



Co-inform

Context Matters,
Your Sources Too

**Background report
Austrian Pilot**

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Author(s):	Nadejda Komendantova, Love Ekenberg, Sonata Neumueller and Wolfgang Amann		
Contributions from:	Gerhard Backfried, Veronica Cretu, Wojciech Czaja, Victoria Ertelthalner, Gabu Heindl, Peter Hirschler, Raimund Gutmann, Doris Molnar, Kevin Muik, Philip Pramer, Tove Raiby, Walter Rosifka, Stefan Schett, Nadja Shah, Andreas Sommer, Lukas Tockner, Franziska Trebut, Martin Weber, Thomas Weninger, Christian Zenz		

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Table of Contents

Introduction

Urbanization and demographic changes will be the major determinants of the development of the housing sector in Europe, in general, as well as in Austria. According to the United Nations, by the year 2030 more than 70% of all European population will live in the urban areas. As from the demographic dynamics, more than 25% of all population will be at least 60 years old and the structure of urban population will become more ethnically and socio-economically diverse.

Another issue which will influence development of the housing sector is migration. For decades, Austria has been a “country of immigration”, given that the annual balance of immigration and emigration regularly shows that the net migration rate is positive (Austrian Ministry of Internal Affairs). Especially the multifamily housing is getting more heterogeneous in terms of cultural, ethnic and religious background of people living there. Migrants come to Austria from different countries and the migration had a character of the waves frequently connected to political events outside of Austria or to political decisions inside of Austria. The significant share of the Austrian population are migrants (16%) or people with migration background (23%). According to the Austrian Migration Council, Austria needs annual net immigration of 21,600 persons to keep population figure constant. However, a massive increase of immigration over short time may have a negative influence.

The Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior diversifies two categories of migrants: the EU/EEA citizen and third-country nationals. The majority of migrants come to Austria for the purposes of work. Only in the year 2015 more than 92,000 migrated to Austria from the EU Member States and 32,000 persons from third countries. During the same year 88,300 persons came to Austria to apply for asylum. During the previous years, asylum seekers accounted for 19% of all migrants. In the year 2015 they made the share of 41%. For countries (Afghanistan, Syria, Russia (Chechnya) and Iraq) accounted for 56% of all asylum applications in the period between 2006-2015. During this period asylum seekers made 45% of all applications, followed by family reunification (24%), seasonal workers (14%), other categories (14%) and highly qualified workers (2%).

According to the Statistics Austria the majority of migrants (46%) are young people at the age between 15 and 29 years as well as at the age between 30 and 44 (29%). Children below 14 years old make 11% and elderly people over 60 make 3.5% as well as those between 45 and 59 make 11%. The share of men is slightly higher (59%) than of women (41%).

The year 2015 made Austria the 4th largest receiver of asylum seekers in the EU. As the majority of these asylum seekers came from the Middle East, Central Asia or Africa countries with different religion background, predominantly Muslim, these wave of migration also increased religious diversity in Austria, the country with a significant level of secularization but at the same time also the significant level of ethnical and religion diversity due to previous international migration flows (Castles et al., 2013). In comparison to 1960ies when almost 90% of Austrians were Roman Catholic by the year 2016 this proportion dropped to 64%. Since this period the religion of refugees became a prominent theme in public and political discourses (Schmiedel and Smith, 2018). At the same time religion played an important role in sustaining migrants through their journey and their adaptation and integration in the host-society (Gozdziak and Shady 2002).

Vienna has the highest share of migrants among all other regions and cities in Austria. According to Verwiebe et al., 2016 more than 96% of all Viennese have contact with migrants in everyday life. The structure of migration to Vienna has been changing however over the last years within two directions. The first one is that with arriving of refugees from the Middle East and North African countries starting from 2015 the topic of integration of refugees gained its actuality. The second one is that the structure of migration to Vienna changed with a larger number of highly-qualified people.

These two tendencies, aging population and growing number of migrants, go hand in hand and will influence development of the housing sector. The number of elderly people in Austria will be growing significantly and will make around 25% of the entire population. Despite of further development of the professional care for elderly people in the houses for elderly people more and more elderly people will prefer to stay in their family environment due to the wish of independence and autonomy in older age as well as improved possibilities for health-care system at home. Existing evidence shows that elderly migrants are especially vulnerable people (Baykara-Krumme et al., 2012). In many European countries older migrants live in deprived urban neighborhoods and are among the most socio-spatially disadvantaged people. In Vienna, the social group of older immigrants is one of the fastest growing population groups. It is expected that the number of old migrants will grow by 80% within the next 20-30 years (Kytir, 2008).

It is important to study the impact of social media on perceptions of contested topics such as migration because hardly anywhere else, except public transportation system and other amenities, there are so many direct social contacts as on housing estate. Housing provides circumstances when people with different background, values, needs, origins and traditions are living together.

The focus of this research is on the Austrian limited profit housing sector for many reasons. First, this sector is a key pillar of the Austrian policy on socio-economic development and political stability. The owners in the sector are municipalities, the financing sector, trade unions, charity organizations, private pensions etc. Currently the sector makes 24% of total housing stock and more than 30% of total new construction.

This sector cannot be really compared to social housing in other countries because it hosts both low and middle income families. One criteria to get an apartment in the sector is the higher border of the middle income. The sector also has high share of immigrants.

The survey among inhabitants of limited profit housing sector shows that 70% of residents have closer neighbor contacts they beyond simply polite greetings (Brech and Feigelfeld, 2017). However, conflicts are also frequent and existing statistics show that only in the year 2016 more than 243 mediation cases were recorded by external and in-house mediators.

Migrants are making a significant share of inhabitants in the Austrian limited profit housing sector, as the Austrian General Act on Equal Treatment prohibits discrimination regarding access to public goods and services on any reason such as gender, ethnicity or age. For example, in Sozialbau, which is the leading Austrian limited profit housing company, the share of residents with a migration background, such as foreign nationals or Austrian citizen born abroad, reached 38% according to the data for the year 2015, among them 15% of main tenants came from Turkey, 14% from Bosnia, 8% from Poland and 7% from Croatia,

followed by 4% from Serbia, 3% from Germany and 2% each from Bulgaria, Macedonia, Montenegro and Romania (Ludl, 2017).

