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The EU's approach to climate mobility: Which way forward?

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Glossary

Climate mobility: The term ‘climate mobility’ is used to reflect the various ways in which climate change and human mobility interact. Climate mobility refers to different kinds of migratory movements, whether voluntary or forced, temporary or long-term and therefore encompasses a wide spectrum of mobility outcomes.

Climate-related displacement: Climate-related displacement refers to situations where people are forcibly displaced due to the impacts of climate change. Climate migration refers to situations where people move in part or largely because of sudden or progressive changes in the environment due to climate change.

Durable solutions: Can involve safe, voluntary return, local integration, or resettlement of refugees.

Gravity models: Gravity models examine historical trends and statistical information to investigate the effects of past climate-related events such as rainfall, temperature changes, or disasters on past mobility to then make projections about future movements.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs): IDPs are people who have been forced to flee due to e.g., armed violence, human rights violations, natural or human-made disasters, but who have not crossed an international border. Contrary to refugee status, IDP does not correspond to a legal status.

Rapid-onset disasters: As defined by UNISDR, sudden-onset events can be linked to meteorological hazards including tropical cyclones, typhoons, hurricanes, tornadoes, blizzards, hydrological hazards including coastal floods, mudflows, or geophysical hazards including earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanic eruptions.

Refugees: Refugees are people who have been forced to flee their homes and have crossed an international border to find safety in another country. Under the 1951 Geneva Convention, a refugee is defined as someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.

Root causes: In the context of EU development policy, root causes can refer to the EU’s goal of eradicating the root causes of poverty guided by sustainable development across economic, social, and environmental realms. Over the years, the focus has increasingly shifted to the root causes of migration and/or displacement, paving the way for a stronger link between development cooperation and reducing irregular migration by, inter alia, increasing incentives to stay or curbing people’s movement.

Slow-onset environmental degradation: As defined by UNFCCC, slow-onset events include sea level rise, thawing of permafrost, increasing temperatures, ocean acidification, glacial retreat and related impacts, salinisation, land and forest degradation, loss of biodiversity, and desertification.

List of acronyms

COP	Conference of the Parties
DG CLIMA	Directorate-General for Climate Action
DG ECHO	Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
DG HOME	Directorate-General for Justice and Home Affairs
DG INTPA	Directorate-General for International Partnerships
DG NEAR	Directorate-General for the European Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ECA	European Court of Auditors
EEAS	European External Action Service
EIB	European Investment Bank
EUTFA	European Trust Fund for Africa
GCCA+	Global Climate Change Alliance Plus
GCM	Global Compact on Migration
GCR	Global Compact on Refugees
HDP	Humanitarian-Development-Peace (nexus)
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IMRF	International Migration Review Forum
IOM	International Organization for Migration
L&D	Loss and Damage
MDB	Multilateral Development Bank
MFF	Multiannual Financial Framework
MPTF	Multi-Partner Trust Fund
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NDICI	Global Europe – Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument
PDD	Platform on Disaster Displacement
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TEI	Team Europe initiative
TFD	Task Force on Displacement
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNHCR	UN Refugee Agency
WIM	Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage

Executive summary

As a global phenomenon, climate mobility necessitates strategic thinking about how people adapt to climate change and the role mobility can play in alleviating the adverse effects of climate change. However, proactive thinking does not come naturally to many political institutions, which may be preoccupied with advancing their policy agendas through short legislative cycles, gaining electoral support, or obtaining favourable outcomes in reform negotiations. This is also the case for the European Union, where the age of permacrisis seems to be widening, rather than closing the gap between long-term priorities such as climate mobility and demographic change and the strategic thinking needed to tackle them.¹

Despite a push by the von der Leyen Commission to implement the European Green Deal, her flagship policy initiative, climate action is often accompanied by a sense that “not enough” is being done. Migration, for its part, continues to generate reactive and short-term responses, making it challenging to move beyond crises and deterministic predictions of future migration patterns.²

The effectiveness of the EU’s actions on climate mobility will, therefore, depend on two factors. First, the EU needs to translate scientific evidence into policy and programming to reflect the various mobility patterns linked to rapid and slow-onset climate change more

accurately and comprehensively. As a second priority, the EU needs to strike a balance between acknowledging the urgency of the climate crisis and doubling down on climate action while avoiding crisis-oriented narratives that have defined political and public discourse around “mass migration”. Otherwise, its capacity to act effectively and gain credibility with impacted countries and partners will be weakened, as will its efforts to achieve greater coherence across its policies and funding.

This Discussion Paper analyses the EU’s current efforts to address climate mobility.³ It addresses the complex relationship between climate change, mobilities, and related challenges in modelling and projecting future scenarios. Also mapped out are the multilateral policy developments relating to climate and migration and the EU’s actions on climate mobility, with a focus on two interrelated challenges: policy (in)coherence and counterproductive narratives, and weak institutional coordination.

In addition, the EU’s funding landscape is addressed, focusing on the mainstreaming and monitoring challenges when comprehensively assessing the funds dedicated to this cause. It concludes with recommendations on impacts, multilateral engagement, policy, and funding, which outline practical steps to be taken in the short and long-term.

Introduction

There is more scientific evidence than ever before about the causes and effects of climate change. The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report emphasises that, as a result of human activity, the global surface temperature has increased faster since 1970 than in any other half-century in the past.⁴ Between 2011 and 2020, the global surface temperature reached 1,1°C above pre-industrial levels, already leading to more frequent and intense extreme weather events, heat waves, heavy rainfall, drought, and wildfires.⁵ This negatively impacts not just people but entire ecosystems, settlements, and infrastructure and causes heat-related deaths, species loss, reduced food security and water scarcity.⁶ All this underlines the need for reinforced action to address the adverse effects of climate change.

In addition, the movement of people within and across borders has been and will continue to be substantially shaped by these changes. Climate change can negatively impact drivers of migration and exacerbate existing vulnerabilities. Now, displaced persons, migrants, and host communities are faced with constraints and difficult decisions that arise due to a changing climate. For some people, migration is a form of adaptation to climate change, while others are immobile in the face of climate change. This highlights the wide spectrum of mobility outcomes evident today.

Climate interactions with mobility present a significant governance challenge for the international community and the European Union (EU). As a global and regional actor with considerable geographic reach and resources, the EU has a decisive stake and opportunity to shape how to respond to climate mobility together with like-minded partners. Over the past years, the EU has shown sustained interest in the topic in various multilateral processes and platforms. This is evidenced through its climate action and its commitment to well-managed migration and effective development cooperation with partner countries exposed to climate change. The European Commission, and to a lesser extent, the European Parliament, are increasingly paying attention to climate mobility, with the former developing policies and programmes that aim to address it through external action. Reflecting its growing commitment, the EU is a key international donor of development and humanitarian aid. In 2021, for instance, it was the fourth largest donor to development projects relating to tackling climate change, worth \$5.7 billion (around €5.2 billion).⁷

The EU has a decisive stake and opportunity to shape how to respond to climate mobility together with like-minded partners.

With climate change affecting countries and communities near and far, the EU is well-placed to mobilise its knowledge and resources to provide support. At the same time, the EU faces five considerable challenges in addressing climate mobility:

1. Integrating scenarios and modelling into policymaking effectively.
2. Carrying out targeted and effective multilateral initiatives.
3. Strengthening its institutional coordination and leadership.
4. Overcoming silo thinking and misleading narratives, thereby achieving greater policy coherence, including via its funding.
5. Developing a longer-term strategy that includes migration as adaptation.

Against this background, this Discussion Paper analyses the EU's current efforts to address climate mobility. It begins with an overview of the complex relationship between climate change and mobilities and related challenges in modelling and projecting future scenarios. The second section maps out key multilateral policy developments related to climate and migration. The third section analyses EU actions on climate mobility, focusing on two interrelated challenges: policy (in) coherence and counterproductive narratives, and weak institutional coordination. Its fourth section unpacks the EU's funding landscape, focusing on the mainstreaming and monitoring challenges that arise in assessing how much money is being dedicated and spent on this cause. The paper concludes with a set of recommendations for each of the sections – impacts, multilateral engagement, policy, funding – outlining practical steps that can be taken in the short- as well as longer-term.

The crux of the issue is that, despite rising interest from climate, migration, development, and humanitarian actors at the global and EU level, no mechanism brings them together. And in spite of the Commission's recent impetus to (re-)ignite its work on climate mobility, coherence across its policies and programming and effective funding mechanisms are lacking. Weak institutional coordination hampers the pursuit of greater coherence. These factors, in turn, constrain the EU's ability to develop a long-term, proactive strategy to address climate mobility at a time when it is urgently needed.

1. People moving in a changing climate

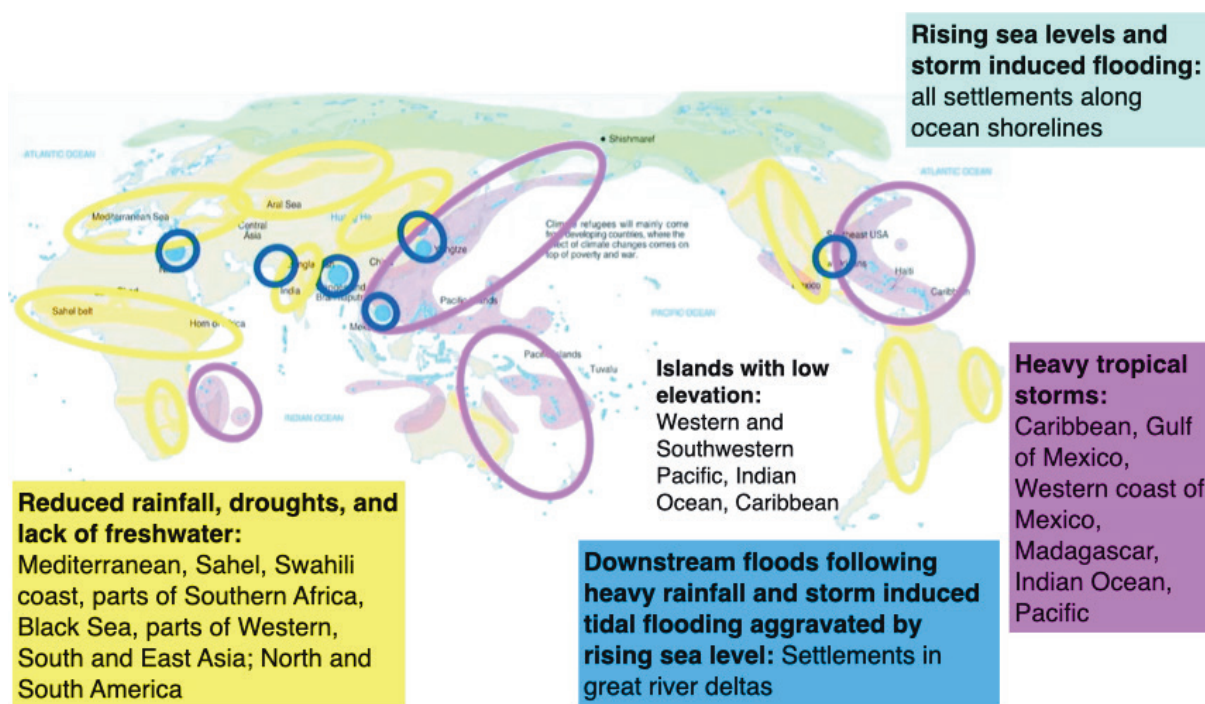
The adverse effects of climate change can translate into sudden-onset events such as tropical storms, tornadoes, blizzards, coastal floods, or mudflows. Moreover, increasing temperatures risk leading to slow-onset events, which include desertification, lower precipitation, loss of biodiversity, land and forest degradation, glacial retreat, ocean acidification, sea level rise and soil salinisation, potentially also leading to disasters.⁸ Both sudden- and slow-onset events can, therefore, impact human mobility. In 2022 alone, 32.6 million people were displaced worldwide due to disasters, mainly extreme weather events⁹ and between 3.3 billion and 3.6 billion people already live in areas highly vulnerable to climate change.¹⁰ These vulnerabilities are further impacted by existing inequalities related to gender, ethnicity, or resource

scarcity.¹¹ Vulnerable communities in developing countries, especially on the African and Asian continents, are disproportionately affected.¹²

Areas strongly affected by climate change, such as Somalia, Ethiopia or Sudan, are also often affected by political instability or conflict.¹³ Not coincidentally, some of these regions, for example, in East Africa and South Asia, are important hosting countries for refugees.¹⁴ Vulnerable displaced populations living in the 20 largest refugee settlements globally are even more exposed to high or low temperatures and reduced precipitation, compared to the respective national average, while being equally at risk of heat- and cold waves as well as floodings.¹⁵ Thus, the interaction of conflict situations and climate change can trigger repeated displacement.¹⁶

Fig. 1

REGIONS NEGATIVELY AFFECTED BY FUTURE CLIMATE CHANGE



Source: Author's own compilation based on Le Monde Diplomatique and Czaika, Mathias and Rainer Münz (2022), [Climate Change, Displacement, Mobility and Migration. The State of Evidence, Future Scenarios, Policy Options](#), Stockholm: Delmi, p.81.

Even if it is possible to identify vulnerable areas and exposed populations, the movement of people can occur on a continuum between voluntary and forced migration.¹⁷ Thus, not all people in all regions affected by climate change will (be able to) move. Migration decisions are driven by multiple factors, including economic, political, demographic, social, and environmental influences, which interact with climate change impacts.¹⁸ Existing vulnerabilities and adaptive capacities also play important roles.¹⁹

Migration decisions are driven by multiple factors, including economic, political, demographic, social, and environmental influences, which interact with climate change impacts.

