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## **AUSTRIA EXPRESSES CONCERN AT UN'S GLOBAL COMPACT FOR MIGRATION**

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190 states have negotiated the UNs global compact for migration. However, two months before it is signed, Austria is expressing its concerns. EURACTIV Germany reports.

Within the Austrian coalition government, the right-wing populist FPÖ is opting for a hard line on immigration, refugees and migration. The Vice-Chancellor Heinz-Christian Strache (FPÖ) has been drumming against the UNs global compact for migration for a while,.

The compact should be formally adopted in Morocco in December. Among other things, he has repeatedly stressed that migration [is] not a human right.

The USA and Hungary have already announced that they will not sign this agreement. Poland also wants to take this step. The extent to which Austria will join these states has not yet been definitively established.

After the council of ministers, Chancellor Sebastian Kurz (ÖVP) announced a desire to closely coordinate with other states. This related to, for instance, Switzerland, which however announced its approval on Wednesday evening.

### **In May 2019, Europe will vote on migration**

Shortly after settling in at La Moncloa, Spains new prime minister, Pedro Sánchez, welcomed the ship Aquarius after it was rejected by the Italian government. But a few months later, his immigration policy changed, writes Beatriz Becerra.

### **Internationally binding caveat**

For the time being, the only thing that is certain is that the examination of the negotiated treaty is still ongoing. Neither Kurz nor Strache mentioned which specific issues were controversial.

In essence, it is a matter of every country wanting to direct its own migration policy and not have these dictated to them. In any case, Chancellor Kurz has already announced that there would be an internationally binding caveat from Austria on certain points.

The Austrian government would do everything it can to maintain the countrys sovereignty on this

matter.

There was strong criticism of the governments line from the opposition.

Monitoring movements of refugees and tackling causes of flight can only succeed with international cooperation, said Andreas Schieder, who has only recently been designated as the social democrat SPÖs Spitzenkandidat for the European elections.

He warned against Austria being in the same league as Trump and [Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor] Orban and jeopardising its reputation as a bridge builder.

The liberal party NEOS (New Austria and Liberal Forum) expressed concern that by taking such a step, Austria would be positioning itself against the international community. The party also underlined that the pact was not binding under international law in any case.

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Kaynak/Source: