

## **Securitization of Climate Change Induced Migration: Analysis of the European Union Discourses and Policies**

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## **Abstract**

Migration has always been a way for people to reach a better life and a strategy to adapt to changing conditions. Since the early 1000s, climate-related environmental changes have begun to directly impact communities whose way of life is dependent on nature and local resources. Owing to climate change, which is mostly a result of human activity, and the devastating environmental changes it has created, people have begun to relocate voluntarily or forcefully, to abandon their homelands, and these migrations within the country or across borders are now evident. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) made a sobering prediction in 2008 that 200 million people will migrate in 2050 due to climate change (IOM, 2008). Internal Relocation Monitoring Centre (IDMC), one of the most cited and widely recognized data sources on disaster displacement, reported in 2021 that: "In 2020, 30.7 million new displacements were triggered by disasters in 145 countries and territories.". The globally warmed world is now facing with mass-scale human displacements which became a "threat multiplier" for human security. Although knowledge about migration as an impact of climate change has been analyzed for a while, there is a gap of empirically based study on the linkage between climate change and securitization to be researched furtherly in academic and political discourse of international relations. This thesis aims to analyze climate change induced migration and security nexus through theoretical framework of human security and in the context of the securitization theory developed by the Copenhagen School; and how the European Union (EU) structured securitization policies on climate change related migration; and as an estimable actor and global leader since the ratification and adaptation of Paris Agreement, how EU's securitization policies have been processed under the Union's legal initiatives.

**Keywords:** Climate change; Climate change induced migration; Human security; Securitization

## INTRODUCTION

The most significant environmental issue of the 21st Century, climate change, presents a serious threat to our planet's future. Climate related conflicts have become more common, bringing with them political, social, and economic challenges, particularly damaging the ecosystems in specific places of vulnerable regions.

The potential for violence in vulnerable regions to which people are migrating is one indicator of the connection between climate change and violent conflict. Mass migrations not only put the safety of migrants at risk, but they could also upset the social and economic order in the countries where they end up. A considerable number of regions experience internal displacement and/or cross-border migration, which are predominantly illegal and irregular. There have occurred socioeconomic imbalances, tensions, vulnerabilities, and other conflicts in those regions. This makes climate change induced migration a worldwide issue and Europe is one of these regions. Future projections suggest that migration flows from Africa to Europe will increase in the coming decades, but this increase will be driven by demographic and political factors rather than climate change. Migration from Africa to coastal EU countries could have important consequences for the future of the EU by; creating diplomatic problems between the countries; increased competition for jobs, housing, and other necessities; tensions and conflicts between migrants and host communities through resources; loss of cultural and social connections for migrants, as well as the potential loss of traditional knowledge and practices; and economic and political instability in countries.

The main objective of this research is to explain the impacts of the climate crisis and to analyze climate change induced human displacement and securitization policies of the EU (EU).

Considering theorizations, this research analyses securitization of climate change induced migration through the new security understandings of human security and Copenhagen School instead of traditional theories in investigating the nexus between climate change, migration, and security.

The literature review of this paper has tried to be mainly conducted on climate change, migration, and security nexus focusing on the emphasis with the most important studies and analyses. While explaining the theoretical and conceptual frameworks, main studies of environmentalist, intellectual, innovative, and inquisitive researchers and authors were taken as reference; the contents and clauses of legally binding international agreements on climate change, as well as observational studies, the reports, and data of several organizations and think tanks such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), are used as an essential components of this research. Another source of literature includes the publications of the European community, mainly the EU which served as the foundation and the formation of the case study and empirical analysis of this thesis. The main source of framing the empirical analysis is the papers and reports of EU institutions, mainly the European Commission (EC), the Union's primary legislative body, to determine whether securitization of climate change induced migration has commenced inside the EU. Because EC is the only organization in the Union that has the authority to propose new measures of legislation, making it the initial body to act decisively in the legislative process in the Union. The 2000s marked the beginning of climate change and security challenges within the EU. The significant milestones that caused the issue to gain momentum were the Paris Agreement and the mass migration flows that Europe experienced in 2015. Therefore, the examination of this study focused primarily on the preceding ten years.

## **RESULTS**

### **Climate Change and its Impacts**

The world has been facing with many climate and environmental problems and has been experiencing different climate periods since its existence. The periodic loop of world climate has mainly consisted of ice ages and warm periods. These natural climate changes should be distinguished from anthropogenic (human related) climate changes. With technological developments, humans' interventions to nature gradually increased. One of the most critical environmental problems that started to emerge in those days, continues today and will continue in the future is climate change (Hughes, 2006).

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) defines climate change as "...a statistically significant variation in either the mean state of the climate or in its variability, persisting for an extended period (typically decades or longer). Climate change may be due to natural internal processes or external factors such as persistent changes to the atmosphere or changes in land use" (WMO, 2017). However, after the 19. Century, with the industrial revolution, it has begun to be discussed that, in addition to natural and cyclical changes, "human activities" started to play a decisive role on climate change on a regional and global scale and those activities began to affect the atmosphere and ecosystem. Contrary to WMO's definition, in 1992, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), expressed that; "Climate change' means a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods.". Other important and comprehensive studies on climate change are carried out by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and according to IPCC, "Climate change in IPCC usage refers to a change in the state of the climate that can be identified (e.g., using statistical tests) by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties and that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer. It refers to any change in climate over time, whether due to natural variability or because of human activity".

