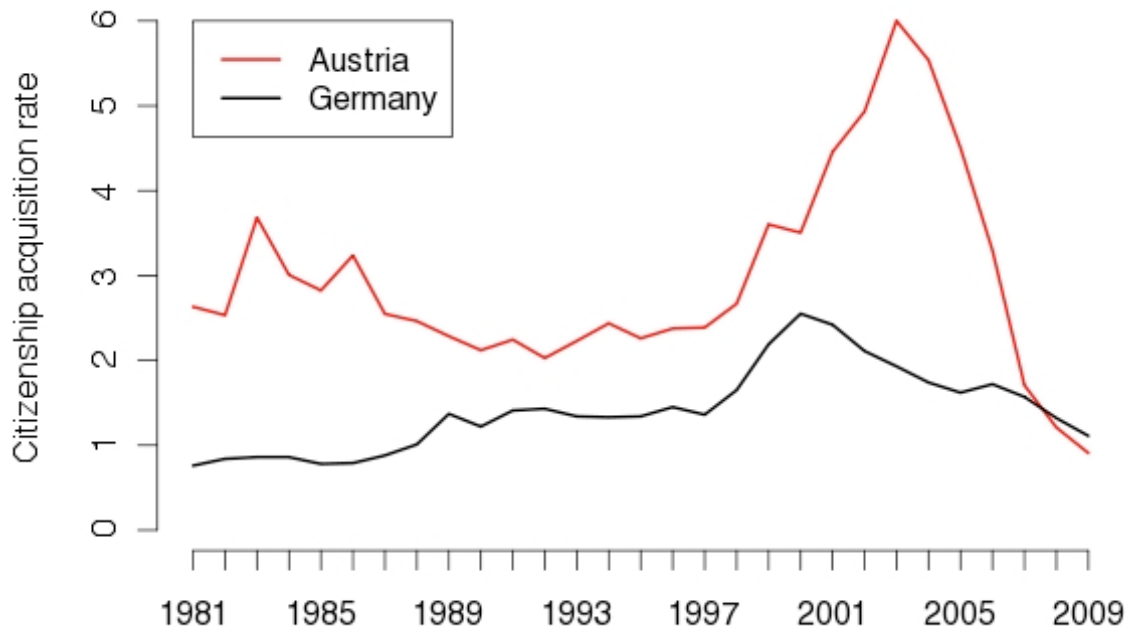


Citizenship begins at home: The Austrian case

I compare citizenship behavior in Austria and Germany in order to test whether the logic of the argument developed in Germany can be generalized. As I will show, there are sufficient similarities between the foreign resident populations in the two countries that we should expect to observe similar behavior. I thus expect foreign residents in Austria, like those in Germany, to favor taking citizenship along with other family members. This preference should help explain variation in citizenship across individuals and, in the aggregate, over time. But Austria and Germany also show some surprising differences. Whereas reforms to citizenship law in Germany were passed by the parties of the Left with the aim of increasing the numbers of new citizens, in Austria far-right politicians pushed through reforms in order to cut the numbers of new citizens. Yet, as we see in Figure one, acquisition rates (i.e. the percentage of foreign residents becoming citizens) have long been higher in Austria than in Germany, only converging in the past few years.

Figure one: Citizenship acquisition rates over time in Austria and Germany



Like the surprising finding that the German reforms of the year 2000 actually cut the numbers of new citizens, the unexpected ranking of Austria above Germany suggests that

the behavior of foreign residents is not simply determined by policies (c.f. Howard 2009; Janoski 2010). It also implies that taking my theory from Germany to Austria provides a hard test of the generality of the argument. If the focus on family-level behavior can explain not just variation across individuals but also why the numbers have been higher in Austria than in Germany, this will be a significant improvement on existing literature. We would then have greater confidence in the general importance of the argument that the family is a critical venue for choices over citizenship.

Introducing the migrant-origin population of Austria

Austria is much smaller than Germany, with a population of around eight million. The country has a similar history of post-war migration. The boom of the 1950s and 1960s prompted the recruitment of ‘guest workers’ from Southern and Eastern Europe, especially the former Yugoslavia and Turkey (Bauböck 1996; Gürses et al 2004; Fassmann et al 2004). The country ceased recruiting in the early 1970s but some of the erstwhile guests stayed in the country, and sponsored family members to join them. The number of foreign residents grew rapidly in the early 1990s when Austria was the destination of many refugees from Eastern Europe. More recently, the country has received asylum seekers from further afield, but the system has been successively reformed to make it easier to reject and deport these people (Perchinig 2006). As we can see in Table one, the result of these migrations is that Austria is now home to around 1.3 million migrant-origin residents, of whom over one third are now Austrian citizens.

Table one: The migrant-origin population of Austria

<u>Country/region of origin</u>	<u>No. of migrant-origin residents</u>	<u>% with Austrian citizenship</u>	<u>Mean years in Austria</u>
Eastern Europe	200,000	38 %	18
Turkey	211,000	49 %	17
Western Europe	212,000	15 %	17
Former Yugoslavia	438,000	32 %	19
Other	215,000	44 %	15
<i>Overall</i>	1,276,000	39 %	17

The data in Table one are taken from the Austrian micro-census.¹ This survey is similar to the German micro-census but smaller; in the second quarter of 2008, the only time that the survey collected all the necessary information on year of citizenship acquisition, the sample of migrant-origin individuals was 4,168 (compared to over 60,000 in the German data). This is adequate for my purposes but makes it difficult to conduct finer-grained analysis, e.g. by country of origin.