It is also important to note that within the housing estates of limited-profit companies migrants are increasingly orienting themselves towards local conventions and middle-class forms of everyday interaction than municipal housing. Therefore, the hurdles to closer contacts are not so high. More than 50% of people in this housing sector maintain interethnic contacts which go beyond saying “hello”. Also, more than 70% of residents have intension towards closer contacts with neighbors, beyond polite gestures. People with migration history are more open to contacts (80% compared to 60% of people without migration history). It seems that families with children are the most open to interethnic contacts (Brech and Feigelfeld, 2017).

Previous research (Brech and Feigenfeld, 2017) showed that even in housing estates with interethnic integration conflicts are present. However, no correlation could be established between frequent reasons for conflicts, such as noise, behavior of children and perceptions of cleanness and interethnic background. But even despite the fact that more than 60% of all respondents wish contacts with neighbors of different cultural backgrounds and perceive different cultural symbols as enrichment, less than 30% would like to have a high share of migrants (50%-50%) in the housing estate. Previous research also finds that not everyday situations and conflicts are influencing attitudes to migrants but rather opinions and perceptions developed about migrants. Herein, media is playing an essential role in formulation of these opinions, but it is unclear to which extent. Thus, further research is necessary to evaluate the impact of emerging media such as social media and Internet on perceptions of migrants and impacts of these perceptions on conflicting situations in the limited profit housing sector.

Background

Austria is the country with the growing share of people with migration background. Since the year 2001 the number of population was growing as well as the share of foreigners reaching over 15% by 2017 (figure 1).

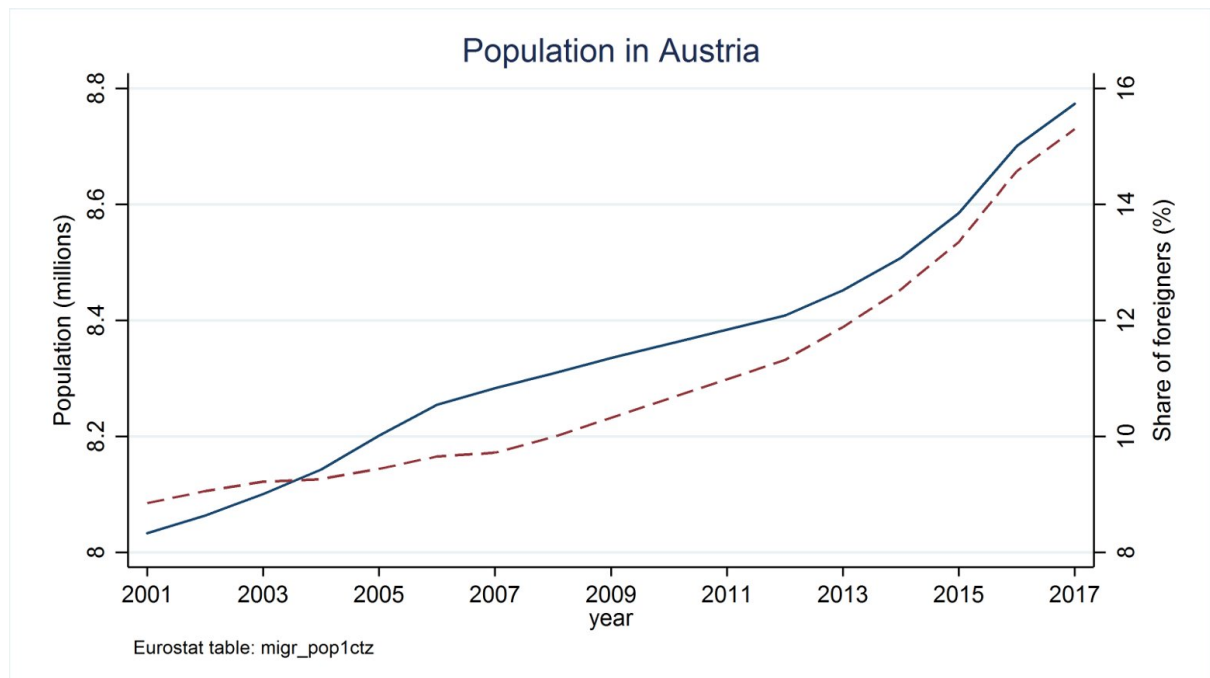


Figure 1: Population in Austria

Source: Eurostat

The net migration rate is much higher than the net natural growth rate. However, it is also much more volatile with the pick of migration in the year 2015 during the last seven years (figure 2).

