

# Dual Citizenship and Naturalisation. Global, Comparative and Austrian Perspectives

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Rainer Bauböck and Max Haller have brought together authors from different countries and different academic disciplines. They provide deep analyses to which extent national identity has become compatible with a democratic system, which is based on a universal understanding of basic human rights. The result is an important interdisciplinary overview of an issue which in the past, in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, has almost destroyed Europe: Who is “we”, who are the “others” – and how to deal with different levels and understandings of identity; how inclusive and how exclusive can and should national identity be understood, legally implemented as citizenship.

The authors of the book’s 14 chapters represent different disciplines and their different approaches – Political Science, Sociology, Law. But they are bound together by their field of research, by a common research question: Is the understanding of nation-state sovereignty – with respect to the access of citizenship – still functional in an increasing transnational world, especially in a European Union, which has intentionally reduced national sovereignty, by the freedoms of the Single Market and the Schengen Treaty?

The core issue is the ambivalence between integration through dual citizenship and/or soft revisionism. The former for example refers to the possibility that Turkish citizens, legally living in Austria for many years receive Austrian citizenship without losing their Turkish citizenship. An example of the latter would be ethnic Hungarians, living as Romanian citizens in Romania, becoming dual citizens of Hungary and Romania – under the shadow of the dominant victim’s

narrative, called Trianon. This ambivalence includes two contradicting consequences of dual citizenship: the possible rebirth – or the containment of ethno-nationalism.

Rebirth of nationalistic revisionism and containment of aggressive nationalism are two aspects of the same phenomenon: Promoting an ethnic-national identity cutting through borders (like the borders established in St.Germain, 1919, or in Trianon, 1920) could allow to heal the imagined wounds of victimization – and at the same time could perpetuate the feeling of ethnic, of national victimhood. Permitting dual citizenship for post-1945 migrants in West- and Central European states could help to integrate first and second generation migrants into their new homeland – but could also prevent integration by deepening the ethnic roots of the past.

The variety of approaches underlines the complexity of the issue. Szabolcs Pogonyi’s chapter *Kin Citizenship in Eastern Europe* deals with the potentially explosive implications of that ambivalence: “Through denying membership to resident minorities and the parallel inclusion of non-resident co-ethnics, the governments of the successor states of multinational federations wanted to secure the political dominance of the core ethnic groups which, in many cases, formed only a slim majority.” (151)

Günther Pallaver und Guido Denicolò analyze the contradiction between the principles of “*ius sanguinis*”, “*ius soli*” and “*ius culturae*” in Italy: “Ethnicity”, based on “blood” and “culture” endanger the progress Europe has made after 1945. “Ethnicity” has to be seen as a soft

version of “Race”. This is, beyond the Italian case, the principal challenge any democratic order has to face: What qualifies a person to become one of “us”? (183-204)

The strategy to be used in a policy aiming at strengthening the concept of a post nationalistic Europe can be seen in the chapter, written by Hermann Atz and Max Haller: *Does Dual Citizenship Endanger Ethnic Cohabitation? How the South Tyrolean Population Views a Supplementary Austrian Citizenship*. “The astonishing result of the study is not so much that scepticism about the proposition of an additional Austrian citizenship prevails but that there are only very small differences between German-, Ladin- and Italian-speaking South Tyroleans concerning the issue”. (314) The combination of a high degree of regional autonomy and the openness of the internal European borders has taken away some (most?) of ethnic hatred and political revisionism.

The book is the summary of all arguments for a transnational and especially for a European solution. For the EU, it does not make sense to insist that national law decides who becomes a citizen of one of the Union’s member states – neither from an economic nor a humanitarian perspective. The Single market guarantees the free flow of goods, capital, services, and people in the whole of the European Union – but the principles of citizenship and of immigration still rest with the member states. And domestic political calculations – called populism – are still a temptation to stir up the fire of nationalism. Is “dual citizenship” a recipe to prevent ethno-nationalism getting out of control? The answer the book gives is “yes” and “no”.

The book Rainer Bauböck and Max Haller have edited is – due to its ambivalence – a warning signal: Ethno-nationalism is still alive and endangers the successes of Europe’s post-1945 and post-1989 order. But the book is also a signal of hope: Ethno-nationalism can be contained – by deepening Europe as a political order beyond all the shadows of the divisive past, called ethnicity or nation or culture.