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“Austria Attractive for Guest Workers?” Recruitment of Immigrant Labor in Austria in the 1960s and 1970s

Vida Bakondy¹

In 1947, Austria faced an acute shortage of male labor that was supposed to help in the “reconstruction” after the end of World War II and the Nazi regime. In this context, a draft for an agreement between Italy and Austria for the “Recruitment and Employment of Italian Seasonal Laborers in 1947” was drawn up.² According to the tasks described in the draft, 8,400 male seasonal laborers were desired. They were to be employed in logging and construction, as well as in brick making and in mining. The brick-making industry above all complained at the time of the shortage in labor and pointed to historical continuity in the employment of Italian brick-makers.³ It was feared, however, that “the enticement of the really qualified Italian seasonal laborers to other countries” had already begun.⁴ No other sources indicate that the agreement was signed in 1947. Nevertheless, this is testimony of historical relevance, as it documents the early demand for immigrant labor in the immediate post-war period and the simultaneous awareness of historical continuity with regard to their employment. In public debates and political discussions surrounding labor migration in the following decades, however, there was an evident tendency toward a lack of historical perspective. The immigrant labor of earlier decades, as well as Nazi forced labor (which in the first half of the 1940s had led to a massive

1 This paper emerged as part of the FWF Austrian Science Fund Project P 24468-G18, “Deprovincializing Contemporary Austrian History: Migration and the transnational challenges to national historiographies (ca. 1960-today),” which is based at the Institute for Contemporary History at the University of Innsbruck (11/2012-10/2017) and headed by Dirk Rupnow. This essay and all quotations from German sources have been translated by Tim Corbett, unless otherwise noted.

2 Übereinkommen zwischen Österreich und Italien zur Anwerbung und Beschäftigung italienischer Ziegelerbeiter im Jahr 1947, Geschäftszahl Sp 2595/1947, MF 680, RZ 6621, Archiv der Wirtschaftskammer Österreich (Archive of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber, hereafter Archiv WKÖ).

3 A letter from the Association of the Stone-working and Ceramics Industry to the Federal Ministry for Social Administration of May 14, 1947 for example states that above all the federal provinces of Carinthia, Upper Austria, Styria, Tyrol, and Vorarlberg “have always been dependent on the employment of Italian bricklayers.” Ibid.

4 Ibid.

forced deployment of foreign labor in Austria),⁵ were often disregarded. Rather, immigration was much discussed as a contemporary phenomenon while a veil was drawn over its history as well as its causes and reasons.

Austria's desire for time limits on recruitment agreements and the related belief in a temporal restriction of immigrant labor was to endure over the years, as did the competition with other Western European countries over the recruitment of foreign labor and the related concern about not being able to recruit enough qualified laborers. This is also testified to in the headlines of contemporary media reports in the early 1960s, when negotiations over the conclusion of recruitment agreements were taken up once more: "40,000 foreign workers are allowed to come to Austria. But there will hardly be that many available," ran a title in the *Arbeiterzeitung* on January 9, 1962; "Austria attractive for guest workers? Economy fears the magnetic effect of Germany and Switzerland," ran the headline in the *Presse* on February 6, 1962. The newspaper reports cited here also referenced the two dominant terms – "*Fremdarbeiter*" (foreign worker) and "*Gastarbeiter*" (guest worker) – which were used for labor migrants above all from Yugoslavia and Turkey right into the 1980s.⁶

Societal Contexts

Austria entered the European competition over migrant workers relatively late.⁷ The first recruitment agreement was signed with Spain on May 2, 1962;

5 At the height of World War II, there were "about 80,000 civilian foreigners, prisoners of war, concentration camp inmates, and Hungarian Jews [employed] in the economy of the 'Ostmark,'" according to the historians Bertrand Perz and Florian Freund. Florian Freund and Bertrand Perz, "Zwangsarbeit von zivilen AusländerInnen, Kriegsgefangenen, KZ-Häftlingen und ungarischen Juden in Österreich," in *NS-Herrschaft in Österreich: Ein Handbuch*, ed. Emmerich Tálos, Ernst Hanisch, Wolfgang Neugebauer, and Reinhard Sieder, 2nd ed. (Vienna: öbv & hpt, 2000), 644–695 (here 684).

6 The term "guest worker" was here connoted positively and was also seen as a dissociation from the term "foreign worker" associated with the Nazi era and forced labor. The fact that the term "guest worker" is by no means an empty and ahistorical term is evident from the efforts of the Nazi regime to introduce it in the 1940s as a descriptor for those workers who came to Germany in the context of official recruitment agreements. Christoph Rass, "Die Internationalisierung des Faktors Arbeit in Europa vom Ende des Zweiten Weltkrieges bis zum Ölpreisschock 1973," in *Projekt Migration*, ed. Kölnischer Kunstverein et al. (Cologne: Dumont, 2005), 354–365 (here 362).

7 Switzerland had already begun recruiting Italian workers in 1948, and the Federal Republic of Germany signed an agreement with Italy in 1955. Eveline Wollner, "Maßnahmen Jugoslawiens und der Türkei zur Regulierung der Arbeitsmigration während der 1960 Jahre," in *Good Luck! Migration Today – Vienna, Belgrade, Zagreb, Istanbul*, ed. Vida Bakondy et al. (Vienna: Mandelbaum, 2010), 80–87 (here 80).

an agreement with Turkey followed in 1964 and with the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1965. Ultimately, immigrant labor from Turkey and Yugoslavia was to become historically significant. From 1962 to 1973, the year that marked the provisional heyday of the “employment of foreigners” in Austria, the proportion of migrant employees had risen from about 17,700 to about 250,000, with Yugoslav citizens making up the largest proportion at 78.5 percent, followed by Turkish citizens at 11.8 percent.⁸ The proportion of women among the migrant workers, meanwhile, also increased notably in the same time period, from 19 percent to 31 percent.⁹ Negotiations over recruitment agreements with Italy, Greece, and Tunisia, which were conducted in the 1960s and at the beginning of the 1970s, ended up failing. Nevertheless, migrants from these countries were also employed in Austria, albeit in much smaller numbers.¹⁰ In the case of Tunisia, a provisional protocol between Austria and Tunisia was signed in 1970, which regulated to bring in a “test group” of Tunisian workers; in 1971 the number was raised from 100 to 400.¹¹

The attractiveness of Austria as a destination for immigrant labor from the countries mentioned was not present in the professions in which foreigners were to be employed, which for the most part promised neither good pay nor prospects for advancement.¹² Immigrants were above all in demand for less prestigious jobs, for which ever fewer Austrian workers could be found. These jobs were characterized by low pay, unpleasant and unhealthy working conditions (for example noise, dirt, damp), shift and contract work, as well as a notably higher risk of seasonal and cyclical unemployment.¹³ This included work in the leather, textile, and construction industries, as well as in the service sector (such as tourism).¹⁴

In comparison to other industrialized Western European countries, such as the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) or Switzerland, a phase

8 Helga Matuschek, “Ausländerpolitik in Österreich 1962–1985: Der Kampf um und gegen die ausländischen Arbeitskräfte,” *Journal für Sozialforschung* 25, no. 2 (1985): 159–194 (here 173).

9 Ibid., 174.

10 Ibid., 173.

11 Copy of a memorandum of the Working Group for the Recruitment of Foreign Labor (AGA) from April 14, 1970, concerning the employment of Tunisian labor forces in Austria, Sektionszahl 1082/70, Sektionsakten der Sparte Handel, Archiv der Wirtschaftskammer Wien (Archive of the Vienna Economic Chamber, hereafter WKW).

12 Bernhard Perchinig, “Von der Fremdarbeit zur Integration? Migrations- und Integrationspolitik in Österreich nach 1945,” in *Good Luck! Migration Today*, ed. Vida Bakondy et al. (Vienna: Mandelbaum, 2010), 142–158 (here 144).

13 Georg Fischer, Hans Steiner, and Georg Wallner, *Ausländische Arbeitskräfte in Österreich*, Forschungsberichte aus Sozial- und Arbeitsmarktpolitik 9 (Vienna: Bundesministerium für soziale Verwaltung, 1985), 72–75; Matuschek, “Ausländerpolitik in Österreich 1962–1985,” 174.