Accordingly, many of the dynamics seen today are context-specific. For example, slow-onset climate change has major effects on agriculture, which are more severe for farmers with less advanced technology and fewer drought-resistant crops.²⁰ This reduces agricultural wages, increasing the tendency for internal and international mobility.²¹ That said, most migratory movements influenced by the adverse effects of climate change presently occur within countries or between neighbouring countries and not across longer distances.²² Most people leave their homes because of slow-onset changes and move to urban areas in their own countries to avoid outsized exposure.²³ This trend is likely to continue and to be partly influenced by the effects of climate change in countries with urbanisation rates under 70%, such as in Sub-Saharan Africa, South and Southeast Asia.²⁴

In cases of sudden-onset disasters (e.g., floods), the initial reaction is short-term internal displacement. However, should displacement become protracted because people cannot easily return, or people's livelihoods are negatively impacted by a series of sudden-onset events, these short-term measures may lead to cross-border movement or long-term migration.²⁵

Migration is not only a possible reaction to climate change but can also be a strategy to adapt to it. Remittances help diminish risks of financial instability for household members who stay.²⁶ When economically successful, migration can contribute to climate resilience by increasing household wealth and returning migrants bringing new skills and technological know-how with them.²⁷ Moreover, as migration of one or more household members decreases pressure on the supply of the household, it can increase food security.²⁸ Seasonal migration is already common in regions with

strong seasonality of weather and climate conditions.²⁹ However, there is still a need for longitudinal analyses that would allow for a fine-grained understanding of when migration serves as a positive versus negative response to climate shocks.³⁰ Equal attention needs to be given to situations where movement in the context of climate change is not possible or does not happen. As resources play a pivotal role in migration decisions, impoverished populations are likelier to stay because they lack the resources to move.³¹ Such a situation can be described as involuntary *immobility*, creating trapped populations.³²

1.1 MODELLING COMPLEX DYNAMICS AND FUTURE SCENARIOS

Against this background, it is essential for the EU to adopt evidence-based policy by integrating methods like modelling and scenario planning.³³ For instance, the latest Strategic Foresight Report by the European Commission, published in 2023, recognises the developing countries' exposure to increasing climate driven hazards and calls for global cooperation to tackle climate change.³⁴ However, it does not address the topic of climate mobility in its complexity. Better EU preparedness is only mentioned with reference to "disaster and climate-related displacements" in the context of the EU's civil protection and civil prevention.³⁵

Quantifying, modelling and predicting human mobility in the context of climate change is extremely difficult due to the complexity of the relationship. Projections of migration patterns have proven trickier to make than those of the effects of climate change alone. Gravity models, though widely used, are unable to forecast future migration.³⁶ While they are able to describe the variation of migratory flows across countries, they cannot map how these flows change over time in relation to different drivers.³⁷ Nor are existing gravity models able to account for the complex and highly context-specific nature of interactions between climate change and migration because they assume a linear interaction between climate-related variables such as rainfall, temperature change or disasters and human mobility.³⁸ But responses to climate change can be heterogeneous. Resource-limited communities might be forced to stay, while those who have the capacity to diversify their agricultural practices might successfully adapt to the extent possible. Some medium-income communities may opt for rural-urban migration.³⁹

Furthermore, there is not enough context-specific data. Traditional migration data fails to capture disaster displacement, as it is only collected after an extreme event has happened.⁴⁰ Due to insufficient attention on immobility, there is equally a data gap between people who choose or are forced to stay.⁴¹ Additionally, when population censuses or surveys are conducted, climate change or environmental degradation are often not considered as drivers of migration.⁴² As climate mobility is highly context-specific, profound knowledge about the

local conditions is a prerequisite⁴³ but the most exposed regions often lack funding for universities and research institutions to conduct the necessary research, establish weather stations and compile comparable historical data.⁴⁴ In areas where government and administration capacities to collect data are limited, most climate mobility remains undocumented.⁴⁵

More recent approaches to modelling try to avoid some of the pitfalls of gravity models by using machine learning methods to capture the complex, rather than linear interlinkages of climate mobility. These emerging models focus on multi-country scenarios rather than country-level analyses⁴⁶ and can expand the climate-related variables to look at water-related risks and agricultural productivity.⁴⁷ Additionally, climate data is increasingly made publicly accessible via platforms such as the EU Copernicus Climate Data Store or the Application for Extracting and Exploring Analysis Ready Samples (AppEEARS) of NASA.⁴⁸ Equally, data about the local impacts of climate change is becoming more available.⁴⁹ New forms of migration data are also being collected, such as cell phone data or social media profiles to learn about migrant pathways, which may prove valuable despite privacy concerns.⁵⁰

As climate mobility is highly context-specific, profound knowledge about the local conditions is a prerequisite.

Critically, there are only some examples using these new approaches,⁵¹ including the latest Groundswell report, which, while still relying on gravity models, also draws on global crop and water simulations of the Inter-Sectoral Impact Model Intercomparison Project (ISIMIP) as well as other methods used by the IPCC.⁵² The Groundswell report projects an increase in internal migration by 2050 in six examined regions if there is no concrete climate and development action.⁵³ The Africa Climate Mobility Initiative has investigated internal migration in Africa, making use of an adapted model based on the Groundswell report with additional driver variables such as ecosystems, flood risks, and conflicts.⁵⁴ However, these are isolated examples. Comparing and finding consensus on the effects of climate-related variables on both internal and international migration remains difficult.⁵⁵

2. Multilateral engagement on climate mobility

Multilateral engagement on climate mobility is growing. From UN agencies, national governments, and NGOs to research organisations, events like COP27 are a testament to the increasing uptake across different sectors.⁵⁶ Moreover, climate mobility is increasingly featuring across different policy processes and areas, such as climate negotiations, including those related to climate finance, global migration governance, as well as the sustainable development goals (SDGs), and disaster risk reduction (DRR).

UN member states negotiated common goals to mitigate and adapt to climate change under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).⁵⁷ The annual Conference of the Parties (COPs), first held in 1995, serves the purpose of reviewing the implementation of climate frameworks and adopting further instruments. At COP16 in 2010, parties to the UNFCCC, for the first time, recognised the linkages between climate change and human mobilities, and the need for actions to address them.⁵⁸

Under the 2015 Paris Agreement, adopted at COP21, leaders subsequently committed to limiting global warming to below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, with efforts to limit it to 1.5°C. COP21 also led to the

establishment of the Task Force on Displacement (TFD), which is housed in the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage (WIM), and was tasked with developing a set of recommendations to avert, minimise, and address displacement related to the impacts of climate change.⁵⁹

As a former member of the Task Force, the European Union substantively contributed to the development of recommendations, and remains part of the WIM Executive Committee to this day.⁶⁰ The group's mandate was extended in 2018, with ongoing work focused also on the take-up and implementation of its recommendations and facilitating further stakeholder engagement across the UN system, member states, and other relevant organisations. While the group's ability to bring together climate and migration actors was seen as an important contribution, there is still a need to move from high-level recognition of the linkages between climate and mobilities to more concrete policy changes and innovations.⁶¹

All these efforts are integrated into the vast web of international climate finance. As part of it, developed countries committed to spending \$100 billion (or €90 billion) per year in climate finance by 2020 under the 2009 Copenhagen Accord. Due to states' weak fulfilment

of this goal, the timeline was extended until 2025 under the Paris Agreement. Beyond this, climate finance comprises a growing number of global, regional, and national funding instruments, each with corresponding donors, including the EU, as well as national ministries, UN agencies, and multilateral development banks (MDBs) (see Figure 2).

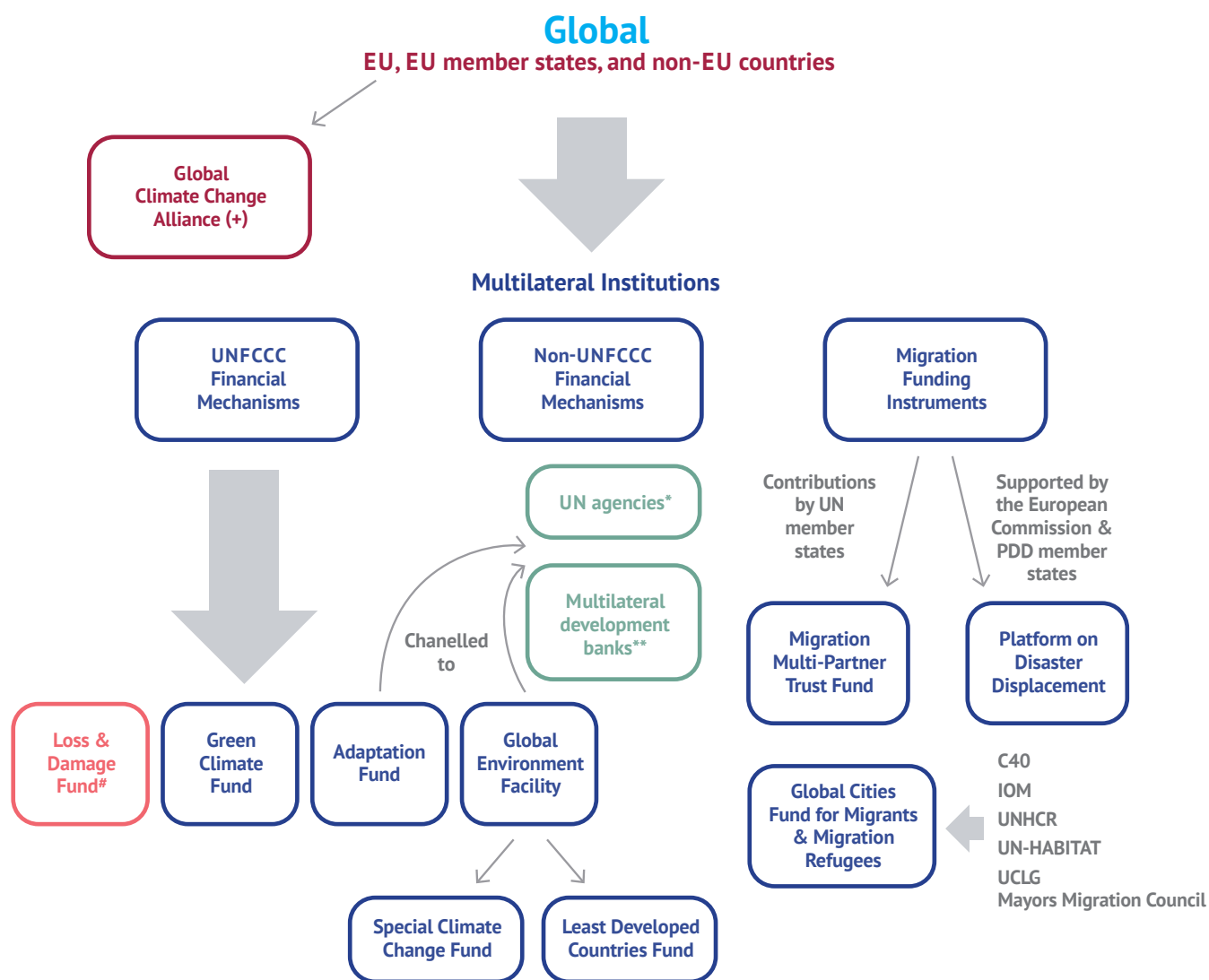
This landscape continues to evolve. COP27, for instance, saw the creation of the Loss and Damage Fund, a novel resource to support the nation's most vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change. However, it also raised critical questions about the need to invest more in adaptation to reduce the risk of loss and damage while ensuring that those already displaced would receive

adequate support and compensation.⁶² Significantly, by making a link between displacement, and loss and damage, this step also cemented COP as a place to address questions of climate justice.

Over the years, global migration governance has seen institutional proliferation, resulting in formal and informal institutions at multilateral, regional, and bilateral levels. These, however, lack a centralised means of coordination or organisation. Despite this fragmentation, 2018 marked a feat of intergovernmental cooperation with the adoption of the Global Compact for Migration (GCM). The non-binding agreement is intended to strengthen international migration governance based on 23 objectives, three of which refer to climate mobility.⁶³

Fig. 2

OVERVIEW OF GLOBAL FUNDING INSTRUMENTS RELEVANT FOR CLIMATE MOBILITY



The new Loss & Damage has yet to be fully integrated into the global climate finance architecture.

** Implementing agencies include UNEP, UNDP, and FAO as well as the World Bank, EIB, EBRD, and the Asian and African Development Banks.

Note: This schematic overview is not intended to be comprehensive. Source: European Policy Centre.

The GCM is a notable achievement in providing UN member states with structural opportunities to engage in climate mobility. At the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) in 2022, the first stock-taking exercise since its adoption, the relationship between climate change, migration, and displacement was more present on the agenda, with frequent mentions in roundtables and country statements.⁶⁴ States also highlighted growing concern about ‘trapped populations’, although solutions such as planned relocations were given only marginal attention. Migration as adaptation also featured, while the lack of context-specific data was identified as an obstacle to further policy development.

A related and promising outcome was the establishment of the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF), under which member states and non-governmental organisations can make financial commitments to support the implementation of the GCM. The creation of such a fund, along with a multi-stakeholder platform, was assessed by legal experts as the most suitable global mechanism to advance efforts on climate mobility under the present circumstance. Yet, effective, coordinated action by a group of interested member states will hinge on the amount of available funding.⁶⁵

On the whole, increased awareness and recognition of climate change as a driver of migration and displacement have yet to translate into more concrete action aside from the creation of the Migration MPTF. While member states made some progress on objective two on minimising the adverse effects of climate change, it was comparatively less so for objective five on expanding access to safe, regular pathways. Among the primary inhibiting factors are continued ‘silo thinking’ among stakeholders, the absence of ‘whole-of-government’ or inclusive approaches, as well as lacking political will to treat climate mobility as more than a future risk.⁶⁶

Multilateral engagement on climate mobility is also increasing through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It contains objectives relating to climate action (SDG 13) as well as reducing inequalities (SDG 10), among others, and as such acts as a broad umbrella for UN member states’ development interventions. SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities is also often invoked with reference to climate-related migration and displacement as it involves increasing the “number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, (...) mitigation and adaptation to climate change, [and] resilience to disasters”.⁶⁷

Finally, concerning disaster risk reduction (DRR), the Sendai Framework aims to preserve the benefits of effective development by reducing vulnerability to risk, such as by increasing national and local DRR strategies, enhancing international assistance to developing countries, and greater investment into early warning systems and preparedness. At the mid-term review in 2023, the European Commission reaffirmed its

commitment to the framework’s implementation by 2030, highlighting, among others, the need to address disaster-related displacement and migration.⁶⁸

Climate change, migration, and refugee-related issues are increasingly being addressed in other high-level fora, such as the G20 and G7 meetings, the Global Refugee Forum (linked to the Global Compact on Refugees), and the COPs relating to biodiversity and desertification, though not necessarily in relation to one another.