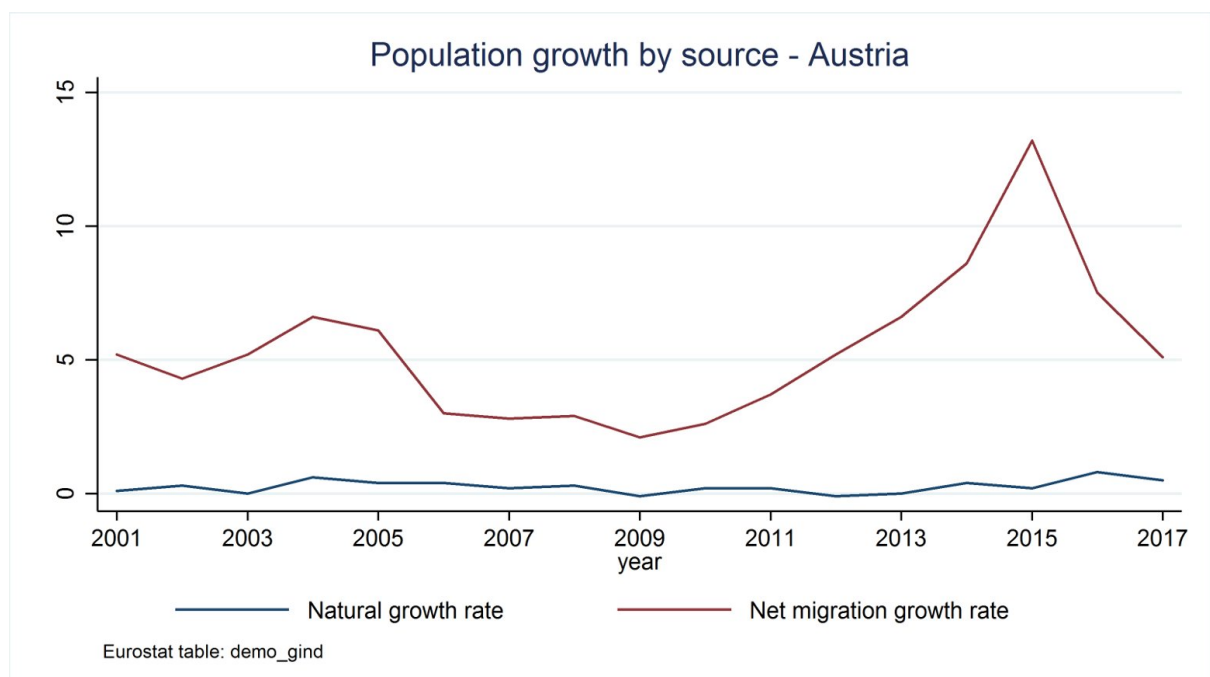


Figure 2: Population growth in Austria due to natural growth and migration
Source: Eurostat

Migration inflows varied also significantly in the past and were strongly connected with political interventions such as invitation of guest workers in 1970ies or political events such as the fall of the Iron Curtain and Yugoslavia wars in 1990ies or the Middle East crisis in 2015 (figure 3).

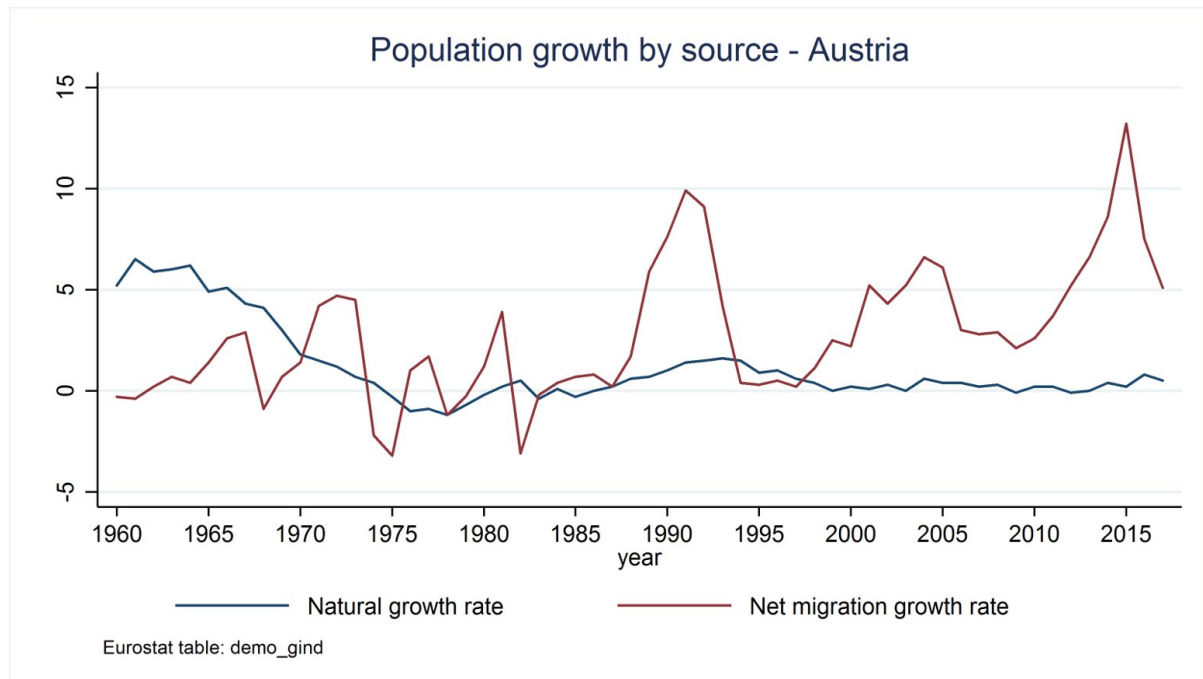


Figure 3: Migration flows starting from 1960ies
Source: Eurostat

Currently a significant share of migrants to Austria comes from Germany and the number of German migrants is growing over the last years. The share of migrants from former Yugoslavia countries was high previously but was declining during the last years (figure 4).

