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# MASTERARBEIT

Immigrants from the new EU member states.  
Policy reactions in Rotterdam and Vienna.

Verfasser/in

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angestrebter akademischer Grad

Master of Arts (MA)

Wien, 2014

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt: A 066 664

Studienrichtung lt. Studienblatt: Masterstudium DDP Urban Studies

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## Abstract:

This thesis investigates the political reaction in Rotterdam and Vienna to immigration from the new EU member states after EU enlargement in 2004 and 2007. Local governments cannot control immigration and therefore have to resort to other policies to react to an influx of immigrants. It is explored how the presence of populist radical right parties in the political system of both cities has had an influence on the policies adopted by other parties. An analysis of the policies implemented in both cities concludes that in Rotterdam, the city has taken up a very active role by bringing together all relevant stakeholders to combat the negative side-effects of the immigration from the new member states. Over the entire political spectrum, fears exist that this immigration flow puts another burden on a city that its policy makers regard as having too many already. Vienna, on the contrary, has not developed specific policy on immigration from the new member states, but accommodates it through general immigration and integration policies. The reaction in both cities fits into the cities' respective traditions on how to deal with immigration, but these traditions diverge significantly. This shows that the emergence of the populist radical right has led to various responses from other parties, depending greatly on local contextual factors.

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# Introduction

In the past decade, the European Union has expanded drastically to the east, incorporating many countries in Central and Eastern Europe that were once on the other side of the Iron Curtain. In 2004, eight countries<sup>1</sup> in this part of Europe joined the EU and three years later, Bulgaria and Romania also became member states. More recently, Croatia became the EU's 28<sup>th</sup> and newest member. This development tied the European continent together in unprecedented ways, and opened up possibilities for the inhabitants of the new member states to live and work in other parts of the EU without needing a visa or other kind of permit. This possibility was and is very attractive for many. Twenty years after the fall of the Iron Curtain, large differences in levels of income and economic development still exist between Western and Eastern Europe, so the access to labour markets of Western European countries means the possibility to earn a lot more than is possible at home in the new member states (NMS). As a consequence, a large number of people have migrated from the NMS to other EU countries. This migration flow naturally has an impact on the receiving regions in Western Europe.

Immigration is a highly sensitive political topic, and emotions over it have been strong. There is a lot of fear for immigration in Western Europe, which has translated politically in the rise of parties on the right of the political spectrum with a strong anti-immigration stance. They argue that 'mass-immigration' threatens the identity of the nation, causes higher crime rates, job losses for natives as well as 'welfare tourism'. Since migration from the NMS to the older member states has become a very important migration flow in many of the old EU member states, often the single largest group of immigrants, the attention of the political immigration discourse and the anti-immigrant parties that play such an important role in it, has moved to this migration movement.

A negative discourse on immigration and the advocacy of measures restricting immigration have not been limited to these populist radical right anti-immigration parties<sup>2</sup>. Mainstream parties, including social-democratic, christian-democratic, conservative and liberal parties,

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<sup>1</sup> Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Slovenia.

<sup>2</sup> The exact definition of *populist radical right* parties will be explained in chapter 2 of this thesis.

often have reacted to the rise of anti-immigration sentiments and populist radical right parties by moving to a stance more critical of immigration.

One aspect that makes the migration of citizens from NMS to Western Europe stand out is that it is tied to a unique political situation, the political process of European unification, which has created the conditions for this migration flow to occur. The same parties that are against immigration usually also are eurosceptics. Since their core ideology is nativist,<sup>3</sup> trying to protect the nation from any negative influence from outside, whether they are people or supra-national organisations. These political convictions make them even more critical of this specific migration flow, as it reflects the combination between immigration and the loss of sovereignty of the nation state.

Immigration policy is generally discussed and studied on the national level, which is generally regarded as being the most important level politically. Little literature exist specifically on the ways local government deals with immigration, and how the general characteristics of this level of government influence the policy outcomes (Caponio 2010). The general regulatory and legal framework that enables the labour migration within the EU is a matter of European and national political institutions. When it comes to the practical dealings with the migrants however, it is the local level that gains importance. The arrival of labour migrants comes with some challenges such as providing housing for those newly arrived, integrating the children of immigrants in the education system, and if they occur, managing tensions between immigrants and the existing population. Hence, the cities of arrival of the labour migration are confronted with this immigration flows and its consequences, without having the means to control it. This structural situation might have important effects on the political reaction at the local level. Cities can only take measures to accommodate the immigration, or lobby at the national and European level for changes in the regulatory framework, but traditional immigration policy subjects like controlling who is allowed in, are outside of the realm of local government.

### Research question

This thesis will take a closer look at the way cities in the old member states of the EU react to the influx of migrants from the NMS, especially given the political context of the moment

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<sup>3</sup> The definition of *nativism* is further explained in chapter 2.

in which immigration is such a sensitive issue. The cases of two different cities, Rotterdam and Vienna will be compared. Both are cities that received substantial numbers of immigrants from the NMS. Both cities also have a strong populist radical right party with an anti-immigration agenda in their city's politics, which might influence the ways in which the cities react to this new flow of immigration. The first question this thesis tries to answer therefore is:

*What is the political response to the influx of immigrants from the Middle and Eastern European Countries that entered the EU in 2004 and 2007 in terms of policies and rhetoric in the cities of Vienna and Rotterdam?*

The second question asked in the thesis is:

*Does the handling by Vienna and Rotterdam of the immigration from the NMS fit into an already existing discourse and set of policies regarding immigration that is influenced by the presence of a strong populist radical right party with an anti-immigration agenda?*

The hypothesis behind this second question is that populist radical right parties with a strong anti-immigration stance have influenced the political climate concerning immigration as a whole, leading also other parties to adopt more restrictive policies towards immigration. However, since the cities lack the competence to control the migration flow and thus are unable to achieve the core policy goal of the populist radical right parties, it is unsure how this political anti-immigration agenda translates itself into policy on the city level.

### Structure of the thesis

This thesis will start with two theoretical chapters. In the first chapter, the European and national regulatory frameworks of migration within the EU will be explained. It describes the context in which both cities have to operate. The second chapter provides an overview of the core ideology of populist radical right parties and especially their stance on immigration. Also, it will give an overview of the scientific literature on how the presence of such parties in the political arena might change immigration policies of other parties. In the third and fourth chapters, the case studies of Rotterdam and Vienna respectively are presented. Both chapters begin with a general overview of the cities and their politics, with the focus on the way the cities have dealt with immigration until so far. Then, an overview is given of the size and nature of immigration of NMS nationals to both cities. Subsequently, the policies concerning NMS immigration and immigrants are presented and analysed for the cases of



the two cities. It will also be explained how the populist radical right wing parties present in the cities' political landscape have reacted to the immigration from the NMS. The fifth chapter will compare the policies in both cities, and look in which ways they might be influenced by the presence of the populist radical right parties.

This thesis wants to explore the relationship between the presence of radical right wing parties and the policies cities have developed to deal with the influx of immigrations from the NMS. However, it does not claim to be able to outline general rules regarding this relationship. First of all, the presence of a radical right wing party is merely one of multiple factors that have an influence on the policies developed and therefore it is impossible to isolate the influence of one single factor given that in every case there is a unique situation and combination of influencing factors. Secondly, due to the fact that this thesis only encompasses two case studies, which both have their local specificities, the scope of the thesis is too narrow that draw conclusions that are generally applicable. It is hoped however, that the results of this thesis both can shed light on the specific situation in Rotterdam and Vienna as well as give indications on the different ways in which populist radical right parties influence urban policies concerning immigrants that then can be investigated in further research.

# Chapter 1: EU-Enlargement and Freedom of Movement

Freedom of movement for EU-citizens is one of the four basic freedoms that form the core on which the European Union is built since 1993. This freedom of movement was originally conceived as the freedom of movement for workers. This means that citizens of the European Union can seek employment everywhere in the Union without needing a visa or other kind of official approval and that no discrimination is on the basis of nationality within the EU.<sup>4</sup> Freedom of movement has since then been extended and now also goes beyond employment related migration. In principle, every EU citizen is free to live anywhere in the EU. The freedom of movement for workers also allows workers to take their children and partner with them, even if these do not have an EU-nationality (Schimmel 2006). The principle of freedom of movement is very important for the construction of a united Europe, and is described as a “*fundamental right of the Union citizen*” (Schimmel 2006: 773).

When the EU expanded eastwards in the first decade of this century, so did the right to travel and to settle freely everywhere within the Union. It is important to note that on the European level, migration within the Union - the freedom of movement - is framed as a basic right of citizens. This is a very different approach from the national migration and integration policies that have been developed in most member states that stress the ability of the nation state to control the influx and demand an effort from immigrants to integrate into the society of arrival (Engbersen 2012). As a consequence, the way countries can deal politically

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<sup>4</sup> This right is written down in article 45 of the Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union in the following way:

1. *Freedom of movement for workers shall be secured within the Union.*
  2. *Such freedom of movement shall entail the abolition of any discrimination based on nationality between workers of the Member States as regards employment, remuneration and other conditions of work and employment.*
  3. *It shall entail the right, subject to limitations justified on grounds of public policy, public security or public health:*
    - (a) *to accept offers of employment actually made;*
    - (b) *to move freely within the territory of Member States for this purpose;*
    - (c) *to stay in a Member State for the purpose of employment in accordance with the provisions governing the employment of nationals of that State laid down by law, regulation or administrative action;*
    - (d) *to remain in the territory of a Member State after having been employed in that State, subject to conditions which shall be embodied in regulations to be drawn up by the Commission.*
  4. *The provisions of this Article shall not apply to employment in the public service.*
- <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:12012E/TXT&from=EN>

with a for instance a Polish immigrant is very different than that of an immigrant coming from neighbouring Ukraine.

When the EU expanded eastwards in 2004 and 2007, this had serious implications for the freedom of movement. Until then, the 15 member states of the EU had more or less the same standard of economic development, so relatively little economic migration took place between the countries and migration flows were relatively balanced. The enlargement to the east however, meant the entrance to the EU of countries much poorer than the existing member states. Because of the unequal level of economic development, widespread fears existed that the enlargement would cause a large flow of labour migration from the new to the old member states, which would result in jobs being taken away from locals, because of the willingness of the migrants to work for lower wages than people in the old member states (Shimmel 2006). In the negotiations about enlargement, the old member states demanded and finally received the right to limit the freedom of movement for workers from any new member state for a transitional period of maximum seven years. Especially Germany and Austria insisted on these restrictions, because they feared extraordinarily large numbers of immigrants due to their geographical proximity to the NMS. These restrictions function according to the so-called *2+3+2-model*. It means that for the first two years after enlargement, the existing member states are allowed to keep whatever restrictions for migration of citizens of the NMS that were in place before the entry of these countries to the EU. After these two years, on the basis of a report by the European Commission, the functioning of these transitional measures is reviewed by the European Council. Countries can opt to keep the restrictions into place for another three years, but have to inform the Commission about this beforehand. Otherwise, freedom of movement is extended to citizens from the NMS. The countries whose citizens are restricted in their movement for these extra three years can ask for an additional review of these restrictions. After five years, restrictions can be prolonged for another two years *“in case of serious disturbances of its labor market or threat thereof and after notifying the Commission”* (Shimmel 2006: 778). For Austria and Germany, an exception was made. They could take extra measures in the transition period to limit migration, mainly by being able to restrict the ways companies based in the NMS can operate on their territory, notably by restricting these companies from sending workers from the NMS to Germany and Austria (Shimmel 2006: 780). It is important to note that all of these measures relate to freedom of movement for workers

from the NMS. General freedom of movement was established at the moment the EU expanded, meaning that citizens from the NMS could travel freely through the EU, but also study there or start a business. Equally, NMS nationals already residing in the old member states received full freedom of movement at the moment of enlargement. However, since the great majority of people is not able to support themselves without working, this effectively deprives them from the possibility to move from the NMS to old EU member states.

When the EU expanded in 2004, twelve out of fifteen existing member states decided to put restrictions on the freedom of movement for workers from the NMS. Only the United Kingdom, Ireland and Sweden opted to not to. In 2007, when Romania and Bulgaria entered the EU, the British Isles also opted to put restrictions for citizens from these countries, like most old member states. Again Sweden, this time joined by Finland, chose not to. Currently, most member states have restrictions for Croatians after this country entered the EU in 2013. The NMS also were given the opportunity to apply the same restrictions their citizens were subjected to, to citizens of the countries that put these restrictions into place. Only a few countries decided to make use of this opportunity.

The two countries in which the two case studies are located, the Netherlands and Austria, had slightly different restrictions and their durations. Prior to enlargement, the Dutch government envisioned no restrictions on labour migration from the NMS, but due to the decision of Germany and other surrounding countries to keep their labour markets closed for some years after enlargement, the Netherlands decided in the end to follow the trend and set up temporary restrictions (Doyle et al. 2006). Following these restrictions, citizens of the NMS had to have a work permit during the transition period, tied to a *labour market test*,<sup>5</sup> meaning the employer must show that no Dutch or other EU nationals<sup>6</sup> can be found to fill in the position. For citizens from the eight countries joining in 2004, two years after EU-entrance— so from the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2006 - this *labour market test* was phased out industry after industry and one year later on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2007, all restrictions for citizens of the eight NMS were lifted. In the end, the Netherlands only kept restrictions for three years, while it was allowed to keep them for an extra four years. For Romania and Bulgaria, the

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<sup>5</sup> Dutch: *Arbeidsmarkttest*

<sup>6</sup> Of the 15 old member states

same transitional restrictions were put into place in 2007, so citizens had to apply for a working permit and employers had to show through a *labour market test* they could not find another Dutch or EU national to fill in the position. This time, the Netherlands chose to keep up the restrictions for the full seven years, until the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2013 (CPB 2011).