Predicting citizenship status

We begin the analysis by using individual-level attributes to differentiate migrant-origin residents with and without Austrian citizenship. If we see systematic differences between the two groups, we may infer that these differences help explain why some have Austrian citizenship but others do not. We cannot truly ‘predict’ citizenship status, because in fact the data only reveals differences that persist *after* some migrant-origin individuals claim citizenship. Nonetheless, the analysis is suggestive, especially because we know that some of these differences, such as gender or educational status, were present before the decision over citizenship was made. Table two shows results from a multivariate statistical model of citizenship status on a range of attributes. Combined with data from interviews, which provide direct evidence on causal pathways, the statistical analysis helps to build the case for or against various explanations of citizenship behavior.

In the model reported in Table two, I treat citizenship status as a binary outcome and fit a logistic regression function by maximum likelihood estimation. Because the coefficients in such models are hard to interpret, I present predicted probabilities for representative values of the variables in question, holding the other variables constant. Where possible I show the difference between individuals at the 10th and 90th percentiles, or the median for binary variables. The comparisons are complicated by the fact that the data includes people born abroad and people born as foreigners in Austria. For people born elsewhere it makes sense to take account of both age and years of residence; for those born in

¹ In Table one I use the weights suggested by the people who conduct the survey. I do not apply these weights in the remainder of the analysis, because using them complicates the estimate of standard errors in statistical models. For the sake of comparability with the statistical models I prefer to rely on the raw data when constructing cross-tabulations and other descriptive statistics. The survey designers also caution against using the weights for relatively small sub-sets of the data, as is necessary for some of my analysis.

Austria the two are identical. For the foreign born, I predict the ‘effect’ of age for people aged 20 vs. 65 who have lived in Austria for the median length of time (i.e. 18 years).

When comparing persons born abroad with those born in Austria, I hold age and length of residence at the median values for people from each category. In the following table, bold type indicates that the coefficient is significant at the 0.01 level.

Table two: Multivariate analysis of differences between citizens and foreigners²

	<u>Predicted probability of Austrian citizenship</u>
<u>Demographics</u>	
Male	0.33
Female	0.40
Unmarried	0.36
Married	0.40
20 years old (foreign born, 18 yrs residence)	0.67
65 years old (foreign born, 18 yrs residence)	0.24
Born abroad (age 40, resident 18 years)	0.4
Born in Austria (age 28)	0.72
10 years residence (foreign born, age 40)	0.14
30 years residence (foreign born, age 40)	0.69
20 years age (Austrian born)	0.71
40 years age (Austrian born)	0.72
<u>Resources</u>	
Dependent on benefits	0.46
Not dependent on benefits	0.40
Owns house	0.48
Doesn't own house	0.40
No educational qualifications	0.28
Secondary education	0.34
Some tertiary or vocational	0.40
University degree	0.46

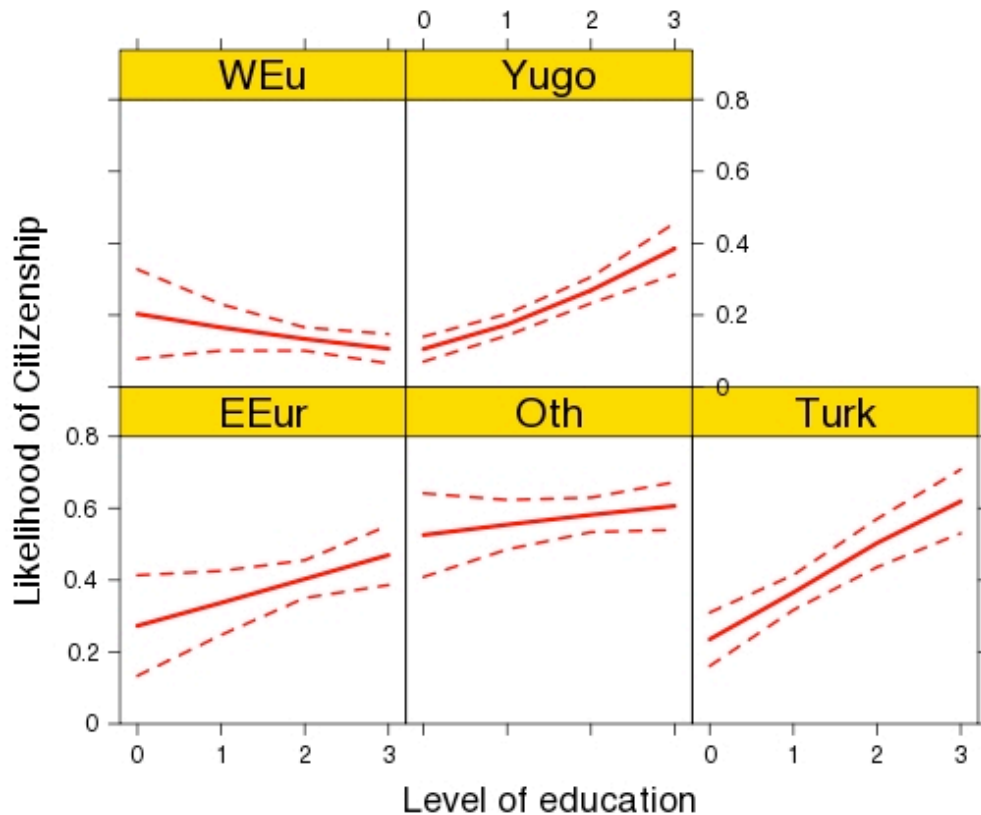
² The analysis reported in this table is based on the individuals for whom relevant information is available. In particular, I exclude people under the age of 16 (who have no educational qualifications but may yet obtain some) and those who moved to Austria before 1950. The reason for the latter restriction is that I expect the characteristics of migrants to Austria before and in the aftermath of World War II to differ substantially from later migrants who now make up the bulk of the migrant-origin population.