It is an obvious fact that climate change is a global issue, but the impacts of climate change have had disruptive influences particularly on vulnerable ones; developing and poor countries of low-income communities rather than developed ones. According to United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), many regions of Africa, Small Island States (SIDs) and coastal zones are facing with droughts, extreme weather events and sea level rises mostly.

Climate change and the related rise in the frequency of severe weather events such as floods, droughts, and that sea levels are increasingly being recognized as posing political and security risks that endanger national and regional stability and people's well-being (Kloos, Gebert, Rosenfeld & Renaud, 2013). As a result, there has been an increase of government concern in the impact of climate change on water supply and human wellbeing. Especially, whether climatic and hydrological changes and growing variability cause and

multiply conflict at various scales or induce cooperation between and within countries, and how this affects human security, remains debatable. Within the context of climate change and conflict literature, an increasing approach argue that climate change should be regarded as a threat multiplier for today's conflicts. In comparison, operational systems and well-adapted organizations of countries can create collaboration and dispute resolution, therefore they can be regarded as threat minimizers which mitigate the maintenance of human security.

### **Mobility and Migration as an Impact of Climate Change**

Human mobility and migration have been mainly based on economic, social, and political conflicts of countries, but global warming and climate change have brought a new dimension to these movements. Although, it seems like a new phenomenon, people have been moving and relocating because of changes in the environment for centuries. The founders of migration studies, like Friedrich Ratzel, and later researchers of neo-environmental determinism mentioned the environment issues and defined climate change as an important determinant of human mobility (Piguet, 2013).

Migration has been accepted as a survival method of people facing with natural or human-related disasters. The absence of natural resources such as clean water and extreme weather conditions such as hot and dry or cold and wet have been endangering the way of life of indigenous people and causing socio-economic disputes, both of which serve as a threat multiplier for the notion of human security. According to data-driven research analysis of the Ecological Threat Register (ETR), 157 independent states and regions are under threat of ecological problems measuring population growth, water stress, food insecurity, droughts, floods, cyclones and rising temperature and sea levels (IEP, 2020). Every year, 24 million people have been displacing because of ecological disasters and this amount is predicted to be increased and these mass movements are expected to be more than 2015 European migration crisis (IEP, 2020).

In 1990, the IPCC noticed that the massive impact of climate change could be on human migration. As a result of extreme and abnormal events of high temperatures and sea-level rise, the average of more than 20 million people has been obliged to leave their homeland and move to other places every year (UNHCR, 2020). Future predictions note that 141

countries are under threat of ecological disasters and more than one billion people do not have the capacity to struggle with environmental changes and estimation for the year 2050 points out that there would have been 1.2 billion individuals forced to relocate. (IEP, 2020). According to the statistics of Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC), every year nearly 3 million people have been displacing as a result of extreme weather events and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies expressed that during the six-month period from September 2020 to February 2021, approximately 10 million people were migrated because of climate change related weather events of flooding and droughts, mainly in Asia (Reuters, 2021).

The linkage and interaction between migration and environment issues have also started to be considered as an important field after the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 (Hugo, 1996). According to the published Agenda 21 of the Earth Summit, the Rio Conference, the results of human activities should be considered in terms of increasing climate events and environmental changes which have the capability of destroying people's local livelihoods and lead to major migration flows (UNSD, Agenda 21, 1992).

The direct impact of environmental issues on migration have been still argued by different disciplines and perspectives. It is obvious that healthy analysis of the interaction and cause and effect relation between climate change and migration needs an interdisciplinary approach. The main arguments about the role of climate change on migration indicate two points; the vulnerability of people and regions and political situation of these regions in terms of combatting against climate change and their adaptation and reduction strategies. Nomadic people, migratory agriculturists and pastoralists are the first examples of environmental-related migrants. However, those were mostly the voluntarily movements, but in the last 30 years a considerable connection between climate change and forced human mobility has started to be deeply recognized and analyzed. Contemporary and future challenges arising from anthropogenic climate change have started to be discussed since these challenges have led to national and international mass migrations. Different research perspectives and approaches have discussed this complex and urgent problem of climate change related migration in different levels. The most extensive perspectives are maximalist/alarmist and the minimalist/sceptical perspectives which have discussed the

connection between climate change and migration (Göransson, 2013). These approaches have focused on the discussion that whether the migration is a result of unsuccessful mitigation and adaptation actions, or it should be subjected as an adaptation plan. Despite the oppositeness, both approaches argue that the risks posed by climate change induced migration will be mitigated with adaptation policies and measures (Göransson, 2013).

Migration is accepted as one of the complex social impacts or results of climate change. The “environmental refugee”, “environmental migrant”, “climate refugee” concepts have been used within new migration forms of the world since climate change has started threatening the environmental security of communities. According to environmental security concept, climate change is an exterior push factor of mass migrations which is accepted as a social consequence and involuntary response of people (Mearns & Norton, 2010).

