



Foreigners in The Labor Market in Austria as a Country of Migration*

Göç Ülkesi Olarak Avusturya İşgücü Piyasasında Yabancılar

Murat KALKAN^a , Abdullah Selim DOĞAN^b 

ABSTRACT	ÖZ
<p>After the WW II, the demographic structure of the European countries turned into a heterogeneous system compared to the pre-war period. In addition to the immigrant influxes following the war, the labor shortage that emerged especially since the late 1950s was also effective. Many European countries have encountered the phenomenon of foreign worker migration over time. Austria, one of these countries, has attracted attention as an immigration country that has a high foreign worker and naturally foreign origin population compared to its total population since the 1960s. Based on this fact, the aim of this study is to determine the current situation and problem areas of foreigners in the labor market of Austria, which is an immigration country. It has been seen that despite more than half a century that has passed, there are issues arising from both Austrians and foreigners in the problems experienced in the Austrian labor market. There must be a bilateral desire and will for a solution to eliminate negative situations. Both the Austrian state and its administrators and foreigners themselves need to try. Different groups of society, especially employers and trade unions, and especially non-governmental organizations need to take the initiative and assume a role.</p>	<p>İkinci Dünya Savaşı sonrasında Avrupa ülkelerinin demografik yapısı savaş öncesi döneme göre heterojen bir sisteme dönüşmüştür. Savaş sonrası göçmen akınlarının yanı sıra özellikle 1950'lerin sonlarından itibaren ortaya çıkan işgücü açığı sıkıntısı da etkili olmuştur. Birçok Avrupa ülkesi zamanla yabancı işçi göçü olgusuyla karşılaşmıştır. Bu ülkelerden biri olan Avusturya, 1960'lı yıllardan itibaren, toplam nüfusuna kıyasla yabancı işçi sayısının ve doğal olarak yabancı kökenli nüfusunun yüksek olduğu bir göç ülkesi olarak dikkatleri üzerine çekmiştir. Bu olgudan hareketle bu çalışmanın amacı, bir göç ülkesi olan Avusturya'nın işgücü piyasasındaki yabancıların mevcut durumunu ve sorun alanlarını belirlemektir. Aradan yarım asrı aşkın bir süre geçmesine rağmen Avusturya işgücü piyasasında yaşanan sorunlarda hem Avusturyalılardan hem de yabancıardan kaynaklanan hususların olduğu görülmüştür. Olumsuz durumların bertaraf edilmesi için iki taraflı bir çözüm arzusu ve iradesi olmalıdır. Hem Avusturya devleti hem de yöneticileri ve bunlara ilaveten yabancıların kendilerinin de çaba göstermesi gerekmektedir. Başta işverenler ve sendikalar olmak üzere toplumun farklı gruplarının ve özellikle sivil toplum kuruluşlarının inisiyatif olarak rol üstlenmesi elzemdir.</p>
<p>Keywords</p> <p>Austria, immigration, labor market, foreign worker.</p>	<p>Anahtar Kelimeler</p> <p>Avusturya, göç, işgücü piyasası, yabancı işçi.</p>

* In this study, the data obtained from the field research in which the author Murat Kalkan was involved as a researcher within the scope of the project titled "Human Rights Practices, Migration and Minorities in Austria: 2016 Report" supported by YTB (Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities) were utilized.

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1. Introduction

One of the most important events that influenced world history is undoubtedly the industrial revolution. So much so that with this event, not only a technical change occurred but also very radical changes in social life; the old social structure has completely evolved into a new order (Tuna & Yalçıntaş, 1999, p. 22-23). One of the most significant manifestations of this situation has mediated those social rights based on working life have become an important agenda item in the context of fundamental rights and freedoms. However, as in almost every issue of social sciences, this concept has changed over time by expanding its meaning. Although it is not possible to point out a completely agreed definition when it comes to social rights at the point reached today, it is possible to say that with this concept, it is aimed to protect the individuals in the society, to live in a minimum way, and to ensure their right to self-realization. Although there is no explicit/rigid definition of this concept in the literature, it is essential to know that it is widely accepted that the right to work is within the scope of social rights (Omay, 2011, p. v-32). Therefore, foreigners living within the borders of a state and taking part in the labor market should also be evaluated within this framework.

The purpose of the study, which is based on all these mentioned, is to deal with the situation of foreigners in Austria (especially Turks/Turkish origin) in the labor market based on social rights and with a social policy perspective. Especially after the Second World War (from the 1950s), the demographic structure that changed with the increasing foreign population due to the foreigners'/foreign origins finding a place in the labor market made Austria a country of immigration (Bekaroğlu, Batur, Doğan, Kalkan, & Kucur, 2016, p. 24-25). The fact that foreigners have been maintaining their presence in the country's labor market for many years since then also reveals the need for the determination of current and ongoing problems related to this issue in Austria, which acts with the emphasis on the social state.

The study carried out within this framework is shaped in two parts. In the first chapter, the organization and functioning of the labor market in Austria has been examined in order to establish the theoretical basis. For this purpose, the basic institutional structure in the country is discussed, as well as the dynamics of the labor market and the applied labor market policies. In the second part, the current situation of foreigners in the Austrian labor market was discussed and the prominent problem areas were investigated. Here, studies in the literature were also used besides the primary statistical data. In addition, it should be said that this information is associated with the data obtained from the field research of the project called "Human Rights Practices, Migration and Minorities in Austria: 2016 Report", which is an extremely significant study in terms of shedding light on the practical situation. Within the scope of this field research, face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted with a total of 50 people, 32 of whom are individuals and 18 are representatives of non-governmental organizations. Therefore, in this study, beyond relying only on macro and official data, literature review and/or analysis of written and visual media content, research that directly contacted the people who are the addresses of the problem was also utilized.