We see that many of these variables relate in the expected ways to citizenship status. Spending more time in the country is associated with a greater likelihood of having claimed citizenship. Net of time in the country, older people are less likely to be citizens. We also see that people born in Austria are considerably more likely to hold citizenship; as I demonstrate shortly, this is because many of these people become citizens while children, along with their parents. As in Germany, we see no significant link between citizenship and being employed, even though this is one of the formal requirements for citizenship. The Austrian micro-census contains no questions on income, but we see that people who own homes rather than renting—suggesting wealth, and settled residence—are more likely to hold citizenship.³ We also see that education is positively related to citizenship status. As Figure two (next page) reveals, though, this pattern differs considerably for people with origins in different parts of the world. The plots show the predicted probability of holding citizenship at varying levels of education, for people from the five main migrant-origin groups, holding constant other variables in Table two (the dashed lines in the figure show 95% confidence intervals, which reflect in part the sample size at each education level—wider intervals mean fewer people at each level).

The figure reveals both that claiming citizenship is much more common among migrants from some parts of the world than others, and that the role of education varies across these groups. The clearest aggregate differences are between West Europeans, who rarely claim Austrian citizenship, and those from ‘other’ parts of the world. The latter group includes people from poorer parts of the world, and relatively many who came to the country as refugees. We also see that increasing education makes Turks much more likely to claim citizenship, but West Europeans slightly *less* likely. The fact that roughly 70% of migrant-origin individuals finished their education *before* claiming citizenship means that the causal order is clear; more education makes citizenship easier to obtain and/or more attractive.

³ I measure whether each respondent lives in a property that is owned or rented. Around 70% of native Austrians live in owner-occupied housing, compared to 40% of new citizens and 25% of foreign residents. I also use questions on occupation to construct an index of job status, and again find a strong positive association with citizenship.

Figure two: Association between education and citizenship, by origin group



Note: zero indicates no educational qualifications, 1 indicates high-school, 2 indicates some college or vocational qualifications, and 3 indicates university-level or advanced technical qualifications.

The final question is how good a job these models do of ‘predicting’ citizenship status, based on the other information available about each individual in the data. The baseline derives from the fact that 41% of the people included in these models now hold Austrian citizenship.⁴ It is therefore possible to correctly predict 59% of cases simply by assuming that nobody has claimed Austrian citizenship, making no use of the information on the individuals in the data. Once we use the individual variables described in Table two, plus country of origin groups interacted with education, we can improve on this baseline, up to 75% correctly predicted. This confirms the utility of existing approaches to the choice over citizenship, but leaves plenty of room for improvement. If we take the range of possible improvement as the difference between the baseline of 59% and getting all cases right, we have moved only around one third of the way towards complete accuracy (16

⁴ This number is somewhat higher than the 35% overall citizenship rate reported in Table one, because the current analysis is restricted to people aged 16 or over, since we have more information on these people.

points out of a possible 41 point improvement). If my argument about the value of claiming citizenship alongside other family members is correct, we should be able to do much better using measures of family-level behavior.

Families of citizens

One way to measure the importance of family-level behavior is to include an indicator of cohesion in the same kind of models reported above. This measure is somewhat coarse, because there are many possible combinations of citizens- and non-citizens making up families of varying sizes, and we would gain little by studying each combination separately. For this reason I include an indicator of the number of foreigners living in the household where each survey participant lives.⁵ This requires a further restriction of the data, because it makes no sense to include people who are the only migrant-origin person in the household (I return to this group later).

Including this indicator of family-level cohesion allows a dramatic improvement in the predictive power of the statistical models; the estimated parameter is large and statistically significant. The two tables below show one way of summarizing the fit of these models. There are only two possible outcomes, and we can cross-tabulate to compare the predictions of the model with actual citizenship status. The correct predictions are in the cells shaded in grey, while incorrect predictions are shown in the off-diagonal cells. The final row of the table summarizes the percentage correctly predicted, for the people predicted not to hold Austrian citizenship, for those who are predicted to have changed citizenship, and for the entire table (in bold). The only difference between Model 1 and Model 2 is that the latter includes the measure of the number of foreigners in the household. We see that including this variable allows for much greater accuracy, especially when it comes to the relatively hard task of correctly identifying people who *have* claimed citizenship (non-citizens are more common in this data and in the country as a whole, and easier to identify).

⁵ The number of foreigners in each household ranges between 0 and 8. In order to allow for a non-linear relationship I compared models including a quadratic term, and a model with the natural log of the number of foreigners in the household, producing a scale ranging between 0 and ~3. I report results from the model that provides the best fit to the data, using the log scale.

Table three: Summarizing models with and without the family variableModel 1: **without** cohesion indicator

	Predict 0	Predict 1	
Actual 0	980	303	
Actual 1	147	319	
% correct	87%	51%	74%

Model 2: **with** cohesion indicator

	Predict 0	Predict 1	
Actual 0	1067	69	
Actual 1	60	553	
% correct	95%	89%	93%

As I explained previously, we can also make more subtle use of the information included in the micro-census on every inhabitant of the households in the survey. We can observe whether people who claimed Austrian citizenship did so in the same year as other family members, and if so, whether *everyone* in the household was involved. We can also track this behavior back in time, though the accuracy of the measure is likely to decline as we reach further back, because some people will since have moved away from their families.

