

Anna Mratschkowski [ed.]

Asylum Related Organisations in Europe

Networks and Institutional Dynamics in the
Context of a Common European Asylum System



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Preface

This book is based on the interdisciplinary teaching–research project ‘Mapping REFugees’ arrivals at Mediterranean borders (MAREM)’, which was conducted from 2013 through 2016 at the Ruhr-University Bochum (RUB). The MAREM project was carried out by members of the Department of Sociology/Organisation, Migration, Participation at the Faculty for Social Science under the direction of Prof. Dr. Ludger Pries.

The research team studied various asylum-related organisations, their cooperation networks and their responses to the implementation of the Common European Asylum System. The team was divided into groups based on specific geographical areas in the Mediterranean, including Italy, Spain, Greece, Cyprus and Malta. In addition, although the original intent of the project was to focus on these five countries, we chose to include Germany because of its situation in 2015 relative to the so-called refugee crisis.

Representatives of the selected asylum-related organisations in each country were interviewed periodically, and the project consisted of three rounds of interviews (2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16). The chapters of this book present the main results of the research conducted during the most recent round and in part the results based on data collected during the two earlier rounds.

The inStudies project at RUB serves to develop teaching and supports students in building their individual profiles. By providing learning through research, it successfully concentrates on specific subjects to deepen individual students’ understanding. The inStudies project received generous funding from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research of Germany, enabling us to combine teaching, learning and research in carrying out the MAREM project.

I am most grateful to all the research groups for their fruitful work. I also cordially thank inStudies and the University’s Faculty of Social Science, whose interdisciplinary approach, supportive atmosphere and encouragement in exchanging ideas with colleagues contributed to the success of our project. My thanks go to Professor Pries for initiating the MAREM project and helping to organise the associated seminars, excursions and international workshops. Although I was responsible for the last

round of MAREM, I always welcomed his support and enjoyed working with all members of the project.

Many students and research assistants helped compile this book as the main product of the study. Juliana Witkowski, Rafael Bohlen, Natalia Bekassow, Katrina Böse, Jana Komorowski, Tobias Breuckmann, Lara Elliott and Megan Costello provided great help in bringing it to fruition.

I would also like to thank William White, René Reinholz and Diane Q. Forti, who provided editorial support during manuscript preparation. Special thanks go to Nomos, the publisher of the 'Migration & Integration' book series, for their kind offer to include our book in this series, for which I acted as editor.

During the project an interactive learning platform based on Google Earth was also created and is accessible to the broader public for free at www.ruhr-uni-bochum.de/marem/en/map.shtml. It includes an informative map showing the results of our three international workshops, offers comprehensive basic information concerning the asylum-related organisations working in Europe and displays the major routes of migration to Europe. Moreover, it highlights a variety of personal stories about people who arrive in European countries seeking asylum. To Mara Hasenjürgen, as well as many other project members and assistants who made this possible, I owe my heartfelt thanks.

It is hoped that this book will help fill a gap in the research on asylum-related organisations. In the MAREM project, we applied the theoretical approach known as neo-institutionalism to our research involving selected countries and have relied on the latest data available. To reach a broader audience, we are releasing these results in English in the belief that accessibility to asylum-related research is critical in setting the groundwork for improving the refugee situation both in Europe and elsewhere.

Anna Mratschkowski
Bochum, November 2016

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