2. Organization and Functioning of the Labor Market in Austria

The labor market, which is accepted as one of the essential socio-economic indicators of a country, is shaped by many factors. Legal regulations, institutional structuring and government policies are at the forefront of these. Of course, at this point, Austria's labor market and even

policy are shaped within the framework of close interaction between the government and non-governmental organizations. Because social partners are active in the development and implementation of legal regulations and policies in this area, and therefore, it can be mentioned that there is a social dialogue mechanism in the country (Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz, 2016, p. 13).

2.1. Basic Institutional Structure in the Management of the Austrian Labor Market

In Austria -as briefly mentioned above- it is possible to talk about the existence of a social dialogue mechanism in shaping the working life. Again, the fact that the country's government is based on a federal understanding according to article 2 of the constitution (Bundesministerium für Digitalisierung und Wirtschaftsstandort, 2021) reveals the influence of local forces in managing the labor market. However, due to the purpose and nature of the study, the two leading institutions that are effective at the federal level, which will not go into details in the institutional structure part; The Federal Ministry of Labor (Bundesministerium für Arbeit) and the Austrian Employment Agency (Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich-AMS) will be discussed.

2.1.1. Austrian Federal Ministry of Labor (Bundesministerium für Arbeit)

The Federal Ministry of Labor is the highest institution at the federal level in managing and coordinating of the labor market, that is, working life in Austria. According to the Federal Ministries Act 1986 (Bundesministeriengesetz), the Federal Ministry of Labor, one of 13 federal ministries, deals with labor law, unemployment insurance and labor market issues (Bundesministerium für Digitalisierung und Wirtschaftsstandort, 2022). In this context, the federal ministry determines the objectives of the labor market policies to be implemented by the Austrian Employment Agency (Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich-AMS), a public employment agency. It should be noted that in recent years, special attention has been given to ensuring equality of opportunity in the labor market of immigrants. (Bösch, Nagl, Wieninger, & Janl-Gartner, 2021, p. 7-9).

2.1.2. Austrian Employment Agency (Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich-AMS)

Decisions regarding the tools and resources necessary to achieve labor market policy objectives in Austria mostly belong to the Austrian Employment Agency (Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich-AMS) (Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz, 2016, p. 12-16). In 1994, the management of the labor market was taken from the federal ministry and the Austrian Employment Agency-AMS was established as a public legal entity to revitalize the economy further. Thus, while it was aimed to get more attention to regional needs, decentralization was also experienced. (Atzmüller, 2009, p. 29).

AMS, whose main task is to place the workforce in vacant positions, also supports workers and employers by providing consultancy, guidance, and information services. As a service provider under public law, AMS, with the participation of the federal minister and social partners, contributes to the prevention and elimination of unemployment in Austria under the full employment policy of the Federal Government (Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich, 2022a). It should also be noted that the institution works with trade unions, chambers of commerce and similar civil society stakeholders (Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich, 2022b).

2.2. Basic Legal Framework on The Labor Market

The Constitution does not regulate fundamental social rights such as the right to work in Austria. However, some fundamental rights and freedoms regarding labor law are under constitutional guarantee. These can be listed as the freedom of association and assembly, the principle of equality, the right to inviolability of property, the freedom to choose a profession and vocational training, and the prohibition of compulsory work. In addition to these, in relation to labor law, which is a branch of private law; It should be said that there are individual labor laws, collective labor laws and employee protection laws, and in addition to these, there are laws specific to some professional groups. In working life (Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz, 2016, pp. 51-54), where a legal framework is drawn with different regulations (regulation, employment contract, etc.) apart from laws, the existing basic laws, especially for labor market policies; it is possible to count as the Employment Institution Law, the Labor Market Policies Financing Law and the Unemployment Insurance Law. There are also regulations in this area such as the Foreign Workers Law, the Labor Market Support Law, and the Worker Hiring Law (Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz, 2017b).

2.3. Dynamics of The Austrian Labor Market

2.3.1. Demographic Structure

The concept of the labor market (Seyyar, 2008, p. 115), which is the name given to the place where those who supply their labor and those who demand labor (employer) meet, expresses the essence of working life. As such, it is necessary to evaluate the situation/characteristics of working life in a country through labor market dynamics. Of course, in this case, one of the first points to be considered is the demographic structure. Because it is a known fact that the main source of a country's labor market is the total population (Murat, 2007, p. 39).