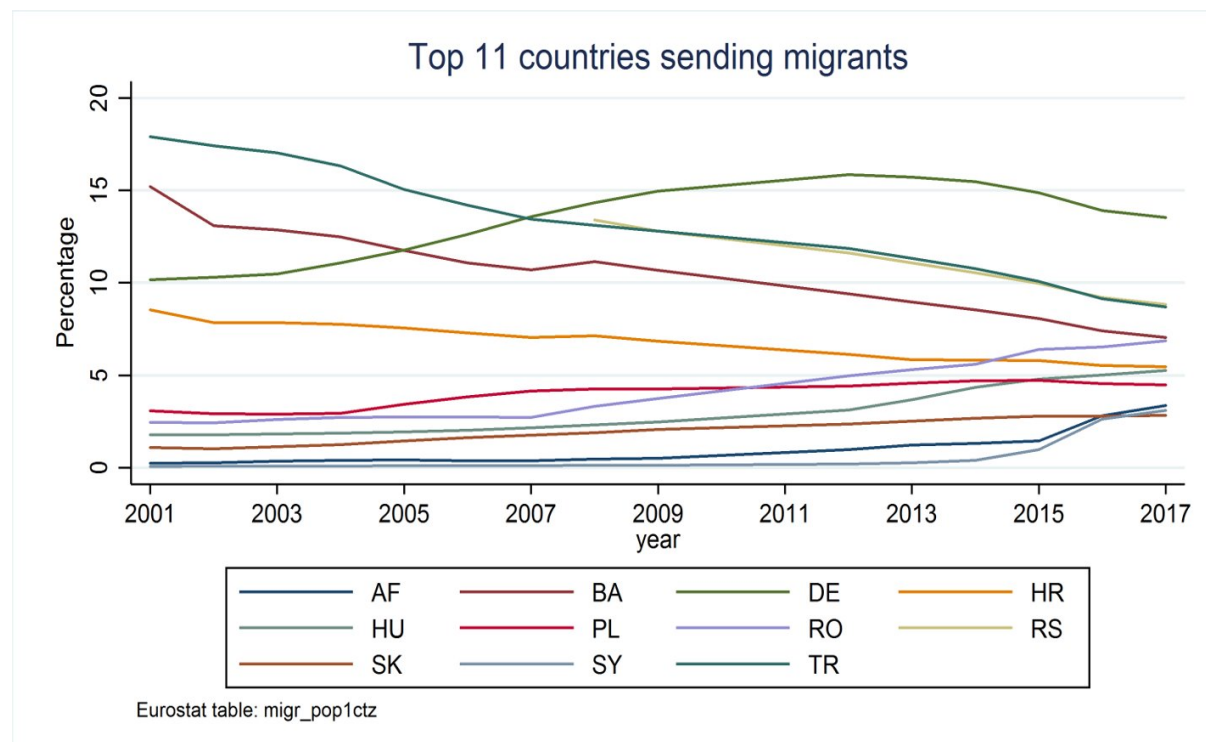


Figure 4: Origin of migrants in Austria

Source: Eurostat

According to the statistics Austria, people of Turkish and former Yugoslavian origin have, on average, 50% smaller living space per person comparably to the national average and are more likely to live in apartments in need of renovation. This makes 25 square meters in comparison to the national average 44 square meters. The apartments of the category D are the lowest quality apartments, often in need of renovation. Around 1.4% of the entire Austrian population lives in apartments of category D. However, among Turkish inhabitants around 7% live in such apartments (Statistic Austria, 2013).

The unemployment rate among migrants, especially of people coming from non-EU countries, is frequently also higher than among the Austrian nationals or the migrants coming from other EU countries (figure 5).

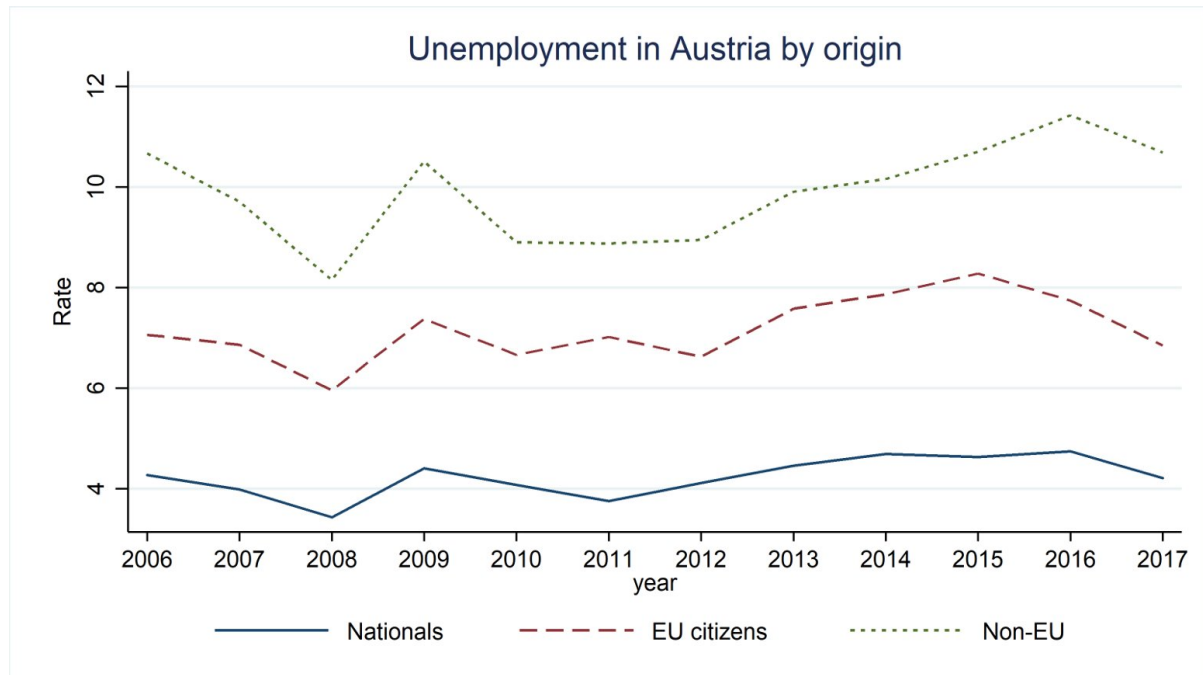


Figure 5: Unemployment in Austria by origin
Source: Eurostat

There are several integration projects in the area of limited profit housing sector. Here we are describing the *Interethnic Neighborhood*, which is also known as the *Global Estate*, as an example. The goal of the project was to have a proportion of Austrians to migrants of 50-50. The project was implemented in 2000 and now 48% of all households are migrants without Austrian citizenship. The evaluation, which was conducted in 2003, showed that Global Estate is a successful reference for integration project with an open, tolerant and urban community (Brech and Feigenfeld, 2017).

However, two things should be mentioned in regards to the project. The first one is that with few exceptions the idea of intercultural integration was not the reason to decide for a flat in the housing complex. There was even criticism from the tenants afterwards that they were not informed about the aim of the Global Estate being an integration project and that they learned it only afterwards.

Secondly, there were still conflicts among inhabitants. When someone is asking about the causes of conflicts among residents the following ones were mentioned as the most frequent conflicts:

- The noise of children and youngsters and loud parties at night
- The lack of cleanliness and order on stairways and other common places
- The unpleasant smell of cooking or barbecues

Austrians are more frequently concerned about annoyances for other residents (64) than migrants (54%). More than 60% of residents of limited profit housing projects confirm that they had conflicts with other residents. Around 40% of these inhabitants complain about behavior of children and teenagers, more than 50% is complaining about the lack of cleanness and noise. These conflicts are getting intensified in summer when windows are open and balconies, terraces and other communal places are used more intensively.

