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Workshop: Is Populism a Side-Effect of the Europeanization of Political Competition?
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Right wing populist parties and their effect on national identity politics under the conditions of Europeanization

First Draft, do not quote, comments are welcome

Abstract

The paper examines whether European Integration favoured adaptation processes and with it a shift towards exclusionary politics of national identity of political actors on national level under the pressure of successful right-wing populist parties (RPP). The assumed hypothesis is that European Integration on the one hand favoured the mobilizing power of national identity and therefore of RPP, but that, on the other hand, established, governing parties partially adapted exclusionary models of identity and (ab)used Europeanization to legitimize even more restrictive and exclusive migration, migrant and citizenship policies. Therefore the Europeanization of identity politics and political competition legitimised by the back door in the end RPP positions. The analysis of the introduction of European citizenship and the local right to vote for EU-citizens with the Maastricht treaty in France and Austria supports this hypothesis. Three major lessons can be drawn from it: First, the Maastricht treaty had a strong impact on political competition and nourished the debate about national identity on domestic level. Second, RPP, like the FN and the FPÖ, adapted their strategies very quickly and efficiently. They were able to profile and to benefit from this integration process due to their self-ascribed role as defenders of national interests and identity. Furthermore they forced established, particularly pro-European and governing parties to adapt their strategies concerning identity politics. Third, the introduction of European citizenship did by no means break up national approaches to citizenship, but favoured the spread of ethnic-culturalist approaches to migration and citizenship policies.
Introduction

Right-wing populism is frequently interpreted as a reaction to a more globalised world: a backlash on the loss of national sovereignty and on a supposed threat of national identity, due to processes as the European Integration or international migration. Eurosceptic and right-wing populist parties (RPP) exploited these developments for their strategic purposes. They nourished growing feelings of uncertainty and disappointment with their scenarios of a weird EU-bureaucracy in Brussels or of “floods of foreigners sweeping the country” threatening the “little man” and gained electoral support.

But as well established, particularly governing, parties adapted new strategies as “blame-shifting” with ongoing integration and the spread of political responsibility. Furthermore, at the same time they had to adapt their strategies to growing dissatisfaction and voter volatility as well as to the electoral rise of new parties.

With the success of RPP and the ongoing European Integration the pressure on national governments and potential governing parties increased considerably: On the one hand the scope of national governments decreased with the ongoing international integration, on the other hand the electoral success of RPP in many countries set established parties under double pressure in electoral and policy terms. In many countries they have a considerable share of the electoral vote, which gives them at least a blackmail potential. Furthermore successful RPP were successful agenda setters. They pushed the issue of national identity on the political agenda through demands for zero immigration and welfare chauvinism. Their xenophobic and EU-sceptic attitudes underlining these demands are well known.

But little is still known about the reactions of political actors, i.e. national governments and parties, in view of this double pressure. How has European Integration and the success of right-wing populism shaped the behaviour of national political elites particularly in the field of identity politics? That identity politics have become a major topic on the European and national agendas cannot be ignored. Frequent discussions about immigration, integration or discrimination and the increased legislation in the field of migration policy show the growing relevance on both national and European level. On national level, we observe a broad consensus toward a restrictive, utilitarian-oriented immigration policy in most of the member states. The developments in the field of immigrant policies, concerning the access to rights of resident migrants, offer a broad variety of trends from inclusionary to exclusionary policies. On European level, we observe divergent trends of inclusion and exclusion in the past: On the one hand, the European Union claims to become a

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1 The term identity politics is almost applied on policies towards ethnic-cultural minority groups and directed to institutionalise particular rights for these minority groups. Here it is also applied to migrants or non-citizens, which have become as well a disadvantaged minority group in modern industrial societies. Migration and migrant policies are regarded as one aspect as the procedural dimension of identity politics.

2 The term immigration policy is used as a broad term including regulations considering immigration, migrant rights or integration policies.
space of free movement, offering equal access to rights for their citizens. On the other hand, the access of so called third-country nationals to the European Union has become more difficult and the demands for a common immigration policy have become louder in recent years. The European Integration of visa- and asylum matters and their implementation on national level indicate the growing willingness of national governments to delegate power to the European level in this field and show a consent toward a restrictive and utilitarian immigration policy. Towards the equalization of European citizens, which is fixed in the treaties, however reluctance has grown. The fundamental idea to develop a political community on the basis of the equal access to rights in the economic, social and political sphere is yet not realised (Perchinig, 2005). The negotiation and implementation of EU directives considering the equality of non-citizens or an improvement of migrants rights was and is frequently a sluggish process.

The growing importance of national interests and national identity in political processes, as well as the adaptation or convergence of political actors towards exclusionary identity politics might offer an explanation for these divergent trends. Therefore the central research question is: Has the European Integration favoured adaptation processes and with it a shift towards exclusionary politics of national identity on national level under pressure of successful RPP?

My hypothesis is that European Integration on the one hand favoured the mobilizing power of national identity and therefore of RPP. On the other hand established, governing parties partially adapted exclusionary models of identity and (ab)used Europeanization to legitimize even more restrictive and exclusive migration, migrant and citizenship policies. By the back door this processes legitimized in the end RPP positions.

To test my hypothesis I look at citizenship policies, which is according to Koopmans/Kriesi (1997:15) today first of all politics of identity (Koopmans/Kriesi, 1997:15). Furthermore citizenship and the access to citizen’s rights are of major concern for the quality of democracies (Beetham, 1994: 38). Therefore the introduction of European citizenship with the Maastricht treaty will be analysed, which for several reasons is a prominent example. Yet, not much attention was spent on citizenship policies, on the contrary to the investigations of European immigration policy (Perchinig 2005: 4). In theoretical terms the introduction of European citizenship attacked the understanding of citizenship and national identity at its core. It forced nation states to enlarge the access to political rights, primarily the right to vote, to non-citizens and it can be seen as an attempt to establish a wider, European identity. Therefore European citizenship affected the quality of national

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3 The recent discussion about a European quota system and “blue cards” initiated by the French and German ministers Sarkozy and Schäuble, which commissioner Frattini took up. But the debate showed that the national interests diverge considerably and particularly countries, as Austria, which still have a restrictive immigration regime remained sceptical.

4 See Juen/Perchinig/Volf (1996: 207/215) about the cooperation in this field.

5 Recent examples are the long-lasting negotiations about the directive on family reunification of third-country nationals or the inert implementation is the directive implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin), which many member states executed with delay or not sufficiently. See Perchinig (2005) or Bendel (2005).

6 Earlier contributions to the discussion of European citizenship made Meehan (1993) and Wihtol de Wenden (1997). Recently the discussion about European and national citizenship gained more attention, particularly the necessity to harmonise citizenship in the European Union (Bauböck 1999b) and discussion about civic citizenship (Perchinig 2005).
citizenship, citizen’s rights, and the scope of citizenship, as non-citizens got access to citizen’s rights. The opposition of RPP seems to be evident in this case, but how did established parties deal with it under pressure of RPP? And what have been the consequences for identity politics on national level? The political discussions and decisions concerning the introduction of European citizenship on domestic level and its further impacts will be examined for two countries with very successful RPP - France and Austria.

**Right-wing populism a slim concept**

As already mentioned right-wing populism is almost associated with two main features: Their critique of political elites and their nationalist positions. The vast literature on these parties offers divers approaches, definitions and typologies: Right-wing extremism (Ignazi, 1992; Hainsworth, 2000), radical right (Kitschelt/McGann, 1995; Minkenberg, 2001), new populism (Taggart 1996), national populism (Germani, 1978; Taguieff, 2001), right-wing populism (Betz, 1994) are the most frequent terms used for this parties since the 1970s. The existing typologies inspired by the research of populism still offer a broad variety of characteristics and there is no consensus about the quality of RPP. Therefore and due to the research question first of all a precise concept of RPP is outlined.

Based on definitions of the research about populism here a slim definition with two major characteristics is applied. The concept takes into consideration what is essential for political parties and what distinguishes them from other parties: their political aims and strategies. Based on the assumption, that populism is a strategy to gain power, which refers to a hypothetical, homogeneous will of the people. In modern democracies we can find several meanings of „people“ (Canovan 2004). Right-wing populism appeals to the “people” in a double sense: First, they appeal to the people as a political community, as ruled and as the sovereign, in a short term as the “demos” (Canovan 1981: 261; Puhle 2003: 16). Second, it appeals to the people as an ethnic-cultural identity, as “ethnos”. It is essential, that both dimensions are meld into one (Minkenberg 2001). The right-wing populist idea of a political nation is identical to an ethnic-cultural homogeneous entity.

On the empirical level, this has implications towards their mobilizing strategy and what is even easier to detect, their programmatic profile. Therefore RPP can be identified as parties, which:

1. emphasize the antagonism between the people and political elites. The "anti-elitarian affect" (Pelinka, 2005: 92) is reflected in a radical, defamatory and discrediting criticism of the existing
representative democracy, its institutions and elites. Beyond this criticism, they claim for a closer relationship between those who govern and those who are governed. The strengthening of the sovereignty of the people, of direct democratic and plebiscitarian elements are their main intentions. Dependent of the constitution the introduction or frequent applications of referenda or direct elections of mandates are typical demands. Consequently they prefer majoritarian regimes instead of consensus democracy or negotiative decision making. This can be seen in their positions and in their mobilizing strategies. So far RPP have the possibility to mobilize by direct means, i.e. by referendum initiatives, they do so.9

2- emphasize national interests and national identity. They legitimise political aims with the preservation of national identity. Therefore they are against an ethnic-cultural, heterogeneous society, they reject immigration and the presence of immigrants. Positions, which are underlined by xenophobic and, at times, racist attitudes. Furthermore, they are against the transfer of national sovereignty and sceptical about European Integration, as they are concerned about the loss of national sovereignty. Since the Maastricht treaty they commented on every further step of integration sceptically and mobilized against it. They took up the idea of De Gaulle of a “Europe of fatherlands” of sovereign nations, which share a common cultural heritage. How strong this argument is, was demonstrated in the discussion about the potential entry of Turkey.

Of particular importance for RPP was and still is the issue of immigration. The importance is threefold: First, it was the topic RPP emphasized most. The main demands of RPP in the field of migration policy are well known: “Zero immigration” and the reduction of resident immigrants in their countries. Restrictions for immigrants to access permanent residence, labour market, social and political rights as well as a strongly restricted access to citizenship bound to cultural assimilation. Second, RPP connected it to other issues and threads. Most prominently are welfare chauvinist positions, what the Front National called "préférence nationale". This means nothing else that they want to privilege citizens in the social, economic and political sphere compared to non-citizens. The formula, which was used by the Front National “3 millions chômeurs, sont 3 millions immigrés trop”10, was frequently copied and modified.11 Third, the migration issue had much mobilizing power and explains much of their electoral success (Betz, 2002: 253).

Therefore the integration of policies, which concern national identity and citizenship affect right-wing populism at its core. The concept of a demos as ethnos seems contradictory to the enlargement and opening of the access to citizenship rights as the right to vote foreseen with the introduction of European citizenship.

9 Best example are the referendum initiatives of the FPÖ in Austria, as their initiative “Austria first” in 1993 against further immigration or their initiative against the introduction of the Euro in 1997. They didn’t succeed in the sense that a real referendum was held, but they made their position clear and mobilized their adherents.


11 In 2006 for example the FPÖ launched a campaign telling that money should be spent for the pension system and not for asylum seekers. http://www.hcstrache.at/index.php?style=7&PHPSESSID=6fee56eee3680fe294aa97fe3dbee8c9d, last download 27 september 2007.
Europeanization of party competition favouring the success of RPP

Europeanization, understood as the “incremental process re-orienting the direction and shape of politics to the degree that EC political and economic dynamics become part of the organizational logic of national politics and policy-making” (Ladrech, 1994: 69), has a twofold relevance for the posed research question: First, it affects the strategies of political actors, such as parties and therefore influences party competition. Second, it affects the policy positions of actors, governments and parties, in the field of immigration, migrant and citizenship policy.

The impact of European Integration on national parties and party systems is widely discussed. Mair (2001) states, that the impact on party systems is limited. But on the other hand it has considerable impact, depending on party competition on single parties and on particular party types (Ladrech 2001, Taggart 1998). The conditions, which favoured the success of RPP, due to European Integration are threefold: First, it introduced a new level of electoral competition. The character of European elections as second order elections favoured the success of new parties like RPP. In some countries the window of opportunity was even widened as European elections introduced new electoral modes which favoured the success of small and new parties for example in France and Britain. Second, the European Integration became a subject of political mobilization for RPP notably with new steps of integration. This strategic and policy dimensions are emphasized most by Taggart (1998) explaining the success of RPP. RPP mobilized against the European polity, i.e. the political elites in Brussels, on the one hand, and on the other hand, they mobilized against the loss of national identity and sovereignty. On other domains of integration, e.g. economy, the positions of RPP have been inconsistent and contradictory. But meanwhile most RPP took up the Gaullist paradigm of a Europe of Fatherlands and an interpretation of Europe as a cultural space, as their recent mobilization against the membership of Turkey showed. Third, European Integration has become in many countries a cross-cutting cleavage, often as a result of upcoming eurosceptic parties, not only RPP. In some cases this new cleavage fragmented party systems and weakened established parties and competitors of RPP, like in France or in Denmark in the 1990s.

