



The European Refugee Crisis: Nationalist Backlashes within the European Union

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Abstract

The European refugee crisis is changing the European Union (EU). In 2015 alone, over one million refugees arrived in Europe. Within Austria and Hungary, this phenomenon has caused far right politics to gain momentum and refugees to be dubbed a threat to the project of nationalism. As a result, a moral imperative to help others in need has been replaced by a patriotic duty to defend the nation-state. This analysis examines this shift within Austria and Hungary, one emblematic of a rise in nationalist attitudes, through posing the question: to what extent has the recent influx of refugees into the EU prompted nationalist backlashes among, and within, receiving states? It is argued that while the current European refugee situation has caused nationalist backlashes at the state level, civil society efforts may offer a way to combat shifts within these two countries. To construct this argument, as well as to analyze where and to what extent nationalist backlashes are now evident within the EU, this paper examines the ways that both state and civil society in Austria and Hungary have reacted to the arrival of new refugee populations.

Introduction

The European refugee crisis is changing the European Union (EU).¹ In 2015 alone, over one million refugees arrived in Europe. Due to ongoing crises at home, a vast majority of this refugee population has been forced to make

1. In an effort to avoid presupposing language, this phenomenon will be referred to as the refugee situation. It is my view that the word “crisis” carries negative connotations and implies that an event is dangerous and unattractive. Additionally, it places a negative emphasis on the number of refugees arriving, rather than on the way the refugees are being treated once they arrive in the EU. The word “situation” is thus offered as a more neutral label. The term “nationalist backlash” is used repeatedly throughout this paper. While there is a definitional difference between “nationalist” and “nationalistic,” their connotations are intertwined in an undeniable way. In an effort to remain as objective as possible, however, the word “nationalist” will be used. Thus, for uses in this paper, “nationalist” should be understood as a sentiment that invokes a desire to separate one’s nation from difference, difference discerned as dangerous and unwelcome. Backlashes include actions such as the rise of far right political parties and the introduction of anti-asylum laws.

the treacherous journey across the Mediterranean. Running away from war and persecution and toward the hope of a better life, these refugees are being simultaneously pushed and pulled toward Europe. Within Austria and Hungary, this phenomenon has caused far right politics to gain momentum and refugees to be dubbed a threat to the project of nationalism. The Austrian and Hungarian states have made themselves crystal clear: the thousands of Syrian, Afghani, Iraqi, Pakistani and Eritrean refugees that have crossed their borders are not welcome.² Rather, they have been labeled as aliens and volatile risks to what it means to be Austrian or Hungarian. Consequently, Austria and Hungary have disregarded the stark realities of “refugeeness,” opting instead to portray this influx of refugees as a danger to existing social structures, policy, cultural attitudes, and, ultimately, to nationalist ideals. A moral imperative to help others in need has been replaced by a patriotic duty to defend the ethnic homogeneity and cultural identity of the nation-state.

This analysis examines a shift within EU member states, one emblematic of a rise in nationalist attitudes, through posing the question: to what extent has the recent influx of refugees into the EU prompted nationalist backlashes among, and within, receiving states? In doing so, the extent to which nationalist, reactionary politics can be witnessed in Austria and Hungary is highlighted. It is argued that, at the state level, there has been a nationalist backlash in Hungary to the recent influx of refugees. Through passing new anti-immigrant law, building the fence along the border with Serbia, refusing to provide support for refugee camps and welcome centers, and imposing regulations on the media, the Hungarian state has been clear: refugees are not welcome. The reality of a nationalist backlash in Austria is less obvious, as there has been a disconnect between verbal promises to assist refugees and concrete actions actually taken. Civil society efforts within both countries, however, have been more emblematic of tolerance and a willingness to help. Although these efforts may offer a way to combat nationalist attitudes within these two countries, the rise of the far right in both Hungary and Austria threatens this arguably positive response.³ Additionally, this analysis comments on how Austrian and Hungarian state reactions to this influx of refugees adequately reflect wider trends of unwillingness to tolerate and accommodate those perceived as “other,” trends that can be evidenced in multiple EU member-states and the United States.

To construct this argument, this paper examines the ways that *both* state and civil society in Austria and Hungary have reacted to the refugees. These two countries were chosen due to their substantial involvement in the unfolding refugee situation. They allow for the consideration of backlashes by two different types of government: right wing, neo-fascist and social democratic. In order to connect nationalist responses in Austria and Hungary with wider trends, state and civil

2. Jeanne Park, “Europe’s Migration Crisis,” *Council on Foreign Relations*, September 23, 2015, <http://www.cfr.org/refugees-and-the-displaced/europes-migration-crisis/p32874>.

3. Civil society involves communities of citizens, joined together in collective action.

society responses in these two cases will be put into conversation with the EU as a whole. Through examining both general EU reactions to this influx of refugees, and widespread, growing momentum of far right politics, it becomes clear that nationalist backlashes in Hungary and Austria are representative of a pattern of nationalist attitudes. Although this paper is *not* a theoretical examination, it does acknowledge how the notion of “otherness” has become embedded in nationalist thought. To this end, key aspects of nationalism including identity, territory, community, and moments in which nationalism may be used to defend the nation-state are outlined below. As nationalism provides a relevant framework through which to interpret current trends of both domestic politics and international relations, this paper addresses the implications of nationalist responses driven by a “fear-of-the-other.”

Nationalism

Defining Nationalism

The literature on the relationship between globalization and nationalism is well-trodden ground.⁴ It has been acknowledged, “that the various forces of globalization have the effect of stimulating a new attachment to local areas, issues and problems.”⁵ The paradoxes inherent to processes of globalization, including the emergence of transnational communities, on the one hand, and the proliferation of small-scale ethnic movements, on the other, have been exposed.⁶ In this manner, despite continued trends of globalization and postmodernity, “we might see the ‘normalization’ of nationalism.”⁷ The literature therefore contends that examination and analysis of the politics of nationalism remains an important and urgent project. As Calhoun (2007) suggests, “It matters whether nationalist appeals mobilize citizens for ethnic cleansing, external war, or internal loyalty, regrettable regimes... [or] whether nationalist appeals mobilize citizens for democratic project, mutual care, or redistribution of wealth.”⁸ As nationalism has the ability to shape and reshape the global order scholars still ask how, why, and for whom nationalistic sentiments manifest.⁹

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4. The literature on nationalism is extensive. For the purposes of this analysis, the academic conversation within this literature that connects nationalism with a “fear-of-the-other” will be the focus. Expressions of nationalism are used to exclude those that are determined to not belong to the national community. For more information see: Ernst B. Haas, *Beyond the Nation State: Functionalism and International Organization* (Colchester: ECPR Press, 2008).; Hilde Weiss, “A Cross-National Comparison of Nationalism in Austria, the Czech and Slovak Republics, Hungary, and Poland,” *Political Psychology* 24, no. 2 (June 2003): 377–401, doi:10.1111/0162-895X.00332.; Kuang-Hao Hou, “Synthesising Gellner, Smith, and Barth: Building a Preliminary Analytical Framework for Exploring the Relationships between Ethnic Groups, Nations, and Nationalism,” *Asian Ethnicity* 14, no. 4 (September 2013): 467–74, doi:10.1080/14631369.2012.726139.; Cyrus Yeganeh, “Contemporary Debates on Nationalism: A Critical Engagement,” *International Sociology* 22, no. 5 (2007): 639–42.
 5. Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History* (John Wiley & Sons, 2013), 147.
 6. *Ibid.* 147.
 7. *Ibid.* 148.
 8. Craig J. Calhoun, *Nations Matter: Culture, History, and the Cosmopolitan Dream* (London; New York: Routledge, 2007), 9.
 9. *Ibid.* 9.

