

# Chapter 9

## Research-Policy Dialogues in Austria

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### 9.1 Introduction

Despite Austria's long standing history as a multi-ethnic and pluri-religious country, Austrian policymakers and the public tend to experience migration and integration as a novel phenomenon. Discourse on the 'integration'<sup>1</sup> of migrants ranks high on the political agenda and is fiercely disputed in society, with a particular focus on perceptions of migrants as 'unintegrated'. Thus, to understand migrant integration in Austria, three contextual aspects appear to be crucial: first, there is a 'lack of integration' widely attributed to migrants and their offspring. About two thirds of Austrian citizens are dissatisfied with the integration of migrants who, in contrast, feel integrated in Austria and support 'Austrian' values and life style (Statistik Austria 2011). Second, attention is directed both in the public imagination and in political measures at migrants from Turkey and the former Yugoslavia, while the major immigrant group by far is constituted by Germans (Statistik Austria 2012). Third, one may observe a tendency in data collection to follow – and therefore reinforce – the dominant perception of migrant integration in Austria.

Indeed, the Austrian Statistical Yearbook on Migration and Integration, which measures integration achievements for several key indicators such as education and

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<sup>1</sup>Both in science and public the term integration is widely used, yet it assumes very different and sometimes opposed meanings. In this article the term integration is used according to the national integration discourse in Austria. Yet one may observe that the use of the term integration in the Austrian integration debates corresponds to what some scientists may refer to as assimilation. The various meanings of integration and the usage of the concept in migration research are elaborated by Heckmann and Bosswick (2006).

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employment, differentiates between migrants from EU/EEA/CH, Turkey, former Yugoslavia and other countries, suggesting a high relevance of Turkish and Ex-Yugoslavian migrants for Austrian integration (policies)<sup>2</sup> (Statistik Austria & Staatssekretariat für Integration 2012). This observation is even more relevant when one bears in mind that migrants are not identified by their present nationality but grouped into a political-geographical unit that ceased some 20 years ago.

Against this background, this chapter sets out to explore what role knowledge and science play in shaping dialogues on migrant integration in Austria. Additional light is shed on the question of how knowledge and particularly scientific knowledge impacts on decision-making and the evolution of policies aiming at integrating migrants in Austria, and if whether this leads to the ‘objectification of the topic of integration’ as formulated by the State Secretary for Integration as one of its mission goals. Empirical evidence is drawn from both quantitative and qualitative research methods including literature and document analysis, network and media analysis, and more than 30 qualitative interviews with experts.

## **9.2 Challenges in Migrant Integration: A Historic Overview**

Historically, the development of Austrian migration policy is closely linked to broader societal and political transformations that marked the Habsburg Empire and its successor states. Five turning points can be identified which are related to historical events including the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy; the Cold War and the division into Communist-ruled and Western states; the opening of Austrian migration policy in the 1960s due to post-WWII labour market needs, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the fall of the Iron Curtain between 1989 and 1993; and the silent Europeanisation of migration policymaking since 1997.

### ***9.2.1 Historical Legacies: The Habsburg Empire and the Fall of the Iron Curtain***

As a successor of the Habsburg monarchy, Austria has a long history of migration, including immigration, emigration and transit migration. The Habsburg monarchy did not possess a migration policy in the modern sense, but several mechanisms of controlling the movement of people within its territory. For instance, by documenting individual identity and regulating access to rights and related obligations. In this context the *Heimatrecht*, the right of residence which tied all individuals to

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<sup>2</sup>Historical reasons may offer some explanation for the particular interest in the aforementioned migrant groups: the successor states of the former Yugoslavia are for example referred to as ‘inner colonies’ of the Habsburg Empire by post-colonial historians. See e.g. Komlosy (2005).

their municipality of origin, played a pivotal role in granting social rights to people (e.g. poor relief), but also in expelling and deporting individuals to their community of origin in case of delinquency or political activism (Burger and Wendelin 2002). The first modern migration policies were established with the foundation of the first Austrian republic in 1918 and the adoption of the so-called Protection of Native Workers Act in 1925. This act was based on the idea that labour markets had a limited intake capacity and thus needed to be regulated. It marked an important shift from local control of public welfare to labour market regulations as a state responsibility (Heiss 1995; Kraler 2011).

During the Cold War period Austria became one of the main receiving and transit countries for about two million refugees from ‘communist’ regimes. Alongside the reception of refugees, in the 1960s and 1970s Austria actively recruited large numbers of labour migrants to feed its post-war economic boom by forging bilateral agreements with southern and south eastern European (Bauer 2008; Currie 2004; Kraler 2011). The first temporary immigration agreement, subject to annual re-negotiation, granted access to 37,120 foreign workers in 1961 (Kraler 2011; Perchinig 2010). Interestingly, these agreements were negotiated by the so-called *social partners*, mainly the Chamber of Labour and the Trades Unions, the Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Austrian Industries. These actors almost exclusively steered migration and integration policy at that time (Perchinig 2010).

Austria’s need to regulate the entry and residence of migrants also triggered the first research on migration and integration at that time (Bauböck and Perchinig 2003; Perchinig 2005).

### ***9.2.2 The Politicisation of Migration and Integration***

In the 1980s and 1990s three major changes led to an increasing politicisation of migrant integration in Austria: first, the rise of new political actors with clear statements on migration; second, a massive increase in the numbers of immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers; and third, a growing awareness in both politics and society that the ‘guest workers’ were about to stay and establish families and communities. In the 1980s the general perception of immigrants as ‘guest workers’ was more and more shaped by both a transformation of the existing political landscape and the institutional framework dealing with migration. Two new actors, i.e. the Green Party (Die Grünen) and the Freedom Party (Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs, FPÖ) gained political momentum. This not only changed the previous two-party system comprising the Social Democratic Party (SPÖ) and the People’s Party (ÖVP), but also lifted the issue of migration up the political and public agenda (Kraler 2011; Perchinig 2005). Both the Green Party and the Freedom Party made migration a central issue of their politics – the first focusing on integration and equal rights and the latter claiming legal and social priority for Austrian citizens. Consequently, having been an issue that previously was decided by a small number of actors (i.e. the social partners) in informal, non-public settings, migration developed into a publicly contested domain.