In Austria, fears for a 'flood' of immigrants from the NMS resulting from the EU-enlargement were exceptionally large, mainly due to its geographical location, bordering four of the eight new member states of 2004. Therefore, it decided that to keep restrictions for the maximum of seven years both for the eight countries that joined in 2004, as well as for the two that joined three years later. During the seven years after EU-enlargement, employers that wanted to hire an employee that was a NMS national had to apply for a permit from an organisation called *Arbeitsmarktservice*. A permit was only given when the contract abided all Austrian labour market regulations, and more importantly, no qualified candidate could be found in Austria for the job. Furthermore, it was not allowed to lease employees from a company in the NMS. For some jobs, mostly high qualified jobs for which it is exceptionally difficult to find qualified personnel, as well as seasonal employees in tourism and agriculture, there were simplified procedures for hiring personnel from the NMS (Landesmann et al. 2013).

At the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2014, the restrictions on the freedom of movement for Bulgarians and Romanians both in Austria and in the Netherlands disappeared altogether. The final result of this is that all immigrants from the NMS now have the same rights as Dutch and Austrian nationals in nearly all domains. The Netherlands and Austria have given up their power to decide which citizens of the NMS to let in and which not; neither can they attach any conditions that citizens of the NMS have to fulfil to be able to live in the country. This means both countries have lost most of the classical instruments of immigration and integration policy in their dealing with labour migration from the NMS. Now, they have to resort to other domains of policy to take measures to accommodate immigration from the NMS, or else lobby for changes in the regime of freedom of movement within the EU at the European level.

## Chapter 2: The Populist Radical Right and its Influence on Immigration Policy

In recent decades, a new party family has emerged in the European political landscape, that of the populist radical right. There exists a myriad of names and definitions for this party family, including *extreme right* or *far right*, but generally the same parties are included and it is not always clear why authors chose the terminology they use. The term populist radical right is chosen here, following the definition of Mudde (2007), because it is the most elaborate and precise one. As defined by Mudde, the key ideological feature of this party family is nativism, meaning that a separation is drawn between a native group on the one hand and non-native elements on the other hand, which are seen as a threat to the nation (Mudde 2007: 22). Secondly, authoritarianism is central to the parties' ideology, defined not in opposition to democracy but as a "*belief in a strictly ordered society, in which infringements of authority are to be punished severely*" (Mudde 2007: 23). Thirdly, populism lies at the core of these parties, which draws up a distinction between the people and the elites, and puts 'common sense' and the 'general will' at the centre of parties' message.

This new party family differs fundamentally from extreme right and fascist groups that have existed in Europe throughout the twentieth century. The populist radical right parties are not biologically racist, meaning that the differences they establish between groups (nativism) are not based on biological characteristics such as the colour of the skin. Instead, the parties can be classified as being *ethno-pluralist*. They draw their distinctions between natives and non-natives on a cultural basis. This ideology comes from the *Nouvelle Droite* movement, which originated in France in the 1970's. In the understanding of ethno-pluralism, there is no necessary hierarchy between different cultural groups, but merely do incompatible differences exist, leading to the necessity to keep the different groups separated (Rydgren 2005; Minkeberg 2011). In this ideology, every nation or culture has a right to a homeland. If immigration does occur, the immigrants have to assimilate completely into the nation and culture of country they move to, otherwise the existence of the nation is threatened (Zaslave 2004). Another fundamental difference between populist

radical right parties and extreme right or fascist parties is, that former are democratic, at least nominally, in contrast to the antidemocratic essence of the latter (Mudde 2007: 31).

Following their nativist ideology, populist radical right parties are against immigration, and immigrants are amongst the most important enemies of the nation according to these parties. Their presence is supposed to lead to crime, insecurity and welfare abuse, and they bring foreign values and customs that are seen as irreconcilable with the national culture. In recent times, Muslims and Islam are often portrayed as the biggest threat to European nations by parties of this party family, but they are certainly not the only group of immigrants seen as a threat.

As with most political topics, much of the attention of political scientists and the media has been directed to the activities of these new parties on the national political level and to a lesser extent the international and European level. Specific literature on how these parties behave on a local level is not very common. Mudde (2007) however does state, that one of the general tendencies of populist radical right wing parties in local government is to focus on symbolic measures. Given the limitations of local government, especially on the area of immigration, as briefly have been discussed in the introduction, it is very difficult for these parties to execute their nativist agenda, which would require the power to control immigration. As a result, the focus is shifted to symbolic measures and cultural policies. Renaming of streets, or transfers of cultural subsidies to organisation that are 'national' or 'patriotic' are measures commonly seen (Mudde 2007: 279).

The ideology of populist radical right parties is one thing, but which policies they actually implement, when these parties are in power, is another. Here, it is important to note that all of the parties of this party family that did manage to get into government did so in coalition governments, meaning that the policy outcomes were a result of compromises between the populist radical right party and its coalition partners. The Austrian coalition government between the populist radical FPÖ<sup>7</sup> and the conservative ÖVP is an interesting case, since it ruled the country six years and constituted one of the first times a populist radical right party became part of a European national government. The coalition made multiple changes to the country's immigration policies, making family reunions more difficult and changing the system for allowing in lower skilled foreign workers from 'normal' permits into temporary

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<sup>7</sup> More information about the FPÖ is provided in the Chapter 4.

permits for seasonal workers with fewer rights than normal working permits. Furthermore, a new integration law was introduced with mandatory integration courses for immigrants. However, even though all these measures were in a more restrictive direction consistent with the FPÖ's nativist ideology, it fell short of executing the party's platform on immigration completely. This would for instance have required a new asylum law that violates the Geneva Convention and a full stop of immigration from 'non-Christian' countries, which also would have been against national, European and international laws. The presence of the ÖVP clearly had a moderating effect. This led to a political agenda that, though clearly meant to cut immigration, was not out of line with many similar policies put into place by main stream centre-right parties all over Europe and also was consistent with policies of previous *grand coalition*<sup>8</sup> governments that went in the same direction (Minkenberg 2001; Heinisch 2003; Zaslove 2004). This indicates that when in office, coalition partners as well as constitutional provisions and international law have an effect on the policies of populist radical right wing parties, which, given the importance of especially European regulation for the immigration from the NMS to Western Europe, can also be of importance for the two case studies presented.

#### Reactions of other parties: the effects of the surge of populist radical right parties

Immigration, integration and law and order are political themes that have seen a strong surge in salience and interest in the last decades. Not only did populist radical right parties emerge in almost every European country, other parties also took on these issues and often moved significantly to the right, advocating tougher policies towards immigrants. Although this is the general tendency, this does mean that this shift to the right is a direct consequence of the emergence of populist radical right parties, neither does it mean that all parties reacted in the same way to the new political reality. Already in the 1970's, many Western European countries restricted their immigration laws to stop the influx of 'guest labourers' and post-colonial immigrants, long before populist radical right wing parties began to play an important role.

Fact is that there is a trend towards convergence of European immigration policies, though this not necessarily means that all the changes that occur are making the policies more restrictive (Givens/Luedtke 2005). For instance, countries that have very stringent citizenship

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<sup>8</sup> Between the social-democratic SPÖ and the ÖVP.



laws, such as Germany, loosened them up a little, whereas asylum laws were made more restrictive in most countries. Givens and Luedtke, who looked at developments in France, the UK and Germany, also showed that it did not actually matter which party was in government when it comes to the restrictiveness of policies concerning immigration control. Only regarding integration policies concerning citizenship or anti-discrimination laws could a difference between left wing and right wing parties be seen, with the latter making more restrictive laws when in office (Ibid.). Other, more recent studies in multiple European countries however, do show a difference of which party is in charge (Bale 2008b; Schain 2006). The role populist radical right parties played in the shift towards more restrictive policies differed from country to country, and was not always relevant in all cases (Ibid.). Overall, there does not seem to be agreement about whether populist radical right parties are the direct or indirect cause of more restrictive immigration laws, or whether both anti-immigration parties as well as mainstream parties in government react to the same sentiment in society and media. Certainly, centre-right parties almost all have taken up the immigration issue irrespective of the presence of a populist radical right wing party and advocated more restrictive measures (Bale 2008a). Others also argue that parties might have changed their stance on immigration pre-emptively as to prevent the emergence of a populist radical right wing party (Mudde 2007).

Irrespective of whether general patterns can be seen, and what they would be, the existing parties have to react in some way to the emergence of the new populist radical right party family. Meguid (2005) describes the three options existing parties have to react to new parties that mainly thrive on one new issue they bring forward: they can either try to downplay the issue by focussing on other issues, they can take an adversarial stance and position themselves as the opponent of the new party on the issue it has brought into the political arena, or they can try to be accommodative and take over the issue and the position of the new party in order to win back voters who shifted their support to the new party.

Since both in Rotterdam and Vienna, the dominant party in government has traditionally been the Social-Democrats, it is of interest to see how social-democratic parties have reacted to the new challenge from the right on immigration throughout Europe. Following Buckel et al. (2014) traditional social democratic ideological project concerning migration would have at its core on the one hand a certain concern for the position of immigrants and

the human rights they should have, at the other hand a concern for the possible negative consequences of immigration for the position of native workers and the too heavy burden immigrants potentially could pose on the welfare state. This leads to both the intention of a relatively open migration policy protecting refugees and ensuring the social rights of labour migrants, but also an affirmation of the right of nation states to control borders, so they can protect the social comprise of the welfare state and the interest of local workers. This does not mean however, that social-democratic parties did always stick to this ideological agenda. A study looking at several European countries shows that social-democratic parties have adopted different strategies in different countries at different times. Differentiating between three possible reactions similar to the model of Meguid (2005), here called 'hold', 'defuse' or 'adopt',<sup>9</sup> it shows that, while initially the social-democratic parties chose either to downplay the issue or stick to their initial ideology, with time strategies became more diverse and often combined all three possible strategies (Bale/Green-Pedersen et al. 2010). It is important to note that the parties were often internally divided and that the positioning of other parties, especially that of other parties on the left such as green parties, also played a role for which strategy social-democratic parties adopted towards their populist radical right competitors on the immigration issue (Ibid.).

Given the divergent reactions to the presence of populist radical right parties in the political system, it cannot be automatically expected that in the cases of Rotterdam and Vienna, parties will have taken over (part of) the anti-immigration agenda of the populist radical right. And in case the other parties, and especially the dominant social-democratic parties, have taken a harsher stance towards immigration, this does not automatically mean that the cause for this change was the emergence of a populist radical right party in the city. Per case study, the development of the city's political attitude towards immigration and integration will have to be studied in order to assess the impact populist radical right parties have had on the other parties.

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<sup>9</sup> 'Hold' meaning that the parties hold on to their original stance and position themselves as opponent of the populist radical right party on the issue of immigration, 'defuse' meaning that they try to play down the issue by focusing on other issues, and 'adopt' meaning that they take over (part of) the agenda of the populist radical right concerning immigration.

# Chapter 3: Rotterdam Case Study

## 3.1 Introduction to Rotterdam

Rotterdam is the second largest city in the Netherlands. The municipality of Rotterdam had 619,925 inhabitants at the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2014 (CBS StatLine), and it is part of an urban area of more than 1 million inhabitants. It is mainly famous for its port, for a long time the largest in the world and still the largest port in Europe. The port and related activities form the core of the city's economy. The city traditionally has been characterised by a large working class and has been a bulwark of social-democracy and the Dutch Labour Party (*Partij van de Arbeid*, PvdA). After the Second World War, Labour was the biggest party at every municipal election until the turn of the century, sometimes even achieving an absolute majority, which is very rare in Dutch politics. Rotterdam has received many immigrants and is one of the Netherlands' most multicultural cities. In 2013, 27.7% of the city's population was born outside of the Netherlands and 48.6% of the population has a *migration background*.<sup>10</sup> As a comparison, these numbers are 11.5% and 21.1% for the Netherlands as a whole respectively (CBS StatLine). The population of Rotterdam is relatively poor compared to the rest of the Netherlands. Unemployment is above average, incomes are lower, and more people live in poverty than in the rest of the country (CBS/SCP 2013).

In recent years, the city's politics has been characterised by a sharp competition between two parties: on the one hand the traditionally dominant PvdA and on the other hand *Leefbaar Rotterdam* (LR).<sup>11</sup> This party was founded in 2002 by Pim Fortuyn, a university professor known for his controversial input in public debate. In the same year, he also led a new party on the national level, the LPF,<sup>12</sup> which campaigned among other things for tougher immigration and integration laws, especially criticizing the lack of integration of Muslims into Dutch society. According to Fortuyn, the political élite, and especially Labour, had been lax in defending Western values against what he saw as an 'islamisation' of Dutch society (Uitermark/Duyvendak 2008, 1490 p.) Pim Fortuyn was murdered on May 6<sup>th</sup> 2002,

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<sup>10</sup> *Allochtonen* meaning people that were either born abroad or have at least one parent born abroad.

<sup>11</sup> The name means *Livable Rotterdam*

<sup>12</sup> *Lijst Pim Fortuyn*

just a few days before the national elections, but some time before, in March of the same year, Leefbaar Rotterdam had won the municipal elections in Rotterdam, becoming the largest party and beating the PvdA for the first time in 60 years. In the four years that followed, a right-wing coalition with LR, the liberal VVD and christian-democratic CDA<sup>13</sup> governed the city. Some of the measures that were taken during this period were law and order policies on crime and the organisation of a series of public debates on Islam and its role in Dutch society (Uitermark/Duyvendak 2008). Labour won the two following elections in 2006 and 2010 and formed coalitions in which again the VVD and CDA participated. At the most recent elections held this year, LR came on top again while the PvdA suffered a historic defeat. As a result, LR again formed a coalition without Labour, this time with the CDA and the social-liberal D66.