Synthesizing the work of Gellner, Smith, and Barth, Hou (2013) argues that the doctrine of nationalism pulls together “national autonomy, national unity, and national identity.”¹⁰ It is understood to be a “primarily political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent...as a sentiment or a movement, [nationalism] can best be defined in terms of this principle.”¹¹ Through introducing nationalism in such a broad manner, the literature suggests that the concept is multifaceted and fluid. This fluidity is caused by the fact that although nations have not always existed, cultures have; nationalism is rooted in this culture insofar as it “takes pre-existing cultures and turns them into nations.”¹² Nations and nationalism, therefore, propagate a sense of shared identity, solidifying a distinctive cultural heritage, and personality for a given named population. This is achieved through normalizing histories and establishing a legitimized set of customs, traditions and habits. Importantly, Gellner (2008) argues, “without such a collective identity, there can be, from a nationalist’s standpoint, no fully fledged and authentic ‘nation.’”¹³ Threats to a national identity are thus threats to the nation itself.

Scholars suggest that nationalism supports the protection of territorially bound national communities.¹⁴ Nationalism in this sense allows for the physical as well as psychological exclusion of those perceived as different. Gellner (2008) asserts that the political boundary of a given state acts as a barrier between the members of the appropriate nation and foreigners.¹⁵ Consequently, nationalism is used to maintain distance from others. The nationalist community strives to preserve the “land, culture, language, political institutions and way of life.”¹⁶ It is through doing so that expressions of nationalism come to life and involve “the protection of the community against alien doctrines.”¹⁷ It prioritizes the history and rights of select groups. This can be evidenced, for example, through the favoring of ethnic Austrian/Hungarian liberties over those of refugees in contemporary Hungary.

The literature tells us that insofar as nationalism propagates a national identity and an ideal of a territorially bound community, it functions as an attempt to combine standardized notions of belonging with the desire to expel and exclude.¹⁸ It dictates terms of welcome into the state through establishing

10. Hou, “Synthesising Gellner, Smith, and Barth.” 471.

11. Ernest Gellner and John Breuilly, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008)..

12. *Ibid.* 33.

13. *Ibid.* 90..

14. Haas, *Beyond the Nation State*, 451.

15. Gellner and Breuilly, *Nations and Nationalism*, 1.

16. Montserrat Guibernau, *Nationalisms: The Nation-State and Nationalism in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), 470.

17. *Ibid.* 465.

18. K. Lueck, C. Due, and M. Augoustinos, “Neoliberalism and Nationalism: Representations of Asylum Seekers in the Australian Mainstream News Media,” *Discourse & Society* 26, no. 5 (September 1, 2015): 608–29, doi:10.1177/0957926515581159.; J. E. Fox and C. Miller-Idriss, “Everyday Nationhood,” *Ethnicities* 8, no. 4 (December 1, 2008): 536–63, doi:10.1177/14687968080888925.

of imaginary and physical borders. Significantly, both Carrington (2006) and Lueck et al. (2015) suggest that nationalist ideals thus support the enforcement of borders as they demarcate sovereign space. Supposed cultural similarities and norms are grouped, necessitating the separation of those who do not “belong” from those who do.¹⁹ Consequently, however, those who do not belong are labeled as inferior and, ultimately, threatening. This establishes an ‘Us’ versus ‘Them’ binary, and cultivates a “fear-of-the-other,” a need to protect oneself, and one’s national identity, from the predatory reaches of difference.

This brief review of the literature on nationalism highlights the connection scholars have made between nationalism, a “fear-of-the-other” and exclusion. Academics including Carrington, Gellner and Lueck demonstrate how expressions of nationalism are used to defend and protect national communities – ones that are simultaneously territorially defined and imagined. Through considering the extent to which the recent influx of refugees into Austria and Hungary has caused a nationalist backlash, this analysis addresses the relationship between nationalism and “otherization.”

Case Study 1: Hungary

Nationalism in Hungary

In order to understand how Hungary’s response to the influx of refugees reflects a nationalist backlash, it is first essential to consider how nationalism manifests itself within the state and what it means in a Hungarian context. In many ways, Hungary’s history of occupation can be viewed as a root cause of nationalism and “othering” within the country. Significantly, the nation’s political legacy is one of a series of (sometimes complicit) subjugations to more powerful forces: Mongols, Turks, Nazis, and Communists, which undoubtedly have intensified fear of outside influences and difference.

The character of Hungarian national identity is illuminated through the country’s constitutions. Hungary’s post-communist constitution (1989) expresses its responsibility to “ethnic co-nationals abroad.”²⁰ During the 1980s the Hungarian government was seen as having failed to protect the rights of ethnic Hungarians, especially those living in Romania.²¹ This became a principal grievance of anti-communist movements; the anti-communist, national-conservative camp used this shortcoming by the state to make “a claim for Hungary’s moral obligation to act as a kin-state towards ethnic Hungarians wherever they live.”²² This effort strengthened nationalism as it introduced a motivation to reinvigorate the nation’s

19. Kerry Carrington, “Law and Order on the Border in the Neo-Colonial Antipodes,” in *Borders, Mobility and Technologies of Control*, ed. Sharon Pickering and Leanne Weber (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2006), 179–206, http://link.springer.com/10.1007/1-4020-4899-8_10; Lueck, Due, and Augoustinos, “Neoliberalism and Nationalism.”

20. Agnes Batory, “Kin-State Identity in the European Context: Citizenship, Nationalism and Constitutionalism in Hungary,” *Nations and Nationalism* 16, no. 1 (January 2010): 31–48, doi:10.1111/j.1469-8129.2010.00433.x. 32

21. Ibid. 37.

22. Ibid.

historical, ethnic roots.

