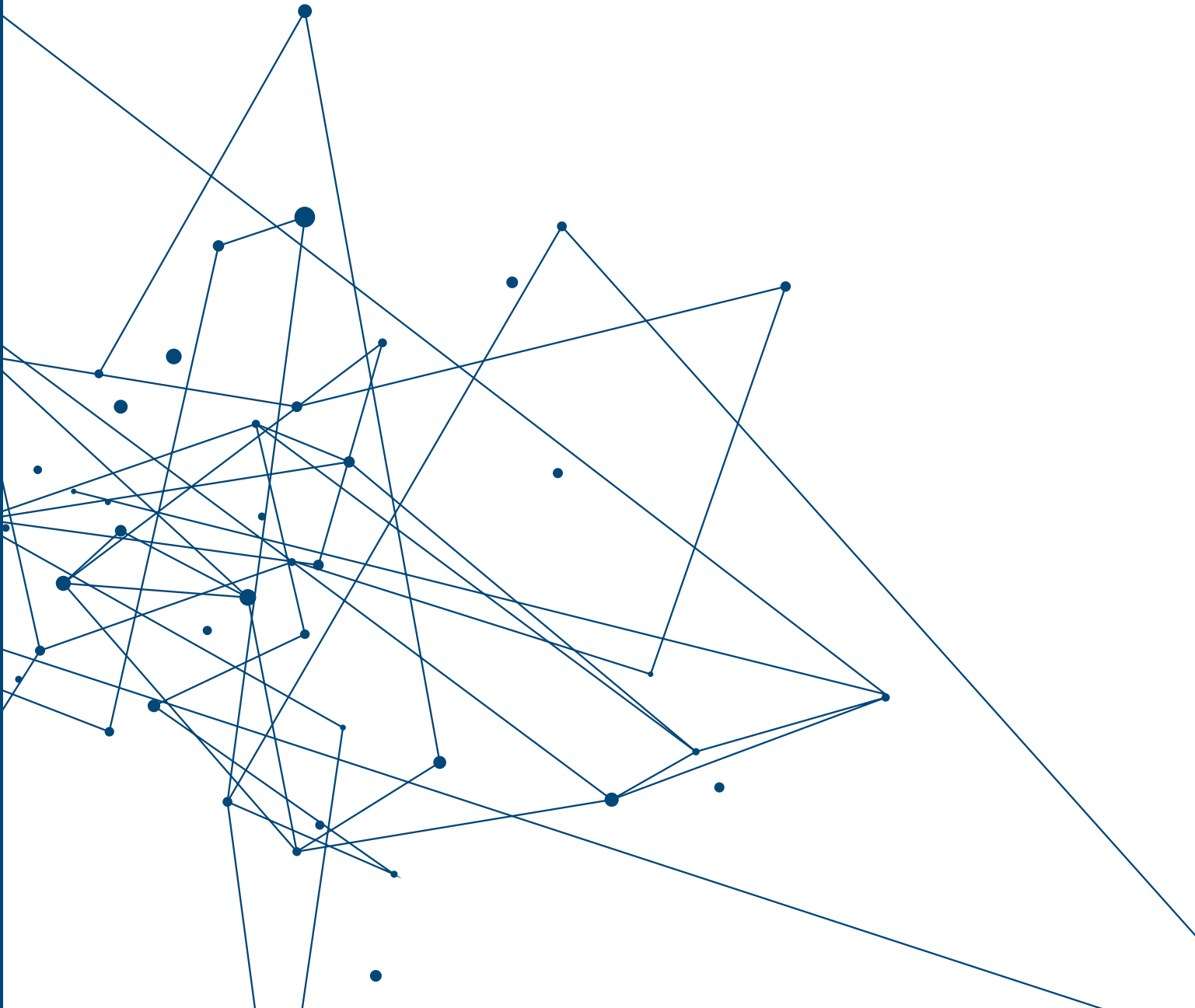


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The Turkish Diaspora in Austria

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In most countries of Western Europe, the Turkish diaspora is a stronghold of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and his ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP). In Austria, the Turkish diaspora is mainly characterised by labour migration, and migrants from Turkey constitute the largest Muslim community. Since the early 2000s, they have become the object of right-wing political discourses on integration and Islam. Long neglected by the Austrian and the Turkish state, migrants from Turkey have established their own cultural and religious associations. Today, many of them are largely affiliated with the AKP and have become important instruments for the AKP's voter mobilisation efforts. With increasingly blurred boundaries between the state and the party in the last two decades, Turkey's diaspora policy has also become increasingly partisan. Against this backdrop, this report provides an overview of the history and composition of the Turkish diaspora and its legal status in Austria. The second part highlights the AKP's mobilisation strategies and sheds light on the complex network of associations, civil society organisations, and state agencies working in the party's service.

This paper is one of five CATS Network Papers assessing perceptions, ongoing debates, and key responses in selected EU member states regarding Turkish diaspora policies.

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1.

Introduction

The first immigrants from Turkey arrived in Austria in the 1960s as so-called *Gastarbeiter*. Since then, the Turkish diaspora in Austria has grown significantly and diversified. Although migrants from Turkey have become an integrated part of contemporary Austrian society, culture, and everyday life, their social status, income situation, housing, and education lag behind the Austrian average. Although the younger generation tends to be better educated, the Turkish community in Austria still skews heavily working class.

Many feel essentially unrepresented by Austrian political institutions. Long ignored by the Austrian authorities and the Turkish state, the first generation of Turkish migrants organised their own associations and informal networks. As well as playing a major role in organising “chain migration” from Turkey, kinship associations, mosque associations, and informal networks have also provided spaces where migrants could socialise, exchange, and spend spare time with compatriots. Most of the many mosque associations are members of umbrella organisations, which are in turn tied to the Turkish Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyanet), to political movements such as *Milli Görüş*, or to Islamic orders such as *Süleymanlılar*.

In recent years, Austrian debates on immigration and integration have increasingly focused on Turkish migrants, religious and nationalist associations, and their relations with the Turkish government under President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. This has been both a reaction to the efforts of Erdoğan and his ruling party to win the diaspora’s support as its protector and representative, and a consequence of a dominant anti-immigration discourse.

Since the 1990s the far-right Freedom Party (FPÖ) has securitised the immigration question, demanding immigration control or even zero-immigration policies. The FPÖ’s populism set the tone, the two largest mainstream parties followed. Immigration policies have been steadily tightened over the past three decades.

Since the early 2000s, immigration has been increasingly viewed through a culturalist lens. The debate shifted from a general perception of *Ausländer* (foreigners) and migrants supposedly threatening welfare, order, and unity to focus more closely on a specific segment of the foreign/migrant population: Muslims. Islam moved into the spotlight after the terror attacks of 9/11 and the subsequent “war on terror”. Debates on immigration and integration have tended to focus on so-called “problematic

neighbourhoods” and extreme cases of ultra-conservative Islamic practices, which have often served as stereotypes. Culturalist and essentialist arguments have found their way into mainstream debates, along with concepts such as “parallel societies”.

The populist anti-Muslim and Orientalist undertones of Austrian political discourse offered the Turkish government fertile ground for its anti-Western critique. The Occidentalistic rhetoric of President Erdoğan and his ruling AKP Justice and Development Party –*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* can be seen as a response to such Orientalist discourses.

Just as the culturalist discourse of Austrian right-wing parties has spoken to those in society who feel left behind and threatened by globalisation and diversification, the AKP’s rhetoric emphasises the importance of conservative values and identity markers for survival in a hostile world. President Erdoğan has successfully presented himself as the champion of the rights and honour of a global Muslim umma. By positioning himself as the protector of marginalised Turkish and Muslim migrant communities in Europe and the world against anti-Muslim and Islamophobic tendencies, Erdoğan and his party have conceptualised the diaspora as a homogeneous conservative Muslim entity and ignored cultural and religious diversity within these groups.

The roots of most Turkish migrants in Austria lie in the rural regions and provincial towns of central and central-eastern Anatolia, such as Konya, Yozgat, and Gaziantep, which are strongholds of the ruling AKP. Election results in recent years have confirmed the existence of a strong pro-AKP transnational political identity: Turkish migrant communities in Austria have overwhelmingly supported Erdoğan and his party.

Turkish state agencies and a transnational pro-AKP civil society have been crucial for mobilising the diaspora in elections. As a consequence of autocratisation and the monopolisation of power in the hands of the president and his ruling party, Turkish state institutions and agencies have become important instruments of partisan politics. The lines between state and party have become blurred.

The strong support for President Erdoğan and the AKP within the Turkish diaspora has further fuelled debates on the lack of integration of Turkish migrant communities and the influence of the Turkish government. The Austrian authorities have sought to counter the influence of “political Islam” on Muslim migrant communities. Their fight against political Islam has included reforms to the so-called Islam Act, as well as restrictive laws regarding the wearing of headscarves and full-face and full-body veiling.

However, despite heated public debates and the great political prominence accorded to the topic, there has been little meaningful analysis of what defines political Islam,

nor have political actors been genuinely interested in learning more about the Turkish diaspora, its structures, and its members' views. Instead, the debates have been steeped in culturalist stereotypes.

The following report tries to provide a comprehensive picture of the Turkish diaspora in Austria. It is divided into two sections. The first part reviews the history of Turkish immigration to Austria, highlighting the legal status of Turkish migrants and their socio-economic situation. It also explores how immigration policies in Austria have been shaped by the far right and how culturalism has increasingly dominated debates and immigration policies. The second part addresses Turkey's changing diaspora policies, examining the effects of autocratisation and the AKP's partisan approach to the diaspora, as well as the role of mosque associations and the pro-AKP transnational civil society sector.

2.

Background of Turkish Migration to Austria

Historically, Austria has been a country of immigration and asylum. During the Habsburg Empire the provinces that today comprise Austria received immigrants from other Habsburg provinces, such as Bohemia, Moravia, Bukovina, Trento and Croatia. The First World War triggered the first major refugee movement, when today's Austria received approximately 390,000 refugees from different parts of the Habsburg Empire¹. Not all of them stayed.

After the Second World War Austria received refugees from the neighbouring Communist countries. The first large refugee movement was in 1956, when approximately 200.000 Hungarians fled their country after the Soviet intervention. Most of them moved on to the United States and Canada, with only 18,000 remaining in Austria². Austria received another 162,000 refugees from Czechoslovakia in 1968 after the Soviet intervention there; again only 12,000 stayed. In 1980/81, 33,000 refugees arrived from Poland, 90 per cent of whom moved on to other countries.³

Austria received significant numbers of non-European refugees for the first time in 1972 – from Uganda, China, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Kurds from Iraq – under an international quota defined by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). From the 1980s, Austria also received political migrants from Turkey, most of whom were leftist and/or Kurdish activists.

¹ Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, *1914–2014 100 Jahre Erster Weltkrieg. Flucht und Vertreibung* (Vienna, 2014) <http://wki.staatsarchiv.at/gefangene-und-fluechtlinge/flucht-und-vertreibung/> (accessed 15 April 2022)

² Sven Felix Kellerhoff, “Als Österreich Flüchtlinge mit offenen Armen aufnahm”, *Welt* (online), 30 October 2016 (online) <https://www.welt.de/geschichte/article159122294/Als-Oesterreich-Fluechtlinge-mit-offenen-Armen-aufnahm.html> (accessed 15 April 2022)

³ “Österreich steht größte Flüchtlingsbewegung seit 1945 bevor”, *Die Presse* (online), 16 March 2022, <https://www.diepresse.com/6112587/oesterreich-steht-groesste-fluechtlingsbewegung-seit-1945-bevor> (accessed 18 April 2022)

2.1

A Short History of Immigration to Austria

Most Turkish immigrants to Austria came as labour migrants. Organised labour migration from Turkey started in 1964. Austria's booming post-war economy needed additional labour, which was actively recruited from southern European countries. Recruitment mainly targeted unskilled workers for the low-wage sector. The Austrian government signed its first bilateral labour recruitment agreement (*Anwerbeabkommen*) with Spain in 1962, modelled on West German labour recruitment agreements with Italy and Spain in the 1950s.⁴ However, the agreement came rather late and most of the available Spanish workers had already been absorbed by other European countries, in particular Germany, France, and Switzerland; additionally, wages in Austria were comparatively low and unattractive.⁵

Large-scale labour migration into post-war Austria only really began with the bilateral recruitment agreements with Turkey in 1964 and Yugoslavia in 1966.⁶ In both cases, the Austrian Chamber of Commerce was the major driver, while the trade unions were rather reluctant and insisted on prioritisation of Austrian workers.⁷

The assumption was that migrants would temporarily fill a gap and then return to their home countries. This notion was also reflected in residence permits, which were often only issued for a single year.⁸ In line with the German model, Austria established a commission tasked with organising the recruitment of Turkish workers and their transfer to Austria.⁹

From the mid-1960s, increasing numbers of workers also migrated to Austria on their own initiative, often following family members or others from the same village. Such chain migration – where informal networks played an important role in the recruitment, movement, and settlement processes – soon overtook official labour recruitment. By the beginning of the 1970s, more than half of Turkish labour migrants

⁴ Sylvia Hahn and Georg Stöger, *50 Jahre österreichisch-türkisches Anwerbeabkommen, Studie im Auftrag des Ministeriums für Integration und Äußeres* (Salzburg: University of Salzburg, July 2014), https://www.bundestkanzleramt.gv.at/dam/jcr:e61b32db-f2e9-4524-8834-0386ba97160c/studie_anwerbeabkommen_-_uni_salzburg.pdf (accessed 15 November 2021)

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Vida Bakondy, "Austria Attractive for Guest Workers?" Recruitment of Immigrant Labor in Austria in the 1960s and 1970s, in *Migration in Austria, Contemporary Austrian Studies*, eds. Günter Bischof and Dirk Rupnow (Innsbruck: University Press, 2017): 113-138

⁷ Sylvia Hahn and Georg Stöger, 2014

⁸ Authors interview with an activist in Vienna, April 2021

⁹ Hüseyin Şimşek, *50 Jahre Migration aus der Türkei nach Österreich* (Vienna: Lit Verlag, 2017): 123

in Vienna reported that they had been recruited through informal channels.¹⁰ Most of the initial labour migrants from Turkey were young men who came without their families. Most of them found employment in the construction and textile sectors.¹¹ More than half of the Turkish labour migrants settled in Vienna.¹² Another large community of Turkish labour migrants emerged in Vorarlberg, Austria's westernmost state.