Whether Leefbaar Rotterdam is a populist radical right party, is question of debate. In international comparable literature on this party family, the LPF is sometimes included, and sometimes not.<sup>14</sup> Both parties developed separately after the death of Fortuyn, with the LPF disintegrating shortly afterwards, whereas LR has proved to be a stable factor in Rotterdam's political landscape. Fact is that the party's ideology has important nativist characteristics, with a very negative stance towards immigration as well as an anti-islamist stance. Furthermore, it is a proponent of a strong law-and-order policy towards crime, consistent with the authoritarian ideology of the party family. It are especially those themes, immigration and safety, that lie at the core of the party's platform and political actions. Nevertheless, due to the fact that the party entered a coalition government directly after the first election it took part in, it has become more governmental and prone to compromise than most populist radical right wing parties. However, since the party does advocate nativist policies on the issue of immigration, which is most relevant for this thesis, it is argued here that the party can be regarded as populist radical right.

The fierce competition between Labour and LR has influenced Rotterdam politics. Both parties have staged themselves as each other's big competitors, and ruled out any coalition with the other party. LR pushed forward the themes of immigration, integration and crime

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<sup>13</sup> VVD stands for *Volkspartij voor vrijheid en democratie* [People's Party for Freedom and Democracy]; CDA stands for *Christen-Democratisch Appèl* [Christian Democratic Appeal]

<sup>14</sup> Mudde (2007) does not include the LPF in his list of populist radical right wing parties, calling it a populist neo-liberal party instead. Being a local party, Leefbaar Rotterdam is not taken into account in any comparing literature on populist radical right parties.

to the centre stage of the Rotterdam's politics. The shock of the historic defeat the Labour party suffered in 2002 caused the party to reflect on the reasons for this loss. Many in the party voiced the opinion that the issues addressed by Fortuyn and LR were legitimate and that the PvdA should take them serious. As a consequence, the party began to move more in the direction of LR in the years after 2002, though keeping a somewhat different style and discourse.<sup>15</sup>

One of the main issues addressed by LR and taken over by the PvdA was the composition of the city's population, which was and is perceived as problematic. The fact that the population of Rotterdam is much poorer, lower educated and more often of foreign background is now problematized by most local parties and by all successive governments of the city since 2002. Many of the city's problems and possible solutions are often discussed in relation to the city's demographics (Rijendorp/Van der Zwaard 2004). It is argued that Rotterdam has a too large concentration of social and economic problems for the city to handle. Therefore, a 'more balanced' demographics is needed in the city, meaning more higher educated and higher income families should be attracted to Rotterdam. For instance, the right wing city government wrote in 2003 that *"The limits of the capability to absorb of the city have been reached and sometimes even crossed when it comes to accommodation and accompaniment of social-economically disadvantaged inhabitants and groups of people who cause (serious) nuisance"* (Gemeente Rotterdam 2003, 6).<sup>16</sup> About the consequences of this development the city government writes: *"The consequences of this development can be guessed: concentrations of deprived people are created; moreover, in some neighbourhoods maladjusted behaviour, nuisance and criminality pile up to such levels that the situation threatens to be uncontrollable levels of discontent amongst the population are increasing"* (Ibid.).<sup>17</sup> It was not only the right-wing city government arguing that the city's demographics

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<sup>15</sup> As an example, Dominic Schrijer, the erstwhile chairman of the district of Charlois and prominent local Labour politician said the following, answering to the question which new ideas Labour should develop to win back power after the defeat in 2002: *"The PvdA cannot longer reject the issue of the influx of immigrants [In Dutch: 'de verkleuring van de stad'] as a taboo, because this issue plays a role"* (Schrijer/Van der Zwan 2004: 227).

<sup>16</sup> *"De grens van het absorptievermogen van de stad is bereikt en hier en daar zelfs overschreden als het gaat om de opvang en begeleiding van sociaal-economisch kansarme inwoners en van groepen (ernstig) overlastgevenden."*

<sup>17</sup> *"De gevolgen van deze ontwikkelingen laten zich raden: er ontstaan concentraties van sociaaleconomisch kansarmen; bovendien stapelen in bepaalde buurten onaangepast gedrag, overlast en criminaliteit zich zo hoog op dat dit onbeheersbaar dreigt te worden en er in toenemende mate gevoelens van onvrede ontstaan bij de bevolking."*

posed problems. In the same year, chairman of the Charlois district,<sup>18</sup> Dominic Schrijer, member of the, at that time oppositional, Labour party wrote that: “*The influx of disadvantaged migrants exceeds the carrying capacity of our district and its inhabitants*” (Schrijer 2003)<sup>19</sup>. And if perhaps for some, calling the overrepresentation of deprived groups as problematic goes too far, the very same thing is phrased in a different way, namely by emphasising the perceived lack of wealthy and highly skilled inhabitants in the city. Rotterdam’s *City Vision*, its strategic development plan, stresses the importance of attracting more high skilled people, thereby addressing the same demographic problem of the city Leefbaar put onto the agenda in a different way (Gemeente Rotterdam 2007).

The debate about the need to try to control the composition of the population of Rotterdam demonstrates a kind of social engineering that fits into a tradition in the city. Already in 1972, the city<sup>20</sup> proposed measures to spread out migrants over the city, at a time when just 5% of the population was of foreign background. These measures were judged to be illegal by the Council of State because of their discriminatory character and never executed, but the city government continued to promote spreading immigrants over the city with other less stringent measures (Van Praag 2004).

As the number of immigrants in Rotterdam increased, the political climate in the Netherlands began to change, and Rotterdam managed to get policy instruments allowing them to influence the composition of the population in certain neighbourhoods. When the right-wing city government led by Leefbaar came to power in 2002, a similar coalition including Fortuyn’s LPF party took up power on the national level a few months later. This was of importance, because Rotterdam needed national legislation to be changed in order to implement its policies of spreading immigrants over the city. The national government introduced the so-called *Rotterdam Law*, of which the most important provision was that municipalities could point out some neighbourhoods in which people needed a *housing permit*<sup>21</sup> to register on their new address when moving to a rental dwelling. In order to receive such a permit, one had to earn at least 120% of the minimum wage, though some exceptions for groups like students were made. The designation of *Rotterdam Law* for a law

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<sup>18</sup> Charlois is located on the south bank of the river Nieuwe Maas. The south of the city is the part of the city with the most deprived population.

<sup>19</sup> “*De toestroom van kansarme migranten gaat de draaglast van deelgemeente en bewoners te boven.*”

<sup>20</sup> At a time Labour was still almighty in Rotterdam and did not have a populist radical right competitor.

<sup>21</sup> *Huisvestingsvergunning*

that applies to all Dutch cities was no coincidence. It was made at the explicit request of the Rotterdam city government that wanted to do something about the city's 'demographic problem'. The measure was a compromise between Leefbaar and its coalition partners. Leefbaar named immigration as the source of the problem, and proposed measures to stop deprived immigrants from moving into certain neighbourhoods. Leefbaar's coalition partners however, did not want to bar specifically immigrants from moving to selected neighbourhoods as they judged it to be discriminatory. Therefore, an income threshold was chosen instead as the means to create a stop of the influx of deprived people into the most deprived neighbourhoods of the city. This made the measure less nativist, since the measure now also applied to ethnic Dutch, but given the nature of immigration to Rotterdam still mainly targets immigrants. No other Dutch municipality opted to make use of the *housing permit* but Rotterdam. The return to power of Labour in 2006 did not change anything in this respect. The local Labour party supported the Rotterdam Law and has continued to implement it.<sup>22</sup>

The influx of immigrants from the NMS came right after the political developments described above. Leefbaar Rotterdam had just made a breakthrough that caused the whole political spectrum of the city to shift to the right and put the issue of the city's perceived unbalanced population on the political agenda. Immigration from the NMS meant a new change to the city's demographics, giving a new impulse to this important political issue. Since all major political parties in Rotterdam agree on the existence of this demographic problem, immigration from the NMS for all these parties threatens to undo much of the efforts of the last years.

### 3.2 Immigration from the NMS to Rotterdam: Facts and Figures

In the Netherlands, Rotterdam is one of the cities which received most immigration. Most of the immigrants were either people from the former Dutch colonies Suriname and the Dutch

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<sup>22</sup> For the period of 2014-2018, a *housing permit* is needed to move to six neighbourhoods in Rotterdam with a total housing stock of 22,500 rental dwellings. People living longer than 6 years in the city's agglomeration do not have to apply for a permit. The requirement of earning 120% of the minimum wages has been changed to receiving an income from work, getting a pension or a student grant, meaning that now people that are unemployed or on welfare are excluded from moving to a rental dwelling in the neighbourhoods concerned (Ouwehand/Doff 2013).

Antilles or so-called *guest labourers* from Turkey and Morocco. Immigration from Central and Eastern European countries was not so common before the EU enlargements of 2004 and 2007, but picked up afterwards. Immigrants from the NMS are mostly active in a few specific economic sectors that are very present in Rotterdam and its surroundings, for instance horticulture, with the Netherlands' largest concentration of greenhouses being located in the Westland region adjacent to Rotterdam. The city's port and related logistic activities equally provide job opportunities for NMS migrants as does the construction sector.

When looking at official figures of the city's population register, the number of NMS immigrants appears to be not that high. On the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2011, the municipality of Rotterdam counted 10,851 inhabitants that were nationals of one of the 10 NMS. This was less than 1.8% of the total registered population and not a particularly big group, though about double the number measured three years earlier. Of the 10,851 NMS nationals, about half were Polish and a quarter came from Bulgaria. This relatively small number is however only a small percentage of the total number of NMS nationals actually living in Rotterdam. The city noticed that the perceived presence of NMS immigrants in the city grew much stronger than was visible in the official statistics and therefore tried to estimate the number of NMS nationals in Rotterdam that do not register (Van Puymbroeck et al. 2011). This estimation concluded that in 2009, only 24% of NMS nationals in Rotterdam were registered, meaning that instead of about 7,000, their number actually was around 30,000. Since then, the city has made a great effort to increase the number of registrations from NMS nationals, so the percentage of unregistered NMS nationals on 31-12-2011 - when officially 10,851 NMS nationals lived in the city - probably is lower than in 2009. Presuming a number of unregistered NMS nationals somewhere between 60% and 76%, the actual number of NMS nationals according to the latest prediction at the end of 2011 was between 27,000 and 45,000, representing 4.3% to 7.3% of the city's total population (Gemeente Rotterdam 2012). This is quite a high number for a population group that only a decade ago was very small. Numbers were consistently under 1,000 before 2004, at least according to official statistics.

Since labour migration from the NMS is regarded as an important development, the city of Rotterdam, as well as the national government of the Netherlands not only have



commissioned studies about the number of NMS immigrants living in the city and the country, but also studies on what type of immigrants come to the Netherlands. Factors like educational attainment, the kind of work the immigrants do, whether they are temporary migrants or plan to stay permanently, all influence the kind of impact this migration flow might have on Dutch society and consequently how public authorities should respond. Research done by Engbersen (Engbersen et al. 2011) uses four ideal types of labour migration based on two factors: the bond immigrants have with their country of origin and the link they have with the country they emigrated to. These four types are *settling migration*, meaning that migrants plan to stay permanently in the Netherlands and have relatively little ties with their home country; *transnational migration*, meaning migrants that are well integrated and connected but keep strong ties with their home country and eventually might return (from time to time or permanently); *circular or seasonal migration* includes migrants who once or repeatedly come to the Netherlands to work for a limited period but always return to their country of origin in the end; *footloose migration*<sup>23</sup> is the final category and refers to migrants who neither keep strong ties with their homeland nor are well integrated into Dutch society. Higher educated immigrants tend to fall in the first two categories, whereas immigrants with low educational attainment are more likely to be footloose. Older immigrants are overrepresented with seasonal migration, having already built up a life in their home country, whereas people migrating to the Netherlands with a partner and children tend to stay more permanently (Ibid.). The study also compares the three biggest national groups, Polish, Romanians and Bulgarians. Polish migrants more often fall into the first two categories, whereas the majority of Bulgarians are classified as footloose. The study also stresses that the regional impact within the Netherlands will differ, depending on the economic structure of the region. Big cities such as Rotterdam are expected to attract more higher educated settle or transnational migrants (Engbersen 2012), but additionally the horticulture and port in the Rotterdam region will also permanently attract large numbers of seasonal workers, while the large amount of cheap housing in Rotterdam is attractive for footloose immigrants.

The labour market position of the NMS immigrants does for a large part correspond to the popular image of badly paid jobs and precarious status, but not completely. The majority of

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<sup>23</sup> The original Dutch terminology used by Engbersen is *vestigingsmigratie*, *transnationale migratie*, *circulaire of seizoensmigratie* and *footloose migratie* respectively.

the NMS labour migrants does indeed work for relatively low wages in jobs that require low skills. This does not mean however, that the migrants themselves have a low educational attainment. The big majority have much higher skills than one might expect considering the kind of work they do and as a whole they are considerably higher educated than the so called *guest labourers* from Turkey and Morocco that preceded them as labour migrants (Snel et al. 2013). Also, the big majority of NMS migrants work, and very few claim unemployment or other welfare benefits (Ibid.). Permanent contracts are very seldom. Most NMS immigrants either have a contract for a limited term, work via temporal employment agencies or are self-employed (Ibid). Bulgarians tend to work more often in the informal sector (41%), as do Romanians,<sup>24</sup> whereas illegal employment is almost non-existent amongst Polish immigrants (Engbersen et al. 2011: 10), yet Bulgarians and Romanians also are more likely to perform high skilled jobs than Polish immigrants (Snel et al. 2013). Specific information about NMS immigrants in Rotterdam is not available, but this group is unlikely to differ very much from the national group.

