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# ACCESS TO CITIZENSHIP AND ITS IMPACT ON IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION

## HANDBOOK FOR AUSTRIA



Beratungszentrum  
für Migranten und  
Migrantinnen



# ACCESS TO CITIZENSHIP AND ITS IMPACT ON IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION

## HANDBOOK FOR AUSTRIA

Prepared by the Migration Policy Group.

This report was produced in the context of the project '**Access to Citizenship and its Impact on Immigrant Integration (ACIT)**' co-funded by the European Fund for the Integration of Non-EU immigrants (European Commission Grant Agreement: HOME/2010/EIFX/CA/1774).

## INTRODUCTION

The project ‘[Access to Citizenship and its Impact on Immigrant Integration \(ACIT\)](#)’ funded by the European Fund for the Integration of Non-EU immigrants provides a new evidence base for comparing different elements of citizenship in Europe.

The five consortium partners (the European University Institute, the Migration Policy Group, University College Dublin, University of Edinburgh and Maastricht University) have developed **four sets of citizenship indicators** on citizenship laws, their implementation, shares of citizenship acquisition and its impact on integration for all 27 EU Member States, accession candidates (Croatia, Iceland, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey) and European Economic Area countries (Norway, Switzerland).

The outcomes of this research were presented to politicians, civil servants, members of civil society and academics in ten EU Member States (Austria, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom) in order to **use this information to improve their policies and practices**. Citizenship stakeholders were asked to share their insights about which factors influence naturalisation rates, on the impact of citizenship on integration, on past and future policy changes and on the political environment for citizenship reform. These ‘**national roundtables**’ were a key element of this research as the national stakeholders had the opportunity to interpret the results and give meaning to the numbers.

The Migration Policy Group produced this **handbook** based on the results from the citizenship indicators and the responses of national stakeholders at the national roundtable. It provides a snapshot of how the vast amount of data of this project can be used for national policy debates. All citizenship stakeholders, be they policymakers, academics, non-governmental organisations or others, can go online and create their own graphs, dig into the data and use this information for presentations, debates or publications. All the results are accessible through an **interactive online tool and comparative reports** at <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/indicators>.<sup>1</sup>

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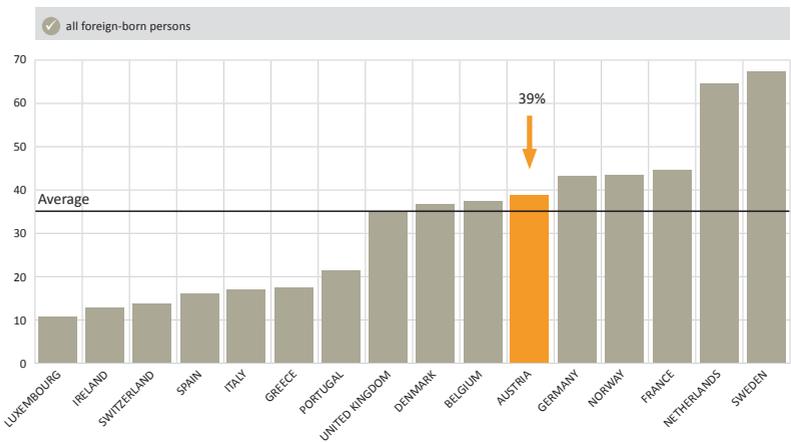
<sup>1</sup> For more information on the background and methodology see appendix and visit <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/indicators>

# 1. CITIZENSHIP ACQUISITION INDICATORS: WHO BECOMES A CITIZEN?

How likely are foreign born immigrants to become citizens in Europe and how long does it take them? Citizenship Acquisition Indicators measure the share of foreign-born immigrants (aged 16-74) that have acquired citizenship as well as the number of years between arrival in the country of residence and the acquisition of citizenship.<sup>2</sup> Since this data is based on the 2008 European Labour Force Survey, they reflect the cumulative effects of relatively high naturalisation rates before the 2006 amendments of the Austrian citizenship law. This overall share does not show the dramatic decline of the number of naturalisations after that reform.

**In 2008, 39% of foreign born immigrants residing in Austria had become Austrian citizens.** This share is slightly higher than the EU-15 average of 34%. The acquisition of citizenship varies considerably across the EU. Between 60% and 70% of foreign-born immigrants are citizens in Sweden and the Netherlands. Less than 20% are citizens in Greece, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, Ireland and Luxemburg.

## Share of naturalised persons among first generation in EU-15, Switzerland and Norway in 2008



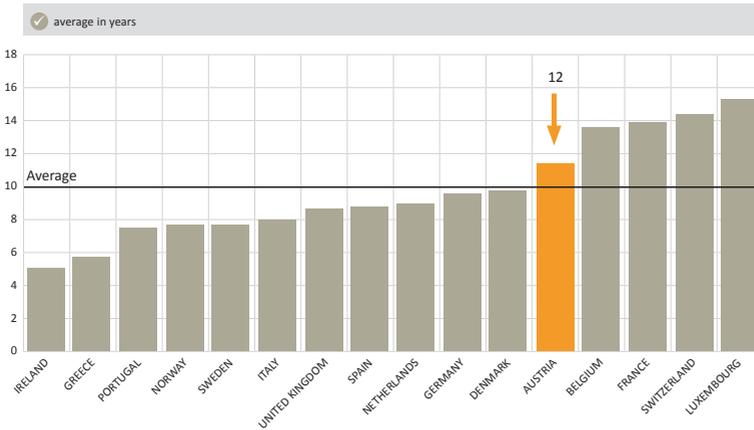
Source: <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/indicators>

**Those first-generation immigrants who successfully become Austrian citizens naturalise on average after 12 years of residence.** This number reflects the average period only for the minority of foreign-persons who have actually naturalised. In EU-15 countries, Norway and Switzerland, it takes on average 10 years. Among EU-15

<sup>2</sup> see methodological appendix for more information.

countries only immigrants in Belgium, France, Switzerland and Luxemburg require more time on average. In contrast, in Ireland, Greece, Portugal, Norway, Sweden and Italy it takes immigrants on average less than 8 years from arrival in the country to the acquisition of citizenship.