The current constitution, written in 2012, reflects a culmination of this desire for ethnic rediscovery through highlighting Hungary's Christian, nationalist values.²³ Fidesz, the state's leading party, spearheaded the writing of the document, emphasizing throughout the past insults Hungary has endured. For example, the constitution states:

“We members of the Hungarian nation... acknowledge the role Christianity has played in preserving our nation... We respect all our country's religious tradition [and] solemnly promise to preserve the... unity of our nation, torn apart by the storms of the past century.”²⁴

Such language establishes Hungarian nationhood as being defined in cultural/ethnic terms.²⁵ This is further evidenced through a tradition held by the country's prime ministers; it is custom for newly appointed prime ministers to profess their loyalty to their Hungarian constituency. Importantly, the heads of state always reference a number that is larger than the citizen population.²⁶ This effectively strengthens the notion of a Hungarian kin-state, as the prime minister's allegiance unites all who share the common ethnicity. While characterizing the Hungarian nation as such makes clear the emphasis placed on identity and the imaginary borders established by expressions of nationalism, it consequently “promotes chauvinism.”²⁷ Academics have labeled Hungary as an “intolerant society,” exclusive in nature, as it is “defined in terms of culture, language and ultimately, blood.”²⁸ The following subsection will examine how the Hungarian state has responded to the refugee situation, demonstrating how such reactions are extensions of Hungary's form of nationalism.

Hungarian State Response

The response by the Hungarian government to the recent influx of refugees into the country has been clear: they are not welcome. In June, 2015, billboards appeared throughout the country, promoting messages such as “If you come to Hungary, you cannot take the jobs of Hungarians!”²⁹ Written in Hungarian, the government used this message as a way to spark internal resentment towards the refugees. Further, the state demonstrated a level of intolerance through passing new anti-immigrant law, building the fence along the border with Serbia, refusing to provide support for refugee camps and welcome centers, and imposing

23. Laura Ymayo Tartakoff, “Religion, Nationalism, History, and Politics in Hungary's New Constitution,” *Society* 49, no. 4 (July 2012): 360–66, doi:10.1007/s12115-012-9553-9. 361.

24. *Ibid.* 362.

25. Batory, “Kin-State Identity in the European Context.” 39.

26. *Ibid.* 39.

27. Tartakoff, “Religion, Nationalism, History, and Politics in Hungary's New Constitution.” 361.

28. *Ibid.* 362; Batory, “Kin-State Identity in the European Context.” 33.

29. Eleni Kounalakis, “Hungary's Xenophobic Response,” *The New York Times*, September 6, 2015, <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/07/opinion/hungarys-xenophobic-response.html>.

regulations on the media. Such regulations have restricted the images and events that can be broadcast and influenced the language used by the media to portray refugees. These actions, much stronger and more straightforwardly nationalist than those taken by Austria, are considered in turn below.

Newly declared laws have allowed the Hungarian government to challenge international regulations concerning refugees. The first legal actions taken by the Hungarian state occurred on August 1, 2015. These measures stipulated “no refugee will be eligible for asylum if they have passed through a ‘safe country’ before entering Hungary.”³⁰ Now, only refugees who have entered the country through Ukraine are permitted to apply for asylum.³¹ This demonstrates Hungary’s effort to evade accountability for the Dublin 3 Regulation which states, “asylum seekers must remain in the first European country they enter and that country is solely responsible for their asylum applications.”³² Additionally, through declaring a state of emergency, Hungary is able to detain refugees until their asylum applications are processed; most applications were denied. This has been justified by declaring that detainment is lawful if a refugee has entered the country illegally or has damaged state property in any way.³³ Given Hungary’s new laws, most refugees, just by entering the country, have unintentionally committed a crime. Nationalistic discourse contributes to the legitimate legal exclusion of refugees, as refugees are stripped “of their humanity in order to legitimize stricter border protection policies and the corresponding exclusion of this group of people from the nation-state.”³⁴

The September 15, 2015, state of emergency also allowed Hungary to send fully armed soldiers to its borders. This anti-immigrant law greatly expanded the power of the military and police, as it authorized the use of “dogs, rubber bullets, tear gas and nets.”³⁵ The decision to implement such extreme measures has been framed in a way to showcase the state’s willingness to protect its people. It simultaneously, however, exemplifies Hungary’s intolerance towards the refugees, an intolerance that is indicative of Hungary’s brand of nationalism.

In mid-June, 2015, Hungary began construction of a razor-wire fence along its Serbian border which serves as the main entry point into the country for refugees. The fence symbolizes a physical demonstration of Hungary’s decision to keep out refugees. The state has since proposed extending the barrier to the country’s border with Romania.³⁶ While these actions are telling on their own, the fact that prominent politicians have vocally defended them is of additional

30. Kim Lane Scheppelle, “Orbán’s Police State,” *POLITICO*, September 14, 2015, <http://www.politico.eu/article/orbans-police-state-hungary-serbia-border-migration-refugees/>.

31. Ibid.

32. Park, “Europe’s Migration Crisis.”

33. Scheppelle, “Orbán’s Police State.”

34. Lueck, Due, and Augoustinos, “Neoliberalism and Nationalism,” 609.

35. Scheppelle, “Orbán’s Police State.”

36. Matthew Weaver and Haroon Siddique, “Refugee Crisis: Hungary Rejects All Asylum Requests Made at Border – as It Happened,” *The Guardian*, September 15, 2015, sec. World news, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2015/sep/15/refugee-crisis-hungary-launches-border-crackdown-live-updates>.

significance. For example, Foreign Minister Peter Szijarto believes that continuing the fence along the Hungarian-Romanian border would be “reasonable.”³⁷ Similarly, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán justified the decision to build the fence by claiming that it helps enforce EU law that refugees must claim asylum in the first country in which they set foot.³⁸ Orbán’s justification holds little validity, however, as his party, Fidesz, explicitly advocated for the above mentioned new laws.

Hungary’s ambivalence toward providing services for refugees highlights its lack of interest in contributing to a viable solution for this problem and its sole desire simply to keep out refugees. Despite the arrival of refugees throughout 2015, the state did not agree to build two new camps until August.³⁹ These camps are equipped with roughly 2,000 beds each; at the time, however, there were over 2,000 refugees entering the country each day. In addition to the gross shortage of beds, registrations centers are understaffed and only open for a few hours a day. The general registration process has been made longer, and forms and instructions have only been provided in Hungarian.⁴⁰ The dismal conditions of the Hungarian camps eventually resulted in refugees refusing to leave the Bicske train station, located approximately fifty kilometers west of Budapest.⁴¹ Occupying the train station seemed like a preferable option. After a standoff with Hungarian authorities that lasted over twenty-four hours, the refugees left the station and began to walk toward the Austrian border, a destination over 100 miles away.⁴² Given these events, the UNHCR has condemned Hungary for policies and practices that “promote intolerance, fear and fuel xenophobia against refugees.”⁴³

This unwelcoming response by the Hungarian state has been reinforced through restrictions placed on state television and media outlets. For example, television stations were instructed to never show images of refugee children on the news, but rather, were told to broadcast “pictures of angry young men, garbage and anything that made the large crowd of destitute people look menacing.”⁴⁴ This underscores the government’s determination to distract from the fact that most refugees are “middle-class professionals,” a trait ethnic Hungarians can identify with, and rather, to highlight refugees’ dark skin, a characteristic ethnic

37. Ibid.

38. Caroline Mortimer, “Hungarian PM Viktor Orbán Says ‘All the Terrorists Are Basically Migrants’ in Response to Paris Attacks,” *The Independent*, November 24, 2015, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/hungarian-pm-viktor-orb-n-says-all-the-terrorists-are-basically-migrants-in-response-to-paris-a6746356.html>.