The oil crisis of 1973/1974 hit Austria's economy hard, and unemployment triggered a diversification of the Turkish workforce. Many migrants who had lost their jobs became small-scale entrepreneurs, opening restaurants, cafés, snack bars, market stands and small shops.¹³

Starting in the mid-1970s, family reunification replaced labour migration as the primary driver of immigration from Turkey to Austria.¹⁴ Soon, the number of dependent family members exceeded the number of workers. By 1980, only 28,224 out of 63,094 Turkish migrants were in the labour force, while 34,870 were dependents: partners, relatives, or children of labour migrants.¹⁵ At the same time, family reunifications recalibrated the gender imbalance within the Turkish migrant communities.¹⁶

After the military coup in Turkey in 1980, political migration to Austria increased significantly.¹⁷ However, very few political migrants applied for asylum as entry to Austria was visa-free: a visa regime for Turkish citizens was only introduced in 1991. The number of asylum seekers from Turkey grew from a point on, reaching a peak in the mid-1990s.¹⁸ Political migration movements were driven by political polarisation, the military coup of 1980 and, in particular, the conflict between the Turkish armed forces and the Kurdish PKK.

Over the past twenty years, the number of asylum seekers from Turkey has generally remained under 500 per year. In 2019, only 16 per cent of the 298 Turkish citizens who applied for asylum in Austria were granted that status, 34 per cent of applications

¹⁰ Sylvia Hahn and Georg Stöger, 2014: 23

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Verena Lorber, "To Come into Focus. Female 'Guest Workers' from Former Yugoslavia in Austria (1960-1980)", in *Migration in Austria. Contemporary Austrian Studies* 26, eds. Günter Bischof, Dirk Rupnow (Innsbruck: Innsbruck University Press, 2017): 168

¹³ Hüseyin Şimşek, 2017: 125

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Ibid: 126

¹⁶ İlker Ataç, "Determining Turkish migration to Austria. The role of migration policy", *Migration Letters* 11, no. 3 (2014): 275-287

¹⁷ Kahraman Solmaz, *Krise, Macht und Gewalt. Hannah Arendt und die Verfassungskrisen der Türkei von der spätosmanischen Zeit bis heute* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2016): 282; Hüseyin Şimşek, 2017: 129

¹⁸ Turgut Gümüşoğlu, Murat Batur, Hakan Kalaycı and Zeynep Baraz, "Türkische Migranten", in *Österreich: Eine Querschnittsstudie der türkischen Migrantengemeinschaft zwischen transnationaler Struktur und Integration* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2009): 22

were denied, and 51 per cent of cases were dropped without a decision.¹⁹

While the number of asylum seekers from Turkey decreased, that of Turkish students at Austrian universities increased rapidly in the early 2000s. Austrian universities became particularly popular among Turkish students affected by the headscarf ban at Turkish universities and among graduates from clergy schools (*Imam Hatip*).²⁰ Austrian universities were particularly popular due to their open access and low fees. The number of students from Turkey decreased from 2009 onwards, after the lifting of the headscarf ban and the end of the discriminatory practices regarding *Imam Hatip* graduates. Since the early 2000s, immigration from Turkey has stagnated at 4,000 persons per year. Three-quarters of them are under 25.²¹

In 2020, 2,138 million people in Austria had a “migrant background” (24.4 per cent of the population). Individuals of Turkish origin represent almost 13 per cent of all migrants in Austria (270,000).²² Statistik Austria defines migrants as residents who were born abroad or whose parents were both born abroad and migrated to Austria.²³ Thus, the category “migrant” covers the first and second generations and does not distinguish between Austrian citizens and citizens of other countries.²⁴

¹⁹ Statistik Austria, *Statistisches Jahrbuch – Migration & Integration 2020* (Vienna, 2020a), https://www.integrationsfonds.at/fileadmin/user_upload/MigInt_2020.pdf (accessed 25 March 2021): 40–42

²⁰ In 1999, after the so-called post-modern coup against the Islamist-led government of Necmettin Erbakan, the new military-supported government introduced an education reform aimed at pushing back the influence of political Islam. Graduates of the clergy schools were penalised in the university entry exams. The discriminatory practice was lifted by the AKP government in August 2009, see: Ayhan Kaya, “Islamisation of Turkey under the AKP Rule: Empowering Family, Faith and Charity”, *South European Society and Politics*, no. 20 (2015): 47–69, doi: 10.1080/13608746.2014.979031; “Österreich zieht türkische Studenten an”, *Wiener Zeitung* (online), 01 November 2010, https://www.wienerzeitung.at/startseite/archiv/56573_Oesterreich-zieht-tuerkische-Studenten-an.html (accessed 10 November 2021)

²¹ Österreichischer Integrationsfond, *Fact-Sheet. Schule und Integration* (online), no. 34 (Vienna, September 2020), https://www.integrationsfonds.at/fileadmin/FS-34_SchuleundIntegration.pdf (accessed 29 March 2021); Bildungswissenschaft, *Türkei* (online) (Graz, 2016), <https://www.bildungswissenschaft.at/index.php/zitate-r-bis-z/tuerkei> (accessed 30 June 2021)

²² Statistik Austria, *Statistisches Jahrbuch – Migration und Integration 2021* (Vienna, 2021g) https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/dam/jcr:d9b292a5-3457-4cff-aa80-58d92c46f3f8/stat_jahrbuch_migration_u_integration_2021.pdf (accessed 29 June 2021): 24, 29

²³ Statistics Austria uses the term “migration background” to refer to persons with both parents born abroad. This group comprises first-generation migrants, who were born abroad, and second-generation migrants who were born in Austria as children of immigrants. (Vienna, 2021g): 119

²⁴ Ibid

2.2

The Legal Status of Turkish Immigrants

Turkish citizens (117,580) represent the fourth largest group of foreigners in Austria after Germans (208,732), Romanians (131,800), and Serbs (121,990). The other main groups of non-citizens are Bosnians, Hungarians, Croatians, Poles, Syrians, Slovaks, and Afghans.²⁵

Austrian citizenship is regarded as valuable, with naturalisation the crowning event of a long integration process. Accordingly, immigrants need to prove themselves to be worthy of citizenship in a time span of ten years. This is a particularly lengthy process. In June 2021, the opposition Social Democrat Party (SPÖ) suggested reducing the process to six years. Chancellor Sebastian Kurz rejected this, arguing that a reduction would “devalue Austrian citizenship”. He added: “We can’t allow the hundreds of thousands who came in as refugees in recent years to become citizens regardless of whether they have integrated or not. Integration must be achieved, and citizenship must be earned”.²⁶

The Migrant Integration Policy Index reveals that Austria’s naturalisation legislation is among the strictest of the 52 surveyed countries.²⁷ Only 0.6 per cent of Austrian citizens are naturalised.²⁸ This is one of the lowest rates in the EU, where the average is 2.1 per cent.²⁹

The financial requirements for naturalisation are also exceptionally strict in Austria. The law discriminates against persons and groups with low income. Women are particularly disadvantaged due to the still large gender pay gap and the financial marginalisation of migrant women.³⁰

²⁵ Statistik Austria, 2021g

²⁶ “Kurz und FPÖ gegen Erleichterung bei Staatsbürgerschaft”, *Der Standard* (online), 12 June 2021a, <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000127347245/kurz-gegen-staatsbuergerschaft-kogler-fuer-erleichterungen> (accessed 05 April 2022)

²⁷ Giacomo Solano and Thomas Huddleston, *Migrant Integration Policy Index 2020 (MIPEX)* (Barcelona/Brussels: Barcelona Centre for International Affairs [CIDOB] and Migration Policy Group [MPG], June 2020): 38–40, https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Giacomo-Solano/publication/346952928_MIPEX2020_Migrant_Integration_Policy_Index/links/5fe723df299bf14088456876/MIPEX2020-Migrant-Integration-Policy-Index.pdf?_tp=eyJjb250ZXh0Ijp7ImZpcnNoUGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uIiwicGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uIn19 (accessed 06 May 2021)

²⁸ Statistik Austria, 2021c

²⁹ Eurostat, “EU Member States granted citizenship to over 670 thousand people in 2018. Moroccans, Albanians and Turks were the main recipients”, Press Release (30 March 2020), <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/10624889/3-30032020-AP-EN.pdf/03fb2386-c585-05f3-5721-ba3536152007> (accessed 14 May 2021): 2

³⁰ Ines Rössl, “Wahlrecht für Migrantinnen!”, *Zeitschrift für Kritik/Recht/Gesellschaft*, no. 1 (2018): 74

Slightly more than half of the persons of Turkish origin living in Austria are naturalised. 76 per cent of these naturalised persons of Turkish origin are first-generation immigrants.³¹ Just over half (52 per cent) of the 911 persons of Turkish origin who became naturalised in 2019 were born in Austria, and one-third were under 18.³² Turkish citizens represented only 0.9 per cent of all naturalisations in 2019.³³ In 2022, 1 per cent of all naturalisations were Turkish migrants.³⁴

Austria allows dual citizenship only in very specific circumstances (children with mixed Austrian/non-Austrian parentage, also VIPs). This is one of the factors deterring Turkish citizens with permanent residency from applying for naturalisation. Under the Austrian law on citizenship (StbG §10 – *Staatsbürgerschaftsgesetz*), a naturalised person has two years to renounce their previous citizenship (StbG §20 – *Staatsbürgerschaftsgesetz*).³⁵

In 2020, there were 107,833 Turkish citizens living in Austria. Most of them held a residence permit, while only 782 held a settlement title.³⁶ The residence status of Turkish citizens can be divided into three categories:

³¹ The Expert Council for Integration, *Integration Report 2020* (Vienna, 2020), https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/dam/jcr:869a29f6-8745-4be0-b077-1fb27a6e1408/IB2020_EN_printversion.pdf (accessed 02 May 2021): 22

³² Statistik Austria, 2020a: 90

³³ Ibid

³⁴ Statistik Austria, *Statistisches Jahrbuch – Migration und Integration 2023* (Vienna, 2023), https://www.statistik.at/fileadmin/user_upload/MIG2023.pdf (accessed 01 February 2024)

³⁵ According to §25 of the Turkish citizenship law, Turkish citizens need to apply to be released from the Turkish citizenship. In such cases, the Turkish authorities often offer a rather unbureaucratic option to subsequently reapply for Turkish citizenship, see: Kubilay Yiğitbaşı, “Doppelte Staatsbürgerschaft für die Türkischstämmige Bevölkerung in Österreich? – Eine Rechtliche und Rechtspolitische Herausforderung”, *Europa Ethnica*, no. 73 (2016): 1–2, 17–22
Another legal way to avoid the difficulties caused by the denial of dual citizenship is the so-called Turkish Blue Card. This grants migrants who are citizens of a country that – like Turkey – denies dual citizenship all the rights associated with citizenship (work, residence, inheritance, property) except for voting rights and employment in the civil service.

³⁶ Bundesministerium für Inneres [BMI], *Niederlassungs- und Aufenthaltsstatistik 2020* (Vienna, 31 December 2020), https://www.bmi.gv.at/312/statistiken/files/nag_jahr/Niederlassungs-und_Aufenthaltsstatistik_Jahresstatistik_2020.pdf (accessed 10 July 2021): 6

1. Rot-Weiß-Rot-plus Card (20,732 persons)³⁷
2. Residence permits as family members of third-country nationals with a permanent residence permit (10,194 persons)³⁸
3. Permanent residence permits (74,981 persons)³⁹

2.3

The Socio-Economic Situation of Turkish Migrants

The employment rate of Turkish migrants (62 per cent) is considerably lower than the figure for the autochthonous Austrian population (76 per cent) and slightly lower than the figure for migrants as a whole (67 per cent).⁴⁰ One central reason for the relatively low employment rate of Turkish migrants is that only 51 per cent of Turkish migrant women are part of the workforce.⁴¹

First-generation immigrants are over-represented in low-wage sectors.⁴² In 2017, the average annual net income of migrants of Turkish origin was €18,355, compared to €27,325 for autochthonous Austrians and €19,870 for other non-Austrian citizens.⁴³

Overrepresentation in low-wage sectors increases vulnerability to unemployment and impoverishment. The unemployment rate among Turkish migrants in 2020 was 21.8 per cent, compared to 9.9 per cent for the population as a whole.⁴⁴ Due to lower education levels first-generation migrants from Turkey are more threatened by unemployment, although long-term unemployment rates are lower among non-Austrians than among Austrian citizens. Among Turkish citizens in Austria, the long-term unemployment rate was 13.9 per cent.⁴⁵

³⁷ Ibid: 11;

The *Rot-Weiß-Rot plus (RWR+) Card* is awarded to persons who have fulfilled the requirements for the RWR Card for at least 21 months and to family members of persons who hold a *RWR Card*, a *Blue Card* or a residence permit (and therefore represents a form of family reunification).

