

# ON MIGRATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

## Lessons and recommendations from the faces of migration project for the European Union and Italy

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# ON MIGRATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

## Lessons and recommendations from the faces of migration project for the European Union and Italy

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"This background document has been realized in the framework of the project, to spread data and information based on a scientific analysis. If you want to know more about this project and be part of its activities, please feel free to contact the leading partner Diaconia in Czech Republic (email: nozinova@diakoniespolu.cz), as well as Focsiv in Italy (email: f.novella@focsiv.it)."

<sup>1</sup>This Policy Paper has been realised in the framework of the "Faces of Migration" project, co-financed by the European Union. The paper has been elaborated Aurora Ianni, Mattia Giampaolo (CeSPI) and Andrea Stocchiero (FOCSIV). This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This policy paper is the final output of the three-year Faces of Migration (FoM) project, in which, as researchers and experts, we analyzed different issues related to migration in the framework of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Global Compact on Migration for safe, orderly, and regular migration (GCM) and, at the European Union (EU) level, the New Pact on Migration and Asylum (from here on New Pact).<sup>1</sup>



Ph. Global Goals for Sustainable Development

These policy agreements have been the backbone of our work, and have been analysed in respect to the root causes of migration, the interlinkages between different dimensions of migration and SDGs, specific case studies, and the key challenges to be faced as well as the opportunities to be taken, in order to raise awareness among the general public on a topic that is usually misunderstood and instrumentalised, and to provide decision and policy makers with new approaches on migration, stressing the intersectional nature of this phenomenon and its linkages with sustainable development.

The negative impact of migration is at the core of the public debate, as new forms of racism, discrimination and xenophobia are spreading in Europe. The social inclusion of migrants as well as their access to public services are seen as a threat to the social stability of destination countries, despite figures and economic data demonstrate (as we will see below) the great economic contribution migrants give to 'host' societies. The main lesson learned, thanks to this project, is **the extreme need to reshape the EU's policy on migration**, in terms of tools, attitude and approaches, the latter to become holistic according to the Agenda 2030 principles (particularly the not leaving behind, integration and coherence), by considering the interest and needs of the countries of origin, transit, and arrival, and by linking migration to sustainable development.



Climate change, conflicts, poverty, and social instability must be addressed by the European Member States that should put at the core of their agendas a long-term strategy on migration in sustainable development, that takes into account the root causes of migration -be it political instability, conflicts, discrimination, persecution, climate or economic factors-, the need for regular and safe pathways to migrate, the social inclusion and empowerment of migrants in the countries of arrival, as well as the broader cooperation with third countries, namely by engaging and committing in capacity building and development cooperation with the poorest communities.

<sup>1</sup> See for SDGs: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>; See for GCM: [https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/180711\\_final\\_draft\\_0.pdf](https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/180711_final_draft_0.pdf); see for New Pact: [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_20\\_1706](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_20_1706)



Nowadays, both the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine represent a breakthrough in this sense and create further urgency for the EU to implement the abovementioned approach. With the outbreak of COVID-19 the mechanisms and opportunities for admission, stay, work and return were altered as the general tendency was that of limiting people's movement to prevent the spread of the virus. Governments have mainly focused on domestic health and emergency issues, while the development of new provisions on migration was carried out to fill labour shortages in sectors mostly dependent on seasonal workers. Also, with the public sector closure during the lockdowns access to basic services for migrants was slowed down and irregular migrants -with the residence permits expired- were even prevented from access

**Background document n.8, COVID 19 and Migration in the EU: perceptions from some EU Member States, <https://bit.ly/3P1lxE8>**

Presently, as the war in Ukraine enters its fifth month, together with the humanitarian tragedy in and outside the country, new challenges for the reception of refugees emerge as well as the threat of food insecurity in some African and Asian countries, due to their dependence on cereal and crop imports from Russia and Ukraine. By developing a coherent analysis on the different dimensions of migration addressed in FoM papers (background documents, case studies and policy papers), we aim at providing policy recommendations to the EU and Member States to enhance the role of migration as a factor in sustainable development.



Ph. <http://www.fondazioneleonemoressa.org>



## 2. MIGRATION AND THE CHALLENGES OF OUR TIMES

In a document published by UNSDN (United Nations for Sustainable Development Network), the UN stressed the need to modify the approach on the SDGs speaking about the their intersectionality and the need to start thinking and discussing some issues together and within the same framework rather than discussing them separately. If there is something intersectional, this is migration. Development, climate, gender, labour market and, more recently, the need to have an inclusive health system are all linked to migration and have direct effects on both society and governments.

In these last years **climate change** has been the most relevant issue for governments in both developed and developing countries. At the same time, the uneven development among and within countries around the globe shifted the focus on how to deal with this prominent topic. While countries of the West are attempting, without real success, to reduce carbon emissions, African, Asian and some Latin American countries are struggling with huge movements of people due to the reduced and unsustainable exploitation of natural resources (notably water and also fertile land), the increase in natural disasters and conflicts, as well as the impossibility to resist and to be resilient to these tragic events

**Background document n.1, Climate Change and Migration**, <https://bit.ly/3af3X29>

<https://bit.ly/3nJMgdY>



Background document 1



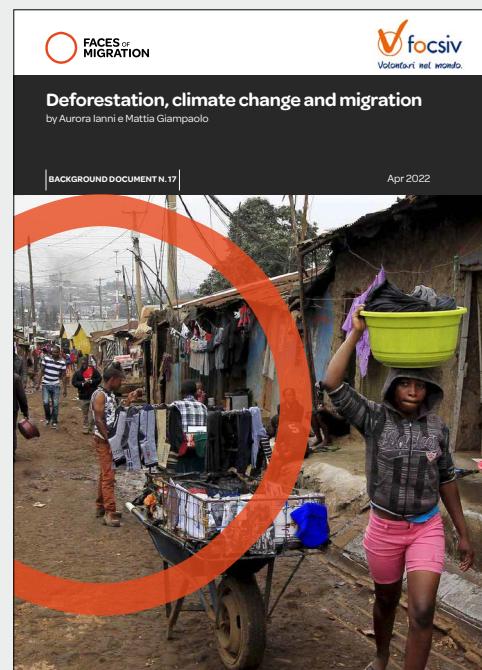
Ph. <http://www.perlapace.it>

<sup>1</sup> See for SDGs: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>; See for GCM: [https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/180711\\_final\\_draft\\_0.pdf](https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/180711_final_draft_0.pdf); see for New Pact: [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_20\\_1706](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_20_1706)

