

The obscuration of climate-induced mobility

A discourse analysis of the EU governance

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Abstract

Climate changes and disasters are evidently contributing to migration and displacement of people all over the world, including Europe, and yet, climate-induced mobilities seems to be neglected in EUs internal policies. The aim of this study is to use discourse analysis and the Foucauldian inspired framework “analytics of governance”, to analyze and understand the shaping and construction of EU policies on climate-induced mobility. The findings indicate obscuration of the issue, a prominent securitisation and ecomodernist discourse, and limited commitment to vulnerability and climate justice. It confirms previous studies that the EU governmentality is dominated by security and ecomodernism, resulting in practices that don't manage climate-induced mobilities. These dominant structures must be questioned, institutions held responsible, and transformative options that are human-centred and sustainable must be adopted. No one is immune to climate change.

Keywords: Mobilities, displacement, EU, Governmentality, Vulnerability

Word count: 11,995

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Abbreviations

DA: Discourse analysis

EU: European union

GD: Green deal

CCA: Climate change adaptation

JTM: Justice transition mechanism

JTF: Justice transition fund

NEL: Non-economic losses

UCPM: Union civil protection mechanism

1 Introduction and research aim

1.1 Introduction

There is increasing evidence indicating a rise in the frequency and intensity of environmental hazards due to the increase in global temperature (IPCC, 2022). These hazards disproportionately affect vulnerable populations and regions. Developed countries are however not immune to the effects of climate change, as is evident from increasing heatwaves and wildfires in the Mediterranean, floods and heavy rainfalls in central Europe and coastal erosion in the countries of the Baltic Sea (IDMC, 2022; Weisse et al., 2021). These climate-exacerbate disasters are thus causing increasing human displacement and forced migration within Europe, triggering a total of 276,000 displacements in Europe and central Asia in 2021 (IDMC, 2022).

Traditionally, the European Union (EU) has taken, and continues to take an external focus in its approach to climate-induced mobility, with efforts primarily focused on addressing the root causes of displacement in the sending countries in the global South, to avert migration flows to Europe (Geddes & Somerwille, 2012; Noonan & Rusu, 2022). This approach has often been paired with a securitization perspective that seeks to keep certain groups of “undesirable” people out of the EU (Baldwin et al, 2014).

While efforts to address climate-related mobilities in developing countries have had limited but largely positive, consequences, this approach has resulted in neglect of the issue within the EU (Bilak, 2021; Fornalé, 2020). This dominant discourse of securitization which portrays migration and climate change as security issues, has contributed to a non-humane approach towards climate-induced migration (Fröhlich, 2017). This is a narrative that feeds both xenophobic mindsets and inhibits effective measures to address climate-related mobilities in the EU (Bettini, 2013; Fröhlich, 2017).

With the increasing occurrence of climate-induced disasters within Europe (IDMC, 2022), there is a dire need to re-consider these policies and approaches from a different perspective, and to revise and review the EU’s internal approach to climate-induced mobilities. Climate change is causing significant loss and damage impacts that cannot or will not be avoided, and the lack of comprehensive policies addressing these issues are concerning (Bilak, 2021; Geddes & Somerwille, 2012). Without proactive efforts, responses will likely continue to be reactive, resulting in greater loss and damage (Geddes & Somerwille, 2012). Therefore, I argue that there is a need to analyze the climate governmentality of the EU, bringing its practices into question and challenging the current

discourses that allow for the neglect of climate-induced mobility policies. By analyzing the rationalities, knowledges, and technologies of the EUs governmentality and how these shapes internal climate mobility discourse and policy, I will provide concrete policy recommendations and entry points for political mobilization to ensure climate justice and to hold institutions accountable.

This thesis contributes to the field of sustainability science by examining the dynamics and complex interactions between climate-induced disasters, mobility patterns and the social and political-economic conditions that shape the policies at the EU level. While research on this sustainability issue from this perspective is limited, this thesis aims to fill this gap by providing a critical evaluation, that enhances the understanding of the topic. Through this analysis, I aim to question the current approaches and discourse that are neglecting this growing sustainability issue and is cause to injustices.