434

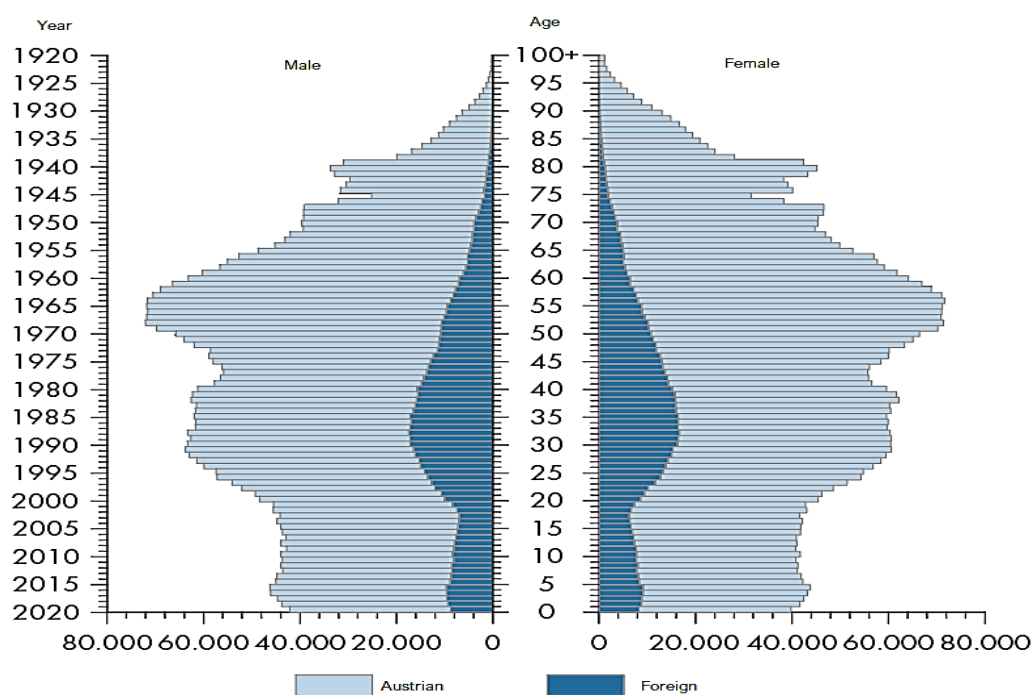
Table 1: Population Structure of Austria (By Gender and Age)

Gender	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Male	4,272.553	4,312.441	4,338.518	4,357.033	4,378.772	4,396.952
Female	4,427.918	4,460.424	4,483.749	4,501.742	4,522.292	4,535.712
Total	8,700.471	8,772.865	8,822.267	8,858.775	8,901.064	8,932.664
Age	%					
0-14	14,3	14,3	14,4	14,4	14,4	14,4
15-64	67,3	67,2	67,1	66,9	66,7	66,4
65+	18,5	18,4	18,5	18,7	18,8	19,2

Source: (Statistik Austria, 2022c, p. 13)

Austria, which is governed by a federal structure and consists of nine states, has a population of 8.93 million as of 2021. It is estimated that this figure will reach 9.94 million in the 2080s. However, today 1.92 million people, that is, more than one in five of the population, live in the capital Vienna (Statistik Austria, 2022c, p. 12). As can be seen from Table 1, the most striking aspect of the population structure of the country, where the female population is higher than the male population, is that the ratio of the number of people aged 15-64, called the working age population, to the total population, is more than two-thirds.

Figure 1: Austrian Population Pyramid by Nationality (2021)



Source: (Statistik Austria, 2021b)

As seen from Table 1, the fact that the working age population is at the level of 66% indicates that almost two out of every three people in the country are potential labor force – that is, they can participate in the production. This is extremely important as an economic indicator. As can be seen from Figure 1, the population pyramid of the country presents a clustered image of the working age population. However, the fact that the 'baby boom generation' is now reaching retirement age gradually poses a challenge for the financing of the pension system (Statistik Austria, 2022c, p. 14) and indicates that the phenomenon of 'foreign worker' will continue in Austria.

435

2.3.2. Flexibility and Part-Time Employment

One of the crucial goals in the government program covering the years 2013-2018 in Austria to achieve a fair, modern and balanced working life is the use of new approaches and tools in labor law, as well as taking simplifying and facilitating measures to reconcile work and family life (Bundeskanzleramt, 2013, p. 12-14). Of course, flexibility is one of the top priorities evaluated in this context. Part-time work, one of the most typical manifestations of this in practice, has gradually reached severe levels in Austria. According to a press release prepared by the Austrian Statistical Institute, while 25.3% of the employees were employed part-time in 2011, this rate increased by more than three points in five years, reaching 28.7% in 2016 (Statistik Austria, 2017a). Similarly, another study emphasizes that part-time work has increased continuously since 2006 and states that part-time work is very widespread, especially among women (Statistik Austria, 2017b, p. 35-36). So much so that while this rate was 47.3% among women (almost one of every two female employees) in 2020, it was 10.7% among men, and it was 27.9% in total (Statistik Austria, 2021a, p. 9).

2.3.3. Employment Rate

Undoubtedly, one of the most important indicators regarding the labor market is employment and employment rate. In Austria, where 4,296,900 people are employed as of 2020, 71% of employment is in the services sector, 25.1% in industry and commerce, and finally the remaining 3.9% in agriculture (Statistik Austria, 2021a), p. 23). This shows that the country has the characteristics of a post-industrial society. The higher the employment rate (Statistik Austria, 2017b, p. 57), means the ratio of the number of the employed to the active population – in other words, to the employable population, that is, to the total population aged 15-64 – reveals that the potential of the workforce in the country is used more. Looking at the employment rate for Austria, it is seen that it is 72.4% in 2020. When the employment rates are compared within the framework of the European Union, it is possible to see that Austria has a rate above the EU-27 average (67.6%) and ranks 8th among countries, which is extremely important for the country (Statistik Austria, 2021a, p. 70-72).