These are structural and political reasons why European Integration favoured the success of RPP, as they were able to adapt new strategies. A major turning point, which reflected how European Integration affected political competition at the national level was the Maastricht treaty (Pollak/Slominski, 2002: 179). As eurosceptic and anti-migrant attitudes of RPP favoured their success, the dynamics of political processes when European Integration was accompanied by matters of identity are of central interest.

European Integration of identity politics

The main integration steps towards a common policy in the field of identity politics were made in 1993 with the Maastricht treaty and the introduction of the common market: the establishment of
the third pillar, the development of a common visa- and asylum policy forced by the Schengen treaties with the beginning of the 1990s, and the introduction of European Citizenship.

Both fields of integration had a deep, but diverse impact on national legislation: The integration of asylum- and visapolicies led in most member countries to a much more utilitarian and restrictive immigration policy on national level (Kofman, 2005). The harmonisation of immigration policies led primarily to an anti-immigration policy and a further distinction of immigrants with different, hierarchical legal status: EU-citizens, third-country nationals, non-European non-residents, refugees, asylum seekers and illegals (Withol de Wenden 1999: 96). On the other hand the introduction of European citizenship could be seen as an attempt to force steps towards the equalization of non-citizens in the social, economic and political sphere. It marked a turn from national to residence-oriented citizenship, as for the first time political rights were conceded to non-citizens, though only Union citizens. At the same time it manifested a distinction between citizens, EU-citizens and third country nationals (Withol de Wenden 1999: 94). Perchinig concludes that “Union citizenship remained tied to the nation-state framework, which it otherwise intended to transcend” (Perchinig, 2005: 3). It introduced a fragmented citizenship in view to the accession of rights and the origin country of citizenship (Perchinig, 2005: 3f). Particularly political rights were restricted to the local and the European level and not enlarged to the more important national level.

Since then, both fields developed with very different dynamics. Has the enlargement of political rights come to a halt since Maastricht, the field of immigration, particularly the control and avoidance, has become a major concern on the European level. Meanwhile the control of immigration, the combat of illegal immigration and asylum policies are the best integrated policy fields. Shortcomings can be ascertained in the fields of the cooperation with countries of origin, the control of legal migration and the fair treatment of resident third-country nationals, which were agreed upon in Tampere (Bendel, 2005). Vice versa the discourse about further inclusion was thwarted by a discourse of exclusion.12

Furthermore we can observe different implementation strategies on national level towards both fields: Restrictive measures concerning immigration have been forced by national governments and have been implemented almost fast. But the implementation of a more generous access to equal rights for non-citizens was in some cases very sluggish. Recently the directive on racial discrimination (2000/43/EC) showed how reluctant the member states execute measurements considering equalization. As well the equalization of European citizens in the economic and social sphere has turned out to be a very tenacious process.

But the question of citizenship is essential for a European Union striving for being a democratic, political community. Due to the lack of a European identity this seems only attainable by legal

12 A prominent example is the directive on family reunification (2003/86/EC), which ended up as a much restrictive measurement, as it was intended by the Commission.
status - citizenship. Furthermore citizenship is for the identity of a political community and for the
democratic quality of major concern. Citizenship defines who belongs to the community and under
which circumstances it might be accessed. The major quality of citizenship are political rights,
particularly those which allow participation.\textsuperscript{13} Therefore it determines the quality of democracy,
which is based on the assumption of a congruence between those who are ruled and those who
govern. Thus democracies should offer access to participation rights to their residents. Whether
the introduction of European citizenship and the enfranchisement of European citizens changed
the approach towards citizenship on national level is therefore of major concern.

The introduction of European Citizenship in France and Austria

The introduction of the European citizenship and the local right to vote brought out very distinct
regulations of the electoral laws, due to the territorial structures and political relevance of the local
level in the individual member states. The paragraph in the Maastricht Treaty about the right to
vote was still formulated in general terms. In 1994 a directive with more precise formulations and
exceptions was issued.\textsuperscript{14} It clarified on which level the enfranchisement should be applied. But the
directive concerned exceptions as well, which paid regard to national peculiarities and interests
(Waltrauch, 2003: 57). The implementation process took in the single member states very different
time spans and the implemented laws were far away from a uniform local right to vote for EU-
citizens. They differed considerably concerning the score and the relevance of elections and the
individual access and conditions (Waltrauch, 2003). Therefore not only the introduction of the
Maastricht treaty respectively the entry to the European Union and the political discussion around it
will be considered, but the implementation of the right to vote as well.

Two countries are taken into consideration in the following analysis: Austria and France. Both
countries had to introduce the right to vote for EU-citizens under very different conditions, as their
legal preconditions concerning franchise and citizenship and their relationship towards the EC/EU.
But both countries faced the upcoming of a RPP, the Front National (FN) and the Freiheitliche
Partei Österreichs (FPÖ) in the 1980s, which became even more successful in the 1990s and
exercised considerable pressure on established parties.

France, a founding member and one of the core countries of European Integration, had to
introduce European citizenship, and therefore the right to vote on local level for EU-citizens living in
France, with the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. France is known as a country with a\textsuperscript{13} Citizenship can be considered as a bundle of rights and obligations with respect to a given state. Types of citizenship can be
distinguished referring to the access to citizenship. Two ideal types are distinguished: First when citizenship is reserved to primordial
groups as ius sanguinis, which defines the nation as ethnic-cultural community. Second, when citizenship offers access to those who
are born in the country, the ius soli, which is based on a political understanding of the nation. The rights, which are reserved to citizens,
show in reality a vast variation. This may concern civic, economic, social and political rights. Whereas the access to the first three
domains, depend frequently on other prerequisites, the main domain, which is still strictly reserved to citizens, are political rights,
particularly the right to vote.