1.2 Research aim and questions

This thesis will explore and analyze climate-induced mobility policy in the EU. The analysis will be conducted through using the theoretical framework “analytics of government”(Dean, 2010), and the methodology, discourse analysis (DA) (Phillips & Hardy, 2002). These are assessed to be useful as both the method and framework aims to examine questions of power and presumed knowledges by looking at structures and the language that creates and sustain them.

The proposed overarching question this thesis aims to answer is;

How is the EU dealing with internal climate-induced mobility?

To be able to answer this there will be four sub-questions based on the theoretical framework, which will guide the analysis, and will be introduced in section 4.3.1 *Analytical strategy*.

2 Literature review

2.1 Development of the field

No country or city—rich or poor—is immune. (Fornalé, 2020, p1)

The relation between climate change and human mobility is a topic which has caught great interests from scholars since the late 1980's (Baldwin et al., 2014; Ligouri, 2021). It was argued that climate change, if not dealt with, would cause mass displacement of people, and scholars warned of millions of people becoming “environmental migrants” or “climate refugees” (Baldwin et al., 2014; Ligouri,

2021; Piguet, 2022). Mass flows of people that would come from the global South to the global North, were projected to cause instability in the world and produce conflicts (Bettini, 2013; Ligouri, 2021). Many policy makers and institutions jumped on these claims and adapted the idea that this presumed scenario would pose as a security threat to the western world (Baldwin et al., 2019; Bettini, 2013).

Scholars from the migration field questioned the method used by the main reports that claimed this future scenario of climate-driven mass displacement (Bettini, 2013; Ligouri, 2021). The underlying assumption of the linear cause-effect relation between climate change and mobility was questioned and the debate on climate-induced movement has since then been divided in two approaches (Baldwin et al., 2014). The “maximalist”, also referred to as “alarmist” approach, are raised particularly from the concern of the alarming numbers of migrants linked to climate change (Baldwin et al., 2014; Bettini, 2013). In opposition, is the “minimalist” approach, which is more prominent in the migration research field. From the minimalistic approach, migration is argued to be so multifaceted that it cannot be narrowed down to one cause, many times dismissing climate change as being a major cause (Baldwin et al., 2014; Ligouri, 2021).

The predictions of numbers of climate migrants have proven to be highly insecure, as our knowledge regarding them, can so far, only be based on predictions and not facts (Baldwin et al., 2014; Piguet, 2022). In the 2007 IPCC AR4 reports, it was stated that any efforts of quantifying the numbers is, at its best, guesswork (Bettini, 2013). Research also shows that most migration will happen internally and not cross-border (Bettini, 2013; Boas et al., 2019; Fröhlich, 2017). Yet, debates continuously circulate in politics and science on the actual quantity of displaced people as an anticipated threat (Bettini, 2013; Fröhlich, 2017; Geddes & Somerwille, 2012).

The nexus of climate change and human mobility presents multi-dimensional issues with many implications, such as political conflicts, questions of climate justice and direct threat to life and human rights (Bettini, 2013; McAdam, 2009). Making both of these mentioned approaches lacking, as the maximalist perspective is rather simple in its explanation and great part of the minimalistic approach is dismissive of the influence of climate change on mobilities (Boas et al., 2019).

The minimalist approach has been established as a dominant consensus among many scholars in the academic fields of, for example critical social sciences, demographers and so on (Baldwin et al., 2014). There is not a denial of the relationship between climate change and mobilities, but rather it is argued that climate change and the environment cannot be the only factor that drives movement, it is due to political-economic factors (Kashwan & Ribot, 2021). Historical structural factors primarily

constructs vulnerability and turns a climate hazard to a climate-induced disaster (Ribot, 2014; Wiegel et al., 2019). It is however noteworthy that immediate impacts of hazards may also have tremendous impacts on those who are not considered to be explicitly vulnerable, anyone, from any developmental level, can be susceptible to climatic disasters such as wildfires and heatwaves (Fornalé, 2020; Jackson et al., 2023).

The minimalistic narrative dominating in various fields of academia stands in contrast to the more maximalist approach, which have been observed to dominate the public and political debates, creating dual and contradicting discourses (Baldwin et al., 2014). These discourses are part of producing and shaping the narratives of the public and political debates, agendas and ultimately the policies (Bettini, 2013), such as the responses towards climate-induced mobilities.

