Austrian Economic Chamber, *Mentoring für Migrantinnen und Migranten – Ergebnisse*, available at www.wko.at/site/Mentoring/Ergebnisse.html (accessed on 31 May 2018).

173 Austrian Economic Chamber, *Mentoring für MigrantInnen – Projektbericht Deutsch 2015*, available at www.integrationsfonds.at/fileadmin/content/AT/Downloads/StipendienFoerderungen/Projektbericht_Deutsch_2015.pdf (accessed on 24 May 2018).

Figure 9: Type and number of support offered in the mentoring partnership



Source: Austrian Economic Chamber, *Mentoring für Migrantinnen und Migranten, Ergebnisse*, accessed on 31 May 2018, Representation by author.

In 2014, Erich Neuwirth worked with the Austrian Integration Fund to conduct an evaluation of the programme that considered the perspective and opinions of mentees, carrying out an empirical/qualitative survey using a standardized online questionnaire (Neuwirth, 2016:46). The latter was sent by the Austrian Integration Fund to 863 participants of courses held from 2008 to 2012. Of these, 177 (27%) completed the form, which had been developed by Neuwirth and expanded by the Austrian Integration Fund (Neuwirth, 2016:47–66). Alongside demographic details, questions also covered personal development, satisfaction, career relevance and the mentee’s opinion of the project (ibid.:47–65). Generally speaking, the similarity between mentor and mentee played a key role in terms of satisfaction, while ethnicity and gender were both less important (ibid.:86–87). Overall, the results of the evaluation cast the programme in a positive light.

One expert from the Austrian Economic Chamber who was involved in the project at the development stage sees a challenge in managing mentee expectations. These are often very high, she maintains, especially since roughly a third of earlier participants had found employment after six months. Many of the new mentees on the programme therefore also expect to find a job in a short space of time. Yet, as she points out, participation in the project does not itself guarantee successful integration into the labour

market. As she sees it, the difficulty is therefore ensuring mentee expectations are appropriately realistic.¹⁷⁴

Overall, the Mentoring for Migrants project can be cited as an example of good practice. A project semester is currently in progress. According to an expert from the Austrian Economic Chamber, it is very likely that the Mentoring for Migrants project will continue to be run in the future.¹⁷⁵

7.4 Measure 4 – Contact Points for Persons with Qualifications from Foreign Countries

Table 4: Overview of Contact Points for Persons with Qualifications from Foreign Countries

Measure 4	
Name	Contact Points for Persons with Qualifications from Foreign Countries
Type	Legislative/structural measure
Area	Training and qualification (<i>see example in the overview of measure 2</i>)
Access and target group	Generally accessible measure for third-country nationals and EU citizens
Coverage	National
Funded by	Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection
Link	www.anlaufstelle-erkennung.at/anlaufstellen

Source: Representation by author.

In 2016 the counselling centres were anchored in law by the Recognition and Assessment Act¹⁷⁶ and thus became a legislative and structural measure. This measure targets individuals residing in Austria who have qualifications acquired in foreign countries. This means that access to the measure is not conditional on a person's country of origin or nationality. Besides the target group, namely third-country nationals, beneficiaries of international protection and EU citizens also have access to the measure. The Contact Points for Persons with Qualifications from Foreign Countries measure is therefore a general measure for labour market integration. The measure is implemented throughout Austria and therefore covers the entire country.

174 Interview with Margit Kreuzhuber, Austrian Economic Chamber, 22 May 2018.

175 Ibid.

176 FLG I No. 55/2016.

7.4.1 Key features and access criteria

The Contact Points for Persons with Qualifications from Foreign Countries measure is a voluntary, free and multilingual service that provides information, advice and guidance throughout the recognition and assessment process for qualifications. The programme does not distinguish between third-country nationals and EU citizens. The programme aims to simplify “labour market integration in jobs appropriate to individuals’ qualifications”. Essentially, the measure is therefore open to all individuals residing in Austria with qualifications acquired outside Austria who require guidance on their recognition or potential value for employment. Interested persons are required to arrange an appointment in their Federal State’s contact points; a separate approval process is not envisaged (Social Affairs Ministry, 2018:2).