It was not before the 1990s, however, that the issue of migrant integration entered public and political debates. A first ‘rational discourse’ (Perchinig 2010) on migrant integration ended abruptly with the fall of the Iron Curtain and the subsequent major changes in the European political landscape at the beginning of the 1990s, when Austria was confronted with an unprecedented influx of refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina. In reaction to this, the fear of mass immigration from Eastern European countries gained momentum and all parliamentary parties, except the Greens, called for strengthening immigration controls. In addition, a new social issue quickly gained political significance in the 1990s: the ageing of society. This issue further fuelled migration and integration debates but regarded migration not as a threat to social peace but as a potential instrument to control demographic developments. As leading demographers argued that controlled migration might contribute to a positive population outcome in Austria, this discussion eventually led to a quota-system of immigration, but without improving the legal status of migrants (Perchinig 2010).

As a result of the dramatic developments in the late 1980s and early 1990s, new actors and institutions emerged in the realm of migration and integration policy. The most important of these was the Ministry of Interior (MoI), which took over the responsibility for migration-related issues from the social partners, and the Ministry of Social Affairs in the late 1980s and early 1990s. By so doing it defined immigration as a matter of internal security (Sohler 1999). Nevertheless, Caspar Einem, then Minister of Interior, presented a bundle of migration law amendments under the name of the Integration Package (*Integrationspaket*) in 1995, marking the birth of Austrian migrant integration policy as a distinct policy concern (Kraler 2011).

### 9.2.3 *Integration Policymaking at the Crossroads*

In the following decade, scientification,<sup>3</sup> politicisation and a silent Europeanisation of migrant integration policies seemed to go hand in hand. On the one hand, the formation of a coalition government between the conservative Austrian People’s Party (ÖVP) and the right-wing Freedom Party (FPÖ) in 2000 introduced increas-

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<sup>3</sup>The increased interference between science and politics and, more generally, the increasing importance of expert knowledge for practices of regulation and governance of societies, is considered a structural feature of the late nineteenth and twentieth century which transcends regions and political systems. Lutz Raphael (1996) referred to this process as the ‘scientification of the social’. He pleaded not only for devoting more attention to this previously overlooked historical phenomenon, but also for sensitising social history to the historicity of the social science data material on which it is based. Already in 1983, however, Peter Weingart suggested that the then current legitimisation crisis of science can be ascribed to two opposing processes, i.e. the scientification of societal institutions (in the sense of the dissolution of traditional action orientations) and the politicisation of science.

ingly restrictive immigration policies and more and more symbolic measures on integration. For example, it introduced significant changes in the Aliens Act and the Asylum Law in 2002 aimed at reducing in-migration in general. This legislation also included a so-called integration agreement that obliged long-term migrants to sit language tests. Both measures proved largely ineffective as the main sources of immigration soon turned out to be other EU member states – with Germany being by far the most significant country of origin for labour migrants. Just 4 years after this revision a new Aliens Legislation Package entered into force in 2006, which again intensified restrictions for migration and increased the integration requirements on new migrants. The reform strengthened the link between citizenship and integration of migrants while simultaneously refusing naturalisation to most migrants by raising the requirements significantly. At this time political measures on migration and integration in Austria also became increasingly influenced by scientific discourses and spill-over effects linked to other countries’ integration paradigms. One example of this is the distinction between high-qualified (good) and low-qualified (bad) migrants. Introduced in Austria by the emergent internationalisation and Europeanisation of science and politics, this scientific distinction had a pivotal influence on politics and public debate in Austria.

To conclude, an overview of the evolution of Austrian Integration Policy is provided in the Table 9.1.

**Table 9.1** The evolution of Austrian integration policy – at a glance

	Development phases
1960–1990	<b>The ‘Guestworker’-Paradigm</b>
	Social partners ( <i>Sozialpartnerschaft</i> ) regulate immigration through bilateral recruitment agreements; due to the dominance of the rotation principle legal, political and social aspects of integration are not considered
1980/1990s	<b>Integration enters the political arena</b>
	New political actors (Greens, FPÖ); fall of the Iron Curtain increases immigration from Eastern Europe, particularly Bosnia Herzegovina; ‘Integration before new immigration’ becomes guiding principle; Ministry of Interior assumes central role
1995–1997	<b>Milestones of Austrian integration policy</b>
	The then liberal Minister of Interior, Caspar Einem, proposes amendments to the Foreigners Law under the heading of ‘integration package’. He experiences a defeat. His successor Karl Schloegl is successful in enforcing a consolidation of the right to stay ( <i>Aufenthaltsverfestigung</i> ).
Since 2000-	<b>‘A duty to integrate’ (‘Fordern statt Fördern’)</b>
	1998 – Citizenship Law Amendment = Proof of personal and professional integration as well as language knowledge; 2002 – Integration agreement makes language course compulsory; 2006 – citizenship test; 2010 – National Action Plan for Integration; 2011 -Reform of language requirements, pre-entry courses become compulsory

Source: Author’s own elaboration

### 9.3 Dialogues on Migrant Integration: What Role for Science?

While there are some isolated studies on the interrelation between migration researchers and Austrian politics and society, contemporary Austrian science studies are generally characterised by a focus on natural sciences, technology and innovation (Bogner and Menz 2010; Fassmann et al. 2009; Münz 2011; Perchinig 2005, 2010). According to Ulrike Felt (2000, 2001), interaction between science, politics and society in post-war Austria is generally shaped by the establishment of expert systems and advisory bodies, a multiplication of actors and topics in the public sphere, a mostly marginal position in Austrian decision-making for the public and an institutionalisation of science in politics. She argues that scientific bodies increasingly lack authority because they are no longer considered to be able to solve modern society's complex problems (Beck 1986; Felt 2001). Instead, hybrid spaces between science, politics and the public, and the 'proto-professionalisation' of other actors, have flourished (Felt 2001: 58). The question whether similar developments can be depicted for migration research will be discussed in the following sections.