Natural disasters do not directly cause migration or displacement; the main factors that influence and provoke climate displacement are the lack of basic social services and protection in a given community –infrastructure, access to the national resources and social support from the states- which could support them in restoring their normal livelihoods (Ibid). Furthermore, what is worth noting is strictly related to government development policies of those ‘less resilient developing countries’ which aimed, also with the support of western economies, to promote private investments which did not consider the thin equilibrium between man and nature **Background document n.6, Migration and Development**, <https://bit.ly/3al5PX6>

obstructing the natural rivers’ flow to intensify agriculture **Background document n.1, Climate change and Migration**, <https://bit.ly/3af3X29>

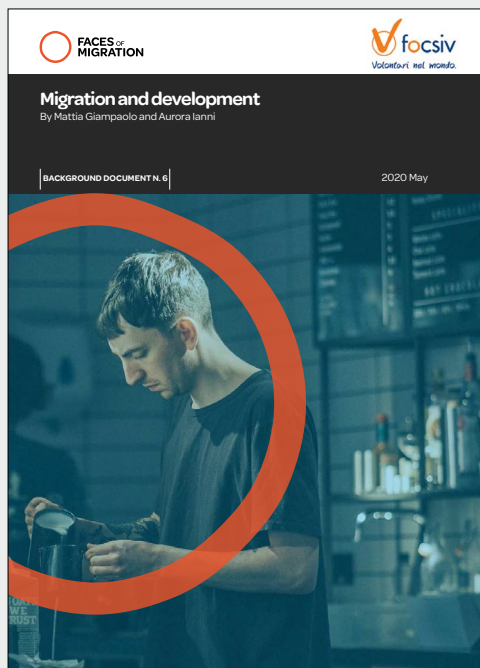
In addition, as of the urgency climate change is posing on our everyday life, NGOs and research networks have been attentioning, in recent years, the topic of deforestation across the world and its effects on both the environment and the population **Background document n.17, Deforestation and Migration**, <https://bit.ly/3ymBzmt>



**Background document 17**

The direct contribution of migration to deforestation is given by various factors linked to the social conditions of poor populations. It is important to remark the effects of deforestation on both environment and population.

**Background document 6**



Floods, which struck for example some Asian countries in the last twenty years, are the direct effects of the indiscriminate men actions, such as buildings hotels on the shores and



Natural disaster and climate change are not the direct causes of migration (push factors). Although these events occur everywhere and cause disasters and destruction, the social conditions of these populations are the real driver of migration<sup>2</sup>. In addition, given the loss of cultivable land due to the hyper-exploitation of the soil that reduces its fertility, local populations move toward old-growth tropical forest to cultivate fertile land, producing new processes of deforestation.

In 2021, the World Bank reported that more than 200 million people in 2050 could be displaced due to climate change and the related natural disaster, within five main regions in the world, more precisely the report states: “By 2050, Sub-Saharan Africa could see as many as 86 million internal climate migrants; East Asia and the Pacific, 49 million; South Asia, 40 million; North Africa, 19 million; Latin America, 17 million; and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 5 million”<sup>3</sup>. Most of them are internal displaced persons; indeed, looking at some figures the highest numbers of migrants are those who move within the same area/region and, to a lesser extent, within the continents.

According to Migration Data Portal 2022 report, the world witnessed an exponential growth of population **living in urban areas**, showing that migration is driving –and will continue to drive – the growth and diversity of cities<sup>4</sup>.

The lack of basic services, job opportunities and the usual insecurity in suburban areas have pushed many individuals to leave rural areas to find better living conditions in cities.



Ph. <https://www.aev.agriagenzia.it>

Despite the possibilities and services offered by urban centers, rural-urban migrants face major challenges: due to their low skills and educational level, they do not have access to the labor market and end up being employed in informal sectors **Background document n.10, Rural-Urban Migration in Africa**, <https://bit.ly/3yrwdXs>



**Background document 10**

<sup>2</sup> Britta Rude, Bennet Niederhöfer e Fabio Ferrara, Deforestation and Migration, Dice Data Analysis, CESifo Forum 1 / 2021 gennaio Volume 22. <https://www.cesifo.org/DocDL/CESifo-Forum-2021-1-rude-niederhoefer-ferrara-deforestation-january.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> See: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2021/09/13/climate-change-could-force-216-million-people-to-migrate-within-their-own-countries-by-2050>.

<sup>4</sup> See the report here: <https://www.migrationdataportal.org/themes/urbanization-and-migration>.

**Intra-African movements**, for example, have interested, in the last decades, those countries that witnessed a worsening of socio-economic conditions and have been involved in civil conflict and an increasing climate crisis. At the same time, while the impoverished rural areas became more and more vulnerable, big cities started to grow economically and in terms of services, but with strong inequalities. This kind of uneven development did not translate into a real progress for the poor and migrants coming from rural areas (Ibid). According to GCAP (Global Call to Action Against Poverty) in “East Africa alone there are approximately 7.7 million migrants and 3.6 are refugees. Among them, more than 63% intend to move to the countries of the Gulf, only 2% want to go to North Africa and Europe, and the rest remain in the region”<sup>5</sup>.