In the following sections I will cover the concept of climate-induced mobility, debates surrounding it and the political and academical discourses on climate change and mobility. Then I'll discuss the dominant discourse on migration and displacement policies of the EU, providing a contextualization for this thesis in the current political and public debates, and within the research field.

2.2 Terminology and why it matters

The terminology used for the human mobility and environmental nexus has been open to massive debates. We find the labels of environmental migrants, climate, - or environmental refugees and displaced people, being used by different actors, and they all hold various meaning and political consequences. Indeed, there is no consensus on a collective clear definition (Fornalé, 2020; Laurence, 2021). It is important to clarify the concepts used in science and policy, as the lack thereof influences government efforts and governance applications (McAdam, 2009). Yet, there is a fear that politics will stop at the stage of debate on conceptualizing what to be governed instead of proceeding to action (Geddes & Somerville, 2012).

I hold the perspective that terminologies and concepts hold meaning and value, especially when considering the outplay in for example legal discussions regarding the rights of refugees and legal responsibility of states and international actors (McAdam, 2009). The debates on what is the "right" concept have however tended to take a great deal of attention away from active decision making and have caused development in this area to halt (Geddes & Somerville, 2012; McAdam, 2009). The conceptualization of the matter in politics will however not be the subject of this thesis, but it, nonetheless, requires that an informed concept will be used. The concept that will be used in this thesis is climate-induced (im)mobility (Ayeb-Karlsson et al., 2020; Baldwin et al., 2019).

2.2.1 Climate-induced (im)mobility

Mobility entails various forms of movements, such as permanent or temporary displacement, migration, and relocation (Baldwin et al., 2019). Mobility provides a useful umbrella term to include movements that can range on the spectrum of involuntary to voluntary. It holds more neutrality than other concepts, and can therefore offer a better analytical use (Boas et al., 2019). Additionally, immobility is a part of this concept, as some people can find themselves trapped in place involuntarily while other voluntary stay or leave and return (de Haas, 2021). These notions of movement are always influenced by the socio-cultural and political economic structures they are happening in (Baldwin et al., 2014; Geddes & Somerwille, 2012). However, in the context that this thesis covers, climate change and environmental events are recognized as the major reason behind those mobilities as it exacerbates already existing vulnerabilities (Ayeb-Karlsson et al., 2020; Geddes & Somerwille, 2012). Therefore, I will employ climate-induced (im)mobility throughout this paper, yet some deviations might occur when referring to specific topics, policies, and other contexts.

2.3 Securitization discourse

Security theories explain how a phenomenon becomes an issue of security (Baldwin et al., 2014). There are two major standpoints within this field, the human or state security perspectives. The state perspective puts more focus on the national level, border controls, political control, and military preparedness (Butros et al., 2021). Conversely, the human security perspective encompasses a broader conceptualization of security, with a focus on individual well-being, emphasis on the protection and safety of citizens and holds the state responsible for ensuring it (Butros et al., 2021). The prevalent standpoint on security determines and shapes the political incentives and decisions pursued (Bello, 2022), making a great difference to climate-induced mobility policies as climate-induced migration is typically framed within the political realm as a security issue (Baldwin et al., 2014; Bettini, 2013; Geddes & Somerwille, 2012). The maximalist perspective, which posits that climate change poses a significant threat to societal stability and security has gained traction in international politics since the beginning of 2000s, when climate change was prominently conceptualized as a security threat (Baldwin et al., 2014; Boas et al., 2019). This framing continues, and in response states tend to draw from neoliberal governmentality, to ensure the security of the state against climate change disruptions through economic stability (Jackson et al., 2023). Climate-induced migration has since it gained traction been widely used to highlight the dangers of climate change in various forums, including The UN, in popular culture and NGO's (Baldwin et al., 2014)

The securitization narrative surrounding climate-induced mobilities is two sided, as it pertains to both the separate “threats” of climate change and migration, and the nexus between the two. The securitization debate on migration has been primarily triggered by large numbers of refugees and people movement triggered by conflicts and war zones (Bello, 2022), such as the 2015 European migration crisis, triggered by the war in Syria (Bello, 2022; Csepele & Örkény, 2021). The fear of migrants has also become increasingly linked with the fear of climate change, as it is anticipated to drive mass migration, thus the maximalist perspective is reinforcing fears towards climate-induced mobilities as a threat (Baldwin et al., 2014; Trombetta, 2014). This may contribute to a hostile public and political environment where people forced to move due to climate-related events are seen as threats to states (Butros et al., 2021), leading to a focus to protect the states, rather than protecting the individuals (Butros et al., 2021). Such a perspective allows for more extreme and radical measures to be accepted and normalized to prevent a potential “migration crisis”, such as heavy-handed border controls, anti-migration policies and xenophobic attitudes (Bettini, 2013).