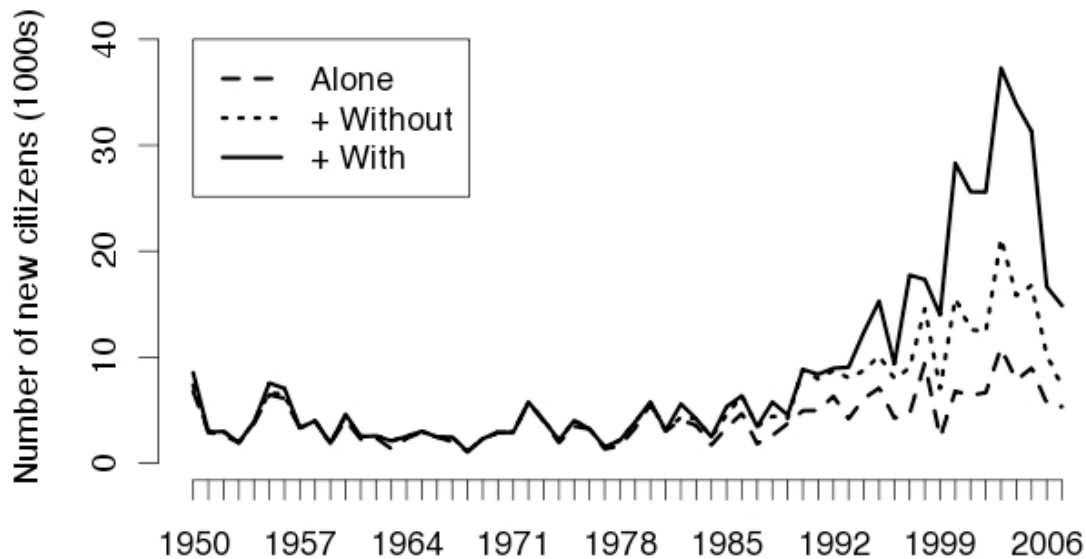
Overall we see that, since 1950, 30% of the migrant-origin residents who claimed Austrian citizenship did so in the same year as at least one other family member. A further 22% live with other migrant-origin persons but did not claim citizenship along with any of these people, and the remaining 48% of new citizens acquired this status while living without any other people who whom the question arose, i.e. either on their own or (much more often) with one or more native Austrians.⁶ But the numbers taking these different routes to citizenship have also varied quite distinctly over time. For most of this period, the main route to citizenship was ‘alone.’ As I will discuss in greater length later in this chapter, many of these people originated in Western Europe, have lived in Austria for decades and are the spouses of native Austrians. This sets them apart from the bulk of migrants who arrived in the country over the past three decades.

The numbers claiming citizenship ‘alone’ have been fairly steady since the 1950s. As we can see in Figure three, claiming citizenship along with other family members has only recently become the norm. The figure shows the total number claiming citizenship, by each of the three routes (in the plot, the totals stacked one on top of the other). The

⁶ Over 70% of migrant-origin individuals who live in households without any other migrant-origin persons live with native Austrians.

dashed line shows the numbers claiming citizenship ‘alone,’ i.e. while living without other migrant-origin individuals. The dashed line shows the additional numbers becoming citizens ‘without’ other family members, even though they live with other people for whom the issue arose. And the unbroken line shows the total number, now also including people who claimed citizenship ‘with’ other family members.

Figure three: Paths to citizenship in Austria since 1950

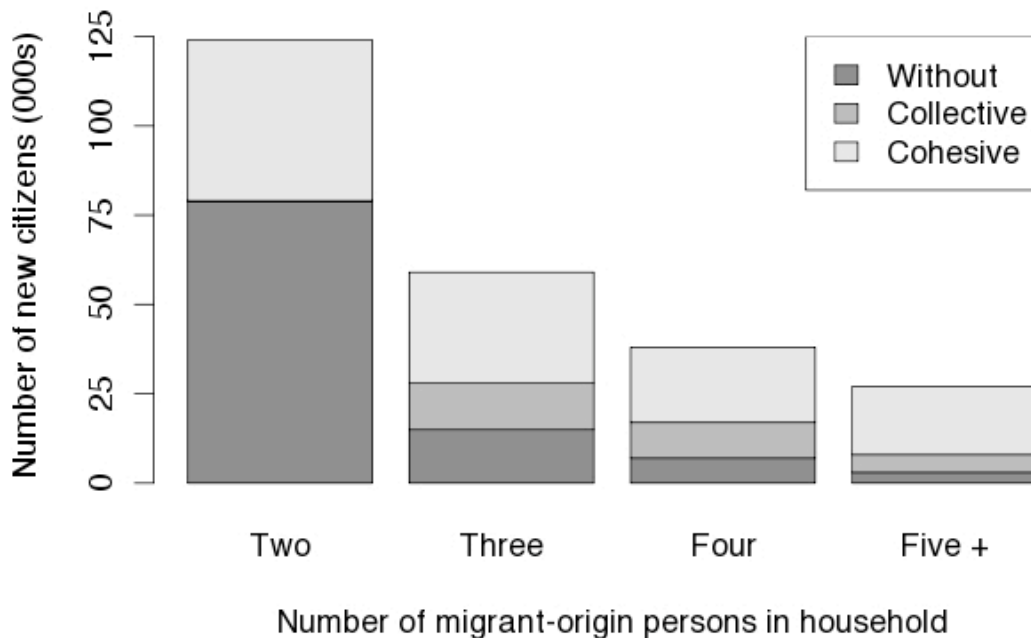


Once we account for these changing patterns over time, we gain a different perspective on the importance of family-level citizenship behavior. Since the mid 1990s, around 50% of new Austrian citizens acquired this status along with other family members, one quarter ‘without’ and the rest ‘alone.’ Put another way, of those who live with at least one other migrant-origin resident, only 30% claimed citizenship alone.

Of those who become citizens ‘with’ other family members, over 80% become citizens along with *every* other person in the family for whom the issue arises. One can think of this kind of behavior as ‘cohesive’ at the level of the family, as distinct from ‘collective’ claims on citizenship with some but not all family members. This suggests that foreign residents value changing citizenship along with every other family member, if this is possible. But we should not assume that this preference has the same implication for all

migrant-origin residents of Austria. In the simplest case, there is no option to claim citizenship along with other family members for migrant-origin residents who live alone or with native-born Austrians. Beyond this, if the benefit from collective claims on citizenship is greater with each additional person who can be included in the claim, we should expect higher rates of cohesive behavior in households with more migrant-origin individuals. Indeed, this is the pattern revealed in Figure three, below, which shows the numbers claiming citizenship cohesively, collectively, and without other family members, depending on the number of migrant-origin persons in the household.

