



## Conference key points

Research on migration is important and the interest in this topic has been also demonstrated by the EU, through many opportunities of funded-research on the topic, valorization of the results through workshops and the organization of conference for the dissemination of the results and the identification of the research needs.

Key crucial points emerged during this two-day conference. First existing predictions of massive flows of migrants due to climate change are overestimating the phenomenon (Etienne Piguet, Michel Beine). Movements triggered by environmental factors are of limited duration and cover short distance. Alternative adaptation strategies to migration might be in place. Katrin Millock finds that irrigation helps reducing the effect of drought on migration. Migration is costly, not only financially but also psychologically. Relocation can be used as a last resort, when all other adaptation measure and survival strategies have failed.

What we might expect is high internal mobility, which exceeds international migration by far (Mathilde Maurel, Marina Mastrorillo). Another interesting result is the changing pattern of traditional rural-rural seasonal migration due to increased rainfall variability (Benjamin Schraven). Migration in Ghana used to be an adaptation strategy, while now it is becoming an additional source of food stress.

There is also a certain evidence of heterogeneous impacts of climate change depending on the characteristics of the origin countries. By impoverishing rural populations and worsening their income perspectives, long-term warming affects migration in different ways, depending on the initial income of those rural populations. A decline in agricultural productivity, causing a decline in rural income, seems to have a depressing effect on the possibility of emigrating in extremely poor countries where individuals live on subsistence income. Lower income worsens their liquidity constraint, implying that potential migrants have a reduced ability to pay for migration costs and to afford travel and relocation costs. In this case, global warming may trap rural populations in local poverty. In contrast, in countries where individuals are not extremely poor, a decline in agricultural income strengthens the incentives to migrate to cities or abroad. (Immaculada Martinez-Zarzoso)

This implies that under certain circumstances we assist to immobility rather than mobility, even if people, who are stuck, sometimes face worse humanitarian crises than migrants. Kniveton analyzed the decision making process under the immobility decision. The concept of trapped population has been also emphasized by Anastasios Kentarchos in his presentation.

Evidence of a negative effect of climate-induced migration, for example on conflict, is missing (Christiane Fröhlich).

One key point of the presentations is that rather than migration induced by natural disasters, we assist to man-made disasters as a driver of migration. This message was clear in the presentation of Prof. Sassen, who documented emergent migration flows due to massive loss of habitat because of land-grabs, poisoning of land and water due to mining or violence related to economic development.

Climate-induced migration should not be perceived as a security threat. There are important issues to be addressed, but there are not security issues. There is no reason to expect that Europe will face large waves of environmental migrants.

It is important to give more opportunities for legal migration for example by issuing more visas for students, family reunification, and more work permits.

At the same time, other policies such as development and cooperation policies are needed. We need alternative way to cope with number of people at risk. Migration cannot be the only solution to address climate related risks. It is not feasible a situation where all people hit by climate change migrate to another country, in particular in face of high population growth in certain developing countries. In this respect, an important instrument to reduce the demographic pressure is to invest in women empowerment.

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