Ibid

³⁸ Ibid: 15

³⁹ Ibid: 16

⁴⁰ Statistik Austria, 2020a: 59

⁴¹ Ibid

⁴² Ibid: 69

⁴³ Österreichischer Integrationsfond, *Wien. Zahlen, Daten, Fakten zu Migration und Integration* (Vienna, 2019), https://www.integrationsfonds.at/fileadmin/content/AT/Downloads/Publikationen/2019_Wien_Migration_Integration.pdf (accessed 01 July 2021): 41

⁴⁴ Statistik Austria, 2021g: 55

⁴⁵ Ibid: 11

The living and housing conditions of Turkish migrants are also worse than those of non-migrant Austrians. In 2020, 78 per cent of Turkish migrants lived in rented homes, compared to 34 per cent of autochthonous Austrians.⁴⁶ And their homes were significantly smaller. While the average living space per person for autochthonous Austrians was 45m², the corresponding figure for Turkish migrants was just 23m². Compared with other migrant groups, this is the smallest living space per person.⁴⁷

The level of education of Turkish migrants also tends to be generally lower compared to autochthonous Austrians. Only 12.2 per cent of migrants from Turkey have a maximum secondary education qualification, and 8.5 per cent have a university degree (data do not reveal if this is a degree from an Austrian university).⁴⁸ While many first-generation migrants completed their education in Turkey and attended only elementary school, second-generation Turkish migrants are more likely to have a university education degree. Most of the latter have completed their education in Austria and hold a vocational school qualification.⁴⁹ 29.2 per cent of Turkish migrants have completed an apprenticeship or other vocational training.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Ibid: 81

⁴⁷ Ibid

⁴⁸ Österreichischer Integrationsfond, 2019: 26

⁴⁹ Turgut Gümüşoğlu, Murat Batur, Hakan Kalaycı and Zeynep Baraz, 2009: 190

⁵⁰ Österreichischer Integrationsfond, 2019: 26

3.

Legal and Political Context in Austria

After a rather liberal approach throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, Austrian migration policies became increasingly restrictive from the 1990s on. Different coalition governments introduced a series of reforms of the immigration, residence, and asylum laws. These narrowed the opportunities for legal immigration and have made residence conditional on compliance with so-called “integration criteria”.

The tightening of immigration laws was, on the one hand, a reaction to growing immigration after the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe and the refugee movements triggered by the war in Yugoslavia.⁵¹ On the other hand, it was also a response to a rapid rise of the far-right, populist Freedom Party (FPÖ) under Jörg Haider. Haider promoted a strong anti-immigration discourse and challenged the broad mainstream coalition formed by the Social Democrats (SPÖ) and the conservative Austrian People’s Party (ÖVP). Haider and the FPÖ successfully mobilised socially disadvantaged groups with anti-immigration and anti-elite discourses. They set the tone on immigration and integration policy, and the governing parties followed.

3.1

Restrictive Immigration Policies

Legislative reforms tightened the criteria for immigration and residence. The Residence Act of 1993 established different categories of residence and migrants (EU,

⁵¹ Between 1989 and 1993 the number of foreigners living in Austria increased from 372,000 to 645,000 (total Austrian population in 1993 was 7,905,632). Werner T Bauer, *Zuwanderung nach Österreich* (Vienna: Österreichische Gesellschaft für Politikberatung und Politikentwicklung, 2008): 9, https://politikberatung.or.at/fileadmin/_migrated/media/Zuwanderung-nach-Oesterreich.pdf (accessed: 26 April 2024)

EEA, third-country nationals, and by reason for immigration) and introduced a quota of 10 per cent as the “maximum share of foreign workers in the total workforce”.⁵² The Residence Act also sets quotas for residence permits.⁵³

The Aliens Act of 1997 aimed to further narrow the scope for legal immigration, introducing a set of minimum requirements for residence and its renewal and placing a stronger emphasis on “integration”. The Aliens Act was guided by the idea of preventing further immigration and promoting immigrants’ integration into Austrian society. However, rather than providing instruments, programmes, courses, or other means that would support integration, the government introduced a set of “integration measures” such as language proficiency, employment status, income, and housing situation. Residence permits became conditional on the fulfilment of these criteria.

Integration has become a legalised process in which immigrants are required to prove that they are making an effort to learn German and improve their standard of living. Permanent residence status and citizenship are presented as a reward at the end of a successful integration process.⁵⁴ In other words, Austria’ immigration and naturalisation laws have linked immigration and residence to a cultural integration process, rather than focussing solely on the needs of the labour market and objective absorption capacities.

The Naturalisation Act of 1998 amended the citizenship law and linked the acquisition of Austrian citizenship to the fulfilment of the integration criteria.⁵⁵

The parliamentary elections in 1999 ended the era of broad centrist coalition governments that had dominated the 1990s. The far-right FPÖ overtook the conservative ÖVP to become the second-largest party. In 2000, the two right-wing parties formed a coalition government—the first since 1945 in which the Social Democrats were not represented. The far-right’s participation in government caused much resistance within Austria and among EU partners. The coalition under Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel lasted until 2005.

⁵² Michael Jandl and Albert Kraler, *Austria: A Country of Immigration?* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute [MPI], 1 March 2003), <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/austria-country-immigration> (accessed 04 April 2021)

⁵³ Residence permits are usually tied to work permits.
Michael Jandl and Albert Kraler, 2003;
Jasmina Malkoc, *Die Entwicklung der österreichischen Migrationspolitik in der Zweiten Republik aus neoinstitutionalistischer Perspektive* (Austria: Johannes Kepler University Linz, Master Thesis, 2018), https://www.jku.at/fileadmin/gruppen/120/Publikationen_und_Downloads/Downloads/Masterarbeit_en/Malkoc_Masterarbeit_oesterreichische_Migrationspolitik.pdf (accessed 24 February 2022): 4off

⁵⁴ Michael Jandl and Albert Kraler, 2003

⁵⁵ Bernhard Perchinig, “All you need to know to become an Austrian: Naturalisation policy and citizenship testing in Austria”, in *A Re-definition of Belonging? Language and integration tests in Europe*, eds. Ricky van Oers, Eva Ersbøll and Dora Kostakopoulou (Leiden: Brill/Martinus Nijhoff, 2010): 29

Migration laws were further strengthened under the ÖVP-FPÖ coalition, with labour migration restricted to key personnel only. “Key personnel” (*Schlüsselarbeitskräfte*) is defined as highly qualified persons and specialists in understaffed professions, with a minimum monthly gross salary requirement of €2,000. The reforms also introduced compulsory integration courses for immigrants from non-EU countries. These courses focus on language skills and basic knowledge of Austria’s history, legal and political systems.⁵⁶

The so-called Aliens Legislation Package (*Fremdenrechtspaket*), which entered into force in 2005, represented the most comprehensive reform of immigration and integration law. The reform altered the names, regulations, and requirements of almost all forms of immigration titles and generated a complex legal framework. It split the former Aliens Act into Aliens Police Law (*Fremdenpolizeigesetz*), which regulates the legal entry, exit and removal of aliens, and the Settlement and Residence Act (NAG - Bundesgesetz über die Niederlassung und den Aufenthalt in Österreich). The reform also amended the Asylum Law and further limited the scope for asylum.

The Settlement and Residence Act also introduced immigration quotas for persons who apply from abroad for residence and settlement. The requirements, for any kind of residence permit, are very strict. Applicants must prove that they are able to support themselves. The guideline for 2021 requires a net monthly income of €1,000.48 for singles and €1,578.36 for married couples. €154.37 is required for each child. Moreover, applicants need to prove they have health insurance and “appropriate accommodation”, defined as a certain amount of living space per person. However, this only applies to non-EU citizens and is also not relevant for Red-White-Red Card (RWR) and Blue Card applicants (BMI 2021).⁵⁷ Foreigners are entitled to permanent residence permits (*Daueraufenthalt EU*) after five years of continuous residency in Austria and fulfilment of the aforementioned requirements.⁵⁸ Another important title is the residence permit as family member (*Aufenthalt Familienangehörige*). Applicants need to comply with the same requirements as in the other aforementioned cases.⁵⁹

Reforms have been strongly driven by the notion that immigrants need to be disciplined and educated. Residence in Austria has become conditional and linked to

⁵⁶ Michael Jandl and Albert Kraler, 2003

⁵⁷ The *Rot-Weiß-Rot Card (RWR, Red-White-Red)* is awarded to highly skilled/qualified workers in key branches, and to founders of start-ups. The list of key occupations is updated each year. Most of these professions are manual trades.

“Formen der Zuwanderung”, *Migration.gv.at* (online), <https://www.migration.gv.at/de/formen-der-zuwanderung/dauerhafte-zuwanderung/> (accessed 28 April 2024)

Blue Cards are for highly qualified employees who hold a university degree and have been recruited for a specific position.

⁵⁸ Bundesministerium für Inneres (BMI), *Aufenthaltstitel Daueraufenthalt EU* (Vienna, 2021b) https://www.oesterreich.gv.at/themen/leben_in_oesterreich/aufenthalt/3/2/Seite.120402.html#Voraussetzungen (accessed 17 July 2021)

⁵⁹ *Ibid*

the gradual fulfilment of integration criteria. While highly qualified labour immigration was encouraged, unskilled labour immigration, family reunifications and refugees were to be suppressed. However, these reforms failed to make Austria a popular destination for highly skilled international personnel.

Integration before immigration was also prioritised. Under the slogan “German before immigration” (*Deutsch vor Zuzug*), language proficiency became a key criterion for issuing visas and residence permits. Since 2005, persons who wish to immigrate must apply for an immigration visa in their home country and prove their proficiency in German before they enter Austria.⁶⁰

Since 2005, most residence permits have also been conditional on a so-called *Integrationsvereinbarung* (integration agreement). The *Integrationsvereinbarung* obliges immigrants to attend German language classes and achieve level A2 within two years.⁶¹ Failure to achieve an A2 level in German and non-fulfilment of the integration agreement can be sanctioned and can even lead to the termination of the residence title.⁶² Social security benefits are also conditional on compliance with integration criteria.

3.2 Culturalisation of the Immigration Question

From the early 2000s, debates on migration and integration increasingly overlapped with debates on radical Islam. The fear of Islamism was exacerbated by the events of September 11, 2001, and the subsequent global war on “Islamist terror”. Unfortunately, broader public debates made little distinction between Islam and Islamism.