\textsuperscript{14} Council Directive 94/80/EC of 19 December 1994 laying down detailed arrangements for the exercise of the right to vote and to stand
as a candidate in municipal elections by citizens of the Union residing in a Member State of which they are not nationals.
long tradition of a more liberal immigration and migrant policy. The access to rights for non-citizens was comparatively simple. But still, political rights, such as the right to vote, were rigidly restricted to citizens. But citizenship was easy to access in comparison to other EU countries. The French concept of citizenship is almost characterized as a political, universalist concept, which denies ethnic-cultural differences and is based on a concept of assimilation through socialization whereas citizenship is seen one step to assimilation (Bizeul 2004).

At the same time it is the country of one of the most and long-lasting successful RPP the Front National of Jean-Marie Le Pen. The Front National was at the beginning of the 1990s the only new political party, which had considerable and lasting electoral success, despite being expelled from parliamentary representation since 1988 due to the electoral system. It produced a double pressure on established parties: On the electoral level it developed a blackmail potential. On the level of party competition the FN forced a new issue, that of immigration and migrant policy. The party gained electoral support with an interpretation of national identity, which was contradictory to the official republican view. The Front National demanded the suppression of further naturalisation and a reform of the Code de la nationalité due to the principle of ius sanguinis. Repeated demands of the Front National have been: to accept naturalisation only exceptionally in the case of a further cultural assimilation, to submit naturalisation a political decision of local councils, a time of probation without political rights, to withdraw citizenship under certain circumstances, the refusal of double citizenship and the abolition of naturalization by marriage.15

But the Front National did not deny the existence of different culture. On the contrary it propagated the right on difference, known from the Nouvelle Droite, and it brought into the political discussion about citizenship a cultural dimension. Likewise the Front National differentiated between groups of migrants, Europeans, which are easier or can easier assimilate and those who can’t or are not willing for, Non-Europeans.16 In the 1990s European citizens were considered as almost equal to French citizens and not subject to the restrictive-exclusive demands of the FN.17 But the FN strictly denied to offer migrants, non-citizens, political rights. But positions of the party towards Europe have been quite ambivalent. On the one hand the FN interpreted Europe as a cultural space they advocated. On the other hand they strictly refused a further political integration on the basis of the transfer of power from the national to the European level and went in opposition to the Maastricht treaty.18

Therefore the established and (potentially) governing parties, which traditionally supported European Integration were under double pressure: On the one hand the ascending Front National, 

15 See the manifestos of the Front National "Pour la France, Programme du Front National"(1985: 117) or "300 mesures pour la renaissance de la France, Front National programme de gouvernement"(1993: 39ff).
18 Later on the Front National refused even explicitly EU-citizenship, the equalization of EU-citizens and their access to political rights in its electoral manifest. Front National "Programme du Front National (FN) Pour les élections législatives de 2002" (2002).
exploiting the negotiations about the Maastricht treaty to mobilize with nationalist and anti-establishment sentiments, and the obligation to put through the further step of integration on national level they had forced on European level.

A very different situation faced Austria, which had to introduce the local right to vote for EU-citizens when they joined the European Union 1995. In 1994 and 1995 on national level the necessary legal adaptations for their entry have been made. Consequently the discussion about the entry focussed on more general questions as the neutrality, economic liberalisation and interest politics as welfare, agriculture or transport. But even though national identity and the introduction of the enfranchisement for EU-citizens played a role and the Maastricht debate showed a development of actor positions in the field of identity politics.

Austria is known as a country with a comparatively restrictive immigration and migrant policy (Çinar/Hofinger/Waldrauch, 1995). Austria has a typical guest worker regime, which assumes that immigrants are only short-term residents, and political elites denied for a long time seeing Austria as a country of immigration. In 1992 they introduced what now is discussed on European level a quota system for immigrants, which sets annual quotas for particular groups of immigrants and confirmed the traditional guest worker regime. The discrimination against non-nationals concerning resident, economic, social and political rights is comparatively strong and the only possibility to get equal access than Austrians is naturalisation (Bauböck, 1999a). These legal discriminations weigh still heavier, as the access to citizenship is also very restrictive. Citizenship is defined in ethnic-cultural terms and ius sanguinis is the dominant principle. Until 1998 no considerable changes had been made.¹⁹ The access to citizenship requires cultural assimilation to those who wants to acquire it. Naturalization, becoming a citizen independent of birth, is still interpreted as an exception. Therefore manifold rights were reserved to citizens as well as the right to vote (see Valchars, 2006: 10-17; Davy/Çinar, 2001). Even though Austria followed already a restrictive and utilitarian immigration policy and an exclusionary migrant and citizenship policy, the issue of immigration was since the 1990s at the top of the political agenda.

At the same time and almost parallel to the Front National the FPÖ under Haider started its electoral ascent.²⁰ The positions of the FPÖ in the field of migration are very similar to those of the Front National. They rejected the long-term residence of immigrants as they rejected to see Austria as a country of immigration (“Einwanderungsland”). They denied any further access to rights for immigrants concerning residence, social, economic or political rights. The FPÖ defended the exclusive ethnic-cultural character of citizenship and denied the introduction of ius solis in the naturalisation law, or any facilitation of the access to citizenship as well as the enfranchisement of

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¹⁹ The only considerable reform concerned the equalization of women in 1983.
²⁰ In 1986 Haider took over the leadership of the party and transformed it into a RPP. Throughout the 1990s they had great electoral success (from 1994 on more than 20% of the votes) until they went in a governing coalition in 2000, which marked a turning point and the decline of the FPÖ started.
non-citizens. Instead of that the FPÖ complained about the “sell out” of citizenship rights. Toward the European Integration the position of the FPÖ at the mid 1990s was less clear. Traditionally, the FPÖ was the Austrian party, which always favoured the European Integration. And still in 1989 they supported the negotiations about the entry of Austria on parliamentarian level. Until the beginning of the 1990s they changed toward a eurosceptical course. A change due to strategic considerations, as it served the FPÖ to profile as oppositional force and the defender of national interests. But the changes also affected the overarching discourse on European Integration and political competition in Austria (Schaller 1996: 20f).

At the beginning of 1994 the pressure on the governing parties was not as high as in France. The socialdemocrats (SPÖ) and conservatives (ÖVP) had a broad parliamentarian majority and were self-confident with regard to the European Integration of Austria. But during the year the conditions changed significantly and they got under pressure with regard to the electoral success of the FPÖ, the legitimisation of their European politics.