Yet, this proliferation of organisations working on climate mobility, policy processes, and new instruments has crowded the landscape, limiting entry points - due to a preponderance of state-led processes - and scope to steer and impact negotiations and policy development.⁶⁹ With many stakeholders participating in the same conversations and conferences, there is also a risk of duplication or oversaturation, with no actual political or financial pledges or activities to implement them. Even as voices present in multilateral settings grow and diversify, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the absence of mechanisms to bring them all together in a more coordinated and coherent manner could undermine the ongoing work.

It is becoming increasingly apparent that the absence of mechanisms to bring climate mobility actors all together in a more coordinated and coherent manner could undermine the ongoing work.

At the same time, the global landscape remains fragmented. This is a result of different factors and obstinate tendencies. Actors approach the topic from specific thematic fields, which results in siloed rather than joined-up thinking. The degree to which climate mobility is considered a political priority varies widely. This manifests itself in the asymmetric relations between member states with the means to assist affected communities versus those bearing the brunt in the fight against climate change. This complex landscape, coupled with competing institutional mandates and competition for funding, explains why greater multilateral coordination has been problematic thus far. The consequences of weak coordination of policies and stakeholders at the global level inevitably trickle down to other levels. While the European Union is orienting itself based on the global landscape, it is faced with the same challenges of achieving greater policy coherence based on evidence-based narratives and better coordination (see Section 3).

2.1 OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR EU MULTILATERAL ENGAGEMENT ON CLIMATE MOBILITY

The EU, as one of the most established systems of regionalised governance, has considerable capabilities and reach to set priorities and drive policy discussions that impact its neighbourhood and non-member states.⁷⁰ Accordingly, the EU must consider how it can effectively position itself in this shifting multilateral landscape and take strategic action. This potential will be analysed with respect to the Platform for Disaster Displacement, the Convention of the Parties on Climate Change (COP), and Team Europe initiatives, including those implemented under the Global Gateway.

Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD)

One of the more visible contributions of late is the EU's Chairpersonship of the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD), a state-owned process aimed at implementing the Nansen Initiative Protection Agenda, from July 2022 until December 2023.⁷¹ As part of this role, it has undertaken a strategic review of the Platform's work. Some of the main challenges identified include a lack of funds, weak participation by member states, and underrepresentation of climate actors.⁷² As such, the EU intends to put forward recommendations aimed at strengthening the Platform's role as a convenor of interested parties, strengthening ties with donors, and becoming more operational by, for example, facilitating access to funding. Others relate to supporting research and data dissemination and giving topics such as the climate-migration-conflict nexus and planned relocations more visibility through effective agenda-setting.⁷³ If this transformation comes to fruition, achieving a reinforced convening and operational role for the PDD will be an essential contribution attributed to EU efforts.

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Convention of the Parties on Climate Change (COP)

The EU must also continue exploring other opportunities for engagement. COP27 was met with high expectations by migration actors as an opportunity to double down on efforts to address climate mobility, including by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and investing into

disaster risk reduction, and supporting cities dealing with climate change and expedited urbanisation.⁷⁴ Through its "bridge-building", the EU helped secure the establishment of the Loss and Damage Fund with a wide donor base, provided certain conditions would be fulfilled.⁷⁵ However, the conference altogether did not result in any major breakthrough for climate mobility. Moreover, despite being Chair of the PDD already at that time, the EU's position for COP27 did not make reference to migration or displacement, marking a "missed opportunity" to draw linkages between climate action and disaster displacement.⁷⁶

Much work remains to be done, particularly on how climate-related migration and displacement should be addressed through the Adaptation Fund and the Loss and Damage Fund, respectively, and how this could lead to broader facilitation of migration as a form of adaptation.⁷⁷ Arriving at a common understanding that does not view mobility as a failed adaptation strategy soon emerged as the main challenge. Others include ensuring the additionality of funding and devising operational measures.⁷⁸ Given the sensitivity of the issue, COP28 or even subsequent COPs are unlikely to deliver on these points, although complementary efforts to fill data and research gaps and to strengthen the science-policy interface can contribute to accelerating the progress.⁷⁹

Team Europe initiatives

Team Europe initiatives (TEI) are another means through which the EU could address climate mobility. Originally established in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, Team Europe has become an increasingly important shaping force of the EU's external action. True to its name, its main objective is to facilitate joint responses to external action challenges by a broader coalition of actors, namely the EU (including EU delegations), member states, the European Investment Bank (EIB), and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). More concretely, this entails improved internal coordination as well as joint formulation of policy objectives. Another layer is Team Europe's ability to act as a vehicle through which EU efforts to the multilateral system can be channelled and made more visible.

A strength of Team Europe is its aim of broadening the stakeholders involved in development cooperation. With only a handful of EU member states addressing climate mobility in multilateral fora or their development cooperation, there is potential for member state involvement in wider EU efforts to grow.⁸⁰ So far, it appears that member states with strong bilateral political priorities and large development budgets have been most involved in TEIs, such as France and Germany.

While clear on paper, Team Europe's implementation remains somewhat murky in practice. For one, the scope of Team Europe has and continues to expand, making it difficult to always understand its added value and

effectiveness. Amidst a variety of policy objectives, Team Europe has now become a tool that straddles the divide between foreign affairs, development cooperation, and increasingly, migration management.⁸¹

A closer look at the numbers reveals that by summer 2023, nearly 170 TEI covering five broad geographic regions had been launched, of which 130 were country specific.⁸² The programmes focus on public health, digitalisation, democracy, and a considerable amount relate to climate action. However, none of the climate-related programmes explicitly refer to migration or displacement. The TEI *Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience – Africa*'s objectives of improving the data basis on climate risks, strengthening policy frameworks as well as access to climate finance have tenuous links, at best.⁸³

Team Europe has now become a tool that straddles the divide between foreign affairs, development cooperation, and increasingly, migration management.

While there is growing recognition of climate mobility as a challenge in the EU's neighbourhood and beyond, this thinking has not yet been integrated into the Team Europe architecture aside from a mention in a 2022 Commission Staff Working Document.

Instead, TEI have seen a growing focus on migration management objectives. Illustrating these trends are the two Action Plans that the European Commission devised in 2022 following demands by member states to tackle the rise in irregular migration along the main migratory routes. This led to the launch of two dedicated TEI in December 2022, one covering the Central Mediterranean route with a budget of €1.13 billion and one covering the Atlantic route with pooled resources making up €908 million.⁸⁴ These initiatives have cemented Team Europe's status as a development cooperation-cum-migration management tool, its purpose and goals primarily defined by European stakeholders, rather than jointly with non-EU countries. These include reducing irregular arrivals and dismantling smuggling networks, in exchange with the promise of expanded legal migration opportunities and financial investments.

Another challenge is whether Team Europe can go beyond a 'branding exercise' to promote EU interests to represent a new template of cooperation among equal partners for mutually beneficial cooperation.⁸⁵ Lacking convergence between EU priorities and partner country needs has been a long-standing problem in EU development and migration cooperation. The juxtaposition of increased border management

measures in exchange for more development aid or expanded legal migration opportunities is common to many of the EU's strategic partnerships. Ownership in Team Europe was questioned early on due to a dominance of EU policy priorities and actors over local or national stakeholders in developing countries.

So far, TEI have not led to productive discussions on climate mobility. In high-level EU-Africa exchanges, differing views about the main migration-related challenges and priorities continue to prevail (Section 3.3). Relevant discussions so far have been limited to the regional level.⁸⁶ Whether Team Europe can effectively be used to address climate mobility will hinge on whether enough willing partners can be found within Europe and beyond.

The Global Gateway initiative

The Global Gateway is a related opportunity to address climate mobility. Launched in 2021, it is a strategy aimed at investments in infrastructure and connectivity, as well as in the areas of health, education, and research. It could thus be understood as a tool that contributes to the EU's development agenda while intending to position the EU as a more geopolitical actor in its neighbourhood. Implemented through the Team Europe approach, EU institutions, member states, and development finance institutions aim to mobilise up to €300 billion by 2027, complemented by private sector contributions.⁸⁷

Some of the TEIs connected to the Global Gateway in climate and energy aim to reduce people's vulnerabilities to climate change through climate resilience actions, and in such a way could be said to address the root causes of forced displacement and migration.⁸⁸ Moreover, investments into climate resilient infrastructure could also be seen as a means to address the climate-migration nexus, especially in urban settings vulnerable to climate change. Finally, the TEI on Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience in Africa could also provide a context for raising mobility considerations, given the focus on disaster risk reduction, mobilising more adaptation and loss and damage funding, as well as reinvigorating high-level policy dialogues on climate adaptation between the EU and African Union.⁸⁹

However, even if these tacit links are fleshed out further, Global Gateway may not be an effective mechanism for addressing climate mobility. As a geopolitical-cum-development tool, the EU presents the Global Gateway as a means for the EU to make "positive offers" to like-minded partner countries.⁹⁰ From a migration perspective, efforts in disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation may be welcome. However, they are a way off from demands by countries faced with climate-related displacement and migration for greater international responsibility-sharing, support for host communities, and the implementation of durable solutions to displacement.

3. Challenges to a coherent EU approach on climate mobility

3.1. ADDRESSING LACK OF POLICY COHERENCE AND COUNTERPRODUCTIVE NARRATIVES

The EU’s policy on climate mobility is the product of actions on migration, climate, development cooperation, and humanitarian aid. Each of these areas, however, conceives of the issue differently, and develops policy separately, often based on narratives that are both inconsistent with each other and oftentimes either incorrect or counterproductive to successful policy outcomes. The best outcome for EU policy in this area should be to empower people to make the best possible migration decisions in the circumstances they individually face. Yet, since external migration policies are rarely focused on the individual, they rarely serve this end.

Moreover, the EU’s development cooperation – where most of the EU’s actions on climate mobility have taken place thus far – is driven by conflicting policy objectives, reducing the coherence and credibility of its approach. Accordingly, partner countries have seen the EU make climate change adaptation a major priority, accompanied by financial commitments, but also a sustained push for projects to address the root causes of migration to ensure that populations stay put.⁹¹

Four policy frames hamper the development of effective policy: a ‘root causes’ narrative that seemingly sees all migration, not just irregular migration, as a problem and seeks to reduce it by addressing its underlying causes; a security narrative that presents migration as a threat; gaps between short-term humanitarian assistance following displacement, and long-term development assistance including for populations that may become mobile; and a sedentary bias in policymaking. Furthermore, the extent to which migration, when voluntary, should be considered as adaptation to climate change *in itself* is often underestimated.

These framings ignore the complex, non-linear relationship between climate change and human mobility, the prevalence of internal movement, and potential opportunities offered by migration as adaptation (see Section 1).⁹² Despite being among the EU’s priorities, they have not contributed to greater policy coherence since in climate mobility policy.

Root Causes

In its development policy, the EU has pursued partnerships with non-EU countries aimed at addressing the root causes of migration and reducing irregular migration,⁹³ often at the cost of traditional development objectives.^{94 95} For example, in the *New European Consensus on Development: ‘Our World, Our Dignity, Our Future’* (2017), the EU institutions committed to

addressing the “root causes” of irregular migration.⁹⁶ At the same time, the New European Consensus assumed a causal link between environmental degradation and climate change and increased large-scale migration, which is seen as jeopardising stability, and therefore to be reduced or stopped, rather than people’s response to the effects of climate change.⁹⁷

In the *New Pact on Asylum and Migration* (2020), the role of climate change is mentioned only in passing. The focus is most explicit in the EU’s commitment to addressing climate change as one of several root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement.⁹⁸ The EU’s migration partnerships developed following the New Pact, including via the Team Europe approach, accordingly, pursue this objective (see Section 2.1) as part of its migration management. Development assistance is aligned with “countries with a significant migration dimension”,⁹⁹ which has led to both a predominance of migration-related priorities, but also the targeting of countries that do not necessarily have the greater climate-related needs. More positive framings of migration as adaptation are absent.

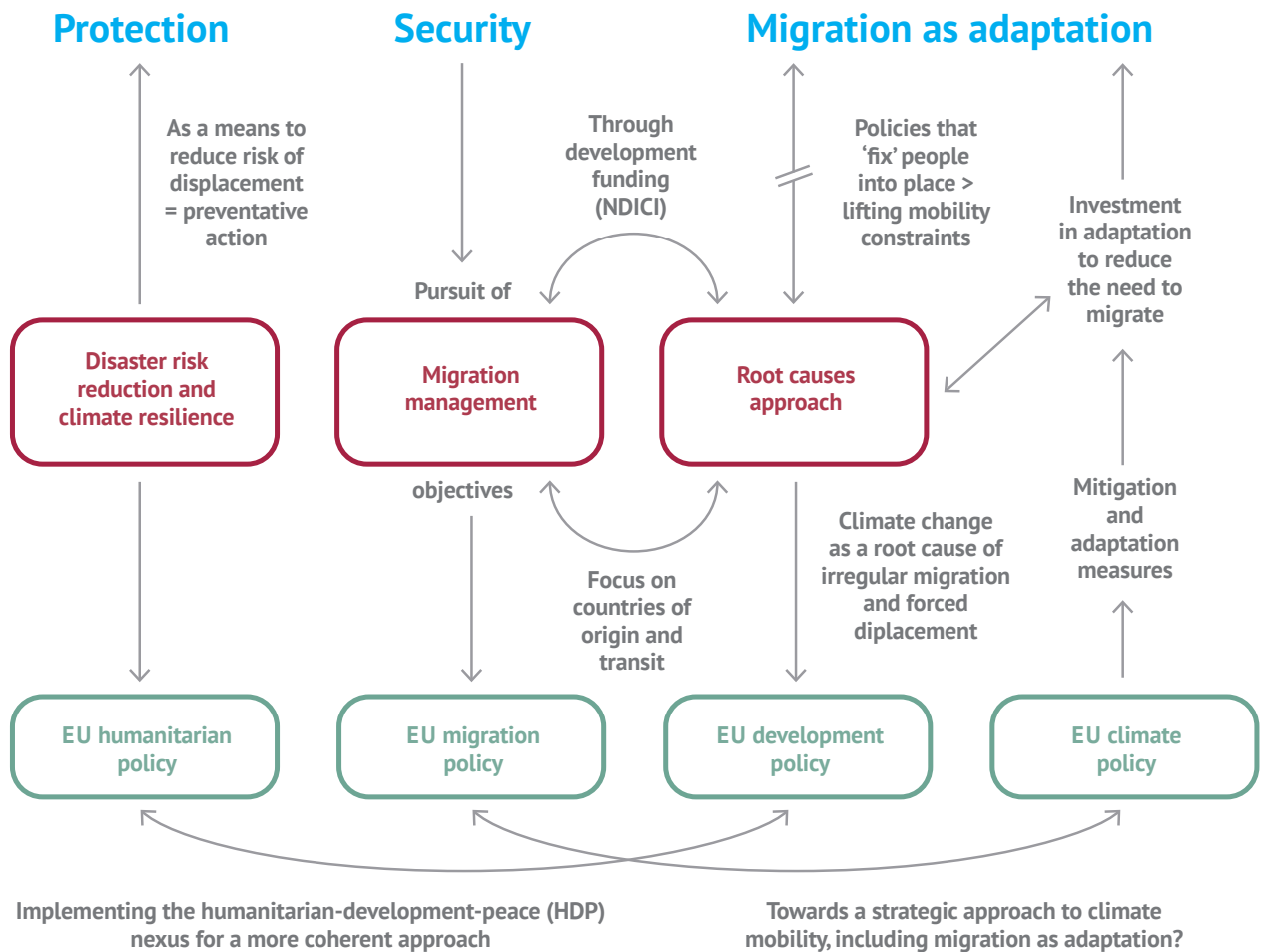
Security

Security has also emerged as an overarching consideration alongside the need to tackle the so-called root causes of migration.¹⁰⁰ The security framing presents climate-related migration as a security threat, assuming that a large number of persons would be “at risk” of moving across borders because of climate change, in turn leading to the reduction of this risk being prioritised.