#### 9.3.1 *Knowledge Production on Migrant Integration: Research Landscape, Funding Structures, Paradigms*

In Austria, migration and integration hardly received scholarly attention until the late 1960s and early 1970s, when Austria attracted large numbers of guest workers (Perchinig 2005). This initial phase was primarily marked by individual researchers focusing on either particular movements of migrants or migrant groups, and on the issue of 'guest workers'. A first paradigm shift towards 'integration' took place in the 1980s, when the first representative census on migrants in Austria was published by the Institute of Advanced Studies (IHS) (Bauböck and Perchinig 2003).

The 1990s witnessed an expansion and disciplinary diversification of migration research, leading to an institutional fragmentation in Austria. In contrast to most European countries, migration research in Austria has continued to exist as a fragmented field with mostly small research groups and individual researchers. Even today, there is no research facility focused solely on migration research. Researchers are instead embedded in institutions focusing on broader issues and often represent a minority in their institution (Fassmann et al. 2009: 13). Aside from academic institutions there are also a number of NGOs involved in conducting or documenting research on migrant integration (policies) such as the anti-racism NGO ZARA (Zivilcourage und Anti-Rassismus-Arbeit) or the Austrian Asylum Coordination (Asylkoordination Österreich 2012; ZARA 2012). The Poverty Conference also maintains a database for (partly unpublished) scientific studies on a variety of subjects. In contrast to scientific knowledge, civil society groups, in particular NGOs, are perceived as political actors and 'knowledge translators'. Even though there are tight connections between science and the NGO sphere (i.e. NGOs having

scientists as staff members), the knowledge produced by NGOs is largely not considered a neutral source of knowledge but rather politically influenced. The diffusion of science into society has been pushed further by the MoI, which has established its own research facilities by recruiting graduates from various academic fields and by offering further training to its staff, particularly so in the Austrian Integration Fund that is part of the ministry.

The institutional and disciplinary disconnection of migrant integration research in Austria has led to mutual scepticism among scholars about the theoretical or methodological quality of rival research (Bauböck and Perchinig 2003). More importantly, however, the lack of proper institutionalisation of research has made this subject area a lot more dependent on third-party funding than others (Fassmann et al. 2009: 13). While several experts agreed that migration and integration research has gained relevance in the past decade, this has not led to more cooperation among researchers or better funding opportunities (Fassmann et al. 2009; Bauböck and Perchinig 2003; Stacher et al. 1997). Even though the disciplinary and institutional diversity opens up the field to a variety of potential financing institutions, Fassmann shows that the Austrian Science Fund (FWF), the Austrian National Bank (OeNB) and Austrian Ministries such as the MoI and the Ministry of Science and Research clearly constitute the most common sources of funding (Fassmann et al. 2009: 14). Consequently, researchers are constrained by a high degree of dependency on financial resources provided by political actors involved in migration policymaking (Perchinig 2010; Fassmann et al. 2009; Bauböck and Perchinig 2003).

These institutional and funding conditions have obviously had a major effect on the issues that have been researched. Due to institutional fragmentation there is a large diversity of topics and approaches pursued. A historical overview, though, reveals some general paradigm shifts over the past decades. As outlined above, migration research in Austria developed with a strong focus on the *paradigm of guest workers* (Bauböck and Perchinig 2003). Changes in Austria's political system in the late 1980s and the epochal geo-political transformation in Europe in the 1990s acted as major driving forces of change in migration policy and research (Bauböck and Perchinig 2003; Schock and Schimany 2010). The fall of the Iron Curtain and the subsequent influx of refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina initiated a paradigm shift towards 'integration' both in the research landscape and in public-political debates. Integration at that time however was framed as assimilation and soon political debates and initiatives arose promoting a rejection of refugees and a strong legal divide between foreigners and nationals. Since the turn of the new millennium Austrian migrant research has focused on integration more generally as a process of adaptation to the 'receiving society'. In this vein, research has been concerned with: a general monitoring of integration and perceived 'deficits'; assessment of integration of particular migrant groups or in specific geographical areas; citizenship, diversity and equality; as well as issues of forced and arranged marriage or 'intercultural tracking' (Fassmann et al. 2009). Despite these shifts in Austrian integration research, the economic paradigm of (preferably high skilled) labour migration has remained pivotal for both public interventions and scientific research.

### 9.3.2 *Dialogue Structures: From Informal Circle to Institutionalisation*

While Austria's first decades of migration policies were characterised by a closed circle of labour market actors regulating migration, the topics of migration and integration became publicly contested and politicised in the public domain with major shifts in the political landscape in Austria in the 1980s and 1990s. As a result not only new discourses and issue domains emerged but also new actors and institutions entered the migration and integration policy scene. As interviewed experts argue, the emergence in particular of the MoI as the central authority on migration and integration had a significant effect on the subsequent development of science-society dialogues. Similarly, the upsurge of human rights groups at that time also opened up new political spaces for participation and paved the way for public dialogue. Even though public debates remained heavily influenced by right-wing populism and scapegoating, the increased interest in the topic also led to its steady scientification.

In the new millennium this new openness experienced both setbacks and successes. In the early 2000s the new ÖVP-FPÖ government stopped regular consultations between NGOs on the one hand and governmental actors such as the Chancellery, the MoI, and the Ministry of Social Affairs on the other (König and Perchinig 2005: 19–23). By contrast, under the grand coalition of Social Democrats and the ÖVP since 2007, roundtable meetings were initiated to integrate NGOs, scientists and other stakeholders in decision-making over a new integration policy. In this context two new bodies were also created to support policymakers in dealing with migrant integration: the Advisory Committee on Integration (Integrationsbeirat)<sup>4</sup> and the Expert Council on Integration (Expertenrat für Integration)<sup>5</sup> (Kraler 2011). These two bodies, together with more general panels of science and policy exchange in Austria such as Forum Hirschwang or European Forum Alpbach, the expert committee of the Austrian Poverty Conference<sup>6</sup> and the Commission for Migration and Integration Research (at the Austrian Academy of Science), constitute the major science-society dialogue structures presently dealing with migrant integration in Austria.