14 Matuschek, “Ausländerpolitik in Österreich 1962–1985,” 174.

of increased economic growth only began in Austria from the middle of the 1950s. Until then, Austria had mainly been a country of emigration.¹⁵ Moreover, internal migrants from economically underdeveloped regions and the integration of refugees (in 1952, for example, the basic opening of the labor market to the group of so-called *Volksdeutsche*, refugees perceived as co-ethnics, took place), constituted a large reservoir of labor.¹⁶ Following the growth of the economy, the unemployment rate in Austria sank from 5.5 percent in 1955 to 2.9 percent in 1961.¹⁷ This development was encouraged by the "expansion of the welfare state, state investment in construction and other infrastructure programs, the extension of the average time in education, and the reduction of the working life and working hours."¹⁸ As early as the late 1950s, the Austrian economy had therefore been suffering an increasing shortage in labor in certain regions and industries. Various attempts to limit the labor migration of Austrians into neighboring countries, especially into Switzerland or the FRG, remained unsuccessful.¹⁹

Employers therefore demanded liberalization of labor market policies and, related to this, easier access for immigrants to the Austrian labor market.²⁰ The legal framework exacerbated the ability of businesses to respond flexibly to the demand for labor. Until the passing of the *Ausländerbeschäftigungsgesetz* (Foreign Nationals Employment Law) in 1975, the *Deutsche Reichsverordnung über ausländische Arbeitnehmer* (German Reich's Decree on Foreign Labor) of 1933, which had been in force in Austria since 1941 and replaced the *Inlandarbeiterschutzgesetz* (National Workers Protection Act) of 1925, had formed the juridical foundation for the employment of migrants.²¹ This was based on a "complicated admittance procedure" and was not only dependent on the economic situation and that of the domestic labor market, but also on companies' ability to prove that no Austrian labor was available.²² However, the demands of the economy

15 August Gächter, "Ausländerpolitik seit dem Zweiten Weltkrieg zwischen Assimilation und Ausgrenzung," in *Österreich: Kultur und Identität – heute und vor 100 Jahren*, ed. Flemming Talbo Stubkjaer (Odense: Odense Univ. Press, 2000), 107–127 (here 109).

16 Perchinig, "Von der Fremdarbeit zur Integration?," 144.

17 Matuschek, "Ausländerpolitik in Österreich 1962–1985," 159.

18 Kenneth Horvath, *Die Logik der Entrechtung: Sicherheits- und Nutzendiskurse im österreichischen Migrationsregime* (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2014), 148.

19 Matuschek, "Ausländerpolitik in Österreich 1962–1985," 161.

20 Ibid., 159–160.

21 Eveline Wollner, "Auf dem Weg zur sozialpartnerschaftlich regulierten Ausländerbeschäftigung in Österreich: Die Reform der Ausländerbeschäftigung und der Anwerbung bis Ende der 1960er Jahre" (diploma thesis, University of Vienna, 1996), 23. However, three decrees issued after 1945 led to the law not being applied in Austria "in this form." Ibid.

22 Matuschek, "Ausländerpolitik in Österreich 1962–1985," 161.

for a liberal management of the employment of foreigners initially met with vehement opposition from the workers' representative organizations. They by contrast demanded an "active labor-market policy," in the sense of a redeployment and better qualification of Austrian workers.²³ In 1955, the union of construction workers and loggers threatened a strike if foreign labor was brought in for the construction industry.²⁴

The basic agreement on the increased admission of foreign labor into the Austrian labor market was achieved in the context of the Raab-Olah Agreement,²⁵ following the failure of negotiations over a new law on the employment of foreigners in the early 1960s.²⁶ The Raab-Olah Agreement was concluded in 1961 between the Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB) and the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (BWK),²⁷ the principal interest groups of employees and employers in Austria. As an interim solution, the expanded employment of immigrants in the framework of agreements on contingents (*Kontingentvereinbarungen*) was arranged, which were concluded between the ÖGB and BWK anew each year. A maximum number of foreign laborers for which the complicated individual admissions procedure could be waived was fixed for each federal province/region and industry.²⁸ The agreements on contingents were passed on as "recommendations" to the Federal Ministry for Social Affairs, which was responsible for the employment of foreigners in Austria, and which in turn implemented these in the framework of decrees which were supposed to regulate the practice of the employment of foreigners.²⁹ Until the Foreign Nationals Employment Law of 1975, Austrian immigration policies thus opted for an "extra-parliamentary path" without a legal foundation.³⁰ The

23 Ibid., 162.

24 Gewerkschaftlicher Nachrichtendienst Nr. 590, 5.5.1955, Geschäftszahl SP 2224/1955, MF 680, RZ 6621, Archiv WKÖ.

25 Named after the President of the Federal Economic Chamber at the time, Julius Raab, and the President of the Austrian Federation of Trade Unions, Franz Olah.

26 The passing of a new Law on the Employment of Foreigners not only aimed to take account of the need for an "expansion and simultaneously a continuation of state control of the employment of foreigners" (Wollner, "Auf dem Weg," 23), it had also become necessary because the constitutional court had annulled three decrees as unlawful that had been issued after 1945 and which had simplified the process of admission for the employment of immigrants; Matuschek, "Ausländerpolitik in Österreich 1962–1985," 163. For details on the negotiations, see Wollner, "Auf dem Weg."

27 Today: Wirtschaftskammer Österreich (WKÖ)

28 Matuschek, "Ausländerpolitik in Österreich 1962–1985," 166.

29 Stefanie Mayer, "Migration & Labor Markets: Political Discourse in Austria," in *Debating Migration: Political Discourses on Labor Immigration in Historical Perspective*, ed. Stefanie Mayer and Mikael Spang (Innsbruck: Studienverlag, 2009), 25–73 (here 32).

30 For more detail, see Matuschek, "Ausländerpolitik in Österreich 1962–1985"; Wollner, "Auf dem Weg"; Horvath, "Die Logik der Entrechtung," 156.

social scientist Helga Matuschek explained the initial reservation of state institutions in this area as follows: "Since the protection and the supremacy of domestic workers had been secured, the government and/or other state institutions have been able to leave this field to the social partners without endangering the basis of legitimation toward the citizens."³¹ Beyond this – according to the migration researcher Bernhard Perchinig – the domestic political significance of the Raab-Olah Agreement lay in the establishment of the institution of social partnership "as a specifically Austrian form of corporatist cooperation between the government and the interest groups and their domination of labor and social policy."³²

The ÖGB linked its agreement to a number of conditions. These included, for example, compulsory medical examination before arrival in Austria, the limitation of employment of foreigners to a maximum of one year, the "*Inländerprimat*" (domestic primacy, according to which immigrants were to be laid off before Austrians), the prohibition of employment of immigrants in place of striking Austrian workers, immigrant workers being subject to the same collective agreements as Austrian workers, but also the fixation of maximum numbers of immigrant laborers according to the branch of the economy and the federal province.³³ Significant features of the agreements on contingents already contained these conditions, which were to be incorporated into the Foreign Nationals Employment Law in 1975.³⁴ The immigration policies of the Second Republic thus relied on historical continuities. The basis was offered by the National Workers Protection Act of 1925, which, as social scientist Kenneth Horvath demonstrated, not only distinguished "explicitly between domestic and foreign labor" and legally anchored the "*Inländerprimat*," but also fundamentally subjugated labor migration to reorganization, as it was made into the "*direct* object of negotiation processes between business associations and labor representatives."³⁵ The fundamental premise of Austrian migration policies was rotation and the eventual return of immigrants to their country of origin.³⁶ For this reason, Austria's first recruitment agreement with Spain was at first limited to one year.³⁷ Simultaneously, however, the countries of origin and the immigrants themselves initially believed in the temporary character of labor migration.

31 Matuschek, "Ausländerpolitik in Österreich 1962–1985," 180.

32 Perchinig, "Von der Fremdarbeit zur Integration?," 145.

33 Mayer, "Migration & Labor Market," 31–32.

34 Ibid.

35 Horvath, "Die Logik der Entrechtung," 165–166 (emphasis in the original).

36 Perchinig, "Von der Fremdarbeit zur Integration?," 145.

37 Spanien-Anwerbeabkommen und Sozialversicherungsabkommen, Information für den Herrn Sektionsleiter, Grundzahl 201 042, Geschäftszeichen 31, BMHGI, AdR, ÖStA [Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Austrian State Archive].

The Formalization of Immigrant Labor in the Recruitment Contracts

While the Raab-Olah Agreement and the quota solution marked the domestic political cornerstone for immigrant labor from Spain, Turkey, and Yugoslavia to Austria, the conclusion of intergovernmental recruitment contracts and social security agreements provided the necessary foreign policy cornerstone.³⁸ The signing of the agreements was sometimes preceded by years of protracted domestic as well as foreign negotiations. The recruitment agreements – which were mostly modeled on existing contracts of the countries of origin with other states³⁹ – regulated the procedure of recruitment through to the organization of travel and the respective responsibilities of the contractual partners. The formalization of immigrant labor through the recruitment contracts and the labor and salary equalization of immigrants with the resident workers stipulated in them was intended to serve as protection for both groups. The granting of equal rights, however, was consistently subverted; for example, through the limitation of work permits for immigrants to one year, which was moreover bound to a specific business, as well as the “domestic primacy” that had been structurally anchored in the Austrian labor market since 1925.