Despite the little percentage of **migrants reaching Europe**, they still represent a major concern for the EU governments and public opinions due to the “fear” policy created by righthwing political parties and media. But these movements toward Europe demonstrate that the **EU trade, investment and financial policies in poor countries have failed**, while the development cooperation policy tries to face the more urgent social and environmental issues. Indeed, as outlined in the back doc n.6 published within Faces of Migration project **Background document n.6, Migration and development**, <https://bit.ly/3al5PX6>, “the creation of EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zones –free tax zones), with the aim to increment job opportunities and investments in poor countries, have increased inequalities”<sup>6</sup>. With a growing new super-rich business class and a huge mass of

underpaid workers –without any public services- developed, inequalities, exclusions and migrations have increased. This **neoliberal mechanism** of development has functioned as a driver to migration. Due to this uneven modernization of the economic system of these poor countries, disparities contribute to augment migration.



Ph. <https://www.europarl.europa.eu>

The global recession in 2008 made these countries more vulnerable in terms of resilience and reduction of the provision of basic social services to the people. This context fueled flows of migrants (the so-called economic migrants) to Europe and generated an **increasing wave of discrimination**, racism, and xenophobia. Since the second decade of 2000's, particularly since 2011, after the Arab Uprisings, and the increasing flows of migrants at the European shores fueled in 2015 by the Syrian crisis, far right parties and movements started to take actions against migrants, accusing them of stealing jobs to autochthon population.

<sup>5</sup> See here the report: <https://gcap.global/news/internal-migration-in-africa-and-sustainable-development/>.

<sup>6</sup> Feldman, Guy, Neoliberalism and poverty: An unbreakable relationship, Routledge, London, 2019, in: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/336700342\\_Neoliberalism\\_and\\_poverty\\_An\\_unbreakable\\_relationship/link/5dadd83d299bf11d4bf864d/download](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/336700342_Neoliberalism_and_poverty_An_unbreakable_relationship/link/5dadd83d299bf11d4bf864d/download)



This belief has consolidated since 2008, when the economic crisis produced a dramatic loss of jobs and a gradual impoverishment of middle classes and made a great deal of local populations vulnerable<sup>7</sup>. Migrants were seen as a threat for the economic and social system as their wages were much lower than those of 'local' population. This contributed on one side to exploit migrants within the labour market and, on the other, to create a climate of hatred and discrimination between the host communities and migrants due to employment of the latter rather than the former.

This mechanism, for example, is very clear in Italy in many fields and notably in agriculture, but also in logistical hubs and other labour market sectors wherein the Master Gang System (known with the Italian term, "Caporalato") represents the main example of the social exclusion and exploitation of migrants **Case study document 1, The Master Gang System In Italy**, <https://bit.ly/3Rbu3Uj>

The term "Caporalato" is referred to the illicit system of brokering and exploiting labour by illegal intermediaries (named "corporals") who recruit the labour force. A crucial feature of the master gang system is the monopoly of the transportation system, which forces workers to pay money to a private informal system of transportation to commute to and from the workplace. The system is mainly widespread when the workers' accommodation (sometimes remote slums) is far from the workplace<sup>8</sup>.



**Case study document 1**



**Ph.** Farm workers pick tomatoes in the countryside near the town of Foggia, southern Italy on 24 September 2009. Reuters

<sup>7</sup> Vogt Isaksen, J. The impact of the financial crisis on European attitudes toward immigration. CMS 7, 24 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-019-0127-5>.

<sup>8</sup> See Ibid. and Omizzolo M., Tratta internazionale nell'area del Mediterraneo e sfruttamento lavorativo: il caso della comunità indiana in provincia di Latina.

The exploitation of migrants within the agricultural sector in Italy is strictly linked to migrants' low degree of inclusion within the host society and intersects different factors that, in turn, generate a set of vulnerabilities that trap migrants in illegal recruitment networks<sup>9</sup>. Lack of regular visa/documents, as well as the vulnerable social conditions (housing, access to transport and access to basic services) along with the tendency of the companies and enterprises to keep salaries low and make more profit are the bases for this kind of mechanisms. Low wages, also, are linked to the ghettoization especially in the outskirts of the big cities where rents are very high and push migrant to live in overcrowded houses. This produces social problems in the outskirts of the big cities that, often, suffer from a high rate of unemployment and the presence of migrants –which, considering their bad living conditions– are a competitive subject in the labour market fueling war among poor **Background document.2, The social inclusion of migrants in the EU**, <https://bit.ly/3nHzRr3>

This is directly interconnected with **the social inclusion** of migrants within the host society<sup>10</sup> that means the capacity of the system to include migrants within basic social services, providing regular documents quickly and including them in the labour market. Inclusion also means the active participation of migrants to everyday life in a given country.

In this sense, looking at Italy for example, these aspects are far from being overcome. Migrants represent the weak ring of the social chain and, notably during Covid-19, one of the most vulnerable layers of society.



**Background document 2**

Access to the healthcare system, for example during the first months of the pandemic, was a sort of privilege for migrants due to restricted rules and the tendency to grant services only to regular migrants.<sup>11</sup>



**Ph.** [www.Vita.it](http://www.Vita.it)

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

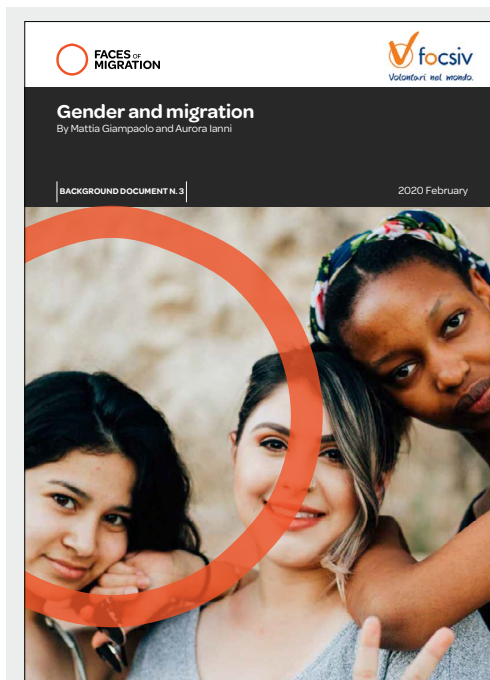
<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> See: <https://welforum.it/il-punto/emergenza-coronavirus-tempi-di-precarita/gli-immigrati-irregolari-al-tempo-della-pandemia-da-covid-19/>.