### 3.3 Rotterdam's Policies Concerning NMS Migration

Rotterdam reacted relatively late to the new immigration from the NMS, partly because the number of immigrants was not very high before 2007 (Van Puymbroeck et al. 2011). However, when the issue came on the political agenda, the reaction was quick and strong. The influx of immigrants from the NMS was largely perceived negatively. As described in chapter 3.1, a lot of the political debate in Rotterdam in the last decade centred on the large influx of deprived people to Rotterdam and to certain neighbourhoods in particular, leading to concentrations of deprivation. Drastic measures were taken to reverse this trend, including making it impossible for people with a low income to move to certain neighbourhoods (*Rotterdam Law*), as well as urban renewal schemes that included the demolishing of social housing, replacing it with more expensive owner-occupied dwellings. The influx of NMS immigrants is regarded as development that could possibly undo much of the effort that was done to upgrade the deprived parts of the city, certainly because it were

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<sup>24</sup> Note that these figures were from before 2011, when restrictions were still in place for Romanians and Bulgarians, making it more difficult for them to work legally in the Netherlands. This might have changed since these temporal restrictions have been lifted in January 1<sup>st</sup> of 2014.

precisely the more vulnerable neighbourhoods that attract most NMS immigrants. In the first policy document set up by the city about labour migration from the NMS, two main problems are described: unfair competition on the labour market and illegal housing. Furthermore, also the integration of the new migrants is named as an issue that needs a reaction in terms of policy (Gemeente Rotterdam 2008). With time, the issues of housing and the labour market have remained those on which most focus is put on.

As the Netherlands is a highly centralised country, the municipality of Rotterdam has only limited competences. At the centre to the city's efforts to cope with the influx of labour migrants from the NMS lies the attempt to put together all relevant stakeholders, both within and outside government, and cooperate with them, as to make the city's policies effective. For many of the plans, the cooperation of the national government and other national government organisations is crucial. Equally, since different organisations have different data that can be of importance for other stakeholders, sharing information is another crucial aspect of the city's policies. This approach bringing together all stakeholders is called *Ketenaanpak*<sup>25</sup> by the city.

In the following part, the most important issues that are addressed in the city's policy regarding NMS immigration will be discussed issue per issue:

### Registration of NMS immigrants

As discussed in chapter 3.2, the number of immigrants from the NMS that register when arriving in Rotterdam is very limited. Part of this group may not stay longer than four months and consequently does not have to register, but also many of those that do stay longer equally choose not to register. The municipality wants to increase the number of people that register. First of all, because it offers the city a better insight in the size of the immigration from the NMS. Secondly, it allows the city to know more about the housing situation of NMS immigrants and how many people live on one address. Thirdly, registered inhabitants pay local taxes. Now, Rotterdam misses out on the taxes of the immigrants that do not register. But most importantly, registration is the moment that NMS immigrants come into contact with the authorities. It provides the authorities the opportunity to inform the immigrants about their housing and labour market rights and responsibilities, as well as the offers for

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<sup>25</sup> Literally meaning *chain approach*, meaning that all the links in the chain of stakeholders work together.

integration and languages courses. To increase the number of NMS migrants that register, the city organises registration events, where interpreters who speak Polish, Bulgarian etc. are present. Also, cooperation with other government agencies is sought to provide information about NMS migrants and check whether they are registered. Equally, the city tries to work with landlords and employers to persuade them to make an effort to stimulate their tenants or employees to register (Gemeente Rotterdam 2013).

The fact that so many immigrants from the NMS do not register influences the efficacy of the *Rotterdam Law*, which is so important to local policy makers. When immigrants that move into the neighbourhoods concerned by the law do not register, they also do not apply for a *housing permit*. In this way, a big group of people that probably might not have received such a permit is able to move to these deprived neighbourhoods nevertheless. The city therefore stepped up checks to see whether inhabitants of dwellings do have the required permit.

### Information

The moment people register is not the only time the municipality of Rotterdam tries to come into contact with immigrants from the NMS to provide them with information and give them the opportunity to ask questions. The city organises a whole range of meetings where a lot of organisations and authorities<sup>26</sup> are present to provide information. Several interpreters are present on the occasions to make communication easier. Furthermore, in some neighbourhoods that receive most of the NMS immigrants, Polish speaking municipal workers hold regular consultation hours for Polish immigrants. In some neighbourhoods, citizens' organisations equally hold consultation hours for NMS migrants, sometimes helped by trade unions, to give them information about housing, work and social security. Polish- or Bulgarian speaking personnel or interpreters are present at these meetings (Gemeente Rotterdam 2011; Gemeente Rotterdam 2012).

### Housing

Housing is one of the most problematic issues in Rotterdam concerning NMS migrants. The Dutch housing market has a very large social housing sector providing housing for low-

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<sup>26</sup> To give some examples, the tax authority, the organisation many of the social security provisions, the immigration office, social housing associations as well as several municipal departments were present at these meetings.

income people - the category most NMS-migrants fall into – and Rotterdam has an especially large social housing sector.<sup>27</sup> But access to this social housing is based on a waiting list of several years, meaning it is inaccessible for the many temporary and seasonal migrants from the NMS. The Dutch and Rotterdam housing policy did not provide for a permanent flow of temporary labour migrants. As a consequence, little is organised to provide housing for labour migrants from the NMS. Employers who hire personnel from foreign countries are expected to take care of housing for their employees, but they have no formal responsibility for providing housing for their employees. There merely is a ‘moral obligation’ to provide adequate housing according to the Dutch government (Engbersen/Snel 2012: 29). However, many employers do not take up this responsibility. As a consequence, many immigrants from the NMS depend on private landlords for their housing that often illegally rent out inadequate dwellings. These dwellings are often not safe and overcrowded. In Rotterdam, little more than half of the illegal housing that was closed down after inspection by the municipality was inhabited by immigrants from the NMS in 2010 and 2011 (Gemeente Rotterdam 2012). This kind of housing is concentrated in the most deprived parts of the city, mostly in the south. The inadequate and overcrowded housing causes nuisance for neighbours, sometimes causing them to move out of the neighbourhood, leading to a negative spiral with the same illegal landlords buying the houses of people moving away (Stadsregio Rotterdam 2010).

The nuisance and following complaints of residents caused by the illegal housing of NMS migrants created a sense of urgency for the municipality, especially because the problems are concentrate in exactly those deprived neighbourhood the city has been trying to gentrify for years. The need for short stay housing for temporary labour migrants is now acknowledged by the city of Rotterdam that wants to develop such housing in cooperation with employers and housing associations. In 2009, a pact between the city, employers and several housing associations was signed and three years later, on the national level the different stakeholders signed a *declaration of intent* to develop housing for temporary labour migrants from the NMS. In Rotterdam, the municipality wants this new kind of housing to be developed in other parts of the city than in those seven most deprived neighbourhoods in the south of Rotterdam, which the city is trying to upgrade (Gemeente

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<sup>27</sup> 48% of the total stock of housing in Rotterdam falls into the category of social rental dwellings owned by social housing associations (Gemeente Rotterdam 2012a: 8).

Rotterdam 2013). The city estimates that 2000 units will have to be developed in the coming years. These facilities are commonly referred to as *Polenhotels* (*Polish hotels*) and can either be housed in newly constructed buildings, or in empty office buildings or redundant homes for the elderly, which are being converted for this purpose.

Developing new housing takes time. In the meantime, problems such as overcrowding remain an issue and the municipality has stepped up checks of houses where offences are suspected. Furthermore, as soon as four people with different surnames register at the same address, the city inspects the dwelling. Rotterdam is permanently lobbying at the national level for changes in legislation to give more powers and instruments for local authorities to combat illegal landlords (Rotterdam 2011; Rotterdam 2012).

### Labour market

One of the prime fears concerning immigration is that immigrants take jobs from natives. Rotterdam is a city with high unemployment and many people living on welfare, yet it received great numbers of labour migrants to do jobs for which employers cannot or do not want to find Dutch personnel. A significant part of vacancies at the bottom of the labour market (40%) cannot be filled quickly, leading companies to look for personnel in the NMS (Gemeente Rotterdam 2008: 14).

The city of Rotterdam can do relatively little on this area of policy. The first policy document of the city regarding immigration from the NMS notes that "*freedom of movement for workers within the European Union is a fact*"<sup>28</sup> (Ibid.) showing that the city has no influence whatsoever to change the structural conditions on this point. The effort of the city is mainly concentrated on three goals: detect and punish illegal practices, trying to get local unemployed into work and in the first years after enlargement, lobbying at the national level to keep restrictions for NMS immigrants for as long as EU regulations allowed.

Many NMS labour migrants work at the bottom of the labour market, where illegal practices are more likely to happen. Moreover, many of the immigrants do not know what their rights are according to Dutch labour market regulations. Consequently, the risk for exploitation is high, leading to unfair competition for Dutch workers. Many of the immigrants are employed through temporary labour agencies, many of which operate illegally. Also on this area

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<sup>28</sup> "*Het vrije verkeer van werknemers binnen de Europese Unie (EU) is een gegeven.*"

however, the options for local authorities to take action are very limited, because the organisations that regulate and inspect the sector are national. In part due to a strong lobby by Rotterdam and other Dutch municipalities with large numbers of NMS immigrants, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment stepped up inspections on these temporary labour agencies. Also, the legal possibilities for prosecuting these organisations and the people behind them were enlarged (Ministerie van SZW 2013).

Local authorities cannot do much about the influx of labour migrants, but they have significant policy leverage when it comes to the local unemployed. The execution of welfare in the Netherlands, the *Wet op Werk en Bijstand*, was devolved to municipal authorities. Rotterdam consequently is responsible for activating people living on welfare, trying to get them to work again. One of the most prominent initiatives, receiving a big media echo, was to let unemployed people work in the greenhouses of the Westland region for a test period while they continued to receive benefits. Of the 700 people that were driven to the greenhouses by busses, only 5 had a permanent job there after a few months (Binnenlands Bestuur 2012). The failure of this project did not stop the municipality from trying to get local unemployed to fill in the vacant positions often taken by labour migrants from the NMS. The city signed a pact with temporary employment agencies and the organisations running the Dutch unemployment insurance system (UWV) to actively try to fill in these positions with local unemployed people (Gemeente Rotterdam 2012).

### Welfare and social security

A policy domain related to the labour market is the perceived risk of 'welfare tourism'. The fear exists that NMS nationals will use the freedom of movement to move to Western Europe in order to use the benefits the welfare states there provide, which are much more extensive than in Eastern Europe. Partly because of the EU-enlargement, the national law on welfare, the *Wet Werk en Bijstand*, was changed in 2006. Now, EU-nationals have to wait three months before they could receive welfare benefits. They only can stay longer than three months in the Netherlands when they can prove they have the financial means to support themselves. This means that it now is almost impossible to move to the Netherlands just to claim welfare benefits. As a consequence, the number of NMS migrant receiving welfare or unemployment benefits is very low. At the start of 2012, NMS nationals accounted for 0.32% and 0.79% respectively of all recipients of welfare and unemployment

benefits in Rotterdam. Given the fact that their share of the official population of Rotterdam at that time was 1.7% and estimations on their true numbers were ranging from 4.5% to 7.3% of the total population, this shows that NMS migrants are significantly less likely to live on benefits (Gemeente Rotterdam 2012: 15-16). Despite this current situation, the city is monitoring the number of NMS nationals that claim social security benefits, because fears exist this number might rise in the future.

### Integration policies

Due to the fact that immigration within the EU, and consequently the immigration to the Netherlands of NMS-nationals, falls into a totally different legal category - that of freedom of movement within the EU - than the immigration from other countries to which the national immigration and integration laws apply, the NMS immigrants totally fall out of the national integration policies of the Netherlands. Given the local problems this migration flow has created, some argue that this distinction between immigrants from within and without the EU is arbitrary and that there is a need for an integration policy for migrants from within the EU (Engbersen 2012). The city of Rotterdam also stated in its first policy document about immigration from the NMS that it regarded its integration policy's goals also to be applicable for NMS migrations, even though there is no legal obligation for these migrants to go through an integration trajectory (Gemeente Rotterdam 2008: 19). Therefore, the city tries to actively spread information about the possibilities to follow language and integration courses. Also, the city started a lobby to try to convince the Dutch national government to create the legal possibility to be able to make integration courses compulsory also for some EU nationals (Gemeente Rotterdam 2008).

Integrating the children of NMS migrants into the Dutch education system is another concern of Rotterdam. Partly due to the temporary nature of the migration and because many migrants do not register, it is difficult to uphold compulsory education. Children often change schools when returning to their home country and subsequently coming back to school when their parents return to Rotterdam. In this way, it is difficult to keep track of the children for the municipality (Gemeente Rotterdam 2013). Especially concerning Bulgarian children, many schools note that their parents do not seem to have any experiences with an education system and do not follow rules concerning school hours and vacations (Ibid.)



The integration of the NMS children into schools does create some problems. The children and their parents often do not speak Dutch, their deprived socio-economic situation and inadequate housing puts an extra burden on the children and some cultural differences exist (Tweede Kamer 2011).

The first policy overview of the city of Rotterdam on NMS immigration also mentions the possible need to create recreational facilities for NMS migrants, and support them with setting up associations (Gemeente Rotterdam 2008). This theme is repeated in the newest policy agenda of the city. It stresses the need for the city government to have good contacts with the immigrant community in order to be able to respond to the needs of this community. Associations and key figures in the community can help the city to keep in touch with the communities from the NMS and therefore the city tries to help establish them. Another way to foster integration is for the city to train its workers to be more culture-sensitive. City personnel that works with NMS immigrants receives training for this purpose (Gemeente Rotterdam 2013) and staff with knowledge of Polish, Romanian and Bulgarian often is present when there is contact between the municipality and NMS migrants.