Extreme climate events or sudden-onset and slow-onset disasters have had short-term and long-term effects on vulnerable locations and their residents. These effects can be caused from different type of environmental disasters, sudden or chronic, such as droughts, desertification, floods, tsunamis, hurricanes etc., mainly driven from increasing temperatures and sea level rise problem. Many people living in problematic regions have had the experience of sudden and extreme weather events and they have the capability of overcoming with the results of those events and hazards. In these kind of regions, short distance human movements are seen frequent and natural. The complexity and seriousness of climate change induced migration can be clearly observed in Small Island Developing States (SIDs). People living in SIDs have been facing with and suffering increasingly strong natural disasters and other climate issues, which threaten their well-being and as their territories are going under water, the movement of them is urgent and mandatory. EU has also been facing with environmental migration intensively, specifically with boat refugees in the Mediterranean Sea. Thus, the scale or potential of relocation depends on the scale or type of weather event and environmental risks that individuals and communities are experiencing in their livelihoods.

Another variety fact of climate migration is the governmental policies of adaptation and socio-economic resistance of governance against these environmental threats. In the aftermath of an extreme natural disaster, people need humanitarian needs of food, water,



shelter and medicine. If the government and local administrations have not developed sufficient infrastructure and system of disaster management, relief period and reconstruction of disaster area spin out of control. In those kind of events, international foreign emergency organizations come and help. The dimension of international help is related with foreign relations and politics of both aid recipient and aid giving nations. In most cases, the "relocation" system is used as a method of dealing with the consequences of the disaster or helping the victims.

The global issue of climate change has been triggering the activity of migration because it affects the environmental conditions and livelihoods of people and threatens their lives with serious and vital conflicts of waterlessness, hunger, homelessness, and unemployment. Refugees and stateless masses have been the reflection of worldwide climate change problem indicating how the problem requires urgent action. Many people living in fragile and conflict-affected areas have lack of resources to adapt or recover the damaging effects of environmental disasters.

Politically and economically wealthier governments of developing countries have constructed a steady infrastructure and system of delivering food, water, sheltering and providing social or and insurance against environmental disasters. But for vulnerable communities, for example in SIDs, migration is one of the survival strategies utilized not only by individuals but also by governments. (McLeman & Smit, 2006). While researching how migration and climate change are related to one another, physical vulnerabilities of people are assumed to be one of the reasons affecting environmental migrations. Environmentally induced human movements, as both a cause and result of climate change, mainly occurs in low-income countries because the scale and effect of environmental changes have increased substantially (Mearns & Norton, 2010).

Irregular rainfalls and precipitation regimes, flood and overflows cause physical and moralistic damages in the environment, living spaces of people, animals, and other creatures. Formations and damages to soil structure consequence as destruction biological diversity of agricultural lands which are the workplaces of people. The loss of clean water resources leads to spread of diseases. Those ecological threats, natural disasters have become the predominant reason for climate induced migrations and displacements as a humanitarian emergency issue.

More than two billion people do not have access to sufficient food for a healthy life today, and it is projected that this number will rise to 3.5 billion by the year 2050 (IEP, 2020). Most of those displacements originating from natural disasters are within the country or to neighboring places. However, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR) estimates that at least one of five people will migrate overseas, and ecologically driven migration of populations could exceed the European migration crisis of 2015 (UNCHR, 2020). Therefore, it is important to consider which countries are directly impacted and which ones have the power and capacity to resist against extreme ecological scenarios.

### **Securitization of Climate Change Induced Migration**

In 1940s, the concept of security had started to be reconsidered by political leaders and strategists. The first centralization of human being in terms of security was established in the declaration of United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948. Although the definition of "refugee" was legally broadened in the 1951 Refugee Convention, there was still a big gap in the legal recognition and protection of refugees who are forced to move because of environmental changes (Hartley, 2012). The first proposition of "environmental refugee" was by Lester Brown in 1976 and in these years the effects of extreme natural events had started to be observed and experts from different disciplines started to develop policies and re-define the concept of human security. During the Cold War, martial and statist approach of human security concept was continued. But in the middle of 1970s, despite the Cold War's consolidation of state-centric approach, the UN's reports and declarations had focused on security concept in terms of underdevelopment and emphasized basic needs of human being, poverty, hunger, inequality, and environmental threats. During 1970s and 1980s, human wellbeing had been directly connected to environmentally equal conditions and the notion of vulnerability was expressed by environmental and social scientists (Timmerman, 1981). During 1990s, with the attempts of UN again, the scope of security had been broadened and it had been re-conceptualized in terms of sustainable development, human being and maintaining human rights. At the beginning of 2000s, extreme climate events and disasters like droughts and hurricanes started to be resulted with human replacements or movements because of lack of natural resources and unstable socio-economic conditions. As an outcome of those

movements, human security paradigm was conceptually broadened with “freedom from hazard impact” which aims to protect vulnerabilities of individuals and improve the struggling skills of communities facing with climate change events like floods and cyclones (Jayaram, 2018).

The concept of securitization within Copenhagen School, has been introduced as the widening of state-centered, military and political power perspective of traditional security approaches. In contrast to traditional security approaches, which assume that security policies are triggered by concrete security problems, the Copenhagen School is based on the understanding that both security problems and the associated security policies are constructed by actors, and based on the constructivist approach, the Copenhagen school conceptualizes security as a speech act (Türkeş, 2018). The concept, which was firstly brought to the agenda and originally formulated by Ole Waever, later gained a theoretical framework with the contributions of writers such as Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde, broadened the scope of security to include threats and problems that traditional security approaches regarded as low politics (Buzan, Waever and Wilde, 1998). Specifically, the concept and theoretical framework are described in depth in the 1998 book titled *Security: A New Framework of Analysis*, which was authored by three researchers from the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute (COPRII) Buzan and other authors’ analysis, securitization can be placed in five political arenas: military, political, economic, society and environment (Does, 2013).