Among migrants, the most vulnerable are women and children. Especially the former, that represent approximately 45% of the total amount of migrants **Background document n.3, Gender and Migration**, <https://bit.ly/3yLyttP> and, once arrived in the host countries, are often excluded more than men. The lack of regular status and inequalities within the host country and the country of origin pushes many migrant women into the network of criminal groups, which are responsible for managing trafficking.<sup>12</sup>

As for labour market, migrant women are often employed within the care system which means support to ageing or elderly population, as well as disabled people. Even in this case, as in agriculture, exploitation, low wages, and discrimination are the main features. In addition, in Europe, the rate of employed women is lower than that of men. Gender inequality within the labour market may also cause a confinement of women at home.

This means that, once again, women could find themselves at the same starting point as in their countries of origin<sup>13</sup>.



**Background document 3**



**Ph.** <https://www.coe.int/it>

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.



### 3. CONFLICT, MIGRATION, AND EU RESPONSE: SOME CASE STUDIES

The **Report on Migration and Asylum in the EU**, published in September 2021, states that *“Building comprehensive, tailor-made and mutually beneficial partnerships with countries of origin and transit is fundamental to ensuring the safe and orderly management of migration”*<sup>14</sup>. Our analysis has then focused on some case studies, such as those of Jordan as a hosting country, Afghanistan and Libya as origin countries of migration in the framework of internal conflicts and crises.

Cooperation with third countries responding to humanitarian crises and stemming and containing irregular migration to the EU is a kind of common practice. In June 2021<sup>15</sup> 5.7 billion euros were committed for the next four years to support Syrians, other refugees and host communities in Turkey, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan.

Jordan is among the countries that host the highest number of Syrian refugees in the region and has been receiving assistance from the International community, the main international actors and the EU since the very beginning of the Syrian crisis in 2011, first in terms of emergency response and later in development assistance **Background document n.4, Migration in Third countries, the Jordanian case**, <https://bit.ly/3NNps7C>

To facilitate a coordinated effort, the Government of Jordan has developed tools and implemented actions to face the challenges coming from the crisis. Among the others, the Government has been updating, over the years, the Jordan Response Plan for the Syrian crisis, a tool that helps define the needs of the refugee population and the vulnerable Jordanian com-

munities, elaborating possible lines of intervention and establishing the financial needs to be provided for by international partners, under each sector.



**Background document 4**



Ph. <https://www.caritaspisa.com>

<sup>14</sup> See <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/report-migration-asylum.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

Since 2014, an increasing share of the EU's non-humanitarian aid for Syrian refugees and their host countries has been provided through the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis<sup>16</sup> which has supported both Syrian refugees and host communities while addressing educational, economic, social and health needs of Syrian refugees, as well as the resilience of local communities. In addition, the European Commission is assisting the country with a lot of measures, including Macro-Financial Assistance to cope with economic challenges, such as that coming from the conflict in Syria.<sup>17</sup> Hence, also due to the country's stability and reliability at the international level, EU partnership with Jordan can be seen as a case of balancing between mutual benefits and migrants' protection, although some challenges remain in terms of migrants' social inclusion, particularly for those without updated documentation.<sup>18</sup>

When talking about the link between migration and conflict and the direct relations between the EU and origin migration countries, the EU concepts of *mutual partnership* and *safe and orderly migration management*, change both in scope and implementation. With the Taliban taking power after the US withdrawal from the country, the EC has pledged one billion euro to avert a major humanitarian and economic collapse for **Afghanistan** by addressing the urgent needs of the country, its people and the region **Background document n.15, Migration in the case of the Afghan crisis**, <https://bit.ly/3P8Lx1O>



**Background document 15**



**Ph.** <https://www.open.online/>

<sup>16</sup> To go into depth on the Trust Fund components and targeted countries see [https://ec.europa.eu/trustfund-syria-region/index\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/trustfund-syria-region/index_en)

<sup>17</sup> See [https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/international-economic-relations/enlargement-and-neighbouring-countries/neighbouring-countries-eu/neighbourhood-countries/jordan\\_en#:~:text=The%20European%20Commission%20is%20providing,large%20number%20of%20Syrian%20refugees.](https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/international-economic-relations/enlargement-and-neighbouring-countries/neighbouring-countries-eu/neighbourhood-countries/jordan_en#:~:text=The%20European%20Commission%20is%20providing,large%20number%20of%20Syrian%20refugees.)

<sup>18</sup> To know more about EU's assistance and the refugee needs in Jordan see [https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/where/middle-east/jordan\\_en#:~:text=Since%20the%20beginning%20of%20the,to%20over%20%E2%82%AC404.5%20million](https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/where/middle-east/jordan_en#:~:text=Since%20the%20beginning%20of%20the,to%20over%20%E2%82%AC404.5%20million)



After more than 40 years of conflict, Afghans are among the largest refugee population worldwide and according to UNHCR estimates, there are 2.6 million registered Afghan refugees mainly based in Pakistan and Iran, to whom must be added 3.5 million internally displaced persons.<sup>19</sup> However, beside the commitments to avoid a humanitarian disaster and offer support to vulnerable people and neighboring Afghan countries, the first approach of the EU was that of supporting evacuations of all local EU staff, as well as a significant number of those Afghans with close contacts with the EU or Member States. Then a series of high-level meetings have put new actions at the core of the EU Agenda, mainly aimed at preventing irregular and large-scale migration, and protecting EU's borders, apart from some opening to resettlements. The case of **Libya** is more indicative in this sense **Background document n.7, Migration and Conflict: the case of Libya**, <https://bit.ly/3AuRFgv>

In the last decade, the country has been characterized by instability, violence and a civil war. The 2011 popular mobilization for progressive change ended up into a ten-year conflict creating an unstable scenario which negatively impacted on the lives of the local population and migrants as well.