Figure three: Paths to Citizenship by Number of Migrant-Origin Persons

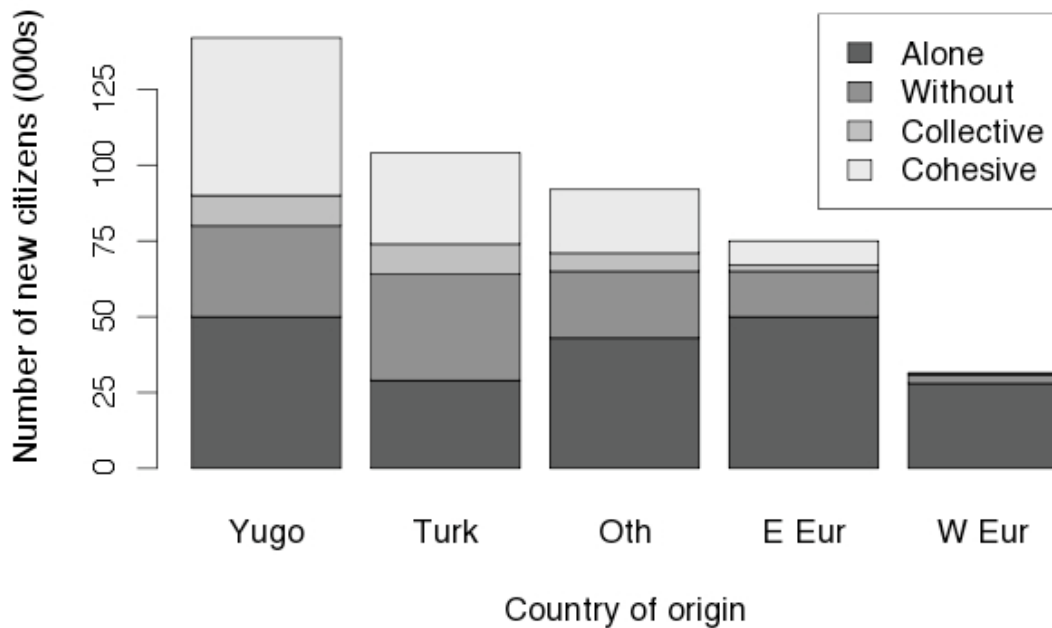


We see that around 40% of those in households with two migrant-origin persons claimed citizenship in the same year as the other family-member for whom this issue arose (single-person households are excluded from the figure, because it is not possible for foreigners living without other foreigners to claim citizenship together). The share of citizens that reached this status through ‘cohesive’ behavior rises to 52% where there are three such people, to 56% where there are four, and to 70% where there are five or more. Once we also include ‘collective’ behavior, i.e. claiming citizenship with at least one but not all of the relevant persons in the household, we see that it is rare for foreign residents

who live with three or more people with migrant origins to work through the process of claiming citizenship alone.

We also see variation in the paths taken to citizenship, depending on country (or region) of origin. The patterns are illustrated in Figure four, below. We see that, of those who have become Austrian citizens, around half of migrants with family origins in the former Yugoslavia acquired this status in the same year as some or all of the people with whom they live. This is also true of 40% of Turkish-origin residents, but cohesive and collective behavior is less important for people from ‘Other’ areas, for Eastern Europeans and, especially, for those from Western Europe.

Figure four: Paths to citizenship, by country/region of origin



Yugo = former Yugoslavia, Turk = Turkey, Oth = Other, E Eur = Eastern Europe, W Eur = Western Europe.

These differences reflect in part the varying composition of the households in which migrants live. In particular, rates of marriage with native-born Austrians vary sharply across these five groups. Whereas 56% of migrant-origin residents with roots in Western Europe are married to a native-born Austrian, the same is true of 40% of East Europeans, 35% of those with roots in ‘other’ parts of the world, 7% of those from the former

Yugoslavia and just 2% of Turks.⁷ Inter-marriage is important because migrants married to native Austrians benefit from easier access to citizenship; in particular, the required period of residence falls from 10 years to just three. This implies that the migrant-origin residents with the lowest overall proclivity to claim Austrian citizenship—namely those from Western Europe—are also most likely to benefit from the provisions for spouses of natives. The overall impact of this family-friendly provision is thus smaller than one might otherwise expect.

I also conduct a separate statistical analysis of the features distinguishing Austrian citizens from foreigners, in the sub-set of migrant-origin residents who live without other migrants. We see that being married to a native Austrian makes little difference to the citizenship acquisition rate among migrant-origin residents with roots in Eastern Europe, Turkey or ‘Other’ countries. Migrants from each of these countries/regions have relatively high rates of citizenship acquisition. But among West Europeans, the group with the lowest overall rate of citizenship acquisition, inter-marriage makes for a 12% difference, from 24% to 36%. The difference is even bigger for those from the former Yugoslavia (which has the second-lowest overall rate of Austrian citizenship), from 45% to 73%. This is the group with the lowest average length of residence in Austria, which may explain why the special provision for the spouses of native Austrians makes an especially big difference in this case.

The fact that inter-marriage between residents with migrant origins and native Austrians helps us distinguish between those who have vs. those who have not claimed Austrian citizenship shows that family-level factors play an important role even for migrants who don’t live with anyone else facing the decision whether or not to claim citizenship. We also see that the preferences and behavior of other family members interact with other factors emphasized in existing literature, such as country/region of origin or social and economic resources. State policies also shape behavior, though not always in the ways we might expect. The provision to ease citizenship criteria for those married to native

⁷ These figures are based on my own calculations, from the census data. The numerator in this calculation is the number married to a person with no history of migration (both parents born in Austria), and the denominator is all married persons.