2.3.4. Unemployment

Unemployment is not only an economic issue, but it can also turn into a situation that can bring about social and psychological problems over time. Therefore, it is one of the most important problems for a country to be solved. Considering the unemployment issue in terms of Austria (Schröder, 1997, p. 131), which was considered among the countries with full employment together with Norway, Switzerland, and Sweden until the early 1980s, it is possible to say that the country has been struggling with this problem for many years. As a matter of fact, even though Austria is the 10th country with the lowest unemployment rate among the EU-27 in 2020 in terms of unemployment rate of 5.4%, it is below the EU-28 average (7.1%) (Statistik Austria, 2021a, p. 72) the figures in Table 2 show that there is an upward movement in unemployment (Tálos & Obinger, 2020, p. 57-58), especially due to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

436

Table 2: Unemployment Indicators in Austria

Year	Total Number of Unemployed (in 1000)	Unemployment rate (%)	Male Unemployment Rate (%)	Female Unemployment Rate(%)
2006	211,7	5,3	5,0	5,6
2007	200,3	4,9	4,5	5,3
2008	172,0	4,1	3,9	4,4
2009	222,9	5,3	5,5	5,1
2010	203,4	4,8	5,0	4,6
2011	193,8	4,6	4,6	4,6
2012	208,9	4,9	5,0	4,8
2013	231,3	5,4	5,4	5,3
2014	244,9	5,6	5,9	5,4
2015	251,8	5,7	6,1	5,3
2016	270,0	6,0	6,5	5,6
2017	247,9	5,5	5,9	5,0
2018	220,1	4,9	5,0	4,7
2019	204,6	4,5	4,6	4,4
2020	243,5	5,4	5,5	5,2

Source: (Statistik Austria, 2021a, p. 63)

When the unemployment rates are examined in detail, it is seen that the ratio of the long-term unemployed (unemployment duration of one year or more) to all unemployed in Austria in 2020 is 25.1% (59700 persons) and the average unemployment period is four months. Although unemployment among youth (15-24 age group) in Austria has increased compared to the previous year (Statistik Austria, 2021a, p. 35-36) the youth unemployment rate is 10.5%, which is the fourth lowest in the EU-27. (Statistik Austria, 2021a, p. 72). Although this situation may seem tolerable at first, the fact that the number of young unemployed people aged 15-24 (53200 people) is 11.7% of the country's total youth population aged 15-24 (454300 people) (Statistik Austria, 2022a) is considered, because this population group will reach middle age in the future, it reveals that there is no heartwarming picture.

2.4. Labor Market Policies in Austria

After examining the labor market of Austria around these dynamics, it would be appropriate to make an examination in terms of the applied labor market policies. As it is known, labor market policies are the measures taken by public institutions to manage the labor market. When viewed in this context, the Employment Agency in Austria has two main duties, as indicated earlier, according to the law, which are (Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz, 2017b);

- To prevent and eliminate unemployment,
- To bring labor supply and demand closer to each other as fully, economically meaningful, and sustainable as possible, considering social and economic principles.

At this point, some of the objectives of Austria's labor market policies are (Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz, 2017b).;

- Ensuring and maintaining full employment,
- Keeping the elderly workforce in working life for a longer period,
- Increasing the transparency of the labor market,
- Developing human resources,
- Combating long-term unemployment

It should be said that active and passive policies are applied in the labor market while trying to fulfill all these mentioned duties and targets. As it is known, passive labor market policies are measures to reduce the effects of unemployment. In contrast active labor market policies are policies aimed at preventing unemployment -that is, a kind of combative- (Mahiroğulları & Korkmaz, 2005, p. 45-52). In this context, unemployment benefit, social assistance, bankruptcy guarantee fund assistance, retirement advance should be counted as passive labor market policies in Austria. Again, considering active labor market policies, some of them are;

- increase the transparency of the market by processing various information with the help of modern information technologies,
- promoting vocational education and training to adapt the qualifications of the workforce to the needs of the market,
- to encourage labor mobility,
- providing support to individuals to overcome personal problems that affect career development such as addiction, debt, homelessness, physical or mental disability

As a result, it should be known that active labor market policies envisage the support of people who have moved away from business life due to long-term unemployment, child rearing, old age, lack of qualifications, poor language skills and similar obstacles (Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz, 2017b).

3. Foreigners in the Austrian Labor Market: Current Situation and Problem Areas

It is known that countries aim to increase their economic and social development, that is, their welfare level. To do this, they need to increase production. One of the most basic ways to increase production to the desired amount is to increase the working population, that is, the workforce (Murat, 2007, p. 39). As such, if the country's population is considered stable for a moment, the inclusion of every employee from outside in the labor market is an important step in ensuring production increase. As a matter of fact, the fact that foreign workers are employed in the labor markets of countries has been known for many years. At this point, although foreign employment in Western Europe, although it expanded after World War II, it should be noted that foreign employment has a long history in Austria, like many Western European countries (Gezgin, 1994, p. 147-160).

When Figure 2, which shows the number of foreign populations living in Austria and the ratio of foreigners to the total population during the 59 years from 1961 to 2020, is examined, it is understood that the ratio of the foreign population to the total population has increased from 1.4% to 17% in a period of more than half a century. While this is not an insignificant increase, it also kind of reveals that the population grew almost entirely through immigration, as stated by the official sources of the country. As a matter of fact, in a news bulletin published by the Austrian Statistical Institute, rapid immigration is shown as the most significant factor in the increase of the country's population (Statistik Austria, 2016), and it is stated that if this is not the case, the population will quickly decline to the level of the 1950s (Statistik Austria, 2021c). At this point, it is not surprising that 83% of the population growth experienced in the first quarter of 2022 in the country, whose population exceeded 9 million as of April 2022, is due to Ukrainian refugees (Statistik Austria, 2022d).