In this context, some European Member States played a central role being responsible for shaping the internal situation through military intervention, under NATO umbrella, to take down the Gaddafi's regime without any plan for the future of the country.



**Background document 7**



**Ph.** <https://www.internazionale.it>

<sup>19</sup> See <https://www.unhcr.org/afghanistan.html>



Libya, historically, has always been a central country for migration as a destination, and has always been at the core of the partnership with the EU and some of its States (Italy) **Background document n.7, Migration and Conflict. The case of Libya**, <https://bit.ly/3AuRFgv>

In this respect, the MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) between Italy and Libya was very important in terms of cooperation to halt departures from the Libyan ports and push back migrants in detention centers. Since 2012, the management of both reception and detention formal centers has been in the hands of the Ministry of the Interior, more precisely the Department for Combatting Illegal Migration. Some of the centres are controlled by the government, the rest lies in the hands of armed groups and militias<sup>20</sup>. In this centers torture, violence against women, men and children are the rule. Many Civil International Organizations, as MSF<sup>21</sup> or UN reports -more particularly those of UNSIMIL<sup>22</sup>, have often denounced abuses on migrants in these centers which, among other things are overpopulated and lacking the basic health and sanitarian services.

For this reason, EU and some Member States, namely Italy, have taken on short-term policies on migration and have treated it as an emergency issue, rather than as a systemic phenomenon. This prevented EU from taking on a different and more appropriate approach on migration and conflict resolution in the sustainable development framework<sup>23</sup>.

Even in the last, much promising, EU-AU summit held in February 2022 **Background document n.19, Migration and sustainable development**

**in the African Union-European Union summit**, <https://bit.ly/3PbNWsB>, the externalization of borders remains among the core topics of the two Entities relations. Beside the commitment to developing a common vision for a new partnership to achieve solidarity, security, peace, sustainable development, and prosperity for the citizens of the African Union and the European Union by bringing people, regions, and organizations together,<sup>24</sup> the prevailing approach on migration is that of the EU focused on migration control and containment.

This means that in many cases authoritarian rule and the militarization of the political and social fabric are at the core of the maintenance of security, peace and mobility.



**Background document 19**

<sup>20</sup> Libya Immigration Detention, Global detention Project, August 2018, <https://www.globaldetentionproject.org/countries/africa/libya>

<sup>21</sup> Here the report of MSF: <https://www.msf.org/libya%E2%80%99s-cycle-detention-exploitation-and-abuse-against-migrants-and-refugees>.

<sup>22</sup> UNSIMIL is the UN mission in Libya that is leading the road map of the political transition in the post-Gheddafi.

<sup>23</sup> Mattia Giampaolo, L'Europa e la crisi libica, Centro Studi sul Federalismo, Commento n°160, 15/11/2019, <http://www.csfederalismo.it/it/pubblicazioni/commenti/1449-l-europa-e-la-crisi-libica>.

<sup>24</sup> See <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/it/policies/eu-africa/>

EU-AU Joint Vision committed to enhancing cooperation for peace and security through support for capacity building, equipment and training to African defence and security forces to strengthen autonomous peace operations as well as to enhance cooperation in preventing irregular migration and trafficking of human beings, strengthening border management, and achieving improvements on return, readmission, and reintegration, also promoting voluntary return, through common action and capacity-building, including with dedicated African migration institutions. In the meantime, the Horn of Africa, as well as Western Africa and Sahel are witnessing new and old conflicts as Tigray and the coups in Mali, Chad, Guinea, Sudan e Burkina Faso facing Islamic terrorist groups that are causing great displacements and migration of people<sup>25</sup>. These countries did not participate in the summit, letting open and unresolved questions about peace building opportunities. The increasing instability could provoke new waves of migrants within African countries and secondary movements towards Europe.

Sub-Saharan countries are crucial for migrants' routes; however, they are witnessing a rising presence of terrorist groups such as **Boko Haram in Nigeria and Cameroon**, and they are also affected by an increasing process of land grabbing and, consequently, forced migrations **Case Study report 2, Conflicts, forced migration and access to land: the special case of north Cameroon**, <https://bit.ly/3bU40Ro>

If on the one hand, the instability of the region and the spread of terrorist groups concerned Africa as well -besides North Africa-, on the other hand, the direct effect was a huge wave of forced migration which interested the

South-Saharan region. These migrations in turn generate other tensions between migrants and local populations, particularly over access to land, undermining peaceful coexistence and local development. Also when a focus is maintained in the EU-AU summit on addressing the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement and less on enhancing both the pathways for legal migration between EU-AU and within Africa and the support for technical and vocational education to face brain drain, investing in youth and women empowerment, all these renewed initiatives are characterized by a high level of bureaucratic procedures that, at least in the past, transformed the aids from Europe to an empty box for the African governments. And last but not least, many civil society organizations both in Africa and Europe underlined the lack of an effective involvement of local populations, social movements, indigenous peoples in the AU-EU political process<sup>26</sup>.