The countries of origin in many cases opposed direct recruitment by foreign businesses and therefore demanded the establishment of an official recruitment center, which was to cooperate with the respective national authorities on site; moreover, employment services were a state monopoly at this point in time.⁴⁰ The countries of origin thereby tried to control the labor migration of their citizens.⁴¹ The degree of attempted control and

38 Spain initially declined to conclude a social security agreement with Austria. Due to the time limit on the validity of the recruitment agreement until December 31, 1962, renewed negotiations were already necessary in 1963, and a new agreement was finally signed in 1964. As a result, a social security agreement was concluded—on the express wish of Spain—which entered into force in 1966. (Grundzahl 137/63, Sektion II, BMSV, AdR, ÖStA) Austria concluded a social security agreement with Turkey in 1969. In the case of Yugoslavia, the agreement was concluded at the same time as the recruitment agreement. See *Abkommen zwischen der Republik Österreich und dem Spanischen Staat über Soziale Sicherheit samt Zusatzprotokoll*, Bundesgesetzblatt [Federal Law Gazette, hereafter BGBl.] 8/66; *Abkommen zwischen der Republik Österreich und der Türkischen Republik über Soziale Sicherheit samt Zusatzprotokoll*, BGBl. 337/69; *Abkommen zwischen der Republik Österreich und der Sozialistischen Föderativen Republik Jugoslawiens über Soziale Sicherheit*, BGBl. 289/66.

39 Negotiations over the recruitment agreement with Spain were based on the Swiss-Spanish agreement; in the case of Turkey it was the German-Turkish agreement.

40 Eveline Wollner, “Maßnahmen Jugoslawiens und der Türkei,” 80–87 (here 82).

41 Monika Mattes, “*Gastarbeiterinnen*” in *der Bundesrepublik: Anwerbepolitik, Migration und Geschlecht in den 50er bis 70er Jahren* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2005), 64; see also Wollner, “Auf dem Weg” and Wollner, “Maßnahmen Jugoslawiens und der Türkei.”

influence varied from country to country and was subject to the interests of the economy and labor-market policies. The possibility of control on the part of the countries of origin extended, for example, to the limitation of selection to certain regions or groups, the restriction of the recruitment of specific individuals, up to the curtailing of the recruitment of qualified workers and the prohibition of individual recruitment by companies.⁴² This "pre-selection" of workers and the concurrent limitation of recruitment opportunities, however, led to conflicts with the recruiting states and to the exploitation of "alternative channels of migration."⁴³ According to the social scientist Eveline Wollner, Austria's recruitment institutions may have lost their importance over the course of the 1960s, "but they were of great significance for the willingness of the sending countries to permit recruitment."⁴⁴

The first recruitment agreement between Austria and Spain, which was signed in May 1962, did not result in any noteworthy or lasting labor migration to Austria. Austria was not an attractive destination for Spanish workers. Kurt Büchlmann, the head of the Austrian recruitment office in Madrid at the time, recalled that the salaries offered by Austrian businesses were 25% less than those offered by German, French, and Swiss businesses, and the success of recruitment altogether remained very modest.⁴⁵ Moreover, Austrian companies hardly made use of the recruitment opportunities in Spain. A statement by the Federal Economic Chamber in 1966 stated that "the employment of Spanish labor in Austria is only of secondary importance."⁴⁶ Within the next year, the Austrian recruitment office in Madrid was closed, with any subsequent recruitment being handled by the Austrian external trading office of the Economic Chamber in Madrid.⁴⁷

42 For details, see Wollner "Auf dem Weg" and Wollner, "Maßnahmen Jugoslawiens und der Türkei," which analyze this question with regard to the cases of Turkish and Yugoslav migration policies.

43 Christoph Rass, *Institutionalisierungsprozesse auf einem internationalen Arbeitsmarkt: Bilaterale Wanderungsverträge in Europa zwischen 1919 und 1974* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2010), 301.

44 Wollner, "Maßnahmen Jugoslawiens und der Türkei," 83.

45 Kurt Büchelmann, in discussion with Christina Hollomey and the author, Innsbruck, May 7, 2014. Various strategies, such as the targeted use of Austrian tourist advertising or the search for Austrian businesses that were prepared to pay higher salaries, were nevertheless employed to win over Spanish labor for work in Austria.

46 Schreiben der BWK an das Bundesministerium für Handel und Wiederaufbau vom 4. Mai 1966 betreffend Arbeitsvertrag für spanische Arbeitskräfte, Grundzahl 201 042/67, Geschäftszeichen 31, BMHGI, AdR, ÖStA.

47 Abkommen zwischen Österreich u. Spanien über die Anwerbung span. Arbeitskräfte und deren Beschäftigung in Österreich, BGBl. Nr. 26/1969; Frage der Wiedererrichtung der 1967 aufgelösten österr. Anwerbekommission in Madrid, Grundzahl 204 903-Sekt. IV/71, Geschäftszeichen Spanien V/5P, Abteilung 12, Bundesministerium für auswärtige Angelegenheiten (*Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs*) [hereafter BmaA].

By contrast, the conclusion of the recruitment agreement with Turkey in 1964 constituted the intergovernmental formalization of a “de facto status.”⁴⁸ As early as 1962, representatives of the Turkish labor-market administration, the BWK, and the Austrian trade delegate in Turkey had concluded a provisional agreement, which was to regulate the recruitment of Turkish workers until the conclusion of a final agreement. Until the establishment of a commission in Istanbul in 1964, recruitment was handled by the Austrian foreign trade office in Istanbul in cooperation with the Turkish labor market authorities.⁴⁹ However the planned recruitment agreement with Turkey, which was welcomed by the BWK due to the as-yet unexhausted labor reservoir in the country,⁵⁰ was at first met with domestic political opposition by the labor unions and individual ministries, above all by the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior. The latter, for example, feared a considerable cost arising from the deportation or repatriation of unwanted migrants to Turkey.⁵¹ The Ministry of Social Affairs, by contrast, argued with cultural and racist reservations: “There is no particular interest in the employment of Turkish labor in Austria due to the unusual working and living customs and due to linguistic reasons,” as expressed in a statement in May 1961.⁵² While the trope of the ostensible “otherness” of Turkish workers was to maintain itself stubbornly in the following years and decades, the initial domestic political opposition to a recruitment agreement with Turkey was quickly dropped, especially since negotiations over recruitment agreements with Italy, Greece, and

48 Information für den Herrn Sektionsleiter betreffend Unterzeichnung des österr.-türkischen Fremdarbeiterabkommens vom 10.2.1964, Grundzahl 200 360-12/64, Geschäftszeichen Türkei V/5P, Abteilung 12, BmaA.

49 Bericht des österreichischen Handelsdelegierten in der Türkei an die Arbeitsgemeinschaft zur Anwerbung ausländischer Arbeitskräfte vom 16.7.1962, Grundzahl 205 930-12/62, Geschäftszeichen AK-Öst-Türkei, BmaA.

50 See Abschrift eines Berichtes des österreichischen Handelsdelegierten in der Türkei an die Arbeitsgemeinschaft für die Anwerbung ausländischer Arbeitskräfte (AGA) vom 9.1.1963, Grundzahl 300 965-12/63, Geschäftszeichen AK-Öst (Türkei), BmaA. It is noted right at the beginning here that “[e]ven in the case of an increased recruitment of labor by several developed countries, the supply will not be depleted and there will be no shortage of healthy labor forces, from whom one should however not expect any particular technical expertise.”

51 Schreiben des Bundesministeriums für Inneres, Generaldirektion für die öffentliche Sicherheit an das Bundesministerium für auswärtige Angelegenheiten betreffend Anwerbung von türkischen Arbeitskräften nach der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und nach Österreich vom 6.6. 1961, Grundzahl 117 552-12/61, Geschäftszeichen AK-Türkei II, BmaA.

52 Schreiben des Bundesministeriums für soziale Verwaltung an das Bundesministerium für auswärtige Angelegenheiten betreffend Anwerbung von türkischen Arbeitskräften nach der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und nach Österreich vom 9.5.1961, Grundzahl 117 552-12/61, Geschäftszeichen AK-Türkei II, BmaA.