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<sup>4</sup>The Advisory Committee on Integration involves representatives from several federal ministries (e.g. Ministry of Interior; Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection; Ministry of Science and Research), all federal state governments, the Austrian Association of Towns, the Austrian Association of Municipalities, the Austrian Chamber of Labour, the Austrian Chamber of Agriculture, the Austrian Chamber of Commerce, the Federation of Austrian Industries and the largest relief organisations in Austria (Caritas, Diakonie, Hilfswerk, Red Cross and Volkshilfe).

<sup>5</sup>The Expert Council on Integration involves established experts in the field of migration and integration from the sciences like Heinz Fassmann, Ruth Wodak, Gudrun Biffl and Rainer Münz, and less well known journalists like Hans Winkler or businessmen like Thomas Oliva from the Austrian Association of Branded Goods Industry.

<sup>6</sup>The Poverty Conference involved most civil society actors in this field (such as SOS Mitmensch and ZARA, besides the largest relief organisations).



### 9.3.3 *Knowledge Utilisation: What Knowledge for Society?*

By critically analysing specific patterns or types of knowledge utilisation, this chapter will draw upon the three ideal-types of knowledge utilisation in science-society interaction developed by Christina Boswell (2009) (see also Chap. 2): *instrumental knowledge use* (to rationally adjust policy instruments), *legitimising knowledge use* (to bolster an actor's political role or authority), and *substantiating knowledge use* (to justify decisions and orientations). In addition, a fourth type will be used to distinguish between knowledge utilisation (as an active way of appropriating knowledge for action) and knowledge consumption as a more passive attitude, which implies acquisition of knowledge, but no direct subsequent use. The latter shall be named *knowledge shelving or knowledge storing*. Knowledge shelving or storing occurs when funding institutions receive scientific input by means of research reports but do not process the knowledge contained therein.<sup>7</sup>

In Austria, the main knowledge users are public administration (such as ministries) and NGOs. What is common to all of them is that they put a focus on a knowledge transfer or dialogue between *science* and *politics*. Only the Advisory Committee on Integration explicitly involves non-scientific actors.

Even though some NGOs and coalition organisations conduct research or documentation projects on migrant integration (e.g. ZARA or the Austrian Asylum Coordination), their knowledge is neither key for nor systematically incorporated into institutionalised decision-making processes. This does not mean, of course, that they are exempted from Austrian integration dialogues: all NGOs are allowed to submit statements on draft regulations to the federal ministries, and a few are involved in the Advisory Committee on Integration, established by the MoI. But the large number of involved parties in the Advisory Committee (30 institutions) and the dominance of political and administrative institutions among them (three-quarters of the parties involved) move the NGOs into a comparatively marginalised position. Even though they are not officially regarded as 'experts', NGOs may get heard by politics and science through informal networks, joint projects with scientific institutions and/or political institutions as well as shadow reports for international organisations. According to interviewed experts, personal networks had been a vital platform for exchange among NGOs and scientific institutions in the past. The utilisation of scientific knowledge, in turn, appears to be desired and facilitated by the official dialogue structures (Advisory Committee and Expert Council on Integration). The ways by which political institutions 'receive' this knowledge, however, suggests an ambivalent relationship to scientific knowledge. Equally the establishment of in-house research facilities, such as the Austrian Integration Fund, may be interpreted in this way. Furthermore, most researchers complain that research data is misused and misinterpreted by political institutions

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<sup>7</sup>Possible reasons for knowledge shelving are e.g. an incapacity to translate scientific findings into policy relevant paradigms (missing connection), bad timing in terms of political opportunity, and work overload among public servants.

and research results are seen as instruments to enhance the legitimacy of political programmes. One may thus observe that scientific knowledge on migrant integration in Austria evolved to have a substantiating and, particularly, legitimising function for politics and policy. Even if the MoI assembled different kinds of knowledge (scientific and practical experience) in its major dialogue forums, it is nonetheless the case that key NGOs were excluded and their expert status was denied, indicating mistrust towards outside scientific knowledge. At the same time, the participation was permitted of several ‘experts’ who were not well known or highly reputed in the field. These latter points all suggest that knowledge has a rather legitimising function for integration policymaking in Austria. Both scientific findings and NGO statements do not seem to be taken into account in a comprehensive manner. All interviewed experts, in fact, agree that ‘expertise’ is used according to political rules not to scientific considerations. To become heard by public authorities, migrant integration scholars or activists either try to trigger widespread public attention or use personal networks and demonstrate willingness to cooperate with the public bodies dealing with a specific issue area. Besides this *substantiating* and particularly *legitimising* function, interviewed experts also mentioned *knowledge shelving* as a standard procedure in Austrian integration politics when dealing with scientific findings and studies whose results seem not to suit or, on the contrary, stand in opposition to current political interests.

Generally, science serves as a reliable source of legitimacy for policymakers and political camps in migrant integration policies in Austria as it enjoys a high reputation in the public and is regarded as ‘neutral’ and ‘objective’. Especially quantitative analyses and opinion polls from established universities, research institutes or international organisations are cited regularly. As one respondent confirmed, both political actors and NGOs tend to utilise this particular kind of knowledge for two reasons. On the one hand, established and renowned institutions lend legitimacy to knowledge users. On the other hand, studies that provide ‘facts’ and ‘numbers’ are (seemingly) easy to interpret and to communicate to a wider public. Aside from the utilisation of ‘expert knowledge’ by the MoI and other ministries, consulted experts also mentioned knowledge utilisation in applied projects with NGOs where the knowledge created in the project is directly utilised by the participating NGOs and associated organisations. Nevertheless, networks seem to have a great importance in Austrian science-society dialogues, as different forms of knowledge (scientific and practitioner knowledge) seem to flow through personal networks more than through institutionalised dialogue structures.

## 9.4 Key Topics in Science-Society Dialogues

In order to identify and critically analyse this flow of information and knowledge between science, politics and the wider public in Austria, the following chapter will provide an in-depth analysis of key topics in migrant integration, namely the naturalisation of newcomers, the reception of migrant children in education and the accommodation of religious pluralism.