39. Akos Rona-Tas, “Hungary’s Response to the Refugee Crisis: An Orchestrated Panic,” *IWM*, October 2, 2015, <http://www.iwm.at/transit/transit-online/hungarys-response-refugee-crisis-orchestrated-panic/>.

40. Ibid.

41. Arwa Damon, Laura Smith-Spark, and Faith Karimi, “Europe’s Migrant Crisis: Refugee Buses Reach Austria,” *CNN*, accessed December 24, 2016, <http://www.cnn.com/2015/09/05/europe/europe-migrant-crisis/index.html>.

42. Ibid.

43. United Nations News Service, “Hungary Urged to Halt Campaign Portraying Refugees and Migrants as ‘invaders,’” *UN News Service Section*, December 21, 2015, <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=52874#.WF7hmVfMzww>.

44. Rona-Tas, “Hungary’s Response to the Refugee Crisis.”

Hungarians cannot identify with.⁴⁵ News stations have even run irrelevant headlines on terrorism in other parts of the world while showing images of refugees in Hungary.⁴⁶ Furthermore, a journalist for the Associated Press was arrested after filming migrants crossing the Hungarian-Serbian border, as the reporter had captured footage of a police dog knocking down a refugee.⁴⁷ Such limitations placed on the media are demonstrative of a nationalist backlash as they emphasize the State's conflation of security concerns with refugees.⁴⁸

The Rise of the Far Right

Prime Minister Orbán has effectively framed the refugee issue as either “we help Hungary or we help them.”⁴⁹ Since refugees have begun arriving in the EU, Orbán has argued that their presence will destroy Europe. The Prime Minister has reminded the country that “those arriving have been raised in another religion, and represent a radically different culture” and set of values.⁵⁰ His claim is rooted in a fear that the refugees greatly threatened the role of Christianity within the nation, and reject “Western” principles. This perceived threat has led Orbán to lobby for weakening the European Parliament, as he views current EU asylum law to be too lenient.⁵¹ Through supporting Orbán's nationalist rhetoric, the Prime Minister's party, Fidesz, has gained political backing over the last several months. This brief overview of Orbán's position seems to reflect the current views held by the majority of Hungarians.

Despite its leading position within parliament the last several years, support for Fidesz waned in the months preceding the current refugee situation. The party was in desperate need of an issue that could be used to reunite the constituency, as right-wing populist voters began to slowly gravitate towards the more center-right party, Jobbik.⁵² The arrival of thousands of refugees stopped this movement away from the ‘far-right.’ As with the far-right FPÖ in Austria, Fidesz was able to successfully regain favor among the public by framing the issue as “we have to protect ourselves against people who come here for economic reasons and to carry out terrorist acts.”⁵³ By defining the refugees in this manner, Fidesz has reinvigorated nationalistic sentiments and Orbán has reemerged as a strong,

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid.

47. Weaver and Siddique, “Refugee Crisis.”

48. Mortimer, “Hungarian PM Viktor Orbán Says ‘All the Terrorists Are Basically Migrants’ in Response to Paris Attacks.”

49. Rona-Tas, “Hungary's Response to the Refugee Crisis.”

50. Kounalakis, “Hungary's Xenophobic Response.”

51. Matthew Kaminski, “All the Terrorists Are Migrants,” *POLITICO*, November 23, 2015, <http://www.politico.eu/article/viktor-orban-interview-terrorists-migrants-eu-russia-putin-borders-schengen/>.

52. Anna Fifield, “On Hungarian Frontier, Support for Prime Minister's Tough Refugee Stance,” *Washington Post*, October 2, 2015, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/on-hungarian-frontier-support-for-prime-ministers-tough-refugee-stance/2015/10/02/f2849d60-6773-11e5-bdb6-6861f4521205_story.html.

53. Lauren Frayer, *A Race To The Far Right In Hungarian Politics*, Parallels, accessed December 24, 2016, <http://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2015/10/12/447911182/a-race-to-the-far-right-in-hungarian-politics>.

resolute leader. Between July and December, 2015, support for Fidesz rose six percent, while support for the Hungarian Socialists has dropped four percent.⁵⁴ Furthermore, following the propagation of nationalistic language by Fidesz, center-right parties are beginning to radicalize.⁵⁵ Jobbik, which holds the second-largest bloc in parliament after Fidesz, also self-identifies as anti-immigrant and anti-Semitic. Jobbik, an openly nationalist party, has organized anti-refugee rallies in border towns, telling people “most of the more than 350,000 migrants who’ve entered Hungary this year are actually Muslim fighters here to wage jihad.”⁵⁶ While this language mirrors Fidesz’s, Jobbik lacks experience governing. This has further pushed constituents to reaffirm their support for Fidesz.

Civil Society

Given the presented discussion thus far, it is evident that the Hungarian state and major political parties have responded to the refugee situation in a strongly nationalistic manner. By comparison, civil society has reacted more ambiguously. Due to the lack of an appropriate response by the government, thousands of refugees have occupied train stations and overcrowded camps. Similar to the civil society efforts in Austria, this has prompted citizens to donate food, clothing, washing supplies and Internet access. Non-governmental organizations have used social media to raise awareness and support.⁵⁷ Migszol, a Hungarian advocacy group based in Budapest, believes that increasing the public’s knowledge about needed refugee relief efforts will help get additional civil society organizations involved.⁵⁸ This strategy has worked. Groups such as Migration Aid have joined individual citizens in distributing basic necessities to newly arrived refugees.⁵⁹ Thus, civil society, in some respects, is doing what the state will not. This has included advocating for policy change, increasing the capacity of the “current asylum system... [and providing] more accommodation, more vacancies, and more personnel.”⁶⁰

Despite this positive reaction by certain sectors within Hungarian civil society, those seeking to help have been consistently impeded. Many citizens still experience heightened feelings of insecurity which has resulted in their skepticism towards humanitarian response efforts.⁶¹ Skepticism has manifested

54. “Latest Poll - Fidesz Gains Support, Socialists at Record Low,” *Daily News Hungary*, October 29, 2015, <http://dailynewshungary.com/latest-poll-fidesz-gains-support-socialists-at-record-low/>.