The conflicts are also getting intensified with the age. Statistics of complaints from Sozialbau show that the older a resident is, the more likely he or she is to complain and also being concerned about migrants. Especially frequently were mentioned concerns about people with Muslim background, less frequently about people from Balkans and from eastern European countries (Brech and Feigelfeld, 2017).

However, security was never perceived as an issue. Also the discussions in the media about Islam and Islamism did not change the atmosphere in the housing estate (Brech and Feigelfeld, 2017). The only thing which was causing the questions, was the headscarf but this is mainly because of its visibility in everyday life.

The management of the housing estates, such as Sozialbau, is providing several possibilities to decrease potentials for conflicts. These are “get-to-know-you meetings” where people have an opportunity for personal contacts with housing management and neighbors. There are also residents parties which aim to create positive atmosphere in the community and to motivate residents further to organize parties and other activities independently. There are “team-kick” ball games or also “operating costs hotlines” which serve the purpose to de-escalate conflicts.

Even though the number of conflicts in everyday life is not high only one fifth of every respondent was satisfied about the way how these conflicts were solved and six out of the people mentioned that conflicts were not solved at all.

However organized information does not seem to be an issue which is much discussed and there were no complains about the lack of possibilities for communication. The inhabitants would appreciate more possibility for interactions on conflicting issues. The internet forums are desirable options. Every fifth of residents think that such forums already exist. However, concerns were also frequent that internet forums may be still unfamiliar to many residents and that those who visit forums or active on Facebook will perhaps hardly visit housing community forums.

Perceptions towards migration are frequently based on a subjectively perceived collision of interests. Therefore, it is a characteristic which is socially constructed and influenced by several factors such as socialization, experience, awareness and many others. It is also a social construct which defines what can be seen as an improper behavior and what not. Also, it is a cultural construct about such value as cleanness or noiseless etc. These perceptions can be frequently influenced by preconditions such as preconceived pictures of the migrants. These preconditions can be a result of information flow or of personal experience. Without being addressed or without further information, preconditions can form prejudices. Prejudices are frequently formed at the societal level and their effects can be serious for coexistence in the housing estate. Preconditions also frequently appear in situation with limited information or experience. For example, migrants from countries with unfamiliar cultures are confronted with more preconditional judgements because of their appearance, clothing or form of communication.

Importantly, perception of foreign characteristics is frequently determined by general sentiments in the media reporting. Dorostkar and Preisinger (2017) analyzed online discourses in the forums such as derStandard.at about migration. Der Standard is the Austrian liberal newspaper which has one of the widest circulations. It was also one of the first newspapers offering digital platform for discussion. On average the forums of the newspaper have the 20,000 new reader postings per day. The forums for reader commentaries are

institutionally framed by the forum rules, which have ethical standards and discursive practices, such as rational argumentation and respect. There are also such criteria as limits on text length, anonymity and moderation. The editors of the forum respond to violations of these rules by deleting the posting or account in question. The authors of the study follow the assumption that online reality created in the internet discussion forums is not the mirror of the reality but that both are domains of social reality and interact with each other. They find out that anonymity and the lack of social mechanisms for sanctioning facilitate production of discriminatory language towards other groups of people. Their results show elements of prejudice discourse in such forums. They derive these results by using macro-codes such as authority, justice, history, homogeneity in terms of conformity and culture, as well as usefulness, victim, responsibility. They find the following elements of discriminatory discourse:

- “Austrians on paper but not in reality” is a discourse which says that because immigrants differ from locals in terms of cultural characteristics these immigrants are not “true Austrians” even after receiving citizenship and are causing problems to society of receiving country.
- “Good and bad migrants” discourse has key elements on education and welfare of migrants saying that if a person is highly skilled in professional field, such as scientist or skilled worker, or if the person is a member of upper class, this is a useful migrant.
- Discourse about migration and education includes such as elements as the proportion of pupils of a first language other than German which negatively influences education and German in schools. This discourse uses generalization that if persons have a first language other than German, they don’t know German or are stupid. It also reflects in the discourse that “if less pupils with migration background attend a given school, the higher is the level of education in this school”.
- Elements of the rejection of justified criticism such as “because certain statements are seen as politically incorrect, certain factual problems in our society cannot or can only inadequately be articulated and thus also solved”.

Research on migration and societal attitudes in Austria in late 2015 shows the dominance of the “welcoming culture” in the country, which was characterized by the large involvement of civil society (De Jong and Atac, 2017). Also interviews with refugees in 2015-2016 reveal that only few respondents reported experiences of xenophobic attitudes towards them (Kohlbacher, 2017).

During survey conducted at the Global Estate, from all characteristics of migrants the religious symbols have the greatest impact because of their visibility. This frequently resonates with feelings of Austrians, because due to the secular processes in Austria the religious symbols have largely lost their significance in building the identity. In contrast, many migrants integrate religious symbols into their appearance such as certain types of beards or cloths.

The majority of Austrians welcome customs and symbolic languages, especially of southern and far-eastern countries, as an enrichment. Such examples are a folk-dancing groups meeting in the community rooms or festivals celebrated with traditions from different countries (Brech and Feigelfeld, 2017). However, while being surveyed in the projects like the Global Estate, around 55% of Austrians advocated for a smaller proportion of migrants, below 50%-50%, which is currently a practice in their estate. Less than 30% were in favor of the 50%-50% proportion.

According to the survey conducted by the Eurobarometer in 2018 Austrians have different perceptions towards migration as a process, towards migrants from EU and non-EU countries. The majority of Austrians (74%) support the idea of free movement of EU citizen, who can live, work, study and do business anywhere in the EU. However, 22% is against the idea of free movement and the share of Austrian people against the free movement is actually the highest in Europe, after Italy. The share of Austrians supporting the idea of the right of EU citizen to work in any state of the EU is lower (60%) than the share of people supporting the idea of migration and the share of people completely against this idea is 17%. The right of EU citizen to live in Austria is supported by 59% of Austrians (with 19% against it) and the right of EU citizen to work in Austria is supported with 58% of Austrians (with 20% of people against it). Also 30% of all Austrians participating in the Eurobarometer survey think that additional measures should be taken against illegal migration at the 30%, 24% think that such measures should be taken at the EU and national level and the highest share of respondents, 36%, think that such measures should be taken at the national level.