**Case Study  
Report 2**

<sup>25</sup> See: <https://www.affarinternazionali.it/vertice-unione-europea-unione-africana/>

<sup>26</sup> See: <https://concordeurope.org/2022/02/14/joint-african-european-civil-society-statement-to-all-heads-of-states-and-government-dignitaries-attending-the-6th-eu-au-summit/>; and <https://www.cidse.org/2022/02/16/african-peoples-summit-joint-declaration/>

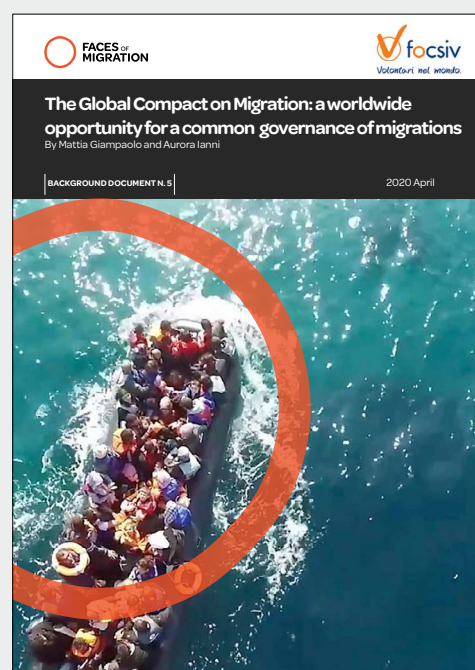
## 4. MULTILATERAL AND EU POLICIES

The 2018 agreement on the **Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration** **Background document n.5, The Global Compact on Migration, a worldwide opportunity for a common governance of migrations**, <https://bit.ly/3utFkpg> is to be considered a milestone in aims, such as improving the governance of migration at the global level, addressing the challenges of migration and strengthening the role of migrants in sustainable development.<sup>27</sup> Indeed, the majority of the UN member states adopted a document based on the “shared responsibility” principle, both to address each other’s needs and concerns over migration and to protect the human rights of migrants, while promoting security and prosperity for all.

A comprehensive approach to the management of migration then translated into a combination of measures, in line with the principle that no country can act on its own. But although the 23 GCM objectives represent an unprecedented opportunity for rethinking, enhancing, addressing migration, their implementation was and still is not immediate. Cooperation between states is at the core of the Compact but not all of the UN Members have adopted it nor considered it as mandatory, because of its non-binding nature.

Not to dissipate efforts, however, the GCM provided indications on follow-up and review of its core demands. Thus, between 17-20 May 2022 the President of the UN General Assembly hosted the International Migration Review Forum at the United Nations Headquarters in New York **Background document n.20, What progress on the Global Compact on Migration**, <https://bit.ly/3OOMFI8>

The 2022 IMFR represented the first quadriennial platform “to discuss and share progress on the implementation of all aspects of the Global Compact, including the reference to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the participation of all relevant stakeholders” (par 49 of the GCM).



**Background document 5**



**Background document 20**

<sup>27</sup> See <https://www.iom.int/global-compact-migration>



Just few months before the IMRF, UN Secretary General also reported on the advancement of the GCM in world's countries, considering the impact of the Pandemic **Background document n.16, Overview of the UN Secretary General's Report on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration**, <https://bit.ly/3AriD8P>

Despite the improvements of some states in terms of new structural policies regarding migrants, the UN Secretary General outlined recommendations aimed, among others, at ensuring that all migrants are enabled to gain access to essential health services and continuity of care -including COVID-19 vaccinations-; expand and diversify rights-based pathways for regular migration; complying with the obligation of non-refoulement at borders; integrating migration as a core, cross-cutting issue in sustainable development, including by developing ambitious national plans to implement the Compact, to strengthen its implementation, follow-up and review.<sup>28</sup>

The IMRF was then developed during a series of roundtables that emphasized progress, challenges, and gaps in the implementation of the Global Compact. Many efforts were made in implementing the Global Compact, also in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, at national, local, United Nations and other international and regional organizations levels, migrants, diasporas, civil society, and so on. However, as underlined in the final IMFR declaration, greater efforts are needed<sup>29</sup> including the commitments of respecting and protecting the human rights of all migrants, developing national gender-re-

sponsive and child-sensitive migration policies, recognizing migrants' meaningful contribution to policy development in societies, providing all migrants with safe access to basic services, eliminating all forms of discrimination, intensifying joint efforts to prevent smuggling, strengthening efforts to enhance the availability of pathways for regular migration, among the others.<sup>30</sup>

Moreover, a commitment was taken to consider migration as a cross-cutting issue, an inter-sectional phenomenon to be addressed *in line with a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach*, also by expanding international cooperation and partnerships through financial and technical assistance to developing countries, especially to Africa.



**Background document 16**

<sup>28</sup> To all the UN Secretary General recommendations see <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/global-compact-safe-orderly-and-regular-migration-report-secretary-general-a76642>

<sup>29</sup> See <https://migrationnetwork.un.org/system/files/docs/A%20AC.293%202022%20L.1%20English.pdf>

<sup>30</sup> To the IMRF recommendation and conclusions see: <https://migrationnetwork.un.org/system/files/docs/A%20AC.293%202022%20L.1%20English.pdf>

At the European level, although considering that not all the EU member states have adopted the Global Compact, such as Italy,<sup>31</sup> migration management and its reform is at the core of the EU debate, both in its internal and external dimensions, where the latter usually has a special weight.

In September 2020, the European Commission proposed a “fresh start” to the management of migration and asylum in the EU. **The New Pact on Migration and Asylum Background document n.9, Migration governance in the European Union: The New Pact on Migration and Asylum**, <https://bit.ly/3AvjEgq> has established a roadmap to overcome the critical issues already experienced in the management of the so-called “migration crisis” of 2015 and to guarantee “a strong and balanced migration and asylum system equal to the challenges of the future”.