### 9.4.1 *Naturalisation of Newcomers: Towards an Institutionalised Monologue?*

As confirmed both by the interviews and the network analysis conducted for this study, the Austrian MoI and related institutions<sup>8</sup> are central and dominant actors in naturalisation policy – particularly, when it comes to decision-making processes. Interviewees attributed its powerful position to its legal competence, its responsibility for social security, its capacity to establish (and impose) dialogue structures, as well as its influence over domestic media. In contrast, scientists and civil society organisation play a marginal role in naturalisation policy in Austria: according to interviewed experts, domestic scientific research on naturalisation is largely absent. Similarly, NGOs are seen to carry out meaningful activities in the area of naturalisation, but play a very limited role in decision-making processes. NGOs are instead regarded as periphery actors. Their involvement in the drafting of laws is limited to giving comments to an already amended draft law and their statements are usually not taken into consideration.

In terms of formal *dialogues structures* in the area of naturalisation interviewees referred to the Expert Council on Integration and Advisory Committee on the one side<sup>9</sup> as well as expert appraisals (*Begutachtungsverfahren*) and statements submitted by non-governmental actors on draft legislation (*Stellungsnahmen*) on the other side. However, as our research revealed, dialogues on naturalisation in Austria tend to be held *within* the MoI rather than with other actors, be they scientists, civil society organisations or the wider public. It is, therefore, not surprising that informal relationships in the area of naturalisation are considered important: according to network analysis, *formal* contacts and cooperation among actors accounts only for 30 % (compared to 81 % of interactions in religion and 60 % in education), while 50 % of interactions amongst actors in this area are *informal* contacts. One can thus conclude that the area of naturalisation shows the lowest level of institutionalisation among the topics investigated.

These dialogue structures have a direct impact both on *knowledge production* and utilisation. While scientists report having very limited formal communication with governmental actors on naturalisation, they are in frequent contact with other scientists through various university research platforms and department structures. The overall need for knowledge and information is however striking. The dominant paradigm in Austrian naturalisation policies holds that citizenship is a valuable good which is only given to those who ‘deserve’ it. In this vein, only those who are well integrated deserve citizenship and therefore citizenship is not regarded as an integration instrument but as its end-point. This idea of citizenship was

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<sup>8</sup>This includes also the State Secretary for Integration established in 2011 by the Ministry of Interior and located within its structure.

<sup>9</sup>Even if citizenship is not mentioned in the National Action Plan for Integration (NAPI), interviewed experts stated that the topic was discussed to some extent within the mentioned structures.

widely supported by most of the actors in politics – except for the Green Party. Therefore, recent restrictions of integration and citizenship law went through without major opposition. Furthermore, in the absence of knowledge produced by academics, the MoI assumes a pivotal role in producing key knowledge, for example by commissioning studies on naturalisation, which further support this dominant paradigm.

With regard to the *utilisation of scientific knowledge* on naturalisation, experts stated that there was no or minimal use. According to them there is little need to legitimise naturalisation policy, because the idea of citizenship as the end-point of integration and a ‘rare good to treasure’ was and is widely supported. Furthermore, it is a widely held belief that more votes are gained by making citizenship regulations stricter than by fostering images of ‘well integrated migrants’.

Interviewed experts widely agreed that what scientists offer, is basically ignored by both legislative and executive actors. According to them, most members of parliament do not even know the basic fact that 36 % of the citizens naturalised each year are actually born in Austria. Instead they would believe that those are all ‘complete strangers’ that had no relation with Austria but want to become Austrians. The same image is said to prevail among the public or worse used by the xenophobic party. Experts also stated that all ‘facts’ used in current naturalisation debate in Austria seem to support the Austrian national mode of integration, while alternative knowledge claims are largely missing. The informal nature of contacts between science and politics as stated above might partly explain why scientific knowledge in naturalisation is not influential in policymaking.

#### ***9.4.2 Reception Policies for Migrant Children in Primary and Secondary Education: The Role of Boundary Actors in Facilitating Dialogue***

In the area of education the two ministries perceived as having influence over integration dialogues are the Ministries of Education (MoE)<sup>10</sup> and Interior (MoI). The latter was seen as influential, but less dominant than in naturalisation and religion.<sup>11</sup> As in the area of naturalisation, scientists are in frequent contact with other scientists through various research platforms and university structures. They have, however, very limited formal communication with government actors as the network analysis shows. Nevertheless, universities together with the teachers’

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<sup>10</sup>While the Ministry of Interior was named 59 times in total, the Ministry of Education was next with eleven references. Besides being a relevant actor in education (eight times), it was also named in the area of religious accommodation (three times). Interestingly, the Ministry of Finance was also named as a relevant actor in education (four times), but not in naturalisation or Islam.

<sup>11</sup>While the MoI was cited 46 times by all nine interviewees as a central actor in citizenship, it was mentioned ten times by six interviewees on religion and three times by three interviewees on education.

college (pädagogische Hochschule) were regarded as having an important though indirect impact on integration policies for children with a migration background. As interviewed experts stated, their role lies first and foremost in educating teachers and making use of scientific knowledge in training teachers to be qualified as practitioners of school integration. Moreover, most scientists concerned with reception policies for migrant children in Austrian education maintain informal contacts with the Ministry of Education. According to network analysis, the main rationales for interaction between the two are organising joint projects (29 %), information sharing (23 %) and seeking advice for practical problems (19 %). The central position of the MoE as an (informal) interlocutor for integration actors can also be linked to the active role of boundary actors such as Rüdiger Teutsch and Elfie Fleck at the ministry and Barbara Herzog-Punzenberger at the Federal Institute for Education, Science and Culture (BIFIE).

As with citizenship, civil society organisations were regarded as having an important but limited role to play in the area of school integration. According to interviewed experts, this is because they need to work through schools to be effective and they need higher authoritative power to actually instigate change. Though NGOs implement many good projects in the area of school integration, they are seen to have very little decision-making power or influence in politics.

Contrary to the field of naturalisation, *knowledge production* on school integration shows one major conflict point. This conflict regarded the topic of monovs multi-lingual school education, and centred on the question whether schools should provide equal conditions for all or ensure equal opportunities among migrant children in school. The current Austrian system is predominantly run under the mono-lingual ‘submersive’ model except for some minority schools. It is perceived as being supported by the education institutions themselves, the State Secretary for Integration, some political parties, and also the teachers’ union. The alternative system of promoting multilingual education to ensure equal opportunities is unanimously supported by international and Austrian scientists as well as relevant members in the MoI’s Expert Council.