Austrians only influences the behavior of migrants from groups that have relatively high rates of inter-marriage, but relatively low overall rates of citizenship acquisition.

Beyond this, analysis of the sub-set of the census data that provides information on migrant-origin residents living 'alone' reveals many of the same patterns that we observed for those who live in multi-migrant households. The one difference that stands out is a large and highly significant coefficient on gender, revealing that women are considerably more likely to hold Austrian citizenship than are men with similar backgrounds and resources. This is true both of those who are married to native Austrians, and of those who are not. The gender difference is also seen in the wider sample of migrant-origin residents who live with other migrants, but it is much more pronounced among those who live on their own or with native Austrians.

Another angle on citizenship behavior

In this chapter we have established that family members often claim citizenship together, that migrants married to native Austrians have been joining the citizenry at a fairly stable rate for decades, and that 'cohesive' and 'collective' claims account for most of the recent increase in the number of new Austrian citizens. We have seen that migrant-origin residents who live with greater numbers of other migrants are more likely to claim citizenship together. This evidence provides considerable support for the argument that foreign residents value citizenship more highly if other family members can get it too. But we can also test the argument using other evidence on the decision-making of migrant-origin residents. In particular, it is important to hear from the people confronted with these decisions, and from other people with direct experience of the application process, such as workers for NGOs and the bureaucrats in charge of the application process. I will now present evidence from 45 interviews in Austria. I spoke with foreign residents, new citizens, and with relevant NGOs, with bureaucrats and with local and national politicians. Around half of the migrant-origin interviewees now have Austrian citizenship. The interviews ranged between 30 and 90 minutes in length, and were conducted in towns and cities across the country.

Each interview with migrant-origin residents of Austria provided further evidence that decisions over citizenship are made at the level of the family. In many of the interviews, family was so important that it was assumed to play a central part in the decision. Most people used plural personal pronouns: we, us, our. I was told many times that ‘we’ applied, or that ‘we’ didn’t want to, or that ‘we’ would like to become citizens but that one or more family member doesn’t meet the requirements. Commonly, in the cases where my interviewees assumed that family was important without discussing the preferences and prospects of various family members in detail, it became clear that the family behaved ‘cohesively’, i.e. that everyone had Austrian citizenship, or nobody did. When I pointed out this assumption, most said ‘of course!’ Several responded with a rhetorical question: ‘what good would it [citizenship] do me on my own?’ And as one young mother from Iran put it: ‘migration, integration, citizenship... it isn’t something you do on your own.’

In the cases when family was discussed in greater detail, it was often because of some difficulty in claiming citizenship together. In an interview with two people who offer advice for immigrants through an NGO in one of Austria’s regional capitals, I was told that they often receive visits from families, some of which leave the room ‘in despair’ when they realize that one of them would struggle to meet the criteria. Another interviewee told me, though, that she had been lucky to receive advice from an unusually friendly bureaucrat—the person who normally runs the office was on holiday—that the easiest way to become a citizen would be to add her name to her husband’s application. She said she thought this also made it easier for her daughter, born one year later, to become an Austrian citizen too, ‘a great relief.’⁸ Indeed, a number of my interviewees said their main motivation for becoming an Austrian citizen was that they would thereby also secure citizenship for their children, which they hope will help in later life, in school and on the labor market.

⁸ In fact, if the father were an Austrian citizen by that time, the child should have had a right to citizenship in any case. But migrant-origin residents are often unclear on the details of these provisions.

A number of my interviewees said they applied for citizenship, less for their own sake, than for the children. This, then, was one reason for family members to take account of the family-level benefits of citizenship. The other common family-level effect was for people who were ambivalent about Austrian citizenship to decide they ‘might as well’ join the applications of another family member who had a particular reason for applying. The person with a stronger motivation for becoming a citizen can relieve their fellow-travelers of many of the costs. One young accountant told me, for a example, that his wife needed Austrian citizenship to get a job as a teacher, so he thought he may as well join her. He said he was relieved that she did most of the paperwork, and they were able to reassure their parents that they applied in order to be sure she got the job, not because they mean to turn their backs on Croatia. From this person’s point of view, the joint application reduced the cognitive and the social costs of changing citizenship.

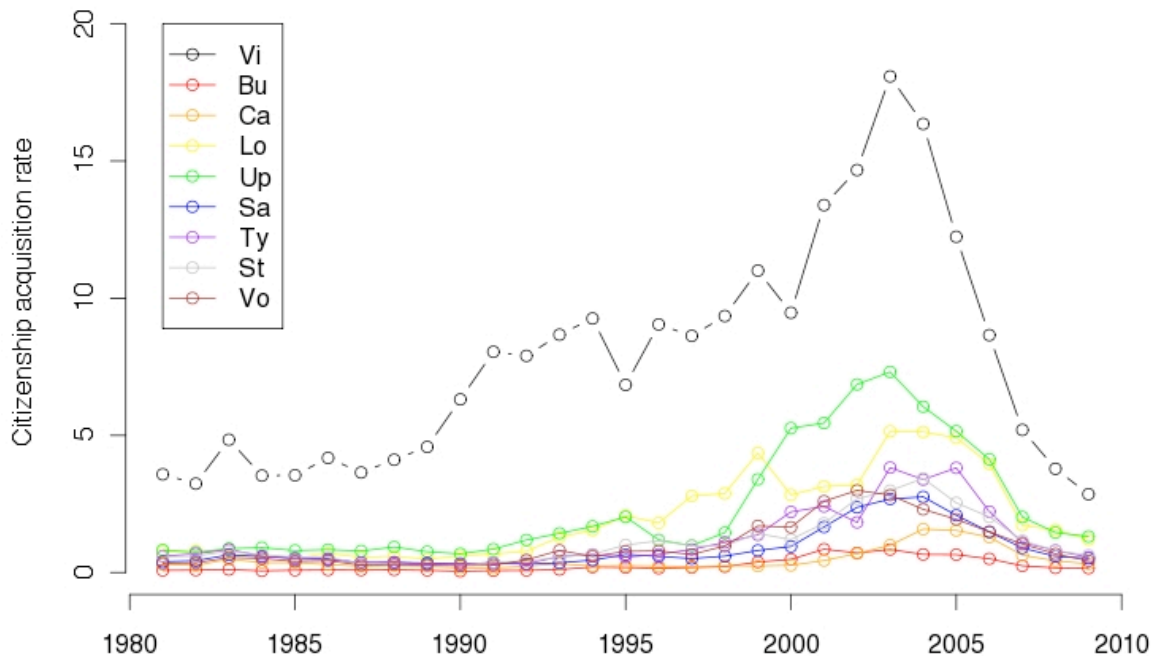
I also spoke with a few people who had applied for citizenship even though some other family members didn’t. Rather than ignoring the topic of family, these interviewees spent a lot of time talking about the views of other family members. For example, a young journalist with Turkish origins explained that she had become a citizen a few years ago along with her mother and siblings, but that her father hadn’t joined them, because he thought this would make it easier to manage his property in the homeland. She told me he isn’t entirely happy with the situation, however, because despite taking a keen interest in Austrian politics he is ineligible to vote – ‘and without a vote, somehow you don’t really exist.’ I asked whether her father might now apply for citizenship, but she told me that it’s ‘too late now, because the rules got much harder.’

