
AUSTRIAN NATIONALIST CANDIDATE TO FLAUNT HIS 'TOUGHNESS'

25.08.2016

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EurActiv

Austrias far-right Freedom Party (FPO) kicked off its campaign for president on Wednesday (24 August) with the slogan Power needs control, seeking to get its candidate Norbert Hofer elected on a promise of toughness after concerns over Europes migrant crisis.

The FPO successfully challenged the result of a runoff vote in May that Hofer narrowly lost against former Green Party leader Alexander Van der Bellen. The Constitutional Court ordered a re-run, which will take place on 2 October.

Hofers slogan is the same as that which in 1992 ensured victory for the current presidents predecessor, Thomas Klestil from the conservative Peoples Party (OVP).

Back then the OVP and the Social Democrats were mass parties, but Austrians anger about their shared politics built up. Since then the Austrians have become so upset with the two parties that both parties presidential candidates failed to make it the presidential run-off.

RIGHT WING NATIONALIST SET TO WIN RERUN AUSTRIAN PRESIDENTIAL RACE

Freedom Party candidate Norbert Hofer has widened his lead in a Gallup poll ahead of Octobers repeat election for the Austrian presidency.

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Like the late Klestil, who was head of state until 2004, Hofer says he wants to be an active president, rather than a purely ceremonial one.

(He wants to become a) necessary counter weight to a power cartel that has established itself at every nook and corner in the state, said his campaign manager and the Freedom Partys secretary Herbert Kickl .

Hofer is a eurosceptic and has said that in some cases Austria should consider leaving the EU.

The FPO, which also hopes to provide the next head of government, shares its anti-immigration policy with rightist movements in several European countries, such as the Alternative for Germany (AfD).

Very few of Europes top politicians would be expected to welcome Hofer as the first far-right head of state in the European Union.

Hofers rival Van der Bellen said he had received several spontaneous calls from Brussels and other (EU) capitals after his victory in May.

He plans to use public concerns over Britains vote to leave the EU against Hofer and to focus his campaign squarely on his EU-friendly credentials.

AUSTRIAN FAR RIGHT GETS ELECTION DEFEAT ANNULLED

Austrias presidential run-off election must be held again, the countrys Constitutional Court ruled on Friday (1 July), handing the Freedom Partys narrowly defeated candidate another chance to become the first far-right head of state in the European Union.

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