The scientists speak about the so-called “immigration paradox” when despite worse socio-economic and spatial conditions the level of satisfaction among migrants is higher than among natives living in better conditions (Calvo et al., 2017). However, the influence of this paradox seems to diminish within the second generation of migrants.

There are several factors which influence the feeling of place attachment. For instance, strong social ties lead to increased sense of place attachment. Also, availability of ethnic services and infrastructure can contribute to the feeling of place attachment. Evidence shows that the place attachment gets stronger with the age. If feeling being discriminated, the majority of these perceptions relate to religion (74%)

The city of Vienna has experience with integration of migrants in the limited profit housing sector. For example, the Interethnic Neighborhood Housing Model or the Liesing “Globaler Hof” (Global Estate) were the projects which integrated high share of migrants, up to 50% of inhabitants.

Co-Creation Workshop 1

Misinformation is one of the most pressing issues which the world is facing today. It existed for a long time, but nowadays new technologies and social media facilitated the spread of misinformation, which has the potential to lead to social conflicts. Misinformation about such socially disputed issues as migration can influence attitudes towards migrants. Perceptions towards migration are socially constructed and influenced by such factors as socialization, experience, awareness also including general sentiments in the media reporting. Perceptions are frequently influenced by preconditions, which can be a result of information flow or personal experience and can lead to prejudices.

The focus of the Co-Inform project is on misinformation about migration and its impacts in the Austrian Limited Profit Housing sector (ALPH). ALPH was selected for several reasons but mainly because inhabitants are making a significant share of its inhabitants. The sector is getting more and more heterogeneous in terms of cultural, ethnic and religious background of people living there. ALPH is also a key pillar of the Austrian policy on socio-economic development and political stability, it represents 24% of the total housing stock and more than 30% of total new construction.

Before the workshop the following preparatory steps were conducted:

- Stakeholders mapping
- Data collection protocol
- Organizational issues (moderators, venue, equipment, announcements)

The format of the workshop included following sessions:

- Co-Creation activities on stakeholders' perceptions of misinformation (in three various groups)
- Co-Creation sessions on everyday practices to deal with information
- Co-Creation activities on challenges connected of dealing with misinformation
- Discussions about the needs and possible solutions

The post-workshop works included the following:

- Transcriptions of discussions and roundtables
- Translations into English
- Reporting forms
- Questionnaires
- Consent forms

The workshop which was organized in cooperation between IIASA and the Ministry of Economy and Digitalization of the Austrian Republic took place on the 28th of March 2019 at the premises of the ministry. This was the first event in the participatory process involving journalists, fact checkers, inhabitants of ALPH and policy makers in Austria. The workshop included several innovative methods of stakeholders' dialogue such as games based on words associations, participatory landscape mapping as well as wish-lists for policy-makers and interactive online "fake news" games. The workshop also discussed aspects on the development of Artificial Intelligence methods for and in frames of the stakeholders' dialogue, such as browser plug-ins to raise awareness of citizen about misinformation or dashboards for fact-checking journalists and policy-makers which shows detected misinformation and its origins.

The workshop was moderated by Mr. Wojciech Czaja who is a well-known journalist and has written for The Standard amongst other journals. He is also the author of the book Hektopolis, a guide in a hundred of cities.

Several stakeholders from the Austrian decision-making processes on migration and housing expressed their interest in the project and in the workshop and will be participating. Among them is the Austrian Chamber of Labor, ALPH companies "Neues Leben", "Siedlungsgenossenschaft Neunkirchen", "Heim", "Wohnbauvereinigung für Privatangestellte, housing service of the municipality of Vienna, as well as the Austrian Association Association of Cities and Towns, which has 252 members among the total of 2100 local authorities representing 55% of total population in Austria.

- Journalists group: we invited altogether 12 journalists, also including students studying journalism and fact checkers and 7 people participated out of these. The criteria for selection of participants were documented activities in the media coverage of migration issues and housing policies.

- Policy-makers group: during the stakeholders mapping we identified 45 policy-makers and 7 people from this group participated during the workshop. The main criteria for selection was activity in the area of housing policies or migration issues.
- Citizen group: Altogether we invited 38 citizen and 7 from them participated in the workshop. The announcement about the workshop was also provided through social media such as Facebook. The criteria for selection of workshop participants was their interest in migration issues. We also looked for the inhabitants of the LPHS sector and people with various attitudes towards migrants.

The language of communication between the moderator and the participants was German. The data recording method for this group was mainly audio recording combined with sticky notes, flipcharts and photos.

The discussion included collection of perceptions about various terms which are relevant to the subject of misinformation such as echo chambers, clusters, groups, dream, confirmation bias, trust and others. The discussion also included the identification of synonyms, terms and associations.

It included the following questions:

1. How do you define misinformation regarding migration and migrants? What is misinformation in housing regarding migration and migrants?
2. When or in which cases does misinformation on social conflicts arise? So what needs to be given so that this leads to social conflicts?
3. What are the most common reasons for spreading misinformation? Either in general, in all media or in social networks in particular. What are the most common reasons for spreading misinformation or misinformation?
4. Has misinformation ever been dangerous or unpleasant for you personally? Yes or no. Why?
5. What is the challenge for you to deal with the misinformation in a private or professional context?

After the break the topics connected to the tools to combat misinformation were discussed.

The discussion included the following questions:

1. If you are reading an article that is incorrect or inaccurate, will you act to review it? Yes or no? If yes, which? (Incorrect information or misinformation? -
2. How do you decide which source of information to trust?
3. Which tools do you use to validate information? How do you access media and information to verify facts?
4. What do you do if you have detected or discovered a misinformation or misinformation (in relation to migration and housing)?
5. Friends & Followers: How do you decide when and what you share?

The sessions included the co-creation activities and collection of stakeholders' perceptions about misinformation, sessions on everyday practices to deal with misinformation, co-creation activities on challenges connected with misinformation, discussions about the needs to deal with misinformation and possible solutions.