Since 2004, debates on immigration and integration have mingled with the question of Turkey’s accession to the EU. Discussions on Turkey’s membership application were dominated by identity issues and centred largely on the question of whether a large, culturally different Muslim country was compatible with the EU and European values. The debate on Turkey’s integration with the EU overlapped with debates on

⁶⁰ Sebastian Schuhmacher, *Die Neuorganisation der Zuwanderung durch das Fremdenrechtspaket 2005*, KMI Working Paper 12 (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Kommission für Migrations- und Integrationsforschung [KMI], 2008)
<https://www.ssoar.info/ssoar/handle/document/42698> (accessed 28 April 2024): 6

⁶¹ Bundeskanzleramt, *Integrationsvereinbarung 2017* (Vienna, 2021d),
https://www.oesterreich.gv.at/themen/leben_in_oesterreich/aufenthalt/3/Seite.120500.html
(accessed 14 July 2021)

⁶² Schuhmacher, 2008: 6

the ability of Turkish migrants to integrate into Austrian society (“integration ability” or *Integrationsfähigkeit*). Also, debates often focused on migrants from Turkey because they represent the largest group among Muslims in Austria (45–50 per cent).⁶³

Debates increasingly revolved around concerns about the perceived resistance of Muslim immigrants to adapting to Austrian society and fears of so-called parallel societies (*Parallelgesellschaften*), which are believed to be in opposition to democratic values. Right-wing discourses, in particular, appropriated liberal democratic values and exploited them to justify exclusionary practices and anti-immigration positions.⁶⁴ Liberal achievements such as the empowerment of women and LGBTIQ+ rights came to be promoted as markers of a self-imagined occidental civilization. At the same time, the headscarf and alleged homophobia among Muslim migrants have been framed as expressions of a conscious rejection of Western democratic values.⁶⁵

Culturalist assumptions have also impacted legal reforms. The Aliens Legislation Package (*Fremdenrechtspaket*) of 2005 created new obstacles to marriages between Austrian citizens and third-country nationals. The tightening of conditions for family reunion and bi-national marriages was influenced by an assumption that marriages between Turkish immigrants and partners from Turkey are per se arranged or forced.⁶⁶ This has mainly affected Turkish migrants, who tend to marry persons from the same background in Turkey. 55 per cent of male Turkish migrants in Austria and 68 per cent of female Turkish migrants in Austria are married to a person who only moved to Austria after their marriage.⁶⁷

The large refugee influx in the summer of 2015 from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq triggered fears of uncontrolled migration and radical societal change. Soon, tabloids such as *Krone*, *Heute* and *Österreich* were portraying young male refugees from those

⁶³ This also includes around 60,000 to 80,000 Alevis, as well as Kurds, see Daniel Steinlechner, “Türken in Österreich”, *News* (online), 19 July 2016, <https://www.news.at/a/fakten-tuerken-in-oesterreich-7238460> (accessed 25 March 2021)
Bosnians form the second-largest Muslim diaspora in Austria, estimated at 100,000. The other main Muslim diasporas are Syrian (48,103), Afghan (45,724), Chechens (35,000), Iraqi (14,536), and Iranian (13,888).
Österreichischer Integrationsfond, 2019;
“Zahl der Muslime in Österreich wächst rapide” *Die Presse* (online), 13 April 2017, <https://www.diepresse.com/5200447/zahl-der-muslime-in-osterreich-wachst-rapide> (accessed 23 June 2021)

⁶⁴ Gabriele Dietze, “Okzidentalismuskritik. Möglichkeiten und Grenzen einer Forschungsperspektivierung”, in *Kritik des Okzidentalismus. Transdisziplinäre Beiträge zu (Neo-) Orientalismus und Geschlecht*, eds. Gabriele Dietze, Claudia Brunner and Edith Wenzel (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2015): 35

⁶⁵ Ibid: 33

⁶⁶ Sabine Strasser, “Repressive autonomy: discourses on and surveillance of marriage migration from Turkey to Austria”, *Migration Letters* 11, no. 3 (2014): 320

⁶⁷ Statistik Austria, 2021g: 86

countries as hostile to democracy and a threat to public order and posing a link between immigration and the resurgence of Islamist terrorism.⁶⁸

3.3

The Fight against Political Islam

The term “political Islam” has gained increasing currency in public debates in recent years, used in particular by conservative right-wing politicians to differentiate between Muslims as such and those who see Islam as a political ideology. However, the debates on political Islam have distinguished neither between religious practice and political intentions nor between conservative Islamic symbols and radicalism or extremism.

In 2015, the grand coalition of SPÖ and ÖVP passed a reform of the Islam Act (*Islamgesetz*) of 1912, which recognised Islam as a “community of faith” after the Habsburg Empire’s annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. That legal status bestows specific rights, such as conducting religious instruction in public and private schools, providing pastoral services in the military and hospitals, and tax exemptions.⁶⁹ The reformed legislation requires Islamic religious societies and communities to submit financial documents at regular intervals to facilitate monitoring and to inform the Federal Chancellery about the establishment of religious associations, their organisation, their officials, and their guest imams. The reform sought to prevent foreign funding for religious associations.⁷⁰ On the other hand, the reform promised greater transparency and acknowledged the religious needs of Muslims, such as pastoral care, Islamic theology, public holidays, and meals in canteens in public institutions. The reform in 2015 was a reaction to radical speeches in certain mosques and criticism of the growing influence of the Turkish government on religious associations in Austria.⁷¹

⁶⁸ “Krone verunglimpfte Flüchtlinge als mögliche Terroristen”, *Kurier* (online), 30 November 2015, <https://kurier.at/wirtschaft/atmedia/krone-verunglimpfte-fluechtlinge-als-moegliche-terroristen/167.033.475> (accessed 18 April 2022);

“Trotz Razzien: Muslimbrüder sehen sich als Opfer”, *Kronen Zeitung* (online), 03 March 2021, <https://www.krone.at/2356159> (accessed 07 June 2021)

⁶⁹ Österreich.gv.at-Redaktion, *Religionsgemeinschaften in Österreich- Statistik* (2021a), https://www.oesterreich.gv.at/themen/leben_in_oesterreich/kirchenein_austritt_und_religionen/3/Seite.820018.html (accessed 30 June 2021)

⁷⁰ “Novelle zum Islamgesetz soll mehr Transparenz bringen und Vollzug verbessern”, *Austria Press Agentur [APA-OT]* (online), 10 Juni 2021, https://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20210610_OTS0247/novelle-zum-islamgesetz-soll-mehr-transparenz-bringen-und-vollzug-verbessern (accessed 02 May 2021)

⁷¹ “Islamgesetz: Österreich verbietet Auslandsfinanzierung religiöser Vereine”, *Zeit Online* (online), 25 February 2015, <https://www.zeit.de/politik/ausland/2015-02/oesterreich-islamgesetz-verabschiedet-auslandsfinanzierung> (accessed 27 March 2021)

However rather than addressing the religious needs of Muslims in Austria, legal reforms have either been driven by security considerations or have targeted symbols that the authorities associate with “political Islam”. The following legal measures have aimed at preventing the influence of “political Islam” in Austria: In 2017, the government banned facial and full-body veils in public places and buildings. Often referred to as “the burqa ban” (*Burkaverbot*)⁷² the measure was rather symbolic as there are relatively few women wearing the burqa in Austria.⁷³ Similarly, the headscarf ban in kindergartens, introduced by the ÖVP-FPÖ coalition in 2019⁷⁴, was a symbolic measure against “political Islam”. The ban was later extended to elementary schools. In 2020, the Constitutional Court ruled the ban unconstitutional.⁷⁵

In 2018, the ÖVP-FPÖ coalition announced a blow against “political Islam” and closed seven mosques in Vienna, Upper Austria and Carinthia, expelling sixty-five Austrian Turkish Islamic Union (ATIB) imams and dissolving the “Arab religious community”.⁷⁶ Public debates have distinguished neither between extremist and

⁷² Christian Ultsch, “Es gibt gute Gründe für ein Burkaverbot”, *Die Presse* (online), 20 August 2016, <https://www.diepresse.com/5072183/es-gibt-gute-grunde-fur-ein-burkaverbot> (accessed 20 April 2021);

“Islam-Beauftragte—Baghajati: Burkaverbot wirkt kontraproduktiv”, Interview with Carla Amina Baghajati, *Kronen Zeitung* (online), 11 Februar 2017, <https://www.krone.at/553566> (accessed 11 May 2021);

“Die Burka ist die Unsichtbarmachung der Frau”, *Kronen Zeitung* (online), 04 March 2019, <https://www.krone.at/1876294> (accessed 08 July 2021)

⁷³ Christian Bartlau, “Burkaverbot in Österreich”, *Deutsche Welle* (online), 01 October 2018a, <https://www.dw.com/de/österreichs-burka-bann-kaum-was-verändert/a-45679265> (accessed 25 November 2021)

⁷⁴ Parlament Österreich, “ÖVP und FPÖ sehen Kopftuchverbot an Volksschulen als wichtige Maßnahme zum Schutz von Kinderrechten”, *Parlamentskorrespondenz* Nr. 535 vom 15 May 2019, in https://www.parlament.gv.at/aktuelles/pk/jahr_2019/pk0535#XXVI_A_00495 (accessed 29 January 2024)

⁷⁵ “Die Debatte um das Kopftuch an Schulen: Zwischen Zwang und Gleichheitsgrundsatz”, *Die Presse* (online), 14 December 2020a, <https://www.diepresse.com/5911207/die-debatte-um-das-kopftuch-an-schulen-zwischen-zwang-und-gleichheitsgrundsatz> (accessed 10 June 2021);

Werner Pöchinger, “Kopftuch bei jungen Mädchen ist immer noch Thema”, *Kronen Zeitung* (online), 06 March 2021b, <https://www.krone.at/2358809> (accessed 22 April 2021);

Daniel Bischof, “Razzia- 'Muslimbrüder spielen ein doppeltes Spiel'”, *Wiener Zeitung* (online), 9 November 2020a, <https://www.wienerzeitung.at/nachrichten/politik/oesterreich/2081998-Muslimbrueder-spielen-ein-doppeltes-Spiel.html> (accessed 25 April 2021)

⁷⁶ President Erdoğan’s spokesperson İbrahim Kalın criticised the mosques closures and the expulsion of Turkish imams as anti-Muslim, racist and discriminatory populism.

Ulrich Trebbin, “Türkei protestiert gegen Moschee-Schließungen in Österreich”, *Bayrischer Rundfunk* (online), 08 June 2018, <https://www.br.de/nachrichten/deutschland-welt/tuerkei-protestiert-gegen-moschee-schliessungen-in-oesterreich,QuOXB6Q> (accessed 22 April 2021);

Markus Bernath, Irene Brickner, Oona Kroisleitner, Rosa Winkler-Hermaden, “Moscheeverein Atib: Erdoğan’s Arm in die türkische Diaspora”, *Der Standard* (online), 24 April 2018b, <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000078565849/moscheeverein-atib-erdogans-arm-in-die-tuerkische-diaspora> (accessed 01 July 2021);

Michaela Reibenwein, “Moschee-Schließung: 'Geht's ham, oida'”, *Kurier* (online), 08 June 2018, <https://kurier.at/chronik/wien/moschee-schliessung-gehts-ham-oida/400047998> (accessed 07 June 2021);

moderate Islamist groups nor between conservative religious movements and political movements.⁷⁷ Moreover, certain legal reforms were poorly elaborated. In 2021, the Vienna Regional Administrative Court (*Landesverwaltungsgericht Wien*) declared the mosque closures unlawful.⁷⁸

In spring 2020, the coalition government of the ÖVP and the Green Party established the Documentation Centre for Political Islam (*Dokumentationsstelle Politischer Islam*), whose remit is to observe and research political Islam and extremism and to contribute to pluralism, democracy, and freedom of religion. The centre defines political Islam as an ideology of domination that transforms society, culture, the state and politics in line with its own notion of Islam. That ideology is deemed to be in conflict with the principles of democracy, the rule of law, and human rights.⁷⁹ The centre's advisory board and researchers are appointed by the Minister for Integration (ÖVP). The process was criticised for not being transparent. Instead of leaving room for open research, the centre has served to legitimise the ruling ÖVP's policies.⁸⁰

Mosques came under scrutiny following an Islamist terrorist attack in central Vienna in November 2020.⁸¹ In November 2020, the Ministry of the Interior ordered a raid on the premises of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB). Although officials stated that the raid had been planned for a long time, media reports suggested a connection with the

“Regierung lässt Moschee der 'Grauen Wölfe' am Antonsplatz in Wien-Favoriten schließen”, *Vienna.at* (online), 08 Juni 2018a, <https://www.vienna.at/regierung-laesst-moschee-der-grauen-woelfe-am-antonsplatz-in-wien-favoriten-schliessen/5815462> (accessed 04 April 2021)

⁷⁷ The question of political Islam also became associated with a tough immigration policy and border security issues. Another measure taken by the ÖVP-FPÖ coalition was Austria's withdrawal from the UN migration pact in 2018. Although the withdrawal had little real effect on migration policies, it sent a message and repositioned the country on the international stage.

“Österreich zieht sich aus Migrationspakt zurück”, *Deutsche Welle* (online), 30 October 2018b, <https://www.dw.com/de/österreich-zieht-sich-aus-un-migrationspakt-zurück/a-46098717> (accessed 25 November 2021)

⁷⁸ “Gericht erklärt Moscheenschließungen für rechtswidrig”, *Kurier* (online), 23 April 2021, <https://kurier.at/chronik/wien/gericht-erklaert-moscheeschliessungen-fuer-rechtswidrig/401360714> (accessed 24 November 2021)

⁷⁹ Mouhanad Khorchide and Lorenzo Vidino, “*Der Politische Islam als Gegenstand wissenschaftlicher Auseinandersetzungen und am Beispiel der Muslimbruderschaft*”, Grundlagenpapier der Dokumentationsstelle Politischer Islam (Austria, 2020) <https://www.dokumentationsstelle.at/fileadmin/dpi/publikationen/Der-Politische-Islam-als-Gegenstand-wissenschaftlicher-Auseinandersetzungen-und-am-Beispiel-der-Muslimbrud.pdf> (accessed 30 March 2021);

Bernhard Ichner, “Das schwere Erbe der Milli Görüs”, *Kurier* (online), 25 Februar 2019, <https://kurier.at/chronik/wien/das-schwere-erbe-der-milli-goerues/400414436> (accessed 29 May 2021)

⁸⁰ Vanessa Gaigg and Jan Michael Marchart, “Was die Dokumentationsstelle mit 'politischem Islam' meint”, *Der Standard* (online), 29 December, 2020a, <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000122811873/was-die-dokustelle-mit-politischem-islam-meint> (accessed 14 June 2021)

⁸¹ “Kampf zwischen Türken und Kurden: Was tun gegen die Brandsätze in Wien? ”, *Salzburger Nachrichten* (online), 29 June 2020a, <https://www.sn.at/politik/innenpolitik/kampf-zwischen-tuerken-und-kurden-was-tun-gegen-die-brandsaetze-in-wien-89522818> (accessed 20 June 2021)

attack.⁸² The Muslim Brotherhood was listed as a “terrorist organization” with little reflection, and experts have strongly disagreed with that framing⁸³.