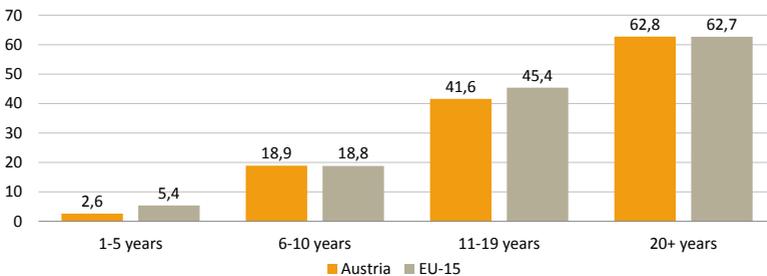
### Speed of naturalisation



Source: <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/indicators>

What explains why immigrants become citizens in Europe and how much time it takes? **Residence matters:** One reason for the above-average share of naturalised persons in Austria is the country’s comparatively long-settled first-generation population. Our multivariate analysis<sup>3</sup> shows that **the longer immigrants have settled in a country, the more likely they are to become citizens**. As is the case in most other EU-15 countries, naturalisation shares in Austria increase with residence in the country. Note that those naturalised after 1-5 years were most likely naturalised before 2006 based on spousal extension or transfer.

### Share of naturalised persons by years of residence



Source: <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/indicators>

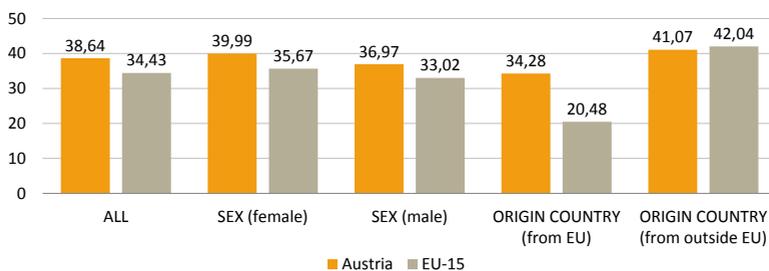
3 See Vink/ Prokic-Breuer/ Dronkers (2012)

### Immigrants' background plays a major role.

Another reason for the above-average share of naturalised persons in Austria is the large share of immigrants coming from low- or medium-developed countries. People born in developing countries tend to naturalise in Europe in general and also in Austria. Immigrants coming from medium and low-developed countries are on average 2.5 times more likely to be citizens than immigrants from highly developed countries. Immigrants from less developed countries also take longer to acquire citizenship. Across EU countries, the role of immigrants' backgrounds can be reflected in the different results for EU and non-EU-born persons: Immigrants from outside the EU (on average from developing countries) are roughly 10% more likely to be citizens of Austria than EU citizens residing in Austria. However, this difference is significantly higher for many other EU-15 countries (e.g. 20% in France).

**Gender matters: Women are usually more likely to be citizens than men in the EU.** This is also true for Austria.

### Share of naturalised persons in Austria, by gender and origin country



Note: EU refers to the 27 EU Member States as of 31.12.2012;  
Source: <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/indicators>

**Education, employment, family status and the use of language are additional factors that influence the acquisition of citizenship.** Across most EU-15 countries, immigrants from less developed countries who have at least secondary education are about 42% more likely to naturalise than those with only primary education. Immigrants from both developing and developed countries are more likely to be citizens if they speak the country of residence's language at home, if they are married, and if they are employed.

**Policies matter:** While these individual factors do play a role, **citizenship laws significantly influence how many immigrants become citizens because they determine the conditions under which immigrants can choose to naturalise.**

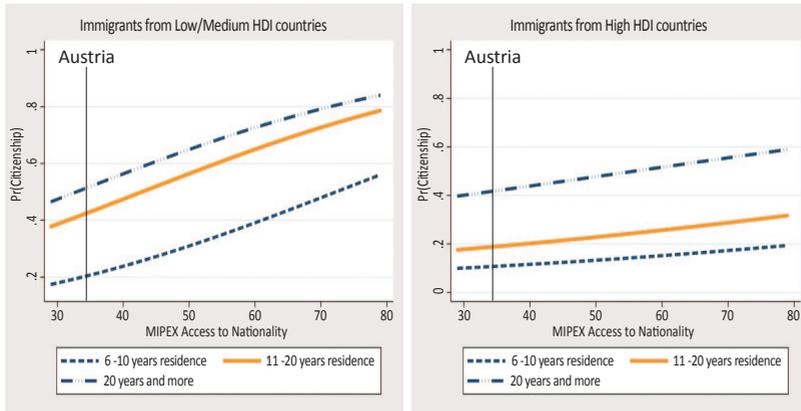
One example is the acceptance of multiple nationality: Immigrants from less developed countries that reside in EU countries that accept dual citizenship are 40% more likely to be citizens of the country of residence.<sup>4</sup>

More importantly, inclusive citizenship laws in the country of residence have a major effect on whether or not immigrants naturalise:<sup>5</sup>

4 Multiple nationality must be tolerated by both the country of origin and the country of residence.

5 Policies are measured by an adjusted score of the Migrant Integration Policy Index, see [www.mipex.eu/](http://www.mipex.eu/)

## Probability of citizenship acquisition in EU-15 countries<sup>6</sup>



This graph above shows how ordinary naturalisation laws for the first generation affect their uptake of citizenship on average in EU-15 countries, Norway and Switzerland. **Citizenship policies matter more for immigrants from less developed countries, especially for newcomers** (as the three lines in on the left are steeper than the lines for immigrants from higher developed countries, they are not only less likely to acquire citizenship, but whether or not they do so also seems to depend on fewer factors that go beyond the time of residence in the country).

Austria's naturalisation laws are thus the major factor determining whether immigrants become Austrian citizens. In general, more foreign born have become citizens in Austria than would be expected just based on the restrictive law, due to the characteristics of the foreign-born population in Austria. This finding implies that there is great potential for increasing the naturalisation rate if Austria were to pass more inclusive laws.

### Results from the National Roundtable

National roundtable participants stressed that naturalisation is often a very personal decision. For example, immigrants with aspirations to return to the country of origin are less likely to naturalise while immigrants with children that grew up in the country of residence more often become citizens. For some groups, there are strong incentives to secure their residence and the protection of effective citizenship, while for EU nationals acquiring Austrian citizenship may provide fewer legal benefits.

<sup>6</sup> The horizontal axis in the graph represents the 'openness' of citizenship laws across EU countries. The vertical axis represents the probability that foreign born immigrants are citizens. This analysis used pooled data from the European Social Survey (2002-2010) available for 16 Western European countries (EU-15, minus Italy, plus Norway and Switzerland). The graph shows that citizenship laws have a different effect for immigrants from different countries and with different length of duration in the country.

Participants discussed whether immigrants naturalise for purely pragmatic or also emotional reasons.