### Crime

Widespread fears often exist that immigration will cause increased criminality and criminalising migrants is at the core of populist and nationalist far-right discourse concerning immigration. The municipality noted that people perceive NMS-nationals to create nuisance and crime, especially in some fragile neighbourhoods, but that police statistics do not show much higher crime rates amongst NMS-nationals (Gemeente Rotterdam 2008: 11). When there is crime or nuisance caused by this group, this often directly related to the inadequate way these people are housed. On the other hand, NMS-nationals, because of their socio-economic position are also more likely to be victims of criminality and exploitation (Ibid.)

The risk of criminal behaviour is estimated to be the largest with the group of *footloose* migrants, because of their vulnerable socio-economic situation. Monitoring the situation regarding this group and crime is important for Rotterdam, also because problems with this group have a large impact on the image of NMS immigrants. Therefore, the city tries to be pro-active on crime prevention, especially in some of the most deprived neighbourhoods

with many NMS immigrants. However, these crime prevention measures are general and not target NMS immigrants as a special group (Gemeente Rotterdam 2013).

### Lobbying at the national level

As is mentioned above, on different areas of policy Rotterdam has asked the national government to change laws and regulation, pay more attention to certain issues or to lobby at the European level for changes in regulations. This lobby regarding labour migration from the NMS is a cornerstone of the city's efforts in dealing with this immigration flow, since it has only limited competences as municipality. In fact, the city together with the municipalities of The Hague and Westland organised a so-called *Polish Summit (Polentop)* already in 2007, which for the first time put the issue prominently on the national political agenda (Engbersen 2012; Van Puymbroeck et al. 2011).

### Leefbaar Rotterdam's stance towards immigration from the NMS

Leefbaar Rotterdam was in the opposition until the spring of 2014, so up until now, most of Rotterdam's policies concerning NMS immigration have been developed without the participation of this party. The party has, however made clear its position on immigration from the NMS and has given it a prominent spot on its political agenda. During the 2014 municipal election campaign, limiting the influx of immigrants from the NMS became a prominent topic in Leefbaar's campaign. In its election manifesto, the party stressed the importance of 'taking seriously' the current influx and 'not making the same mistakes that were made with earlier generations of immigrants'. Very striking was the fact that the party did not mention Islam at all anymore in its manifesto's integration paragraph. Immigration from the NMS has completely taken over the party's immigration discourse. Leefbaar Rotterdam proposed to introduce quota for immigration from the NMS to Rotterdam - a proposal that would require changes in European treaties to be executed – and a 10 year waiting period for foreign workers before they can receive social security benefits, a proposal that equally would require both national and European laws to be changed. Furthermore, the party stressed the need to fill in the jobs currently done by NMS labour migrants with local unemployed and expressed itself against creating special housing for labour migrants from the NMS, saying it would make integration impossible (Leefbaar Rotterdam 2014).

There certainly can be seen a negative tone towards immigration from the NMS in Leefbaar's platform, but the overall picture is a bit more nuanced. The party repeatedly has said it does not want to stop labour migration from the NMS altogether, but just want to take measures *'to keep the development manageable'* (Leefbaar Rotterdam 2008: 4). The quota it proposes would only count for Rotterdam and is related to the demographic 'problem' of the city as described in chapter 3.1. The party's leader Joost Eerdmans said during the campaign that he did not want to stop immigrants from the NMS from coming to the Netherlands altogether, but said the concentration of problems in Rotterdam already was too big for the city to be able to handle more immigrants (NOS 2014). Here, the fact that Leefbaar Rotterdam is a local party might play a role. The party can just claim to treat Rotterdam differently than the rest of the country, because there is no need to take into account negative views on immigration of people not living in Rotterdam. However, the party seems to balance between an awareness of labour migration to Rotterdam being a reality on the one hand and a strong focus on the negative impact of this phenomenon on the other hand.

### Analysis

Overlooking the whole range of measures Rotterdam has taken in response to the arrival of labour migrants from the NMS, it can be noted that the general character is rather pragmatic, a character that is reflecting the city's approach that like it is formulated in the most recent policy agenda concerned with NMS migrants: *"Rotterdam has the view that labour migrants are important for the development of the economy and the city and wants to facilitate migrants that contribute to the wealth and wellbeing of Rotterdam as well as possible. The arrival of a large group of new migrants requires a lot of the local society and local government. It comes together with both desirable and undesirable effects, both opportunities and threats."*<sup>29</sup> (Gemeente Rotterdam 2013). This is partly related to the fact that the city does not have the power to control immigration and thus is limited to merely take on its consequences. A relatively large part of the measures is in fact just the execution of general laws and regulations that do not specifically have to do anything with immigration from the NMS or immigration in general. Every inhabitant of the Netherlands has the

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<sup>29</sup> *"Rotterdam staat op het standpunt dat arbeidsmigranten van belang zijn voor de ontwikkeling van de economie en de stad en wil migranten die bijdragen aan de welvaart en het welzijn van Rotterdam zo goed mogelijk faciliteren. De komst van een omvangrijke groep nieuwe migranten vraagt het nodige van de lokale samenleving en overheid. Er gaan zowel wenselijke als onwenselijke verschijnselen, zowel kansen als bedreigingen mee gepaard."*

obligation to register his or her address. Labour market regulations as well as regulations regarding housing also are general regulations. The fact that there is such a strong focus on upholding all these regulations, most of all illustrates the situation that the influx of NMS immigrants has caused violations of these rules. It reflects the 'undesirable effects' and 'threats' the city of Rotterdam sees, as mentioned in the statement above.

However, a certain tendency can be seen in the way the policies are phrased, as well as what they do not include. The regular overviews of the its efforts in dealing with labour migration from the NMS, which the city of Rotterdam publishes, all concentrate on the problems that accompany this migration flow, whereas the opportunities are rarely addressed. While this may be logical - if there is no problem, there usually is no need for government action - also potential problems, such as 'welfare tourism' or welfare dependency or high crime rates, are addressed that currently cannot be observed, yet which fit into common concerns regarding immigration. There certainly is a kind of scepticism noticeable in the city's policies. This is most clearly expressed in Rotterdam's lobbying activities at the national level. Immigration from the NMS has sparked an active lobby from Rotterdam at the national government to get legislation to be changed and competences to be broadened. The city pleads for making access to the social security system more difficult (Gemeente Rotterdam 2013: 17), even though elsewhere no signs of 'welfare tourism' can be found. Rotterdam also lobbied to keep temporary restriction after enlargement on the freedom of movement for workers into place as long as possible (Gemeente Rotterdam 2008), and there was a lobby to change European rules as to be able to make integration courses compulsory for EU nationals as well. Looking at such lobby initiatives, the question arises whether the pragmatic nature of most of the policies concerning NMS immigration is entirely a consequence of the limited powers of local government, and if Rotterdam had the legal powers, whether it wouldn't have introduced much more restrictive policies, meant to keep away as many of the NMS it deemed undesirable. The hypothetical nature of these questions makes it impossible to answer them with certainty, but Rotterdam's lobby at the national and European level certainly indicates that might well be the case.

# Chapter 4: Vienna Case Study

## 4.1 Introduction to Vienna

Austria's capital city is by far the country's largest city. As of the first of January 2013, it had a population of 1,741,246 inhabitants, of which 34.6% had a migration background.<sup>30</sup> On the same day, 23.0% of the population did not have Austrian citizenship (Statistik Wien).

Just like Rotterdam, Vienna has been a bulwark of social-democracy throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. During the First Republic, the city was known as *das rote Wien (red Vienna)* because of its social-democratic city government by the *Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs*<sup>31</sup> (SPÖ) with its internationally renowned social housing policies. During the Second Republic, the dominance of the SPÖ has continued, and until so far the SPÖ came first at every election and only twice fell short of an absolute majority of the seats of the city council, in 1996 and at the last election in 2010. After the last election, the SPÖ entered into a coalition government with the Greens, who have enjoyed considerable success in Vienna, especially in the inner city districts.

As is visible in the statistics, Vienna is a city of immigration. Like many other countries in Western Europe, Austria began to attract labour migrants from the 1960's onwards, mainly from Turkey and Yugoslavia, many of which came to Vienna (Bauer 2008). Migration from the countries that now are the NMS was not very common at the time, because for those east of the Iron Curtain, it was very difficult to leave their country. This changed in 1989 with the fall of the Iron Curtain, which caused a considerable influx of immigrants to Austria and Vienna. Most of them again came from Yugoslavia, whose disintegration caused wars to erupt in Croatia and Bosnia. This sudden peak in immigration had a significant impact on Austria's political climate regarding immigration. The country's relatively loose asylum policy was criticised and there many advocated stricter rules for labour migration. The country's proximity to Eastern Europe was seen by many as a risk, because there were fears of 'mass immigration' from these rather poor countries to nearby wealthy Austria. This debate lead

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<sup>30</sup> *Migrationshintergrund*. This definition includes both all people with foreign nationality as well as Austrians born abroad.

<sup>31</sup> At the time called *Sozialdemokratische Arbeiterpartei*, from 1945 until 1991 *Sozialistische Partei Österreichs*.

both to a stricter asylum policy as well as quota for foreign labour migrants in the 1990's (Ibid.).

When the topic of EU-enlargement came on the agenda, and with it the potential for freedom of movement within the EU for millions of Eastern Europeans, the debate around immigration came up once more. Austria had become a member of the EU in 1995 and quickly after this date, negotiations with the ten countries that would become member in 2004 started. This led to great fears in Austria that the country would be 'flooded' with immigrants from the NMS after EU-enlargement. Austrians were had a much more negative stance towards EU-enlargement than citizens in other EU member states (IDM 2001). This negative stance was mainly for economic reasons. Austrians expected a downward pressure on wages, higher unemployment, and higher crime rates as well as increased immigration (Weiss/Strodl 2003). As a response to public sentiment, the Austrian government insisted on the temporary restrictions of the freedom of movement for workers that were in the end adopted as part of agreement on the enlargement of the EU.

The political debate around immigration, both in Vienna as well as in the whole of Austria, is closely tied to the country's most important populist radical right party, the *Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs* (FPÖ). Is both active on the national level as well as in in the country's *Bundesländer* (States) and currently is the second largest party in Vienna. It received a quarter of the votes at the last Viennese election, enjoying most support in working class neighbourhoods and more suburban districts at the edge of the city. The FPÖ was founded in 1955 and originally united the *deutschnationalen* and national-liberal currents of Austrian politics.<sup>32</sup> Under the national leadership of Jörg Haider, from 1986 to 2000, the party transformed to a populist radical right party with a strong anti-immigration agenda (Luther 2005). This strategy proved to be very successful, both on the national level but also in Vienna, where the party, after getting around 7% of the votes for several decades, came in second during four out of the last five elections with scores above 20%. Although the party has remained in opposition so far, Vienna has become a FPÖ stronghold. The current leader

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<sup>32</sup> During the First Republic, these were the conservative and secular forces that saw no reason for Austria to exist anymore as a separate state after the collapse of the Habsburg Empire, and wanted Austria to join Germany. Many from this political faction supported the NSDAP and the *Anschluss* of 1938. During the occupation after the Second World War, former *Deutschnationalen* and national-liberals first founded the *Verein der Unabhängigen* that transformed to the FPÖ after the Second Republic was founded. The party for a long time had a nationalist current as well as a more liberal one and played a fairly minor role in the political system that was dominated by the two big parties, the SPÖ and ÖVP.

of the party, Hans-Christian Strache, was leader of the Viennese FPÖ before becoming the national leader and still is very active on the city level, being the mayoral candidate both at the last election in 2010 as well as for the upcoming election in 2015.

In Vienna, the most important city of immigration in the country, the topic of immigration is central to the success of the FPÖ in the city's politics. In the party's manifesto for the 2010 Viennese elections, immigration is the first topic addressed. It is stated that there has been an "*a massive, uncontrolled immigration to Vienna*" that has caused problems in areas like housing, safety, schools and the working place (FPÖ 2010: 6). Especially Islamic immigrants and asylum seekers are picked out as groups that supposedly cause trouble. The former, because of their culture and their tendency to 'form parallel societies' and the latter, because they supposedly are no 'genuine' refugees and are linked to criminality. Measures that are proposed are a full stop of immigration from outside of Europe, a headscarf ban in schools and buildings of the city as well as a ban on building minarets (ibid.). Islamic immigrants remain the most important group targeted by the FPÖ's rhetoric, even given the recent large migration flow from the NMS. This strong anti-Islam stance of the FPÖ is a fairly recent development however. For a long time, the Islam was not in the forefront of the FPÖ's nativist campaign and especially during its years in government, the party toned down its rhetoric, at a time other populist radical right wing parties stepped up anti-Islam campaigns in the wake of the attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001. It was with the rise of Viennese FPÖ leader Hans-Christian Strache and the subsequent split of the party, with Strache taking over the national leadership, that criticising Islam became central to the party's anti-foreigner rhetoric (Rosenberger/Hadj-Abdou 2013). The party's focus on Islam and Islamic migrants as main target also allowed the party to campaign for votes amongst other, non-Islamic immigrants, especially Serbs (daStandard.at 2012; Zeit Online 2010). Another issue that the FPÖ has addressed in Vienna is the access of foreigners to the city's communal dwellings, the *Gemeindebauten*. The changing composition of the population of the *Gemeindebauten*, which are accessible for non-Austrians since 2006, has led to tensions which the FPÖ uses to campaign against the right of foreigners to live in this housing (Rosenberger/Mourão Permoser 2013).

The presence of a populist radical right party in the Viennese political arena does not mean however, that this nativist agenda has become mainstream and taken over by other parties.

