

Concept note

Exploring narratives on the Migration-Development nexus:

How can the future EU-Africa partnership maximise the development impact of migration and mobility?

Virtual roundtable discussion organised by ACT Alliance EU in collaboration with

Caritas Europa and Caritas Africa

9th November 2021 11 am-13 pm (CET or UTC +1)

Background to the webinar

In the lead-up to the 6th EU-Africa summit taking place in 2022, ACT Alliance EU together with Caritas Europa and Caritas Africa convenes a second virtual roundtable discussion that will explore how to maximise the development impact of migration and mobility in the future EU-Africa partnership. The roundtable discussion will build on the [main recommendations](#) from our first joint webinar on [how to ensure a more balanced and sustainable approach to migration](#) in the EU-Africa partnership (April 2021). For this webinar, **we aim at exploring existing and potential links between migration and sustainable development and their positive impacts on livelihoods, health, education, youth and women’s empowerment in the ECOWAS regional context and more broadly in the EU-AU relations. The event will also be an opportunity to highlight the value of meaningfully engaging civil society in the debate before, during and after the 6th AU-EU summit, planned for early 2022.**

Topic and main objectives

Almost 15 years ago, the European Union (EU) and African leaders came together to define the future direction for cooperation between the two continents, resulting in the [2007 Joint Africa-EU Strategy](#). In March 2020, the EU released its [communication on a new comprehensive strategy with Africa](#), **promising to ensure a “balanced, coherent and comprehensive approach to migration and mobility, based on the respect for human rights and international law”**. After years of debates and negotiations, differences persist in how the issue of migration is perceived in Europe and Africa: from a mostly development-driven approach on the African side to one still rooted in a security-driven nexus in the EU. Yet, within these divergent narratives on migration, there exist areas of convergence on which common strategies and actions can be built. For instance, in facilitating the implementation of the Global Compacts on Migration and on Refugees, supporting the African continental and regional agendas on the free movement of persons, strengthening the protection of migrants’ rights, creating safe and regular pathways, enhancing labour, educational and circular migration and addressing the structural causes of forced displacement.

While there is acknowledgement from the EU side on the importance to invest more on safe and regular pathways within Africa and to Europe or to facilitate remittances, challenges persist in implementation. In different frameworks applicable to the EU-Africa cooperation, such as the Post Cotonou Agreement and the proposed EU Migration and Asylum Pact, **little attention is paid to priorities of African countries. There is no emphasis on protecting migrants’ rights or empowering diaspora groups, while commitments on regular migration remain vague and weak.** Moreover, the 10% target and the “incentive approach” on migration endorsed in the new Global Europe financial instrument risk further undermining the focus on poverty reduction and development in the EU cooperation with African countries on migration.

By exploring the migration-development nexus in the context of the ECOWAS region, **this event will provide an opportunity to engage in an informed dialogue on the priorities and challenges of the ECOWAS agenda on regional mobility, migration and integration, on the development potential of migration in origin and destination countries and on possible ways for the EU and the AU to cooperate and invest more on regular migration and protection of migrants’ rights.** The discussion outcomes are expected to help shape the new framework for the EU-Africa partnership on migration

The event will be **by invitation only**.

Programme – 11h00-13h00 (CEST or UTC +1) 9th November 2021

- ❖ Welcome and introduction by **Lucy Esipila**, Policy and Advocacy Officer at Caritas Africa
- ❖ Setting the scene by **Anna Knoll**, Head of Migration Programme at ECDPM
- ❖ Presentation by **Siga Fatima Jagne**, Commissioner Social Affairs and Gender, ECOWAS Commission ECOWAS (tbc)
- ❖ Comment by **Badara Ndiaye**, Director of the association DIADEM (Diaspora Development Education Migration) and the West African Platform of the civil society organization MIGRAFRIQUE

Q&A first round (facilitated by the moderator)

- ❖ Presentation by **Hans Stausboll**, Head of Unit for Regional and Multi-Country Programs for Africa at the Directorate-General for International Partnership of the European Commission (DG INTPA)
- ❖ Comments by **Bob van Dillen**, Senior Migration Adviser for Cordaid, the Netherlands, and by **Carine Nsoudou**, Executive Director of Africa-Europe Diaspora International Platform (ADEPT)

Q&A second round (facilitated by the moderator)

- ❖ Concluding remarks by **Sophie Fanucchi**, Head of Office Borders, asylum and migrations, from the General Secretary of European affairs (SGAE) of France (tbc)