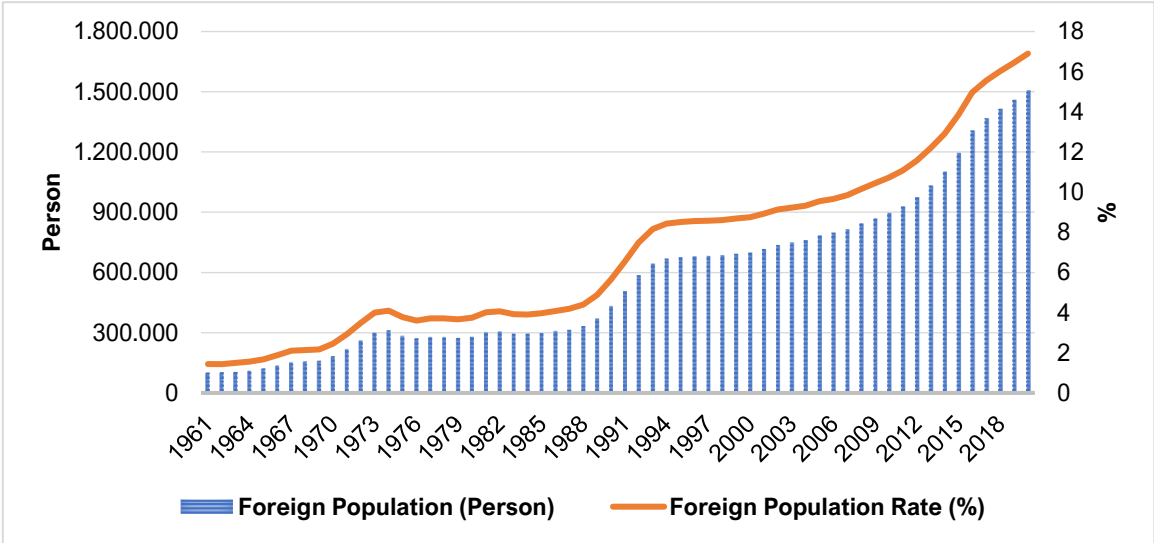


Figure 2: Foreign Population and Foreign Population Rate in Austria (1961-2020)
Source: (Statistik Austria, 2022b)

All this information reveals another fact: Since the population is the main source of the labor market, foreigners have an extremely important place in the Austrian labor market. As a matter of fact, according to 2020 data, while the total number of people employed in Austria was around 4.3 million, it was determined that 16.77% of them were citizens of another country and 21.51% of them were born outside of Austria (Statistik Austria, 2021a, p. 68). Again, according to the data published by the Austrian Statistical Institute in 2021, the fact that 24.2% (1,038,000 people) of the workers in Austria has an immigrant background (Statistik Austria, 2021d, p. 56) and the fact that the employment potential will decrease rapidly in the coming years if the country has not received immigration is also expressed by the official authorities (Statistik Austria, 2016). This situation reveals that foreigners (and thus people with a migrant background) are highly remarkable in Austrian labor market and economic life. One of the indicators of this is that the ratio of people with a migrant background among those employed in the Austrian labor market has increased by about a third during the 2010-2020 period (see Figure 3).

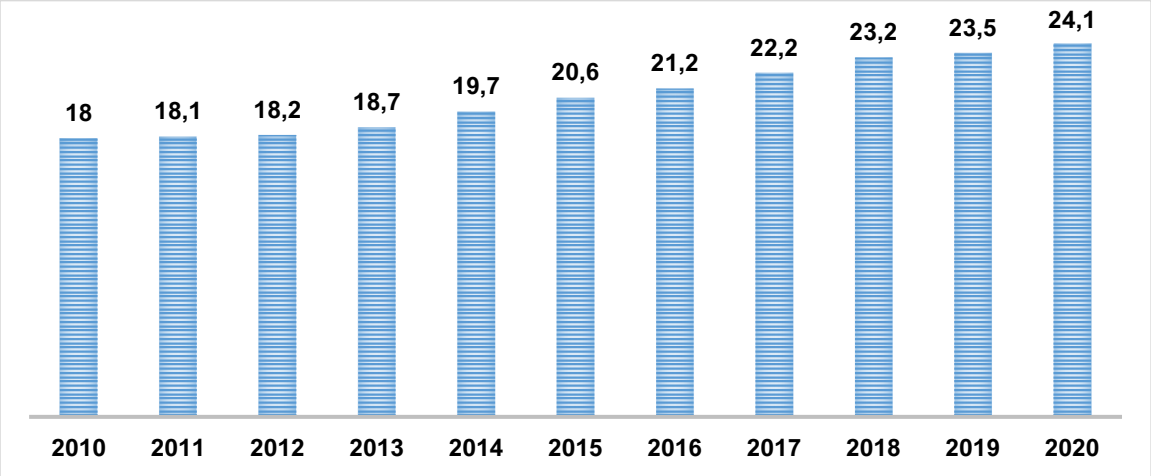


Figure 3: Proportion of Immigrants Among All Employed in Austria (% , 2010-2020)
Source: (Statistik Austria, 2021d, p. 57)

As stated above, as of 2020, approximately 16.77% of total employment in Austria is foreign; that is, 1677 out of every 10000 employees are not Austrian citizens. Looking at the same figure for 2006, it is understood that it was 9.5% (Statistik Austria, 2017b, p. 37). This shows the existence of an increasing trend over the years. However, the employment rate of foreigners decreased by 1.7 points in 2020 compared to the previous year and realized as 65.1%. The same figure was 74.1% for Austrians, with a decrease of 0.9 points (Statistik Austria, 2021a, p. 24). Although these data mean that only 651 out of every 1000 employable foreigners are employed, it clearly shows that the employment figures for Austrians are relatively better than foreigners.