Though the FPÖ has governed on the national level, this has not been the case in Vienna, where the SPÖ still is in power, now in a coalition government with the Greens. The SPÖ has not gone through a similar electoral shock as the PvdA in Rotterdam went through in 2002. The SPÖ has kept a clear distance to the FPÖ and has refused to enter into a coalition with the party. The current government overall hits a rather positive tone in regard to Vienna's reality of a city of immigration. It puts diversity at the core of its integration policy, and formulates its policies rather positively. For instance, when talking about the need for migrants to learn German, it focusses on offering cheap and accessible German courses for all, without mentioning any more repressive measures such as obligatory tests or possible punishments if people fail to learn German.<sup>33</sup> Labour migration from the NMS is not mentioned at all in the coalition's government agreement (Stadt Wien 2010). While this does not mean that every migrant is welcome in Vienna – again, who can and cannot come to Vienna is a matter of national policy – it does testify of a political climate where the SPÖ has chosen a strategy of 'hold' and 'defuse' instead of 'adopt', to stay with the terminology of Bale/Green-Pedersen (2010), perhaps partly because of the strength of the Greens that generally favour more a more open immigration policy. This can be illustrated with the SPÖ's stance in the conflict over access of foreigners to housing in the *Gemeindebauten*. The SPÖ has defended this opening and rejected the FPÖ's culturalised explanation of the tensions in the *Gemeindebauten*, blaming them on the culture of the immigrants living there. Instead, it has adopted a policy of trying to regulate tensions by pressing forward general rules of conduct that all inhabitants, Austrian or foreigner, should abide (Rosenberger/Mourão Permoser 2013).

## 4.2 Immigration from the NMS to Vienna: Facts and Figures

Contrary to Rotterdam, Vienna has had a long history of immigration from many of the areas that nowadays are the new member states of the EU. The city once was the capital of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, which included the entire present-day Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia as well as parts of present-day Poland and Romania. The capital attracted many people from all over the empire, and especially the Czech population of Vienna was

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<sup>33</sup> These more restrictive policies do exist however, but mainly stem from national legislation regarding integration.



sizeable, probably a few hundred thousand in the years before the First World War. After the Austrian-Hungarian Empire fell apart, many people of these minorities left Vienna and those who stayed were assimilated over time. With the beginning of the Cold War, Vienna became cut off from its close neighbours that now were at the other side of the Iron Curtain. However, it was one of the prime destination of asylum seekers from communist Eastern European countries,

especially after events like the Hungarian uprising in 1956 and the Prague Spring in 1968, and the unrest in Poland in the beginning of the 1980's. Many asylum seekers used Vienna only as a transitory stop on their way to other destinations, but some

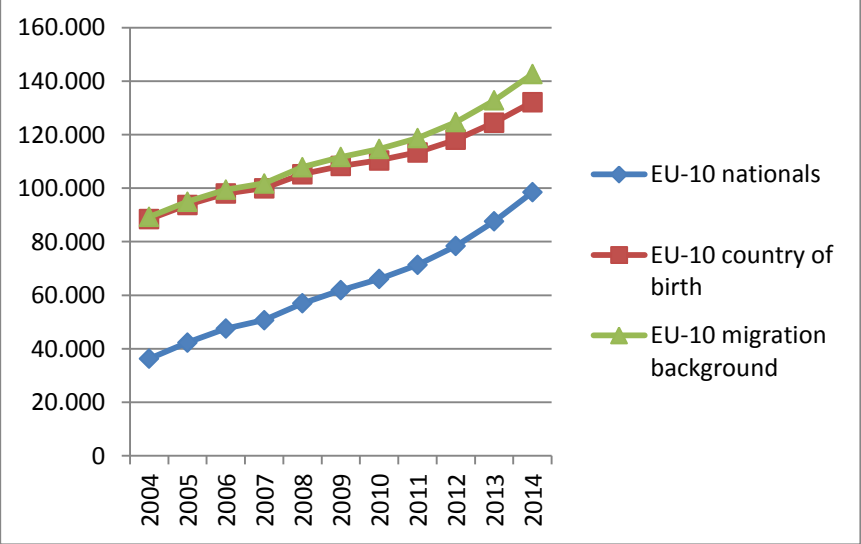


Figure 1: Number of inhabitants of Vienna with nationality, country of birth and migration background from the 10 new EU-member states 2004-2014 (Own work, statistics provided by MA23)

chose to stay in the city (Bauer 2008). Before EU enlargement, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2004, Vienna already had a sizable population of migrants from the 10 NMS. At that day, 88,925 people living in Vienna were born in one of these 10 countries, 36,316 people were nationals of one of them and 89,285 people had a migration background<sup>34</sup> from the NMS. This was 5.5%, 2.3% and 5.5% of the city's total population respectively. Since then, these numbers have risen steadily to 132,155 people born in the NMS, 98,152 NMS nationals and 142,642 people with a migration background from the NMS on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2014. These numbers correspond to 7.4%, 5.5% and 8.0% of the city's population respectively. The number of migrants from the NMS exceeds the number of immigrants from Turkey by far and, taken as one group, are only second to immigrants from former Yugoslavia. It is interesting to note that the number of NMS-nationals grew at a much faster rate than the number of people born in the NMS, as is easily visible in Figure 1. This suggests that the

<sup>34</sup> Migration background is defined as having foreign nationality or in case of Austrian nationality being born abroad.

recent influx has been even bigger, but that former generations of immigrants that already were naturalised are either leaving Vienna or there the death rate is higher than the birth rate amongst this group. Mainly responsible for this trend is the Czech immigrant

community, the only one the groups from the NMS that shrunk in the last decade, as can be seen in Figure 2. The number of Viennese born in the Czech Republic went down with nearly 10,000. At the same time, the number of Czech nationals actually rose slightly from 2,138 to 3,134 people. Other interesting

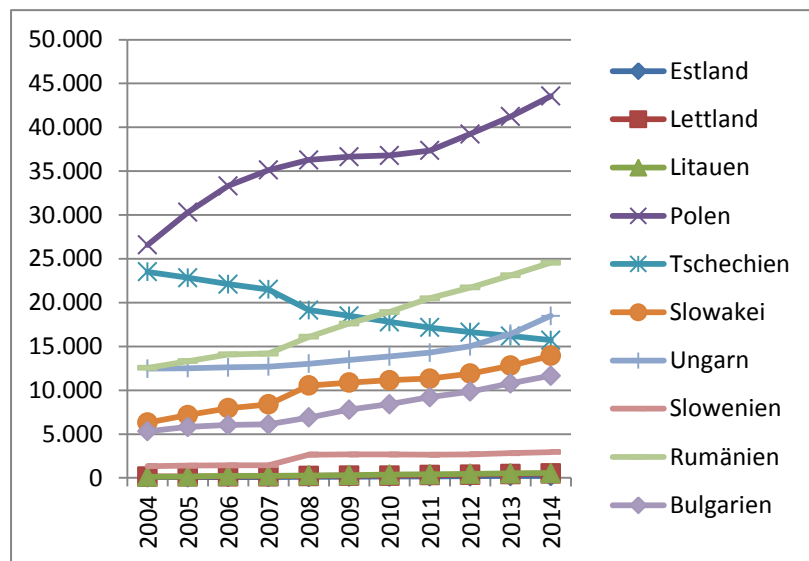


Figure 2: Number of Vienna inhabitants born in the 10 NMS 2004-2014 (Own work, statistics provided by MA23)

trends visible in Figure 2 are the fact that the Polish community is by far the largest, now followed by the Romanian community, which has grown significantly, especially after 2007 when Romania entered the EU. The number of immigrants from the Baltic States, and to a lesser extent Slovenia, is not very significant. All these figures refer to the officially registered population of Vienna, and therefore do not include estimations for people who do not register. Whereas in Rotterdam, this group was estimated to be very large, even larger than the number of migrants that did register, this does not seem to be the case in Vienna. At least, the topic never comes up in policy documents or other scientific or media reports.

Regarding the distribution of NMS migrants over the city of Vienna, there is a fairly equal distribution amongst the different districts of the city. No very large concentrations can be registered, merely a somewhat higher share in districts that have a higher percentage of foreigners in general. The 15<sup>th</sup> district, which has the highest share of foreigners of all of Vienna's district, also has the highest share of people born in the NMS. About one out of 10 in this district is born in one of the 10 new EU member states. In the 23<sup>rd</sup> district at the edge of the city, only a bit more than one out of 20 inhabitants was born in the NMS (Statistik Wien).

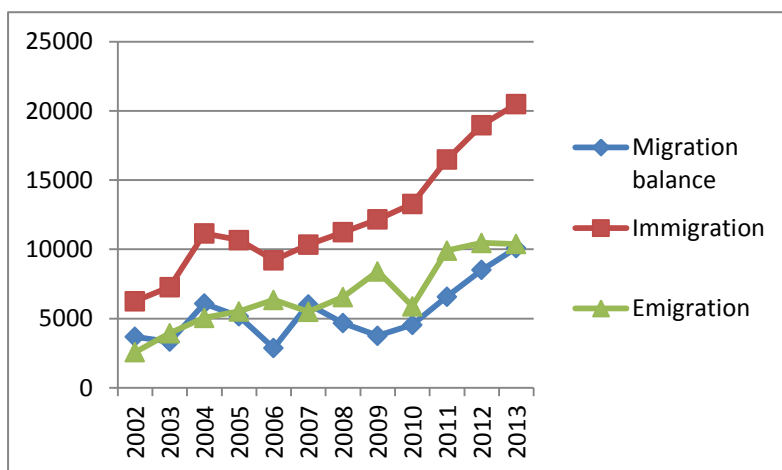


Figure 3: Migration flows between Vienna and the NMS 2002-2013 (Own work, statistics provided by Statistik Austria)

When looking not at the population but migration flows, it becomes clear that the number of immigrants from the NMS rose significantly just after the enlargement of 2004 to stay relatively stable afterwards until the lifting of labour market restrictions in 2011. In

absolute numbers, immigration from the 10 NMS was little above 6000 people in 2002 and has risen to more than 20,000 in 2013. Meanwhile, emigration also rose, but at a slower pace than immigration (going from about 2500 to little over 10,000 between 2002 and 2013) leading to an increase of the positive migration balance, especially in recent years, with the positive balance for 2013 being 10,098. Migration flows to and from the NMS make up around 50% of Vienna's migration surplus, showing the importance of immigration from the NMS demographically (Statistik Austria).

Since the immigration from the NMS was discussed extensively in Austria with regard to its impact on the Austrian labour market, a lot of studies were done, partly commissioned by the Austrian government, to monitor the consequences of labour migration from the NMS (Riesenfelder et al. 2012; AMS 2012; Huber/Böhs 2012; WIIW/IHS 2013). Their main conclusion in regard to the impact of labour migration after EU-enlargement is that the temporary restrictive measures have been successful in keeping the numbers of immigrations relatively low. Overall, no major negative impact has been registered on the Austrian labour market. The feared rise in unemployment and downward pressure on wages in Austria did not materialise in a general sense. Phenomena like *Lohn-* and *Sozialdumping*, semi-legal working conditions, were not widespread, partly thanks to a new law to prevent this kind of practices that accompanied the full opening of the labour market, the so-called *Lohn- und Sozialdumpingsbekämpfungsgesetz*.<sup>35</sup> However, in some sectors where most labour migrants work, some of these feared effects can be noticed. Labour migrants often

<sup>35</sup> Literally meaning *Law to combat wage and social dumping*.

are seasonal migrants and work primarily in construction, agriculture and tourism. The temporary restrictions proved successful in preventing large numbers of NMS immigrants from coming, while at the same time not completely keeping them out but letting them come in those sectors of the economy where they were needed. Because the temporary restrictions only applied for working for a dependent employment and not for self-employment, a very large share of NMS migrants before 2011 worked as self-employed person, even though in reality, they probably did work for a company. Especially in the construction sector this mode of employment seemed to be popular. After the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2011, when restrictions for the eight countries were lifted, a very high peak of people switching from being self-employed to dependent employment was registered for nationals of the eight NMS. This is an indication that the self-employment was indeed fake, and now became legalised as a normal employment situation. Another form of legalisation of many NMS workers in Austria took place during the phase of temporary restrictions. 24-hour personal care for (elderly) people in their home is an occupation done by many NMS immigrants, since it is difficult and low-paid work that Austrians are reluctant to do. This work mostly was done illegally, but the Austrian government decided in 2006-2008 to legalise this work without applying normal labour market standards that would make it too expensive for most people to utilize, and allowing NMS nationals to do this work (Bachinger 2010).

The studies not that the immigrants coming from the eight countries that joined 2004 generally are well educated, mostly having a median level of education, which means that are much higher educated than immigrants from third countries. The share of immigrants with low education levels is higher with Bulgarians and Romanians, though also here, the big majority comes with more than just basic qualifications. Moreover, the city of Vienna attracts immigrants with higher levels of education than other regions of Austria. The kind of work the labour migrants do often does not correspond to level of education of the immigrants. They are overqualified and do not succeed in making use of their qualifications. Immigrants tend to be rather young, most are between the ages 15-44 and a majority of them is female.

Another important phenomenon concerning NMS immigration to Vienna are people that commute across the border mainly from Slovakia to the city of Vienna. Because of the city's

close proximity to the border, it is possible to commute to Vienna from the bordering area of Slovakia, which includes the country's capital Bratislava, as well as to a lesser extent from Hungary's bordering regions. The main reason to commute is the lower cost of living east of the border, as well as people having their social networks in their home country. There are no exact numbers on how many people commute to Vienna every day, but it is a sizable group that often is named when discussing labour migration from the NMS. While they strictly aren't immigrants, they add to the presence of NMS nationals in Vienna.