In December 2020, the government presented an anti-terrorism package that also included further amendments to the Islam Act. The reform expanded control over the IGGÖ (Islamic Faith Community Austria),⁸⁴ which is the legal representative of Islamic communities in Austria and expedited the implementation of the ban on foreign funding for religious associations by granting greater access to their financial records.⁸⁵ The ban aimed in particular to curb the influence of President Erdoğan and the Turkish government on Muslim organisations in Austria. The reform also introduced harsh financial penalties and required the IGGÖ to compile a list of religious institutions and functionaries.⁸⁶ The IGGÖ and independent experts have criticised the reform’s close association with the anti-terrorism pact, which they argue casts suspicion on all Muslims.⁸⁷

In May 2021, the Documentation Centre for Political Islam published a document (the Islam-Landkarte) which maps 623 Muslim associations, educational facilities, and mosques, categorising them according to their relationship to political Islam. The so-called map of Islam was heavily criticised by experts, who point out that the assessments are not based on scholarly analysis and the criteria are unclear. The map has also been criticised for publishing private data and breaching data protection regulations. The University of Vienna, one of the original cooperation partners, distanced itself from the map of Islam.⁸⁸

Besides radical and extremist preachers and mosques, the legal reforms have targeted the influence of the Turkish government on religious associations in Austria.

⁸² “Nach Razzia: Muslimbrüder: Beschuldigter mit Kontakten zu Milliardär”, *Kleine Zeitung* (online), 28 November 2020, <https://www.kleinezeitung.at/politik/innenpolitik/5904426/> (accessed 22 June 2021);
Kronen Zeitung, 2021a;
Wiener Zeitung, 2020a

⁸³ Thomas Schmidinger, “Schuss ins islamistische Dickicht”, *Falter* (online), 18 November 2020, https://www.falter.at/zeitung/20201118/schuss-ins-islamistische-dickicht/_fb14675e43 (accessed 07 June 2021)

⁸⁴ The IGGÖ was established in 1979 and has the legal status of a corporation under public law. It represents Sunni and Shia communities in Austria. Mosque associations are members of the IGGÖ. They are represented by umbrella organisations in the IGGÖ council. Until 2010, the IGGÖ also represented the Alevi community in Austria. In 2013, Alevis were recognized as a separate religious community. “Nach Anerkennung: Österreichs Aleviten gespalten”, *ORF.at* (online), 21 December 2010, http://religionv1.orf.at/projekt03/news/1012/ne101221_aleviten_fr.htm (accessed 03 May 2021)

⁸⁵ “Neues Islamgesetz: Mehr Kontrolle und harte Strafen”, *ORF.at* (online), 26 January 2021, <https://religion.orf.at/stories/3204086/> (accessed 16 April 2022)

⁸⁶ Ibid

⁸⁷ Ibid;

Austria Press Agentur [APA], 2021

⁸⁸ “Uni Wien distanziert sich von „Islam-Landkarte“ und untersagt Logoverwendung”, *Der Standard* (online), 28 May 2021, <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000126984340/uni-wien-distanziert-sich-von-islamlandkarteund-untersagt-logoverwendung> (accessed 14 June 2021)

Meanwhile, the Turkish government's activities have been discussed as one of the major obstacles to integration and a threat to public security.⁸⁹

⁸⁹ “Kurz und Kern einig: Türkischen Einfluss nicht zulassen”, *Die Presse* (online), 10 July 2017a, <https://www.diepresse.com/5249483/kurz-und-kern-einig-tuerkischen-einfluss-nicht-zulassen> (accessed 18 April 2022)

4.

Turkish Diaspora Politics

The Turkish state long neglected labour emigrants and their needs. Turkey's foreign representations placed little weight on services for citizens. Often, migrants were treated as second-class citizens.

The lack of acknowledgement by Austrian authorities and the lack of representation of Turkish authorities spurred self-organisation.

4.1

A Network of Diaspora Organisations Emerges

New arrivals in the first-generation established kinship associations and/or mosque associations. Kinship associations (*Landmannschaftsvereine*) formed around networks of people from the same villages and provinces. They provided space to exchange information on housing, labour and immigration law, and a place where people could socialise: “a piece of home in a foreign land”.⁹⁰ When the Austrian authorities stopped recruiting “guest workers”, these associations enabled large-scale chain migration, helping to recruit fellow villagers and family members. The largest kinship association is the Austrian Yozgat Association (AYFED).⁹¹

Turkish immigrants established mosques to satisfy their religious needs. Mosques, often located in vacant buildings, former workshops, or garages, offered places where Turkish migrants could socialise. As well as prayer rooms, they have frequently included tea rooms, lunchrooms, snack bars, childcare and even barbers and have been usually open to all.⁹² However, in most of the cases, the communities remain rather exclusive. People frequent mosques on the basis of their regional background, political preferences, or membership of a specific Islamic order. Mosques are run by

⁹⁰ Sinan Ertugrul, *Identität und Integration—Eine Analyse der türkischen Vereine in Österreich* (Vienna: Akademikerverlag, 2011): 64

⁹¹ Ibid

⁹² Ibid: 66

so-called mosque associations. Most local mosque associations are part of a larger umbrella organisation that represents them at the national level and within the IGGÖ. The largest umbrella organisations are ATIB, Islamic Federation Vienna (IFW and Union of Islamic Centres of Culture (UIKZ).

Mosque associations and their umbrella organisations thus reflect the regional, ethnic, social, political, and religious divisions within Turkish society. Many mosque associations have been linked through umbrella organisations to Turkish political movements such as *Milli Görüş* or *Ülkücüler* (*Grey Wolves*), Islamic orders such as the *Süleymanlılar*, or the Turkish Presidency for Religious Affairs (*Diyanet*).

Despite its Kemalist secular orientation, the Turkish state nevertheless used religion for communication as a bridge and an instrument of control in its relationship with the migrant communities in Europe. The state institution *Diyanet*, which controls and administers religious affairs in Turkey, has been sending imams and other religious representatives to Europe since 1971.⁹³ Its activities include constructing and managing mosques, appointing imams, and issuing Friday sermons. Although imams in Turkey are employed by *Diyanet*, the organisation only represents Sunni Islam (and not other variants of Islam present in Turkey). Critics argue that this makes Sunni Islam the official religion and excludes other religions and Islamic communities, such as the Alevi religious minority.

From the 1980s, *Diyanet* increasingly became an instrument to justify state policies such as anti-terrorism laws or the war against the Kurdish PKK. The instrumentalisation of *Diyanet* for state interests reflected the logic of the conservative Turkish-Islamic Synthesis (TIS) ideology, which was introduced after the military coup in 1980 and left its mark on the 1982 constitution and the education system. The TIS emphasised the importance of religion as a social bond, but still subjugated the religious realm to the control of the Kemalist state.⁹⁴

Diyanet began in the 1980s to establish religious associations abroad. The ambition was to monitor and control religious and political activities among Turkish migrants abroad and to contain the influence of other religious actors. Especially in the 1990s, Turkish governments became increasingly concerned about Islamist and Kurdish

⁹³ Since the constitutional reform of 2017 and the shift to a presidential system in Turkey, *Diyanet* reports to the President of the Republic.

“Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Resmen Cumhurbaşkanlığına Bağlandı” [Directorate of Religious Affairs Officially Affiliated to the Presidency of the Republic], *Diyanet Haber* (online), 10 July 2018, <https://www.diyanehaber.com.tr/gundem/diyanet-isleri-baskanligi-resmen-cumhurbaskanligina-baglandi-h583.html> (accessed 05 November 2021)

⁹⁴ Cengiz Günay, *From Islamists to Muslim Democrats? The Trajectory of Islamism in Egypt and Turkey against the Background of Historical, Political and Economic Developments* (Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag Dr. Müller, 2008)

secessionist activities in European countries.⁹⁵

Diyanet's largest association abroad is DITIB (The Turkish Islamic Union for Religious Affairs) in Germany, which was founded in 1984.⁹⁶ In Austria, *Diyanet* is represented through ATIB, which was established in 1990. ATIB is an umbrella organisation for 63 local mosque associations across Austria. It claims to be Austria's largest Turkish civil society organisation providing religious, social, and cultural services.⁹⁷ ATIB and its associations follow *Diyanet*'s guidelines.⁹⁸ Imams in ATIB mosques are mostly trained in Turkey and dispatched by *Diyanet*.⁹⁹ For a long time, Austrian authorities encouraged and actively supported *Diyanet*'s activities through ATIB as they considered the Turkish religious authority more trustworthy than other, mostly political groups such as *Milli Görüş*, the *Süleymancı Movement* or the Grey Wolves, which had secured their place within the Turkish diaspora.

ATIB's major competitor in the 1990s was the *Milli Görüş*, which is a moderate Islamist movement that emerged among Turkish labour migrants in Germany. Modelled on the Muslim Brotherhood,¹⁰⁰ which can be defined as the first modern Islamist mass movement, *Milli Görüş* propagates a return to conservative Islamic values. However, in contrast to the Muslim Brotherhood, which considers itself a pan-Islamic movement, *Milli Görüş* has a clear Turkish outlook and sees itself as the voice of a marginalised Sunni conservative segment of Turkish society. Its mission to protect Turkish Islamic values and lifestyles against Western cultural and economic imperialism has also had the character of a social class struggle.

Besides religious services and charity, *Milli Görüş* also offers migrants services such as transferring the dead to Turkey. However, the movement's focus has lain on political struggle, and its political arm has been an integrated part of the political party spectrum in Turkey. Today, *Milli Görüş* has been politically represented by the *Saadet Partisi*.

In Austria, *Milli Görüş* is represented through the IFW (Islamic Federation Vienna),¹⁰¹ an umbrella organisation for 22 mosques and 40 cultural and educational institutions

⁹⁵Şerif Onur Bahçecik, "Constructing Liberal Subjects? Turkey's New Diaspora Strategy", in *A Transnational Account of Turkish Foreign Policy*, eds. Hazal Papuççular and Deniz Kuru, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020): 175-194.

⁹⁶ "Gründung und Struktur", *Türkisch Islamische Union der Anstalt für Religion e.V. [DITIB]* (online), <https://www.ditib.de/default1.php?id=5&sid=8&lang=de> (accessed 29. April 2024)

⁹⁷ "Über uns", *Avusturya Türk İslam Birliği [ATIB]* (online), <https://atib.at/uber-uns/> (accessed 10 June 2021)

⁹⁸ Ednan Aslan, Evrim Ersan-Akkilic and Jonas Kolb, *Imame und Integration* (Springer VS: Wiesbaden, 09 January 2015): 59-77

⁹⁹ "Regierung will sieben Moscheen schließen, etliche Imame ausweisen", *Der Standard* (online), 08 June 2018c, <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000081199654/regierung-will-sieben-moscheen-schliessen-etliche-imame-ausweisen> (accessed 30 June 2021)

¹⁰⁰ The Muslim Brotherhood considers itself to be not only religious and political, but also a social and cultural movement that strives for the Islamisation of society and state. It pursues a bottom-up approach that builds on the proselytising.

¹⁰¹ Although the IFW claims to be autonomous, symbols, reports and brochures with references to the political branch of the *Milli Görüş* movement in Turkey point to a tight connection. *Kurier*, 2019

with approximately 12,000 members.¹⁰² Mosques are established and self-governed by the members of each of the mosque associations.¹⁰³

The Islamic *Süleymanlılar* order has also been strongly represented in the diaspora. This is a modern religious order (*tarikât*) named after its founder Süleyman Hilmi Tunaha. Tunaha founded it in Turkey in the 1930s in response to the Kemalist state's authoritarian secularisation programme and the closure of religious training institutions. Today, the order has grown into a large network in Turkey, the United States, and Europe. It is very active in the education sector and runs dormitories in Turkey and Europe. The *Süleymanlılar* order has traditionally competed with *Millî Görüş* for influence.¹⁰⁴ However, since the AKP's rise to power, all Islamic movements have benefited from the government's emphasis on religion and its integrative policies towards different Islamic movements.

In Austria, the *Süleymanlılar* run several local mosques, which are represented by the UIKZ. Its headquarters are in Vienna. UIKZ is one of the largest Islamic umbrella organisations in German-speaking countries.¹⁰⁵ Besides religious services, organising pilgrimage to Mecca, and arranging the transport of remains and funerals, the *Süleymanlılar* provide imam training for men and women. UIKZ offers three-year courses in Islamic theology.

The ultranationalist *Ülkücüler* (*Grey Wolves*) movement is also represented in the Turkish diaspora with various associations. Although the *Ülkücüler* are first and foremost a political movement, they have also become active in the religious realm. The Austrian Turkish Federation (ATF) is an *Ülkücü* umbrella organisation that runs around 17 mosques in Austria.¹⁰⁶ The ultra-nationalists' involvement with religion can be seen as another expression of the Turkish-Islamic synthesis, which seeks to reconcile Islam and Turkish nationalism in the fight against leftist and Kurdish groups. The bases of the ultra-nationalists and the *Millî Görüş* movement overlap. Since 2016, the ruling AKP and the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) have formed an alliance. Ultra-nationalist *Ülkücüler* have permeated state institutions, often replacing Fethullah Gülen supporters who were ousted after the failed coup attempt in July 2016.