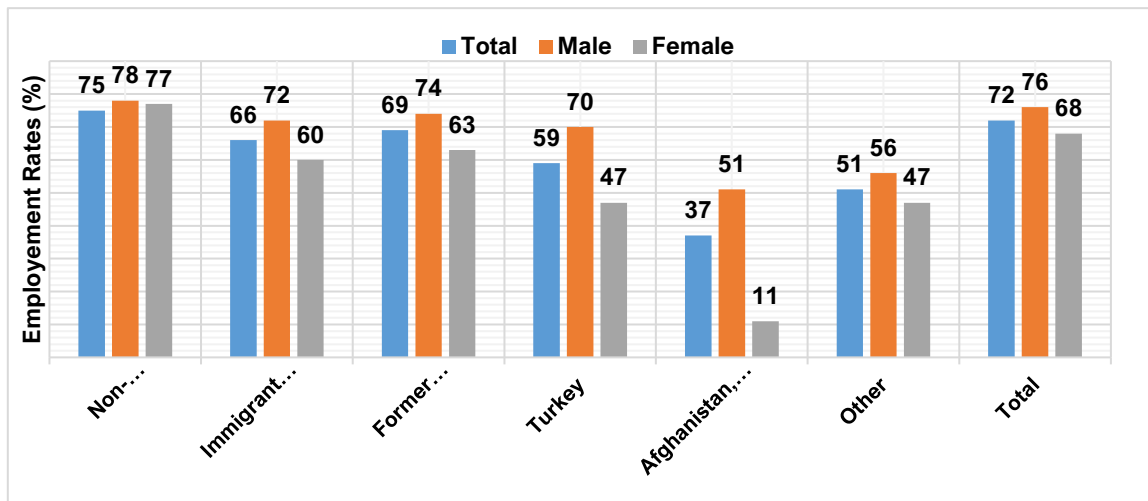


Figure 4: Employment Rates by Nationality in the Austrian Labor Market (%)
Source: (Statistik Austria, 2021d, p. 59)

When the employment rates in Austria are continued to be examined, a complex structure is encountered. As seen in Figure 4, when the employment rates are compared based on nationality, there are serious differences between those with a migrant background and those with a non-immigrant background, and there are extremely different rates for citizens of other countries. So, there is a heterogeneous situation. In terms of employment rates, the situation of the citizens of the former Yugoslavia is relatively good, while the worst figures are calculated for the citizens of Afghanistan, Syria, and Iraq. Of course, one of the most striking values at this point is the employment rate of Turkish citizens. The employment rate of Turkish women corresponds to the worst figure seen in the table after Afghanistan, Syria, and Iraq nationals. Accordingly, it is understood that 53 out of every 100 employable Turkish women are not working (see Figure 4).

Looking at the distribution of employment in the Austrian labor market by occupation, based on nationality, it is seen that 39.7% of the immigrant population is working as a worker in comparison this rate remains at 19.4% for non-immigrants. Again, when a nationality-specific analysis is made, it is understood that 51.44% of former Yugoslavia citizens and 50.1% of Turks are working as workers and these are in the first two rank. Another subject of study is undoubtedly to look at the issue regarding immigrant generations. As a matter of fact, when this is done, it turns out that the occupational status of the second-generation immigrants is significantly different from the first generation and more like the situation of the non-immigrant population (Statistik Austria, 2021d, p. 60-61). Of course, at this point, the fact that people with a migrant background are employed in temporary jobs relatively more often than non-immigrants (Österreichischer Integrationsfonds (ÖIF), 2017, p. 8) is certainly one of the remarkable situations.

Another important data giving an idea about the labor market of a country is unemployment figures. In this context, when we look at the situation in Austria for 2020, it is understood that the increase in unemployment compared to the previous year is higher for foreigners compared to Austrian citizens (Statistik Austria, 2021a, p. 36), and the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic is extremely important in this (Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich, 2021, p. 20). As a matter of fact, compared to the previous year, the unemployment rate for Austrians increased by 0.4 points to 4% in 2020, while it was 11.6% for foreigners with an increase of 2.6 points. It

is also seen that foreign men are affected by unemployment more than foreign women (Statistik Austria, 2021a, p. 36).

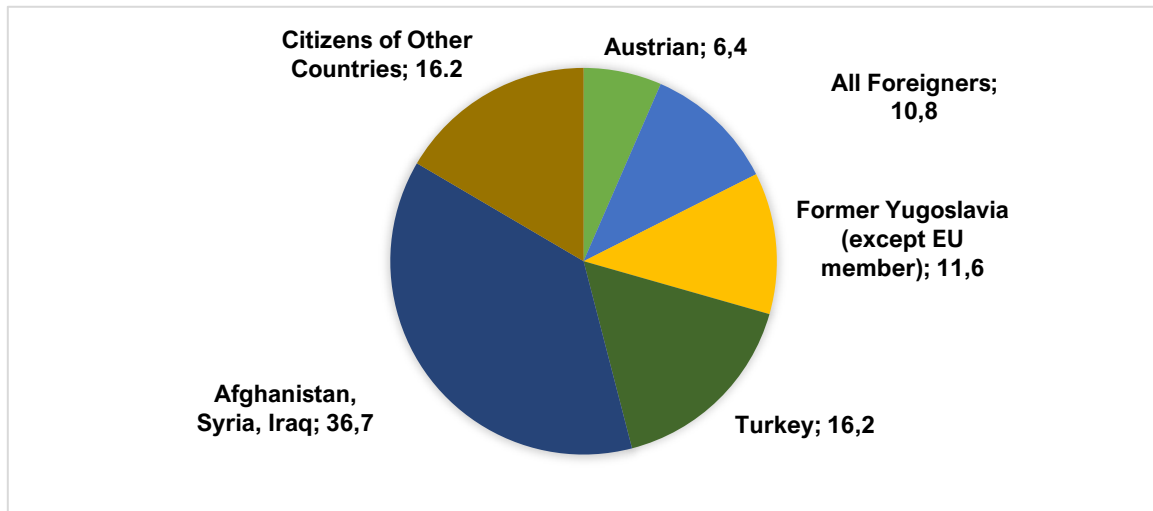


Figure 5: Unemployment Rates by Nationality in the Austrian Labor Market (%) (2019)
Source: (Statistik Austria, 2021, p. 63)