What is the role of science, one might ask, in providing evidence and knowledge on this point of conflict? To answer this question, a closer look at a special fund set up by the MoE providing up to 2 years of extra German language support for children whose first language is not German is instructive. While language support runs for 2 years, it is widely recognised amongst linguists that it takes 4–6 years for genuine language training to be effective. As to the question why this knowledge is ignored one interviewee declared that it was the Ministry of Finance (despite its lack of expertise on the issue) which decided that 2 years would be sufficient.

Interestingly, in the area of school integration in Austria, European and international studies seem to play a major role. Several scientists from German universities were cited as providing scientific knowledge on the issue of integration in schools. The importance of international discourse was also confirmed with regard to the PISA study. Although PISA seemed to have primarily influenced policy changes related to strengthening pre-school education in Austria, it has certainly encouraged more discussion in Austria on issues of equal opportunity at school – a topic that

was previously predominantly international. The impact of these debates on national policymaking is, however, perceived as rather weak.

As one of the most relevant events in terms of *knowledge utilisation*,<sup>12</sup> interviewed experts referred to a meeting by the Expert Council for Integration to discuss the issue of equal opportunity in the Austrian education system. As the interviewees stated, all participants including the Council members acknowledged the importance of multilingualism and stressed the necessity to promote it. Only one week later, however, Austria's State Secretary for Integration publicly suggested creating extra support classes for children whose first language is not German. Even if his idea was criticised by the Green Party as a 'Ghetto-class', it spread rapidly, illustrating how professional expertise might be counteracted by political interventions. Asked why scientific knowledge on multilingualism is not put into practice, interviewed experts explained that the existing monolingual school system in Austria is not willing to accommodate change. Equally politicians, education councils and the teachers' union would be reluctant to implement such change. One interviewee also identified political inertia as the main reason, meaning that Austrian parties (with the exception of the Green Party) are seen as reluctant to even discuss integration politics in the context of schooling, because it is hard to change an established institution. Other interviewees referred to practical problems: in particular the implementation of mother-tongue or multilingual class is deemed difficult, because it cannot be offered to all languages, especially less common ones. Overall, the introduction of a multilingual school system in Austria is deemed unlikely by interviewed experts. Instead, the common paradigm on school integration is, as one interviewee puts it, to invest everything in 'German, German, and again German'.

#### ***9.4.3 Accommodation of New Religious Pluriformity: Highly Institutionalised Dialogues***

Based on recommendations from the Expert Council on Integration, in 2012 the MoI set up the Islam Dialogue Forum bringing together governmental actors, civil society and faith-based organisations as well as scientists. As it meets on a monthly basis, the Islam Forum is seen as a frequent and regular formal structure for exchange. Unlike the Expert Council, the choice for personnel in specific topic-areas is deemed transparent and the members of the Forum and its working groups are highly regarded in terms of their scientific expertise. The Forum's aim is to foster 'feedback loop' mechanisms between scientists and politics.

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<sup>12</sup>In the area of education various types of knowledge, i.e. theoretical, practice-based and statistical knowledge, are used by a variety of actors. In content, this knowledge concerns discipline-related knowledge on, for instance, how to teach German as a second language. Discipline-related knowledge is certainly widely used and put into practice in the Austria school system. In contrast, scientific knowledge with regards to the integration of children with a migration background, which will be discussed in this chapter, shows distinct patterns of knowledge use.

Despite its expertise, concerns have been raised, though, with regard to the involvement of the MoI: interviewed experts felt that hosting both the State Secretary for Integration and the Islam Dialogue Forum within the MoI structure is inappropriate. Some suggested that the Ministry of Education and Culture would be a more appropriate host as a coordinator of integration issues as they have competence in education and cultural matters. Experts stated that integration entails much wider social aspects than security, which is of primary interest to the MoI, and that it is dangerous and inappropriate for the MoI to handle integration. Particularly with regard to Islam, experts expressed their fears that the current arrangement stigmatises migrants if all aspects of migration and integration are dealt with by the MoI.

Furthermore, the Forum is regarded as an 'elite-based closed circle' based on personal contacts and not an open dialogue forum. Invitations to participate in the Forum are decided by the MoI or the State Secretary for Integration. Due to the prominence of the Islam Forum most contacts and cooperation among actors in this field are formalised (81 %). While some respondents emphasise engaging in a mixture of formal and informal contacts (19 %), none of the interviewees mentioned informal contacts as the only mode of engagement. Interestingly, funding relationships between actors in religion play a very limited role: only 19 % of the interaction in religion is based on financial aspects – in comparison to 37 % and 47 % in education and naturalisation, respectively.

Similarly to naturalisation and education, scholars working in the field of religious diversity are in frequent contact with other scholars through various research platforms and university structures. However, they are seen as having very limited formal communication with government actors – except through the Islam Dialogue Forum.

In addition to governmental and scientific actors, faith-based NGOs are identified as relevant actors. Furthermore, this is the only area in which interviewees suggested that NGOs play a central role. Above all, the Islamic Faith Community of Austria (IGGiÖ) is seen as a crucial actor, having established good networks with relevant ministries and dialogue with the government. Nevertheless, there is controversy over the fact that IGGiÖ was appointed as the official dialogue partner for the Islam Forum, because it does not represent all Muslim communities in Austria. The establishment of the Islam Dialogue Forum and the positioning of the IGGiÖ as central dialogue partner for the MoI has, in fact, led to a major shift in the research-policy dialogue concerning Islam in Austria. This included both a change of actors and a change of dialogue structures: according to interviewed experts, it was previously the Islam Federation in Austria which was consulted on accommodation issues and met with respective government actors twice a year and more frequently before elections. The Federation has, however, been pushed out from the centre to the periphery of dialogues because of the appointment of the IGGiÖ as the official dialogue partner in the Forum Islam. Furthermore, various forms of informal dialogue were mentioned as being undermined. The most frequently mentioned informal structures were dialogue forums between Islamic associations and other religions, especially Christian and Jewish. These dialogue structures included, for

instance, the annual Vienna International Christian-Islamic Summer University in which scientists and experts from various disciplinary backgrounds come together. Others have historical roots, such as the communications between Islam and the protestant churches, since they share the same legacy of being a minority religion in Austria.