For the EU, there is a trade-off between helping people move so they can avoid the negative effects of climate change and reducing the amount of migration that takes place.

This framing (at least as far as the EU position is concerned) originates in the joint report by the then-High Representative and the European Commission Climate change and international security (the “Solana report”), which in 2008 ranked “environmentally-induced migration” alongside other security threats driven by climate change, such as conflicts over resources, damage to the economy and infrastructure, or border disputes.¹⁰¹ This went hand in hand with the depiction of climate

THE EU POLICY LANDSCAPE AND OBJECTIVES



mobility as a form of migration that leads to conflicts in transit and destination areas, as well as adding migratory pressure on the EU. The security framing, by reinforcing the pressure to reduce migration, makes it more difficult to address climate mobility coherently. There is, rather, a trade-off between helping people move so they can avoid the negative effects of climate change and reducing the amount of migration that takes place.

Short-term vs long-term assistance

Other than development, humanitarian policy is one of the main avenues through which the EU addresses climate-related displacement. But it is also in this field where tensions between short-term and long-term priorities manifest themselves, thus further limiting the potential for coordinated strategies. In humanitarian policy, there is a strong focus on disaster risk reduction, including as a means to reduce the risk of displacement of populations in disaster-prone areas.¹⁰²

Thus the immediate needs-based approach of EU humanitarian assistance stands in contrast with responses to long-term migration patterns that can also

be connected to climate change. When put into practice, prioritising humanitarian assistance may come at the cost of investigating the deeper and complex causes of displacement, be they conflict or climate change.¹⁰⁵ Inherent in this trade-off is the risk of prioritising short-term responses over long-term mitigation, adaptation, and development efforts. Focusing solely on providing assistance to affected populations without more broadly addressing the risk of climate-related displacement reflects the difficulty of achieving an approach that can address the multifaceted nature of climate mobility.

A stronger focus on climate resilience as a way to reduce the risk of displacement, accordingly, is partially reflected in more recent external climate policy measures, including the *European Green Deal* (2019) and the subsequent Communication *Forging a climate-resilient Europe - the new EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change* (2021). However, in citing the Great Green Wall project as an example of climate change adaptation in Africa, the European Commission nevertheless repeated the narrative of climate-induced mass migration by arguing that the project should help with stopping the projected climate-related migration "of up to 70 million people by 2050" in Sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁰⁴

Sedentary bias

Sedentary bias is an assumption held by policymakers that people living in the ‘Global South’ prefer to stay where they are, even in the face of slow-onset environmental degradation or other factors that make it difficult to maintain their livelihoods.¹⁰⁵ It has shaped the view whereby migration is seen as a failure of development interventions, leading to an ambivalent view of migration from developing countries.

While often discussed in the context of migration from Africa, this assumption proves especially problematic in climate mobility – irrespective of the geographic locale. A facile understanding of the relationship between migration and development (also called the ‘migration-development hump’) fails to capture the various ways in which people move or do not move in the face of climate change.¹⁰⁶ Growing capabilities through economic gains and people’s agency are important factors in migration decisions but are obfuscated by broader goals to manage or control movements, which, in some framings, suggest that all migration is undesired.

Migration as adaptation

Provided the sedentary bias can be overcome, it can be fruitful to consider migration as a form of adaptation to climate change, where those affected reduce their vulnerabilities through migrating. For them, migration could be seen as a means of household income diversification or generation or even to acquire financial and social resources to strengthen climate resilience and reduce vulnerability to disasters.

Successfully integrating migration as adaptation into EU policy requires not only overcoming the tendency to target measures towards reducing migration but also addressing the practical challenges in how it might be implemented, including the risk of ‘maladaptation’.

Successfully integrating migration as adaptation into EU policy requires not only overcoming the tendency to target measures towards reducing migration but also addressing the practical challenges in how it might be implemented, including the risk of ‘maladaptation’. This comprises, first, differences in how donor and recipient countries conceive of assistance for mobile or potentially mobile populations. Partner countries may prefer private investments for entrepreneurial projects and relevant skills development via dedicated funds as a means to build resilience and

the capacity to adapt. Donor countries, meanwhile, may prefer to orient funding to projects that put greater emphasis on reducing incentives to leave, socio-economic reintegration of returned migrants, or diaspora projects, rather than investing in projects potentially enabling people to move. Second, if people move to places where they cannot pursue sufficient economic activity, they may still end up in a “climate migration poverty trap”.¹⁰⁷ Means of integrating them into the economies of their destinations, the respective welfare systems, and access to social service must also be developed for migration as adaptation to work.

This said, migration adaptation does not provide a one-size-fits-all solution to all policy dilemmas, as it fails to account for the plurality of drivers that can influence migrant decision-making. Empirical research has shown that people may be unable or reluctant to move in the context of climate change (see Section 1), while other forms of adaptation may, in fact, reduce the incentives to move because they allow people to stay where they are. However, research also shows that while an initial shock may dampen the decision to migrate in the short-term due to mitigated resources, in the long run, an accumulation of shocks may actually pave the way for migration, especially if other adaptation strategies are no longer available or have failed.¹⁰⁸ From such a view, migration can be seen either as a successful adaptation strategy, or as a failed outcome of adaptation. This indicates, broadly, that there is an unresolved question on what constitutes ‘successful adaptation’, especially considering that many people experience several climate shocks or hazards over time. It also means that the narrative of migration as adaptation, if not fully developed, may reduce movement to a misleading binary choice.

Nonetheless, the European Commission has, in recent years, come to recognise the importance of the notion of migration as adaptation, evidenced in its greater willingness to include the notion in some policy areas.¹⁰⁹ This is visible in the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (see Section 4), strategy documents, or thematic development programming.¹¹⁰ The revised EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change, furthermore, sees adaptation strategies as a way to “reduce the risks of climate-related displacement”, coalescing more or less with an understanding of migration as a last resort.¹¹¹ Attention is also focused on short-term responses instead of pursuing diversified adaptation efforts. The 2022 Commission Staff Working Document on climate change, environmental degradation, and migration outlines steps to strengthen the resilience and adaptation of communities affected by climate change (e.g., through planned relocation), but the focus is still on disaster risk reduction as the main way to minimise vulnerabilities rather than strengthening all possible policies to support migration as adaptation.¹¹²

Policy priorities pursued by the EU through partnership with third countries reveal a lack of willingness to grapple with the implications of migration as adaptation.

In addition, policy priorities pursued by the EU through partnership with third countries reveal a lack of willingness to grapple with the implications of migration as adaptation. These partnerships may undermine mobility instead of facilitating it. Reflecting this, EU support for border management in non-EU countries undermines migration as adaptation. Free movement regimes, for example, have been promoted at the African regional level.¹¹⁵ But under donor pressure, including the EU, national policymakers across Africa have implemented more restrictive measures for all kinds of mobility, thus possibly inhibiting migration as adaptation. It also undermines third countries' actions, including those led by other regional organisations, such as the African Union (AU), the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) in East Africa, or the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Studies thus show that the EU favours development interventions that effectively prevent migration, while African partners prefer measures easing mobility for development.¹¹⁴ EU efforts to fund security and border control, studies highlight, “can undermine efforts towards free movement and regional economic integration” in Africa.¹¹⁵ The ongoing dominance of the migration management approach in the EU's relations with partner countries, therefore, not only hurts African domestic interests, but also reflects a the inherent trade-offs involved in mitigating the effects of climate change and political pressures from within the EU to limit migration.

Moving towards a framework and narrative that encompasses migration as adaptation is therefore an important imperative for the EU. This is not without its risks: the high salience of irregular migration and the prioritisation of control-oriented measures dictated by member state interests may continue to limit or even undermine the positive elements from this alternative framing, yet should not detract from this vital strategic re-orientation.

Ways Forward

Some openings towards a more nuanced understanding of the complexity of climate mobility can be identified, but these are rare and have had few concrete consequences. For example, the Commission's 2013 Staff Working Document *Climate change, environmental degradation, and migration*, accompanying the 2013 *EU Adaptation Strategy*, moved away from alarmist narratives about

mass migration triggered by climate change. Recognising evidence that shows that migration can be a form of adaptation, the Commission concluded that the EU should use and better coordinate its existing toolbox to promote adaptation to reduce the need for migration, while also assisting displaced persons and promoting migration as a coping mechanism.¹¹⁶

The 2013 Staff Working Document reflected the then growing international recognition and efforts to better understand human mobility in the context of climate change.¹¹⁷ Already then, the Commission even emphasised the need for more policy coherence, addressing climate mobility comprehensively beyond development and humanitarian policy. Among others, it called for achieving greater coherence through corresponding funding mechanisms (see more in Section 4).¹¹⁸ Although increased nexus thinking between humanitarian, development, and climate policy and climate mainstreaming are ways in which the Commission is currently pursuing coherence, more concrete action has yet to follow. The need to prevent mass migration remains an overriding concern.

Reducing the emphasis on preventing large-scale migration might open up the possibility of considering migration as adaptation. Migration as adaptation actually reinforces the imperative for the EU to double down on its commitment to expanding legal pathways and investing in durable solutions abroad, such as increased support for integration and host communities.¹¹⁹ This consideration would also align with the EU's interest in migration cooperation through strengthening transnational cooperation between countries of origin and destination, notably via diaspora communities having already been confronted with climate change. Such a shift could thus contribute to greater policy coherence on climate mobility.

3.2. WEAK INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION

Achieving greater policy coherence is also contingent on joined-up strategic thinking and policy planning. At the EU level, coordination remains weak, both within and across the leading institutional actors on the issue: the European Commission and European Parliament. This has made it difficult to build on and harness internal expertise and capacities to tackle the complexities of climate mobility.

A lack of structured exchange and coordination among the EU institutions continue to characterise policymaking in this area.

Since the late 2000s, the European Commission has emerged as the most active among the institutions, consolidating its role in climate mobility-related initiatives in the 2010s. Around this time, interest on the side of EU member states instead decreased, as national authorities wanted to avoid linkages between asylum debates and climate change in a geopolitical context already marked by instability and insecurity.¹²⁰ Already then, the Commission noted the need for better coordination, more targeted action, and joint reflection, including with non-EU actors, in the 2013 Staff Working Document *Climate change, environmental degradation, and migration*.¹²¹ Despite this recognition, a lack of structured exchange and coordination among the EU institutions continue to characterise policymaking in this area. Lack of political prioritisation, unwillingness to go beyond security framings, and the absence of long-term, strategic thinking are among the reasons for this.

A closer look at the Commission and Parliament reveals that policy coordination on climate mobility is lacking between EU institutions, but also within them. Starting with the Commission, the EU executive follows the principle of “co-creation”, whereby all relevant Directorate Generals (DGs) are informed and consulted about upcoming policies in the planning process. For matters relating to climate mobility, this includes DG International Partnerships (INTPA) and DG European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) as well as the DGs in charge of Migration and Home Affairs (HOME), Climate Action (CLIMA), and the European External Action Service (EEAS). The DG responsible for the European Neighbourhood (NEAR) is also involved. Due to its geographical focus, DG NEAR has been working in coordination with INTPA and ECHO in connection to the EU’s Chairpersonship of the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD). But these DGs, are to various degrees, involved in aspects relating to multilateral engagement, with the EEAS Delegation in Geneva involved in UN-level discussions on migration and humanitarian affairs, and delegations in partner countries involved in policy programming and implementation.¹²²

Despite the involvement of several DGs, climate-related displacement is dealt with primarily by DG ECHO as disaster risk reduction and humanitarian responses to rapid-onset disasters fall within its portfolio. DG INTPA and NEAR’s work falls more on the side of climate-related migration due to their focus on the so-called root causes of migration. DG NEAR’s work in EU neighbouring countries, for instance, is guided by a variety of policy and funding instruments, including the New Pact on Migration and Asylum, the Agenda for the Mediterranean, the remainders of the EU Trust Fund for Africa (see Text Box below) and the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI – Global Europe).¹²³ Several of the projects overseen by DG NEAR relate to labour migration and the green transition, notably in North Africa, and as such, relate more to regular migration.¹²⁴ In sum, DG INTPA and ECHO can be considered as lead actors, with considerable input from DG NEAR.

On a practical level, coordination within the Commission remains ad hoc.¹²⁵ The absence of a more structured internal coordination mechanism limits the ability to “connect the dots between DGs”.¹²⁶ This, in turn, requires in-house expertise, which is slowly being built up across different DGs. What is more, the difficulty of overcoming sector-specific competences and conflicting policy agendas may stand in the way of achieving a more coherent approach to climate mobility. Commission officials seem to be readily aware of the pitfalls of a “silo mentality” in policy and programming.¹²⁷

Policy agendas may stand in the way of achieving a more coherent approach to climate mobility.

