



ECOSOC  
YOUTH  
FORUM

YOUTH2030



Major Group for  
**Children and Youth**  
A space for children and youth in the United Nations

## Economic and Social Council Youth Forum

**"COVID-19 recovery: Youth taking action for a sustainable future"**

**SIDE EVENT AT THE 2022 ECOSOC YOUTH FORUM**

**" An opportunity, a necessity, or a choice: Youth mobility in the context of climate change. "**

**18 April 2022**

09:00 – 10:30 EST / 15:00 - 16:30 CET

### 1. Background

In the past years, young people all over the globe have mobilized to raise awareness of the need to take more action to fight climate change. Young people today are fully aware of the challenges the world is facing because of the climate crisis. They also acknowledge the opportunities that lay ahead of us. Youth voices and ideas were at the forefront of the pre-COP26 summit which resulted in the adoption of the first [Youth4Climate Manifesto](#).

While the climate crisis affects everyone, everywhere, its impacts are greater on those most vulnerable, like children and youth.<sup>1</sup> **The largest young generation in history, 1.8 billion<sup>2</sup>**, is facing today's global climate crisis, with a very significant number of young people **living in areas vulnerable to climate impacts**. When facing adverse climatic conditions that very often intersect with other social, political and economic factors, people **engage in different forms of migration** either within their countries or abroad. In the context of climate and environmental change, migration can either aggravate

<sup>1</sup> Between the ages 10 and 24 years, according to UNFPA, State of the World Population: The Power of 1.8 Billion (UNFPA, 2014). Available at [www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/EN-SWOP14-Report\\_FINALweb.pdf](http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/EN-SWOP14-Report_FINALweb.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Population Fund (2014). 'The Power of 1.8 Billion: Adolescents, Youth and the Transformation of the Future', UNFPA

young people's challenges or boost their opportunities. Environmental migration is already a reality and youth involvement should be at the center of the response to these environmental changes. Yet to date, policy processes have paid relatively little attention to youth migrating in the context of climate change.

In 2020 alone, there were **30.7 million internal displacements worldwide triggered by disasters** (IDMC 2021). Specific data regarding environmental migration and youth is scarce but it is likely that they are among those 30.7 million, and are moving in the context of climate change due to a combination of drivers. In addition, only in 2020, **young migrants accounted for 11.3 per cent of the total migrant population and 2.6 per cent among youth globally** (UN DESA, 2020). These figures do not however represent the full picture. We do not know the total number of people currently on the move due to slower processes of climate change and environmental degradation, like droughts; the data of young people moving in this context is even more scarce.

Looking at the future, predictions indicate that many more people will be on the move within their own countries because of the adverse effects of climate change. The Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change in his 6<sup>th</sup> report of 2022, highlights that *"Regions with more youthful populations – such as Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and Central America - are both highly vulnerable to climate change impacts, and reliant on agriculture, forestry, aquaculture, and fisheries for livelihoods. (...) In these vulnerable regions, climate change compounds other drivers such as poverty to increase youth out-migration to urban areas or other regions (medium confidence), which can further worsen rural economies."*

Young migrants face specific challenges during their migration or displacement experience, especially as it occurs at a crucial time in their emotional, cognitive, physical and social development. However, specific vulnerabilities of young migrants in the context of climate change and environmental degradation remain underexplored. Migration can offer young people new opportunities and horizons, such as the chance to improve skills, access alternative livelihoods, pursue education, and the opportunity to use it as a strategy to adapt to the changing climate. Where possible, migration has to be a choice, especially for youth to explore their full potential. However, climate change impacts, especially in rural areas, can lead to a decline in youth employment opportunities, which in conjunction with other drivers can increment youth movement from a rural area to an urban one.