¹⁰² Ibid

¹⁰³ Ertugrul, 2011: 67

¹⁰⁴ "Mavi takkeli çok tehlikeli cemaat: Süleymanlılar" [A very dangerous congregation with blue skullcaps: Süleymanlılar], *Aydınlık* (online), 17 August 2018, <https://www.aydinlik.com.tr/mavi-takkeli-cok-tehlikeli-cemaat-suleymanlilar-ozgurluk-meydani-agustos-2019-2#1> (accessed 17 November 2021)

¹⁰⁵ "Süleymans Anhänger in Wien", *Wiener Zeitung* (online), 15 September 2012, https://www.wienerzeitung.at/nachrichten/politik/oesterreich/489286-Sueleymans-Anhaenger-in-Wien.html?em_cnt_page=1 (accessed 01 April 2021)

¹⁰⁶ "Die rechtsextremen Wölfe aus der Türkei heulen auch hierzulande", *Der Standard* (online), 04 May 2018a, <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000078718964/die-rechtsextremen-woelfe-aus-der-tuerkei-heulen-auch-hierzulande> (accessed 01 July 2021); Ertugrul, 2011: 76

4.2

The AKP Builds an Imagined Faith-based Transnational Community

From the 1990s on, Turkish foreign policy strategies have been increasingly shaped by identity issues. Different Turkish governments have sought to capitalise on historical, religious, and ethnic ties with Turkish and Muslim communities and minorities abroad. The Turkish diaspora in Europe gradually moved into the centre of attention. On the one hand, the diaspora was seen as a potential source of support for Kurdish secessionist activities, which therefore needed to be surveilled,¹⁰⁷ and on the other hand, the diaspora came to be regarded as a potential lobbying group that could be mobilised for the national interests of the “homeland”.¹⁰⁸

This dichotomous approach to the diaspora continued and was further elaborated under the AKP government. However, in the first years of its rule in the early 2000s, the AKP pursued an inclusive and service-oriented approach, making consulates more accessible, professionalising the bureaucracy, and promoting digitalisation. At the same time, the embassies and consulates actively reached out to the communities and associations, and directly to second and third-generation migrants. In the early 2000s, many young Turkish migrants in Austria sought employment in Turkey. Since the AKP’s second term (2007–2011), Turkey has undergone a process of gradual autocratisation characterised by the narrowing of democratic liberties, a reconfiguration of state institutions and agencies, constitutional amendments, the construction of a pro-government business and media sector, and the personalisation of power in the hands of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. The ruling party established a monopoly over the state and its institutions. Autocratisation peaked after the failed coup attempt in 2016 and the introduction of the presidential system in 2018.

Autocratisation has had an impact on foreign policy and relations with diaspora communities, as the boundaries between domestic and foreign policy and between the interests of the state and those of the ruling party and the president have become increasingly blurred. The ruling party’s partisan interests have been particularly evident in policies toward the migrant diaspora in Europe. On the one hand, growing political polarisation in Turkey and increasingly narrow electoral victories have made diaspora communities an indispensable voter pool for the AKP. On the other hand, Turkish migrant communities in Europe have been instrumental for the party’s identity construction and projection. Turkish labour migrants have been rhetorically constructed as pious Sunni Muslims who are exposed to European racism,

¹⁰⁷ Kurdish activists in exile pursued a “diaspora engagement policy” that was largely controlled by the PKK. Fiona B Adamson, “Sending states and the making of intra-diasporic politics: Turkey and its diaspora(s)”, *International Migration Review*, no. 53 (2019): 210–236

¹⁰⁸ Ibid

Islamophobia, and hostilities. President Erdoğan has positioned himself and his party as advocates of the rights and needs of this oppressed and marginalised group.¹⁰⁹

The expansion of voting rights in 2012 to permit Turkish citizens living abroad to vote in Turkish elections strengthened transnational ties between Turkish politics and the diaspora. The diaspora came to be regarded as a subject and an important electoral base. Representatives of the diaspora have increasingly stood as candidates for national elections in Turkey.¹¹⁰ However, at the same time, the expansion of the voting rights to a transnational constituency changed political balances. In Turkey's highly polarised system, diaspora voters are tipping the scale.

President Erdoğan referred to this imagined faith-based transnational community in his victory speech after the 2014 presidential elections, when he explicitly thanked “friends of the heart” from South Africa to Japan and from Bosnia to Germany. “Today not only Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has won, but the whole nation has won, democracy has won (...). Today great Turkey has won, the leading Turkey has won. Not only Turkey, but Kabul, Beirut, Damascus, Aleppo, Ramallah, Jericho, Gaza and Jerusalem have won”.¹¹¹ In 2019, in the run-up to the local elections, Erdoğan said in a speech in Izmir: “According to us, the borders of Izmir start in Vienna. They start in East Turkistan, in the north of the Black Sea (...)”.¹¹²

The AKP's rhetoric has painted a picture of a glorious transnational community bound together by solidarity and loyalty to the party and its leader President Erdoğan.¹¹³ However, while “loyal” transnational citizens can fully enjoy their citizenship rights and travel freely in and out of the country, political dissidents at home and abroad face repressive and exclusionary mechanisms and practices.¹¹⁴

Popular sovereignty builds on a frontier of exclusion that divides society into two camps.¹¹⁵ Politics plays out in the register of morality. The frontiers between the in-group and the out-group (us and them) are drawn in moral categories of “good” and

¹⁰⁹ Cengiz Günay, Lena Maria Fruth and Caroline Sarifitci, *Religion, Geld und Allianzen. Wie Parteiinteressen die Außenpolitik der Türkei leiten*, öiip Report 2/22 (Vienna: Österreichisches Institut für Internationale Politik [öiip], 2022) <https://www.oiiip.ac.at/cms/media/kurzanalyse-parteiinteressen-und-aussenpolitik-tucc88rkei.pdf> (accessed 10 April 2022)

¹¹⁰ Serif Onur Bahçecik, 2020: 175-194

¹¹¹ “Erdoğan' dan balkon konuşması” [Erdoğan's balcony speech], *Sözcü* (online), 11 August 2014, <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2014/gunun-icinden/Erdoğandan-balkon-konusmasi-574975/> (accessed 03 December 2021)

¹¹² “Erdoğan: Bize göre İzmir'in sınırları Viyana'dan başlar” [Erdoğan: For us, Izmir's borders start from Vienna], *Ege'de Bir Gün* (online), 05 January 2019, <https://www.egedebirgun.com/Erdoğan-bize-gore-izmir-in-sinirlari-viyana-dan-baslar/21646/> (accessed 02 December 2021)

¹¹³ Zeynep Yanasmayan and Zeynep Kaşlı, “Reading diasporic engagements through the lens of citizenship: Turkey as a test case”, *Political Geography*, no. 70 (2019): 25

¹¹⁴ Ibid

¹¹⁵ Laclau, 2005: 81

“evil”.¹¹⁶ Hence, many AKP partisans consider politics as a moral fight of the right people (democrats) represented by the AKP against the old establishment (Kemalists). The struggle against the old elites is expanded and transferred to the international level, where it takes the form of the struggle of marginalised and victimised Muslims against Western hegemony.

The AKP has adopted a binary civilisational discourse distinguishing between “us” and “them”, which continuously constructs two antithetical and seemingly homogeneous conceptions of East and West.¹¹⁷ Here the diaspora is juxtaposed to secular Europeans (presented as racist and Islamophobic). This dichotomy also reflects the polarisation within Turkey, where the ruling party paints the image of a pious constituency threatened by secular Kemalist elites. As in the Turkish domestic context, President Erdoğan presents himself as the defender of the rights of the “righteous” people against the old elites. In its rhetoric towards the diaspora, the AKP positions itself as the defender of Muslims in Europe against Islamophobia and racism. Similar to its strategy towards its constituencies within Turkey, the AKP has promoted itself as the guarantor of its supporters' economic and cultural survival. This reinforces a sense of moral superiority. Elections turn into a moral fight against evil. The construction of “uniqueness and exclusivity” versus “evil” has been underpinned by the mythologisation of history.

4.3

Agencies and Institutions of Partisan Diaspora Policies

State agencies have been important elements of the AKP's transnational policies. Dominated by the ruling party, they have played a major role in reaching out to, mobilising, and controlling the migrant diaspora in Europe.

Diyanet has played a particularly prominent role, having established 61 branches in 36 countries in recent years. AKP policies have created a space for *Diyanet* to operate in two ways: as a state apparatus and as an actor of religious diplomacy.¹¹⁸ It has promoted the translation of the Quran and religious books into 28 languages and has

¹¹⁶ Chantal Mouffe, “The 'End of Politics' and the Challenge of Right-wing Populism”, in *Populism and the Mirror of Democracy*, ed. Francisco Panizza (London: Verso, 2005): 58

¹¹⁷ Chiara Maritato, “Islam, the Homeland, and the Family: *Diyanet*'s Narrative and Practices Aimed at Shaping a Loyal Muslim Turkish Diaspora”, *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 21, no. 2 (2021)

¹¹⁸ Ahmet Erdi Öztürk and Semiha Sözeri, “*Diyanet* as a Turkish Foreign Policy Tool: Evidence from the Netherlands and Bulgaria”, *Politics and Religion* 11, no. 3 (2018): 624–648

built mosques around the world.¹¹⁹

As part of its international mission, *Diyanet* has reinforced a conservative religion-nation-family nexus within the diaspora. Chiara Maritato's (2021) ethnographic research highlights the active involvement of *Diyanet* officers in promoting a religious-national discourse within diaspora communities and shows how this discourse reinforces a nexus between Islam, the Turkish nation, Turkish family values, and indirectly the ruling party.¹²⁰ *Diyanet*'s ambition to dominate Turkish Muslim diaspora communities contrasts with European governments' ambitions to create their notion of "European Islam".¹²¹

ATIB, which is the largest umbrella organisation for mosque associations in Austria, has avoided any open connection to the Turkish government. However, *Diyanet* has supported ATIB concerning personnel and organisational matters. ATIB (and its religious interpretations and practices) have therefore been exposed to the influence of the Presidency for Religious Affairs – which is controlled by the Presidential administration of Turkey.

Despite ATIB's claims to be non-political, photos emerged in 2018 showing Turkish immigrant children in uniforms staging a war game in one of its mosques in Vienna. These images caused outrage and were condemned by all Austrian political parties. The incident was seen as an expression of political Islam and its influence in Austria.¹²²

The AKP's aim to dominate Turkish migrant communities also led to the establishment of new institutions that promote its agenda. In 2010, the AKP government established the Presidency of Expatriate Turks and Related Communities (YTB), a state agency overseeing and coordinating engagement with Turkish minorities and migrant communities abroad. However, rather than a bilateral approach operating through other government institutions, YTB has engaged directly with Turkish diaspora associations.¹²³ YTB delegations have repeatedly visited Turkish migrant community centres, they have tried to position themselves as primary point of contacts for migrant community matters. In 2019, a YTB delegation visited Turkish communities in Vorarlberg and Tirol to discuss the options for Turkish-language

¹¹⁹ Ibid: 10

¹²⁰ Maritato, 2021

¹²¹ Zana Çitak, "The institutionalization of Islam in Europe and the Diyanet: the case of Austria", *Ortadoğu Etütleri* 5, no. 1 (2013): 169

¹²² Der Standard, 2018a;

"ATIB: Der verlängerte Arm Erdoğan's in Österreich", *OÖNachrichten* (online), 08 June 2018, <https://www.nachrichten.at/politik/innenpolitik/ATIB-Der-verlaengerte-Arm-Erdoğans-in-OEsterreich;art385,2919051> (accessed 04 May 2021)

¹²³ Bahçecik, 2020

education for children in Austria.¹²⁴

YTB functions as an instrument to promote the ruling party's conception of conservative Muslim Turkish identity, which it portrays as being under attack. It addresses the issue of racism and discrimination against Turkish migrant minorities and Muslims in general, has funded research on Islamophobia and xenophobia, and publishes reports about racist attacks against Turkish populations abroad.¹²⁵ YTB also awards scholarships for Muslim students from different countries, who are expected to develop close ties with Turkey¹²⁶, and funds PhD and master theses on topics dealing with the Turkish diaspora.¹²⁷

The Yunus Emre Institutes, established in 2009 are also part of the AKP's identity construction policies. Modelled on cultural institutions of European states, the Yunus Emre Institutes were initially established as an instrument of Turkey's soft power.¹²⁸ However, over time they have promoted a biased notion of Turkish culture dominated by the AKP's conservative Sunni worldview. The organisation runs 58 cultural centres. The Yunus Emre Cultural Centre in Vienna opened in 2015. The principal goal is to promote cultural diplomacy in Turkish foreign relations and enhance Turkey's reputation worldwide.¹²⁹

The Yunus Emre Cultural Institutes offer Turkish language teaching and courses on Turkish culture and art. The Yunus Emre Institute in Vienna also offers training programmes for teachers and others in the field of intercultural integration. It cooperates closely with the YTB.¹³⁰

The transnationalisation of the AKP's rhetoric and strategies was accompanied by the emergence of a vibrant transnational civil society. Most of these civil society organisations have been connected in some way with the ruling party, and many have a religious dimension.