Yet, different perceptions of climate mobility make it difficult to overcome. Officials pursuing ‘migration and home affairs’ objectives may prioritise the goal of reducing irregular migration through migration management and international cooperation. Development actors, by contrast, may emphasise the fact that, presently, most climate-related movements happen within borders and would prefer to prioritise better implementation of the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus to address security concerns.¹²⁸

In contrast, the European Parliament generally maintained a human rights and protection-oriented perspective in its approach to climate mobility, although internal divisions have hampered concrete actions. As early as 1999, it accordingly called for an official recognition of “environmental refugees” as well as greater international cooperation to combat conflict and violence.¹²⁹ Since then, the European Parliament has released several reports and position papers. In a resolution in 2017, for example, it called upon the EU and its member states to “take a leading role in recognising the impact of climate change on mass displacement”, to support affected countries’ adaptation and mitigation efforts while continuing to provide aid aimed at reducing poverty, and to explore options for a special international protection status for displaced persons.¹³⁰ In 2021, an own-initiative report from the Development Committee (DEVE), one of the Parliament’s many specialised committees made up of MEPs to advise and deliberate legislative files, was intended to give the topic more visibility.¹³¹ However, reflecting internal divisions, it did not receive the necessary votes to be adopted in the plenary.¹³²

Divergent positions by the Parliamentary groups explain the European Parliament’s inability to push forward with this initiative in 2021. Fragmentation within the Parliament, however, can also impact future initiatives.

With the June 2024 elections on the horizon, whether and how the topic will be taken up in the future will ultimately depend on the configuration of the Parliament after the vote. Should far-right political movements capitalise on their increasing visibility on both climate and migration-related matters, and conservative forces more closely align with them, it could hamper coordinated actions within the Parliament. It could also further weaken institutional collaboration at the EU level.

With the June 2024 elections on the horizon, whether and how the topic will be taken up in the future will ultimately depend on the configuration of the Parliament after the vote.

Independent researchers reviewed a variety of ways to improve coordination in the EU. Considering the above, it does not come as a surprise that they found that high-level political support was a “necessary but insufficient” condition for success.¹³³ What is needed are mechanisms that allow for multi-level, multi-stakeholder interaction and information-sharing, next to a shared vision. Among the options considered were hierarchical instruments, staff training, strategy-developing processes, and horizontal instruments.¹³⁴ Some of these are more easily implementable than others. Other than following the principle of co-creation, it does not appear that any thorough assessment of the needed level of coordination, and corresponding mechanism was ever made. Of the two Commission Staff Working Documents released in the past ten years on the topic, neither delves into the internal changes needed to achieve coherence across policy and programming, embodying a weak spot in the EU’s strategic planning.

4. Unpacking the EU funding landscape on climate mobility

Climate mobility is a nascent funding priority for the EU and draws funds from a variety of different funding instruments, which makes monitoring the effectiveness of programmes and spending more challenging. These efforts are further complicated by the fact that policies are either very broad in scope or only indirectly contribute to addressing climate mobility.¹³⁵

EU funding is currently split between its international climate finance commitments, research funding, and humanitarian, development, and climate funding under the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2021-27, where most sources are concentrated (see Figure 3).¹³⁶ Activities range from funding research, supporting national governments in implementing relevant strategies or action plans, notably for disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation, to supporting the Platform for Disaster Displacement and the UN Secretary General’s Action Agenda on Internal Displacement, among others.¹³⁷

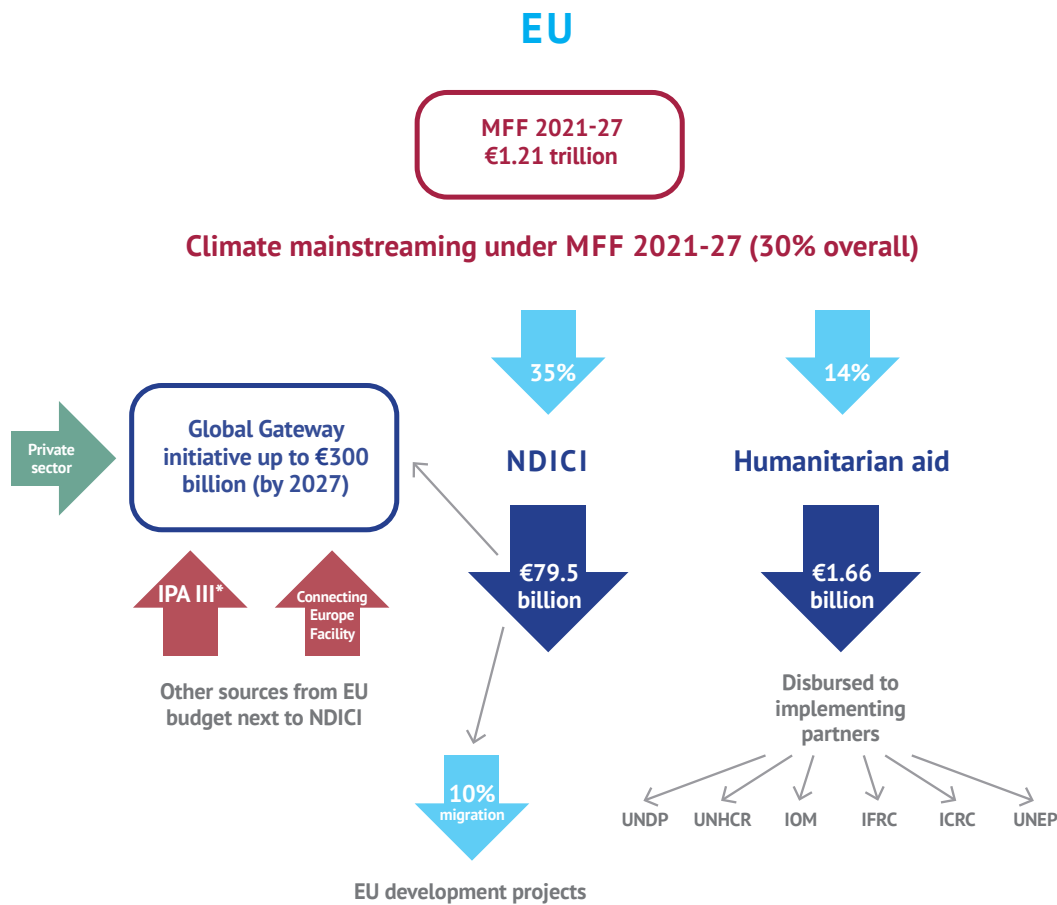
Yet, despite these increases (including an increase of 14% in humanitarian aid over what was originally agreed in the MFF),¹³⁸ both humanitarian and development funding have proven insufficient for meeting the needs arising from crises, including natural disasters. As a result, the Commission proposed top-ups to both areas in its mid-term review of the MFF.¹³⁹

Shortages in humanitarian and development spending have become particularly severe, undermining the EU and its member states’ ability to address complex crises.¹⁴⁰

In 2022, for example, only 57.4% of global humanitarian appeals were met with funding commitments (although Germany and the European Commission remain in the top 3 donors worldwide).¹⁴¹ Pledges for climate-vulnerable regions, such as Burkina Faso and Ethiopia, were even lower (43.1% and 50% respectively). Moreover, Western countries, including several member states, continue to repurpose Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) to cover domestic refugee costs.¹⁴² While this is technically allowed, it has long been subject to the criticism¹⁴³ that this aid is siphoned off from its intended beneficiaries, and that domestic refugee costs should instead be paid from domestic budgets.¹⁴⁴

Climate finance has faced related criticism. Climate finance commitments have increased over the years, reaching \$83.3 billion (roughly €75 billion) worldwide in 2020 (out of \$100 billion or €90 billion goal annually by 2025).¹⁴⁵ According to its own calculations, the EU contributed €23.04 billion in 2021 to public climate finance, several billion Euros of which are drawn from development finance.¹⁴⁶ Moreover, many donor countries, including member states, have not allocated new money either and are guilty of the same double counting as the EU.¹⁴⁷ Climate change funding is classified as being for mitigation (reducing greenhouse gas emissions) or adaptation, and about 50% of EU funding is allocated either to adaptation or cross-cutting funding for mitigation and adaptation.¹⁴⁸ Though migration can be an important means of adaptation, little funding is directed towards this purpose.¹⁴⁹

OVERVIEW OF EU FUNDING INSTRUMENTS RELEVANT FOR CLIMATE MOBILITY



UNDP = United Nations Development Programme, UNHCR = UN Refugee Agency, IOM = International Organization for Migration, IFRC = International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, ICRC = International Committee of the Red Cross, UNEP = United Nations Environment Programme.

Note: This schematic overview is not intended to be comprehensive. Source: European Policy Centre.

*Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance.

As climate-related displacement and migration are expected to increase, the EU faces the challenge of aligning its policy and funding priorities. There is a risk that gaps between short-term humanitarian interventions and longer-term development aid will not be sufficiently addressed, thereby leaving vulnerable populations at risk. A better understanding of the relationship between disasters, slow-onset environmental degradation, and related forms of mobility is needed, as are ways to ensure greater continuity between the EU's (annual) humanitarian response plans and its (multi-annual) development programming.¹⁵⁰

There are practical limitations, too, especially in fragile contexts¹⁵¹ where the 'silosation' between humanitarian and development programming is particularly evident. In Somalia, for instance, which has faced a humanitarian emergency since 2021, humanitarian workers were asked to "push their mission beyond their original call" and take on a more development and risk management role, despite not necessarily having the required skill set.¹⁵² The Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus provides a framework for further thinking on how

these gaps could be addressed, though climate change's compounding effect adds another layer of complexity to planning humanitarian and development interventions.¹⁵³

4.1. MAINSTREAMING CLIMATE MOBILITY FUNDING

One of the Commission's goals is to further mainstream migration and displacement considerations into climate and vice versa.¹⁵⁴ The Commission has set fixed targets for climate action under the current financial framework for the period 2021-2027, the goal being to ensure the integration of climate action into other policy areas.¹⁵⁵ Accordingly, for the Neighbourhood, Development, and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), at least 30% of which should be dedicated to climate action.¹⁵⁶ For humanitarian aid, figures from 2022 show that just over €1 billion contributed to climate action.¹⁵⁷

Most of the relevant funding can be found in the NDICI, which is worth €79.5 billion. While, as mentioned, 35% of these funds must be dedicated to climate action, only

FROM THE GCCA+ TO THE NDICI

A relevant instrument pre-dating the current budgetary cycle is the Global Climate Change Alliance/Global Climate Change Alliance+ (GCCA). An EU initiative launched in 2007 aimed at helping developing countries, especially Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States, to build resilience to climate change before being slowly phased out as of 2021 and subsumed under the NDICI. Actions focused on climate adaptation, mitigation, and disaster risk reduction, but did not consider linkages to migration or displacement. In 2023, the European Court of Auditors assessed that the initiative ultimately did not address the needs of communities most vulnerable to climate change and that, in fact, this focus decreased as time went on. Moreover, the GCCA+ did not demonstrate that it effectively helped countries to boost their resilience to the effects of climate change. For that reason, the ECA recommended ensuring a focus on the most vulnerable, possibly including gender-sensitive actions, as well as incorporating lessons learned into the new development funding architecture.

Source: European Court of Auditors (2023), [The Global Climate Change Alliance\(+\): Achievements feel short of ambitions](#), Luxembourg: European Union Office of Publications, p.42.

10% of the total envelope is devoted to migration-related issues.¹⁵⁸ Within NDICI, the EU's aid is targeted towards urgent displacement situations, which also happen to be climate change hotspots, such as the Horn of Africa, the Sahel region or countries like Bangladesh. Initiatives aimed at improving socio-economic opportunities, reducing insecurity and conflict, and climate action are intended to mitigate the root causes of displacement and migration. Since the committed contributions to climate action outweigh migration-related external action funding, there are more opportunities to embed migration and displacement considerations into climate action under NDICI rather than the other way around. Moreover, migration management remains sensitive in some partner countries. The EU also operates in some countries with hostile regimes, or partner countries, which may not be particularly interested in addressing climate mobility in their country.¹⁵⁹ Framing actions as being focused on climate resilience or adaptation may be a more effective way to address both climate action *and* mobility, even if it presents challenges in terms of monitoring as the mobility aspect is not overt.

Aside from mainstreaming, the Commission also has the option of either using thematic NDICI funding (€6.4 billion) to address specific priorities or expanding the pool of Team Europe initiatives (see Section 2). In 2022, DG INTPA was, for instance, allocated €10 million for climate and displacement, representing a fifth of the overall thematic budget for that year.¹⁶⁰ DG NEAR's actions under thematic funding have mainly focused on linking migration to climate change and the green sector, notably by exploring mobility pathways to support

training and upskilling of third-country nationals, as well as filling labour market needs in Europe and partner countries.¹⁶¹

4.2. ENHANCED MONITORING, BUT UNCLEAR RESULTS

There are currently two mechanisms to approximate the monitoring of spending on climate mobility: monitoring by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)'s Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and internal EU monitoring and evaluation of relevant instruments, such as the NDICI.

The EU, like other major development aid donors, reports its spending to the OECD, which collects data on climate-related development assistance via the Rio Markers for Climate. In 2021, the latest year for which data is available, EU institutions (excluding the EBRD and EIB) spent approximately \$5.7 billion (around €5.1 billion) on climate adaptation and mitigation.¹⁶² Key sectors benefitting from this money were infrastructure, energy, and environmental protection.

In 2022, the DAC agreed to introduce updated markers to track support for refugees and internally displaced populations in Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) recipient countries, which will be applied as of 2023.¹⁶³ Insofar as aid is used to provide emergency reception to people displaced by disasters or to facilitate voluntary relocations, migration-related spending may therefore also boast a link to climate change. However, as climate mobility is rarely the principal objective of development interventions, the monitoring results may, at best, give some indication of trends and numbers. They will unlikely provide a more in-depth overview of ODA related to climate mobility.

In addition to OECD reporting, the EU also carries out internal monitoring of funding. Under the NDICI, the Commission committed to reinforced monitoring and evaluation (M&E), with clear obligations towards the European Parliament and the European Council to submit annual progress reports. DG INTPA, which manages EU development aid, oversees the climate and migration-related spending targets, as well as the Global Gateway Initiative, and is working towards more granular tracking of actions on migration and forced displacement, including via a specific tag for climate and environmental displacement.¹⁶⁴

Several more general challenges remain. Most projects follow broader development objectives, such as poverty reduction, resilience-building, or other aspects of development relating to climate mobility.