With regard to *knowledge production*, the most frequently brought-up point of conflict was the issue of religion, especially Islam, which some see as a problem rather than an opportunity for society. Unlike the US, there is hardly any discourse in Austria on the potential opportunities which migration and religious pluralism can bring to society. Overall, religion is seen and treated as a societal problem to be ‘mastered’. When it comes to knowledge production in the area of Islam, the Austrian media play a prominent role in fuelling the dominant view that Islam is a problem rather than an opportunity. The most frequently brought up issue by interviewees was the prejudice in the media towards Muslims and Islam as a religion, also described as ‘Islamophobia’ (although some preferred not to use this word and instead called it ‘racism’). Experts referred to the media being responsible for disseminating prejudice among the general public, or aligning with groups of people hostile to Islam. According to them, the media discourse is dominated by a monolithic and homogeneous image of Islam evoking ‘oppressed women’ or ‘violent tribes’ and full of comments of hatred towards Muslims in online newspapers.

Furthermore, many of the interviewed experts see Austrian politics as being no different to the media in how it treats Islam. By contrast, scientific discourses are centred on issues with regard to the legal rights of Orthodox Christians and Muslims, as well as the relation between religion, state and society. These discourses are embedded in the MoI’s preferred structure for dialogue, namely the Islam Dialogue Forum.

On *knowledge utilisation* the majority of interviewed experts stated that scientific knowledge on accommodating Islam in Austria is mostly used according to current needs and convenience. A major concern of experts was that media-generated knowledge is not differentiated with – and sometimes even taken more seriously than – scientifically produced knowledge. Generally, the media pick the scientists who suit their needs, and well-researched pieces of journalism are rare.

Such interest-driven utilisation is also attributed to political and scientific actors. Actors from politics (not only restricted to the right-wing parties) would rely on whichever scientist is available and some scientists would try to deliver what politicians want to hear because they need access and connections to them. Interviewees also referred to ‘pseudo scientists’ being invited to seminars organised by the FPÖ politician Elisabeth Sabaditsch-Wolff, which would result in FPÖ slogans against Muslim migrants. The much-debated study by Mathias Rohe on the ‘unwillingness of Muslim migrants to integrate’ was cited as an example of scientific knowledge falsely communicated by the MoI.

Evidence suggests that German science-society dialogues are a relevant point of reference also in the field of accommodating Islam. Interviewed experts stated that the establishment of the Islam Forum was inspired by the German Islam Conference



(Islamkonferenz) with one difference: while the German Islam Conference is viewed as being open to a variety of actors including controversial scholars, Austria has adapted its structure by appointing IGGiÖ as the only official dialogue partner and by making the Forum more controlled and closed by carefully selecting its members.

## 9.5 Conclusions

When it comes to integrating migrants in Austria, knowledge, and particularly scientific knowledge, plays a central role in related discourses and dialogues. Scientific knowledge claims have a high reputation in society and are perceived by most parties as a source of neutrality and objectivity. Practical everyday knowledge from civil society organisations active in the field of migrant integration is, however, not deemed relevant. In fact, there seems to be a division between scientific and non-scientific bodies and the ‘knowledge’ or ‘expertise’ they are able to provide. As interviewed experts explained, there is a great difference between ‘scientific knowledge’ and the knowledge provided by NGOs. Given that NGOs always argue from a certain political position and mostly focus on the practical application of theoretical knowledge, their ‘knowledge’ or ‘expertise’ is perceived as less neutral. Instead of being producers of knowledge, NGOs are instead seen as ‘translating’ scientific knowledge for other societal spheres, utilising it to develop campaigns and legitimising their political positions. Hence, there is a certain division of labour between scientists as primary ‘knowledge producers’, NGOs as primary ‘knowledge translators’ and political decision makers as primary ‘knowledge users’. In reality, however, the clear-cut division between knowledge providers and users is blurred by several overlaps: non-scientific bodies such as NGOs and state ministries have recently assumed and incorporated scientific personnel within their structure, and often individuals are engaged in several activities. The status of an ‘expert’, however, is not automatically granted to any scientist. Instead, most interviewees point out that being considered as an ‘expert’ by political decision makers is very much dependent upon informal and personal networks, political patronage and employment at one of the well-known and respected Austrian research institutions.

*Dialogues on migrant integration* in Austria can be hence characterised as follows: *first*, the MoI assumes a central and dominant position in all three topic areas as well as the migrant integration debate in general. *Second*, science-society dialogues unfold as an exchange between science on the one side and politics on the other, while civil society organisations and the broader public are not seen as an equal dialogue partner. Both the media analysis, interviews and network analysis are illustrative in this regard. *Third*, there are great differences between the national level and the municipal level (e.g. City of Vienna) as regards how dialogues on migrant integration are structured and what the leading paradigms are, even if the actors and experts involved partly overlap. While the national agenda on migrant integration is

marked by a narrow understanding of integration, dominated by the MoI, the City of Vienna is seen as a focal point for issues related to education, multilingualism and diversity. *Fourth*, most interaction is happening between similar kinds of actors, i.e. scientists most frequently interact with university actors, NGOs with NGOs and governmental actors with other governmental and semi-governmental actors. The exceptions to this are few in number, and pertain to the interaction between scientists and ‘minor’ NGOs. However, all types of actors, i.e. scientists, NGOs and governmental actors, are in contact with the social partners, confirming both the de-facto centrality and continuity of the social partners as an influential group of actors in integration policymaking. Topics discussed with the social partners are mainly concentrated on labour market integration and labour rights, but they are also involved in other political issues such as mosque constructions and religious teachers’ education. Unlike the (primarily self-referential) government and non-profit organisations, the social partners are in contact with a diverse range of actors.