Despite both climate change and migration are considered matters of security, the nexus between the two has not been thoroughly researched (Geddes & Somerwille, 2012; Piguet, 2022). This has resulted in weak governance measures on this issue in the EU, as decisions are not made in the absence of robust sources of knowledge (Geddes & Somerwille, 2012).

2.4 The approach of EU

The EU is a political and economic supranational union comprising 27 members situated in the same region (Butros et al., 2021). The EU is a powerful actor, it shapes both its members, neighbor countries, and exerts significant influence within the international arena (Geddes & Somerwille, 2012). Members states do retain a certain extent of sovereignty (Geddes & Somerwille, 2012), but the EU possesses the legal capacity to enact and enforce laws that apply to all members states, (Butros et al., 2021). Making the EU hold significant power and agency in shaping the structures, discourses and policy priorities (Blackburn & Pelling, 2018).

The state securitization discourse has been the EUs approach to migration and climate change, alongside an ecomodernist one to climate change more generally (Boas et al., 2019; Machin, 2019; Trombetta, 2014). This has led to greater emphasis on border controls, stability of the state and its economy and market competitiveness (Fröhlich, 2017). As the EU and its member state constitutes a unity with external borders, the anticipated large-scale flows of “unregulated” mobility is argued to pose an external threat to the stability of the EU (Butros et al., 2021). The so-called “migration crisis”

of 2015 serves as an example, which contributed to the implementation of stricter border controls and migration policies throughout Europe (Bello, 2022).

This alarmist securitization discourse may also give rise to xenophobia by creating a division between “us” and “them” (Bettini, 2013). Other groups are portrayed as unfamiliar or threats towards one’s own integrity, reinforcing mindsets of hostility and suspicion towards others (Csepeli & Örkény, 2021). This type of division is already evident in the distinction between global South and the global North in EU policies (Geddes & Somerville, 2012), as migrants and refugees from the southern regions are often portrayed as harmful or threat to the stability of society, a “risk” that is addressed through preventive migration measures (Butros et al., 2021).

It is however important to note that the majority of climate-induced mobilities will be internal, rather than cross-border (Bettini, 2013; Boas et al., 2019; Fröhlich, 2017), and that Europe is not immune to internal climate-induced mobilities but yet, has not taken the preventive measures needed (Bilak, 2021; Fornalé, 2020). There is by recently, a commission working document specifically about displacement and migration in relation to climate change (see Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) 2022). However, this document specifically states that it does not cover climate-induced mobilities within the EU, showcasing that they are aware of the issue, yet continue to neglect it internally.

Climate change is expected to have serious consequences, cross-sectoral and spatial, in various parts of Europe, its effects already causes observable consequences in both economical and non-economic losses (NEL), such as displacement, damage to agriculture, homes and infrastructure, threats to health and loss of lives (IDMC, 2022; Serdeczny et al., 2018). Extreme weather is already, and will continue to displace people, and according to data estimates, in 2021 alone, climate change resulted in 276,000 of internal displacements in Europe and parts of central Asia, see Figure 1 (IDMC, 2022). Wildfires, in part driven by record breaking heat, have been the major contribution to displacement. Floods have also been a significant cause, now measured to have increased above the historical average in numbers of displacements (IDMC, 2022).



Figure 1: Internal displacements 2012-2021 in Europe and Central Asia, IDMC report (2022)

The southern and central parts of Europe are more severely impacted by climate change, and therefore, moving to northern regions within or across borders may be a viable option for affected populations (IDMC, 2022). The EU has relatively liberal internal migration laws, providing EU citizens, with free movement to other member states and the same rights as the receiving countries citizens, with some restrictions regarding length of stay without employment (Kommerskollegium, 2019). Yet, the anticipated movement may create tension and exacerbate historical divisions and xenophobia within Europe (Csepli & Örkény, 2021). The last years patterns of xenophobia has reemerged in both public and political parties, alongside an increase of radicalism and right populism governments in Europe (Fröhlich, 2017), normalizing a xenophobic discourse and anti-immigration policies among the member states (Fröhlich, 2017).