### 4.3 Vienna's policies concerning NMS migration

Overall, the political attention for the consequences of labour migration from the NMS to Vienna is fairly limited. As described before, the topic caused considerable political debate on the national level, especially in relation to the expected flood of migrants that would disturb the country's labour market. In response to the political discussion about the topic, the Austrian government became one of the main advocates for temporary restrictions of the freedom of movement for citizens of the NMS after ascendance and did use the possibility to put restrictions into place for the maximum seven years allowed by the EU. However, this active stance on the national level and during European negotiations contrasts with a low political activity on the local level, at least concerning the city of Vienna. Whereas in Rotterdam, one can find a coordinated political approach, going beyond different areas of policies and branches of the public administration, that what is done in Vienna, is done by single departments, but not as an overall coordinated strategy regarding labour migration from the NMS.

The political debate in Vienna about immigration from the NMS is characterised by a strong bipolarisation between the SPÖ-led city government on the one side, and the oppositional FPÖ on the other side. The FPÖ does put the topic on the political agenda with some regularity, in a negative way, whereas the SPÖ, as well as the other parties, do not pay too much attention to the development and reject the negative claims made by the FPÖ.

Since there are no policies that explicitly are introduced to accommodate immigration from the NMS, it has proven difficult to list all measures that are nevertheless relevant for this purpose. The rest of this chapter will therefore focus on those two areas of policy where the

most direct connection can be made between the policies that have been introduced recently and immigration from the NMS: the extension of the city's integration program to EU nationals and the efforts to make the process of recognition of diplomas obtained in foreign countries easier.

### Integration policy

One of the actions the city of Vienna has undertaken in recent years, it to step up the effort to reach migrants from EU countries with its offer for integration measures. EU citizens have no obligation to take integration or language courses, and this is not what the city of Vienna would like to see. Instead, it decided to extend its offer for integration and language courses that is offered (and compulsory) to third country nationals to migrants from the European Union on a voluntary basis.

Integration is the responsibility of the *Magistratsabteilung 17* (MA17). The current integration offer of the city of Vienna is called *Start Wien*. When foreigners from the EU register in Vienna and apply for an *Anmeldebescheinigung*<sup>36</sup>, they get the offer from the MA17 for a one-hour *Orientierungsgespräch*,<sup>37</sup> which is offered amongst other languages in Polish, Czech, Slovakian, Hungarian, Romanian and Bulgarian. During this conversation, general questions that the immigrants have, can be clarified, for instance regarding job and education possibilities, recognition of qualifications attained in the home country or any other questions immigrants might have when they come to Vienna. At the occasion, the migrants receive the so-called *Wiener Bildungspass*, the *Vienna education pass*, which serves as an overview of where the migrant stands in terms of courses he or she has completed. This allows people from authorities or educational organisations to easily see which steps the immigrant has taken so far on the way to integration. The *Bildungspass* comes with three coupons worth €50 that give a discount on German language courses on A1 to B1 levels. The coupons are only valid when the migrant visits a so-called *information module* about the themes such as the Austrian education system, starting a business or recognition of qualifications attained in the home country. These information modules consist of a two-hour lecture with time for questions and discussion and are given in the same languages as

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<sup>36</sup> A certificate or registration that EU citizens need to have when they stay registered in Vienna for a period longer than three months.

<sup>37</sup> Literally meaning *orientating conversation*.

the *Orientierungsgespräch*. After completing an *information module*, a coupon gets stamped and can be used for all the institutes with which the city of Vienna cooperates for giving German language courses.

This program is modelled after the integration trajectory third country nationals have to go through obligatorily. Since EU-nationals are not obliged to take part, participant numbers are not that high, about 800 per year.<sup>38</sup> However, since getting an *Anmeldebescheinigung* took quite a long time due to a lack of capacity at the immigration office, it held back many people from taking up the offer of *Start Wien*. The city has made an effort to handle the registration more quickly and the MA 17 hopes this will lead to reaching more EU immigrants in the coming years (Interview Eltayeb).

### Labour market

As discussed before, the consequences of the EU enlargements of 2004 and 2007 and the following introduction of freedom of movement within the EU were mainly discussed and framed in the Austrian and Viennese debate in terms of their impact on the Austrian labour market. On the one hand, there were fears of negative pressure on wages and foreigners taking jobs from natives. On the other hand, the advocates of freedom of movement for workers stressed the need for immigration of qualified workers, because of Austria's supposed *Fachkräftemangel*, a lack of skilled professionals. Migration from the NMS is seen as a way to solve this problem (Heschl 2008). The different studies discussed in chapter 4.2 on the impact of immigration from the NMS on the Austrian economy and labour market show that NMS immigrants generally are well skilled, yet mostly do unskilled work. Many of them apparently are overqualified, meaning that there is a potential with the immigrants to fill in some of the shortages of the Austrian labour market.

The city of Vienna sees this potential, and has taken some active steps to make use of the skills NMS immigrants bring with them. One thing that stands in the way are the difficulties immigrants face to get their qualifications recognised in Austria. As described above, *Start Wien* also has a focus on the recognition of qualifications obtained in the home country, and both the Viennese and Austrian governments are planning to reorganise the recognition

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<sup>38</sup> In 2013 already more than 20,000 people migrated from the NMS to Vienna, and the group of immigrants from the EU-14, Switzerland and Norway was also sizable, making the number of 800 only a fraction of the total group of immigrants that could use the offer of Start Vienna.

procedures of foreign qualifications as to make it easier to get them recognised. A special contact point for the recognition of foreign qualifications<sup>39</sup> has been set up, where migrants can receive free help with the recognition of their qualifications. It is important to note that again, this is part of a general immigration and integration policies and there is no direct connection made with immigration specifically from the NMS.

### The FPÖ's stance towards immigration from the NMS

As described in chapter 4.1, the FPÖ's anti-immigrant rhetoric picks out Muslims and asylum seekers as the main immigrant threats to Austria. Labour migration from the NMS is not on the forefront of the party's discourse. For instance, in the 2010 Viennese election manifesto, immigration from the NMS is not stated specifically as a problematic development. In the chapter on safety however, 'criminal tourism' (*Kriminaltourismus*) is named as a problem with "[a]lmost 100% of burglar gangs in Vienna being from Eastern and South-Eastern Europe"<sup>40</sup> (FPÖ 2010: 8). Here, the party brings together two issues that strictly speaking are two separate developments. On the one hand, there is the freedom of movement, making it possible for citizens from the NMS to move to Austria without any restrictions.<sup>41</sup> On the other hand there is the enlargement of the Schengen zone, which the eight NMS of 2004 joined in December 2007, causing the border controls between Austria and its eastern neighbours to disappear. The supposed criminal Eastern European criminals do not necessarily have to be immigrants from the NMS, but could be just crossing the border and go back instead. There often is little place for such nuances in the anti-EU and immigration remarks of the FPÖ however, with both discussions overlapping in the party's discourse. Also regarding safety, the FPÖ makes Eastern European migrants responsible for increased begging on Vienna's streets. The party claims criminal gangs are behind the begging which it describes as *Bettelunwesen*<sup>42</sup> being done by the *Bettlermafia* from Eastern European countries ([Gudenus] Wiener Landtag 2013). As a consequence, it demands a general ban on begging in Vienna, which the city government refuses, however.

Since the FPÖ is a national party, it is difficult to make a distinction between the party's actions on the Viennese and Austrian level. And given the fact that the debate around

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<sup>39</sup> *Anlaufstelle für Personen mit im Ausland erworbenen Qualifikationen*

<sup>40</sup> „Fast 100 % der Einbrecherbanden in Wien sind aus Ost- und Südosteuropa.“

<sup>41</sup> Of course, in 2010 the temporary restrictions were still in place.

<sup>42</sup> Meaning so much like *begging nuisance*



immigration from the NMS has had a fairly national character with relatively little focus on problems specifically in Vienna, much of the negative campaigning against NMS immigration of the FPÖ has been done on the national level. In its manifesto for the 2014 elections for the European Parliament, the party advocated a restriction of the principle of freedom of movement for workers, e.g. by closing of certain sectors of the economy for foreign workers (FPÖ 2013). The FPÖ also has campaigned against 'welfare tourism', speaking of "Armutszuwandanderung"<sup>43</sup> from Eastern Europe, which it wants to stop by paying immigrants only the benefits they can receive in their home country (Neue Freie Zeitung 2014).

### Analysis

The main striking thing in Vienna, is not such much the policies the city has developed towards immigration from the NMS, but the almost complete lack thereof. The introduction of freedom of movement for workers from the NMS was widely discussed politically in Austria, and Vienna has received a very sizable group of immigrants from the NMS after enlargement, yet the city has not singled out this development as one that needs special attention. Vienna is a city of immigration, a development which the SPÖ-led city government acknowledges and even welcomes, and has set up policies to deal with this reality. But the city does not seem to make much distinction between the different flows of immigrants that come to the city. This is consistent with the reaction of the SPÖ to other immigration related topics, such as the access of foreigners to *Gemeindebauten* and the tensions this caused. The SPÖ tried to address this issue in a non-culturalised way that does not frame the tensions in ethnic terms. In general, the reaction of the Viennese government can be characterised by a mix of 'defuse' and 'hold' in regard to the FPÖ's efforts to push the issue on the agenda.

Since immigration from the NMS was high on the national political agenda in Austria, policies were developed there, such as the *Lohn- und Sozialdumpingsbekämpfungsgesetz* to respond to the influx, meaning that a lot of the political reaction, certainly in the area of the expected negative consequences of the freedom of movement on the Austrian labour market, which dominated the political debate, has been taken place on the national, rather than the Viennese level. At the city level however, policies are there to make sure the arrival of immigrants, whether they come from the NMS or from elsewhere, happens without much

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<sup>43</sup> Literally meaning *poverty immigration*

problems. A strong focus is put on making use of the qualifications immigrants bring with them, also since proponents of freedom of movement for workers from the NMS again and again have stressed the need for skilled workers because of the countries *Fachkräftemangel*, a lack of skilled professionals (Heschl 2008). What is striking in this respect, is that this lack is mostly defined as applying to highly skilled work, or at least work which requires special technical skills. In reality however, all studies point to the fact that workers from the NMS mainly work in sectors like agriculture, construction and tourism with work that requires low skills, a situation comparable to other Western European countries. This implies that here the real need for foreign workers exists, a fact that is not acknowledged in public policies however. This might precisely be, because stating that the country needs immigrants that are willing to do difficult and badly paid work that Austrians are not willing to do, would probably spark strong rejection from parties like the FPÖ.

## Chapter 5: A Comparison between the Rotterdam and Vienna Cases

As the previous two chapters have shown, there are remarkable differences in the way the cities of Rotterdam and Vienna have responded politically to the arrival of labour migrants from the NMS after the EU expanded eastwards in 2004 and 2007. Briefly worded, whereas Rotterdam responded very explicitly to the influx of the immigrants, judging it to be a development that urgently needed a political response, in Vienna, policy makers have not deemed the development as one that needs specific political action on the city level, and have dealt with it only through general policies, not targeted specifically at NMS migrants.

For Rotterdam, the arrival of labour migrants from the NMS was a rather new development. Although the city has a rich history of immigration, there existed no previous history of immigration from these specific countries, so when suddenly great numbers of people from the NMS moved to Rotterdam, this influx was very visible for inhabitants. The first problem the city noted was that though there was a tangible increase in immigrants from the NMS, this was not reflected in official figures of registered inhabitants, leading to the conclusion that many of the immigrants did not register as inhabitants of Rotterdam. The city has since then stepped up efforts to make sure more immigrants from the NMS register. Much of the policy effort of the city of Rotterdam focussed on the areas of housing and labour market. In both areas, the arrival of immigrants has had the most tangible local impact in the city. Especially the housing situation, with many migrants living in overcrowded and rundown apartments often rented out illegally, has caused nuisance in exactly those neighbourhoods that the city views as so deprived, they cannot handle any newcomers that bring with them an extra burden on the neighbourhood. Since managing the supposed too large concentration of deprivation has been absolutely central to Rotterdam's politics in the past decade, NMS immigration has been addressed very prominently. Regarding the labour market, most competences to regulate and control it lie at the national level, so most of Rotterdam's effort has been to lobby for more checks on illegal practices. Also, there have been efforts to fill in the jobs mainly done by labour migrants from the NMS with local

unemployed, though these have not been very successful. Furthermore, the city closely monitors the situation regarding criminality and claims on social security done by NMS labour migrants – both classic concerns around immigration – though on both areas, no major problems can be registered and consequently no significant political action has been taken. Because the city has only limited competences, it has been working to get all stakeholders, including the national government, together to cooperate and share information. In this way, the city has been able to do more than it could have done just by itself. Overall, the city of Rotterdam has had a strong focus on the negative side effects of NMS migration, fearing they pose another burden on a city that is viewed by policy makers as having too many problems already.

In Vienna, much of the debate around immigration from the NMS seems to have taken place before EU enlargement and the lifting on temporary restrictions seven years later. Especially nationally, the introduction of freedom of movement was followed with anxiety, because fears existed about possible negative effects on the Austrian labour market of EU enlargement such as increased unemployment and a downward pressure on wages. Since the temporary restrictions were successful in limiting immigration in the first years and most of the fears did not materialise, the debate has somewhat subsided. The city's government has not taken any specific measures to deal with immigration from the NMS. Vienna receives a fair amount of immigrants from both Western and Eastern Europe as well as other parts of the world, and the city's policies are directed to cope with immigration in general. Also the fact that immigration from the NMS has become the single largest group and numbers of NMS nationals in Vienna have risen steadily does not change this principle. Measures that have been taken include a voluntary integration trajectory called *Start Wien* for EU nationals as well as special attention to recognition of foreign qualifications, trying to make it easier to get them recognised in Austria. They generally put the focus on the contribution (NMS-) immigrants can give to the city, and not so much to the risk related to immigration. Vienna's reaction to immigration fits into earlier debates about how to deal with immigration such as the conflict about access to the *Gemeindebauten* in that critique from the populist radical right is countered by the SPÖ-led city government by general policies meant to frame the issue in a more universal, de-culturalised or de-ethnicised way.