After the Cold War, the security approach has been expanded as it started to include non-conventional and non-military threats for national security. Environmental issues, like climate change had started to be analyzed and defined as a threat to human, national and ecological security concepts (Hughes, 2018). This military-based security approach had started to be evolved and broadened with including new range of non-military security concepts such as economy, migration, and environment (Allenby, 2000). Even though research into the connections between the environment and security dates to the 1960s and 1970s, it was the Copenhagen School that introduced the term "environmental security" to refer to these connections and identified the concept as a field whose particularities must be considered when examining the dynamics of modern security. With the global warming

other critical problems in climate system, the policy makers and researchers have started to focus on the environmental threats like climate change and its outcomes.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Analysis of European Union Securitization Policies**

Climate change related issues need to be solved with a sustainable and interdisciplinary political approach and required focalizing on global mobilization. The EU has been using its foreign policy making tools of policy dialogues and engagements with climate related initiatives like UNFCCC, high level collaborations and unities with non-EU countries, EU level and global level negotiations, and financial funding mechanisms to maintain sustainable development and propose climate change for the agenda of policy making processes.

According to the World Migration Report 2020, most of the new internal displacements in Europe in 2020 were caused by natural disasters rather than other conflicts. Over the past decade, EU have developed considerable number of strategies, initiatives, policy departments and forums referring the conflicts related with climate change induced displacement and migration. Since the climate change related migrations, environmental security and human security issues have become into prominence in international politics in 2000s, EU policy makers have started to enhance several systems functioning for preventing climate change related environmental degradation and build up regional resilience plans and adaptation strategies. Furthermore, the socio-political framework and initiatives of EU emphasizes the significance of addressing climate and environmental concerns together, as well as mainstreaming climate and nature across all policy sectors.

In January 1999, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Security and Defence Policy under European Parliament (EP) presented a report titled as ‘The Environment, Security and Foreign Policy’, with an explanatory statement of “a defence against environmental threats” (EP, 1999). This report was focusing on developing a strategy on using military resources for environmental purposes and drew a security scenario of non-military approach and put emphasis on the rise of human flows from climate change and

underlined that these movements have the potential of creating the “worst humanitarian crises of our time” (Myers & Kent, 1995).

In 2003, the European Security Strategy focused on competition for natural resources and migratory movements in various regions.” (EC, 2003). In January 2007, EC, as an executive and legislative power of EU security policy, gave support to a Project called "Environmental Change and Forced Migration Scenarios" (EACH-FOR) which was as a representative of multi-country research-based study of environmental issues including human mobility happening in all parts of the world.

A green paper on climate change and a letter from EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana Madariaga to the Council combining climate change with security issues marked the beginning of the EU’s participation in environmental change and migration.

As a result of United Nations debate of 2007 and its emergent call for humanitarian aid for impacts of climate change to protect international security and with a reflection of IPCC’s alarming estimations on the number of future emissions, the European Council and EC representatives gathered in 2008 to prepare a collective work and published “Climate Change and International Security: Paper from the High Representative and the EC to the European Council” which was firstly published in 2003, attributed migration caused by environmental factors as one of the dangers to European security.

This study of strategy takes a regional approach, recognizing vulnerabilities that certain nations are more at risk from climate change than others, but also calling for the global acknowledgement of environmental migration. Compared to the first version of 2003, this strategy not only discusses environmentally driven migration, but also urges public policy to address it. The Report annominated climate change as a threat multiplier posing political and security risks that directly strike European interests (EC, 2008). With this Report, EU located itself in the center of global climate policies as a leading actor with wide range of instruments and claims that Europe's comprehensive approach to conflict prevention, crisis management, and post-conflict rehabilitation, and as a leading proponent of successful multilateralism, play to the region's strengths" in the face of the security problem (EC, 2008).

In December 2008, European Parliament's Temporary Committee on Climate Change published a Report on "2050: The future begins today - Recommendations for the EU's future integrated policy on climate change" which emphasizes the significance of expanding international diplomatic efforts to address climate change issue and to include climate related challenges such as climate induced migration into strategies of foreign policy (EP, 2008). The day after that committee report, the EU published the report "Implementation of the European Security Strategy - Providing Security in a Changing World" in which climate change was described as a 'threat multiplier' with reference to the 2003 and March 2008 security strategies by opening a special title on Climate Change (EC, 2008). EU improved conflict prevention and crisis management, according to the Commission, but the organization still has room to grow in terms of its analytical prowess and early warning systems.

Those were the first years that fascinating lines of study on climate change traced the linkages between climate insecurity, human security, and conflict. In December 2008 again, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) published "Environmentally induced migration and displacement: a 21st century challenge" and brought to light the fact that international legal texts on human movement due to environmental catastrophes and degradation are not universally agreed upon, making progress on the identification and legal protection of environmental migrants difficult to achieve. Further, the paper recommends conducting research into existing inconsistencies in legislation and protection mechanisms with the end goal of developing a unique system for the protection of environmental migrants, either as a separate international agreement or as part of relevant multilateral agreements (Acketoft, 2008).

Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs of European Parliament published a report on "Common Immigration Policy for Europe: Principles, actions and tools" in April 2009 (EP, 2009). This policy resolution paper addressed governments to think about 'environmental refugees', a category of people who don't fit the criteria for being either economic migrants or legally recognized as refugees under the Geneva Convention.

The Stockholm Programme was approved by the EU Council later in 2009. For the first time, the Stockholm Programme (2010–2014) investigated the connection between climate and migration, and it urged the EC to assess the effects of climate change on international migration, including their potential effects on immigration to the Union. In 2011, International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) published a report requested by the European Parliament on "'Climate Refugees': Legal and policy responses to environmentally induced migration". This report analyzed the efficiency of EU's approach and policy tools in that period for climate change induced migration and asylum. As concerns grow about the connection between environmental deterioration, conflict, and national security, the Report pointed out the competition for resources and underlined that most of the authors indicate no direct connection between environmental problems and armed conflict. According to that approach, climate change can lead to limited resources for livelihood and migration flows, but this should be defined as destabilization and violence, not a conflict regarding army or military (EC, 2011).

At the end of EU Foreign Affairs Council Meeting in 2011, Council Conclusion Paper was published about EU Climate Diplomacy and the first statement of the Paper was clearly indicated that climate change is acting as a "threat multiplier" and creating challenges for the world on development, prosperity, and stability regarding security implications; increasing tensions and competitions over livelihood resources and leading migratory.

For the first time, a clear and obvious EU climate diplomacy policy was developed in 2011, when the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the EC's Directorate General for Climate Action issued a Joint Reflection Paper titled 'Towards a renewed and strengthened EU Climate Diplomacy' (Biedenkopf & Petri, 2021). The Paper strangled of thoughts for strong collaboration of actors, sustention of developing countries and reducing security risks. These years were the consolidation of the opinion that climate change induced migration could have an impact on European security due to the potential large flow of people from regions damaged by climate change (Peri & Cattaneo, 2016).

The adaptation of the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM) in 2012 was the overall framework of the EU's external migration policy, focused on true

collaboration with non-EU nations and tackling all elements of migration and mobility challenges in an integrated, comprehensive, and balanced manner.

In EU Commission staff working document published in 2013, titled "Climate change, environmental degradation, and migration" is a strategy document that was produced as part of the EU's adaptation strategies that were prepared for climate change challenges. This groundbreaking research and data analysis was the first of its kind to establish a connection between climate change, migration, and security.

In 2014, the Council of EU had agreed on some Conclusions on Migration in EU Development Cooperation, in which EU Member States encouraged the Commission to design a cohesive and integrated development strategy towards refugees and IDPs concerns (EU Council Conclusions, 2014). According to the findings of the study, migration is a complex phenomenon that has various inter-linkages with other areas of action like climate change.

2015 was the year of unparagoned developments in the acknowledgements of migration and climate change for the World and in course for the EU with the adoption of UNFCCC Paris Agreement (McAuliffe&Triandafyllidou, 2021). Almost immediately after the signing of the Paris Agreement, the EU announced that it would play a significant role and serve as a global leader in the agreement process. 2015 was also the year of refugee crisis in EU; because of several wars in the Middle East, millions of people were compelled to escape their homes during the 2015 refugee crisis in Europe, causing a humanitarian catastrophe to spread over its borders and on its seas (Moran, 2022). As a consequential situation of the adoption of Paris Agreement and EU Refugee Crisis in 2015, EC have enhanced to develop published materials like research study papers, strategy reports, press releases and policy documents related to the climate change induced migration and securitization approach of European countries. In the following European Agenda on Migration from 2015, the EC emphasized climate change as one of the underlying reasons of irregular migration and forced displacement. Same year, in terms of European Security Strategy, the Parliament published "Towards a new European security strategy? Assessing the impact of changes in the global security environment" briefing paper and underlined migration under the title of strategic threats due to climate change (EP, 2015).



EC's State of the Union: Time for Honesty, Unity and Solidarity 2015 was held in September, in Strasbourg (EC, 2015). In his speech, President of the Commission Jean Claude Juncker stated that: "Climate change is even one the root causes of a new migration phenomenon. Climate refugees will become a new challenge – if we do not act swiftly." (Juncker, 2015). This tremendous securitization maneuver by one of the most elite characters in the EU lobbying for climate migration can be seen in Juncker's statement, which is an example of a forceful securitization move.

European Economic and Social Committee Trainees' Initiative hosted a conference in Brussels in January 2016 with the theme "The Challenge of Climate Migration: an EU Perspective," and key-note speakers included representatives from the institutions like IOM, UNHCR, EEAS, EESC. In that conference, the link between climate change and security was underlined in climate policy speeches and EU's approach to climate related migrants was framed as EU attempts for climate resilience policies, works for mitigation and adaptation strategies, and concentrates on enhancing legal frameworks on displacements (European Economic and Social Committee, 2016).

In June 2016, "A Global Strategy for the EU's Foreign and Security Policy" was published and A More Effective Migration Policy was launched. Migration and climate change were underlined in the same nexus as constituting threats for the prosperity and peace in Mediterranean, Middle East and Africa.

