The Mediterranean has been at the centre of many heated discussions about migration-related issues in recent years. Especially since the 'refugee crisis' of 2015 there is a growing number of publications addressing migration and its attendant issues in this region. The anthology *Bilateral Relations in the Mediterranean: Prospects for Migration Issues* brings together 14 contributions covering various aspects of bilateral relations in the Mediterranean. Whilst most of the contributions approach the topic from the perspective of the legal discipline, the anthology also incorporates historical and political aspects as well. This work, furthermore, incorporates several levels of analysis and discusses various actors dealing with migration issues in the Mediterranean, such as nation-states, the European Union, and International Organizations.

The book is divided into three chapters. Chapter 1 addresses the topic on the level of the nation state and consists of five sub-chapters covering Spain, Greece, Malta, France and Italy, respectively. Chapter 2 addresses supranational forms of legal bilateralism, consisting of four sub-chapters on relations between EU and Mediterranean countries, Southern Mediterranean States, the EU partnership framework on migration, countries in the EU's Eastern neighbourhood, and EU-Turkey cooperation. Chapter 3 investigates Horizontal issues of migration management covering five sub-chapters on soft law and shared responsibilities in the Mediterranean, the negotiation process for a Euro-Mediterranean free-trade area, the rhetoric of human rights in EU external relations in the Mediterranean, and fighting irregular forms of migration.

By incorporating case studies from different countries and on different levels, this book provides a comprehensive overview over issues of migration in the Mediterranean. This comparative approach and broad perspective is a significant strength of this publication, and it allows the anthology to pinpoint central issues of migration in the Mediterranean today. Also, this interdisciplinary and transnational approach enables the editors to take a big-picture perspective on issues around migration in the Mediterranean.

A few key challenges and important recommendations for policy makers become apparent when reading this book: The first central challenge that emerges from this analysis is the increasing informality when dealing with migration issues. This issue is emphasized by Casolari (2020) and Di Filippo (2020). The second central issue that becomes apparent is a lack of agreement in crucial definitions across different EU member states. This poses

challenges to decision-making, which is especially noteworthy in the context of emergencies where quick decisions need to be taken. Facts such as that there is a lack of definitions on terms such as "Place of Safety", as shown by Papastavridis (2020: 237), are most concerning, and it is thanks to the book's comparative approach that these key challenges become evident.

The issues discussed in this publication are very timely. This anthology has been published in 2020, but several of the contributions were updated since 2017. This in itself is not a limitation, but there is a patent lack of information on up to which point in time the data in this anthology apply. This would have been good for readers to know and would make engaging with this book easier, e.g., leading the reader to consult additional sources in order to be better informed about the most recent developments.

Despite this small limitation, this book is a very valuable read, in my opinion. As someone who is not from the legal discipline, I nevertheless found this anthology very easy to access and insightful because the contributions are written in a very comprehensive and clear manner. I would thus recommend this book to all academics working on migration as well as to policymakers dealing with migration issues.

References

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