The Contact Points for Persons with Qualifications from Foreign Countries measure can also be used at any point in time in the migration process. Since questions about recognition and qualifications are usually relevant at the start of this process, however, the measure is most effective in the first years after immigration. The core tasks for the counselling centres include the following:

- Guidance on recognition;
- Clarification of whether formal recognition is needed or possible;
- Obtaining notarized translations of diplomas, certificates, school marks and other documents;
- Forwarding references to an assessment body;
- Guidance throughout the recognition procedure;
- Providing information about further options for education and counselling.¹⁷⁷

The counselling centres are also required to collect anonymized data about individuals, including their age, gender, nationality and level of education. These data are then to be sent annually to various ministries and published by the Social Affairs Ministry (Art. 5 para 2 Recognition and Assessment Act).

177 *Anlaufstellen für Personen mit im Ausland erworbenen Qualifikationen, Anlaufstellen für Personen mit im Ausland erworbenen Qualifikationen*, available at www.anlaufstellen-erkennung.at/anlaufstellen (accessed on 21 June 2018).

7.4.2 Contextualization and development

Since 2013 counselling on the recognition of foreign qualifications has been offered by nine contact points in Austria (Social Affairs Ministry, n.d.:2). The Recognition and Assessment Act was then enacted in July 2016. The act specifies that the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection¹⁷⁸ is to use these existing structures to establish procedures for the recognition of qualifications (Art. 5 para 1 Recognition and Assessment Act). The measure has been implemented in Austria since this date.

One target of the act is to reduce employment in jobs inappropriate to individuals' qualifications, since this can lead to substandard wage and labour conditions. This, in turn, can lead to effects that present obstacles to integration.¹⁷⁹ This counselling centre expansion therefore aims to provide a comprehensive, nationwide counselling service for Austria and offer migrants support for labour market integration that adequately reflects their qualifications.

7.4.3 Funding and implementation

The Contact Points for Persons with Qualifications from Foreign Countries measure is funded by the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection, as stated in the Recognition and Assessment Act.¹⁸⁰ In terms of the overall financial impact on the Federal Budget and other public budgets, a total of EUR 1,441,400 was set aside for the establishment of counselling centres in 2016. An additional budget of around EUR 200,000 has been set aside for the programme up to 2020.¹⁸¹

Afterwards, nationwide coordination of the contact points in Austria will be the responsibility of the Counselling Centre for Migrants NGO.¹⁸²

178 At that time, the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection.

179 Recognition and Assessment Act, Government Proposal, Preamble and Impact Evaluation, p. 3, available at www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/I/I_01084/fname_524423.pdf (accessed on 6 June 2018).

180 Written input by Heinz Kutrowatz, Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection, 25 May 2018.

181 Recognition and Assessment Act, Government Proposal, Preamble and Impact Evaluation, p. 1, available at www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/I/I_01084/fname_524423.pdf (accessed on 6 June 2018).

182 Beratungszentrum für Migranten und Migrantinnen, *Anlaufstellen für Personen mit im Ausland erworbenen Qualifikationen*, available at www.migrant.at/unsere-einrichtungen/ast-wien/ (accessed on 11 June 2018).

Implementation, i.e. the actual counselling work, will then take place at provincial level and be performed by the following organizations:

- Contact Point Vienna and Contact Point Lower Austria and North Burgenland: Counselling Centre for Migrants;¹⁸³
- Contact Point Upper Austria and Salzburg: migrare – Centre for Migrants in Upper Austria;¹⁸⁴
- Contact Point Styria, Carinthia and South Burgenland: ZEBRA – Intercultural Counselling and Therapy Centre;¹⁸⁵
- Contact Point Tyrol and Vorarlberg: ZeMiT – Centre for Migrants in Tyrol.¹⁸⁶

The target group is informed about the contact points via the berufsanerkennung.at internet portal (see measure 2) or through counselling centres for migrants.¹⁸⁷