When we look at the unemployment rates (in 2019) of the people living in Austria by nationality, as can be seen in Figure 5, it is determined that the unemployment rate among the Turks living in Austria is also better than the citizens of Afghanistan, Syria, and Iraq. Still it is about 4.4 points above the Austrians. Again, when comparing Austrians and foreigners with the same qualifications, it is seen that the unemployment rate of foreigners is higher. The same is valid for youth unemployment. However, considering the long-term unemployment (unemployment for one year or more), it is possible to say that foreigners are in a better position than Austrian citizens (Statistik Austria, 2021d, p. 62-64).

441

In the light of the statistical information given above, after clarifying the practical situation of foreigners in Austria in working life, it is useful to mention the legal regulations in this area. First, it should be noted that the legal basis for the admission of foreigners to the labor market in Austria is the Employment of Foreigners Act (Ausländerbeschäftigungsgesetz) administered by the Employment Agency (AMS) (Bundesministerium für Arbeit, 2022a). So much so that this regulation creates two benefits: Firstly, it controls the irregular entry of foreign workers into the Austrian labor market, and secondly, it protects foreign workers from any injustice and victimization (Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich, 2017). In Austria, persons from EU member states as well as Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein are free to enter the labor market. However, citizens of a third country other than these need a residence-work permit (Bundesministerium für Arbeit, 2022b). In this framework, a new system was put into effect in 2011, based on the issuance of a document called Rot-Weiß-Rot-Karte (RWR) (red-white-red card), which envisages certain controls in entering the labor market. Accordingly, the candidate is scored around certain criteria (most importantly; qualification, experience, grammar, age and availability of a suitable job offer) in order to obtain an RWR, so that those who provide it can permanently reside and work in Austria (Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz, 2017a). In addition to this RWR, which is given for 24 months, there is also an RWR-plus card, which can be obtained by people who have worked for 21 months within 24 months (Bundesministerium für Arbeit, 2022b).

According to the Austrian Chamber of Commerce, qualified migration has a positive effect on the labor market, as it contributes to both the increase in employment and the increase in the level of education (WKO, 2017). Similarly, in a news report published on October 22, 2015, in the national newspaper Die Presse, “Many forget that we owe most of our welfare and social gains to people who were not born in Austria.” It draws attention to the socio-economic importance of foreign employment for the country (Pramböck, 2015). In addition, in the section titled "Preparing Austria for the Future" of the government program covering the years 2013-2018, the integration of foreigners is considered especially within the framework of social peace and economic development, and social diversity is considered as a chance for the country. Therefore, it is not surprising that it is emphasized that the problems in living together should be minimized/resolved to better use the potential of people with a migrant background -for the benefit of all parties involved- (Bundeskanzleramt, 2013, p. 27-29).

According to the data published by the Austrian Statistical Institute, based on research conducted among foreigners living in Austria, approximately one-third of the foreigners immigrated to the country for family reasons, while one-fourth of them came because of their desire to work (Statistik Austria, 2015, p. 40-43). Despite this request, what is the practical situation of foreigners living in the country in working life and how they look at them? According to the news in the previously mentioned Die Presse, although the contribution of immigrants is appreciated, it is possible to say that both the perspective of foreigners and their practical situation in working life is not very good according to the research. As a matter of fact, according to a research report published by the Austrian Integration Fund, almost three-quarters of Austrians (73%) are concerned about the integration of foreigners into education and business life (Österreichischer Integrationsfonds, 2017, p. 17), an important indicator of this.

442

At this point, an article published in Die Presse is noteworthy. In fact, according to the information given there, foreigners are frequently employed in many fields, from construction to agriculture and forestry, from tourism to cleaning works, in which Austrians do not like the wages given and do not work (Pramböck, 2015). As a matter of fact, one of the male individuals interviewed during the field research, responded to this situation with what was experienced in practical life:

“There are some difficulties in working life due to being a foreigner. For example, foreigners always work in hard and heavy work. If a person is to be hired responsible for a key point – even if you work in that department, despite having experience – another person from outside can be brought in and appointed as the manager.”

When another female interviewee was asked about the difficulties encountered in her working life and the following response was received:

(Foreign women) ...for lack of paperwork, not having knowledge of German, sorry, but they are not hired because their looks are not very well-groomed.

Of course, it is possible to say that these situations are incompatible with the principle of equal treatment in Austria, and moreover, they conflict with the labor market targets. However, in the Equal Treatment Law, which has been in effect since 1979 and is described by the Ministry of Social Affairs as the main pillar of the labor law, no one; It is stated that they cannot be subjected to any different treatment (discrimination) in their working life due to (Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz, 2017c).