Yugoslavia in 1962 had not led to positive results. The Austrian-Turkish recruitment agreement was signed on May 15, 1964.⁵³

The negotiations over an agreement with Yugoslavia turned out to be more protracted and difficult. Negotiations had begun in 1962,⁵⁴ were resumed in 1964, and resulted in the signing in 1965 of the "Agreement between the Republic of Austria and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Concerning the Regulation of Employment of Yugoslav Employees in Austria."⁵⁵ For ideological and political reasons, Yugoslavia had rejected the promotion of transnational labor migration to Western European countries well into the 1960s. A restrictive passport law and the punishment of "illegal emigration" aimed at preventing the efforts of its citizens to emigrate – albeit unsuccessfully.⁵⁶ The Yugoslav economic reforms of 1965, however, resulted in an immediate rise in unemployment and thus sealed the final reversal of Yugoslav migration politics toward the promotion of temporary labor migration.⁵⁷ This reversal had in part already taken place at the beginning of the 1960s with the easing of the restrictive emigration regulations and a liberalization of the passport regime.⁵⁸

The demand in the Austrian economy for Yugoslav labor, however, had already been partially slaked before the conclusion of the Austrian-Yugoslav recruitment agreement. This was possible due to, among other things, employment contracts with smaller groups,⁵⁹ to regional agreements with

53 BGBl. 164/1964.

54 While the ÖGB generally left the intergovernmental negotiations over recruitment to the BWK and the responsible ministries, in the case of Yugoslavia (the ÖGB favored recruitment from Austria's neighboring countries), it became active of its own accord. So, for example, in 1962 a meeting took place between the president of the ÖGB, Franz Olah, and the president of the Yugoslav Association of Trade Unions, Svetozar Vukmanovic-Tempo, during which the Austrian trade union president proclaimed the interest of "wanting to employ at least 10,000 Yugoslav workers in Austria." Fernschreiben der Österreichischen Botschaft in Belgrad an das BmaA vom 19.4.1962, Grundzahl 205930-12/62, Geschäftszeichen AK-Öst (Jugosl.), BmaA.

55 BGBl. 42/1965.

56 Rass, *Institutionalisierungsprozesse*, 192-193. The first agreement was signed with France in January 1965.

57 Ibid; Wollner, "Maßnahmen Jugoslawiens und der Türkei," 85. The belief in the temporary nature of labor migration was also underlined in the Yugoslav term for immigrant labor as "privremeno u inostranstvu zaposleni" (those employed abroad temporarily).

58 Rass, *Institutionalisierungsprozesse*, 193. Not only was the Amnesty Law passed in 1962, which was intended to categorically exempt Yugoslav citizens who had previously been working abroad illegally, but a first "Decree Concerning the Treatment of the Employment of Labor Abroad" was issued, which came into force in 1963. Vladimir Ivanović, "Die Beschäftigung jugoslawischer Arbeitskräfte in Österreich in den 1960er und 1970er Jahren," *zeitgeschichte* 40, no. 1 (2013): 35-48 (here 37).

59 Fernschreiben der Österreichischen Botschaft in Belgrad an das Bundesministerium für auswärtige Angelegenheiten vom 19.4.1962, Grundzahl 205930-12/62, Geschäftszeichen AK-Öst (Jugosl.), BmaA.

employment agencies of individual republics (Zagreb and Sarajevo),⁶⁰ as well as to the liberal dispensation of work visas by the Austrian diplomatic representation authorities in Yugoslavia.⁶¹ It should be noted, however, that not all Yugoslav citizens were equally desirable as workers for the Austrian authorities. Historical sources indicate that, owing to their supposed lack of a work ethic, Yugoslav Roma were not to be given work visas.⁶²

The great significance of Yugoslav workers for the Austrian economy was also underlined by a statement by the Ministry of Social Affairs in 1964: "From the perspective of Austria, the conclusion of a recruitment agreement with Yugoslavia is nevertheless [...] very important since [...] the domestic economy relies heavily on Yugoslav labor, which is pouring into Austria more or less unregulated, resulting in not inconsiderable difficulties."⁶³ With the conclusion of a recruitment agreement, both the Austrian and Yugoslav parties sought a formalization, and thereby a stricter regulation, of labor migration of Yugoslav citizens to Austria. Yugoslavia, moreover, also hoped for increased protection for its citizens working abroad and attempted to assert this in the recruitment negotiations. To cite two examples: the text of the agreement granted Yugoslav employees the right to "agree on a new contract with their Austrian employer" during the course of their stay in Austria. Additionally, the contract also included the demand brought forward by Yugoslavia during negotiations in 1964, "that the Yugoslav employee, should he lose his employment, must be secured accommodation and provisions by an Austrian body until he finds new employment."⁶⁴ Beyond this, Yugoslavia assumed direct influence over the process of recruitment, since a mixed Austrian-Yugoslav commission decided "whether the selected labor forces suit the requirements of health and other requirements of the available workplaces."⁶⁵ In contrast, the final

60 Jahresbericht der Bundeswirtschaftskammer, 1966; Matuschek, "Ausländerpolitik in Österreich 1962-1985," 170; Ivanović, "Die Beschäftigung jugoslawischer Arbeitskräfte," 38.

61 In an inter-ministerial meeting on May 7, 1962, including representatives of the Foreign, Interior, Social, Trade, and Reconstruction Ministries as well as representatives of the ÖGB and BWK, a "benevolent visa-granting practice" was agreed upon for the "promotion of the immigration of Yugoslav labor." Grundzahl 250 019/62, Geschäftszeichen 35, BMHW, AdR, ÖStA.

62 Grundzahl 326 613-12/65, Geschäftszeichen Jugoslawien IX/2P, Abteilung 12, BmaA; Grundzahl 230 184-12/66, Geschäftszeichen Jugoslawien IX/2P, Abteilung 12, BmaA. On the discrimination of Yugoslav Roma, see Vida Bakondy, "Keine Arbeitsvisa an jugoslawische Roma," *Stimme: Zeitschrift der Initiative Minderheiten* Nr. 93 (2014): 15-17.

63 Schreiben des BMSV an die Sektion II im Hause vom 17.2.1964, Grundzahl 176/64, Geschäftszeichen Jugoslawien-Abk, Sektion II, BMSV, AdR, ÖStA.

64 BGBl. 42/1966, Article 12. For details on Yugoslavia's strong negotiating position, see Wollner, "Maßnahmen Jugoslawiens und der Türkei" and Rass, *Institutionalisierungsprozesse*.

65 BGBl. 42/1966.

selection of applicants in Spain and Turkey lay with the Austrian commission on site. As a result, the Yugoslav authorities repeatedly rejected the recruitment orders from Austrian businesses, for example because the wages offered were deemed too low.

The Austrian Recruitment Apparatus

In the course of the conclusion of intergovernmental recruitment agreements, a new administrative apparatus was also created in the 1960s that was intended to organize the recruitment of foreign labor. The Ministry of Social Affairs entrusted the Federal Economic Chamber with this task.⁶⁶ On the part of the employers, this was perceived not least as an opportunity not to leave the fields of employment services and immigration policy entirely to the "political opposition."⁶⁷ The costs of the recruitment apparatus were covered by the Federal Economic Chamber and its respective provincial chambers.⁶⁸ In February 1962, the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft für die Anwerbung ausländischer Arbeitskräfte* (Working Group for the Recruitment of Foreign Labor, AGA) took up operations as the center of the Austrian recruitment apparatus, with its offices in Vienna.⁶⁹ After the conclusion of intergovernmental recruitment agreements, commissions or recruitment offices were established in Madrid (1962), Istanbul (1964), and Belgrade (1966). Before the conclusion of the contracts, the AGA worked with the Austrian external trading offices of the BWK in the various countries or directly with the local labor market authorities.

A central task of the AGA concerned the organization of the recruitment of foreign labor. It constituted the intersection between Austrian

66 A little later, the presidential conference of the Chamber of Agriculture was also tasked with the recruitment of labor for agriculture. This also established a recruitment organization. According to Edith Tschank, a former employee, all the documentation of the Working Group of the Central Union of Agriculture and Forestry was shredded in recent years; Edith Tschank, in discussion with the author, Vienna, Aug. 1, 2013.

67 This argument was still being made in the 1980s to justify the existence of the recruitment organizations: "It must also be mentioned that the Federal Chamber through the creation of the committee in 1962 succeeded in achieving an exception to the monopoly in employment services, which to this day the Chamber of Labor and the ÖGB describe as a grave mistake by the Ministry of Social Affairs. The workers' representatives are of the opinion that the placement of foreigners should be handed back to the Ministry of Social Affairs." See Dienstreisen des Leiters. Dreiseitiges Papier, undatiert, V2, SPA-Kommission Istanbul, Archiv WKÖ.