**French republican values challenged by European citizenship**

As already mentioned had France to introduce the local right to vote for EU-citizens with the ratification of the Maastricht treaty in 1992. The treaty was heavily discussed particularly because of the transfer of sovereignty it required, but another major point of discussion was the enfranchisement. That the necessary legal adaptations would be difficult was foreseeable, because the governing socialist held neither in the national assembly (Assemblée Nationale) nor in the senat (Sénat) an absolute majority.

In March 1992 the socialist president Mitterand requested a ruling of the constitutional council (Conseil Constitutionnel) to clarify whether a constitutional amendment would be necessary. In its decision the constitutional council declared parts of the Maastricht treaty as unconstitutional, so the transfer of sovereignty in the field of currency policy, immigration policy and the local right to vote of non-citizens. The right to vote was seen as a contradiction of Art.3, about the national sovereignty, and Art.24, about the elections of the senat, of the French constitution. The principle that only French citizens have the right to vote and to participate on national legislation was violated. According to Oliver (1994: 14) Mitterand called the constitutional council to get a decision about the right to vote for non-citizens. Since 1981 the Parti Socialiste (PS) pledged for a local right to vote for non-citizens. But during the 1980s the Socialists became aware that this was

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21 See the electoral programmes of the FPÖ ‘Österreich-Erklärung. Dr. Jörg Haider’ (1994) and ‘20 Punkte für den ‘Vertrag mit Österreich’.
24 The constitutional council argued that the senat is a product of local elections and participation in local elections might cause participation to national legislation, which is reserved to citizens.
not only unpopular, but that it would need a constitutional amendment, which sets the legislative hurdle much higher.

The decision of the constitutional council nourished the controversial discussion about the Maastricht Treaty and as well on the legislative procedure, which should be applied to pass the amendment. The president had the choice to submit the constitutional amendment a referendum or to submit it to the senat and the assembly, which would have to accept with a three-fifth majority in a congress reunion. Mitterand decided to submit it to the Congress. A decision, which was criticized by the right-wing parties and the opponents of the Maastricht treaty. They called for a referendum, knowing that a referendum about the Maastricht Treaty would be a referendum about Mitterand and his presidency. Concerning the parliamentary majorities Mitterand’s decision was surprising. The governing Socialists had only a minority in the assembly and the senat was traditionally dominated by the political right. Therefore the acceptance of the treaty was only possible in a kind of grand coalition between socialists and the right parties, RPR and UDF. Additionally the socialists were in a weak position as they had lost regional elections in March.

After the congress had passed the constitutional amendment president Mitterand called additionally for a referendum, which was held in September. Probably Mitterand speculated that a referendum would deepen the splits in the political right and advantage his own party in the upcoming national elections of 1993. Therefore the debate on the Maastricht Treaty continued more than half a year and dominated the political discussion throughout 1992 in France.

During the long debate about the treaty, two major aspects, the transfer of power and sovereignty and the European citizenship, were controversial. Both were disputed not only along, but within the parties. Only the Parti Communiste Français (PCF) and the Front National had a clear standpoint. Both denied the treaty even though for different reasons. The communists, the traditional coalition partners of the socialists, opposed the treaty for economic reasons, but they were in favour of a general right to vote for non-citizens. The Front National refused the Maastricht treaty because of the loss of sovereignty and the enfranchisement of non-citizens as a devaluation of citizenship.

The other major and decisive parties the socialist PS, the neo-gaullist Rassemblement pour la République (RPR) and the center-liberal party federation Union pour la Démocratie Française (UDF) were at that time in general pro-european oriented, but during the debate about Maastricht all of them proved to be divided in the question of European Integration. The issue of enfranchisement had become particularly a point of discussion for the political right.

The governing PS was in favour of the Maastricht Treaty at last the further integration was a project initiated by Mitterand in the 1980s. The PS had been as well since the 1980s in favour for a local right to vote for non-citizens, in the 1980s president Mitterand and the socialist party were the

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25 Sarkozy declared that the RPR is in favour of a referendum particularly because of the European citizenship and the right to vote, which affects French institutions. Séguin demanded as well a referendum for more general reasons. See Le Monde 14 avril 1992.
26 See also Denni (1993: 92).
only ones, who claimed it. Though they never made serious attempts to enlarge enfranchisement during their governance. One reason was the internal party splits, indeed there was no real consent in the socialist party towards denizenship. Nevertheless the enfranchisement of EU-citizens would have been a good advantage to realise the project of Mitterand. In the debate about the Maastricht treaty controversies about republican values and sovereignty broke out in the PS and a group around Chevènement, the later founder of the republican MDC, refused to follow Mitterands political course.

The right-wing parties, UDF and RPR, refused both a general right to vote for non-citizens, but parts of it, particularly of the UDF, welcomed the Maastricht treaty as well as the European citizenship. Both parties were deeply divided with regard to the Maastricht treaty and the transfer of national power to the European level and with regard to the enfranchisement. In the assembly, the CDS, one part of the UDF, formed an own fraction and supported from time to time the socialist government. The other parts of UDF kept their role as opposition. In the question of the ratification of the Maastricht treaty, the position of the overwhelming part of the UDF was consent. But in the question of the right to vote there was some dissent in the party. Clearly divided was the RPR of Chirac. One part, the sovereignists, around Séguin and Pasqua, were against Maastricht treaty in general, as they were against the transfer of national sovereignty to European level. The introduction of the right to vote even for EU-citizens was not welcome in major parts of the RPR and parts of the UDF, which favoured an intergovernmentalism and were afraid this could cause an open the door to other non-citizens.

None of the three big parties reached an internal consensus with regard to the Maastricht treaty in their parliamentarian groups and the European citizenship played an important role in the argumentation of the opponents. More than a dozen of parliamentarians of the RPR, two deputies of the UDF (de Villiers and Griotteray) and some of the PS around Chevènement voted against the amendment law.27 In the end, the draft of the government was supplemented in three major points (Oliver, 1994:17f): First, it was fixed that the language of the republic is French. Second, rights of parliamentarians in view of international treaties were strengthened. Sixty deputies of the assembly or the senat could now call for a constitutional examination of treaties. The third modification concerned oversea territories.

Article 88-3 of the law28 passed by the congress concerned the enfranchisement of EU-citizens. Reserved to reciprocity, EU-citizens living in France obtained a restricted right to vote in local elections. Supplements, made by right-wing senators, fixed, that the law carrying out the regulations on the right to vote had to be an organic law, which had to be passed in the same terms. The supplements secured, that the senat could not be passed over in the legislative process.