The 2020 Pact was based on some key elements, such as:

- a)** a robust and fair management of external borders, which include an identity, sanitarian and security scrutiny;
- b)** equal norms and laws in terms of asylum procedures and a facilitation process in terms of asylum and repatriation;
- c)** a new mechanism of solidarity for search and rescue actions, crisis and pressure situations;
- d)** better preparation and prevision of a future possible crisis;
- e)** an effective repatriation policy and a coordinated approach at EU level;

**f)** a complete governance in terms of asylum and migration policies at EU level;

**g)** advantageous partnerships with third countries of origin and transit;

**h)** development of legal paths of migration and sustainable patterns for those in need of protection and in order to attract talents in Europe;



**Background document 9**



<sup>31</sup> For the monitoring of the SDGs linked to migration and the GCM in Italy see: <https://www.focisiv.it/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Migrazioni-e-Sviluppo-Sostenibile-2021-ENG-19.04.2021.pdf>

Although considering some reference to legal migration, many NGOs and civil society organizations (CSOs) have highlighted the criticalities of the New Pact that proposed the same old logic of externalization of borders, lack of respect for the human rights of migrants, lack of real solidarity among Member States. In fact, the New Pact aims to build a system in which the prevention of all forms of unauthorized movement and the increase in expulsions and returns continue to be the main policy features, while fewer efforts are dedicated to the protection and inclusion of migrants.

Also, beyond the “new beginning” auspices, in 2020, the migration discourse in the EU was tied to restrictions on mobility, linked to COVID-19, and the announced economic decline that has actually led to a change in the trend of the phenomenon, with a net reduction in asylum applications **Background document n.12, The next future of migration and European policy**, <https://bit.ly/3ORqEsi>

Then, in 2021, **a year on the New Pact Background document n.14, A year on the New Pact on Migration and Asylum in the EU**, <https://bit.ly/3lj2cgQ>, some progress on the legal framework for migration and asylum in the EU were achieved, such as the revision of the EU action Plan against migrant smuggling (2021-2025), an EU strategy on voluntary return and reintegration and political agreement was reached in May 2021 on the revised Blue Card Directive, among the others. But criticalities remain.

**Background document 12****Background document 14**



The solidarity mechanism that on paper is aimed at supporting the countries most exposed to massive arrivals (such as Italy, Greece, Spain and Malta) is one of the most challenging ones. According to the 2020 New Pact, the solidarity mechanism is applicable only in two cases: a) recurrent arrivals in the territory of a Member State through SAR (Search and Rescue) operations or in situations of 'migratory pressure'; b) in the event that a Member State finds itself in a situation of 'migratory emergency'.

The decision to put the solidarity mechanism into practice is in the hands of the European Commission which should evaluate whether a country is experiencing a 'crisis' or not. In addition, solidarity is not mandatory, but it is based on the willingness of the single Member State which can decide to actively participate in the relocation of migrants or be part of the process by sponsoring and supporting the logistics of the procedures -i.e., sponsoring the repatriation of migrants.

So, despite some developments on the legal framework for migration and asylum, major criticalities in the field of migration governance in the EU remain and are still of crucial relevance in respect to the principles of Agenda 2030.

Above all, there are divisions among the Member States which are far from being overcome, especially in terms of co-responsibility. If a political agreement has been reached on externalization of borders, including deals with third countries to reduce illegal migration and tighter border control, an agreement is still missing in terms of internal migration management.



Ph. <https://www.ilfoglio.it>

But while the 2021 pushbacks at the Polish-Belarusian border, revealed, once again, the unwillingness of some Member States to take on responsibilities in terms of solidarity and non-refoulement, the 2022 Ukrainian crisis has portrayed a completely different scenario. In a span of just few days the EU as a whole has triggered, for the first time in history, the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD). Under the TDP, beneficiaries are entitled to a residence permit that lasts from 1 year to 3 years, they have immediate access to health, housing, education and to the labour market and they are free to reach the country in which to stay (presence of relatives and co-national communities), before the issuance of a resident permit.<sup>32</sup>

To alleviate pressure on Member States, in addition, there is no application nor assessment, just verification of identities and status (anybody who were in Ukraine before February 2022, TCN enjoying any kind of protection in Ukraine, stateless persons with long term residence permits in Ukraine).

<sup>32</sup>To go into depth, see

[https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/policies/migration-and-asylum/common-european-asylum-system/temporary-protection\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/policies/migration-and-asylum/common-european-asylum-system/temporary-protection_en)

According to UNHCR data, as of June 2022, the border crossings from Ukraine reached 8 million with Poland, Moldova, Romania, Hungary and Slovakia experiencing the largest influx. 3,5 million are registered for Temporary protection or similar national protection schemes in Europe.<sup>33</sup>

However, if solidarity has been reported especially by countries that are usually refusing to share responsibility on migration (e.g., Visegrad Group) this raises questions as to why Ukrainian nationals have been granted with immediate access to protection procedures, particularly at the administrative level, compared to migrants and refugees arriving from other regions. This specific issue will need to be monitored and reported in the coming months by civil society organizations in EU countries in order to hold governments accountable for discriminatory - and potentially racist - practices towards people fleeing conflict, poverty, climate change and human rights violations in African, Middle Eastern and Asian countries **Background document n. 18, Reception System in some EU Member States during the Ukraine crisis: solidarity and discriminations**, <https://bit.ly/3nIMzpG>

But other than that, there is a need of preventing possible waves of intolerance and resentment towards the refugees fleeing Ukraine in the scenario of a “war-time economy” that could leave the space to nationalist and protectionist claims in the EU.



**Background document 18**



**Ph.** <https://www.ilriformista.it>

<sup>33</sup> See <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine> (as of June 21 2022).

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this paper we attempted to link some dots related to the main issues around migration that are strictly linked to the main tools the international community provided for in the framework of the 2030 Agenda. Both the SDGs and the GCM try to have a comprehensive approach, considering migration in all its dimensions as an intersectional phenomenon.

However, while looking at the EU Member States, the tendency remains that of approaching migration on an emergency basis. This becomes clear when analyzing the persistent inequalities between the countries of origin, transit and destination to which EU (and generally “the West”) “external” actions have substantially contributed. Political instability, civil wars and the exploitation of resources are still provoking those conditions which contribute decisively to pushing migrants to leave their countries and attempt to reach our soil.