In December 2016, the Commission adopted a communication paper on 'Lives in Dignity: from Aid-dependence to Self-reliance Forced Displacement and Development' which underlined 'violence' as a crucial component pushing people to move and emphasized that the economic and psychological safety of residents is coming under growing threat from natural disasters and climate-related occurrences. The effects of climate change may amplify the risks associated with insecurity, conflict, and the fragility of states, as a threat multiplier (EC, 2016). It was noted that migration is being negatively impacted by climate change in a variety of ways already, making this an issue that requires governmental attention.

The securitization issue was considered in 2016, when the PACE prepared a report in which the argument of member states to devote more importance to the development of protection laws and standards for victims of natural disasters and victims of the

repercussions of climate change. At that time, the Assembly's main recommendation was prioritizing the development of protective laws and standards for those affected by natural, chemical, or nuclear catastrophes, as well as those affected by the effects of climate change and as a real legal enforcement and implementation step was recommended for revising the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, using measures such as an extra protocol.

In the year 2017, the human-centered security principles were highlighted in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, and it was mentioned that there is a direct relationship between climate change and people who have been forcibly displaced due to environmental factors. EU's climate resilience approach and adaptation strategy were specified in detail under the Joint Communication Paper on 'A Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU's External Action' published in 2017. The item about resilience strategy was a step toward increasing the impact of EU external action in bolstering state, social, and community resilience in developing nations. With the release of this Paper, the Union has made a commitment to continue working on the Resilience Action Plan 2013-2020, which aims to reduce the effects of long-term crises and threats of violent conflict, in addition to other structural tensions such as environmental devastation, climate change, mobility, and forced relocation (EC, 2017).

Subcommittee on Security and Defence requested from European Parliament to prepare a deeply analyzed report on describing the situation of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) regarding climate change and security nexus. This study paper titled "Preparing the CSDP for the new security environment created by climate change" published in 2021, reviewed and examined how climate change would affect security in the EU neighborhood and offers suggestions for how the CSDP should include climate change considerations into its goals and deliverables. The paper suggested that the CSDP would take a regionally specialized strategy that emphasizes the unique social, political, and economic dynamics that make climate issues manifest in various partner nations.

EC announced European Green Deal in Communication Paper of 2019 and adopted in 2020 as a set of policy actions with the overarching objective of reaching the EU climate neutrality; zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, with reference to more economic

strategy of Strategic Long-Term Vision 2018 named A Clean Planet for all (Wachsmuth, 2022). EU underlined that global climate change and environmental challenges are important threat multipliers and roots of instability and states that this ecological transition will trigger geopolitical, economic, and security-related stability problems in states and societies.

As part of the larger climate and security nexus, the Council invited the High Representative (HR) to propose, in close dialogue with Member States and in conjunction with the Commission and the European Defence Agency, a set of concrete short-, medium-, and long-term actions mentioning the linkage between security and climate change in the context of the 2020 Conclusions on Security and Defence (EC, 2021). Following the Green Deal and 2020 Conclusions on Security and Defence, as a contribution to addressing the broader climate and security nexus, the European External Action Service (EEAS), in conjunction with the EC and the European Defense Agency, developed a specific roadmap of European Climate Pact in November 2020 centered on the difficulties that climate change poses for the defense industry. The roadmap places a significant focus on multilateralism and partnerships, both of which will contribute to the EU's position as a worldwide leader on climate change concerns. Because climate change is a complex problem with many facets, it is essential for the various players within the EU to take an integrated strategy to locate synergies and maximize their effect.

2020 was also the year in which another initiative on migration was established. The Lives in Dignity (LiD) Grant Facility was established with the intention of efficiently and effectively allocating funds to encourage development-oriented approaches to new, recurring, and chronic displacement crises, with a primary emphasis on early operational involvement. Disaster and climate-related human mobility are one of the five different subject matters that the Facility is mostly concerned with. Because of its adaptable design, the LiD Grant Facility can quickly adapt to changing circumstances and contribute effectively to the three interconnected fields of humanitarian aid, sustainable development, and peaceful coexistence. The LiD Grant Facility will disseminate fund of €24 million to several partners in the implementation process between 2021 and 2025. The establishment and distribution of these and similar financial supports and funds, and the support of research and implementation projects applying to these funds is an important indicator that

the EU is not only producing solutions in the axis of combating climate change and migration problems not only in discourses but also financially, developing support mechanisms and making efforts to solve the issue with financial investments.

In July 2020, ICMPD's Policy Unit collaborated on recent research that offered suggestions for improving responses to environmental migration and displacement. The Policy Unit of the ICMPD collaborated with the Department of Migration and Globalization at Danube University Krems to produce a report titled "Climate Change and Migration; Legal and policy challenges and responses to environmentally induced migration" examines the global reactions to environmental migration and displacement from a legal and policy perspective. The LIBE Committee of the European Parliament requested this research to inform their efforts to better meet the protection requirements of those who have been displaced or uprooted due to environmental factors throughout Europe and the world. This in-depth research paper highlighted how a recent study that examined the correlation between extreme weather events and asylum applications in the EU and argued that asylum applications will increase in the future due to global warming can be criticized for similar reasons, specifically a simplistic interpretation of correlations found between variables.