55. Fifield, “On Hungarian Frontier, Support for Prime Minister’s Tough Refugee Stance.”

56. Frayer, *A Race To The Far Right In Hungarian Politics*.

57. Csaba Toth Tibor, “Volunteers and Vigilantes Watch over Refugees in Hungary,” *DW.COM*, accessed December 24, 2016, <http://www.dw.com/en/volunteers-and-vigilantes-watch-over-refugees-in-hungary/a-18677868>.

58. “Migszol - Who We Are,” *Migszol*, accessed December 24, 2016, <http://www.migszol.com/who-we-are.html>.

59. Antonia Zafeiri, “Inside the Civil Society Effort to Help the Refugees Stranded at Hungary’s Train Stations,” *Open Society Foundations*, accessed December 24, 2016, <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/civil-society-steps-support-hungary-train-station-refugees>.

60. *Ibid.*

61. *Ibid.*

itself into concrete action as locals have joined state soldiers in patrolling borders and guarding the newly constructed fence. These reactions suggest “a sense of patriotic duty” at the local level.”⁶² Moments of nationalist backlash have been further evidenced through the presence of the Outlaws’ Army in Asotthalom, a Hungarian village near the Serbian border.⁶³ This group is an extreme-right, neo-Nazi militia that has expressed and acted upon strong xenophobic attitudes since its establishment in 2008.⁶⁴ This has included participation in rallies held by far-right political parties, advocating for the expulsion of multicultural, consumer society. The Outlaws’ Army’s presence in Asotthalom underscores the still prevalent “fear-of-the-other” held by many Hungarians.

The response by Hungarian civil society to the influx of refugees is divided. On the one hand, thousands have volunteered to provide “food, water, clothing, shelter, blankets, medical supplies, ambulance services and even baby strollers to families with young children.”⁶⁵ Citizens and charities have vocalized their concern about the nature of the state’s response. On the other hand, however, many firmly believe that the arrival of refugees marks the end of Europe. Significantly, this group of Hungarians has turned towards the state in order to be saved from “these people.”⁶⁶ Given such contrasting responses, it is difficult to definitively characterize civil society’s reactions.

There has been a nationalist backlash in Hungary to the recent influx of refugees. This type of response is particularly evident when examining the ways in which the state has reacted. Through passing new anti-immigrant law, building the fence along the border with Serbia, refusing to provide support for refugee camps and welcome centers, and imposing regulations on the media, the Hungarian state has been clear: refugees are not welcome. As Fidesz has continued to enjoy large support, Hungarians themselves appear to favor the government’s nationalist position. Among civil society efforts, however, there have been glimpses of more tolerant, open-minded attitudes and a willingness to provide assistance to these refugees. As will be examined below, this suggests that perhaps civil society offers a way to circumvent nationalist backlashes.

Case Study 2: Austria

Nationalism in Austria

Though Austria has had a very different history than Hungary, similar expressions of nationalism exist.⁶⁷ Despite having experienced occupation to a lesser degree, nationalism in Austria is still partially rooted in the “longing for

62. Toth Tibor, “Volunteers and Vigilantes Watch over Refugees in Hungary.”

63. Ibid.

64. “Hate Groups Map - Outlaws’ Army,” *Athena Institute*, July 7, 2014, <http://www.athenainstitute.eu/en/map/olvas/33>.

65. Réka Szemerkényi, “Hungary’s Response to the Refugee Crisis,” *POLITICO*, September 21, 2015, <http://www.politico.eu/article/hungarys-response-to-the-refugee-crisis/>.

66. Toth Tibor, “Volunteers and Vigilantes Watch over Refugees in Hungary.”

67. Christian Fleck, “Explaining Austria,” *Society Abroad* 38, no. 2 (2001): 61–67.

national identification” that logically follows “epochs of foreign rule.”⁶⁸ Evidence of the importance of national identity is highlighted through Austria’s family and citizenship policies which favor those who know German, acknowledge Austrian values and law, and have established cultural roots.⁶⁹ The state’s favoring of ethnic Austrian traits has contributed to political arguments against multiculturalism. Right-wing parties have consistently linked loss of national culture and identity and mass immigration.⁷⁰ This has reinforced explicit hostility towards “any semblance of a multicultural and/or multi-ethnic society” among right-wing populists.⁷¹ Thus, the country’s radical right-wing parties support exclusionary nationalist sentiments within Austria. They have argued that restrictions on immigration are essential to preserving the national culture. Such sentiments have found favor among the working-class which has recently returned to fearing the presence of foreigners.⁷² In this manner, nationalistic attitudes have strengthened in Austria over the last ten years. Just as in Hungary, this commentary indicates that nationalism in Austria is rooted in “fear-of-the-other.”

Austrian State Response

Responses by the Austrian state reflect its ambivalence about the arrival of refugees throughout 2015. While it has verbally expressed a certain degree of acceptance of the refugees, its actions are more indicative of mistrust of the “other.” Given the extent to which the center-left Social Democratic Party (SPÖ) and the far-right Freedom Party (FPÖ) both enjoy considerable support throughout the country, the government’s contradicting reactions illuminate the divided political views within the country. The current Austrian government is a coalition government, formed by the SPÖ and ÖVP, the conservative Austrian People’s Party. As will be elaborated, despite the ÖVP’s place in the coalition, the FPÖ has enjoyed unprecedented support in recent years. Unlike Hungary, Austria agreed to receive thousands of refugees, a decision that appears to indicate tolerance and welcome. In relation to the influx of refugees, Austria’s Chancellor Werner Faymann stated, “We have always said this is an emergency situation in which we must act quickly and humanely.”⁷³ It is critical to acknowledge, however, that Chancellor Faymann is a member of the SPÖ, and, therefore, seeks to counter the nationalist rhetoric of the FPÖ. Recent efforts by the SPÖ to combat exclusivity have been somewhat successful, as Austria *verbally* agreed to suspend random border checks and urged other EU countries to do their part.⁷⁴ Beyond this, however, the Austrian state has done very little to support the refugees.

68. Weiss, “A Cross-National Comparison of Nationalism in Austria, the Czech and Slovak Republics, Hungary, and Poland,” 378.

69. *Ibid.*

70. *Ibid.*

71. *Ibid.*

72. *Ibid.* 397.

73. “Austria to Tighten Controls on Flow of Refugees,” *Aljazeera*, September 7, 2015, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/09/austria-set-tighten-controls-flow-refugees-150907041528545.html>.