A couple of the foreign residents with whom I spoke dismissed the topic of citizenship in a similar way, saying ‘it is too late now anyway.’ One said she had discussed it with her mother, and that either of them could probably have been persuaded if the other had really wanted to apply, but the rules are much harder now. The topic of recent changes in the requirements for becoming an Austrian citizen arose in many of my interviews. The first of the important recent reforms was passed in 1998. The intent was to restrict access to citizenship; in particular this reform was a response to the politicization by center- and

far-right parties of the fact that Vienna was granting citizenship at a much higher rate than elsewhere (Cinar 2010: 8). Viennese officials made a liberal interpretation of a provision allowing some foreign residents to apply for citizenship without having lived in the country for the standard 30 years. The other federal states, led by Jörg Haider’s Carinthia, pushed to close this loophole, but agreed to reduce the standard waiting period to 15 years, or 10 years for those able to meet the still somewhat vague integration requirements. This change was estimated to have doubled the numbers eligible.

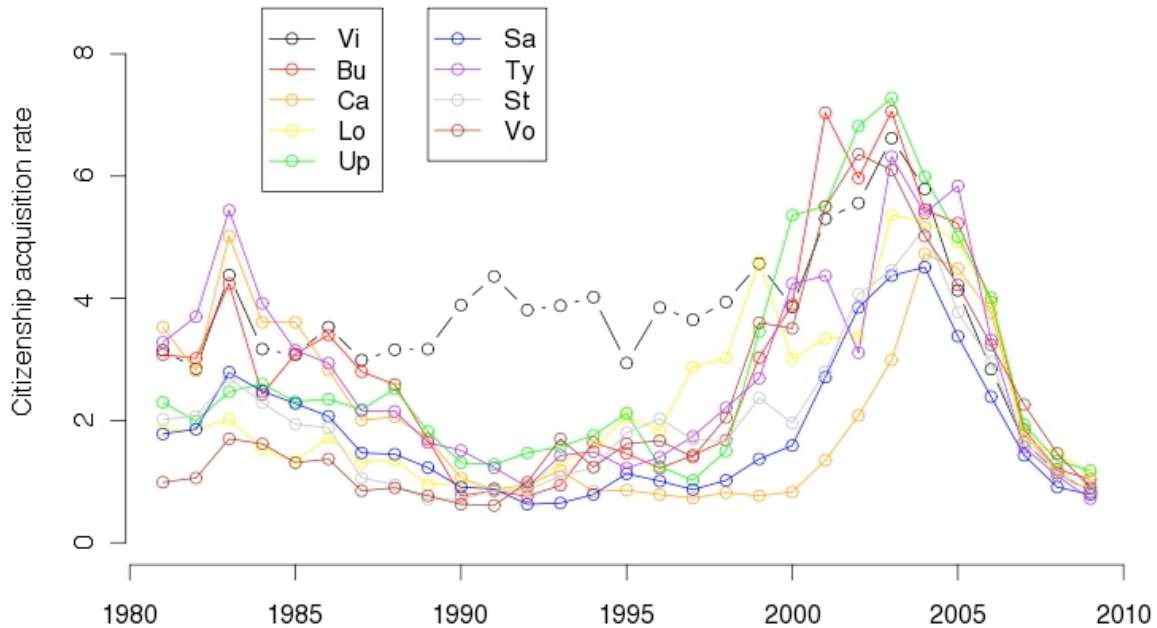
The results surprised the authors of the reform: instead of falling, the numbers shot up. Whereas in the 1990s the great bulk of new citizens acquired this status in Vienna, to the chagrin of political leaders in the rest of the country, in the years after the reform the numbers rose across the rest of the country as well. The patterns are displayed in Figures five and six. In the former, we see that Vienna has long been the main source of new Austrians. The city-state is also the major home of migrant-origin residents, however, and for this reason it is important to study not just the actual numbers, but the rate at which resident foreigners have been acquiring Austrian citizenship, across the country.