These dialogues structures have a huge impact on the question of how knowledge is produced, consumed and utilised. As the MoI promoted the recent institutionalisation process, dialogue structures are certainly marked by this government department. In the area of naturalisation, as could be shown, the dominance of the MoI is such that it successfully claimed knowledge authority and established itself as a knowledge producer. When confronted with Austria’s low score on naturalisation policy in the MIPEX survey, the MoI not only ignored the scientific critique but re-interpreted it successfully as a vindication of its restrictive policy model. Only in the area of school education, in which the Ministry of Education has competence, does some sort of national dialogue exist. One may thus conclude that the MoI seems to promote the institutionalisation of dialogue structures between science and politics as a means to consolidate and reinforce its primacy in Austrian migrant integration policies.

Overall, three different types of *knowledge use* in the area of migrant integration could be identified in Austrian integration policymaking: *legitimising use* (to bolster an actor’s political role or authority), *substantiating use* (to justify decisions and orientations) and *knowledge shelving*, i.e. when the results of government-funded research are consumed and archived and, eventually, used for decision-making at a later stage. Indications of legitimising knowledge use were most often referred to by interviewees in the field of naturalisation, but ranked high in general. However, the MoI itself stated that it does not have an in-house competence in all issues related to integration and therefore has established the Expert Council to increase its ‘authenticity’. Interviewed experts instead see the set-up of the Expert Council as a justification strategy used by other ministers to gain competence in an area of responsibility.

While most interviewees referred to a legitimising use of scientific and expert knowledge, differences between the three topic areas could be identified: in *naturalisation*, where continued national research is absent and the MoI established itself as a knowledge producer, little need is felt by policymakers for scientific knowledge. The area of *education*, in contrast, is marked by the active role of boundary actors

(especially from the MoE) facilitating dialogue and requesting applied science with regard to teaching German as second language. While the benefits of intercultural education or plurilingualism in school are widely recognised by scientists, NGOs and policymakers alike, the current Austrian system is predominantly run under the mono-lingual school model. In the field of *religious pluriformity* – a topic discussed in terms of the accommodation of *Islam in Austria* – scientific knowledge is mostly used according to current needs and convenience. Interviewed experts interpreted the set-up of the Islam Dialogue Forum, established in 2011 by the MoI, in the same vein. Furthermore, the majority of the interviewed experts were concerned that media-generated knowledge is not differentiated with – and sometimes even taken more seriously than – scientifically produced knowledge. Generally, media actors pick the scientists that suit their needs, and well-researched pieces of journalism are rare. Similarly, political and scientific actors use scientific knowledge for their own political and personal ambitions.

Also, the institutionalisation of migration and integration policies in the MoI turned out to play an important role in perceiving and defining migration and integration as a security problem for both the state and society. For police forces and legal advisors, it is part of their job to produce security knowledge. They have a professional disposition to frame political concerns in securitised terms, and to propose security measures to deal with such concerns. As a consequence, they encounter immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees as a security problem, which is fundamentally different from a policy that concentrates, for example, on human rights issues in asylum matters or emphasises labour law aspects of international mobility (Huysmans 2000: 756). In this sense, one can theorise that scientific knowledge is utilised by the MoI when it relates with and is ‘translated’ into the dominant security paradigm. As interviews with experts suggested scientists are widely aware of this fact. This could be shown particularly for the topic of accommodating Islam.

With regard to *the role of the print media in migrant integration policies* in Austria this study analysed media coverage and articles in the analysed topic areas (naturalisation, education and religion) from the late 1990s until 2012, focusing on claims articulated around scientific studies. This analysis showed that the media focus on political lines of argument rather than discussing the validity/plausibility of scientific findings. Representatives of NGOs play a very marginal role in all media debates. Some important differences among the three topic areas have emerged though. Media analysis seems to suggest that the socio-economic dimension (education) and the cultural dimension (religion) of integration are given much more prominence in the media than the legal-political dimension (naturalisation). Overall, naturalisation appears as a ‘non-issue’ in the media. Media coverage is mostly limited to reports on rising or falling numbers of people naturalising in a given year. Even though the media emerged as the second most important integration actor after the MoI by interviewed experts, it was not possible to establish a causal relation between the degree and kind of media attention and knowledge utilisation by governmental actors.

In Austria the direct *relation between the politicisation of migrant integration and* the spread of related *research* and recurrence on scientific findings in national debates seems particularly strong. In this regard, the ÖVP is perceived as a key player in defining (and also fuelling) integration paradigms. The influence of the ÖVP in the MoI's policymaking on migrant integration was mentioned several times by interviewed experts. The influence of the ÖVP is seen to be rooted in its 'nationwide hegemony' as a majority catch-all party especially in conservative areas. The SPÖ as a coalition partner is seen as having abandoned the integration debate related to citizenship (except for Vienna) for fear of losing voters either to the left or to the right. Interestingly, the influence of right-wing parties such as the FPÖ is considered weak compared to that of the ÖVP (dominating the MoI) by interviewed experts. Experts referred to the Green Party as continuously vocal in its opposition to the dominant integration paradigm but stated that its influence is not big enough due to its rather small support base, especially outside the cities. Overall, however, the MoI is perceived as the main actor in introducing gradually restrictive measures for acquiring long-term resident permits and citizenship.

As the study revealed, the national *context of migrant integration* and the pursuit of a national integration mode based on history and tradition is particularly strong in Austria. The role of the EU is deemed 'not influential enough' by interviewed experts, especially in the field of naturalisation. Five regional and international studies (INTEC, MIPEX, NATAC, OECD and EUDO Citizenship) were mentioned by interviewed experts, but all in the context of not playing a major role or influencing Austria's naturalisation policymaking. In the area of education, the situation is rather different. Here, the PISA study was the predominantly cited international study in the field of school integration. The majority of the interviewed experts, in fact, agreed that the PISA study had the greatest impact on school education policy compared to other international comparative studies on children's school performance.

When it comes to accommodating Islam in Austria, the influence of Germany seems to be particularly strong in the MoI, including the formation of the Islam Dialogue Forum. As the interviewed experts suggested, the establishment of the Forum seemed to be influenced by the Islam Conference (*Islamkonferenz*) in Germany, with one major difference: while the German Islam Conference is viewed as being open to a variety of actors including controversial scholars, Austria has adapted its structure by appointing IGGiÖ as the only official dialogue partner and by making the Forum more controlled and closed by carefully selecting its members. As interview partners declared, Austria tends to wait until discussions take place in Germany before embarking on the topic itself.

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