*'I also believe, that when discussing about how difficult it is to acquire the Austrian citizenship, and how expensive the Austrian citizenship is, it is absolutely impressive how many persons naturalise. So there must be a reason for this.'*

(ACIT National Roundtable in Vienna, 19 November 2012, Academic expert)

*'In practice, I have to say that it occurs very seldom that someone really says in romantically embellished words "it is my heart's desire to become Austrian". In most cases, residence stability (...) and free access to the labour market, and, which must not be forgotten either - if I think of the group of the recognized refugees - it is about being able to travel again. This must also be kept in mind. So there is a group of persons who are not even able to go on holiday or, let alone, to visit their family in their home country. These are, so to speak, very vital reasons for striving to acquire the citizenship.'*

(ACIT National Roundtable in Vienna, 19 November 2012, Civil Servant)

*'I don't think that people really believe that this (discrimination) will end with citizenship. I think that the basic mood that this (citizenship) will not change anything prevails among the people. But it entails pragmatic advantages. This is my experience.'*

*'This is also supported by the - how shall I say - very reluctant naturalisation of EEC citizens but except if they want to be entitled to vote they do actually not draw any benefits from the naturalisation and therefore they are frequently not interested in it.'*

(ACIT National Roundtable in Vienna, 19 November 2012, NGO)

## 2. CITIZENSHIP LAW INDICATORS: WHAT ARE IMMIGRANTS' LEGAL OPPORTUNITIES TO BECOME A CITIZEN?

Since citizenship policies influence why more immigrants become citizens in one country and not the other, what are the legal opportunities and obstacles that they face in Europe? Citizenship Law Indicators describe and compare legal rules for birth-right acquisition, naturalisation and loss of citizenship across countries and over time. Indicators measure degrees of inclusion and individual choice on a 0 to 1 scale.<sup>7</sup> The provisions of citizenship laws have different target groups, such as immigrants, native born, emigrants, family members of citizens or stateless persons. A score of close to 1 indicates that the legal rules are relatively inclusive for the respective target group or allow more choice of citizenship status to its members, whereas a score close to 0 indicates more exclusion or lack of individual choice.

**Overall, Austria has one of the most restrictive citizenship regimes in Europe.** Only in its legal opportunities for renouncing citizenship is Austria similar to most EU-15 countries.

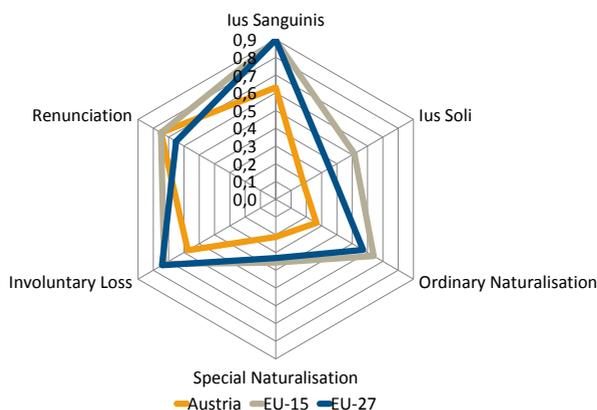
Austria restricts the acquisition of citizenship by descent from a citizen parent (*ius sanguinis*) through the paternal line (*ex patre*); *ius sanguinis ex patre* is not applied to a child born out of wedlock. Only if the Austrian father later marries the foreign mother of the child, the child can retroactively become a citizen (with consent of the child if 14 years or older).<sup>8</sup> Acquisition of citizenship based on birth in the Austrian territory (*ius soli*) is available at birth for foundlings and stateless persons. Persons born in Austria to foreign parents have an entitlement to citizenship after six years of residence in the country, but they must still meet most of the ordinary naturalisation requirements (i.e. language, renunciation, income and assimilation).

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<sup>7</sup> See methodological appendix for more information.

<sup>8</sup> This is conditional upon a highly discretionary permission by the president of the republic ("legitimation"). An amendment to this *ex patre* restriction was proposed by the Austrian Government in February 2013, following judgments by the ECtHR and Austrian Constitutional Court: <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/news/citizenship-news/798-austria-citizenship-bill-includes-minor-repairs-and-faster-naturalisation-for-especially-well-integrated-migrants>

## Overall results of the Citizenship Law Indicators



Source: <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/indicators>

Austria provides preferential access to citizenship based on their special ties or contributions to the country for nine out of 16 target groups identified by EUDO CITIZENSHIP.<sup>9</sup> Only Denmark and Finland offer fewer special naturalisation opportunities.

**Austria has more legal obstacles for access to citizenship for family members of citizens than most EU-15 countries.** In the EUDO CITIZENSHIP typology, family-based modes of acquisition include transfer of (an existing) citizenship to spouses and children, extension of a naturalisation process to spouses or partners and minor children, transfer to adopted children of citizens, and naturalisation with reduced residence requirements for the spouses or children of former or deceased citizens.

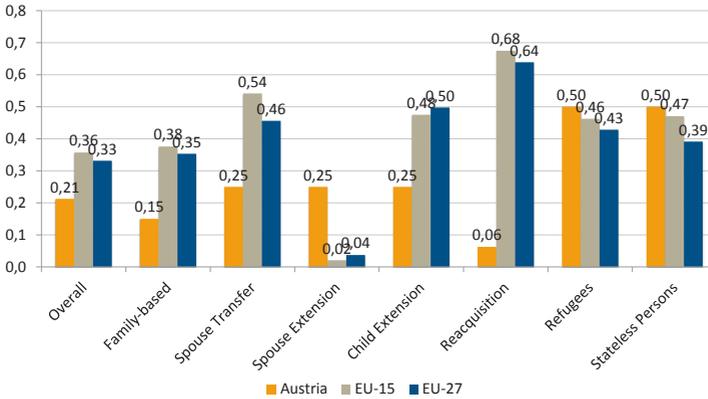
In Austria, there are currently no provisions for child transfer, adoption or descendants from former citizens. Citizenship for the spouse of a naturalised citizen is an entitlement in Austria which is more inclusive than in most EU countries where spousal extension is discretionary or not possible at all. To naturalise, the spouse of an existing Austrian citizen has to have been married to the citizen for five years and resident in Austria for six years. Permanent residence status at time of application and renunciation of former citizenship is required. In addition to these conditions, other language, income, assimilation, and criminal record requirements also apply. Spouses of applicants for naturalisation also acquire Austrian citizenship if the application is successful and the previously mentioned conditions are satisfied.

Minor children (or disabled adult children) of applicants for naturalisation acquire Austrian citizenship if the application is successful and if they have permanent residence status in the country.<sup>10</sup> Minor children are not exempt from renunciation, language, assimilation, or criminal record requirements.