¹²⁴ "YTB Heyeti Avusturya'da Vatandaşlarla Biraraya Geldi" [YTB Delegation came together with citizens in Austria], *YTB* (online), 30 April 2019, <https://www.ytb.gov.tr/-haberler-ytb-heyeti-avusturyada-vatandaslarla-bir-araya-geldi> (accessed 13 December 2021)

¹²⁵ Baser and Ahmet Erdi Ozturk, "Positive and negative diaspora governance in context: from public diplomacy to transnational authoritarianism", *Middle East Critique* 29, no. 3 (2020): 319-334

¹²⁶ Yanasmayan and Kaşlı, 2019: 27

¹²⁷ Baser and Öztürk, 2020

¹²⁸ Yaşar Aydın, *The New Turkish Diaspora Policy. Its Aims, Their Limits and the Challenges for Associations of People of Turkish Origin and Decision-makers in Germany*, SWP Research Paper RP 10 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik [SWP], 2014) https://www.swp-berlin.org/publications/products/research_papers/2014_RP10_adn.pdf (accessed 25 November 2021)

¹²⁹ "Über uns", *Yunus Emre Enstitüsü Viyana* (online), <https://viyana.yee.org.tr/de/content/yunus-emre-institut> (accessed 20 March 2022)

¹³⁰ Bahar Başer, "Governing Turkey's diaspora(s) and the limits of diaspora diplomacy" in *The Routledge Handbook of Turkish Politics*, eds. Alpaslan Özerdem and Matthew Whiting, 1. Edition (London: Routledge, 2019): 202-213

One such pro-AKP civil society organisation is the Union of International Democrats (UID), formerly *Union Europäisch-Türkischer Demokraten* or Union of European Turkish Democrats (UETD)¹³¹. The UID has branches in most European countries. Although it denies any direct ties to the ruling party, it is led by Metin Külünk, a close confidante of President Erdoğan.¹³² The UID is also instrumental in coordinating a complex patronage network and conducting financial transfers for the ruling party and its functionaries. It has also been an important instrument of surveillance and mobilisation in the diaspora.¹³³ The UID and its predecessor, UETD, have been crucial in increasing voter turnout in the diaspora.¹³⁴

In 2014, the UETD organised Erdoğan's presidential campaign meeting in Vienna. After the failed coup attempt in July 2016, it mobilised pro-government protests. In 2017, it campaigned for a yes vote in the constitutional referendum with the slogan "homeland lovers say yes".¹³⁵ The UETD also actively mobilised voters for the referendum and in 2018 for the presidential elections. This included transportation from remote areas to vote at the general consulates in Vienna, Bregenz and Salzburg.¹³⁶ When the campaign for the constitutional referendum encountered restrictions in Austria, Germany, and the Netherlands, the organisation shifted its rallies to Bosnia and organised coach travel from Austria and other European countries with large Turkish populations.¹³⁷ President Erdoğan in turn used the ban on his planned rallies in Austria, Germany, and the Netherlands to portray himself and the Turkish diaspora as victims of Islamophobia and racism.

UID members have been vocal advocates of Turkish government positions in Austrian TV talk shows.¹³⁸ And organisations such as the UID have opened up new career opportunities for second- and third-generation migrants. Activism within a pro-government network with direct ties to the President of the Republic of Turkey has promised access to the circles of power, reputation, and status.¹³⁹ As well as defending

¹³¹ The organisation changed its name in May 2018 at the general assembly held in Sarajevo with the participation of President Erdoğan as guest of honour.

¹³² Bilge Yabancı, "Home state-oriented Diaspora organizations and the making of partisan citizens abroad: motivations, discursive frames, and actions towards co-opting the Turkish Diaspora in Europe", *Diaspora* 21, no. 2 (2021): 147

¹³³ Ibid: 156

¹³⁴ Ibid

¹³⁵ Yabancı, 2021: 147

¹³⁶ "Erdoğan's Referendum startet für Austro-Türken", *Kurier* (online), 27 March 2017, <https://kurier.at/politik/inland/erdoans-referendum-startet-fuer-108-561-austro-tuerken/254.531.646> (accessed 05 November 2021)

¹³⁷ Yabancı, 2021

¹³⁸ "Österreich beklagt Türkei-Wahlkampf in Wien – nun bringt Erdoğan Merkel in Dilemma", *Fokus* (online), 25 April 2018, https://www.focus.de/politik/ausland/vorfall-bei-uetd-veranstaltung-oesterreich-beklagt-tuerkei-wahlkampf-in-wien-nun-bringt-erdogan-merkel-in-dilemma_id_8819492.html (accessed 28 October 2021)

¹³⁹ Cengiz Günay and Vedran Dzihic, *Politische Teilhabe im Transnationalen Kontext. Türkische und Serbische MigrantInnen in Wien*, (Vienna: Österreichisches Institut für Internationale Politik [oiip], 2021) <https://www.oiip.ac.at/cms/media/stadt-wien-ucc88bearbeitet-projektbericht-8-11-2021.pdf> (accessed 13 November 2021)

the Turkish government's foreign policy positions, they have also legitimised authoritarianism by pointing out Europe's double standards on refugees, human rights violations, and racism.¹⁴⁰

Initially, the Gülen Movement was one of the major beneficiaries of the new diaspora policy,¹⁴¹ but this changed radically after the failed coup attempt in 2016. Since then, the AKP government has tried to mobilise the diaspora against the Gülen Movement. Following the coup attempt, there have been reports of increased surveillance by the Turkish Intelligence service MIT and encouragement to denounce Gülenists and Kurdish activists.¹⁴²

4.4

Participation in Turkish Elections

The Turkish diaspora in Austria has been a stronghold of President Erdoğan and the ruling AKP.¹⁴³ The social fabric of the Austrian diaspora today resembles the AKP's core constituencies in Turkey. President Erdoğan's provocative rhetoric fell on fertile ground in the Turkish diaspora in Austria due to the prevailing anti-Muslim migration discourse in this country.

In the 2014 presidential elections, voters abroad were able to cast their votes in consulates for the first time.¹⁴⁴ Turnout in Austria remained very low at approximately nine per cent (only 9.519 out of 105.478 eligible Turkish citizens in Austria used their right to cast their vote in a Turkish consulate).¹⁴⁵ Recep Tayyip Erdoğan won a landslide victory in Austria, with 81.4 per cent in Vienna, 76.8 per cent in Salzburg and 80.2 per cent in Bregenz.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁰ Yabancı, 2021: 147

¹⁴¹ Adamson, 2019

¹⁴² Baser and Öztürk, 2020;

Gaul, Pilz, "Türkischer Geheimdienst wollte Kooperation mit Austro-Polizei", *Kurier* (online), 31 March 2017, <https://kurier.at/politik/inland/pilz-tuerkischer-geheimdienst-wollte-kooperation-mit-austro-polizei/255.341.455> (accessed 01 April 2021)

¹⁴³ "Turkey election: Expats play decisive role in Erdoğan vote", *BBC* (online), 21 June 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-44546035> (accessed 30 May 2021);

"Türken vs. Kurden—Das Heulen der Wölfe. Politik in Wien", *Wiener Zeitung* (online), 04 July 2020, <https://www.wienerzeitung.at/nachrichten/politik/wien-politik/2066685-Das-Heulen-der-Woelfe.html> (accessed 29 June 2021)

¹⁴⁴ Until then, the president was elected by parliament. The elections in 2014 were the first where Turkish voters in Austria could cast their votes in consulates.

¹⁴⁵ "Erdogan: Nur neun Prozent Wahlbeteiligung in Österreich", *ORF* (online), 11 August 2014, <https://wien.orf.at/v2/news/stories/2662470/> (accessed 26 April 2024)

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid*

Austrian turnout was significantly higher in the parliamentary elections a year later, in June 2015, with 34.7 per cent of eligible voters participating.¹⁴⁷ In the snap elections held in November of the same year, the AKP's vote share in Austria was 69.0 per cent, on an increased turnout of 40.6 per cent.¹⁴⁸ The pro-Kurdish HDP (People's Democratic Party) came second with 12.3 per cent, and the major opposition party CHP (Republican People's Party), only gained 10.4 per cent.¹⁴⁹ In Turkey itself, the AKP won with 49.5 per cent of the votes, while the opposition CHP gained 25.3 per cent.¹⁵⁰

Differences in voting patterns between Austria and Turkey persisted in subsequent elections. In the 2017 constitutional referendum on introducing a presidential system, the outcome in Turkey was rather narrow. While the amendments were approved by 51.4 to 48.6 per cent overall,¹⁵¹ the yes vote among Turkish voters in Austria was 73.2 per cent among the highest in the diaspora, second only to Belgium with 75.0 per cent.¹⁵²

In the 2018 presidential elections, President Erdoğan gained 72.3 per cent in Austria compared to 52.6 per cent in Turkey.¹⁵³ Turnout was 50.0 per cent.¹⁵⁴ President Erdoğan's share was higher only in Belgium (74.1 per cent) and the Netherlands (72.9 per cent).¹⁵⁵

Erdoğan was able to maintain his share of the vote in the presidential elections in May 2023, gaining 71.9 per cent in the first round held on 14 May 2023. His challenger Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu only won 25.9 per cent. In the parliamentary elections, which were held simultaneously, the ruling AKP won 54.7 per cent, while the main opposition

¹⁴⁷ "Türkische Parlamentswahl: 37.000 haben in Österreich gewählt", *Der Standard* (online), 01 June 2015a, <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000016759525/tuerkische-parlamentswahl-37000haben-in-oesterreich-gewaehlt> (accessed 01 July 2021)

¹⁴⁸ "1 Kasım 2015 Avusturya Genel Seçim Sonuçları" [1 November 2015 Austrian General Election Results], *Haberler.com* (online), 2015, <https://www.haberler.com/secim/2015/avusturya-secim-sonuclari/> (accessed 15 March 2022)

¹⁴⁹ "69 Prozent für AKP in Österreich", *Der Standard* (online), 01 November 2015b, <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000024900464/69-prozent-fuer-akp-in-oesterreich> (accessed 01 July 2021)

¹⁵⁰ Steinlechner, 2016

¹⁵¹ "Türkiye Geneli Canlı Referandum Sonuçları—İllere Göre Evet Hayır Oy Oranları" [Live results of the referendum for whole Turkey - The ratio between yes and no votes according to provinces], *NTV* (online), 2017, <http://referandum.ntv.com.tr/> (accessed 05 April 2021)

¹⁵² "Türken in Österreich stimmen klar für Verfassungsänderung", *Die Presse* (online), 19 April 2017b, <https://www.diepresse.com/5202096/tuerken-in-oesterreich-stimmen-klar-fuer-verfassungsaenderung> (accessed 18 March 2021)

¹⁵³ "72,3 Prozent der Wähler in Österreich für Erdoğan", *Tiroler Tageszeitung* (online), 26 June 2018, <https://www.tt.com/artikel/14515595/72-3-prozent-der-waehler-in-oesterreich-fuer-Erdoğan> (accessed 29 November 2021)

¹⁵⁴ "Türkei-Wahlen: 72 Prozent in Österreich für Erdoğan", *Kurier* (online), 24 June 2018b, <https://kurier.at/politik/ausland/tuerkei-wahlen-71-prozent-in-oesterreich-fuer-Erdoğan/400056200> (accessed 23 November 2021)

¹⁵⁵ *Wiener Zeitung*, 2018

party CHP gained only 14.3 per cent.¹⁵⁶ Erdoğan's vote share in Austria was significantly higher than the overall vote. With 49.5 per cent Erdoğan remained slightly below the 50 per cent threshold. Kılıçdaroğlu's overall vote share in the first round was 44.8 per cent (much higher than the 25.9 per cent he won in Austria).¹⁵⁷ Erdoğan was able to increase his share in a vote to 73.8 per cent in the second round, while Kılıçdaroğlu remained at 26.1 per cent. The turnout in Austria in the second round was 58.8 per cent. While Erdoğan's highest second-round vote share in Austria was in Salzburg (78.7 per cent), Kılıçdaroğlu's best vote was in Graz (51.4 per cent).¹⁵⁸ At the same time turnout in Austria remained around 30 per cent below the overall turnout.¹⁵⁹

As the table below shows, President Erdoğan and the AKP successfully mobilised their electorate in Austria, achieving better results than in Turkey. On the other hand, voter turnout has remained far below the total figure. The reason for this could be the government's failure to inform citizens appropriately, the opposition parties' failure to mobilise their voters or limited interest in Turkish elections. In any case, the comparably low voter turnout highlights the limits of the ruling AKP's mobilisation capacities and of President Erdoğan's popularity among the diaspora.