Moderator: **Floris Faber**, ACT Alliance EU Representative/Head of Office

Topics for discussion

- ❖ **The ECOWAS official speaker representative** will discuss the main challenges and opportunities for the ECOWAS region in the implementation of the Protocol on the Free Movement of People. Furthermore, the discussion will focus on how the EU migration policies and the EU-ECOWAS policy dialogue and cooperation on migration impact on migration policies and on the free movement of people and migrant's rights in the region and between West Africa and Europe. The intervention will also contribute to clarifying how ECOWAS and AU institutions discuss migration and mobility issues with civil society and to what extent this dialogue informs decision-making on these issues.
- ❖ **The African civil society's representative** will highlight the main priorities and challenges civil society encounters in relation to the ECOWAS and EU's Agenda on migration and mobility in the region, while identifying what is needed to ensure harmonisation and coherence of regional and EU policies on migration across different sectors, for example, with regards to employment and jobs creation, youth and women empowerment, trade agreements. This intervention will also help to identify areas of cooperation and engagement on migration and migrants' rights between the ECOWAS, the AU and civil society and suggest how the EU can be supportive of that, especially in the lead-up to the future EU-Africa summit.
- ❖ **The EU official speaker** will clarify how the EU is and will be supporting human mobility within Africa and, more particularly, in the context of the ECOWAS region, and explain how the EU envisages to maximise the migration-development nexus through the new Global Europe instrument. It will also be the occasion to hear more about EU's plans on ensuring legal pathways for migration, expanding opportunities for labour, education and for family reunification from Africa to Europe. How the EU institutions intend to consult civil society on migration and mobility issues in the context of the 6th EU-Africa Summit and beyond will also be part of the discussion.
- ❖ **The European civil society's representative** will discuss the main proposals – and shortcomings – with regard to commitments on regular migration, protection of migrants' rights and progress on remittances and diaspora issues in different frameworks applicable to the EU-Africa cooperation, such as in the 2020 EC-EEAS joint communication, the recent EU-OACPs agreement, and the New Pact on Migration. This intervention will help to identify what is needed to maximise a development-migration nexus in the EU future migration policies as well as suggest how the EU can improve engagement with civil society during and beyond the future EU-Africa summit.

Language

English with simultaneous interpretation into French.

Participants

European and African decision-makers, civil society organisation representatives, researchers and journalists

Format

The Zoom webinar will be recorded for internal purposes only. Registration link can be found [here](#).

Background documents

- [African Union 'Migration Policy Framework for Africa and Plan of Action \(2018-2030\)' \(May 2018\)](#)
- [EC/EEAS Joint Communication 'Towards a new comprehensive strategy with Africa' \(March 2020\)](#)
- [European Council Conclusions on Africa \(June 2020\)](#)
- [European Council Conclusions \(October 2020\)](#)
- [European Parliament Resolution on a new EU-Africa Strategy – a partnership for sustainable and inclusive development \(March 2021\)](#)
- [Caritas Africa-Caritas Europa joint position paper 'A new EU-Africa strategy that works for people and the planet' \(May 2020\)](#)
- [ACT Alliance EU recommendations for a people-centred and transformative EU-Africa strategy](#)
- [ACT Alliance EU, Caritas Europa, Caritas Africa' article 'Shifting the EU-AU dialogue toward more transformative actions: how can the new EU-Africa partnership take a balanced and sustainable approach to migration?'\(June 2021\)](#)

Organisers

About ACT Alliance EU

[ACT Alliance EU](#) is a network of 12 European church-based humanitarian and development agencies whose purpose is to influence EU policy and practice regarding development and humanitarian aid policies and related issues, in order to provide sustainable benefits to and improvements in the lives of people affected by poverty and injustice around the world.

About Caritas Africa

[Carita Africa](#) is the network of 46 national Caritas organisations in 46 African countries. Caritas Africa member organisations are part of the local communities they serve, and focus on human development, peace building and economic justice, while practically responding to some of the world's largest and most complex humanitarian emergencies.

About Caritas Europa

[Caritas Europa](#) is the network of Caritas organisations on the European continent. The united strength of its 49 members, present in 46 European countries, makes Caritas Europa one of the major social actors in Europe. Caritas Europa has a heartfelt commitment to analyse and fight poverty and social exclusion as well as to promote true integral human development, social justice and sustainable social systems in Europe and throughout the world.