74. *Ibid.*

Recognizing these positive moves by the SPÖ, the vast majority of scholars indicate that the state's response is, however, more indicative of the FPÖ's political influence. This is evidenced by the events that have taken place at the Traiskirchen refugee camp. Traiskirchen, located roughly twenty miles outside of Vienna, is the largest refugee camp in the country and the first stop for many refugees arriving in Austria. Currently, the camp is overwhelmed. Refugees have been sleeping in overcrowded rooms or tents with no water. At the time the influx started, authorities were ill-prepared, and resources were not made readily available. Furthermore, local and state governments refused to find the refugees permanent housing, regardless of the poor conditions at Traiskirchen. Within the camp, state authorities have done little to prevent stealing and petty crime from occurring.⁷⁵ Amnesty International has called this a major failure on the part of the Austrian state, labeling the camp a "degrading and inhuman" facility.⁷⁶

The ambivalence of the state is further witnessed through the weakening of its original opposition to the building of fences. As the arrival of refugees has continued, the state has announced plans "to erect barriers along parts of its border with Slovenia."⁷⁷ This announcement supports the FPÖ's position: "Don't come."⁷⁸ This message has been reinforced through the proposal for a new law that would make the country less attractive to Afghan refugees.⁷⁹ In response to this proposal, Johanna Mikl-Leitner, Austria's Interior Minister, stated, "It is important for us...to decrease [Austria's] attractiveness" to refugees.⁸⁰ This level of animosity has only increased since the November 2015 Paris attacks, as the incident has decreased the likelihood of asylum applications being accepted.⁸¹ With this in mind, the response by the Austrian state highlights local tensions between "right-" and "left-leaning" politics. It is significant that the majority of policy actions have been representative of a nationalist response, mirroring that of the Hungarian state. Tolerance and the willingness to help have only been voiced.

Rise of the Far Right

While verbal and concrete reactions by the state have contradicted each other, the rise of the far right in Austria clearly supports the reemergence of

75. Aaron Ernst, "In Austria, Refugees Voice Frustration at Overcrowded Camps," *Aljazeera America*, September 18, 2015, <http://america.aljazeera.com/watch/shows/america-tonight/articles/2015/9/18/austria-syria-refugees-frustration-overcrowded-camps.html>.

76. Alison Langley and Fred Kaplan, "So Long, Farewell," *Slate*, September 15, 2015, http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/foreigners/2015/09/austrians_have_helped_syrian_refugees_austria_s_far_right_parties_may_still.html.

77. Mark Tran, "Austria Tightens Asylum Policy for Afghans," *The Guardian*, November 3, 2015, sec. World news, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/nov/03/austria-tightens-its-asylum-policy-for-afghans>.

78. Langley and Kaplan, "So Long, Farewell."

79. Tran, "Austria Tightens Asylum Policy for Afghans."

80. Ibid.

81. Kerry Skyring, "A View of the Paris Attacks from an Austrian Refugee Stop," *SBS News*, November 30, 2015, <http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2015/11/30/view-paris-attacks-austrian-refugee-stop>.

strong nationalistic sentiments. Over the past several months, fear of increasing immigration has helped the FPÖ gain support. The party's leader, Heinz-Christian Strache, has advocated for protection of Austria's western culture from Islam.⁸² Austrians seem to have responded to such language, as the FPÖ won just over thirty percent of the vote in the state elections in September 2015. The SPÖ lost approximately six percent of its previous support.⁸³ The FPÖ's success included doubling its vote share and seat numbers in Upper Austria.⁸⁴ Despite failing to capture enough votes to form a national coalition, the FPÖ did the best it ever has in the Vienna elections. Strache labeled the outcome a major accomplishment. SPÖ's poor performance appears to be the direct result of the FPÖ's success, as the socialist party did the worst it has since World War II.⁸⁵

The FPÖ's performance in recent elections and opinion polls follows months of pushing a nationalist agenda. This has included Strache openly expressing his hope that many refugees will not remain in Austria. Like Orbán in Hungary, Strache views anti-Islamization as crucial to preserving the nation's traditional community.⁸⁶ The FPÖ has accepted this position, characterizing Muslim refugees as barbarians that threaten to challenge Austria's White, Christian roots. Thus, intolerance has become one of the pillars of the FPÖ's platform and a more widely held sentiment throughout the state.⁸⁷

Civil Society

While the rise of the far right suggests an intensification of nationalistic attitudes, the response by a significant segment of Austrian civil society has been one of toleration and acceptance, not strong nationalism. Action taken by civil society reintroduces the mixed messages coming out of Austria. In many ways, Austrian citizens are willing to step in where the state has not. For example, close to 7,000 Austrians have volunteered at Traiskirchen, bringing clothing, jackets, shoes, hats, and gloves with them. Social workers have provided child support, and Austrian singers and bands have performed free concerts. Despite the state's hesitance to improve conditions, refugees in the camp have said locals are "friendly, welcoming, and supportive."⁸⁸ Such acceptance has been further witnessed in border towns, such as Nickelsdorf, where residents have congregated

82. "Austrian Far-Right Party Gets Electoral Boost from Migrant Crisis," *Reuters*, September 27, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-austria-election-idUSKCN0RR0ZQ20150927>.

83. *Ibid.*

84. Sarkis Zeronian, "Freedom Party of Austria Records Stunning Gains In Regional Elections," *Breitbart*, September 28, 2015, <http://www.breitbart.com/london/2015/09/28/freedom-party-austria-surges-local-elections-boosted-migrant-crisis/>.

85. *Ibid.*

83. Jess McHugh, "How The EU Migrant Crisis Is Fueling Right-Wing Politicians And Refugee Policies In Europe," *International Business Times*, August 27, 2015, <http://www.ibtimes.com/how-eu-migrant-crisis-fueling-right-wing-politicians-refugee-policies-europe-2071326>.

87. "Asylchaos: HC Strache Will Grenzzaun," *FPO*, October 24, 2015, <http://www.fpoe.at/artikel/asylchaos-hc-strache-will-grenzzaun/>.

88. Denise Hruby, "At Austrian Refugee Camp, Volunteers Rush In," *VOA*, September 24, 2015, <http://www.voanews.com/a/austrian-refugee-camp-traiskirchen-europe-migrant-crisis/2976989.html>.

to greet refugees and provide medical supplies and blankets.⁸⁹

Civil society's enthusiasm to effectively address the presence of refugees has been additionally evidenced at major train stations. Here, volunteers worked daily in an attempt to reduce chaos. The Train of Hope movement further highlights this broad effort by civil society.⁹⁰ Train of Hope was organized by civilians and is neither affiliated with the state nor an official NGO.⁹¹ Organized under this title, nearly 200 Train of Hope volunteers have worked together to give refugees a "humane welcome" at Hauptbahnhof Wien, Vienna's second largest train station.⁹² This has included: providing clothing, serving meals, arranging temporary housing, limiting confusion over incoming and outgoing trains, and determining medical needs, first-language, and end destinations.⁹³ Although the organization has left Hauptbahnhof, it "plans to hold a series of workshops to decide on how it can [further] help welcome refugees in Vienna."⁹⁴ Given these efforts, it is clear that Austrian civil society "has united to efficiently do what was necessary – at the borders, at the train stations, at the asylum centers."⁹⁵

The reality of a nationalist backlash in Austria is less obvious than in Hungary. Although conditions at Traiskirchen are inadequate, and Austria has loosened its anti-fence position, the state has remained verbally committed to providing support the incoming refugees. This verbal support is threatened, however, as far right political parties gain influence over domestic affairs. As in Hungary, Austrian civil society efforts offer a way to move beyond nationalist backlashes. Although the Austrian state has remained noncommittal, civil society has provided assistance and camaraderie in camps and train stations. Austria's citizenry has mobilized in ways the state seems unwilling to. In doing so, the negative consequences of Austria's nationalist actions are diminished.