- Gender,
- Ethnicity,
- Age,
- Religion/worldview,
- Sexual preferences

During the field research, one of the problem areas that attracted attention regarding the employment of foreigners was the situation of women who wear headscarves. In the government program of Austria covering the years 2013-2018, as one of the employment targets, it has been determined to increase women's participation in the labor market by promoting women's employment, thus improving their income levels, that is, their livelihood opportunities. Although this is the case (Bundeskanzleramt, 2013, p. 11) interviewed in the field research, The person named F.T. (male) is a person who is frequently involved in social and political life in Austria, according to him mentioning the excess of his observations:

“It is known that women wearing headscarves are sometimes discriminated against because of their headscarves during job interviews.”

This indicates that it is difficult for Muslim/headscarved women to enter the job market. The news published in the Kurier Newspaper on February 22, 2016, based on the research carried out by Linz University professor Doris Weichselbaumer, also confirms the situation mentioned by F.T. According to the research mentioned in the news, it has been revealed that people who wear headscarves are less likely to be invited to job interviews in Germany. This situation is not much different in Austria. In fact, the Austrian Employment Agency-AMS official has revealed the existence of the situation in practice by saying that "wearing a headscarf may bring a disadvantage compared to those who wear it in some professions, and in this case, it will depend on the attitude of the company". Again, it should be noted that in the same news it is stated that discrimination is made just because of the foreign name (Kurier, 2016). Moreover, K. A., who was interviewed, describes a tragicomic event that confirms this situation as follows:

“A friend of ours wanted to open a tailor shop (it's a bit of an old thing) and he needed to get a document for this. He was going to and from the municipality, but they were causing a lot of difficulties; this is missing, that is missing, etc... Finally, he gets angry, says he will change his name, goes to court, changes his name to Schneider (tailor) (his name is still the same). Then he goes back to the municipality and 'Herr Schneider' (Mr Tailor) gets all his work done in one day.”

In a study on the wages and employment opportunities of immigrants in Austria, it was revealed that there is a situation of discrimination against immigrants in the labor market within the framework of these issues. As a matter of fact, it is possible to summarize the results as follows (Hofer, Titelbach, Weichselbaumer, & Winter-Ebmer, 2013, p. 6-7):

There is open discrimination in job applications for Serbian, Turkish, Chinese, and Nigerian people. Because 37 of every 100 Austrians who apply for a job are invited for a job interview, this rate is 28.2% for Serbs, 27.1% for Chinese, 25.3% for Turks and 18.7% for Nigerians.

When an evaluation is made in terms of wage difference, it is seen that there is a difference again. While it is seen that EU citizens are not exposed to a severe wage difference, former Yugoslavia, Turkey and other third country citizens may face severe discrimination at this point, which is a fact that mostly Turkish and former Yugoslavian women are victims of.

Regarding the discrimination of foreigners in job applications, H.İ. gives the following information:

“I've heard that there have been problems with job applications for the last three or four months. Normally, if an application is to be rejected, in Austria there is a procedure: “There is no place for now, we have registered you; We will call when needed.” should be said. But now “There is no place for now; it will never happen.” answers can be obtained.”

4. Conclusion And Evaluation

Foreign employment is a troubling issue in the Austrian labor market and working life. Because both the quantitative problems reflected in the statistics, some qualitative research carried out by the Austrian government, non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders, as well as the results of the field study conducted by us, have shown that the working life in Austria, which is a kind of immigrant country, cannot absorb this fact. As a matter of fact, as mentioned, the existence of a disadvantageous picture in terms of employment, unemployment, position in the profession and wages for those with a migrant background compared to those with a non-immigrant background (Hofer, Titelbach, Weichselbaumer, & Winter-Ebmer, 2013, p. 5) is regrettable. In the field research that has already been used, it has been revealed that there is a serious problem in employment and unemployment -as it has been pointed out before-.

The existence of such an annoying picture undoubtedly prevents social peace from being sustainable. So, what kind of solution should be followed? At this point, it is an indisputable fact that all sides of social life have a role to play. Here, first, the Austrian state should take a step, starting from the fact that it regulates the working life. At this point, the state should ensure that this social right is properly exercised through some programs, legal regulations, and more effective control of implementation.

Based on this sentence, it is an important step to point out that one of the employment objectives of the government program mentioned earlier is the establishment of qualified (skilled) immigration and a culture of welcome (Willkommenskultur). Thus, it is argued that there will be an economic improvement and that the adaptation of immigrants to social life will turn into a sustainable state. Of course, from the self-criticisms made at this point; (Bundeskantleramt, 2013, p. 12)

- Lack of welcome culture,
- Problems in professional recognition/diploma equivalence,
- Existence of difficulties in issuing a red-white-red card called RWR (Rot-Weiß-Rot-Karte), that is, a document expressing the right to work

is particularly noteworthy. To achieve all these, it is emphasized that in the 2013-2018 government program, it is necessary to focus on professional integration under the title of integration, and as the cornerstones of the roadmap are indicated as follows:

- Labor market policy will focus on increasing the employment rate of young men and women with a migrant background.
- The qualifications and competencies acquired by the immigrants in the country of origin will be recognized subject to a special law.
- A comprehensive system for migration and integration management will be developed, considering the needs of the Austrian labor market and economy, within the framework

of ensuring qualified migration. The RWR card will also be streamlined, and the bureaucratic procedure simplified.

- Consideration will be given to tax subsidies for more highly educated international students to stay in Austria at the end of their studies.

Of course, employers, trade unions and other non-governmental organizations, which are the other parties of the working life, should also take responsibility for bringing foreign employment to better conditions. However, it is obvious that local people should be more careful about discrimination against foreigners. For a better foreign employment, foreigners in the country should first go to a self-criticism and start by solving the language issue, which is one of the main problems before integration. However, a low level of school education or a poor level of professional knowledge/education are also areas that immigrants should first consider and make efforts to correct.

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