<sup>9</sup> Spouses and children of citizens, former Austrian citizens, EEA citizens, persons who have been resident in Austria for 15 years, refugees, stateless persons, and persons with special achievements on behalf of the State.

<sup>10</sup> If the parents of the child are not married, the father can only extend acquisition of citizenship if paternity has been established and he has (shared) custody over the child.

## Provisions for 'special naturalisation'



Source: <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/indicators>

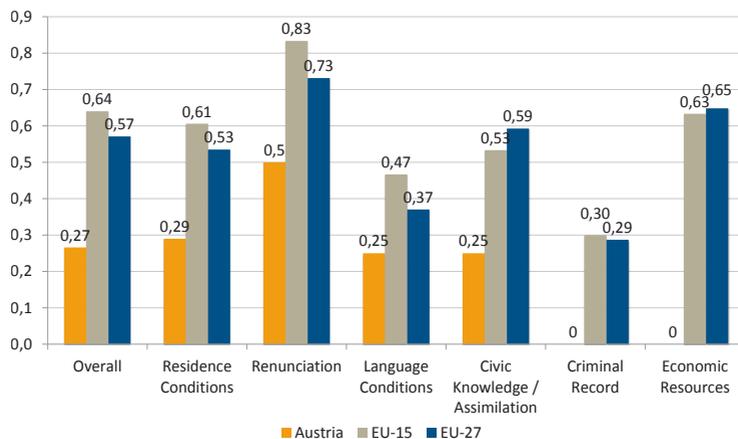
**Austria has more legal obstacles to becoming a citizen through ordinary, residence-based naturalisation than most EU-15 and EU-27 countries.** Only Denmark, Lithuania and Switzerland have more restricted access to ordinary naturalisation.

Austria requires ten uninterrupted years of residence including five years with a permanent residence permit.<sup>11</sup> Austria also requires that applicants renounce their previous citizenship(s). Renunciation of previous citizenship(s) can only be waived if the applicant gives proof that renouncing the nationality of his or her previous home country is legally impossible (in the case of refugees) or prohibitively expensive.

Language, cultural knowledge, criminal record and economic resources requirements are bigger obstacles in Austria than in most EU-15 and EU-27 countries. Austria requires a B1 level of language proficiency according to the Common European Framework of Reference for languages. Austria also requires applicants to pass a civic knowledge test, equivalent to grade-4 secondary school syllabus for the course subject 'history and social studies'. Denial of naturalisation can occur for not only a criminal conviction in Austria or abroad, but even for several administrative penalties. Immigrants that want to become citizens have to prove income above minimum pension rates and independence from social assistance during the last three years prior to application.

<sup>11</sup> Also note that certain categories of people, such as beneficiaries on subsidiary protection, currently cannot obtain a permanent residence permit.

## Provisions for ordinary naturalisation



Source: <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/indicators>

### Results from the National Roundtable<sup>12</sup>

**High residence and economic requirements are the main obstacles for ordinary naturalisation**, according to national stakeholders. Only Switzerland, Italy, and Greece have higher residence requirements among EEA countries. An additional difficulty for meeting the residence requirement is that residence has to be uninterrupted.

*‘From my experience, one particular hardship is that even if these 10 years are interrupted by only one single day, the period restarts from the beginning. I know specific cases with which I was approached and where the authority is, so to speak, helpless because the law stipulates an uninterrupted residence of 10 years.’*

(Participant of the ACIT National Roundtable in Vienna, 19 November 2012, Politician)

Interruptions in residence can be caused by administrative procedures which can lead to the refusal of citizenship. For example, delays in granting residence for recognized refugees or renewal of temporary permits can lead to an interruption in residence records for future applications.

*‘Thus, if persons have settled here legally for some time, but miss this deadline (to renew a permit) for any reason whatsoever, they firstly have great difficulties to get out this unlawful state but they will definitely have an interruption (in their residence) which naturally has an effect on naturalisation.’*

(Participant of the ACIT National Roundtable in Vienna, 19 November 2012, Civil Servant)

<sup>12</sup> The Austrian national roundtable, organised by the ‘Beratungszentrum fuer Migrantinnen und Migranten’, hosted four academic experts, three representatives of non-governmental organisations, two civil servants and one politician.

The challenge of residence is also relevant for high-skilled immigrants. Some business persons may have trouble reaching uninterrupted stay in Austria due to temporary job postings abroad.<sup>13</sup> The same applies to international students that are encouraged to study abroad, as well as researchers that often work on a series of temporary contracts. According to one roundtable participant, 'this is one group where Austria has obviously and constantly shown high interest in keeping them in the country'.

Restrictive economic resource requirements were the second most mentioned obstacle. Income is not only required at a certain point of time, but has to be proven over the past three years. This presents an additional burden for persons in low-income employment, persons working part-time or in temporary jobs. Income requirements above minimum pension levels exclude vulnerable groups, in particular low-income families.

After residence and economic requirements, the renunciation requirement of previous citizenship and language requirements were most mentioned as obstacles for naturalisation. B1 language level is demanding even for immigrants that work well in everyday life. To acquire the language through a series of courses can also be very costly for applicants. Exemptions to language requirements based on health issues do not always work appropriately.

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13 If the applicant still holds a residence permit, they are allowed to spend 20% of the time abroad.

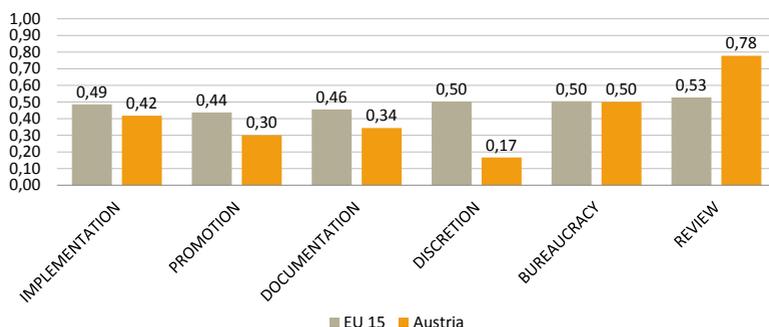
### 3. CITIZENSHIP IMPLEMENTATION INDICATORS: WHAT ARE THE PROCEDURAL OBSTACLES TO ORDINARY NATURALISATION?