Figure five: Numbers of New Austrian Citizens, by Federal State



Note: the abbreviations for the federal states are: Vi = Vienna, Bu = Burgenland, Ca = Carinthia, Lo = Lower Austria, Up = Upper Austria, Sa = Salzburg, Ty = Tyrol, St = Styria, Vo = Vorarlberg

Figure six: Citizenship Acquisition Rates, By Federal State



Note: the abbreviations for the federal states are: Vi = Vienna, Bu = Burgenland, Ca = Carinthia, Lo = Lower Austria, Up = Upper Austria, Sa = Salzburg, Ty = Tyrol, St = Styria, Vo = Vorarlberg

Figure six reveals that Vienna did indeed diverge from the rest of the country in the 1990s.⁹ Social Democratic mayors were accused of stretching the rules for migrants who were likely to vote for the Left. Far-right leaders still repeat such this claim, long after the end of Viennese exceptionalism, as can be seen in the following campaign poster.



⁹ The fall in the acquisition rate in the 1990s is due to higher numbers of foreign residents rather than lower numbers of new citizens. Only in Vienna did the number of new citizens rise sufficiently to offset the arrival of tens of thousands of migrants, the bulk of whom originated in the former Yugoslavia.

The poster is from the 2010 campaign materials of the leader of the FPÖ, Heinz-Christian Strache, who likes to go by 'H-C.' It shows the Viennese mayor and the Social Democrat Chancellor. In the panel on the left, they hand an Austrian passport to men caricatured with Turkish moustaches and what one might describe as Negroid lips, and saying (in pidgin German) there is no need for these men to learn German. In the central panel they explain that these people need to vote for the SPÖ, the Social Democratic Party of Austria. In the panel on the right, the superhero 'HC-Man' says: 'Not with us! The right to vote is for citizens! Citizenship is only for the fully-integrated! Including German!'

Perchinig (2007) and Cinar (2010) describe how angry politicians consulted bureaucrats at the federal statistics office in 2003 and 2004, and discovered that much of the increase in the numbers of new citizens was due to the practice of 'extending' citizenship to the spouses and children of people who successfully applied. The interior minister promptly announced plans to close this loophole, by making citizenship harder to acquire in a number of ways. The reforms came into force in 2005, and many of my interviewees discussed the effects of the changes, which can also be seen from the subsequent trend in the numbers. Although the acquisition rate was already trending down in 2004, at around 5% it was still twice as high as the maximum recorded in Germany; at that rate the number of foreign citizens would be halved within about a dozen years. But by 2009, the acquisition rate was below 1%, lower than at any time since the 1950s.

How exactly was this dramatic decline achieved? The answer became clear in an interview with two volunteers at an NGO in Vienna, both of whom have been giving advice to immigrants since the 1990s. It soon became clear that my interviewees were angry about the 'pretty-much impossible' new rules, and about the lack of public knowledge on the human cost of the 'bizarre' requirements. The two spent over an hour and a half driving home the message that the numerous barriers erected in new system make ensure that, as one put it, 'just about the only people now capable of acquiring Austrian citizenship are the upwardly mobile elite, most of them from rich countries, in other words the very people with the least interest.' The reform of 2005 made just about every aspect harder: from stiffer language tests that are now standardized across the

country, to a massive increase in fees, to a new civics test, to bans on people with any kind of criminal conviction, and a requirement that one demonstrate ‘financial self-sufficiency’ at a level well above the statutory minimum income, and provide reams of paperwork to prove that one had also been earning at such a level for the past three years. Although it is still nominally possible for citizenship to be ‘extended’ to the spouses and children of people who meet these standards, these people now have to meet the same standards. As one official confirmed during a meeting in one of Austria’s regional capitals, ‘we used to go easier on the other family members, until 2005.’

One further feature of the recent reforms that discourages collective claims on citizenship is the sheer cost of acquiring citizenship for an entire family. The federal government charges €700 for those who have lived in the country at least 15 years, and €900 for those who do not meet this requirement but may qualify on other grounds. In addition, the federal states apply their own levies of up to €1,000. Most people also pay additional fees for the required tests and to certify paperwork, often taking the cost above €2,000 per person. One young migrant of Croatian origin told me that even though the costs of living in Austria as a foreigner can also add up to hundreds of Euros, she cannot get hold of €2,000 all at once and is thus unable to apply.

Another student told me that she is in the process of applying for citizenship. She has met with bureaucrats a number of times and is struggling to provide the required evidence that she is financially self-sufficient. Finally, she said, a friendly bureaucrat suggested that she could ask her parents to transfer money to her bank account. She said that once they discussed it, her parents said they would also be interested in becoming Austrian citizens. But after they calculated just how much this would cost, ‘we realized we couldn’t afford it.’ And so the family had been forced to strategize. She told me that her father said she was the best candidate, because she will be able to enjoy the benefits of Austrian citizenship for much longer.

Other reasons for or against citizenship were also raised. Some explained that they hoped for more recognition in Austrian society, as citizens. As one immigrant from East Africa

told me, ‘I want citizenship, it is a journey traveled and succeeded. I mean, you followed the procedure and managed to succeed.’ Other factors mentioned in favor of claiming Austrian citizenship include easier travel within the E.U. and access to certain jobs.

Finally, it is worth noting one factor that does *not* commonly appear to influence behavior with regard to citizenship, although it dominates public debate on the issue. I did not speak to a single person who said that he or she didn’t want citizenship because he or she is opposed to Austrian demands to integrate. A few of my interviewees had complaints, of course. But even those who criticized current citizenship rules generally said they support the criteria—such as German language skills and a clean criminal record. Their complaint was that it is unfairly assumed they don’t meet these standards or that they don’t want to. Only one of my interviewees, a Turkish-origin professor with German citizenship, offered a principled critique of the very idea of holding individuals up to such abstract standards, complaining that West Europeans have a ‘feudal’ view of immigrants, who are expected to conform but not considered capable of coming up with their own ideas about the future of these societies. He told me he doesn’t need Austrian citizenship, because he’s German, and when I asked whether his principles had held him back from applying in Germany, he said ‘no, what good would that do anyone?’