Other DGs' monitoring systems similarly face constraints in M&E. For example, DG ECHO uses traditional humanitarian sectors for categorising its humanitarian interventions (e.g., food assistance, shelter, health care, water and sanitation), but these do not capture people's displacement or migratory experiences. Despite the possibilities offered by mainstreaming and the flexibility enabled by the use of unearmarked funding for emergencies, the unavailability of thematic funding for topics such as climate-related displacement is considered a challenge to internal monitoring by DG ECHO.¹⁶⁵

Several more general challenges remain. Most projects follow broader development objectives, such as poverty reduction, resilience-building, or other aspects of development relating to climate mobility. In this context, categories for reporting, such as climate resilience or climate risk, are poorly defined.¹⁶⁶ Relating to EU development specifically, the 10% migration target under NDICI is arguably too broad.¹⁶⁷ One solution proposed by external evaluators but not pursued by the Commission is for the 10% to be used only for migration and forced displacement under NDICI.¹⁶⁸ However, at present, the 10% is allocated to address the so-called root causes more widely. More broadly, current programming covers activities ranging from training for border management, to health care provision in refugee camps, and the work of the PDD. Other activities are included under climate action or the Global Gateway, making it difficult to disentangle the two.¹⁶⁹ At present, there are also constraints on the availability of data.¹⁷⁰

Beyond these monitoring issues, assessing the effectiveness of EU funding on climate mobility is tricky. The conflation of official development assistance with migration management and the pursuit of migration management objectives have long been subject to criticism.¹⁷¹ Concerns have been raised about the lack of conclusive evidence on whether irregular arrivals were reduced under the EUTF, and the need for policies on migration and development to reflect a more fine-grained understanding of migrant decision-making.¹⁷² Further criticism relates to the lack of policy coherence for development and the risk of overriding foreign policy objectives.¹⁷³ More specifically, analysis has pointed to the ongoing problem of 'governing through funding', which not only prioritises short-term goals over longer-term development objectives, but also carries transparency and accountability risks.¹⁷⁴

EU humanitarian aid, by contrast, follows a needs-based logic and is somewhat more agnostic than development aid as to how displacement is linked to climate change.¹⁷⁵ While climate change may play a role in humanitarian interventions, indirect links present a challenge for evaluation. For example, in 2022, almost a third of the European Commission's funding went to food assistance,

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Targets for climate mainstreaming were already in place under the EU's budget for 2014-2020. In 2022, the European Court of Auditors (ECA) found the European Commission's claim of having met the 20% target for climate mainstreaming in 2014-2020 to be misleading, as it overstated it by at least €72 billion. Moreover, the ECA noted that Commission reporting was unreliable and overestimated climate contributions of agricultural and cohesion funds. Under the 2021-2027 budget, climate funding channelled through MFF programmes mainly focuses on the internal dimension and, therefore, is less relevant for projects looking at the intersection between climate change and mobility, with the exception of NDICI-Global Europe (development) and Horizon Europe (research). However, the identified shortcomings are equally relevant. Efforts have been made to address the shortcomings in reporting, but the ECA expects only limited improvements in tracking and reporting by the Commission, as climate finance tracking still does not differentiate between mitigation and adaptation funding.

Sources: European Court of Auditors (2022), [Special report: Climate spending in the 2014-2020 EU budget – not as high as reported](#), Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, p. 4-5, 27ff, 30; Simon, Frédéric, "[European Commission overreported climate spending by €72 billion, auditors find](#)", Climate Home News, 31 May 2022.

which is a growing need in the Horn of Africa and Sahel regions.¹⁷⁶ Yet, while the climate-displacement-conflict nexus is prevalent in both regions, the existing monitoring results do not allow for a more fine-grained understanding of people's displacement or migration trajectory prior to receiving assistance.

Through rigorous monitoring and evaluation and by making monitoring results publicly available, the EU could not only enhance transparency over its spending, it could also make an important contribution to expanding the pool of knowledge on effective development (and humanitarian) aid addressing climate change, migration, and forced displacement at the global level.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The EU has considerable reach to effectively and positively engage with partner countries affected by climate change. It is also well-placed to harness the existing knowledge on climate mobility, as well as to use its ample financial resources to support communities dealing with the impacts of climate change. However, it lacks clear steps to achieving greater coherence across its policies and programming, as well as a longer-term, strategic approach that could guide its future multilateral engagement and actions on the ground.

Reaching these goals will require considerable commitment and investment. However, these will pay off in the long run. If done successfully, the EU could position itself in more of a leading role in addressing climate mobility, showing the way to a less fragmented and siloed approach and effectively engaging with partners around the world. On that basis, this paper makes the following recommendations, spanning between short, and medium- to long-term goals on what the EU needs to do:

Harnessing the evidence base on climate mobility

- ▶ **Address the lack of context-specific data:** Considering the importance of a reliable evidence base for the EU to assess, prepare, and address the challenges associated with climate mobility, the EU should support research in its own Joint Research Centre and research institutions in developing countries to address persisting data gaps and to develop innovative modelling approaches.
- ▶ **Place greater focus on slow-onset climate change:** This requires the EU to understand the slow-onset effects of climate change, such as droughts, sea level rises, desertification, land degradation, and soil salinisation. EU policy should acknowledge that these effects can be difficult to isolate as drivers of movement but understand that gradual changes in people's living environment will require systemic solutions that go beyond a root causes framing.
- ▶ **Gather evidence on internal displacement:** Further research is needed on monitoring internal displacement as well as disaster-prone regions to improve the understanding of how affected communities cope with displacement in the medium- to long-term aftermath. Existing data usually only covers the initial weeks or months following displacement. Such evidence could help to better tailor humanitarian and development assistance to people's changing needs over time.
- ▶ **Develop policies based on the evidence of internal movement:** Existing evidence on climate mobility, which indicates that most movement will be internal and not directed to Europe, needs to be acknowledged. Following the principle of climate justice and based on the resources available, the EU must use its external policy instruments to support those who are most vulnerable and most affected by the impacts of climate change.
- ▶ **Recognise the uncertainty and limitations of modelling:** Future projections into early stages of policy development need to be integrated while acknowledging and communicating the inherent

uncertainty of all modelling methods. To broaden the evidence base on modelling, the EU should support further research on innovative modelling approaches. Going forward, it will be important to move away from an over-reliance on quantitative models and enrich them with insights from qualitative research on people's motivations and decisions to move. More concretely, this could translate into the development of long-term strategies focusing less on migration numbers and more on policy objectives. Operational planning and concrete policy responses would benefit from quantitative insights while being transparent about related uncertainties.

Strengthening multilateral engagement and commitments

- ▶ **Strengthen and make use of the EU's convening role:** Using its 'convening power', the EU should build strategic alliances and partnerships in the short-term within the context of the Platform on Disaster Displacement and long-term. The EU could recommend to the incoming Chair of the PDD to use it as a platform to build alliances for supporting IDPs in climate change. The EU should strengthen its alliances with other regional actors (e.g. the Union for the Mediterranean), while both the European Commission and member states should more proactively engage and learn from states and non-state actors already dealing with climate mobility, notably from the Global South and Pacific states, including cities.
- ▶ **Maximise its agenda-setting capabilities:** As one of the most developed forms of regionalised governance, the EU has considerable capabilities and reach to set priorities and drive policy discussions, which also impact its neighbourhood and non-member states. Looking ahead, the EU should put climate mobility prominently on the agenda of the international climate negotiations, including COP28 and the Global Refugee Forum. It should also put on the agenda (repeated) internal displacement in the context of climate change, labour mobility as a response to slow-onset climate change, and improving access to climate finance.

- ▶ **Expand efforts to pool knowledge:** Investment should be made in strengthening the evidence base by funding research and data collection and knowledge pooling efforts, something that is often noted as a key challenge across different governance levels. As a top donor of development aid, the EU has considerable influence and leverage in making this a priority and coordinating with other major donors.
- ▶ **Leverage the benefits of Team Europe:** On the programme level, the Team Europe approach offers ample opportunity for the EU, multilateral banks such as the EIB, and member states to jointly address climate mobility through the EU's external action and should therefore be used to promote projects focused on climate mobility and broaden the base of involved partners.
- ▶ **Evaluate and leverage the potential of Global Gateway in connection to migration:** The EU should evaluate if and how mobility could be better addressed within the Global Gateway initiative, drawing on insights from development, humanitarian and climate policy. In general, when financing climate adaptation and resilience in developing countries, the EU should recognise that investing in climate resilient infrastructure can encourage people to stay in their region, even if it is still vulnerable to climate change impacts, or even attract people to move to this region. Because of the framing, the EU needs to be aware that its efforts to promote investments may come across as one-sided if they are not accompanied by further commitments to responsibility-sharing and supporting host countries.
- ▶ **Invest in urban action:** The EU should double down its efforts to address climate mobility under the Sustainable Development Goal 11 on sustainable cities and communities, including in partnership with UN-HABITAT. As urbanisation is already a major factor in climate mobility, the EU, Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy and the Mayors Migration Council should evaluate how the EU Urban Agenda could address future climate mobility challenges. The EU should invest in capacity-building of cities to improve climate resilience, establish urban planning strategies that include secondary cities, and boost the capacities of public administrations and services to meet the needs of growing urban populations. Moreover, the EU should foster knowledge-exchange and peer learning between municipalities within these fora.
- Within the Commission, there should be a concerted effort to move from ad hoc coordination following the principle of “co-creation” to, at minimum, establishing a Working Group on Climate Mobility that meets regularly. This group should include all relevant Directorate-Generals (INTPA, ECHO, HOME, NEAR, and CLIMA), the European External Action Service, and the Joint Research Centre. It could also include partner organisations like the IOM and UNHCR. In the short-term, key priorities for such a mechanism would be to i) harness and build internal expertise, ii) facilitate regular exchange, iii) analyse the structure and coordination of EU policy, including its engagement with partner organisations, and iv) flesh out in greater detail how the climate mobility nexus can be implemented, building on the 2022 Staff Working Document, possibly including through external input.
- ▶ **Strengthen inter-institutional exchange:** More ambitiously, a Task Force might examine medium- and long-term vision for EU action on climate mobility. Elevating climate mobility to the level of a Commissioner's or Vice-President's portfolio could increase awareness and prompt EU action. However, this risks weakening the current cross-cutting approach, which captures the complexity of climate mobility, and better coordination between DGs, policy planning, and programmes. Developing and maintaining internal expertise across DGs, Committees, and Working Groups is key to this.
- ▶ **Appointing a Special Envoy or Adviser for Climate Mobility:** This would be akin to the EEAS's Climate Ambassador, UNHCR's Special Advisor for Climate Action or Germany's Special Commissioner for Migration Agreements, who would be tasked with driving the EU agenda, raising awareness, and coordinating work, following the EU Chairpersonship of the Platform on Disaster Displacement.

Achieving greater policy coherence

- ▶ **Develop a strategic institutional approach:** The EU needs a comprehensive strategy to address climate mobility in the short-, medium- and long-term. It should draw inspiration from other regional processes and strategies, including the continental Kampala Ministerial Declaration on Migration, Environment, and Climate Change signed by 48 African countries in 2023, as well as the Biden Administration's 2021 White House Report on the Impact of Climate Change on Migration. The latter recommended the launch of a Standing Interagency Policy Process that could, adapted to the EU context, similarly guide the implementation of the 2022 Staff Working Document addressing displacement and migration related to disasters, climate change, and environmental degradation.

Improving institutional coordination and leadership

- ▶ **Strengthen internal coordination:** Climate mobility requires a whole-of-government approach. Intra- and cross-institutional exchange should be increased to raise awareness, improve coordination, and ultimately achieve greater policy coherence.

- ▶ **Build policy coherence:** With many references to climate change and migration across different policy areas and documents, the EU must work towards greater policy coherence on climate mobility. This should be done by integrating the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus further into climate mobility policy and programming and, crucially, embedding migration as adaptation in its approach to climate mobility.
- ▶ **Reduce policy silos:** Given the cross-cutting nature of climate mobility, the EU institutions should more proactively work against the tendency of working in policy silos and instead jointly develop internal expertise and the capacity for strategic thinking.
- ▶ **Avoid misleading narratives around root causes:** The EU must avoid simplified framings of climate change as a root cause of displacement and migration, especially when they neglect to consider how climate change impacts the diverse drivers of migration and migrant decision-making. It should also work against a sedentary bias shaping development interventions addressing the so-called root causes.
- ▶ **Go beyond a binary understanding of migration as adaptation:** Going forward, the EU should place a greater focus on understanding of how supporting climate adaptation can reduce forced displacement, and how migration can be an adaptation strategy.
- ▶ **Facilitate migration as adaptation:** The EU's migration management approach will continue to shape its migration cooperation with partner countries. However, the EU should avoid undermining migration as an adaptation strategy through (support for) containment measures. This would help to give weight to the EU's commitment to support partner countries' adaptation efforts.
- ▶ **Fulfil adaptation financing commitments:** The European Commission must also fulfil its promise laid out in the Adaptation Strategy of 2021 to help its partner countries get access to international funds such as the Green Climate Fund, Adaptation Fund and the new Loss and Damage Fund and ensure that the most vulnerable communities, benefit from this financing.
- ▶ **Align budget cycles:** The EU should align humanitarian aid (annual) and development aid (multi-annual) planning cycles to ensure continued support for affected populations and policy and programming coherence, while maintaining unearmarked funding for emergencies. Accordingly, programming should span across longer time horizons and also consider how drivers of migration change between disaster displacement situations and the longer-term impacts of slow-onset climate change.
- ▶ **Ensure better alignment between geographic locales vulnerable to climate change:** The EU should ensure that its programmes are effectively targeting the needs of climate vulnerable communities and factor in potential migration and forced displacement. It should, accordingly, ensure greater continuity between its humanitarian crisis responses and longer-term development aid in climate vulnerable regions to avoid aid gaps.
- ▶ **Carry out a mapping of climate mobility projects:** The EU should implement an (internal) mechanism to map past and ongoing development and humanitarian interventions related to climate mobility. In this way, the EU can best assess the extent to which climate and migration mainstreaming is happening under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument and what concrete actions this translates into. This would ultimately improve the evidence base for EU policy and programming and could serve to highlight good practices to other humanitarian and development actors working on climate mobility.