In both Rotterdam and Vienna, the populist radical right wing parties, Leefbaar Rotterdam and FPÖ, have addressed the topic of immigration from the NMS, seeing it as a negative development. There are however differences in the stances towards this immigration flow, and the arguments the parties use against them. In the case of Leefbaar Rotterdam, NMS immigration has received very prominent attention, especially during the recent municipal elections that took place in March 2014. The party focussed on the threats the immigration flow poses, especially for the vulnerable deprived neighbourhoods where many of the immigrants settle. However, there was some nuance in Leefbaar's tone, stressing that it did not want to stop immigration from the NMS altogether. Instead, it claimed that Rotterdam already has a lot of problems compared to other parts of the Netherlands, and therefore the number of NMS migrants to the Netherlands that settle down in Rotterdam alone should be restricted. In some of the party's statements, a general acceptance of labour migration as a phenomenon seems to be noticeable, although in its concrete policy proposals, little is provided to embrace this reality by facilitating labour migration. In the end, Leefbaar does choose restrictive and assimilationist policies.

The FPÖ has repeatedly described the freedom of movement for workers from the NMS as a threat, stating that causes unemployment for Austrians and also warning for 'welfare tourism' that puts pressure on the Austrian welfare state. There also is made a strong connection between immigrants from the NMS and criminality, and with gangs of (South-) Eastern European criminals being made responsible for a lot of criminality in Vienna as well as begging in the city's streets. Yet, since any meaningful measure to curb this immigration flow has to be taken on the Austrian or European level, the topic of NMS immigration does not figure very prominently in the party's Viennese discourse. Rather, Islam and Muslims are the main threat to Vienna as described by the FPÖ, which contrasts to Leefbaar Rotterdam. That party thanked its political breakthrough mainly to its criticism of Islam, but this topic has been mostly overshadowed with time by criticism of labour migration from the NMS, disappearing more to the background.

Another way in which Vienna and Rotterdam differ is the relationship between the populist radical right's stance towards immigration from the NMS and the actual response in terms of policy that has been developed. In Rotterdam, although Leefbaar Rotterdam and the parties governing the city in the last few years staged themselves as opponent of each other on the

issue of NMS immigration during the last municipal election campaign, the differences between Leefbaar Rotterdam and other parties are actually not that significant. Both agree on the fact that immigration has caused problems, mainly concerning housing in the city's deprived neighbourhoods as well as the need to help or force local unemployed to fill in the jobs now done by immigrants. Also in terms of response to these problems, most parties agree on increased checks on illegal housing and employment situations, as well as welfare policies targeted at activating unemployed people. Leefbaar Rotterdam did campaign for quota for NMS migrants and against so-called '*Polish hotels*' as a housing solution for labour migrants, but during the formation of a new city government, the party dropped these issues during negotiations. The FPÖ however, which is far from participating in any Viennese government, has chosen a strong oppositional position. Although it is unclear which policies it would pursue on the Viennese level, given that most of its proposals such as restriction of the principle of freedom of movement would be executed on the national level, it strongly rejects the underlying principles of Vienna's current policies, which are led by the idea that Vienna is a city of immigration.

This difference is an expression of a more fundamental difference between Vienna and Rotterdam in the way that the established parties have reacted to the rise of a populist radical right party and the issues this party has brought forward. In Rotterdam, the 2002 electoral victory brought Leefbaar Rotterdam to power, so it was able to put its mark on the city's politics in ways the FPÖ has not been able to do. In power, the party introduced a more confrontational style of politics and put the issue of the city's demographics on the political agenda. When Labour came back into power in 2006, it did not break radically with Leefbaar's policies, but has continued on a similar line, though on a symbolic and rhetorical level, it has acted differently. There now is an underlying consensus in Rotterdam's politics about the need for a 'management of urban marginality', with the strong concentration of deprived people in the city being regarded as a problem by both Labour and Leefbaar Rotterdam (Uitermark/Duyvendak 2008, 1499). In Vienna meanwhile, the FPÖ has stayed in opposition, continuing a hard line on immigration and integration and has not been forced to moderate its tone, as happened when the party governed nationally between 2000 and 2006. The SPÖ equally has hold on to its original position on immigration and integration to a much greater extent, not forced to do the kind of soul searching the PvdA in Rotterdam was forced to do, after losing power for the first time in more than half a century.

Another important difference between the political debate around immigration from the NMS in the two cities, is that the debate in Rotterdam is much more local, focussing specifically on those aspects of the immigration flow that locally have had a tangible impact, whereas in Vienna, the political debate seems to have been much more general and in line with the national debate. It may very well be a consequence of framing the immigration much more locally that Rotterdam has developed much more policy in response, whereas in Vienna, where general labour market concerns were dominant in the debate, much of the political response has taken place on the national level with increased controls on (semi-)illegal employment situations. The question than arises, why exactly the debate in Rotterdam has been much more local than in Vienna. Surely, the fact that NMS immigration to Rotterdam touches on one of the city's most central political topics, the influx of poor people to a city that already houses a large concentration of them, makes it logical that Rotterdam has reacted actively to the development. Why in Vienna, where the number of NMS immigrants has been very substantial, a locally focussed debate did not emerge is more difficult to explain. A reason could be that, since Vienna has a more 'balanced' population structure than Rotterdam, there simply might be a less large concentration of problems and consequently no need for the administration to take action to prevent a dreaded process of urban decay in some parts of the city. The distribution of NMS immigrants over the city's districts also suggest no large concentrations exists in city that overall is regarded as one of relatively low levels of segregation. Another explanation might be style of the city's politics. The kind of local debate that occurs in Rotterdam and the policies that have come out of it, require the willingness to name specific migration flows and immigrant groups as the source of problems. This kind of explicit political debate has surely been embraced by the FPÖ, but other parties, and particularly the governing SPÖ, have rejected such a political style. Therefore, the Viennese administration might be unwilling to discuss immigration from the NMS so explicitly, wanting to avoid a negative political climate towards specific ethnic groups.

Overall, the focus in Rotterdam is much more on negative side-effects of labour migration from the NMS. The opportunities that the immigrants can give to the city are seldom discussed. Vienna on the contrary, stresses the potential of immigrants much more in its policies. Here, making use of the qualifications the immigrants bring with them is central to the city's efforts to accommodate immigration from the NMS. This may be a result of a

debate about freedom of movement for citizens from the NMS that centred around the impact on the labour market. In this debate, the proponents of opening the labour market for workers from the NMS mainly argued that Austria needed more skilled migrants, because of the country's supposed *Fachkräftemangel*. While also in Rotterdam, many of the immigrants are much better qualified than is needed for the mostly low-skilled work they do, the issue of trying making use of this qualifications is not high on the political agenda. On the contrary, there is an active effort to try to activate the city's many unemployed and to stimulate them to take on jobs in the sectors where a lot of demand for workers is present, such as in horticulture. These efforts have been mainly in vain however, because the difficult and not well paid jobs that many of the labour migrants from the NMS have are not popular with Dutch people. The difficulty to find natives to do this work is the exact reason such a sizable flow of labour migrants has developed from the NMS to Rotterdam and other places in Eastern Europe. There is agreement amongst most policy makers in Rotterdam that the work many labour migrants from the NMS do is needed. In Vienna, the point that especially in sectors like personal care, construction or tourism there is demand for labour migrants and not only in sectors with high skilled jobs, seem to be somewhat downplayed in the political debate.

Overall, the differences have been large between Rotterdam and Vienna in the way the cities have reacted to migration from the NMS after EU enlargement. Rotterdam has developed a lot of specific policy, it has taken the lead in putting the issue on the political agenda also nationally and has brought together all stakeholders to take measures to accompany the immigration flow. The populist radical right in the city has had a much larger influence on policy, but also has been more moderate and governmental. Although there certainly is political strife, also on the issue of NMS immigration, there is a fundamental agreement on much of the political action that has to be undertaken as a reaction to immigration from the NMS. In Vienna, immigration from the NMS has not sparked specific policy reaction, but is being dealt with through general immigration and integration policies of the city. The vocal criticism of immigration by the FPÖ, also from the NMS, stands in sharp contrast to the much more positive attitude of the Viennese city government.



# Conclusion

This thesis has looked at the ways, in which immigration from the EU's new member states in Eastern Europe to the cities of Vienna and Rotterdam has been handled by the cities' administrations. Since the EU expanded in 2004 and 2007, large numbers of (labour) migrants used the freedom of movement within the EU to move to Western Europe, where job opportunities are better and wages higher. This development has been made possible by political processes on the European and national level, yet its consequences can be registered on a local level, especially the cities where many of the immigrants have moved to. Both Vienna and Rotterdam have received a significant number of these migrants, which has caused challenges for both cities. Immigration is viewed very sceptically by a large part of the population, and populist radical right parties with a strong anti-immigration agenda have established themselves as a permanent factor in the European political system. Rotterdam and Vienna both saw such a party arise in their respective city politics, which has made immigration a particularly important topic in the political debate in the two cities.

The first research question posed in this thesis was, in which ways both cities have reacted politically to the influx of NMS migrants that came after EU enlargements. Here, Rotterdam and Vienna have responded in very different ways. In Rotterdam, there has been a very explicit political response. The city regards the influx at least in part as a threat, because it causes problems in the most deprived parts of the city, especially in the area of housing. These neighbourhoods are deemed so vulnerable, according to the political consensus in Rotterdam, that they cannot handle any more problems than they already have to burden. Therefore, the city has decided to face the problems related to immigration from the NMS head on, and to bring all relevant stakeholders together to end illegal practices in housing and the labour market. Overall, the whole situation surrounding NMS immigration is closely monitored by the city, in case other negative developments might arise. In Vienna, there has not been developed any policy to cope specifically with immigration from the NMS. Instead, the city has developed general immigration and integration policies that, overall, focus more on the positive sides and opportunities of immigration.

With regard to the second research question, it has turned out that the relationship between radical right wing party and the political climate concerning immigration is a complex one, on which there is no agreement amongst political scientist. In both Vienna and Rotterdam, it can be said that the policy reactions to immigration from the NMS have been more or less in line with earlier political debates about and reactions to immigration. However, the cities diverge significantly in their respective political climates, with a much more negative discourse prevailing in Rotterdam than in Vienna. In the specific case of Rotterdam, the social-democratic PvdA moved to right on the issue of immigration and integration after its historic defeat in 2002, when Leefbaar Rotterdam became the biggest party from scratch, pushing the PvdA out of power for the first time in more than half a century. This, for the PvdA traumatic, election led many to the conviction in the party that it had neglected immigration and the concentration of deprivation in the city as political issues. Though significant differences remain between the PvdA and Leefbaar, not least in their political style, they now share the idea that Rotterdam's concentration of deprivation is a problem needing drastic measures. In Vienna meanwhile, the SPÖ did lose its absolute majority in recent times, but stayed in power rather comfortably. At the moment, it sees no need to make a sharp turn right on the issue of immigration and has kept clear distance to the FPÖ. The difference between Vienna and Rotterdam cannot be generalized however. Further research is needed to explore whether social-democratic parties that suffer bad electoral performances with simultaneous electoral success for the populist radical right indeed are more prone to take over a more negative stance towards immigration than social-democratic parties that do not very much suffer electorally from the rise of the populist radical right.

As already mentioned in the introduction, local policy on immigration is an issue that has not received much attention yet from social sciences. Local governments cannot control their own borders, and are therefore almost forced into a more passive role regarding immigration. The two cases studies here give some indications of the kind of policies cities can pursue to respond to immigration flows that come to them. First of all, both cities made use of the competences they do have. For instance Vienna, which, being a federal state of Austria, does have relevant competences on issues like integration policies or the recognition of foreign qualifications. But cities can do more than just strictly use the competences they have themselves. Rotterdam's reaction to NMS migration is a case in

point. It is very striking that the city has taken up a very active role, despite its limited competences in the strongly centralised Netherlands. It has done this by actively bringing together other relevant stakeholders and stimulating them to take the actions the Rotterdam city government wanted them to do. Also, together with other municipalities with large numbers of NMS immigrants such as The Hague, it started an effective lobby at the national level to attract the attention of the national government to the issue of labour migration from the NMS to get the support from the national government they needed. This led for instance to stricter and more frequent checks on the temporary employment agencies that employ many of the NMS immigrants. For now, at least in the case of Rotterdam, this lobby has concentrated more on convincing the national government to take action than on moving competences to the local level to be able to handle the development better.

Since cities do not have control on immigration flows, the policy reactions are of a pragmatic nature. Both in Rotterdam, where the focus has been on problems caused by NMS immigration, and in Vienna, which sees the immigration flow much more positively, questions on how to accommodate immigration are central. This structural power situation cities find themselves in does not allow for the execution of a nativist anti-immigration agenda that would include closing the border for most immigrants. It will be interesting to see, how *Leefbaar Rotterdam* will deal with labour migration in the coming years, now that it has returned to power in the spring of 2014.

To sum up, this thesis has shown that there exist very different reactions of cities in Western Europe to the influx of immigrants from the new EU member states in Central and Eastern Europe. Differences exist between the intensity of the reaction, which issues are seen as in need of a political response, and the kind of measures that are taken. Overall, the nature of policies is rather pragmatic, following the constraints of local government. The presence of a populist radical right wing party in the city's politics does not automatically mean that a negative stance towards immigration has been generalised throughout the political spectrum. There rather exists a whole range of different strategies other parties adopt as a reaction to the rise of the populist radical right.

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