Opportunities created by the law may be undermined by problems in the procedure. Creating indicators is one way to measure the major opportunities and obstacles in the procedure. Citizenship Implementation Indicators measure on a 0 to 1 scale the formal aspects of the ordinary naturalisation procedure: promotion activities, documentation requirements, administrative discretion, bureaucratic procedures, and review and appeal options. 38 indicators compare all implementation stages, from efforts by public authorities to inform applicants to the options to appeal a negative decision. A score of 1 means that the country facilitates naturalisation and involves few practical obstacles. A score of 0 reflects a procedure with little facilitation and many practical obstacles<sup>14</sup>

**In the majority of countries there is a link between the policies and the way that they are implemented.** In general, countries that have more legal obstacles also tend to have more practical obstacles in the procedure and vice-versa.

**Overall, Austria has more practical obstacles in the naturalisation procedure compared to most EU-15 countries with the exception of formal access to judicial review and appeal opportunities.** The implementation of citizenship laws, however, is slightly more favourable compared to the legal obstacles in place. The largest differences in practical obstacles between Austria and most EU-15 countries exist when it comes to promoting citizenship and discretion by authorities in the procedure.

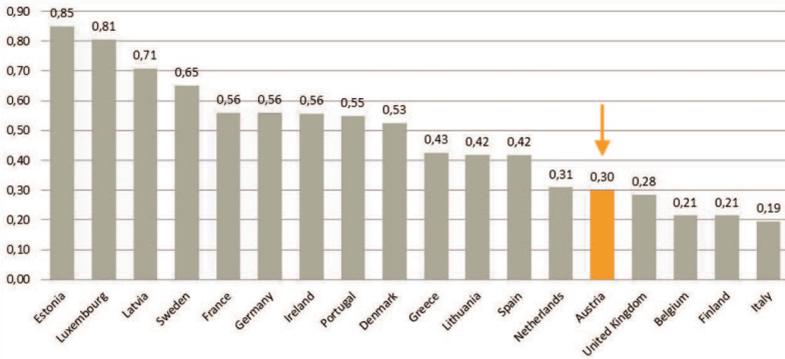
#### Overall results of Citizenship Implementation Indicators



Source: <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/indicators>

14 For more information see appendix and visit <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/about/acit>

## Promotion

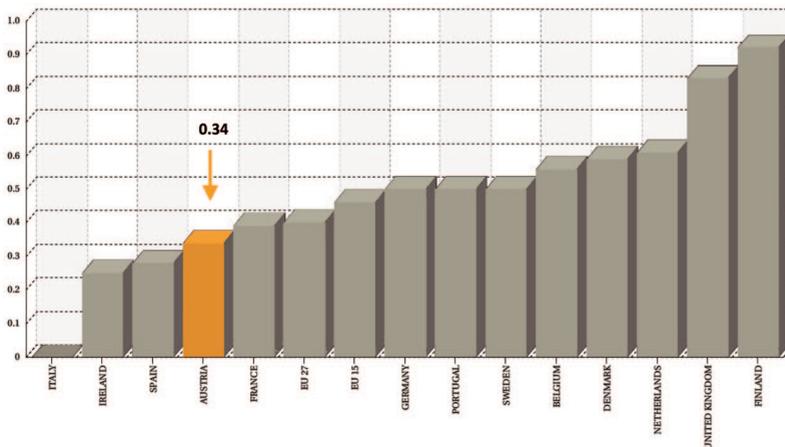


Source: <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/indicators>

**Austria has officially stated that encouraging naturalisation is not a goal of the government.** There has not been a campaign for citizenship in recent years. There is currently no dedicated information or checking-service for applicants. Promotional materials are inadequate and there is no interactive website on procedures of naturalisation and the benefits of citizenship. In addition, support for language course is not sufficient to reach the required B1 level. Citizenship ceremonies often do not involve the media or high-level public authorities.

High naturalisation fees are a considerable disincentive for potential citizens in Austria. Overall costs include not only fees, but also the translation of documents, and language courses. According to an estimation of one of the academic experts at the national roundtable, reaching the B1 language requirement with limited prior knowledge can cost up to 2000€ in course tuition alone.

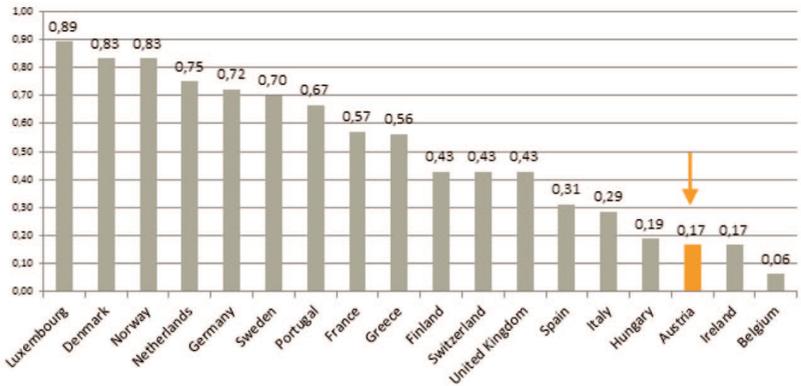
## Documentation



Source: <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/indicators>

**It is more difficult to provide required documentation in Austria than in most EU-15 countries.** Documents to prove residence and economic resources cannot have any interrupted period. The applicant has to provide a clean criminal record from any country where the applicant has lived for more than six months within the last 20 years. Documents must be officially translated and certified which can bear high costs for the applicant. The renunciation of the previous citizenship is required before the new citizenship is granted. This provision could potentially lead to statelessness if authorities decide to deny the new citizenship in the last minute. Currently, there is no right for exemption from economic and criminal record requirements on humanitarian or vulnerability grounds.

### Discretion



Source: <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/indicators>

**Only Ireland and Belgium are more discretionary in their ordinary naturalisation procedure than Austria.** However, Belgium has adopted new legislation in January 2013 restricting discretionary elements. In Austria, naturalisation is granted at the discretion of the authorities. Naturalisation only becomes a legal entitlement after 30 years of residence in the country (6 years for EU nationals, spouses of Austrians, children born in the country, and refugees). Discretion by authorities extends to all requirements. In addition, applicants in Austria have no right to be informed about the status of the application during the procedure.

### Review

Immigrants whose naturalisation claim has been refused have better access to judicial review and appeal opportunities than most EU-15 countries. This is due to the fact that immigrants have the right to appeal to the Supreme Administrative Court. This result was widely contested by national roundtable participants.

Some participants highlighted that the **access to judicial review is limited in practice**. Lawyer and court fees, long waiting periods and lengthy trials and the fact that Court only sits as court of cassation are a major obstacle for any judicial review. Accordingly, several participants highlighted the need for a second ordinary instance in Austria.

