

European Master's Degree in Human Rights and Democratisation

Climate change, forced migration and
security implications: a new challenge for
global solidarity?

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Abstract

Human migration will be one of the consequences of climate change, although there are still problems with establishing the causal link, lack of scientific certainty and lack of consensus on a proper definition of climate migrant. Migration involves complex patterns of multiple causality, in which environmental factors are closely linked to economic, social, and political ones.

Even if a definition is agreed upon, determining how climate migrants are best protected remains unclear and leads to a debate within the international community over issues of responsibility and sovereignty. My thesis will explore the current legal status of climate migrants under international law and will seek to answer the question whether human security and human rights approach to climate change can help to advocate their rights.

Climate migration might have some security implications, particularly through the concept of human security. Concepts of human rights and human security are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. I will argue that linking international climate change law with human security and human rights could help to better understand needs of climate migrants and to force the international community to sooner adopt effective climate change policy.

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