This has mainly been targeted towards non-Europeans (Fröhlich, 2017), but an hypothesis that I hold is that these notions also have the potential to feed anti-immigration narratives internally in the EU and create conflicts that may overshadow climate adaptation and mitigation debates and policies. This study's analysis of the tools and discourses used in the EU may provide evidence of where measures are needed to be changed to avoid this anticipated course of events.

3 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework that will be used for this study is the "Analytics of government ", developed by Dean Mitchell, which is based on the definitions of the concepts power and governmentality proposed by Michael Foucault (Dean, 2010; Foucault, 2007). It offers a systematic

framework for analyzing the processes by which governmental practices are established, maintained, and transformed (Dean, 2010). This is achieved through using four analytical tools of “Fields of visibility”, “Techniques”, “Forms of knowledge” and “Presupposed identities” proposed by Dean, which will be covered in the next sections. This framework is particularly useful to understand how practices of government are shaping and constructing the politics and structures within the EU (Dean, 2010). It is further argued to be a great complement for the chosen method of discourse analysis (Oels, 2005), and the ontological and epistemological perspective of social constructivism and post-structuralism, as these mutually look at how phenomena are socially constructed (Woodward et al., 2009).

3.1 Power and governmentality

According to Foucault, power is not fixed or static, but rather a product of relational interactions (Dean, 2010). In his work, Foucault identified several forms of power, including sovereign power, disciplinary power, and governmentality power (Foucault, 2007; Oels, 2005). The governmentality power is particularly relevant for this study, it regards to what Foucault termed as the "conduct of conduct" (Foucault, 2007)

The term conduct refers to the act of leading, but conduct also entails behaviors and actions, and thus, “conduct of conduct” entails the exercise of power to shape and guide the range of behaviors and actions that are possible (Dean, 2010; Foucault, 2007). This is the basis of the concept of governmentality, referring to how power is exercised through the regulation of conduct, the rationalities of governing (Dean, 2010). This concept encompasses both more calculated, and rational forms of power, and less rational and unintended forms (Dean, 2010; Oels, 2005). Governmentality and how we comprehend it requires looking at how mentalities of government are made into the practices that shape society and how we conduct ourselves, and how these “truths” of reality are constructed. These mentalities of government are thus constructing and reinforcing the “regimes of practices” (Dean, 2010, p27).

3.2 Analytics of government

The analytics of government entails the examination of “regimes of practices”, which are the coherent set of ways, such as rules, norms and values that together shape how we go about things (Dean, 2010). It therefore entails critically examining governmental practices, which have evolved over time, and become so normalized and accepted that they are no longer questioned and are taken for granted by the public (Dean, 2010). These normalized practices are particularly relevant to

analyze to understand how societies respond to greater climate change and climate-induced mobilities. The analytical framework can thus, in the context of this study, aid to shed light on the regimes of practices that shape the public and institutional perception and the actions, or inaction of the EU.

The foundation of this framework is to ask questions of *how*, how we govern and are being governed. The aim of using this framework is not simply to describe a phenomenon, but rather to analyze the complex sustainability issue posed (Dean, 2010), to identify the factors that hinders the development of sustainable policy solutions for climate-induced mobility. By asking these questions, the framework will contribute to the understanding of how the discourses shape and create the established regimes of practices.

The analytics of government provides a critical examination of the current regimes of practices, the habits, and the knowledge upon which they are based. This approach encourages the questioning of the current practices and to foster the emergence of alternative ways of thinking (Dean, 2010, p48). Rather than evaluating government as good or bad, the analytics of government seeks to understand the underlying causes and conditions that produce the regimes of governance (Dean, 2010). By deploying an analytics of government approach, my aim is to provide a more nuanced understanding of the processes at work in the governance of the EU, and thus, contribute to the advancement of knowledge on this topic to the field of sustainability science.

3.2.1 The analytical tools

Dean presents four different fields of “regimes of practices” to guide the analysis in this framework (Dean, 2010).