7.4.4 Evaluation and impact

In 2016 an evaluation of the counselling centres was commissioned from L&R Social Research by the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection.^{188, 189} This evaluation surveyed cooperation and network partners, as well as those given counselling. The contact points received an extremely positive rating. In terms of the overall

183 Ibid.

184 migrare – Zentrum für MigrantInnen OÖ, *Anlaufstellen für Personen mit im Ausland erworbenen Qualifikationen für Oberösterreich und Salzburg*, available at www.migrare.at/cms1/index.php/angebote-kompetenzzentrum/ast-anlaufstelle (accessed on 11 June 2018).

185 ZEBRA – Interkulturelles Beratungs- und Therapiezentrum, *AST-Anlaufstelle*, available at www.zebra.or.at/cms/cms.php?pageName=6&detailId=12 (accessed on 11 June 2018).

186 ZeMiT – Zentrum für MigrantInnen in Tirol, *AST – Anlaufstelle für Personen mit im Ausland erworbenen Qualifikationen für Tirol und Vorarlberg als Beratungsstelle i.S.d. §5 Anerkennungs- und Bewertungsgesetzes (AuBG) (AST Tirol und Vorarlberg)*, available at www.zemit.at/de/ast.html (accessed on 11 June 2018).

187 [Berufsanerkennung.at](http://berufsanerkennung.at) in Österreich, *AST – Anlaufstellen für Personen mit im Ausland erworbenen Qualifikationen*, available at www.berufsanerkennung.at/beratung/ (accessed on 11 June 2018).

188 At that time, the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection.

189 Danzer, L., F. Lechner and Wetzel P., *Evaluierung der Anlaufstellen für Personen mit ausländischen Qualifikationen*. (L&R Sozialforschung, Vienna, 2016). Available at <https://media.anlaufstelle-erkennung.at/EvaluierungASTen2016.pdf> (accessed on 11 June 2018).

counselling offered by the contact points and the competence of their counsellors, for example, around 90 per cent of their clients gave a rating of “very” or “generally satisfied”. Relevant here is the fact that nearly half of respondents viewed the recognition procedure in Austria as “very complicated and difficult to understand”, and the contact points therefore play “a significant support role” in this context (Danzer, Lechner and Wetzel, 2016:1). The evaluation also established that around 55 per cent of respondents are of the opinion that the recognition of their qualifications has “labour market relevance” (ibid.).

It can therefore be shown, for example, that the recognition/assessment of qualifications increases the likelihood of finding employment at the same level of professional competence as in the country of origin. Professional dequalification, as experienced by many respondents, therefore decreases for persons with a recognized/assessed qualification. (Danzer, Lechner and Wetzel, 2016:1)

Overall, the evaluation considered the measure to have thoroughly achieved declared goals such as improving labour market integration appropriate to qualifications. There are also no plans to discontinue the measure as of this writing.

7.5 Measures by the private sector

In recent years especially, several measures related to labour market integration have emerged in the Austrian private sector. Such measures are aimed primarily at beneficiaries of international protection.¹⁹⁰ There are also initiatives targeting university or secondary students, such as the one by L’Oréal Austria.¹⁹¹ According to experts surveyed as part of this study,

190 See e.g. Der Standard, *Wie Flüchtlingen die Rutsche in die Arbeitswelt gelegt wird*, 19 May 2018, available at <https://derstandard.at/2000080028476/Wie-Fluechtlingen-die-Rutsche-in-die-Arbeitswelt-gelegt-wird> (accessed on 5 June 2018).