## Results from the National Roundtable

**Long bureaucratic and often discretionary procedures are the main practical obstacles** for immigrants to become citizens, according to stakeholders present at the national roundtable.

Providing evidence for uninterrupted residence and sufficient income as well as checking this evidence by authorities leads to a disproportionate administrative burden and long waiting periods for applicants.

*‘One thing which is very difficult in practice is the disclosure and calculation of one’s subsistence over a period of three years. If someone is not working continuously (...) for example in the case of self-employed persons, it is enormously difficult to make a real calculation. It is difficult for the concerned persons who have to provide plenty of documents, partially this does not work out even with professional assistance, and also very difficult for us to carry out the correct calculations. Sometimes we have to inquire at many other authorities including the tax office, police etc. where we cannot control when they will answer us and the results of determination have to be completely up-to-date during the decision. Unfortunately, this leads in many cases to the result that the procedure can take a long time and there is only a very short time frame available to us where we have the updated information from the authorities and the updated calculations of subsistence. If there is a delay or one sheet is missing, this means starting from scratch, and then it will take another half a year. This means that the conditions which are to be verified are so numerous and so complex that this creates major difficulties not only for the authorities but also for the concerned persons.’*

(Participant of the ACIT National Roundtable in Vienna,  
19 November 2012, Civil Servant)

Delays in the procedure can also be caused by criminal record requirements. If the application procedure takes longer than three months, the criminal record that is provided by the immigration police expires. As a consequence, a new criminal record has to be requested by the authorities which can again lead to further delay in the procedure.

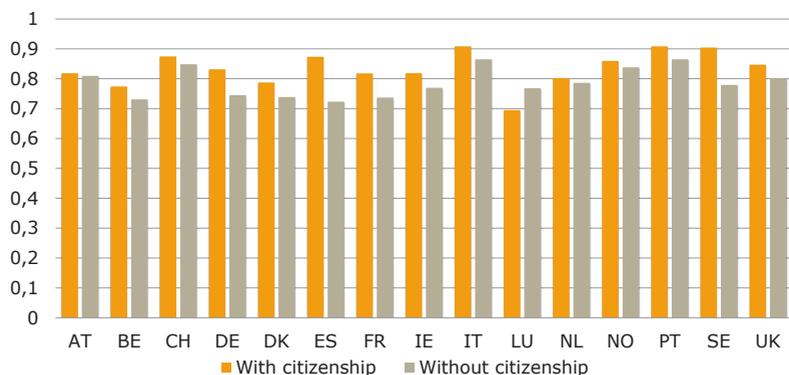
Several roundtable participants suggested to ‘freeze’ all application documents until all requirements are met.

## 4. CITIZENSHIP INTEGRATION INDICATORS: DOES CITIZENSHIP MATTER FOR INTEGRATION?

Are naturalised immigrants better off than immigrants that have not acquired citizenship? Citizenship Integration Indicators compare labour market participation and socio-economic status of native citizens, naturalised citizens and non-citizens based on the 2008 Labour Force Survey and EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions. Ten core indicators measure levels of integration in the EU-27 countries, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland with regards to the citizenship status of migrants. Indicators are organised into three categories: labour force participation, social exclusion, and living conditions<sup>15</sup>

**In most countries, immigrants who have naturalised are often better off than immigrants who have not naturalised**, even after taking into account the differences in age at arrival in the country, residence, education, the region of origin, the region of the destination country and the reason for migration.

### Employment of foreign born immigrants after statistical controls



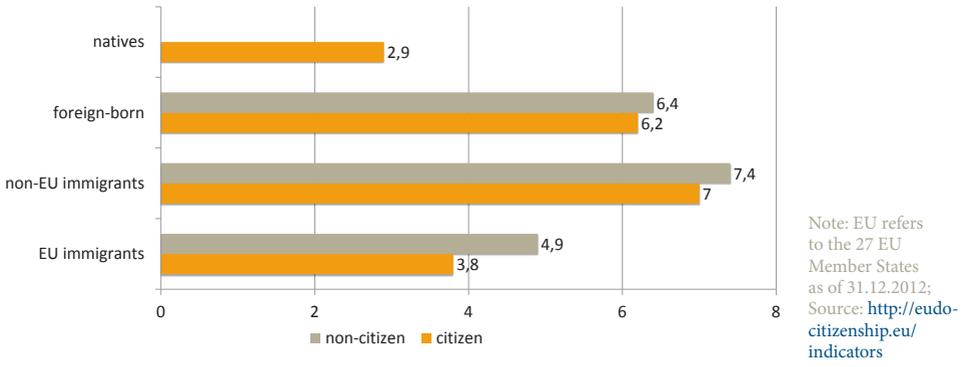
Source: ACIT  
conference  
presentation

On average, the difference between naturalised and non-naturalised is particularly high for immigrants from non-EU countries. Naturalised migrants are more often employed, less often overqualified for their jobs, have better housing conditions and have less difficulty paying household expenses.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> The handbook features a selection of Citizenship Integration indicators. For more information see appendix and <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/indicators>

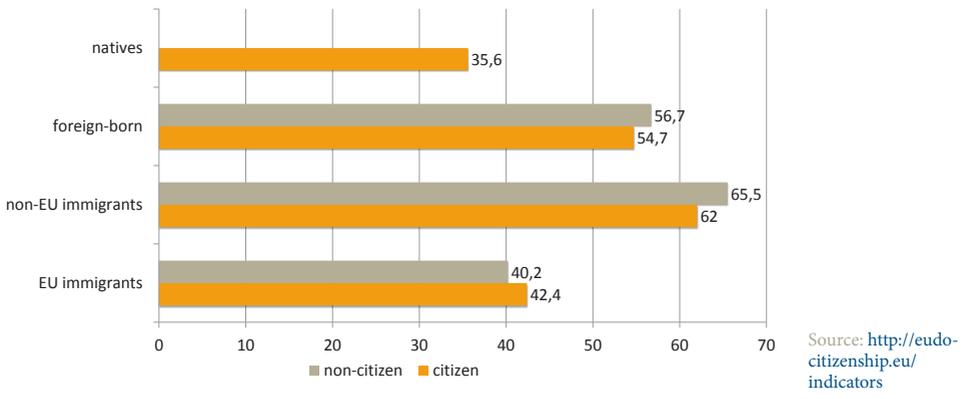
<sup>16</sup> For more information see OECD (2011) 'A passport for the better integration of immigrants' and Citizenship Integration Indicators at <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/indicators>

## Unemployment Rates, Austria 2008 (%)



The unemployment rate is higher for non-citizens in Austria compared to immigrants that have naturalised. This is especially true for non-EU citizens. However, the gap in unemployment between foreign-born non-citizens and native-born citizens is smaller in Austria (3.5%) than in other EU countries (e.g. France: 8.9%).