The first tool of analysis is referred to as “*fields of visibility*”, which pertains to the way governments acknowledge and define certain objects, while concurrently obscuring and hiding others (Dean, 2010, p41). This involves an examination of what is brought to attention and what is intentionally or inadvertently excluded, in for example, important policy documents. In other words, it looks at what and who is being governed and what is not (Dean, 2010).

The second tool employed is called *techné*, which refers to the technical aspects of governance (Dean, 2010, p42). To achieve desired ends and values requires the use of technical means such as, practices of mechanism, procedures and vocabularies, tactics techniques and technologies.

Additionally, they impose limits on what is possible, creating an imagined set of possible actions for

the subject (Dean, 2010). This aims to identify the techniques being utilized to address or limit addressing certain matters.

The third tool is *Episteme*, the forms of knowledge that arises from, and which governing draws from (Dean, 2010, p42). These are the attempts to regulate, reform and organize regimes of conduct. It examines the knowledge and expertise they draw on, use of strategies, and the rationality employed by the government and how these shape the practices of government and produces and reinforces the “truth” (Dean, 2010).

Lastly, the fourth tool is the individual and collective *identity*. This dimension concerns characteristics and sense of identity that are presupposed of those who exercise power and authority, and of those who are being governed (Dean, 2010). Dean makes a clear distinction that government cannot explicitly determine people’s sense of self or subjectivity, but it can influence the condition people live in and thus build their identity upon (Dean, 2010). Regimes of government can promote, facilitate, foster, and attribute various capacities and qualities to agents, and if successful, agents come to think and identify themselves based on these terms and within certain groups (Dean, 2010, p44). Examples of this is the identification of some agents as being vulnerable or active citizens, which may inhibit, or construct capabilities based on these ascribed identities (Dean, 2010).

4 Methodology

4.1 Discourse analysis

The methodology employed in this study is discourse analysis (DA). DA is a qualitative method used to examine how linguistics construct our understanding of the social world (Doherty, 2007). This method is rooted in social constructivism which posits that knowledge, and the “truth” of reality are constructed through social interactions (Phillips & Hardy, 2002). This method can help to understand and explain how we come to know, understand, and make sense of the social world by looking at language (Lynggaard, 2019; Phillips & Hardy, 2002).

The concept of discourse refers to the practices of speech and texts, its creation, and the reception. These communication forms are regarded as discourse units that gain meaning through their interconnectedness and the ways in which they are produced, used and imbued with meaning (Phillips & Hardy, 2002). Discourses shape our perception and understandings of objects and phenomenon’s, and as such, our perception of what is real is constructed through the discourses we produce and uphold, but this understanding can be challenged and altered through alternative discourses (Doherty, 2007; Phillips & Hardy, 2002). DA entails to examine these discourses units to understand how they contribute to the construction of our social reality and may be challenged (Doherty, 2007; Phillips & Hardy, 2002).

Historical and social circumstances shape current discourses and their evolution over time and place must be considered to fully comprehend their meaning (Berberoglu, 2017; Phillips & Hardy, 2002). The literature review in the beginning of this thesis provides an overview of the development of the discourses on climate-induced mobilities, accounting for this aspect.

DA is an effective method to examine the intersection of knowledge and power, and how they shape social dynamics and structures as discourses can lead to power imbalances and marginalization of certain groups (Berberoglu, 2017). The relation between power and knowledge is a prominent theme in Foucault’s work, which has inspired much DA research on the interplay between power and knowledge and how it shapes social construction (Berberoglu, 2017; Phillips & Hardy, 2002). By including perspectives that acknowledge the role of power in creating structures and our perceived knowledge of reality, researchers can better understand and critique these dynamics (Phillips & Hardy, 2002).

In this study, DA will be used to examine the prevalent discourse in the EU through the analysis of important EU policy document. Governmental documents are expressions of the dominant discourse in the government, as they contain the coherent ideas and practices, which reinforce the dominant discourse throughout (Doherty, 2007). By analyzing these documents, it is possible to gain insight into the regimes of practices used to create the dominant discourse, as discourses shape the presented issue and what is considered “possible” solutions (Rothe, 2017), and thus shapes the policies on climate-induced (im)mobilities.