Stepping up EU funding and improving monitoring of funding

- ▶ **Step up climate action and climate finance:** The EU must urgently step up its actions to address the climate crisis not only by pledging more ambitious goals for emission reduction. It must also implement climate mitigation and adaptation measures that consider the development of constructive and proactive responses to changing migration patterns. As the global annual goal of \$100 billion until 2020 to support climate action was not met, and the deadline was extended to 2025, the EU and member states must step up their financial contributions to climate finance. The EU should be more transparent about the distribution between grants and loans of its climate finance contribution of €23.04 billion in 2021.
- ▶ **Improve tracking and publish results:** Within the Commission, updated tracking methods could, in the future, help paint an overall picture of how much aid is related to climate action, the 10% migration target, and climate and migration combined, though even this may be artificial and insufficiently reflect the reality on the ground. Despite these reservations, results from this monitoring should be featured in the annual or final evaluation of the Neighbourhood, Development, and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), along with other relevant funding instruments, and/or be addressed specifically in external evaluations.

- ¹ Zuleeg, Fabian, Janis A. Emmanouilidis, and Ricardo Borges de Castro (2021), [“Europe in the age of permacrisis”](#), Commentary, Brussels: European Policy Centre.
- ² Interview with Andrew Geddes, Migration Policy Centre, June 2023.
- ³ The analysis is based on desk research carried out by the authors, an Expert Group meeting in January 2023, twelve qualitative expert interviews, as well as a roundtable in May 2023.
- ⁴ IPCC (2023), “Synthesis report of the IPCC sixth assessment report (AR6). Summary for policymakers”, p.4. This report summarizes the evidence of the past seven years and is critical because the next Assessment Cycle (AR7) will end only in 2028, leaving only limited time to impact action before 2030.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*
- ⁶ IPCC (2023), *op.cit.*, p.7.
- ⁷ SEEK Development, [“Donor Tracker – EU / Climate”](#), (last accessed 16 August 2023).
- ⁸ UNHCR, [“Key Concepts on Climate Change and Disaster Displacement”](#) (accessed 12 August 2023); UNFCCC, [“Slow-onset events”](#) (accessed 12 August 2023).
- ⁹ IDMC (2023), *GRID 2023: Internal displacement and food security*, Geneva, p.9.
- ¹⁰ IPCC (2023), *op.cit.*, p.5; p.33.
- ¹¹ IPCC (2023), *op.cit.*, p.33.
- ¹² Joint Research Centre (2021), “Science for policy report: Population exposure and migrations linked to climate change in Africa”, Luxembourg, p.37.
- ¹³ Interview with Aimée-Noël Mbiyozo, ISS Africa, March 2023.
- ¹⁴ Fransen, Sonja; Anja Werntges and Alexander Hunns (2023), “Refugee settlements are highly exposed to extreme weather conditions”, PNAS, 120, 0, p.1. “Refugees” here refers to people who are involuntarily displaced because of conflict but also due to other causes. Note: Seventy-six per cent of the world’s refugees and other people in need of international protection are hosted by low- and middle-income countries, with the Least Developed Countries providing asylum to 20% of these. See: UNHCR, [“Refugee Data Finder”](#), (accessed 15 June 2023).
- ¹⁵ Fransen, Werntges, and Hunns (2023), *op.cit.*, p.7-8.
- ¹⁶ For example, in 2019, refugees and IDPs in the White Nile basin who were staying in areas at risk had to flee for a second or even third time due to floodings. See: Gemeinne, François, Caroline Zickgraf, and Elodie Hut (2021), “Forced displacement related to the impacts of climate change and disasters”, University of Liège: The Hugo Observatory, p.12.
- ¹⁷ International Organization for Migration, [“The Global Context of International Migration. Types of movements”](#) (accessed 15 June 2023).
- ¹⁸ The Government Office for Science (2011), “Foresight: Migration and Global Environmental Change. Final Project Report”, London, p.51-52.
- ¹⁹ Beyer, Robert; Andrea Milan (2023), “Climate Change and Human Mobility: Quantitative evidence on global historical trends and future projections”, Berlin: IOM Global Data Institute, p.9.
- ²⁰ Joint Research Centre (2021), *op.cit.*, p.15.
- ²¹ Beyer and Milan (2023), *op.cit.*, p.11.
- ²² *Ibid.*; Czaika, Mathias; Rainer Münz (2022), “Climate Change, Displacement, Mobility and Migration. The State of Evidence, Future Scenarios, Policy Options”, Stockholm: Delmi, p.108.
- ²³ *Ibid.*; Czaika, Mathias, and Rainer Münz (2022), *op.cit.*, p.108.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.83.
- ²⁵ De Sherbinin, Alex, [“Climate Impacts as Drivers of Migration”](#), *Migration Information Source*, 23 October 2020; IDMC (2021), *GRID 2021: Internal displacement in a changing climate*, Geneva, p.78; Czaika and Münz (2022), *op.cit.*, p.107; Beyer and Milan (2023), *op.cit.*, p.11.
- ²⁶ De Sherbinin, Alex (2020), *op.cit.*, p.5.
- ²⁷ De Sherbinin, Alex (2020), *op.cit.*
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*
- ²⁹ Czaika and Münz (2022), *op.cit.*, p.41.
- ³⁰ Interview with Julia Blocher, Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, March 2023.
- ³¹ De Sherbinin, Alex (2020), *op.cit.*, p.5; Beyer and Milan (2023), *op.cit.*, p.11.
- ³² The Government Office for Science (2011), *op.cit.*, p.13; Note: Conversely, immobility can also be a voluntary choice. For example, investments in climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction or misconceptions about climate change might incentivise people to stay. See: De Sherbinin, Alex (2020), *op.cit.*, p.5.
- ³³ Zuleeg, Fabian, Ricardo Borges de Castro, [“From foresight to forethought: no longer lost in translation?”](#), EPC (accessed 13 August 2023).
- ³⁴ Since 2020, the European Commission has published a series of Strategic Foresight Reports.
- ³⁵ European Commission (2023), *2023 Strategic Foresight Report. Sustainability and people’s wellbeing at the heart of Europe’s Open Strategic Autonomy*, Brussels, COM(2023) 376 final, p.18.
- ³⁶ Note: Existing modelling approaches for climate mobility include exposure mapping, statistical methods, agent-based models, system dynamics and population gravity models. Beyer, Schewe, and Lotze-Campen (2022), *op.cit.*, p. 2; 8.
- ³⁷ Beyer, Schewe, and Lotze-Campen (2022), *op.cit.*, p. 8-9; Beyer and Milan (2023), *op.cit.*, p.12.
- ³⁸ Beyer and Milan (2023), *op.cit.*, p. 10.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁰ Vinke, Kira, and Roman Hoffmann (2020), “Data for a difficult subject: Climate change and human migration”, *Migration Policy Practice*, X, 1, p.18.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁴² Vinke and Hoffmann (2020), *op.cit.*, p.17-18.
- ⁴³ Vinke and Hoffmann (2020), *op.cit.*, p.17.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p.16.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁶ Beyer, and Milan (2023), *op.cit.*, p.12.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁸ Hoffmann, Sedova, and Vinke (2021), *op.cit.*, p.10.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁵¹ Beyer, and Milan (2023), *op.cit.*, p.12-13.
- ⁵² Kumari Rigaud, Kanta; Alex de Sherbinin and Bryan Jones (2018), *Groundswell: Preparing for Internal Climate Migration*, Washington, DC: The World Bank; Clement, Viviane, Kanta Kumari Rigaud, and Alex de Sherbinin (2021), *Groundswell Part 2: Acting on Internal Climate Migration*, Washington, DC: The World Bank. The IPCC uses the standardised framework of Shared Socioeconomic Pathways (SSPs) and Representative Concentration Pathways (RCPs).
- ⁵³ The Groundswell II report projects that by 2050 more than 216 million people in these 6 regions could migrate within their countries. See: Clement, Viviane, Kanta Kumari Rigaud and Alex de Sherbinin (2021), *op.cit.*, p. xxii.
- ⁵⁴ Amakrane, Kamal, Sarah Rosengaertner, and Nicholas P. Simpson (2023), “African Shifts: The Africa Climate Mobility Report. Addressing Climate-Forced Migration & Displacement”, New York: Africa Climate Mobility Initiative and Global Centre for Climate Mobility.
- ⁵⁵ Beyer, Robert M., et al. (2023), [“Modelling climate migration: dead ends and new avenues”](#), *Frontiers in Climate* 5, p. 2.
- ⁵⁶ Global Centre for Climate Mobility, [“The Climate Mobility Pavilion @ COP27”](#), (accessed 4 September 2023).
- ⁵⁷ The UNFCCC is complemented by the Kyoto Protocol, which operationalises the Convention and committed developed and developing states to curbing greenhouse gas emissions, as well as the Cancun Agreements, which include the 2010 Cancun Adaptation Framework aimed at strengthening international cooperation and coherent approaches to climate adaptation.
- ⁵⁸ Cancun Adaptation Framework (2010), para 14(f).
- ⁵⁹ Report of the Conference of the Parties on its twenty-fourth session, held in Katowice from 2 to 15 December 2018, Decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties, Decision 10/CP.24 – Annex, access [here](#).
- ⁶⁰ OHCHR (2017), Input to Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of IDPs on Internal Displacement in the context of slow-onset adverse effects of climate change, access [here](#).
- ⁶¹ Interview with Sven Harmeling, CARE, April 2023.
- ⁶² EPC Roundtable In Brussels, May 2023.

- ⁶³ In Objective 2, signatories committed to minimising the adverse effects of climate change and environmental degradation that compel people to leave, while in Objective 5, they committed to identifying sustainable solutions for migrants faced with slow-onset natural disasters, but where adaptation or return is no longer possible. These include planned relocations or dedicated visa options. Finally, in Objective 23, states committed to increasing cooperation to speed up the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in areas where irregular migration due to the impacts of climate change and disasters, among other factors, is persistent. United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), [Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2018, 73/195. Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration](#).
- ⁶⁴ Huckstep, Samuel, and Helen Dempster (2022), "[Climate Migration at the 2022 International Migration Review Forum](#)", Blog post, Center for Global Development, 24 May 2022.
- ⁶⁵ Aleinikoff, T. Alexander, and Susan Martin (2022), "[The responsibility of the international community in situations of mobility due to environmental events](#)", Working Paper 2022-1, New York, NY: Zolberg Institute on Migration and Mobility, The New School.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁷ European Commission, "[KnowSGDs – SDG 11](#)", (accessed 9 August 2023).
- ⁶⁸ European Commission, "[EU reaffirms support at Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction midterm review](#)", Press release, 18 May 2023; European Commission, Directorate-General for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (2023), [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction: Midterm Review 2023 – Working towards the achievement of the Sendai priorities and targets](#), Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
- ⁶⁹ Interview with Julia Blocher, Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, March 2023.
- ⁷⁰ Blocher, Julia (2016), "Climate Change and Environment related Migration in the European Union Policy: An Organizational Shift towards Adaptation and Development", in Kerstin Rosenau-Williams, Francois Gemenne (eds.), *Organizational Perspectives on Environmental Migration*, Abingdon: Routledge, Chapter 3, p.39.
- ⁷¹ Platform on Disaster Displacement, "[What We Do](#)", (accessed 31 August 2023).
- ⁷² Interview with a European Commission official, February 2023.
- ⁷³ *Ibid.*
- ⁷⁴ Dhingra, Reva, and Elizabeth Ferris (2022), "[COP27: An opportunity to get serious about climate migration](#)", Brookings.
- ⁷⁵ European Commission, "[EU agrees to COP27 compromise to keep Paris Agreement alive and protect those most vulnerable to climate change](#)", Press release, 21 November 2022; Note: Reversing its original opposition to the Loss and Damage Fund, the EU called for several conditions to be fulfilled, including a wide donor base, renewed efforts to curb CO2 emissions, and limiting the scope to the vulnerable communities faced by loss and damage. See: Åberg, Anna (2023), "[The historic loss and damage fund](#)", Expert Comment, 1 February 2023, London: Chatham House.
- ⁷⁶ Interview with a European Commission official, February 2023.
- ⁷⁷ EPC Roundtable in Brussels, May 2023.
- ⁷⁸ Åberg, Anna, *op.cit.*; Hill, Cameron, "[A loss and damage fund: two big challenges](#)", Devpolicy Blog, 22 June 2023.
- ⁷⁹ Note: The discussions about the financing of the Loss and Damage Fund via grants or loans are particularly politically sensitive, with low-income countries asking for grant-based financing, while the donors in high-income countries are in favour of insurances. See also: Platform for Disaster Displacement, International Organization for Migration, and Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, "[15 Observations on Displacement as Loss and Damage](#)", June 2022.
- ⁸⁰ Countries active in multilateral settings include Germany, France, and Sweden, while Austria, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden fall into the second group. European Migration Network (2023), *Displacement and Migration Related to Disasters, Climate Change and Environmental Degradation*, EMN Inform.
- ⁸¹ More recently, Team Europe was also criticised for its opacity and lack of a legal basis, see: Sorgi, Gregorio, "[Parliament shouts, pounds table over 'opaque' Tunisia migrant deal](#)", *Politico*, 18 July 2023.
- ⁸² European Union, "[Team Europe Initiative and Joint Programming Tracker](#)", (accessed 7 August 2023).
- ⁸³ European Union, "[Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience – Africa](#)", (accessed 8 August 2023).
- ⁸⁴ European Commission, "[EU working together with African partners on migration: Launch of Team Europe initiatives](#)", Press release, 12 December 2022.
- ⁸⁵ European Commission, "[Speech by President von der Leyen at the International Conference on Migration and Development](#)", 23 July 2023.
- ⁸⁶ European Commission, [Update on the State of Play of External Cooperation in the Field of Migration Policy](#), 14 July 2023, p. 47.
- ⁸⁷ The launch of Global Gateway was met with contrasting opinions on the use of funding. The Center for Global Development argued that Global Gateway was more of a repackaging of existing funds, while Bruegel, for instance, argued that this was not a major concern, and that the EU should instead prioritise using existing financial resources more strategically. See more here: Szczepański, Martin (2023), [The Global Gateway: Taking stock after its first year](#), EPRS Briefing.
- ⁸⁸ Interview with a European Commission official, February 2023.
- ⁸⁹ European Commission, "[COP27: Team Europe steps up support for climate change adaptation and resilience in Africa under Global Gateway](#)", Press release, 16 November 2022.
- ⁹⁰ Szczepański, Martin (2023), *op.cit.*, p. 6; Interview with Rachel Simon, Climate Action Network (CAN) Europe, April 2023.
- ⁹¹ Lietaer, Samuel, and David Durand-Delacre (2021), "Situating 'migration as adaptation' discourse and appraising its relevance to Senegal's development sector", *Environmental Science and Policy* 126, p. 17.
- ⁹² Blocher (2016), *op.cit.*, p.43-44.
- ⁹³ De Bruycker, Philippe, et al. (eds.) (2019), [From Tampere 20 to Tampere 2.0: Towards a new European Consensus](#), Brussels: European Policy Centre, p.43.
- ⁹⁴ Ruiz Soto, Ariel G., and Camille Le Coz, "[Reshaping the root cause approach: Disentangling official development assistance and migration management](#)", Mixed Migration Centre, 6 December 2022.
- ⁹⁵ Ruiz Soto, and Le Coz, *op.cit.*
- ⁹⁶ As development cooperation and humanitarian assistance are under shared management of the EU and its member states, policy approaches are jointly outlined as in *The New European Consensus on Development: 'Our World, Our Lives, Our Dignity', Joint Statement The Council and the Representatives of The Governments of the Member States Meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission*, Brussels, 7 June 2017.
- ⁹⁷ *New European Consensus on Development* (2017), p.20.
- ⁹⁸ Communication on a New Pact on Migration and Asylum, COM(2020) 609 final, p.19.
- ⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.20.
- ¹⁰⁰ Blocher (2016), *op.cit.*, p.43-44.
- ¹⁰¹ High Representative and European Commission (2008), Climate Change and International Security, Brussels, S113/08, p.4.
- ¹⁰² The impact of climate change on the frequency of natural disasters but also instability and conflict was recognised as early as 2008, in the joint statement *European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid*, or, more recently, the Commission's Communication *The EU's humanitarian reaction: new challenges, same principles* (2021). [This footnote note refers to *The European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid, Joint Statement by the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission (2008) 2008/C 25/01* p.2, *Communication on the EU's Humanitarian action: new challenges, same principles COM(2021) 110, final, p.2*]. Similarly, in outlining steps to strengthen the resilience of persons affected by climate change, the 2022 Commission Staff Working Document *Addressing displacement and migration related to disasters, climate change and environmental degradation* has a strong focus on disaster risk reduction.
- ¹⁰³ Interview with a European Commission official, March 2023.
- ¹⁰⁴ EU Adaptation Strategy 2021, p.18.
- ¹⁰⁵ For a seminal critical analyses on the topic, see Bakewell, Oliver (2008), "Keeping Them in Their Place: the ambivalent relationship between development and migration in Africa", *Third World Quarterly* 29:7, pp. 1341-1358.
- ¹⁰⁶ See, for instance: Angenendt, Steffen, et al. (2017), "More Development - More Migration? The 'Migration Hump' and Its Significance for Development Policy Co-operation with Sub-Saharan Africa", SWP Comments, Berlin: German Institute for International and Security Affairs.
- ¹⁰⁷ Jacobson, Chris, et al. (2018), "[When is migration a maladaptation to climate change?](#)", *Regional Environmental Change* 19, pp. 101-112.