The session about stakeholders' perceptions to deal with misinformation included the following activities:

- Misinformation word cloud and word association game. Participants picked the terms (misinformation word cloud terms) and wrote down words they connect with misinformation on sticky notes, they could also add their own terms
- Discussion with people of their writings
- Clustering of answers

The session on everyday practices to deal with misinformation included the following activities:

- Landscape mapping activities
- How do you access the media, info, tools used for fact checking/verification?
- Where do I encounter misinformation in my context?

The session on challenges connected with dealing with misinformation included the following activities:

- Wish-list for policy guidelines
- What would you like to see on an ideal platform that combats misinformation (what rules, ethics, values, should it be based on?)
- Participants described different categories: Event, Condition and Action

The session about the needs to deal with misinformation and possible solutions included the following activities:

- Illustrative artefacts. Participants were provided with examples of existing platforms and tools. They picked up 2-3 examples considered most relevant or interesting, promising
- A Bad news game where Fake News were produced

Discourses about misinformation

Definition and examples of misinformation:

In this section we bring opinions and views which were summarized from the stakeholders' discussion during the workshop.

Misinformation can be identified through concrete examples. However a general stringent definition of misinformation as a phenomenon is still missing. Several issues could be included into the concept, such as unchecked information, rumor, hearing say, affections, etc. It can be also identified as a information for conscious disruption of social behavior. However, it is also important to diversify whether misinformation is happening accidentally without an intent to make damage or if there is an intent behind it. In the latter case, it is usually called disinformation, i.e., when erroneous information is deliberately disseminated for a purpose. Misinformation seems usually used to denote an unconscious human reaction to redirect inner states of mind. Someone can also identify it as information which deviates from reality for various reasons, but mainly because of a lack of proper information. Misinformation is thus some kind of incorrect information that constitutes when people communicate something without an adequate knowledge base and often without knowing that they are spreading misinformation.

Misinformation is thus incorrect information which is distributed willingly or unwillingly and concerns a group of people or some individuals. It can be distributed as an effect of biased opinions, for instance emanating from fear or scarcity of resources which can affect certain

groups. Furthermore, to understand the spread of misinformation, it is important to understand the network and context in which it is spread.

The next question for discussion was whether misinformation in relation to migration differs from other context? Here we bring quotation of one participant.

It is difficult to answer this question. Misinformation is rather about its definition but definition is neutral and can be applied to various policy areas. One is important that misinformation deviates from the facts.

In which cases does misinformation lead to conflicts? Here we bring quotation of one participant.

Misinformation leads often to conflicts in situations where there are existing prejudices, flaccid use of language, understanding problems of either language or even word definition. Also, an atmosphere of lack of trust and suspicion creates a good environment for dissemination of rumors. Social conflicts usually appear when someone is feeling disadvantaged or overreached. Fears also frequently lead to rumors and misinformation. This is actually an emotional reaction, some kind of feeling, when someone feels him/herself as being threatened by something foreign or unknown or different. The lack of information in such situation leads to a tendency to believe rumors, especially if they cause strong emotions.

But the perception of being threatened or challenged depends on what we perceive as something foreign. Who is a foreigner? Who is a migrant? Is a person from a different province in Austria a migrant a foreigner? Or a person from a different country?

1. Social conflicts regarding immigrants and misinformation could appear for mainly two reasons.
2. The perception of distribution of resources and the fear to lose some benefits. A perception of threat and of something foreign which might be threatening.

Social conflicts and misinformation are also frequently connected with the issue of distribution of resources, of goods or benefits. Social conflicts are also frequently connected with fears of losing these benefits. Threat scenarios are usually connected with prejudices, not seldom including a perception that migrants are noisier or about attitudes to trivialities, such as shaking hands and so on. However, prejudices alone do not necessarily lead to conflicts despite, they normally are connected with feelings of being disadvantaged or threatened. The feeling of deprivation also frequently leads to conflict and a feeling of envy against someone who has been more successful in one or another respect.

One of the most common reasons to spread misinformation is a pleasure in spreading misinformation or some kind of conspiracy stories, i.e., just out of boredom. Very often people also do not know that they spread false information. Often, they also tend to fast sharing of information without checking but still (falsely) perceiving that the information is valuable. In this case the major drivers of spreading misinformation is ignorance and the confirmation of preconceived options combined with the need to emphasize own importance.

So, some reasons for spreading false information are the lack of factual checks, superficiality, no time for further controls of the information and a need for communicating in general. Also, sometimes there is a reluctance to check the source, especially among people who are aware about the existence of misinformation, because sharing something which is shocking

might give them a feeling of importance. At the same time, they do not want to share misinformation willingly but nevertheless, do not want to lose the chance of getting attention in this way. The motivation here is then primarily self-affirmation. Frequently, another reason for not fact checking information is a wish to stay in a comfort zone and with an already existing set of beliefs.

Personal experience of being affected by misinformation

Many people were personally affected by misinformation and was perceived as a very uncomfortable, albeit not existential, experience. Some people were seldom affected by misinformation related to migration, but more frequently by misinformation related to political, and broader, issues. In cases where the misinformation was about migration it was mainly in the context whether migration is dangerous. Or it was in the context of social services and migrants using these. The prejudice is that migrants are overusing social services or are creating additional complexity. Misinformation concerning migrants are more disagreeable but not dangerous. However, it can become dangerous if it is spread by purpose and targets certain groups of migrants.

Challenges to control the spread of misinformation

The majority of participants would not actively do anything against misinformation, in particular when it is a private or personal thing there is not really much someone can do. But for the majority of people, the attitudes change when misinformation affects their professional field, and there is a stronger motivation to become active against the erroneous information, in particular when misinformation is perceived as being something professionally challenging. Therefore, many feel an obligation to provide corrective information and to prevent erroneous information from being spread.

During the discussions with participants, we identified three major challenges connected with correction and spread of misinformation. These are time and speed of reaction, kind of misinformation and whether it affects someone personally or professionally, excitement about the news, the low level of willingness to read as well as the difficulties with correcting information at once when it is provided.