4.1.1 Relevance for the study

This method was chosen as it comprises several methodological strengths that aligns with the research questions posed. Through using a DA to examine policy documents, this enables an understanding of the discursive construction on climate-induced (im)mobility in the EU. Additionally, the proposed method will complement the theoretical framework by providing insight into how regimes of practices are both established and reinforced through discourses, specifically, as policy texts serve as both a product and reinforcement of these regimes (Doherty, 2007).

4.2 Ontology and epistemology

In this thesis I adopt a social constructivist epistemological approach, which posits that certain aspects of social reality are constructed through human interactions. While there may be objective truths to the physical world, the understanding of reality is shaped by the ideas, definition and interpretations that are socially produced within historical and cultural contexts (Kukla, 2000). We construct and attach meanings to concepts, such as migrant, which ultimately shape how society interprets that concept and what it entails. Our worldview is created and reproduced using language and discourses, which falls well in line with the chosen method of DA (Doherty, 2007).

Social constructivism is a branch of post-structuralism, which entails the ontological comprehension that our understanding of objects is mediated through language and other social and cultural contexts, with emphasis on the role of language and discourses (Woodward et al., 2009). It also entails the epistemological component to question how we define and know what is true, it challenges the ways in what we come to accept as knowledge, and argues it is socially constructed (Woodward et al., 2009), there is no attainable objective truth, which makes our understanding of reality subjective (Woodward et al., 2009).

Post-structuralism highlights the relationship between structures of power and agency in shaping the “truth” of reality (Woodward et al., 2009). Foucault’s concept on governmentality and power aligns

with this school of thought, as he argues that many societal issues are socially constructed, and that solutions proposed are the results of the constructed understanding of the issue (Howarth, 2013), thus, cornering ourselves in the imagined issue and solutions. By questioning our own assumptions and understanding of knowledge, we can challenge and change the dominant understanding of issues and potential solutions (Howarth, 2013).

4.3 Collection of data

Different discourse units serve different purposes and therefore the selection of discourse units should be based on the specific research questions and purpose of the study (Lynggaard, 2019). Policy documents are particularly useful units for DA, as they are constructed and produced in a setting that resembles the political forum and discourse of the specific time and context in which they were written. However, the EU generates an abundance of documents in various forms, making it necessary to limit the selection based on specific criteria (Lynggaard, 2019). As proposed by Lynggaard(2019), the selection of discourse units in DA should be guided by initial criteria's that are formulated into two questions. The first question is *Whose discourse is to be uncovered?* (Lynggaard, 2019, p 47). Which for the purpose of this study, most fittingly would be the EU as an entity. The supranational organization whose legal decisions shape policies on climate-induced mobilities both nationally and internationally, thus using official EU legislation documents. The second question is, *What is the time frame?* (Lynggaard, 2019, p 47). As the study has both word and time limit, the inclusion of only currently relevant policy documents and legislations is deemed most appropriate, rather than analyzing the development of discourses over time.

Through scanning main migration policies, I found it evident that major parts of them are dealing with climate on a superficial level, such as in the "New pact on migration and asylum" (*European Commission, 2020*), they mention it four times and only in relation to when listing several other societal challenges, not focusing on it, in its own importance. Instead the main focus of migration documents is on people movement in forms of illegality, border controls, Visas, and securitization in general (*European Commission, 2020*). Making them not explicitly related to internal climate risks, and as the nexus between climate change and mobilities is the subject of this thesis, it instead seemed most appropriate to focus on EUs main sustainability and environmental legislations.

I first reviewed the EU's core environmental documents and scanned through their references and additional documents referred to in text. These additional documents were then examined, and as there is also an abundance of unofficial statement documents, working papers and preparatory acts,

selection on which to include was based on whether they were official EU legislation documents and if they were currently active legislation. Which resulted in the documents listed in *Table 1*.

Table 1: List of the used policy documents, with year of publication, source and how each is referred to in text in this study.