Austria and Hungary in relation to the EU

Putting these analyses of nationalist backlashes in Austria and Hungary together, this section contextualizes the two case studies within a larger framework of reactions by the EU. Through examining general trends of increased support for far right politics, it is clear that rising nationalism within Austria and Hungary is indicative of a broader sequence of nationalist backlashes taking place across other countries, including France, Italy, and the Netherlands. This pattern has also included Britain's exit from the EU and the election of Donald Trump in the United

89. Damon, Smith-Spark, and Karimi, "Europe's Migrant Crisis."

90. Sarah Mendelsohn and Fred Schmidt-Arenales, *Episode 2: Your Bed in Vienna*, Reconnaissance, accessed December 24, 2016, <http://smfsa.net/smfsa-3/reconnaissance/episode-2-your-bed-in-vienna/>.

91. Ibid.

92. "Who We Are," *Train of Hope*, accessed December 24, 2016, www.trainofhope.at/train-of-hope/wer-sind-wir/.

93. Ibid.

94. "Train of Hope Moves on from Hauptbahnhof," *The Local*, December 9, 2015, <http://www.thelocal.at/20151209/train-of-hope-moves-on-from-vienna-main-rail-station>.

95. "Train of Hope Helps Refugee Arrivals," *The Local*, September 27, 2015, <http://www.thelocal.at/20150927/train-of-hope-helps-refugee-arrivals>.

States. In order to support the assertion that the nationalist backlashes in Austria and Hungary are part of a larger story, this section considers the relationship between nationalism and migration – the arrival of refugees – before examining how heads of state and far right political parties across the EU have responded to the refugee situation.

Refugees and Nationalism

Situations that challenge the sanctity of the nation-state and nationalist objectives cause expressions of nationalism to intensify. Increased migration, in this case in the form of the arrival of refugees, is one such situation. There are four primary reasons why increased migration is perceived to disrupt the normalization of nationalism and, therefore, cause nationalist backlashes. Some argue that: (1) migrants “destroy the isomorphism between people, sovereign and citizenry.”⁹⁶ In many cases, they are seen as foreigners within their new communities, complicating what it means to belong to and participate in a society. This rationale has been used by both the Austrian and Hungarian state to cast refugees as threats to society. (2) Migrants “destroy the isomorphism between people and nation.”⁹⁷ This has resulted in the policing of refugees, as they are charged with distorting the homogeneity of the nation. Such policing, the sorting of the unwanted from the wanted, causes refugees to become unprotected. To borrow language from Agamben (1998), refugees become *homo sacer*, or “bare life,” as the nation-state defers to a “state of exception” in times of supposed crisis (i.e. the refugee situation of today), during which the rule of law for someone is suspended.⁹⁸ The state of exception can be considered a defense mechanism, enacted to protect a nation’s identity and sovereignty. (3) Migrants “destroy the isomorphism between people and solidarity group.”⁹⁹ Consequently, this creates tension between migrants and welfare systems, since, although migrants cannot be completely excluded from social security, their inclusion often causes resentment. Finally (4), “every move across national frontiers becomes an exception to the rule of sedentariness within the boundaries of the nation-state.”¹⁰⁰ Hungary’s decision to build a fence along its border with Serbia demonstrates clear opposition to increased movement across national borders. These four points suggest that because some believe migration complicates the historical sanctity of the nation-state, sanctity rooted in strong territorial borders and unimpeded political sovereignty, it may invoke a nationalist reaction.

96. A. Wimmer and N. Glick Schiller, “Methodological Nationalism and beyond: Nation–state Building, Migration and the Social Sciences,” *Global Networks* 2, no. 4 (October 2002): 301–309.

97. *Ibid.*

98. Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford University Press, 1998); Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

99. Wimmer and Glick Schiller, “Methodological Nationalism and beyond,” 310.

100. *Ibid.*

Nationalist Rhetoric and the European Union

With over one million refugees entering the EU in 2015, EU leaders expressed fear over what their presence may do to Europe and to the citizens of their respective countries. Significantly, increased media coverage of refugees' arrival to Western countries has been exacerbated through the use of discriminatory language against them. Over the past two decades, greater media attention has furthered nationalist portrayals of refugees as foreigners and outsiders.¹⁰¹ As a result, this population has been marginalized, excluded, and deprived of basic human rights. This language has functioned "to mask the fact that in many instances these people are escaping from threat."¹⁰² In reference to the current refugee situation, for example, several right-wing European politicians claim, "these migrants come from countries with a culture entirely different from Europe's. Mass immigration is leading to the dilution of cultural identity in the European Union member states."¹⁰³ In this Op-Ed, published by the *Wall Street Journal*, Geert Wilders, Marine Le Pen, Matteo Salvini, and Heinz-Christian Strache outline the concerns they have for the future of Europe. This introduces serious concern among the authors because "without identity, there is no country... without a country, there can be no prosperity, no justice, no democracy, no liberty."¹⁰⁴ In this sense, the authors adamantly contend that European civilization is in danger, causing refugees to be politicized instead of considered through a human rights framework.¹⁰⁵

Additionally, Wilders et al. asserts that the economies and welfare systems of receiving states cannot adequately handle the mass arrival of refugees.¹⁰⁶ In fact, right-wing populists have stressed that supporting refugees will limit the EU's financial means to "maintain current standards of social security and solidarity."¹⁰⁷ This assertion underscores an interesting contradiction; the same people who have spent years actively trying to reduce social and economic protection programs within the EU are now pointing to its fragile state. More importantly, however, this view of refugees stresses the nationalist attitudes of the named authors, and

101. Majid KhosraviNik, "The Representation of Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Immigrants in British Newspapers: A Critical Discourse Analysis," *Journal of Language and Politics* 9, no. 1 (April 19, 2010): 1–28, doi:10.1075/jlp.9.1.01kho.; Ruth Wodak and Martin Reisigl, "Discourse and Racism," in *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, ed. Deborah Schiffrin, Deborah Tannen, and Heidi E. Hamilton (Malden, Massachusetts, USA: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 2005), 372–97, <http://doi.wiley.com/10.1002/9780470753460.ch20>.

102. D. Every, "A Reasonable, Practical and Moderate Humanitarianism: The Co-Option of Humanitarianism in the Australian Asylum Seeker Debates," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 21, no. 2 (April 18, 2008): 210–29, doi:10.1093/jrs/fen013.

103. Geert Wilders et al., "Restoring Europe's Borders and Sovereign Nations," *The Wall Street Journal*, October 15, 2015, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/restoring-europes-borders-and-sovereign-nations-1444940613>.