The communication paper of the EC on a New Pact on Migration and Asylum dated September 2020, indicated that climate change is one of the significant societal concerns that the world is currently confronted with and stressed that migration would continue to be an important phenomena and worldwide concern for the near future due to demographic and economic factors, weak governance and conflicts, and climate change.

At the beginning of 2021, on 25 January, EU published the outcome of proceedings of Council conclusions on Climate and Energy Diplomacy. The Council declares again that it is crucial to intensify and influential work on the link between climate and security, especially in support of UN activities, such as work with multilateral organizations and within the UN Security Council, especially with the new unofficial expert committee of UN Security Council Member States on Climate and Security (EC, 2021). The EC released a new climate change adaptation strategy for the EU on February 24 of that year (2021). This new strategy lays out the measures that must be done by the EU to become climate resilient by 2050 and adapt to the inevitable effects of climate change. The Adaptation Strategy places a primary emphasis on the following four types of adaptations: adaptations

that are more intelligent, adaptations that are quicker, adaptations that are more systematic, and adaptations that increase international action to adapt to climate change. This new EU strategy pointed out that EU is and will become more vulnerable to climate consequences occurring elsewhere due to escalating and spillover effects on commerce and migration. Therefore, the EU and its Member States must prioritize international climate resilience as a question of open strategic autonomy and self-interest, not just solidarity (EC, 2021). That strategy emphasized the importance of adaptation policies, innovative financial systems, and a collective international action for reducing the impacts of climate change as interconnected societies have the common challenges of migration, displacement, and conflict.

On March 2021, EU published ‘Communication on the EU’s humanitarian action: new challenges, same principles’ and specified new and old challenges for humanitarian aid. According to that communication report, the number of people who require assistance from humanitarian organizations is at an all-time high. This is largely due to the resurgence of state-based conflicts, which, when combined with the impact of climate change, environmental degradation, global population growth, and failed governance, has contributed to this unprecedented level of need (EC, 2021). The Commission suggested pre-planning early humanitarian action plans to assist in strengthening the resilience of communities, especially populations who have been forcefully displaced, in locations that are susceptible to hazards associated to climate change and other dangers. EU has proposed as a potential action for the future that it would utilize its chairmanship of the PDD in 2022 to encourage worldwide efforts to safeguard individuals who have been displaced because of natural catastrophes and climate change. The Disaster Preparedness Guidance Note that was published in May 2021 by the Commission Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) also provides suggestions on how to enhance resilience for displacement, particularly in the situation of disasters.

Along the axis of climate change and security, the EU took a number of important steps forward, one of which was the publishing, in October 2021, of the ‘Concept for an Integrated Approach on Climate Change and Security’ and declared further activities for the axis of climate change and security (EC, 2021). During 2022, diplomatic efforts to combat climate change continued to be a fundamental aspect of the EU's (EU) foreign and

security policy, and a major priority for the EU and its Member States in their relations with countries and regions beyond Europe. The Council recognizes that climate change, habitat loss, and destruction of the environment pose threats to the promotion and protection of human freedoms and rights and state security, compromise international peace and stability, and frequently exacerbate or increase existing vulnerabilities and destabilization in its February 2022 document titled "Council conclusions on EU Climate Diplomacy: accelerating the implementation of Glasgow outcomes." The Council applauds the United Nations Security Council and other UN entities for paying more attention to the connection between climate change and international stability (EC, 2022).

The Strategic Compass for Security and Defense, which was approved by the EC's External Action under the Diplomatic Service of the EU on March 21, 2022, remarked that climate change, environmental damage, and natural disasters are a threat multiplier and a consistent cause of instability and conflict, which in turn cause a lot of suffering for people and force them to move (EU, 2022). To place an emphasis on climate change as a top priority in EU foreign and security policy, member states of the EU came together on October 17, 2022, to establish an inclusive Group of Friends (GoF) for an ambitious EU climate diplomacy. The GoF said emphatically that after COP27 (held in November 2022), the climate change is the most significant problem facing our generation. The potential for millions of people to lose their homes and their means of livelihood as a direct result of environmental catastrophes makes this a significant danger not just to humankind but also to the stability and safety of the international community (FFO, 2022). After COP27 again, European Parliament published a resolution paper titled "UN Climate Change Conference 2022 in Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt (COP27)" and presented an ambitious climate policy, emphasizing that EU recalls for climate crisis and expresses deep concerns; whereas IOM estimates that climate change might compel over 200 million people to move; whereas the poorest and most climate-vulnerable areas will see the greatest extent of internal climate migration; and the number of people moving inside their own country due to climate change might be slowed by as much as 80% by 2050 if global action is taken to cut greenhouse gas emissions (EP, 2022).

## CONCLUSION

This paper examined climate change, one of the biggest and most complex problems of the 21st Century for humanity and the universe, and climate change induced migration, which is a natural and consequential impact of climate change. In addition to the literature on climate change and the environment, the literature on political science and international relations is dominated by the view that climate change induced migration is a threat to security. Based on this view, this paper tries to investigate the securitization of climate change induced migration and analyze how the EU, an important region affected by these migration movements, securitizes the issue.