Whilst the EU’s attitude on migration has been that of favoring containment and prevention of migration flows instead of investing in measures favoring regular pathways, inclusion and integration, the recent Russia’s invasion of Ukraine demonstrates this trend can be somehow inverted. The adoption of the Temporary Protection Directive means that the EU can improve, if it wishes so, the migration management at the internal level, with a full-scale approach.

By now, it is to be seen whether the adoption of the Temporary Protection Directive can translate improve the negotiation on the New Pact on Migration. The TPD has been triggered to quickly respond to the massive number of people fleeing the war in Ukraine.

So that, as of the EC website, *“due to the scale of estimated arrivals, the European Commission identified a clear risk that the asylum systems of EU countries would be unable to process applications within the deadlines set. This would negatively affect the efficiency of national asylum processes and adversely affect the rights of people applying for international protection”*<sup>34</sup>.

As a fresh new start for the migration management in the EU and a mechanism to respond effectively to possible new crisis, the negotiation on the New Pact can start from lessons learned from the Ukrainian crisis and extend solidarity channels also to the other people fleeing wars and destruction. It is indeed necessary to avoid any instrumentalisation of migration, preventing toxic narratives leading to discrimination.

Also, if the EU is to deliver on its promises to reshape migration governance by balancing Member States’ interests and needs, while effectively managing and combating irregular migration and strengthening safeguards for vulnerable migrants, the roadmap to be adopted must include

- a)** strengthening regular channels for migration especially for people in need of international protection;
- b)** urging the effective implementation of solidarity between Member States and share responsibility of migration governance in all the cases
- c)** revising the externalization approach by increasing investments in circular mobility and sustainable development of the countries of origin, without subordinating the protection of human rights to geopolitical interests;

<sup>34</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/policies/migration-and-asylum/common-european-asylum-system/temporary-protection\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/policies/migration-and-asylum/common-european-asylum-system/temporary-protection_en)



d) strengthening the protection and inclusion of migrants in host societies, investing in their role as “factors in development” and thus in **sustainable migration** **Background document n. 11**, **Cosa sono le migrazioni sostenibili?**, <https://bit.ly/3alRVnA>

2) “Reducing the financial costs of migration”;

3) “Protecting the rights of migrants and their families”

4) “Promoting the (re)integration of migrants” e.g. indicators on the access to citizenship, access to bank account, the right to work and start a business, availability of data on immigration, return migration, among others,

5) “Enhancing the development impact of migration” **Background document n.13**, **Policy coherence on migration governance**, <https://bit.ly/3uwBcET>

**Background document 11**



Also at the national level, the *whole of society and whole of government* approach on migration is about measuring and evaluating **policy coherence** by comparing, as of the KNOMAD indications, the five dimensions of:

1) “Promoting institutional coherence”, e.g. the degree of integration of migration in development strategies/policies, the ratification of migrant specific conventions, migration data and data reporting;



**Background document 13**

But above all, greater coherence means changing EU and member state policies that favor European trade and investment causing unsustainable exploitation -especially of African natural resources-exacerbated by climate change, and consequently internal and international migration.

Changing production and consumption patterns, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and supporting cooperation for the empowerment of people and local communities should be some of the measures for a coherent policy package of EU foreign and cooperation policies, particularly for Euro-African sustainable development. **Policy paper n.1, What coherence in policies to tackle climate migration,** <https://bit.ly/3yncSGM>

Although inequalities continue to grow and migration continue to be considered a problem to solve and a toxic political issue, some positive aspects might be underlined notably in terms of solidarity and multilateral cooperation. Indeed, in many African countries national and international institutions started to take some initiatives with the aim to curb with poverty and social exclusion. For example, IOM stressed on the importance of national government to improve basic services in line with SDGs<sup>35</sup>. This should be incremented throughout a real improvement of social, economic and civil conditions of migrants bringing on policies which aims to reform labour market, industrialization and the strengthening of basic social services. In addition, IOM called for a deeper and functional cooperation among local, national, and international institutions to put in practices these objectives.

Strengthening the link between migration and sustainable development is about considering migration as a structural factor rather than a temporary issue that needs emergency responses.



**Policy paper n.1**



**Ph.** <https://ilsaltodirodi.com>

<sup>35</sup> See the IOM report: <https://publications.iom.int/books/africa-migration-report-challenging-narrative>

That is why, both at the European Union and EU member states levels, there is a need of for developing long-term approaches and plans of action on migration, which stress the importance of social inclusion - by enhancing both the theoretical and practical skills of migrants, and the real cooperation with third countries e.g. not just for border management, readmission, and counter trafficking measures, but also and most of all for increasing legal migration channels and circular migration. It would be helpful in this sense also raising awareness in EU societies on the positive role migration could have, if well managed, for the wellbeing of both the countries of origin and destination.

Talking about Italy, as already underlined in the FoM Monitoring Report on Migration and Sustainable development **Migration and sustainable development: Monitoring Report of the Italian Civil Society on the Sustainable Development Goals related to Migration and for the Global Compact on Migration**, <https://bit.ly/3ReDfan> there is the need to build better coherence between the internal and external dimensions of migration on the basis of human rights and the principle of leaving no one behind.

Investing in the reception system so that, alongside basic needs, it ensures migrants the tools for autonomy and integration into the Italian society, taking into account the different needs with a gender perspective; promoting safe and orderly channels for migration, considering the different challenges the most vulnerable people face (especially women and children) during their journeys; proceeding in the discussion of the popular initiative bill of the campaign “I was a foreigner”<sup>36</sup>; investing in international coope-

ration for sustainable development to enhance diasporas’ role in countries of origin and destination, could be some step to develop a Coherent National Plan on migration and sustainable development.



Ph. <https://www.ilgiornale.it>



**Migration and Sustainable Development**

<sup>36</sup> To go into depth on the proposal promoted by many Italian civil society organisations and entities see <https://erostraniero.radicali.it/la-proposta/>





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