## Share having difficulty making ends meet, Austria 2008 (%)



Around every second foreign born person reports to have difficulties making ends meet. Fewer EU immigrants are affected by this issue. Naturalised immigrants, in general, have less difficulties making ends meet than immigrants that have not become citizens.

In Austria, like in most of Europe, better outcomes for naturalised immigrants seem to be a sign that 'better integrated' immigrants are more likely to acquire citizenship irrespective of how inclusive or restrictive a country's citizenship policy is. While immigrants from less developed countries are more likely to apply, among them, the

'better integrated' do. Thus, the most integrated immigrants become citizens regardless of how demanding the naturalisation requirements are.

But does the acquisition of citizenship itself actually improve integration outcomes? Does the policy select the best 'integrated' immigrants or do only the best 'integrated' immigrants apply regardless of the policy? Do naturalised immigrants usually have better living conditions because they have acquired citizenship or is it more common for people with better living conditions to apply for citizenship?

**More national and international research is needed to clarify the effects of citizenship and better address why naturalised immigrants often have better integration outcomes.** Researchers need panel data to answer this question about causality. Several studies that have used panel data analysis have found a positive effect of citizenship on labour market participation in Germany, France and the United States.<sup>17</sup> This project found also that, although political participation increases mainly with length of residence, citizenship status makes it more likely that first generation immigrants will also engage in less conventional forms of participation, such as wearing a campaign sticker, signing a petition, taking part in a demonstration or boycotting certain products.

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<sup>17</sup> For more detail, see the OECD publication 'A passport for the better integration of immigrants?' (2011).

## KEY RESULTS:

1. Austria restricts access to citizenship more than most European countries. High residence and income requirements are major legal obstacles for ordinary naturalisation. The requirement to renounce any previous citizenship represents a legal obstacle for many eligible immigrants.
2. Documents must be provided for proving uninterrupted residence, income, and current criminal record, which can produce a significant bureaucratic burden on the administration and the applicant. Interruptions caused by delays in the procedure itself can lead to refusal of citizenship.
3. The combined costs to become a citizen in Austria are higher than in most other EU-15 countries. Costs include application fees, document translation and certification fees, as well as language test and tuition fees.
4. Immigrants that were refused citizenship can appeal to the Administrative Supreme Court. However, high legal and court fees as well as long waiting times and the limited legal effect of the decision are major practical obstacles for immigrants to challenge refusals of their naturalisation claim.

# METHODOLOGICAL APPENDIX

## CITIZENSHIP ACQUISITION INDICATORS

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Citizenship Acquisition Indicators have been developed by Maarten Vink (Maastricht University/ European University Institute) and Tijana Prokic-Breuer (Maastricht University). Acquisition indicators have been calculated for 25 European states. The data source for the indicators is the Labour Force Survey Ad Hoc Module 2008 on the labour market situation of migrants and their descendants (Eurostat). The target population includes all persons aged between 15 and 74 (or 16 to 74 in countries where the target group for the core Labour Force Survey is from 16 years old). All numbers presented are based on at least 100 respondents.

Data is presented for the following European countries: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. In Germany, information on country of birth is missing for all respondents. To determine the region of origin (EU or non-EU), the study uses the country of birth of the father and/or mother of the respondent. There was no data provided by Eurostat for Finland. Data was excluded for Bulgaria, Malta and Romania due to small sample sizes.

Acquisition indicators analyse several factors, including

- **sex** (the percentage of foreign-born females and males who have acquired citizenship of the respective country of residence),
- **origin** (the percentage of foreign-born persons from EU and non-EU countries who have acquired citizenship of the respective country of residence)
- **the age at migration** (the percentage of foreign-born persons who have acquired citizenship of their country of residence, differentiated by the age at which the respondent took up residence; age groups: 0-17 years; 18-39 years; 40+ years)
- **years of residence by cohort** (the percentage of foreign-born persons who have acquired citizenship of their country of residence, differentiated by the number of years of residence: 1-5 years; 6-10 years; 11-19 years; 20 + years)
- **years of residence by minimum number of years** ( the percentage of foreign-born persons who have acquired citizenship of their country of residence, differentiated by the number of years the respondent has minimally resided there: at least 5 years; at least 10 years; at least 15 years; at least 20 years)
- **the time until naturalisation** (the numbers of years it takes on average for foreign-born persons to acquire the citizenship of the respective country of residence)

For more information visit:

<http://eudo-citizenship.eu/indicators/citacqindicators>

## CITIZENSHIP LAW INDICATORS

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Citizenship Law Indicators have been developed by Rainer Bauböck (European University Institute), Iseult Honohan and Kristen Jeffers (University College Dublin) in consultation with Maarten Vink (University of Maastricht) and Thomas Huddleston (Migration Policy Group).

Basic indicator scores have been calculated on the basis of a list of substantive and procedural requirements for each mode of acquisition or loss of citizenship using both additive and weighting formulas. The scoring is based on EUDO CITIZENSHIP's qualitative databases on [modes of acquisition](#) and [loss](#) of citizenship, on the detailed country reports and additional information from standardised questionnaire answers by legal experts in the respective countries.

Citizenship indicators are aggregated at different levels in order to analyse more general features of citizenship laws. The six highest level indicators that are calculated using all 45 basic indicators are: *ius sanguinis*, *ius soli*, residence-based ordinary naturalisation, naturalisation on specific grounds, voluntary renunciation and withdrawal/lapse.

These indicators have been calculated for 36 European states. The following labels are used for average indicators: EUROPE for all 36 states, EU 27 for all 2012 member states of the EU, EU 15 for the pre-2004 EU member states and EU 12 for the post-2004 accession states. Citizenship Law Indicators are based on citizenship laws at the end of 2011. In the future, it is foreseen to offer a new edition for past years that allow analysing trends over time.

For more information visit:

<http://eudo-citizenship.eu/indicators/eudo-citizenship-law-indicators> where you will also find a comprehensive [methodology report](#).

## CITIZENSHIP IMPLEMENTATION INDICATORS

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Citizenship Implementation Indicators have been developed by Thomas Huddleston (Migration Policy Group).