It is a certain fact that climate change is caused by human activities that increase with industrialization. Scientific studies make predictions and warnings that human displacement, which is one of the impacts of climate change, will reach very serious numbers in the coming years. Migration movements due to climate change are mostly realized in regions whose livelihoods and living standards are indexed to nature. These regions are defined as vulnerable regions in the face of the impacts of climate change and are the most affected by catastrophic environmental disasters due to climate change. People living in these regions start to experience resource scarcity due to weather changes affecting sectors such as agriculture, animal husbandry and fisheries, such as rising water levels and drought due to extreme temperatures, and therefore have to relocate to improve their living conditions. Depending on the circumstances, these displacements sometimes remain within the borders of the country, and sometimes cross borders turning into an international migration mobility. Regardless of their level, these displacements pose a threat to environmental and human security.

The solutions and methods proposed by traditional security approaches do not provide an inclusive solution to the problems created by climate induced migration. These traditional realist and idealist theories cannot contribute to the creation of a sustainable world peace because they operate with a military security approach and interpret threats by focusing on the axis of war and peace. In the light of these questionings, new security approaches emerged after the Cold War, which put humanitarian norms at the center of security efforts. While new problems caused by increasing human activities with globalization have created a new conflict area for the world, this new conflict environment and threats have also been

effective in widening the concept of security. The Copenhagen School, pioneered by many researchers, notably Buzan, argues that security should be examined holistically in the context of military, political, economic, social, and environmental sectors. In doing so, it primarily emphasizes ensuring the existence and security of the individual. The fact that climate change is also recognized as a direct threat to the security of individuals and the environment, the idea that factors that threaten the individual and the environment will turn into a security issue that will affect the state and the entire system in the future is recognized.

Population growth and human activities in a globalizing and industrializing world are drivers of climate change. Environmental disasters caused by climate change led to major social and economic challenges for individuals and societies, and these challenges and tensions constitute one of the greatest security threats of our time. The notion of climate change as a threat multiplier in terms of security due to the problems it poses for humanity has been and continues to be put forward by many international organizations recognized for their scientific studies. With the scientific studies and efforts of international institutions such as the UN, NATO, EU, environmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and independent research groups, states have started to gain awareness of this problem that threatens the world and humanity. The biggest development and binding legal arrangement on this issue is the Paris Agreement on climate change mitigation, adaptation, and financing, which entered into force in 2016 under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The EU is one of the first and one of the largest economies to ratify the Paris Agreement and put forward action plans with its work on both climate policies and migration policies. It is also one of the leading actors in adaptation and combating climate change. Although not as vulnerable, the EU is one of the regions most affected and will be affected by climate change-related migration. As the most prominent example, the climate crisis and climate migrants in the Sahel region of Africa are seen as one of the biggest global security threats of the future. It is estimated that the number of climate migrants in this region will exceed 30 million by 2050. Climate migrants in this region, which does not have the economic and social capacity to solve this problem within its own borders, have the potential to forcibly cross borders and move



northward. Due to the geographical proximity of Africa and the EU, it is impossible for the EU not to be concerned about this migratory mobility.

Due to both environmental degradation within its own borders and disasters in neighboring countries, the EU is experiencing both internal displacement and external migration. The EU's struggle against climate change and how it securitizes climate induced migration is the main research topic of this thesis.

With the climate policies started to develop in the 1990s, the EU started to reduce carbon emissions and set energy targets for itself. The Council of Europe has prepared many draft laws and reports on this issue. In 2000, it signed the Kyoto Protocol and continued its efforts to become a leader on this issue. The EU has also played a lead role in the negotiations on the Paris Agreement, which focuses on climate protection, adaptation to the consequences of climate change and financial solutions. It then developed its own Green Deal policy and adopted the Climate Act. In recent years, the EU has been addressing climate change and climate induced migration as an international security issue and has given extensive coverage to the issue in its domestic and foreign policy work. The EU has also emphasized the threats posed by social, economic, and environmental crises in African countries and has given a special place to security in its foreign policy. As can be understood from the studies of the Council of Europe, which constitute the main sources of this thesis, the conclusion of this thesis is that the EU is trying to securitize the issue of climate change in every aspect. Whether these securitization efforts are sufficient or not is a matter of debate.

This study has argued that the issue should be addressed within the sectors of the Copenhagen School's securitization theory, namely societal and environmental, and that countries should incorporate an expanded understanding of security into their political agendas as suggested by this theory. The work of the EU as a major regional and political actor on this issue has proven that climate induced migration has been seen as a security threat within the Union (with speech acts and acceptance by audiences) and that the securitization within the EU can be pronounced as an ongoing debate. The EU recognizes climate change as a threat multiplier and migratory driver, but its actions seem to be more private and internal. The securitization actions in the Union politicizes climate migration and promotes public policy on climate refugees but it has no legal definition or legislation.

Fortuitously, Council Conclusions, Parliament actions and global security strategy documents operate a direction and guidance on securitization actions to adopt. Since the beginning of 2000s, gaining momentum with the Paris Agreement, the EU has been actively engaging in securitization activities since the turn of the millennium.

The securitization of climate change induced migration needs a transdisciplinary holistic approach to transcend through the politicization of the issue, collectively.

There is still a need to fill the gap in the political science and international relations literature where climate change, migration and security have not been studied in sufficient depth on the same axis. In addition, for a better world, states should recognize that the problems that they previously characterized as soft politics now have the capacity to cause bigger problems and develop and implement policies to combat climate change in a way that covers all humanity and the entire ecology.

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