¹⁵⁶ "Avusturya Seçim Sonuçları 2023" [Austria Election Results 2023], *Sabah* (online), 2023a, <https://www.sabah.com.tr/secim/14-mayis-2023-genel-secim-sonuclari/avusturya/ulkesi-genel-secim-sonuclari> (accessed 31 October 2023)

¹⁵⁷ Ibid

¹⁵⁸ "Avusturya Seçim Sonuçları 2023" [Election Results for Turkey], *Sabah* (online), 2023b, <https://www.sabah.com.tr/secim/28-mayis-2023-cumhurbaskanligi-secim-sonuclari/avusturya/ulkesi-cumhurbaskanligi-secim-sonuclari> (accessed 31 October 2023)

¹⁵⁹ "Cumhurbaşkanı 2. Tur seçimi" [Second Round of Presidential Elections], *Sözcü* (online), 28 May 2023, <https://secim.sozcu.com.tr/secim2023Mayis28> (accessed 31 October 2023)

Table 1: Results of Turkish elections in Turkey and Austria

Election	Austria		Turkey	
	Erdoğan/AKP	Turnout	Erdoğan/AKP	Turnout (total)
2014 Presidential election	80.3%	9.00%	51.8%	74.1%
2015 Parliamentary election (June)	64.2%	34.7%	40.8%	83.9%
2015 Parliamentary election (Nov.)	69.0%	40.6%	49.5%	85.1%
2017 Referendum	73.2%	50.6%	51.4%	85.4%
2018 Presidential election	72.3%	49.0%	52.6%	86.2%
2023 Presidential election (1st round May 14)	71.9%	54.1%	49.5%	86.9%
2023 Presidential election (2nd round May 28)	73.8%	58.8%	52.1%	84.0%

Source: Compiled by the authors based on the above-mentioned references in this section (4.4)

The Turkish diaspora’s strong electoral support for President Erdoğan and the ruling AKP has been heatedly debated in Austria. Erdoğan has been presented as the primary representative of political Islam. His popularity among Turkish migrants in Austria has often been interpreted as a sign of “the failure of integration policies”.¹⁶⁰ The far-right FPÖ called for Turkish migrants who voted for Erdoğan to return to Turkey.¹⁶¹

While Austrian media had strongly focused in previous elections on the high level of support for Erdoğan among the Turkish diaspora and the reasons for that, in 2023, the focus lay more on developments in Turkey and whether Erdoğan would win or lose.

4.5 Participation in Austrian Politics

Turkish citizens in Austria can neither participate in general elections, nor in elections at the federal state level or the local level. Migrants who are not naturalised are largely excluded from the formal democratic process and representation. Thus, restrictive citizenship laws have led to a growing deficit in democratic representation, particularly in larger cities. The gap is greatest in Vienna, where 30.1 per cent of the population do not possess Austrian citizenship (in Rudolfsheim-Fünfhaus the figure

¹⁶⁰ “Nationalistischer Ausgrenzungsdiskurs”, Der Standard (online), 10 July 2020, <https://www.derstandard.de/story/2000118617172/nationalistischer-ausgrenzungsdiskurs> (accessed 25 June 2021)

¹⁶¹ Wiener Zeitung, 2018

is 41.7 per cent).¹⁶² Large democratic representation gaps also tend to be associated with lower interest in political processes and institutions among eligible voters.¹⁶³

Empirical data indicates that Austrian citizens of Turkish descent show less interest in Austrian politics than the population as a whole.¹⁶⁴ This affects their participation in Austrian elections and representation in political parties and other institutions at the national, state, and local levels. Representation in parties and organisations such as trade unions, the Chamber of Labour (*Arbeiterkammer*), the Chamber of Commerce (*Wirtschaftskammer*), and other professional associations remains comparatively low and Turkish migrants are underrepresented across decision-making structures.¹⁶⁵

This creates a vicious circle, where xenophobic, Islamophobic and anti-Turkish discourses suppress interest in Austrian politics, while the underrepresentation of migrant communities in Austrian political institutions feeds a discourse *about* migrants rather than *with* migrants. Only a couple of political parties (Greens, Social Democrats and NEOS) have developed strategies towards migrants and their needs, such as improving legal and social conditions. The SPÖ has been the most popular party among Turkish migrant voters, while the far-right populist Freedom Party is the least popular.¹⁶⁶ The SPÖ has repeatedly tried to reach out to Turkish migrant communities. The party's influential Vienna branch has been particularly successful in this regard. In the run-up to the 2013 general elections, the SPÖ even printed brochures and posters in Turkish.¹⁶⁷ However, campaigning in Turkish was quickly dropped after criticism from the far-right FPÖ.

It is rather surprising that despite the FPÖ's repeated use of discriminatory language, symbols, and slogans (which have often caricatured Turkish migrants and depicted them as the "cultural other"), 6.0 per cent of naturalised Turkish migrants in Vienna still voted for it.¹⁶⁸ This is surprisingly just one percentage point below the FPÖ's overall result in Vienna (7.1 per cent). One factor might be that the FPÖ has mainly

¹⁶² Stadt Wien, *Integrations- und Diversitätsmonitor Wien 2020* (Wien, 2020), <https://www.digital.wienbibliothek.at/wbrup/periodical/titleinfo/3658833> (accessed 29 April 2021): 57

¹⁶³ Sieglinde Rosenberger, *Engagiert. Transnational. Ausgegrenzt. Politische Beteiligung von Migrant:Innen und Geflüchteten in Wien*, Österreichisches Institut für Internationale Politik (öiip) Event Mezzanin (Vienna, 09 November 2021)

¹⁶⁴ Peter Filzmaier, P, Markus Patscheider and Flooh Perlot, "MigrantInnen als Wählergruppe in Österreich", *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft* 44, no. 2 (2015): 29–43

¹⁶⁵ Günay and Dzihic, 2021

¹⁶⁶ Filzmaier, Patscheider and Perlot, 2015

¹⁶⁷ Michael Völker, "Der Türke in der SPÖ" *Der Standard* Kommentar", *Der Standard* (online) 19 September 2013, <https://www.derstandard.at/story/1379291287425/der-tuerke-in-der-spo> (accessed 22 September 2021)

¹⁶⁸ In the 2005 local elections in Vienna the FPÖ used campaign posters stating "Wien darf nicht Istanbul werden" [Vienna mustn't become Istanbul] and "Pummerin statt Muezzin" [the church bell of St Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna better than muezzins]. In the 2006 general elections the FPÖ campaigned with clearly Islamophobic slogans such as "Daham statt Islam" [at home instead of Islam], and in the 2009 European Parliament elections "Abendland in Christenhand" [the West stays in Christians]. These slogans played on the Ottoman siege of Vienna in 1683, suggesting that Austrian society is under siege and threatened by another Turkish invader, the immigrants.

operated with stereotypes and images of radical Muslims, and has not explicitly attacked Islam, Muslims, or Turks as such.

5.

Conclusion

Migration from Turkey to Austria started in the 1960s as labour migration. Since then, the Turkish diaspora has grown into one of the country's largest migrant communities. Despite successive waves of migration to Austria, the Austrian governments have failed to acknowledge the efforts and contributions of migrants or to adapt institutions and systems accordingly. Instead of focusing on the benefits of migration, Austrian discourses have been dominated by fears of destabilisation and disintegration. Most Turkish migrants have remained part of the working class; few are represented in the public sector or self-employed. A relatively large proportion of Turkish migrants in Austria are threatened by poverty; their income, living and housing conditions are below the Austrian average.

Since the early 2000s, Turkish migrants have been spotlighted in debates on immigration and integration. Many arguments have revolved around identity issues. Muslims and Turkish immigrants have been depicted as the cultural “other”. Migrant communities have often been criticised for living in parallel worlds and cultures. The image of a clearly defined essential “other” has been used to define the Austrian “we”. Just as the image of the Muslim Turkish migrant has been rather a caricature, so the Austrian self-image has acquired folkloristic homogenising traits. The picture right-wing parties have painted of Austrian culture has ignored the many nuances and differences within the nation.

The fears of destabilisation and the urge to control have been translated into legislation and integration measures. Immigration policies have been severely tightened. Various reforms introduced new criteria for issuing and renewing visas and residence permits, imposing new restrictions on family reunification. The state has also sought to better control Islamic institutions and associations in Austria.

The religious arena has been dominated by associations, particularly numerous mosque associations. Most of these belong to umbrella organisations controlled by ATIB (as the representative of *Diyanet*), the *Süleymanlılar* Islamic orders, the political *Milli Görüş* movement, or, to a lesser extent, the ultra-nationalist *Ülkücüler*.

In recent years, with the rise of authoritarianism in Turkey, the *Diyanet* has been controlled by the ruling AKP. This influence also extended throughout the *Diyanet* branches in Europe. However, state agencies and transnational civil society organisations close to the government have also been instrumental.

The Turkish government has advanced the transnationalisation and deterritorialisation of Turkish sovereignty, with President Erdoğan presenting himself as the leader and spokesperson of an imagined Islamic community that transcends the borders not only of territorial Turkey, but also of the Turkish nation and citizenship. Besides religious symbolism and rhetoric, references to a glorious Ottoman past and the promise of regaining status and grandeur have been important components of this imaginary. These messages fall on fertile ground in the Turkish diaspora in Austria. Experiencing racist and Islamophobic discourses, many Turkish migrants have seen President Erdoğan as a protector. Often feeling discriminated against in Austria, they have taken pride in the Turkish government's supposed successes.

The Turkish government's claim to be the protector of the rights of the Turkish and Muslim diaspora has clashed with the Austrian government's ambition to control religious activities and limit cultural differences. One good example of this is President Erdoğan's speaking tours across Europe in the 2014 presidential election campaign. His speeches and the polarising rhetoric he often used were said to have a negative impact on integration. Austria's then Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz criticised Erdoğan's visits and declared that such campaigns would import political polarisation and hinder integration.¹⁶⁹ Kurz accused Erdoğan of "destabilising Austria's streets".¹⁷⁰

This fight over Austrian sovereignty has been to the detriment of the Turkish diaspora. Turkish migrants are alienated by Islamophobic and essentialist Austrian political discourses on the one hand, and President Erdoğan has exploited their situation on the other. Loyalty to Turkey increasingly overlaps with loyalty to the ruling party and the President. The Turkish government's spying and surveillance activities within the diaspora have increased, in particular since the failed coup attempt of 2016 and the concomitant operations against the Gülen Movement.

However, recent developments in Turkey – such as economic decline, the further securitisation of public space and the criminalisation of dissent – have also fostered critical voices among the AKP's traditional constituencies in Austria.

Instead of generalisations, Austrian political parties should seek dialogue with diaspora communities. After all, many migrants either refrain from participating in Austrian politics because they see no place for themselves, or they are excluded because they do not possess Austrian citizenship.

¹⁶⁹ "Erdoğan droht Österreich. Kurz will nicht nachgeben", *Kleine Zeitung* (online), 22 April 2018, https://www.kleinezeitung.at/politik/aussenpolitik/5410174/WahlkampfAuftrittsverbot_Erdogan-droht-Oesterreich-Kurz-will (accessed 12 April 2021)

¹⁷⁰ "Ein Wahlkampf in der Eishalle", *Kurier* (online), 19 June 2014, <https://kurier.at/chronik/wien/erdogan-in-wien-ein-wahlkampf-in-der-eishalle/71.131.695> (accessed 20 April 2021)

Abbreviations

AKP	<i>Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi)</i>
ATF	<i>Austrian Turkish Federation (Avusturya Türk Federasyon)</i>
ATIB	<i>Austrian Turkish Islamic Union (Avusturya Türk İslam Birliđi)</i>
AYFED	<i>Austrian Yozgat Association (Avusturya Yozgatlılar Federasyonu)</i>
CHP	<i>Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi)</i>
DITIB	<i>The Turkish Islamic Union for Religious Affairs</i>
Diyamet	<i>Turkish Presidency of Religious Affairs</i>
EEA	<i>European Economic Area</i>
EU	<i>European Union</i>
FPÖ	<i>Freedom Party of Austria (Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs)</i>
HDP	<i>People's Democratic Party (Halkların Demokratik Partisi)</i>
IFW	<i>Islamic Federation Vienna (Islamische Föderation Wien)</i>
IGGÖ	<i>Islamic Faith Community Austria (Islamische Glaubensgemeinschaft Österreich)</i>
LGBTIQ	<i>Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender, Intersex and Queers</i>
MB	<i>Muslim Brotherhood</i>
MHP	<i>Nationalist Movement Party</i>
MIT	<i>National Intelligence Organisation Turkey (Millî İstihbarat Teşkilatı)</i>
ÖVP	<i>Austrian People's Party (Österreichische Volkspartei)</i>
PKK	<i>Kurdistan Workers' Party (Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê)</i>
RWR	<i>Red-White-Red Card</i>
SPÖ	<i>Social Democratic Party of Austria (Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs)</i>
TIS	<i>Turkish-Islamic Synthesis (Türk-İslam sentezi)</i>
UETD	<i>Union of European Turkish Democrats</i>
UID	<i>Union of International Democrats</i>
UIKZ	<i>Union of Islamic Centres of Culture</i>
Ülkücüler	<i>Grey Wolves</i>
UNHCR	<i>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</i>
YTB	<i>Presidency for Turks abroad and Related Communities (Yurtdışı Türkler ve Akraba Topluluklar Başkanlığı)</i>

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