68 Schreiben der BWK bezüglich Errichtung einer Anwerbeorganisation vom 14.11.1961, Sektionszahl 1362/60, Sektionsakten der Sparte Handel, WKW.

69 Wollner, "Auf dem Weg," 85.

businesses and the commissions in the countries of origin. Interested companies could turn to the AGA with a recruitment order, who in turn forwarded this together with the necessary documentation to the commission, who in turn cooperated with the responsible labor market authorities on site. All steps, from the assignment of contracts through to the settlement of the fixed recruitment fees, ran through the AGA. Apart from the handling of the necessary recruitment steps in Austria, a further task of the AGA involved the ongoing provision of information to Austrian companies and the various chamber organizations.⁷⁰ The Austrian commissions in the countries of origin were responsible for the complete handling of recruitment on site; they corresponded and negotiated with local authorities and workers, organized the examinations of workers and their travel to Austria, and also supported Austrian companies that selected workers themselves on site. The staff of the Austrian commissions was composed of Austrian and local employees. The running of the commission was entrusted to young men, mostly graduates of (international) trade and law.⁷¹

Statistics on the number of employees in the commission in Istanbul in the 1960s and 1970s show that the number of year-round employees changed over the years and that additional local staff were sometimes hired provisionally or dismissed, depending the order situation.⁷² For medical examinations and examination of labor skills, either local professionals were employed on a freelance basis or in cooperation with local institutions, such as national health authorities or recruitment offices of the FRG. In comparison to the recruitment organizations of other Western European states, such as the FRG or France, the Austrian recruitment apparatus remained relatively small. If we believe a statistic from the early

70 Since its founding, the AGA regularly issued circulars on legal and practical questions concerning the recruitment and employment of migrants, and published memoranda and ads on this issue in various economic papers. In 1973, for example, more than fifty circulars were issued. The AGA was moreover a member of various councils and committees that dealt with issues of migrant policy; it also participated in meetings between the social partners and ministries regarding the employment of foreigners.

71 The first head of the Austrian commission in Madrid, for example, Kurt Büchlmann, was 24 years old when he took on the position in 1962. He had recently completed his studies at the Vienna University of Economics and Business: Kurt Büchlmann, in discussion with Christina Hollomey and the author, Innsbruck, May 7, 2014. Siegfried Pfelegerl, born 1939, the long-term head of the commission in Istanbul, studied law and was also in his mid-20s when he took over the commission in 1965. Schreiben von Siegfried Pfelegerl an das Bundesministerium für Umwelt und Familie, Sektion II, Abteilung 2/3, vom 23.6.1988, A3-A12, SPA-Kommission Istanbul, Archiv WKÖ.

72 Anlage Kontrollamtsbericht vom 1.9.1981, Selektion Vermittlungszahlen – Personalstand Kommission Istanbul 1965-1981, V3-5, SPA-Kommission Istanbul, Archiv WKÖ.

1970s, the West German commission in Istanbul employed more than 133 staff, and the French more than 17 staff, while the Austrian commission only employed five staff members. A comparison with the Yugoslav commissions paints a similar picture: 116 West German employees, 24 French, and six Austrian.⁷³

All the documentation produced and received over the decades by the center of the Austrian recruitment apparatus in Vienna was destroyed after its official closure in 1993.⁷⁴ The same is true of the documentation of the recruitment commissions in Madrid and Belgrade.⁷⁵ The archive of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber merely contains an incomplete collection from the commission in Istanbul. This comprises the period from the late 1960s to the closure of the commission in Istanbul in 1993.⁷⁶ Apart from this, the archive of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber contains recruitment orders from Austrian companies for Yugoslav and Turkish workers from the 1960s; those for Spanish workers are missing. The position and voices of those who came to Austria as workers are only rarely documented in the existing correspondence, as in cases where the workers applied for a workplace in Austria or where complaints about working conditions were recorded.

The Recruitment Process

The placement of labor through the recruitment organizations of the Federal Economic Chamber took the form of a bureaucratic process and was based on a multistage selection procedure. The recruitment process was based on the principle of recruiting the most effective labor for the Austrian economy. This followed the tendency of reifying migrants in the recruitment process as objects of labor, who were treated as commodities, examined for whether or not they ultimately suited the given professional and medical qualities. The tendency toward commodification and/or objectification was, in my estimation, also expressed in the correspondence: "*Lieferscheine*" (delivery notes) and

73 Anhang Unterlagen für Gespräche mit dem Kontrollamt, undatiert, vermutlich 1972 oder 1973, V4, SPA-Kommission Istanbul, Archiv WKÖ.

74 Rita Tezzele, head of the Archiv WKÖ, in discussion with the author, Dec. 7, 2012.

75 Ibid.

76 With regard to this collection, it should be noted that not only is the entire documentation from the first four years of its existence (1964 to 1968) missing, but further material not deemed worthy of archiving was destroyed after being delivered to the archive; Rita Tezzele, in discussion with the author, Dec. 7, 2012. See also the index of the archive.

“*Transportbescheinigungen*” (transport confirmations) documented the journeys of the workers; “*Rest*” (the rest) or “*Restbestände*” (remainders) denoted the workers who had not yet arrived, while the term “*Stück*” (item) served as a unit of measurement for people. Simultaneously, there are numerous indications in historical sources that migrants resisted this objectification.⁷⁷

As a rule, the duration of recruitment, from the submission of the recruitment order to the arrival of the desired workers, took several weeks, if not months. In the mid-1960s, for example, the average recruitment period for unqualified workers in Yugoslavia was stipulated as four to six weeks and for qualified workers as up to eight weeks.⁷⁸ Generally speaking, a distinction was made between anonymous and person-specific recruitment, the recruitment of so-called “*Rückholer*” (workers who had already previously been employed by the company), and direct recruitment by companies. Person-specific recruitment and direct recruitment by companies in particular were subject to various regulations from the countries of origin, who – aiming to control emigration – continually changed these over the course of the years.⁷⁹

The recruitment procedure began with the submission of a company order to the AGA in Vienna. Apart from the order form, the company submitted completed employment contracts, valid for a maximum of one year, as well as the *Einzelzusicherung* (individual assurance) to the AGA. For each worker requested the company needed to receive a permit from the responsible labor market authority allowing it to employ an immigrant worker (*Einzelzusicherung*). Above and beyond this, the employer had to supply the immigrants with “accommodation customary for the location” (“*ortsübliche Unterkunft*”),⁸⁰ although the criterion “customary for the location” was a flexible concept, and complaints were repeatedly lodged – also from the countries of origin – about wretched housing conditions.⁸¹

77 See Vida Bakondy, “Bitte um 4 bis 5 türkische Maurer: Eine Analyse von Anwerbeakten der österreichischen Wirtschaftskammer,” in *Good Luck*, 68-79.

78 Merkblatt für die Anwerbung ausländischer Arbeitskräfte aus dem Jahr 1965, Sektionszahl 1226/64, Sektionsakten der Sparte Handel, Archiv WKW.

79 For more detail, see Wollner, “Maßnahmen Jugoslawiens und der Türkei.” Thus Yugoslavia fundamentally forbade individual recruitment by companies. Wollner, “Auf dem Weg,” 102.

80 Merkblatt für die Anwerbung ausländischer Arbeitskräfte aus dem Jahr 1965, Sektionszahl 1226/64, Sektionsakten der Sparte Handel, Archiv WKW.

81 See for example the complaint of the regional employment agency in Sarajevo to the AGA of May 12, 1966, which was made after an inspection of the accommodation for forty Yugoslav workers employed by a Carinthian construction company. Jug 54/1966, MF 904, Archiv WKÖ.