27 The law was adopted in the first lecture of the assembly with 398 votes, 99 abstentions and 77 voted against it. Le Monde 14 mai 1992.
and that no further expansion of the local right to vote could be introduced. The government criticized the senat as arrogant, but had no other choice without risking the consent to the Maastricht treaty. In the end a restricted form of enfranchisement was finally passed. It was strictly reserved for EU-citizens, the active and the passive right to vote was granted, but the right to be elected as (vice-) mayor was still reserved to French citizens as well as the right to nominate the electoral body for the senat. In so far the law did not fulfil the odds of the Maastricht treaty, which explicitly stated that EU-Citizens should be equalized with the member state citizens. Instead of that it took up the exceptional clause (Art. 8-B,1 TEU) foreseen in the treaty and later on fixed in the directive of 1994.

But the debate about the Maastricht treaty was not yet closed with the parliamentarian decision. Surprisingly, the president initiated a referendum on it, though this was not necessary.\(^29\) The right-wing opponents, Pasqua and some right-wing senators, called at the mid of August again the constitutional council to prove the amendment. One major point of their complaint was again the right to vote for non-citizens.\(^30\) They argued that further changes in the constitution concerning franchise would have been necessary, well aware that their arguments would fail. As could be foreseen, the complaint was refused by the constitutional council. The complaint served strategic considerations in view of the upcoming referendum and elections for the sovereignist right, which exploited the debate around the franchise to make their nationalist positions clear.

During the referendum campaign, the political elites were deeply divided. Though the RPR and their president formally agreed on the amendment the party was split in this question. Pasqua and Séguin initiated a “Rassemblement pour le non au référendum”. With less support out of their own rows Jean-Pierre Chevènement (PS) and Philippe de Villiers (UDF) opposed the official party line and campaigned against Maastricht. Later on some of the opponents split definitely from their parties and formed their own political movements. Already in 1993 Chevènement split from the PS and founded the Mouvement des Citoyens (MDC) and in 1994 de Villiers left the UDF and initiated the Mouvement pour la France (MPF). Pasqua and Séguin formed the first current in the RPR and joined for the European elections eurosceptic lists.

Though the major conflict was the question of national sovereignty the issue of European citizenship and enfranchisement broke up the republican consensus towards citizenship. The introduction of European citizenship broke with the republican tradition and introduced an ethnic dimension in the French citizens rights and the access to rights for non-citizens. Obviously at the time European citizenship was implemented there existed no consensus but a vast majority of the established parties accepted this distinction despite former demands. Ironically the Socialists, that always favoured a general enfranchisement of non-citizens on the local level, accepted now a restricted enlargement and culturally distinct franchise. Those who tried to hold up republican

\(^{29}\) Décret du 1\textsuperscript{er} juillet 1992 décidant de soumettre un projet de loi au référendum.

values were parts of the political right, but the argument was reversed. They denied the right to vote for Europeans because they were afraid of a devaluation of citizenship in general and feared that this would open the door to an enlargement of the right to vote toward other non-citizens. Both, supporters and opponents of the European citizenship backed in a way the arguments of the Front National. Those in favour of the enfranchisement of EU-citizens opened the discussion to ethnic-cultural arguments and those against it paved the way for a more restrictive interpretation of citizenship and access to citizen rights. Both served culturalist interpretations of identity politics the Front National agitated.

The right-wing parties demonstrated again their reluctance towards the enfranchisement. It took long until the necessary organic law was passed. The right-wing government postponed the implementation, so that finally the new left-wing coalition of Jospin passed the organic law in 1998.31

The Europeanization, which came along with the Maastricht had strong impact on party competition. It led to internal divisions and splits along the established parties and it was a turning point for policies and issue competition concerning national identity. Also the society was divided on the European Integration, shaped by conflicts of interest as well as by the fundamental question of national sovereignty and identity (Denni, 1993). One indication, that the question of identity had much mobilizing power are the results of the elections of 1993: the gains of the Front National and the loss of the PCF, both strict opponents of the Maastricht treaty for different reasons and that the Front National attracted over proportional those who voted against the treaty in the referendum (Denni, 1993: 107).

The consensus about the universalist approach to citizenship and naturalisation started to broke up in the mid of the 1980s. Though the reform of the right-wing government failed, it had marked a turning point and the right-wing parties took up ideas of the Front National regarding citizenship.32 The next right-wing government in 1993 introduced a more restrictive naturalisation law, though this was not as restrictive as the first draft of 1986, it cut the ius soli and raised the conditions for naturalization. Since than also the culturalist interpretation of immigration and migrant policy, which was in previous times the domain of the Front National and other far right movements has been legitimised and partially adopted by established parties33 and a consensus between the big parties, PS, RPR and UDF, towards a restrictive immigration policy established. Particularly governing parties made attempts to strengthen the distinctions between (EU-)citizens and non-citizens strengthened exclusionary, cultural principles for the access to rights.34 Recent example is the

33 UDF and RPR strengthened in their common manifesto in 1993 (“Le projet de l’Union pour la France”, 1993: 16) their demand, that particular social benefits should be reserved to French citizens.
34 Already the socialist government in 1990 made an attempt to restrict particular social benefits to French citizens, but this was rejected by the constitutional court (Décision No 89-269 DC du 22 janvier 1990. Loi portant diverses dispositions relatives à la sécurité et à la
introduction of the integration contract (contrat d’accueil et d’intégration, CAI) in 2006, which obliges immigrants to prove their linguistic and cultural assimilation.

The debate on Maastricht showed that the political right faced not only an ideological dilemma, but a strategic dilemma with regard to the Maastricht treaty and the rise of the Front National. On the one hand a turn against European Integration at all would not have been credible, neither accepted throughout the parties, nor reasonable. This would have been an opportunity for the PS to profile as the European force. On the other hand they were aware of their new competitor the Front National, which claimed to be the real defender of national interests and identity. Therefore the turn towards other issues concerning national identity as migration and migrant policies and the strengthening of restrictive, exclusionary positions seemed to be the most appropriate solution.

Austrian exclusiveness at a stake?

