

# Human Capital and Mobility at the Service of the Green Economy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**mi***eu***x**+

migration EU expertise

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**The discussion paper 'Human Capital and Mobility at the service of the Green Economy' wants to contribute to the growing scientific and policy discussion that explores the links between human mobility and the green economy. By describing existing good examples and lessons learnt, it identifies entry points that could be replicated in other countries. In addition, the paper highlights gaps in current understanding and proposes further avenues for discussion and research in this domain.**



# Background

Over the course of the last decade, the uncertainty and gloomy forecasts of global poverty, inequality and climate change impact on socio-ecological systems have given impetus to calls and widespread global resolve to decouple economic development from environmental and natural capital degradation and enhance sustainable development.

These concerns have largely informed the ongoing global shift and growing emphasis on green economy as a sustainable growth strategy to stem this scenario and to build the sustainable “[Future We Want](#)” and more recently, to “[Build Back Better](#)” from the COVID-19 pandemic. The vision of green economy is to be realised by instituting the necessary measures, strategies and policies to facilitate sustainable development, just, inclusive and resilient societies for all.

# Green Economy and Migration

The European Green Deal in 2019, the European Skills Agenda and the Talent Partnerships are all tools that may be at the disposal of policy makers to address the challenges of technical skills gaps and shortage in facilitating the transition to green economy.

In spite of the corresponding ongoing efforts to promote regular migration channels, skills development and to attract talent from abroad, there has been limited policy and scientific discussion on the link and the critical role of migration in contributing to the green economy. This has thus underscored the need to examine the potential of labour migration, human mobility, skills development and transfer to address the skills requirements of the green economy.

It is envisaged that the discussion would help to identify points of entry and avenues to leverage labour migration in propelling the transition to greater sustainability, and building inclusive, just and resilient societies. In this light, the paper argues for the inclusion of labour migration and human mobility as part of green growth strategies.

# Structure of the Discussion paper

1

**'What do we know about the Green Economy as a Sustainable Growth Strategy?'** explores the ins and outs of the forthcoming transition and examines its relationship with Agenda 2030, labour markets and decent jobs.

2

**'The Importance of Skills Development for the Green Deal'** delves on the relevance of human capital for the green transition and points to a series of promising practices from around the world.

3

**In 'The EU's Policy Agenda: The European Green Deal, Skills Agenda and the New Pact on Migration and Asylum'** the focus shifts from a global perspective to a regional one and explores these three main policy developments in the context of the European Union (EU).

4

**'Potential areas to tap into labour migration to service the green economy'** follows with more in-depth analysis of entry points and valuable actors to involve in the transition towards the green economy.

5

**'Gaps and Constraints to Harnessing the potential of Labour Mobility and Migration for the Green Economy'** describes the current shortcomings in harnessing migration for the green transition.

6

**'A call to Action: Recommendations and Areas for Further Research'** offers policy makers and practitioners working in the international, regional and local levels of governments a list of recommendations for further action. Several areas for further research in this nascent field are outlined as a means of conclusion.

# Recommendations

**NATIONAL LEVEL**




## ★ RECOMMENDATION 1

# **Adopt a sectoral approach to ensure coordination across institutions and policy coherence in green skills intelligence and development**

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Adopting a sectoral approach and targeted training would also contribute to further harnessing the skills of migrant workers for the green economy and to leverage their potential as an important group across countries.

 Investing into disaggregated data collection for statistical purposes, in line with Objective 1 of the Global Compact for Migration (GCM), would be essential to bringing to light the contribution of migrants who might in fact already be employed in these sectors at a national level.



## ★ RECOMMENDATION 2

# Support the mainstreaming of the migration and green economy nexus through international/development cooperation

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The whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach that have characterised several national migration policy processes present good strategies to design inclusive green policies as part of national development plans in the near future.

 Future EU Pilot Projects and/ technical assistance projects could offer support for the development of national migration policies to align or ensure policy coherence between migration and green policies.

 [See MIEUX+ Case Study from Mauritius: Migration and Development Policy](#)





## ★ RECOMMENDATION 3

# Green skills training as climate adaptation strategies and to foster sustainable reintegration

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In the face of climate and environmental change impact, migration has been one of the many coping or adaptation strategies for affected or vulnerable populations. Yet, in many national climate change adaptation policies and strategies, migration has often been given little attention or perceived as an outcome of mal-adaptation.

 **Design national climate policies that look to harness the potential of migration as an adaptation to climate impact.**

 **Green skills training could be integrated into climate migration strategies and programmes to enable environmental migrants and displaced persons to take up green and decent jobs.**

 **Green perspectives, skills training and development for decent jobs in the green and blue economy could provide avenues for sustainable reintegration.**

## ★ RECOMMENDATION 4

# Enhanced Diaspora Engagement

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Diaspora members are agents of development and information brokers between places of destination and home countries.

There is thus the need to develop and strengthen partnerships with diaspora organisations and to promote effective engagement with diaspora professionals as agents that could drive the green transition through knowledge exchange, green skills transfer and investment in the green sector.



See the [recent study](#) on the potential of diaspora in contributing to the effective implementation of the EU Talent Partnerships (ECDPM, EUDiF and MPF, 2021).



The [EU Global Diaspora Facility \(EUDiF\)](#) provides the platform which could be used as a medium to coordinate and build an up-to-date database of diaspora organisations and professionals. This could provide the foundation to facilitate capacity building on green economy and identify expertise (or talents) that would acquire green skills.

# Recommendations

**INTER-REGIONAL LEVEL**




## ★ RECOMMENDATION 5

# **Pilot projects on legal and labour migration, and Talent partnerships – integrate green perspectives and skills training as part of ongoing or future mobility and skills partnerships**

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Most EU Members States and partner countries are grappling with the lack of adequate and right skills to contain the rapid transformation in economic sectors and disruptions in labour markets.

 The existing mobility schemes and traineeships being experimented as part of the Pilot Projects under the **Migration Partnership Facility** provide an opportunity for pushing and making green skills perspectives more visible and stronger in terms of the focus areas of cooperation.

## ★ RECOMMENDATION 6

# Develop common skills qualification and talent recognition frameworks at both regional and continental levels

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Support the development of common and harmonised skills qualification and recognition frameworks for skills and labour mobility initiatives between the EU Member States and partner countries, as well as at continental and regional levels in Africa.



**Build institutional capacity to facilitate skills anticipation through research and monitoring, skills training and national, regional, or even continental skills database.**



**Integrate Technical and Vocational Education and Training into technical assistance projects that plan to develop green skills for critical sectors of the green economy and digital skills as part of a common (inter-)regional/national educational curriculum for partner countries.**



**The existing policy initiatives and dialogues at the continental and Regional Economic Communities level should look to harness skills portability and recognition as critical elements to addressing the skills needs of the green transition, as well as reduce youth unemployment in Africa.**



# Recommendations

LOCAL LEVEL




## ★ RECOMMENDATION 7

### Focus on the local level

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Given their enormous populations, infrastructure and production activities, cities tend to account for 60 percent of global carbon emissions.

 **City authorities could target green skills training and education at both employed migrant workers and refugees. This could help address the skills gaps in renewable energy and other green sectors, as well as serve to be viable avenues for participation in local labour markets and effective integration.**

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