1. Many participants believe that they can control the spread of misinformation, especially if misinformation concerns the professional area and spread within their networking circles or by employees of the same organizations as themselves. Several participants then suggested to check statistical or other corrective information.
2. The major challenge is to quickly recognize misinformation and the source of misinformation. This quick reaction was perceived by many as some kind of barrier for corrective measures as participants mentioned that someone really should be an expert to be able to correct misinformation in many areas. Another challenge is that the more exiting the misinformation issue is, the faster it gets being spread around.
3. Corrections might be also difficult because people are reading less and less. And the less they read, the more corrections should take place in person. So the main issue here is also time. Time which is needed for correction of misinformation. To be able to correct misinformation, especially with people who don't read, close contact is needed as well as a significant personal integrity.

Perception of satisfaction with the living conditions

The majority of participating decision makers of the workshop and the round discussion have had experience of working with inhabitants. Based on their experience they mention that people are satisfied to a large extent with their living conditions. Complaints about migrant neighbors are rare, but complaints about companies which maintain the building are much more frequent. Here is the example of one statement:

“I would like to tell about the advantages of living in community building. I have had the apartment for a long time. The migrant neighbor lives there since the age of four and it is quiet. I feel comfortable there. The community building is from the 1960s. The only thing that makes me crazy is the management company which does not properly maintain the building. The repairs are sloppy, and nobody cares about repairs. There is a mismanagement by the administration.”

Tools to combat misinformation

The opinions, about whether it is necessary to combat misinformation or not, were very polarized. Several of the participants do not use social media or networks, why the question of further sharing of information was irrelevant to them. They consequently stated that there is no need act against misinformation. However, if people share the news they prefer to share spontaneous and emotional news. Furthermore, if they are faced with misinformation, this is rather the perception of fairness and that misinformation discriminates someone which motivates people to be active against misinformation. Some participants were very emotional about misinformation and about the fact that there is a lot of misinformation in Internet and that nobody is doing anything.

There were a couple of professionals in the room who are consciously using Internet and are sharing a lot of information. Many argued that it is important to be active as at the Internet as there are currently no rules why people are sharing misinformation as they like. Therefore, there is a need to actively combat misinformation. Some participants argued that it is important to combat misinformation because social media are forming opinions and that social media are not about facts only. However, they are about a variety of possible perspectives. The majority of participants had the opinion that it is useless to share news on Twitter, and that a blog could have much broader distribution.

There was a common opinion that if someone shares misinformation, this person loses his or her reputation. Many professionals have a responsibility to share correct information in their area. However, some participants mentioned that it takes a lot of time to correct misinformation in their area and that it currently is an unpaid activity, which reminds more of a hobby. Therefore, some kind of institution should be created in this area and professional task for correction of misinformation should be identified.

It also depends on the kind of a following up reaction if the misinformation should be combatted. If there is potential for conflict afterwards, certainly something should be done to correct such misinformation. One example:

“In a social house in the 16th district somebody started to spread misinformation that the housing company is employing only Turkish families. This was obviously misinformation and should have been corrected immediately”.

The fact if misinformation leads to conflicts depends on how emotional it is. If there are affected and polarized opinions, it does not make sense only to write a contradiction in a newspaper. It is necessary to go to the people in the housing project and to talk to them personally. In general, personal communication were perceived to be the best way to correct

misinformation. For this role, there is a need of people having authority and integrity and who enjoy a certain level of trust. Otherwise the reaction from inhabitants might be “they are doing something to calm us down”, but they will still keep their own opinion.

Trustful source of information

The participants mentioned several characteristics of a trustful source of information such as neutrality, legal mandate, professional appearance and whether there is an institutional capacity behind. Statistical sources enjoy the greatest level of trust, followed by a number of German and English-speaking journals. Participants also appreciated an opportunity to have a variety of sources to be able to compare information.

Many participants emphasized the that they are following their intuition regarding trustfulness. Furthermore, if something is sympatric to them, it is perceived as trustworthy. Also experience creates trust. If somebody receives reliable information from one source over a period of time, this experience creates trust. Accurateness of presentation and of writing style also creates trust. Fact-checkers were mentioned as a trustful information source, but however such a service is not yet common and available to everybody.

Scientific articles are perceived as a trustful source of information, but not often suitable for the general public. For professional information, the source of funding for a certain research guarantees also increases or decreases the reliability of information.

Recommendations

Decision-makers, journalists and citizens provided various recommendations how to deal with misinformation.

Decision-makers recommended the following tools for dealing with misinformation:

- Wikipedia and alternative information sources in Internet.
- Printed traditional media online.
- Creation of info-points and service points for providing information about migration.
- Opportunities for networking and personal discussions about issues relevant for migration.
- Fact checks in traditional media.
- Regulations for social media regarding misinformation.
- Guarantee the independence of media and research institutions.
- Introduction of institution of online journalism

Journalists recommended the following tools for dealing with misinformation:

- Measures to strengthen awareness that behind every news, there could be a special political agenda.
- Blacklist of information sources which provide misinformation.
- Critical thinking about from whom and why this information is coming.
- Usage of plug-ins in browser.
- Cross checking by fact-checking sites.
- Implementation of events of awareness raising about misinformation and media literacy.
- Implementation of events on sensibilization in social media about misinformation.
- Providing easily accessible tools showing the sources of information online.

Citizens recommended the following tools to deal with misinformation:

- Provide recommendations in traditional media about reliable sources of information.
- raise awareness about misinformation and organize public events about reliable sources of information.
- Publish media reports regarding “from whom comes bad information”.
- Create a culture of critical thinking where people are careful with conclusions and are searching for alternative information before they share something.

Stakeholders expectations on tools to deal with misinformation were different. The expectations of the policy-makers were mainly connected with the creation of a reliable environment through development and enforcement of regulations, stimulation of the culture of critical thinking and strengthening of the capacities of statistical offices as well as making relevant statistical information available and understandable to everybody. Journalist expectations were mainly connected with the development and availability of tools for verification of information. Citizen expectations were mainly connected with the role of decision-makers, who should provide them with credible sources of information at the official web-sites and organize information campaigns among inhabitants about the challenges of misinformation as well as how to deal with it.

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