In Austria, the introduction of the right to vote came along with the joining of the European Union in 1995. Therefore the negotiations and political debate about the Maastricht Treaty and the European Citizenship took place in a wider debate about the membership of Austria. The national negotiations about the entry took place in 1994 in a highly politicised atmosphere due to the referendum about the entry, the political mobilisation of EU-scepticism and the upcoming general elections. The first step to ratify the entry of Austria was done by passing a law, which enabled the government to sign the treaty with the Union. Already at this stage it turned out, that the political reluctance toward the membership had grown. The majority of the FPÖ and the Greens rejected the law. But the governmental parties, the Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs (SPÖ) and the Österreichische Volkspartei (ÖVP), were at that time still in the comfortable situation of the necessary two third majority in both houses.\(^{35}\) Both governing parties had already in the elections 1990 opted for a referendum about the entry. Though they faced a considerable political mobilization, they were not able to draw back and submitted the law to a referendum in June 1994. In the end, two thirds of the Austrian voters supported the entry, which was an unexpected majority. In the following general elections in October 1994 the governing parties lost their two third majority and showed their poorest results until than. On the opposite the FPÖ, which was with their anti-Maastricht campaign defeated in the referendum, had again considerable gains and their best results, 22 percent, since ever. The Greens, the second party, which had mobilized against the membership, had gained little electoral support as well. The defeat of the governing parties, despite of the broad acceptance of their European politics, is explained by their competition against each other (Schaller, 1996: 26). Without a constitutional majority, the governing grand coalition of SPÖ and ÖVP needed further support for the necessary constitutional amendments. But the

\(^{35}\) Beside the SPÖ and ÖVP the deputies, split up of the FPÖ because of the dissent in the European question, which formed now the LiF supported the law too.
Greens had modified their position due to the broad public consent shown in the referendum and were now willing to support the further implementation. The final amendment was passed in November 1994 against the votes of the FPÖ deputies in both houses. The introduction of the local right to vote was part of this constitutional amendment but the execution laws lied in the competence of the Länder.

Clearly the long debate about the entry of Austria to the European Union was dominated by other, more relevant, issues as economic concerns and particularly the question of neutrality. The conflict between the parties focussed on the recent step of integration the Maastricht treaty as the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Nevertheless, identity played a key role in the campaigns of the proponents and opponents and had an impact on the political debate and competition considering identity politics in Austria. The governing parties, which faced an unexpected strong anti-EU movement during the referendum campaign, used slogans appealing to the Austrian identity. The main message of both, SPÖ and ÖVP, was to enter the Union for utilitarian reasons, but to preserve Austrian identity (Schaller 1996: 23f).

The introduction of European citizenship was not requested by the governing parties, though non of them claimed for the enlargement of political rights of non-citizens. Since 1990 immigration and migrant policy had become a major political topic embedded in a xenophobic discourse, which was initiated by the Social-democrats and kept alive by the FPÖ in the ongoing years (Zuser, 1996). Between the governing parties SPÖ and ÖVP a very restrictive immigration policy was consent and they clinged to the exclusive migrant laws, which restricted the access to economic, social and political rights on behalf of citizenship. But both governing parties forced the entry of Austria to the European Union and in his governmental declaration in 1990 the chancellor already favoured the development of a political union. Both governing parties stressed economic and security advantages for Austria with regard to the entry whereas they avoided issues as the European citizenship, which meant the opening of national domains as the labour market, social security and citizenship.

The FPÖ had an ambivalent position on the European Integration of Austria. Traditionally a pro-European party they turned at the beginning of the 1990s towards a sceptical position. In 1990 the FPÖ still argued that Europe has to be a level of problem solving, particularly in the field of immigration policy. But during 1994 they have gone in strict opposition towards the European Union of the Maastricht treaty. Their position towards the European citizenship and the enfranchisement of non-citizens was clear: they rejected any right to vote for non-citizens and the critique of the enfranchisement of European citizens was a major point of their referendum

37 Only five Bundesräte of the ÖVP voted with the FPÖ against it, because the promised federal reform, which was agreed part of the treaty negotiations, had failed.
campaign against the accession. The other EU-sceptic party, the Greens (Die Grüne Alternative/Die Grünen), were against a Maastricht European Union because of environmental and socio-economic concerns. But in opposition to all other Austrian parties they pledged for an inclusive migrant policy: the equalization of immigrants on economic and social concerns – at least of EU-citizens –, a secure resident status, a liberal asylum- and citizenship policy as well as the concession of political rights in the working sphere and on local level. The green party was the only party, which already in 1990 had presented a concept of denizenship.  

Due to the minority position of the Greens in the question of enfranchisement a further enlargement had no chance. Though they had a strong position in the negotiation, as the governing parties needed their consent to get the necessary majority, they didn’t make use of it for this purpose. The governing parties already under pressure because of the rise of the FPÖ had no interest to nourish their xenophobic attitudes and blocked any further liberalisation of the right to vote.

In Austria, as in France, the franchise was strictly reserved to Austrian citizens and fixed in the constitution. Therefore the constitution and Art.117 about the local elections had to be changed. With the amendment to the constitution of 1994 the active and passive right to vote of European citizens with regard to European and local elections was fixed in the constitution. Due to the federal structure of Austria the further execution of the general law was delegated to the Länder, a procedure, which enabled the government parties to avoid further discussions about it.

The single Länder introduced electoral laws with very different conditions to access the right to vote. In Vienna, which is at the same time a federal state, the local right to vote admitted to the subordinate level. The Austrian government paid attention, so that the 1994 directive did not apply the right to vote for EU-citizens to the Bundesland Wien, which was at the same time community and federal state. Therefore in Vienna only the access to the local Bezirkswahlen and not to the elections of the Wiener Gemeinderat, which is the equivalent to the Landtage in other federal states, was conceded. In five Länder a certificate of the country of origin about the possession of the right to vote is necessary to candidate in elections, in Steiermark this certificate is demanded already for the active right to vote. Only Wien, Nieder- and Oberösterreich do not ask for it. In six Länder different to Austrians EU-citizens have to register in electoral lists. On behalf of the legislation of the Länder EU-citizens are in some countries further entitled to participate in other local procedures (election, referendum). But as in France, passive voting is restricted. Foreign citizens are not entitled to executive functions (Bürgermeister).  


40 This concerned the elections of the Nationalrat, of the Bundespräsident, the Landtage and the Gemeinderäte (local elections) as well as referendum initiatives and referenda. See Art.26, Art.95, Art.117, Art.41 Art.46, and Art.49b of the Austrian constitution.