104. Ibid.

105. Ibid.

106. Ibid.

107. Mathijs van de Sande, "Europe's Right-Wing 'civil War' against Refugees," *ROAR Magazine*, October 26, 2015, <https://roarmag.org/essays/europe-right-wing-refugees/>.

the right-wing parties throughout the EU they represent.¹⁰⁸

Allowing isolated attacks on Europe, perpetrated by Muslims, to characterize the entirety of Islam unjustly stresses the “existing” incompatibilities between Islamic and Western/Christian cultures.¹⁰⁹ Unfortunately, this is precisely what has happened in Europe. Through appealing to a fear of society becoming less Christian and less white, popular opposition to these refugees has targeted their Muslim backgrounds. This has reignited deep-seated tensions between Islam and Christianity and prompted a new wave of nativism.¹¹⁰ Violent attacks that have occurred across Europe over the eighteen months, including those in France in November, 2015, and July, 2016, as well as that in Germany in December, 2016, have resulted in right wing parties framing “every Muslim as a potential terrorist,” and the arrival of refugees as evidence of a loss of control over borders.¹¹¹

Driven out of a “fear-of-the-other,” it has been proposed that border checks within the Schengen area be extended for up to two years.¹¹² Likewise, the establishment of Europe of Nations and Freedoms, the second anti-EU, anti-immigrant faction within the EU assembly, signals a commitment by member states to protect the national identities and interests of their constituents – a commitment that has strengthened with the refugee situation.¹¹³ In this manner, right wing parties have been pushing for greater national sovereignty, as it has been generally agreed upon by these political representatives that the EU, as a representative body, is undermining the nation-state and its borders.¹¹⁴

General Rise of the Far Right

Nationalist backlashes to the recent influx of refugees can be witnessed across certain EU countries. Both the firm words of Wilders, Le Pen, Salvini, and Strache, and the establishment of Europe of Nations and Freedoms, highlight how a desire to preserve national identity and homogeneity extends beyond Austria and Hungary. Right wing parties, like Fidesz and FPÖ, have been able to capitalize on persistent “ethno-nationalist sentiment” by promoting anti-refugee policies.¹¹⁵ Simultaneously they have invited xenophobic attitudes through manipulating existing fear of what the refugee situation will mean for their nations. Martin

108. This includes: The Party for Freedom (Netherlands), National Front (France), Northern League (Italy), Austrian Freedom Party (Austria) and Fidesz (Hungary).

109. Philip Jenkins, *God's Continent: Christianity, Islam, and Europe's Religious Crisis* (New York, NY: Oxford Univ. Press, 2010). 235-237.

110. *Ibid.*, 244.

111. Sande, “Europe’s Right-Wing ‘Civil War’ against Refugees.”

112. “EU May Extend Border Checks up to Two Years in Schengen Zone,” *Daily Sabah Europe*, December 4, 2015, <http://www.dailysabah.com/europe/2015/12/05/eu-may-extend-border-checks-up-to-two-years-in-schengen-zone>.

113. Andrew Rettman, “Far-Right Parties Form Group in EU Parliament,” *Euobserver*, June 15, 2015, <https://euobserver.com/political/129129>.

114. Wilders et al., “Restoring Europe’s Borders and Sovereign Nations.”

115. Nick Robins-Early, “How The Refugee Crisis Is Fueling The Rise Of Europe’s Right,” *Huffington Post*, October 28, 2015, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/europe-right-wing-refugees_us_562e9e64e4b06317990f1922.

Schain, a professor of Politics at New York University, has asserted that, given the current migration situation, “far-right parties are here to stay.”¹¹⁶ Likewise, as shown through a survey conducted by the Pew Research Center in 2014, there is a general consensus for limiting the number of people arriving in EU countries.¹¹⁷ The survey links lack of desire for increased immigration with ideology; Europeans identifying as “right-wing” are less willing to accept immigrants into their countries.¹¹⁸ In this manner, the rise of the far right in Austria and Hungary is representative of similar trends taking place in Italy, France, and the Netherlands.

Conclusion

Austria and Hungary are heading down a dangerous path of reactionary politics. As processes of globalization, in this case increased movement and influxes of refugees, have begun to affect EU member states, the common response has been a nationalist one. This is most evident at the state level. In Hungary, fences are being built, regulations are being imposed on the media, and new anti-asylum laws are being passed. All of these actions are representative of “othering” and a desire to preserve national homogeneity. Discerning the extent of a nationalist response from the Austrian state is slightly more difficult. The disconnect between verbal promises made by the government and tangible actions that have been taken paints a confusing picture. There is an argument to be made, however, that state resistance to improving conditions at Traiskirchen, as well as a softening on anti-fence positions, is more characteristic of hesitance, fear, and intolerance than of open-mindedness and acceptance. Additionally, an increase in support for far-right politics within both countries presents the possibility for the continuation or exacerbation of such responses and attitudes.

These displays of nationalism within Austria and Hungary are representative of wider trends that seem to be occurring in other EU countries. It is imperative to acknowledge that these countries appear to be shifting to the right. Most recently, this is made evident by the election of Donald Trump in the United States’ 2016 presidential race. Following the French elections in April of this year, five major superpowers – Britain, China, France, Russia, and the United States – may all have governments that support and advocate for neo-fascist politics. This poses serious ramifications for vulnerable populations, including the refugees of concern to this paper. Quite simply, the danger lies in continued maltreatment and further violations of human rights as the resurgence of nationalistic sentiments has hindered the EU’s ability to effectively provide necessary relief and support.¹¹⁹

116. Ibid.

117. “Chapter 3. Most Support Limiting Immigration” (Pew Research Center, May 12, 2014), <http://www.pewglobal.org/2014/05/12/chapter-3-most-support-limiting-immigration/>.

118. Ibid.

119. Rights enumerated by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees. For more information see, Draft Committee, “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” (UN General Assembly, 1948), <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b3712c.html>.; United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, “Convention and Protocol Relating

Acknowledging the danger of continued movements to the right, the potential promise of civil society efforts must be taken seriously. Although it is difficult to definitively label the nature or extent of a nationalist backlash within Hungary's civil society, commendable efforts *have been* witnessed. Likewise, it is beyond dispute that civil society efforts in Austria have demonstrated a high level of tolerance and welcome. In this regard, civil society may be an important counter to nationalist backlashes and shifts to the right, as both Hungarian and Austrian civilians have mobilized to provide food, clothing, medical supplies, and general support to incoming refugees. This paper's analysis of civil society's responses thus offers a glimmer of hope; civil society appears to have filled a role that state governments are unwilling to fill. It is, therefore, recommended that additional research be conducted in order to more closely examine the potential of civil society efforts to combat nationalist backlashes, if not for the sake of thwarting support for nationalist politics, then for the sake of the over one million people risking everything for the possibility of freedom and equality.

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