Migration from the Middle East and North Africa to Europe
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Preface

Michael Bommes passed away on 26 December 2010, after a long and debilitating illness which he bore with patience and great discipline. His interest in issues arising from the field of migration and integration research continued throughout, as did his endeavours to bring the numerous projects and research efforts to a satisfactory end. Sadly, he was not able to witness the completion of the publication presented here, which marks the conclusion of the research project ‘Migration as Opportunity and Danger’ funded by the Robert Bosch Stiftung.

This project regarded the MENA region (including Turkey) as a possible region of origin for a quantitatively significant migration to Western Europe, and placed it at the focal point of the analysis. To facilitate further in-depth work on the project, Michael Bommes established a working group. The members of this group developed the research question and research concept and went on to jointly discuss the preliminary results in a series of working-group sessions. In addition to Michael Bommes, the working group consisted of Tanja El-Cherkeh, Heinz Fassmann, Simon Fellmer, Franz Nuscheler, Ralf Ulrich and Friederike Zigmann. Invited guests, such as Steffen Angenendt, Sigrid Faath, Ahmet İçduygu, Andrew Geddes, Hein de Haas, Hanspeter Mattes, Carmella Pfaffenbach, Andreas Pott and Ayman Zohry participated in selected sessions and contributed their expertise with regard to specific issues and topics. The working group officially concluded its work in 2010 with a preliminary final report, which was to form the foundation for a proposed publication under the joint editorship of Michael Bommes and Heinz Fassmann.

The editors of the now-completed publication felt a moral obligation to publish the final report posthumously, as it includes many ideas conceived by Michael Bommes. The contributions were carefully selected, the authors were provided with an opportunity to update their work and some of the texts were subsequently translated into English. A topic such as this is clearly of interest not only to the German-speaking world, but also to an international audience. The editors and authors also made some adjustments to the contributions to ensure that they would provide readers with a comprehensive insight into a multidisciplinary research question. This joint research question may best be summarised as follows: How will migration between the MENA region and Europe develop in the future, what are the possible causes of future migration from the MENA region to Europe and how reliable are such projections when viewed against the background of a political transition process attended by numerous uncertainties?
Prefaces are always textual depositories of gratitude. Gratitude is due, in the first instance, to Viola Breuer, project manager at the Robert Bosch Stiftung, who accompanied us along the lengthy path from conception of the project all the way to its publication – a generous, at times critical, but always highly committed travel companion. In addition, we would like to thank her colleague, Hannes Schammann, who took over from Viola Breuer when she left the Robert Bosch Stiftung shortly before the completion of this publication. Sincere thanks are also due to the contributing authors, who provided us with their work and remained patient, despite repeated requests by the editors for amendments to the manuscripts. Some of the manuscripts were translated into English by John Smith and Karen Meehan, with subsequent final editing carried out by the team of editors and, in particular, by Wiebke Sievers. Jenny Money proofread the book with great care. Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to everyone who contributed to making this publication possible.

Heinz Fassmann and Wiebke Sievers
Vienna, July 2013