42 See Art.23 a and Art.117 of the Austrian constitution.

43 For the different modes of accession in the Austrian Länder see Waldrauch (2003: 60f).
Further attempts of the Green party or the LiF during the 1990s and the reform of the law about immigration- and residence (Fremdengesetznovelle) 1997 to enlarge the local franchise on third country nationals failed, because of the resistance of the governing parties SPÖ and ÖVP.\(^{44}\) But the position of the Socialdemocrats changed since 2002 and as opposition party they favoured now the enlargement of the local right to vote on, long term resident, third country nationals.\(^{45}\) Whether this approximation to the green positions was more or less tactical, to pave the way for a red-green coalition, remains questionable. The attempt of the governing Socialdemocrats in Vienna, where other non-citizens were entitled to vote in local elections (Bezirksrat) in 2002, which was criticized by the national government of ÖVP and FPÖ, failed in the end. The ÖVP called the constitutional court, because they assumed it to be unconstitutional as the right to vote is restricted to Austrians. In 2004 the constitutional court indeed confirmed the unconstitutionality. Therefore a constitutional majority to change the exclusion of non-citizens from political rights is not in sight. But this case, as well as the strategy of the ÖVP during the referendum campaign and their programmatic renewal in this question in the aftermath showed how far the ÖVP approximated to the position of the FPÖ and took up their culturalist interpretation of citizenry.

Briefly, the introduction of the right to vote was executed as restrictive as possible. That way and against the background of the discussion about the identity, initialised by the FPÖ around the accession, the ethnic-cultural interpretation of citizenship never was at a stake. On the contrary the governing parties were keen to show that their first priority and identity is Austrian. Furthermore they have shown with their policies on citizenship that they cling to the ethnic-culturalist interpretation.\(^{46}\) Whether the slight changes of the SPÖ will end up in a remarkable innovation remains unlikely as long as they are reliant on the ÖVP.

Conclusions: Europeanization and identity politics a favourable condition for right-wing populism

Three major conclusions can be drawn from the lessons of the Maastricht debates and the introduction of European citizenship: First, there was a strong impact on political competition and nourished the debate about national identity. Second, RPP, like the FN and the FPÖ, adapted their strategies very quickly and efficiently, according to their electoral results in the aftermath. They were able to profile and to benefit from this integration process due to their self-ascribed role as defenders of national interests and identity. Due to their electoral and agenda setting success they forced established, particularly pro-European and governing parties to adapt their strategies concerning identity politics. Third, the introduction of European citizenship did by no means break

\(^{44}\) During the negotiations of a new immigration law in June 1997 LiF and Greens asked the government to give its opinion to the enlargement of the passive right to vote. But the government hold on the position, that this can only be derived for EU- or EWR-Citizens.

\(^{45}\) The first time the SPÖ demanded the enlargement of enfranchisement on non-citizens was in their electoral manifest „Faire Chancen für aller 26 Projekte für die Zukunft Österreichs“, 2002: 17.

\(^{46}\) The 1998 reform of the naturalization law brought some facilitations for the naturalization, but did not change the core principles of citizenship and its access.
up the restrictive access to rights or bring in a universalist interpretation of citizenship, but favoured the spread of ethnic-culturalist approaches to migrant and citizenship policy.

Though the impacts of the Maastricht treaty on the party systems were quite different - in France it provoked deep divisions throughout all major parties, not so in Austria - the party competition was obviously strongly affected. It is striking that in both countries in the aftermath of Maastricht RPP made considerable gains in elections, though their European policy positions were contradictory and ambivalent. Obviously this and the further steps of integration gave them an opportunity to mobilize. The only plausible explanation is on the one hand their clear profile considering identity politics, which enabled them to canalise upcoming resentments on further integration and on the other hand the blaming of governmental parties which had to take responsibility. They are the parties, which adapted their strategies in the sense of Europeanization. And furthermore in a long-term perspective the introduction of European citizenship and the halt of further attempts toward a resident citizenship legitimised the ethnic-culturalist approach of RPP towards identity and citizenship. Even more as other parties adapted or strengthened this view.

Compared with other European member states France and Austria have still very tight restrictions on the right to vote. Meanwhile other countries enlarged the local right to vote on non-citizens in general, for example Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Ireland, the Netherlands and so did most of the new eastern European countries. The national government of Austria made no further attempts in this direction. The only attempts were made in two federal states Vienna and Graz, which failed due to constitutional hurdles and the refusal of the conservative ÖVP and the FPÖ. On national level only in France an attempt to enlarge franchise was made. The governing parties PCF and Greens made in 1998 a proposal, which was supported by their coalition partner the socialists, but failed. In both countries the hurdles are high due to the necessity of constitutional changes to enlarge the right to vote. But as was shown there is hardly any majority as the major right-wing parties and not only RPP are strictly against it. On the contrary, there are several examples that there are clear majorities for a restrictive and exclusionary interpretation of immigrant rights and citizenship. Recent citizenship reforms in Austria in 2005 introduced further restrictions and requirements, particularly with regard to the assimilation, to access citizenship. Both countries have strengthened the culturalist argumentations. They introduced a kind of integration contract, which obliges immigrants to prove their assimilation. Restrictions concerning the access to residence, economic and social rights for third country nationals were introduced. In France these attempts sometimes failed because of constitutional restrictions particularly in the economic and social sphere. In Austria the EHRC played a major role to set back further restrictions so far human rights were concerned for example in the case of family reunification.

Both countries manifested the distinction of citizens, EU-citizens and third country nationals in view to the access to rights. The introduction of the European citizenship has not led to a more universalist approach in this question, but introduced in France respectively strengthened in
Austria the culturalist approach and introduced it as a constitutional principle in the case of franchise to the constitutions. In both countries the forcible equalization of EU-citizens in view to economic, social and political rights, was accompanied by further restrictions for third country nationals. Even more the political discourse about migrants is coined by culturalist argumentations and not only RPP are the dominant actors, which argue in this way. Particularly right-wing parties, the Austrian ÖVP, the French UDF, RPR (later on UMP), have adopted culturalist interpretations.

The main lesson, which can be drawn from the analysis, is that governing and most prominently right-wing parties adapted and strengthened culturalist and exclusionary attitudes which were originally brought in by right-wing populist parties. This retreat on ethno-nationalist positions can be explained by their dilemma caused by the electoral rise of RPP, their eurosceptic attitudes and the ongoing European Integration. Had established and governing right-wing parties not seriously the choice to opt against the integration, their only possibility to reply to RPP issues, was the defence of national identity in the interior, as immigration, immigrants and citizenship policies. Therefore in both countries positions towards exclusionary identity politics gained a majority. Recent developments on European level (family reunification) and the implementation of European measures (anti-discrimination) on national level indicate that there are hardly political majorities towards inclusionary identity politics. But meanwhile the RPP, which played in the 1990s a key role in the discourse about identity politics and the forced adaptations of established parties, have lost ground and electoral support due to these developments.


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