- ¹⁰⁸ Interview with Julia Blocher, Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, March 2023.
- ¹⁰⁹ EPC Roundtable in Brussels, May 2023. Note: The Communication *A Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU's external action*, for instance, notes that “at an individual level, migration and flight can be a legitimate adaptation strategy to severe external stresses”. Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council, JOIN(2017)21 final. See [here](#).
- ¹¹⁰ Interview with Rachel Simon, Climate Action Network (CAN) Europe, April 2023.
- ¹¹¹ [Communication Forging a climate-resilient Europe – the new EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change](#), COM(2021) 82 final.
- ¹¹² European Commission (2022), *op.cit.*
- ¹¹³ Note: According to Afrobarometer, more than 55% of all respondents strongly or very strongly agreed with the idea of easing movement across international borders to facilitate trade or work in other countries (in the region), which free movement regimes may facilitate. Based on Afrobarometer results from Round 8 2019/21, the latest available data on public attitudes towards free movement. Afrobarometer, [“Online Data Analysis”](#), (accessed 14 August 2023).
- ¹¹⁴ Zanker, Franzisca (2019), “Managing or restricting movement? Diverging approaches of African and European migration governance”, *Comparative Migration Studies* 7:17, p.2.
- ¹¹⁵ Geddes, Andrew and Mehari Taddede Maru (2020), [“Localising migration diplomacy in Africa?: Ethiopia in its regional and international setting”](#), Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies Working Paper, Florence: European University Institute, p. 10.
- ¹¹⁶ European Commission (2013), Climate change, environmental degradation, and migration, Brussels, SWD(2013) 138 final, p. 22, 26, and 34.
- ¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.4-6.
- ¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 34.
- ¹¹⁹ Geddes, Andrew and Andrew Jordan (2012), *op.cit.*, p. 1032.
- ¹²⁰ Blocher (2016), *op.cit.*, p. 45.
- ¹²¹ European Commission (2013), *op.cit.*
- ¹²² Interview with DG NEAR, May 2023.
- ¹²³ European Commission, [“Southern Neighbourhood: EU proposes new Agenda for the Mediterranean”](#), Press release, 9 February 2021.
- ¹²⁴ See e.g., European Union, [“Project: Towards a Holistic Approach to Labour Migration Governance and Labour Mobility in North Africa”](#), (accessed 11 September 2023).
- ¹²⁵ Interview with a European Commission official, March 2023 (A).
- ¹²⁶ Interview with a European Commission official, March 2023 (A); interview with Marlies.
- ¹²⁷ Interview with Marlies.
- ¹²⁸ This approach stems from the 2017 Council Conclusions on Operationalising the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus and aims to create greater continuity between these three areas of intervention given that many of today’s crises are recurrent, protracted, and complex. Through longer-term interventions, the nexus aims to build resilience to crises at different levels. See: Council of the European Union, [“Council conclusions on operationalising the humanitarian-development nexus”](#), Press release, 19 May 2017; Interview with Marlies.
- ¹²⁹ European Parliament, [Resolution on the environment, security and foreign policy](#), A4-0005/1999.
- ¹³⁰ Kraller, Albert et al. (2020), [Climate Change and Migration: Legal and policy challenges and responses to environmentally induced migration](#), PE 655.591, p.17.
- ¹³¹ European Parliament, Report on the impacts of climate change on vulnerable populations in developing countries (2020/2042(INI)), A9-0115/2021.
- ¹³² Interview with Mónica Silvana González, Member of the European Parliament, May 2023.
- ¹³³ Geddes and Jordan (2012), “Migration as adaptation? Exploring the scope for coordinating environmental and migration policies in the European Union”, *Environmental and Planning C: Government and Policy* 30, p.1042.
- ¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.1037-1039.
- ¹³⁵ See e.g., Huang, Lawrence (2023), [“Efforts to Manage Climate Migration are Slowly Growing, but their Focus is Often Indirect”](#), Migration Information Source, 1 March 2023.
- ¹³⁶ International climate finance refers to local, national, and global financing drawn from public and private sources to support climate change mitigation and adaptation. One component is the \$100 billion financing goal by 2025 as well as several funds under the UNFCCC Mechanism, such as the Green Climate Fund, the Adaptation Fund, and the new Loss and Damage Fund. For a more comprehensive overview of the architecture, see: Climate Funds Update, [“Global Climate Finance Architecture”](#) (accessed 28 July 2023).
- ¹³⁷ European Commission (2022), *op.cit.*
- ¹³⁸ European Commission, [“Humanitarian Aid Programme – Performance”](#), (accessed 2 August 2023).
- ¹³⁹ European Commission, [Communication on the Mid-term revision of the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027](#), SWD(2023) 366 final, p. 15.
- ¹⁴⁰ CONCORD Europe (2022), [Aid Watch 2022: Is the EU a payer, player... or just full of hot air?](#), Brussels: CONCORD.
- ¹⁴¹ UN OCHA Financial Tracking Services, [“Appeals and response plans 2022”](#), (accessed 25 July 2023).
- ¹⁴² OECD, [“Foreign aid surges due to spending on refugees and aid for Ukraine”](#), (last accessed 16 August 2023).
- ¹⁴³ Harcourt, Sara, and David McNair (2023), [“Rerouting goodwill: the risks of diverting aid from Africa to Europe”](#), European Council on Foreign Relations, 14 March 2023.
- ¹⁴⁴ Carta, Silvia, and Helena Hahn (2022), “Weathering storms: EU migration policy between reform and crisis mode”, in: [2022 MEDAM Assessment Report on Asylum and Migration Policies in Europe](#), Kiel: Institute for the World Economy (IfW), pp. 17-30.
- ¹⁴⁵ Achampong, Leila, [“Where do things stand on the global US\\$100 billion climate finance goal?”](#), European Network on Debt and Development, 7 September 2022.
- ¹⁴⁶ Note: These figures provided by the EU diverge from the ones provided by the OECD on EU commitments worth \$5.7 billion in 2021. Council of the EU, [“Council approves 2021 climate finance figure”](#), Press release, 28 October 2022. The EU provides climate finance collectively through the EU budget, through Member States’ public budgets and other development finance institutions, through bilateral and multilateral contributions.
- ¹⁴⁷ Hattle, A. and J. Nordbo (2022), [“That’s Not New Money: Assessing how much public climate finance has been “new and additional” to support for development”](#), CARE Denmark.
- ¹⁴⁸ This differs from the global level, where the majority of the money goes to mitigation measures (93%) and less so to climate risk reduction, building climate resilience, or other adaptation measures.
- ¹⁴⁹ Interview with Aimée-Noël Mbiyozo, ISS Africa, March 2023; In 2021, the European Commission pledged an additional €100 million from the EU budget to the global Adaptation Fund, see: European Commission, [“EU at COP26: Commission pledges €100 million to the Adaptation Fund”](#), Press release, 9 November 2021.
- ¹⁵⁰ Interview with a European Commission official, February 2023.
- ¹⁵¹ This challenge is often discussed in the context of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus. The aim is to achieve greater coherence among stakeholders working in fragile contexts, which is further complicated by the impacts of climate change. See further: Voorhees, Jessica, “How can we improve development co-operation in fragile contexts?”, OECD Development Matters, 12 October 2022.
- ¹⁵² Interview with Sarah Opitz Stapleton, Overseas Development Institute, April 2023.
- ¹⁵³ Milazzo, Eleonora (2023), [The Nexus Approach: bringing together climate, human security, and demographic change in times of permacrisis](#), Discussion Paper, Brussels: European Policy Centre.
- ¹⁵⁴ European Commission (2022), *op.cit.*, p. 25. Mainstreaming involves the setting of objectives and targets within the overall budget and relevant spending instruments, and as such serves to reflect growing policy priorities.
- ¹⁵⁵ European Court of Auditors (2022), [Special report: Climate spending in the 2014-2020 EU budget – not as high as reported](#), Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, p.37.
- ¹⁵⁶ Climate mainstreaming is applied to a total of 16 EU funding instruments. Most of these relate to policy objectives to be achieved within the EU, and therefore have limited to no applicability to EU external action. See: [Council Regulation 2020/2093 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2021 to 2027](#), Annex 2: Declarations; [Council Regulation 2021/947 establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument](#), Preamble.

- ¹⁵⁷ Two recent examples of this are the EU's responses to the floods in Pakistan and the drought in the Horn of Africa. European Commission, "[Humanitarian Aid Programme – Performance](#)", (last accessed 14 August 2023).
- ¹⁵⁸ Note: The EU's primary migration funds, the Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund (AMIF) and the Integrated Border Management Fund (IBMF), only have a limited external dimension and therefore little relevance for addressing climate mobility outside of the EU. Member states are required to apply the environment acquis and obligations under the Paris Agreement.
- ¹⁵⁹ Interview with a European Commission official, February 2023.
- ¹⁶⁰ Note: in addition to this thematic funding, further resources for climate and displacement are expected to be allocated to the Africa and Asia Directorates at DG INTPA. Interview with an official from the European Commission, February 2023.
- ¹⁶¹ Interview with an official in DG NEAR, European Commission, May 2023.
- ¹⁶² SEEK Development, "[Donor Tracker – EU/Climate](#)", (accessed 25 July 2023).
- ¹⁶³ DAC Working Party on Development Finance Statistics, OECD, [Tracking support for refugee and IDP situations in ODA recipient countries in the CRS – updated proposal](#), 26 September 2022.
- ¹⁶⁴ Interview with a European Commission official, February 2023; EPC Roundtable in Brussels, May 2023.
- ¹⁶⁵ Interview with a European Commission official, March 2023.
- ¹⁶⁶ Interview with Sarah Opitz Stapleton, Overseas Development Institute, April 2023.
- ¹⁶⁷ This is not a new problem, however, as the risk of it being spread too thinly was already raised in the context of the EUTF for Africa. See: Altai Consulting (2021), *Learning Lessons from the EUTF – Phase 2: Paving the way for future programming on migration, mobility and forced displacement*, p. 216; 224.
- ¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 26.
- ¹⁶⁹ Interview with a European Commission official, February 2023.
- ¹⁷⁰ EPC Roundtable in Brussels, May 2023.
- ¹⁷¹ See, for instance, Raty, Tuuli, and Raphael Silhav (2020), [The EU Trust Fund for Africa: Trapped between aid policy and migrations politics](#), Brussels: Oxfam; or Coggio (2021), *op.cit.*
- ¹⁷² Ruiz Soto and Le Coz (2022); Coggio (2021), *op.cit.*
- ¹⁷³ Raty and Silhav (2020), *op.cit.*, p. 4-5.
- ¹⁷⁴ Tsourdi, Evangelia, Nasrat Sayed, and Federica Zardo (2023), [Funding the EU's external migration policy: 'Same old' or potential for sustainable collaboration?](#), Discussion Paper, Brussels: European Policy Centre.
- ¹⁷⁵ Interview with a European Commission official, March 2023.
- ¹⁷⁶ See: UN OCHA Financial Tracking Services, "[Grouped View: European Commission 2022](#)", (accessed 4 September 2023); DG ECHO, [DG ECHO Reports on food security: Release n° 3 – November 2022](#), Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

NOTES

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The Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Agenda provide a direction for travel, and SPfE engages in a debate on the needed measures to achieve a fair transition to an environmentally sustainable economy and society. It focuses on areas where working together across the European Union can bring significant benefits to the member states, citizens and businesses, and ensure sustainable prosperity within the limits of this planet.

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