After the companies had submitted all necessary documentation and paid the recruitment fees for each worker requested,⁸² the AGA forwarded the recruitment orders to the Austrian commissions.⁸³ The data given in the recruitment orders offered the basis for potential exclusionary criteria for recruitment in the countries of origin. Apart from information about salaries and working conditions, the duration of employment, and accommodation, they generally included details on the number of workers requested, the country of origin, sex, age, and technical qualifications – insofar as these were stipulated. Sometimes the companies specified workers by name, either because they had already worked at the company in the previous year, or because of suggestions by relatives or acquaintances who had worked at the company previously. In principle, workers between the ages of 18 to a maximum of 50 were sought after, with younger labor generally favored. With regard to the recruitment of women, the marital status “single” was preferred, since it promised more flexibility and adaptation. The immigration, or later bringing in of family members, was only promoted in the rarest of cases.⁸⁴ While some companies only submitted general specifications on the desired number, national origin, gender, and occupation, others offered a precise profile, by indicating regional wishes, or specifications regarding bodily constitution and character or personal qualities, among other requests: when asked for “specific wishes of the employer in selection of labor,” a concrete factory answered, “strong, willing workers”;⁸⁵ in the recruitment order for seven female spoolers from 1964, “single, nimble,

82 The fixed recruitment fee was intended to cover the costs for the issuance of visas, medical examination, travel to Austria, provisions for the journey, as well as “deportation costs following expulsion in the case of uncollectibility.” Merkblatt für die Anwerbung ausländischer Arbeitskräfte aus dem Jahr 1965, Sektionszahl 1226/64, Sektionsakten der Sparte Handel, Archiv WKW. In the case of recruitment in Turkey, however, applicants had to cover part of the technical and medical examinations themselves, leading to criticisms by the Turkish labor market authorities since this practice contradicted the regulations of the recruitment agreement. Bericht über eine Dienstreise des Kommissionsleiters Siegfried Pflegerl nach Ankara vom 3.3.1972, V1-V2, SPA-Kommission Istanbul, V1-V2, Archiv WKÖ.

83 In practice, the AGA had to repeatedly demand payment of the fixed recruitment fees from the companies in the early years.

84 Only the recruitment agreement with Spain contained a clause concerning the subsequent immigration of next of kin. BGBl. 193/1962. Simultaneously, some companies expressed interest from an early stage in the long-term employment of immigrant workers and supported the subsequent immigration of next of kin, for example in the case of a Turkish tailor in a clothing company in Tyrol in 1963. In order to avoid losing the worker, the company attempted to recruit his wife who was to follow him to Austria together with their child. The files note: “We request that she at least be brought in, pending permission by the Turkish employment agency, as a relative (with the child) so that we can keep this good worker.” T66/1963, MF 886, Archiv WKÖ.

85 Jug 23/1966, MF 904, Archiv WKÖ.

suitability for piecework” workers were requested;⁸⁶ in a 1967 profile of a recruitment order, a fish processing company sought workers who were, “female, 20–35 years old, if possible Slovenian (no Serbs).”⁸⁷

It is clear from the sources that businesses and employees of the recruitment organizations occasionally drew generalizing conclusions on personal characteristics and job performance on the basis of regional, national, and social origin. This is evident, for example, in the report of a company doctor in a Lower Austrian textile business from 1969 who had participated in the recruitment examinations in Banja Luka in Yugoslavia. His report, compiled for the management of the company, states that “illiterates” and “partial illiterates” were “downright predestined by fate for manual labor”; one would have to “accept a prolonged training period” with “labor deriving from agriculture” but could “afterwards reckon with all the more industriousness and greater loyalty to the company.” “One has to take into account that the labor forces in agriculture at home and abroad have been used to work from childhood onward and that precisely for such workers employment in a large factory signifies an unheard of improvement in their environment, which they will under no circumstances wish to jeopardize.”⁸⁸ In this understanding, economic disparities, structural disadvantages, and the resulting lack of options promised more willing workers. While illiteracy sometimes counted as grounds for exclusion,⁸⁹ a low level of education combined with a rural background in part augured a particular industriousness.⁹⁰ In some cases, German language skills were also demanded.⁹¹ For this reason, some businesses preferred immigrant workers from Yugoslavia, since these sometimes already had some command of German or were attributed a faster ability to learn German and quicker adaptation to living conditions in Austria.⁹²

The ethnic and cultural stereotypes – such as those about “the Turks”⁹³ – that were repeatedly expressed in the recruitment discourses were sometimes also interlaced with gendered stereotypes. So for example, in reference to the “sociological standing of the woman in Turkish society,” a statement by

86 Jug 7/1964, MF 899, Archiv WKÖ.

87 Jug 167/1967, MF 980, Archiv WKÖ. Emphasis in the original.

88 Jug 1968/1969, MF 979, Archiv WKÖ.

89 T 50/1969, MF 898, Archiv WKÖ.

90 Jug 167/1967, MF 980, Archiv WKÖ.

91 T 9/403, MF 898, Archiv WKÖ.

92 T 16/1963, MF 885, Archiv WKÖ.

93 See for example the letter from the head of the commission in Istanbul, Siegfried Pfegerl, to the AGA in Vienna of October 22, 1971 in response to the requested “comparison” of the “differences between Austrians and Turks.” Unterlagen für die AGA-Ausschusssitzung 1971, V2, SPA-Kommission Istanbul, Archiv WKÖ.

the Austrian commission in Istanbul on the "efficient placement of women" in 1975 claimed that it constitutes "a significantly complicated and difficult step for a Turkish woman to take up employment abroad."⁹⁴ If Turkish workers were generally attributed a greater difficulty integrating into the "host country," this was all the more true for women, since "the Turkish woman, through her entanglement in authoritarian social structures" would be "even less able, when suddenly left to herself, to deal with the great psychological difficulties which arise from the integration problem."⁹⁵ The examples cited demonstrate clearly how hegemonic conceptions of ethnicity, in this case about "the Turks," were connected to gendered images in the recruitment discourses. In this context the "host society," or the recruiting country, functioned as a normative yardstick. Recruitment difficulties were culturalized and not – as formulated elsewhere – regarded as the result of competition between the various European recruiting countries as well as the workers' rational consideration of well-paying job offers.

In Situ: Recruitment Examinations in the Case of the Austrian Commission in Istanbul

After the submission of the company order, the Austrian commission forwarded the request to the responsible national or local labor market authorities. These in turn conducted a preliminary selection from a list of the people who had registered as seeking employment, and informed those selected of the offer. If the workers decided on a workplace in Austria, they appeared in person at the commission. Recruitment orders of Austrian companies were repeatedly rejected: either because the tendered salary and working conditions did not meet expectations and the applicants decided for a better offer, or because the selection criteria proved in reality to be unfulfillable. This is evident in the example of a Lower Austrian textile business, which submitted an order in Turkey for the recruitment of 40-70 textile workers "aged 18 to 24, over 1.50 meters tall, and no illiterates"; of these, "at least 20" were to be "trained textile workers."⁹⁶ As is evident in the sources, the order could not be completed due to "the delimiting factors stipulated by the company (qualification, minimum education, and minimum height)," but also due to the wages offered and competition from the

94 Schreiben von Siegfried Pfliegerl an die AGA vom 15.7.1975 betreffend effiziente Frauenvermittlung, B19, SPA-Kommission Istanbul, Archiv WKÖ.

95 Ibid.

96 T50/1969, MF 898, Archiv WKÖ.

FRG.⁹⁷ In such cases, the commission recommended altering the selection criteria (higher wages, more flexibility regarding age, height, education etc.) in order to make a placement possible after all.

A central component of the on-site recruitment examinations was the examination of the physical and work suitability of the applicants for the workplace. These decided whether or not a worker would ultimately be selected for a workplace in Austria. In addition, immigrants had to submit a criminal record certificate from the police confirming their good conduct. In the case of recruitment of workers with specific qualifications, the AGA recommended that the companies be present on site during the selection. Presumably, companies planning to recruit a large number of workers would be the most likely to follow this suggestion.⁹⁸ Still, company representatives “rarely” went to Turkey.⁹⁹ The work skill tests were then administered either by staff from the commission or by local professionals.¹⁰⁰ In the design of the work skill tests for “construction technicians, textile and metal technicians, carpenters etc., the commission relied on the expertise of the German liaison office,” since the “Turkish labor market administration was not capable of conducting such technical preliminary examinations,” according to the former head of the Austrian commission in Istanbul, Siegfried Pfelegerl.¹⁰¹

The physical and mental health of the applicants ultimately constituted a crucial criterion in the selection process. This was not only to keep the cost to the Austrian welfare state as low as possible, but also to ensure the protection of the domestic population. The so-called “*Infektionsfreiheitsschein*” (Certificate of Freedom from Infection), which was issued by the commission in Istanbul after the final examination, was supposed to guarantee that upon entry immigrants were free from infections that were legally required to be disclosed. Immigrants were therefore construed from the outset as potential carriers of infectious diseases and thus a danger to public security and order in Austria.

97 Ibid.

98 See T50/1969 and T35/1969, MF 898, Archiv WKÖ. Sometimes the company doctor also traveled to check medical suitability.