The COVID-19 pandemic and climate change were felt as multiple burdens in the past years in the short term – especially in developing countries – as severe natural hazards such as hurricanes were experienced in tandem with viral spread. The impacts of the pandemic and the mobility restrictions that were part of the response furthermore exacerbated inequalities and vulnerabilities of youth in the longer term, by hindering development efforts, disrupting education, and damaging already weak formal and informal sectors of work as well as financial flows. Nevertheless, the post-pandemic recovery can also be an opportunity to focus on better and more job opportunities to young people, including in the green sector.

## **2. Objectives of the side event**

IOM together with UNICEF, the **Migration Youth and Children Platform of the Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY)** and the **International Youth Federation (IYF)** are organizing this event with the objective to better understand the links between migration, climate change and youth. It is also an opportunity to discuss how youth can contribute to addressing their needs in the context of migration, environment and climate change, especially slow onset processes, and how better to integrate their proposals in international, regional and local policy discussions on the topic. The event will also explore how to foster youth engagement in green activities that can build their resilience, accelerate climate action, and contribute to addressing the environmental drivers that compel them to move.

## **3. Guiding Questions for presentations and discussion**

- What are the patterns of young people moving in the context of climate change? How are these different from adults, parents and families? Is the rural-urban pattern an important one?
- Are youth disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change? What does this mean in terms of migration and displacement?
- What are the opportunities for youth to engage in the green sector? What other opportunities exist for youth? How can we ensure meaningful youth engagement in green activities?
- What can youth do to address the links migration, environment and climate change? How can youth be effective partners in addressing climate change-induced migration? How can youth contribute to achieving SDG15?

## **4. Format and Agenda**

- The side event will be held in an online format, entirely in English, without interpretation available. The event starts at 09:00 – 10:30 EST / 15:00 - 16:30 CET.

### **Agenda:**

1. Welcoming remarks and moderator– Iulia Elisabeta DUCA, International Organization for Migration (IOM)
2. Panel discussion based on the guiding questions:
  - Julia BLOCHER, President of the International Youth Federation (IYF)
  - Vladislav KAIM, UN Secretary General's Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change
  - Serge HOUNTON, Climate Change and Migration Focal Point at Migration Youth and Children Platform of Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY)
  - Solomon YEO, Campaign director of the youth-led organization Pacific Islands Students Fighting Climate Change
  - Hassan MOWLID YASIN, Executive Director at Somali Greenpeace Association
  - Emmanuel GODLIVING MINJA, Tanzanian Chapter President - World Youth Parliament for Water
3. Q&A
4. Closing remarks

## 5. Platform to be used and link

The side event will be conducted through Zoom.  
No registration needed.

Join from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone or Android device:

**Please click this URL to join. <https://zoom.us/j/91912827247>**

Or One tap mobile:

+16699009128,,91912827247# US (San Jose)

+12532158782,,91912827247# US (Tacoma)

Or join by phone:

Dial (for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 669 900 9128 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or  
+1 346 248 7799 or +1 646 558 8656

Webinar ID: 919 1282 7247

International numbers available: <https://zoom.us/u/a40uK5auq>

Or an H.323/SIP room system:

H.323:

162.255.37.11 (US West)

162.255.36.11 (US East)

115.114.131.7 (India Mumbai)

115.114.115.7 (India Hyderabad)

213.19.144.110 (Amsterdam Netherlands)

213.244.140.110 (Germany)

103.122.166.55 (Australia Sydney)

103.122.167.55 (Australia Melbourne)

149.137.40.110 (Singapore)

64.211.144.160 (Brazil)

149.137.68.253 (Mexico)

69.174.57.160 (Canada Toronto)

65.39.152.160 (Canada Vancouver)

207.226.132.110 (Japan Tokyo)

149.137.24.110 (Japan Osaka)

Webinar ID: 919 1282 7247

SIP: [91912827247@zoomcrc.com](mailto:91912827247@zoomcrc.com)

---

For more information on this side event please visit [IOM Environmental Migration Portal](#)  
or contact **Ms Iulia Elisabeta Duca** [iduca@iom.int](mailto:iduca@iom.int)