Citizenship Implementation Indicators have been calculated for 35 European states, as well as for three German federal provinces. The following list presents the five dimensions and the number of corresponding indicators and sub-indicators:

- Promotion: how much do authorities encourage eligible applicants to apply?
- Documentation: how easy is it for applicants to prove that they meet the legal conditions?
- Discretion: how much room do authorities have to interpret the legal conditions?
- Bureaucracy: how easy is it for authorities to come to a decision?
- Review: how strong is judicial oversight of the procedure?

A country's overall score is calculated as the simple average of these five dimensions. Based on a 0 to 1 scale, countries with scores closer to 1 create fewer obstacles in the implementation of naturalisation law. For each of the five dimensions, procedures that score closer to 1 involve greater promotion, easier documentation, less discretion, less bureaucracy, and/or stronger review. Countries with scores closer to 0 create more obstacles in the implementation of the naturalisation law. For each of the five dimensions, procedures that score closer to 0 involve little promotion, difficult documentation, wide discretion, greater bureaucracy, and/or weak review. The scores are the result of country reports written for the purpose of this project and a standardised questionnaire filled in by legal experts.

For more information visit:

<http://eudo-citizenship.eu/indicators/citimpindicators>

## CITIZENSHIP INTEGRATION INDICATORS

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Citizenship Integration Indicators have been developed by Derek Hutcheson and Kristen Jeffers (University College Dublin).

The indicators are derived from the 2008 EU Labour Force Survey Ad Hoc Module on 'The Labour Market Situation of Migrants and Their Descendants' (Eurostat). Socio-Economic Status indicators are derived from the 2008 cross-sectional EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC).

Some data may be omitted due to small sample sizes. All numbers presented are based on at least 100 respondents or 20 for the Socio-Economic Status indicators.

Citizenship indicators include:

### LABOUR FORCE INDICATORS

**Unemployment:** the number of people aged 15 to 74 unemployed, as defined by the International Labour Organisation, as a percentage of the labour force (the total number of people employed plus unemployed) of the same age group.

**Economic Activity Rate:** the total number of people aged 15 to 74 employed plus the total number of people unemployed (the labour force) as a percentage of the total population of the same age group.

**Level of Education:** the mean highest education attainment level among respondents aged 25 to 74. Values correspond to mean education levels specified by the International Standard Classification on Education: (1) primary education; (2) lower secondary education; (3) higher secondary education; (4) post-secondary non-tertiary education; (5) university degree; (6) postgraduate studies.

**Overqualification rate:** calculated as a share of the population aged 25 to 74 with a high educational level (ISCED 5 or 6), and having low or medium skilled jobs (ISCO

occupation levels 4 to 9) among employed persons having attained a high educational level of the same age group.

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS INDICATORS

**Social Benefit dependence:** measures receipt of family/children related allowance, housing allowances, and social benefits not elsewhere classified as the mean share of respondents' gross annual income.

**Poor dwelling (quality):** aims to objectively measure the quality of the respondents' accommodation. Values correspond to the percentage of respondents who indicate that the dwelling in which they live has a problem with a leaking roof and/or damp ceilings, dampness in the walls, floors or foundation and/or rot in window frames and doors.

**Poor dwelling (environment):** aims to objectively measure the quality of the area in which the respondent resides. Values correspond to the percentage of respondents who indicate that pollution, grime, or other environmental problems in the area caused by traffic or industry is a problem for the household.

**Poor dwelling (crime):** aims to objectively measure the quality of the area in which the respondent resides. Values correspond to the percentage of respondents who indicate that crime, violence, or vandalism in the area is a problem for the household.

**Difficulty making ends meet:** measures the level of difficulty the respondents' household has in paying its usual expenses. Values correspond to the percentage of respondents that indicate they have some difficulty, difficulty, or great difficulty paying usual household expenses.

**Housing cost burden:** measures the average percentage of monthly disposable household income spent on monthly housing costs.

**Unmet health need:** measures the percentage of respondents who indicated that there had been at least one occasion during the last twelve months when the respondent needed medical or dental examination or treatment and did not receive treatment.

For more information visit:

<http://eudo-citizenship.eu/indicators/integration-indicators>

## NATIONAL ROUNDTABLES

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National Roundtables were organised by national partners and the Migration Policy Group in Austria, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom. The purpose of the roundtables was to present the project's country results to national stakeholders in order to gather their feedback and interpret the findings in a national policy context. Participants were asked about the factors that influence naturalisation, the impact of citizenship on various forms of

integration, the impact of national policies and the political environment for reform. The ten events took place between November 2012 and February 2013.

10-20 national stakeholders were invited to each event. Stakeholders included civil servants working in national, regional or local administration, regional or national-level politicians, members of non-governmental organisations including immigrant organisation, advocacy groups and service providers, citizenship and immigration lawyers, and academic researchers working for research institutes and universities. The full list of participants in each country is not made public because participants were insured anonymity to facilitate open debate.

The ten national roundtables were organised in two structured focus group sessions of each 60-90 minutes. The discussion was recorded and transcribed by national partners and analysed by the Migration Policy Group. All transcripts were used for content analysis using Nvivo software package for coding.

For more information, see the comparative EU level report:  
<http://eudo-citizenship.eu/indicators>



## About the MIGRATION POLICY GROUP

The Migration Policy Group is an independent non-profit European organisation dedicated to strategic thinking and acting on mobility, equality, and diversity. MPG's mission is to contribute to lasting and positive change resulting in open and inclusive societies by stimulating well-informed European debate and action on migration, equality and diversity, and enhancing European cooperation between and amongst governmental agencies, civil society organisations and the private sector.

We articulate this mission through four primary activities focused on harnessing the advantages of migration, equality and diversity and responding effectively to their challenges:

1. Gathering, analysing and sharing information
2. Creating opportunities for dialogue and mutual learning
3. Mobilising and engaging stakeholders in policy debates
4. Establishing, inspiring and managing expert networks

For more information on our past and current research, visit our website at [www.migpolgroup.com](http://www.migpolgroup.com)



## About EUDO-CITIZENSHIP

Democracy is government accountable to citizens. But how do states determine who their citizens are? EUDO CITIZENSHIP allows you to answer this and many other questions on citizenship in the EU member states and neighbouring countries.

EUDO CITIZENSHIP is an observatory within the [European Union Observatory on Democracy \(EUDO\)](#) web platform hosted at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies of the European University Institute in Florence.

The observatory conducts research and provides exhaustive and updated information on loss and acquisition of citizenship, national and international legal norms, citizenship statistics, bibliographical resources, comparative analyses and debates about research strategies and policy reforms.

For more information on our past and current research, visit our website at [www.eudo-citizenship.eu](http://www.eudo-citizenship.eu)