99 Die Verwaltungsgagenden der Kommission, undatiert, 23, V5, SPA-Kommission Istanbul, Archiv WKÖ.

100 Schreiben von Siegfried Pfelegerl an den Leiter der Österreichischen Kommission in der SFRJ, Franz Koppensteiner, vom 3.8.1973 betreffend “Selektionsunterlagen,” V 6-8, SPA-Kommission Istanbul, Archiv WKÖ. Regarding the examination of construction workers, the commission in Istanbul stated: “The examination of technical workers is conducted by a civil engineer, who is no longer integrated in the office, who conducts examinations as required. For small numbers, the necessary examination materials (construction materials and tools) are available to the commission, for larger company selections and larger orders the examination is conducted at construction sites.” Ibid.

101 Siegfried Pfelegerl, e-mail correspondence with the author, April 29, 2013.

While the regulation of the medical examination was formulated rather generally in the intergovernmental recruitment agreements, in practice candidates had to undergo a comprehensive medical examination. During the recruitment process, not only was the medical or physical suitability for the requesting workplace generally tested, but "a general clinical examination including locomotor system, ears, eyes, and a neuro-psychiatric examination, pulse and blood pressure measurements, a urine analysis, [and] a full blood test" were also conducted.¹⁰² With women, the discovery of pregnancy also constituted a definite criterion for exclusion.¹⁰³ According to an internal memorandum of the Austrian commission in Istanbul from the late 1960s, the applicants for a workplace in Austria underwent the following mandatory examination steps: "1) full blood examination, 2) serial examination (height, weight, eyes, ears, venereal diseases etc.), 3) X-ray examination, 4) examination of stool, and 5) examination of suitability."¹⁰⁴ As a rule, the first three examination steps had to be completed at a Turkish medical authority even before appearing in person at the commission, the costs of which had to be borne by the applicants themselves. The fourth and fifth examination steps, by contrast, were conducted by the commission's medical officer. The issuance of the "Certificate of Freedom from Infection," which followed a positive final examination, was also the responsibility of the medical officer. A lack of faith in the Turkish medical authorities may have played a role in this deviation from the directives stipulated in the recruitment agreement.¹⁰⁵ The final examination of suitability comprised "the concluding medical evaluation of the X-ray and lab results and an individual general medical examination of the worker."¹⁰⁶ This examination focused once more on the general medical condition of the candidate and their physical and medical "suitability" for the requesting workplace in Austria.¹⁰⁷ Even "minor

102 Schreiben der Österreichischen Kommission in der Türkei vom 13.8.1990, C, SPA-Kommission Istanbul, Archiv WKÖ.

103 According to Siegfried Pfelegerl, pregnancy tests with women were generally conducted. Siegfried Pfelegerl, e-mail correspondence with the author, April 2, 2014. At least in the early years of the Austrian recruitment practice, this presumably only happened in cases where pregnancy was suspected, or in the case of the expressed wish of the company. See T2/1963, MF 885 und Jug 12/1964, MF 899, Archiv WKÖ.

104 Die Verwaltungsgenden der Kommission, undatiert, 6, V5, SPA-Kommission Istanbul, Archiv WKÖ.

105 Schreiben von Siegfried Pfelegerl an die AGA vom 23.8.1990 betreffend Infektionsfreiheitsschein, C 4, SPA-Kommission Istanbul, Archiv WKÖ. The "Certificate of Freedom from Infection" was issued by national medical authorities in the cases of recruitment in Spain and Yugoslavia (here: "medical report"). These were valid for a period of fourteen days, but could be extended.

106 Siegfried Pfelegerl, e-mail correspondence with the author, April 2, 2014.

107 On the criteria for exclusion, see Richtlinien für die Schlussuntersuchung vom 2.1.1973, C 5, SPA-Kommission Istanbul, Archiv WKÖ.

physical deficiencies” – including, for example, lower than average sight in one eye¹⁰⁸ – could constitute a criterion for exclusion. In such cases, the commission recommended inquiring with the AGA “whether the company wishes to recruit.”¹⁰⁹ In the placement of so-called “*Rückholer*” (workers who had already previously been employed by the company) and workers specified by name, the criteria were in part less strict, since the selection was based on a “given, specific interest of an Austrian company in the placement.”¹¹⁰ In some cases, decisions were made on an individual basis, for example dependent on the type of employment in Austria.¹¹¹

There are occasional references to the number of rejections for medical reasons: a memorandum from 1975, for example, states that 25-30% of applicants for a job in Austria had to undergo a follow-up appearance at the commission,¹¹² with the rate of rejection for medical reasons being “significantly higher” with women.¹¹³ However, there is no indication of the reasons for this gender difference. The fact that a verdict of “provisionally unsuitable” existed and a “follow-up appearance” at the commission following treatment was possible indicates that there was a certain leeway and that, depending on the diagnosis, workers were given the possibility of a second chance. The sources indicate that the medical examinations at the Austrian commission in Turkey followed stricter criteria than was commonplace in official medical examinations in Austria.¹¹⁴

A systematic analysis of the subjective experiences of migrants in the recruitment process has not been conducted to date. The few recorded memories indicate, however, that the medical examinations were above all experienced as unpleasant and demeaning.¹¹⁵ Simultaneously, there are indications that immigrants sought and found strategies to circumvent

108 Die Verwaltungsgenden der Kommission, undatiert, 25, V5, SPA-Kommission Istanbul, Archiv WKÖ.

109 Ibid.

110 Richtlinien für die Schlussuntersuchung vom 2.1.1973, C5, SPA-Kommission Istanbul, Archiv WKÖ.

111 These included anomalies of the skin, missing fingers, or limited flexibility of joints and extremities. Ibid.

112 Schreiben von Siegfried Pfelegerl an die AGA vom 7.2.1975 betreffend Laboruntersuchungen, C2, SPA-Kommission Istanbul, Archiv WKÖ.

113 Schreiben von Siegfried Pfelegerl an die AGA vom 15.7.1975 betreffend effiziente Frauenvermittlung, B19, SPA-Kommission Istanbul, Archiv WKÖ.

114 Schreiben von Siegfried Pfelegerl an die AGA vom 8.9.1986 betreffend Grundsätze der ärztlichen Untersuchungen, C5, SPA-Kommission Istanbul, Archiv WKÖ. This also fundamentally concerned all examinations conducted abroad, which according to this letter was a result of the express wishes of the Austrian Social and Labor Ministries.

115 See for example the descriptions of Emin Erdoğan and Aslan Doğan, who came to Austria in the early 1970s, in *50 Jahre türkische Gastarbeit in Österreich*, ed. Ali Özbaş, Handan Özbaş, and Joachim Hainzl (Graz: Leykam, 2014), 287-288 and 307-308.

the strict recruitment criteria. This is also testified to in reports of the commission in Istanbul concerning bribery allegations against Turkish staff members and Turkish authorities in order to achieve positive test results.¹¹⁶ In 1974, there was talk of an "organization of fraudsters" who promised support, against payment, to "gullible workers," especially from rural regions, with the completion of the formalities and the attainment of a "favorable result."¹¹⁷ As demonstrated by Gamze Ongan and Dilman Muradoğlu, "a kind of 'niche economy'" emerged around the recruitment offices in Istanbul and the Turkish employment agency, which "consisted of street photographers, consultation and translation offices, restaurants, cafés, hotels, and so-called mediators who would take care of the formalities on behalf of the applicants, or at least claimed to."¹¹⁸

The final selection by the commission did not always meet the expectations of the companies, as documented in complaints about so-called "*Fehlanwerbungen*" (literally, "mis-recruitments"). These occurred when, for example, local labor-market authorities intervened for reasons of migration policy and placed other workers than those that had been specifically requested.¹¹⁹ Austrian companies moreover complained about missing workers, workers who changed their workplace (here we also find the figure of the "*Abwerber*," the poacher, in contrast to the "*Anwerber*," or recruiter), and cases where workers were categorized as "insufficient" due to illness, pregnancy, unsatisfactory work, or "refusal to work." In reaction, sanctions and compensation were demanded: the deportation of the person concerned, the reimbursement of the costs of recruitment, and the prohibition of further employment with a different company in Austria.¹²⁰ While in cases of "poaching" of labor by other companies, only complaints or recommendations for improvement could be submitted, the correspondence

116 Schreiben von Siegfried Pflegerl an die AGA vom 16.12.1974 betreffend Röntgenuntersuchungen der Kommission, Schreiben von Siegfried Pflegerl an die AGA vom 9.1.1975 betreffend Neue Laborregelung, C, SPA-Kommission Istanbul, Archiv WKÖ.

