

# Immigration and Islam in Austria



[Daniel Pipes reports](#) that an historic event that took place in Austria in December 2017 has gone largely unnoticed outside of Austria. For the first time in Western Europe a government with an anti-immigration and anti-Islamization policy (on paper at least) took power.

To summarize Pipes' report:

The two parties that won 58 percent of the vote in Austria's legislative elections are the Austrian Peoples Party (Österreichische Volkspartei, or ÖVP) and the Freedom Party of Austria (Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs, or FPÖ) – the former a mildly conservative entity and the latter with roots in the far-right shadowlands of German (not Austrian) nationalism.

On coming to power, the coalition issued the following statement – important because it clearly distinguishes between political Islam and the religion of Islam – and that is a new departure in mainstream politics:

*Austria guarantees freedom of belief and religion but fights*

*political Islam. By political Islam we mean groups and organizations whose ideological foundation is Islam, and which seek to change the basic political and social order by rejecting our constitution and Islamizing society. Political Islam, which can lead to radicalization, antisemitism, violence and terrorism, has no place in our society.*

For someone like Pipes, who sees what he calls I&I (immigration and Islamization) as the key issue in the West's future, a trip to Vienna was *de rigueur*.

So, he went, he saw, but left Vienna 'nearly clueless' as to whether or how this policy was to be implemented. Although in an update later in the essay he notes that the government has initiated a proposal to [ban the hijab](#) in schools for girls under ten years of age, he has remained undecided as to whether or not this new coalition will actually 'take steps'. Several anti-Islamist activists he spoke to give their own reasons for skepticism:

- *ÖVP merely mouths anti-I&I positions but does not want to go beyond the European consensus. That means more of the same, nothing dramatic ahead.*
- *The national government is quite hemmed in by the European Union, the bureaucracy, and the judiciary, all of which oppose anti-I&I steps. One interlocutor went so far as to call democracy in Austria "a farce."*
- *Beyond those three power centers, the entire Establishment of the 6Ps (the police, politicians, press, priests, professors and prosecutors) does not want changes.*
- *The Austrian population, despite its resounding vote for anti-immigration policies, is not focused on this issue and is not riding the new government to do something.*
- *The Muslims who do not fit in, mostly Chechens and Afghans, are relatively few in number.*
- *Jihadi violence tends to be shoved under the rug and ignored.*

Interestingly, while the I&I topic has barely surfaced in Austria, the issue of the FPÖ's inclusion in the government has made waves. There are those who are not comfortable with the party's guilt-by-association with National Socialism, criticizing its 'politics of resentment', or its anti-Western outlook. (The FPÖ opposes economic sanctions on Russia, signed a cooperative agreement with Putin's party, and supported the Russian annexation of Crimea. It also supports the Serbian claim to Bosnia, the Republika Serbska.) Those friendly to it point to its accurate civilizational critique, its positive evolution, and the dangers of Islamo-fascism.

Because the FPÖ shares much with its European counterparts in Germany, France, and Sweden, hostility to it in Austria has Europe-wide implications, foreshadowing future disputes over conservatives allying with populists. Pipes, though not exactly endorsing the FPÖ, advocates working with them for four reasons:

- *For example, the 89-year-old Jewish artist [Arik Brauer](#) (who personally witnessed the 1938 Anschluss) said he is less worried about the idiotic anti-Semitic songs sung by members of university fraternities, which pose little threat to Jews, than by 250 million Arabs who want him 'under the earth.' He's right.*
- *Second, a political party can change and be what its members make of it. (Note how the U.S. Democratic Party changed on the race issue.)*
- *Third, parties focused on the I&I crises are rising in popularity across Europe and represent an important and growing body of opinion, which cannot be waved away or ignored.*
- *Fourth, the FPÖ and kindred parties have a vital role in bringing immigration and Islamization issues to the fore: without them, other parties basically ignore the issue and leftist parties remain not just in deep denial but often ally with Islamists.*

The key point made by Pipes is that the issues of immigration and Islamization are far more urgent than the relatively minor threat of neo-fascism and that parties focused on the I&I issue are key to preserving our civilization. Ignoring this issue will lead to immense, irreversible changes from which there may be no turning back.