

## Categorisation, Control, Trust? Work and Identity Documents in the 19th and Early 20th Century

From the mid-19th century until the 1920s, legal employment in many areas of wage labour or domestic services within the realm of the Habsburg monarchy or in Austria required the worker or servant to present an employment record book (either an *Arbeits- or a Dienstbotenbuch*). Unlike in Germany or France, the requirement to possess such work, identity and travel documents was extended to more and more categories of gainful employment. Public authorities and employers perceived these as an indispensable prerequisite for maintaining security and order. In the publications of labour and domestic servant organisations, by contrast, these documents were characterized primarily as instruments of control, compulsion and as symbols of humiliation. However, these employment record books can also be viewed as attesting to an increasing, albeit unequal, formalisation and regulation of labour and employment relationships. They documented occupations and employment relationships of workers and domestic servants that involved a widely disparate range of rights and obligations. This contribution outlines how the various participants discussed, used, misused or avoided these documents and, depending on their position and perspective, the various kinds of protections and risks connected with them.