117 Schreiben von Siegfried Pflegerl an die AGA vom 25.11.1974 betreffend Betrügerorganisationen, C2, SPA-Kommission Istanbul, Archiv WKÖ. Pflegerl was here referring to examinations conducted by the West German commission in 1973.

118 Dilman Muradoğlu and Gamze Ongan, "1964 Anwerbestelle," in *Gastarbajteri: 40 Jahre Arbeitsmigration*, ed. Hakan Gürses, Cornelia Kogoj, and Sylvia Mattl (Vienna: Mandelbaum, 2004), 122-124 (here 124).

119 Jug 23/1966, MF 904, Archiv WKÖ.

120 See Vida Bakondy, "(K)Ein Paradies versprochen...: Die Anfänge der Arbeitsmigration nach Österreich seit den 1960er Jahren," in *Der Onkel aus Amerika: Aufbruch in eine neue Welt*, ed. Verein Industriekultur und Alltagsgeschichte and Werner Koroschitz (Klagenfurt: Drava, 2006), 67-74; Vida Bakondy, "Bitte um 4 bis 5 türkische Maurer," 68-79; and Vida Bakondy, "Die zwei Türken wollen nach Deutschland: Mobilität als Strategie des Aufbegehrens gegen die Arbeitsverhältnisse in den 1960er Jahren," *Stimme: Zeitschrift der Initiative Minderheiten* 89 (2013): 15-17.

regarding “insufficient” recruitments also included threats to refuse the mediation by the AGA in future. The costs arising for the respective business were repeatedly cited here.

The complaints point above all to the fact that immigrants to Austria occasionally did not find the working and living conditions that had been promised them. There is documentation of demands for improvement,¹²¹ strikes,¹²² or the changing of workplaces. To prevent the latter, a decree of the ÖGB and BWK in 1966 resulted in the introduction of the *Ausländer-Arbeitskarte* (Foreigner’s Work Card).¹²³ This noted the workplace and also the “medically certified harmlessness” of the worker. The card served as an ID, which migrants were required to carry with them at all times until the passing of the Foreign Nationals Employment Law in 1975. As a precautionary measure to prevent immigrants’ mobility, some companies held on to their personal documents: “The two Turks, for example, who wanted to leave my company for Germany, waited for two days from morning to evening at the office to effect the release of their papers, although they had been informed through the interpreter that this was pointless,” reported a Lower Austrian construction company in a memorandum to the AGA in 1963.¹²⁴

The desire for total control over the immigrants, as repeatedly demanded or imagined by Austrian companies and authorities, was ultimately not realizable. The economy’s demand for immigrants was too great, as was the competition between Austrian companies, and with companies in other Western European states. Mobility thus constituted a pivotal strategy of resistance for immigrants to defend themselves against working conditions, whether through changing their job, returning to their country of origin, or traveling on to another country that offered more attractive working conditions.

121 For example, the federal police in Innsbruck reported that on June 14, 1966, 36 Yugoslav workers at an Innsbruck construction company “in the period from 7am to 10am refused to work and demanded more pay, better food, and better accommodation.” Grundzahl 221 721-11/66, Geschäftszeichen Jugoslawien V/5P, Abteilung 12, BmaA.

122 These led in many cases to deportations back to the country of origin. To name one example: according to a report of the District Commission of Feldkirch, three Greek workers received an unlimited exclusion order in the summer of 1962 and were deported to Greece as a result, because they had “incited the other workers [...] employed at the factory to discontent, so that they had to be dismissed by the company.” Bericht der Bezirkshauptmannschaft Feldkirch vom 13.7.1962, Grundzahl 86 003-24/69, AdR, ÖStA.

123 Erlass des Bundesministeriums für soziale Verwaltung betreffend Vereinbarung über die Beschäftigung ausländischer Arbeitskräfte im Jahr 1966 (Kontingent-Vereinbarung 1966), Sektionszahl 1226/64, Sektionsakten der Sparte Handel, Archiv WKW; Weisung an die Landesarbeitsämter. Renée Winter, “Migration kontrollieren?,” in *Gastarbeiteri*, 53-59 (here 54).

124 T 17/1963, MF 885, Archiv WKÖ.

The difficulties in recruitment outlined here—the associated costs, the relatively long waiting periods, as well as the criticism of “mis-recruitments”—led to the recruitment institutions increasingly losing significance for labor migration to Austria in the latter half of the 1960s. Increasing numbers of Austrian employers relied on private mediation of workers from among the circles of acquaintances and relatives of workers already employed in Austria.¹²⁵ The company would often reward this mediation with payment of a “bounty” per worker.¹²⁶ In the following years, the informal forms of migration and recruitment also included the employment of immigrant workers who had entered Austria as tourists (without work visas), known as “tourist employment.” The foundation for this was Austria’s conclusion of visa agreements with Turkey in 1955 and Yugoslavia in 1965.¹²⁷ These enabled Yugoslav and Turkish citizens to enter Austria as tourists with the right of stay (visa-free) for three months. To stay for the purposes of work and for employment in Austria, a permit was applied for after entering the country. “Most employment relationships at the time thus began with a legalization,” according to the migration researcher August Gächter.¹²⁸ How important the so-called tourist employment was to Austrian businesses is also testified to by the fact that in 1968 the employment of “immigrant foreign labor [...] without work visas” was listed as a third form of recruitment in a memorandum of the Economic Chamber (alongside recruitment through the AGA and individual recruitment by companies).¹²⁹

The beginning of the economic crisis in Austria in 1974 resulted in an end to the more or less unhindered immigration of labor migrants who had come “to and fro across the border seasonally and according to the

125 Perchinig, “Von der Fremdarbeit zur Integration?,” 146.

126 Matuschek, “Ausländerpolitik in Österreich 1962–1985,” 173. See also the descriptions of Ružica Gavrić, who was also offered money by her company *Elin* for the private procurement of labor in Yugoslavia. Ružica Gavrić, in discussion with the author, Vienna, Sept. 9, 2015.

127 August Gächter, “Migrationspolitik in Österreich seit 1945,” *Arbeitspapiere Migration und soziale Realität* 12, no. 5 (2008), accessed Nov. 13, 2015, <https://www.zsi.at/attach/p1208vukovic.pdf>.

128 Ibid.

129 Merkblatt über die Anwerbung und Beschäftigung ausländischer Arbeitskräfte 1968, Sektionszahl 1082/68, Sektionsakten der Sparte Handel, Archiv WKW. That same year, the abrogation of the Austrian recruitment organizations was discussed since the Austrian recruitment apparatus had come under fire within the chambers due to its lack of efficiency and the notable costs. This also resulted in the temporary dissolution of the commissions in Belgrade and Istanbul. Schreiben von S. Pflegerl an den Leiter der AGA, P. Binder, vom 18.12.1982 betreffend Liquidierungsvorschlag Anwerbeorganisation, V3-5, SPA-Kommission Istanbul, Archiv WKÖ. Schreiben der Arbeitsgemeinschaft für die Anwerbung ausländischer Arbeitskräfte vom 25.7.1968, Sektionszahl 1082/68, Sektionsakten der Sparte Handel, Archiv WKW.

availability of workplaces.”¹³⁰ The Austrian state reacted with limitations on access by forbidding “tourist employment” and introducing a new Foreign Nationals Employment Law in 1975.¹³¹ According to the migration researcher Bernhard Perchinig, this was a reaction “with clear restrictions to the economic crisis,” involving the intensification of “domestic primacy” in the Austrian labor market.¹³² During the economic crisis from 1974 to 1976, “some 55,000 foreign employees were deprived of their work permits and therefore also their residency permits, and another 33,000 between 1982 and 1984.”¹³³ These restrictive measures, however, did not lead to a reduction in immigration to Austria. Rather, they forced the subsequent immigration of family members, since labor migrants now had to choose between returning and settling.¹³⁴

130 Gächter, “Ausländerpolitik seit dem Zweiten Weltkrieg,” 107.

131 August Gächter and research group, “Vom Inlandarbeiterschutzgesetz bis Eurodac Abkommen,” in *Gastarbeiteri*, 31-45 (here 37). As early as the beginning of the 1970s, “tourist employment” had already come under fire from both the ÖGB and the Yugoslav state, who saw this as a fundamental breach of the recruitment agreements. This form of recruitment and employment therefore also became a central topic of discussion for the mixed Austrian-Yugoslav commission, which began to meet regularly from 1970 onward.

132 Perchinig, “Von der Fremdarbeit zur Integration?,” 146.

133 Ibid.

134 Ibid., as well as Gächter, “Ausländerpolitik seit dem Zweiten Weltkrieg,” 107.