191 L’ORÉAL Österreich, *L’ORÉAL Österreich unterstützt Berufseinsteiger mit Migrationshintergrund*. Press Release, Vienna, n.d., available at www.loreal.at/medien/pressemeldungen/loreal-oesterreich-unterstuetzt-berufseinsteiger-mit-migrationshintergrund-5892.htm (accessed on 11 July 2018); L’ORÉAL Österreich, *Unterstützung für junge Menschen mit Migrationshintergrund*. Press Release, Vienna, n.d., available at www.loreal.at/nachhaltigkeit/csr-loreal-osterreich/unterstuetzung-fur-jugendliche-mit-migrationshintergrund.htm (accessed on 11 July 2018).

businesses frequently have activities to improve intercultural relations at work or to encourage diversity, for example by instating an integration officer.¹⁹² A specific example is the Austrian Federal Railways (ÖBB), which have set up a “Diversity Unit”.¹⁹³ Such initiatives, however do not limit their focus exclusively to third-country nationals.¹⁹⁴ Consequently, after surveying various experts, no measures could be identified that would qualify as specific good practice examples to be described here.

192 Interview with Martin Kienl, Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 4 June 2018; interview with Margit Kreuzhuber, Austrian Economic Chamber, 22 May 2018; interview with Johannes Peyrl, Vienna Chamber of Labour, 1 June 2018.

193 Austrian Federal Railways, *Ethnische Zugehörigkeit befremdet uns nicht!*, available at <http://konzern.oebb.at/de/vielfaltige-oebb/ethnie> (accessed on 11 July 2018).

194 Interview with Martin Kienl, Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 4 June 2018; interview with Margit Kreuzhuber, Austrian Economic Chamber, 22 May 2018; interview with Johannes Peyrl, Vienna Chamber of Labour, 1 June 2018.

8. CONCLUSIONS

In summary, it can be concluded that Austria has no special policy strategy for the labour market integration of the target group examined in this study, that is, third-country nationals with regular residence status in Austria and an employment permit (excluding beneficiaries of international protection, asylum seekers, students and researchers). This equates with the fact that the integration process in which such individuals participate is not evaluated in separate reports, while no broadly established integration measures aimed specifically at this group exist. This group similarly does not play a prominent role in public discussions and does not represent a political priority compared with other groups in Austria.

This lack of a specific focus is related to the fact that Austria pursues a general integration strategy that is equally aimed at all migrants. Within this strategy, as a key component of the integration process, labour market integration represents a consistent factor in all fields, strategies and policies connected to integration. This situation is rated positively by experts and is considered appropriate in light of the broad diversity typical for migrants in Austria. Correspondingly, when developing labour market integration strategies, it is seen as helpful to differentiate among individuals not according to their residence status but along the lines of factors such as level of education, country of origin or field of work. In relation to labour market integration, the major challenges identified include labour market discrimination against third-country nationals and dequalification, in other words the neglect or devaluation of an individual's professional skills.

In the development and implementation of measures aimed at integration or specifically labour market integration, various trends have emerged since 2014. Some existing measures have been enshrined in law, such as the contact points and the www.berufsanerkennung.at platform mentioned above. According to the experts interviewed, these trends have subsequently resulted in harmonised, structured measures for all of Austria, a development also viewed as a response to the challenges raised by the migration flows in the period of 2014–2016. One dominant factor driving this change has been the growing expectation placed upon migrants to integrate, as well as the stronger control exercised over their integration progress.

ANNEXES

A.1 List of translations and abbreviations

English term	English abbreviation	German term	German abbreviation
Act Amending the Aliens Law	–	Fremdenrechtsänderungsgesetz	FrÄG
Act Governing the Employment of Foreign Nationals	–	Ausländerbeschäftigungsgesetz	AuslBG
alien	–	Fremde	–
aliens law	–	Fremdenrecht	–
Aliens Law Package 2005	–	Fremdenrechtspaket 2005	–
Aliens Police Act 2005	–	Fremdenpolizeigesetz 2005	FPG
Anti-Face-Covering Act	–	Anti-Gesichtsverhüllungsgesetz	AGesVG
apprenticeship	–	Lehre	–
Asylum Act 2005	–	Asylgesetz 2005	AsylG 2005
Austrian Economic Chamber	–	Wirtschaftskammer Österreich	WKÖ
Austrian Federal Railways	–	Österreichischen Bundesbahnen	ÖBB
Austrian Integration Fund	–	Österreichischer Integrationsfonds	ÖIF
Austrian Trade Union Federation	–	Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund	ÖGB
Chamber of Labour	–	Arbeiterkammer	AK
Citizenship Act 1985	–	Staatsbürgerschaftsgesetz 1985	StbG
Common Basic Principles	CBP	Gemeinsamen Grundprinzipien	–
common study template	–	gemeinsame Studienvorlage	–
district administrative authority	–	Bezirksverwaltungsbehörde	BVB
EU Member State	–	EU-Mitgliedstaat	–
European Commission	–	Europäische Kommission	–
European Free Trade Association	EFTA	Europäische Freihandelsassoziation	–
European Migration Network	EMN	Europäisches Migrationsnetzwerk	EMN
European Union	EU	Europäische Union	EU
European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights	FRA	Agentur der Europäischen Union für Grundrechte	–
Expert Council for Integration	–	Expertenrat für Integration	–
family members	–	Familienangehörige	–
Federal Government	–	Bundesregierung	–
Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs	–	Bundesministerium für Europa, Integration und Äußeres	BMEIA
Federal Ministry Law 1986	–	Bundesministeriengesetz 1986	BMG
Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection	–	Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales, Gesundheit und Konsumentenschutz	BMASGK

English term	English abbreviation	German term	German abbreviation
Federal Ministry of the Interior	–	Bundesministerium für Inneres	BMI
Federal State	–	Bund	–
Federation of Austrian Industries	–	Industriellenvereinigung	IV
foreigner	–	Ausländer	–
Integration Act	–	Integrationsgesetz	IntG
Integration Agreement	–	Integrationsvereinbarung	–
Integration Year Act	–	Integrationsjahrgesetz	IJG
International Organization for Migration	IOM	Internationale Organisation für Migration	IOM
Member State	MS	Mitgliedstaat	–
National Action Plan for Integration	NAPI	Nationaler Aktionsplan für Integration	NAPI
National Contact Point	NCP	Nationaler Kontaktpunkt	NKP
non-governmental organization	NGO	Nichtregierungsorganisation	NRO
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	OECD	Organisation für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung	OECD
Permanent Residence – EU	–	Daueraufenthalt – EU	–
persons granted asylum	–	Asylberechtigte	–
province	–	Bundesland	–
Public Employment Service	–	Arbeitsmarktservice	AMS
Recognition and Assessment Act	–	Anerkennungs- und Bewertungsgesetz	AuBG
Red-White-Red Card (Plus)	RWR Card	Rot-Weiß-Rot – Karte (plus)	RWR –Karte
Regulation for Skilled Workers	–	(„Fachkräfteverordnung“) Verordnung des Bundesministers für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz, mit der für das Jahr 2018 Mangelberufe für die Beschäftigung von ausländischen Fachkräften festgelegt werden	Fachkräfteverordnung 2018
Regulation on the Integration Agreement	–	Integrationsvereinbarungs-Verordnung	IV-V
residence title	–	Aufenthaltsstitel	–
return decision	–	Rückkehrentscheidung	–
Road Traffic Act 1960	–	Straßenverkehrsordnung 1960	StVO 1960
settlement	–	Niederlassung	–
Settlement and Residence Act	–	Niederlassungs- und Aufenthaltsgesetz	NAG
Settlement Permit	–	Niederlassungsbewilligung	–
Settlement Permit – Dependant	–	Niederlassungsbewilligung – Angehöriger	–
Settlement Permit – Gainful Employment Excepted	–	Niederlassungsbewilligung – ausgenommen Erwerbstätigkeit	–

English term	English abbreviation	German term	German abbreviation
shortage occupations	–	Mangelberufe	–
skilled workers	–	Fachkräfte	–
social partners	–	Sozialpartner	–
Temporary Residence Permit	–	Aufenthaltsbewilligung	–
The Austrian Association for German as a Foreign/Second Language	–	Österreichischer Verband für Deutsch als Fremdsprache/Zweitsprache	ÖDaF
third-country nationals	–	Drittstaatsangehörige	–
vocational education and training	VET	Berufsausbildung	–

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