Public Name /description	Source	Year	Reference in text
The European climate law	The European parliament and the council	2021	Climate law
The Justice transition Fund (JTF)	The European parliament and the council	2021	JTF
Union civil protection mechanism (UCPM)	The European parliament and the council	2021	UCPM
Programme for the environment and climate action (LIFE)	The European parliament and the council	2021	LIFE
The European union solidarity fund	The European parliament and the council	2021	Solidarity fund
EU floods directive	The European parliament and the council	2007	Flood directive
Forging a climate resilient Europe-the new Eu strategy on Adaptation on climate change	European commission	2021	Adaptation strategy
European climate pact	European commission	2020	Climate pact
The European Green deal (GD)	European commission	2019	GD

4.3.1 Analytical strategy

The analysis of the policy documents is guided by four key questions, drawing on the theoretical frameworks four tool of analysis, to systematically structure the examination of the data. These questions are:

- *What's obscured and what's made visible?*

- *What "techniques" do they use to address or limit addressing climate-induced mobilities?*

-*What forms of knowledge are used and produced to rationalize the governing?*

-*What forms of identities are presupposed?*

To answer these questions, a thematic strategy, as outlined by Bryman (2016, p 585), is employed. It is a strategy that can be discerned in the approach of discourse analysis and will provide a framework for strategically managing the analysis of the selected data.

Fairclough identifies themes to systematically structure a DA, which will be applied to the thematic strategy, as the themes presented by Fairclough(2003), is well-suited to combine with the guiding research questions and for the purpose of this study. This includes examining recurrences, or repetitions, and to examine identity constructions and legitimization through e.g., rationalization, authorization, or morals. Additionally, the features of linguistics will be examined, through e.g., identifying the semantic relation between words, words that are hyponyms for another word (Fairclough, 2003). Attention will also be given to the construction of contrastive relations or additive relations between groups or objects, implying the similarities and differences, which can be examined through looking at collocation of words (Fairclough, 2003, p88). Lastly, the abstract or concrete representation of people, processes, and objects shall be considered (Fairclough, 2003).

4.4 Limitations and ethical reflections

The scope of this thesis is limited, and as such, only a limited number of documents were selected and analyzed. Therefore, the study is only representative to a certain extent of the discourse in the EU, as the organization produces an immense quantity of policy documents. Additionally, the historical transformation and development, that ought to be part of discourse analysis cannot be adequately covered due to the limitation of scope, making this study only a snapshot of the current discourse on climate-induced (im)mobility.

Regarding ethical reflections, it is important to note that the researchers bias may be present in this study. As a researcher and individual, I do have subjective constructions and assumptions about the world, which will affect the analysis and interpretation of the documents and discourses. While research cannot be unbiased, it is important for the researcher to be transparent and be aware of the bias. Thus, I will actively reflect upon and critically review the bias to the furthest extent possible throughout this study.

5 Findings

Presented below are the conducted findings and discursive analysis. The findings are divided in four sections, each covering the analytical guiding questions individually.

5.1 Fields of visibility

The threat of climate change is explicitly emphasized in the documents; it is an “existential threat” and a reason for the increase in environmental disasters (UCPM, 2021). Climate change is further recognized as a multiplier of threats (GD, 2019), which include various consequences listed, and would assumingly include climate-induced (im)mobility, yet this is not mentioned. Instead, there is consequently focus on the threat climate change impacts pose to the economic stability of EU, and secondly, the threat it poses to citizens health and wellbeing in general. The economic stability is continuously repeated to be endangered due to climate change impacts, but through EU policies, such as the green transition and climate adaptation plan, there is opportunities for achieving growth and stability despite this threat (GD, 2019). It is explicitly stated that climate change early on was acknowledged by the commission to be a security threat,

Climate change and security are interrelated; the Commission and the High Representative emphasised already in 2008 that climate change is a threat multiplier, exacerbating existing tensions and instability (Adaptation Strategy, 2021, p17).

Climate change is thus discursively portrayed as an outer, objective threat to the stability of the EU. This calls for solidarity and integration of common security and defense policies to ensure security of the EU from outer threats, and not inner, (GD, 2019; UCPM, 2021), a narrative that aligns with the securitization of states discourses.

The dominant discourse in the documents further creates a nexus between climate change and human mobility, where climate change is a contributor to increasing and changed migration patterns in and from other continents, especially Africa. This is portrayed as disrupting the stability of the origin countries, but even more so, it is portrayed as a threat to the stability of EU, as it is a risk that these countries would not themselves be capable to do climate change adaptation (CCA). The EU establishes their part in taking global responsibility through contributing with aid and development of CCA to these countries, to prevent this potential increase in migration flows. The EU continuously refer to their work in these matters as ensuring stability and security (Adaptation Strategy, 2021),

which creates an additive relation between migration and “threat”, as migration is being tied to creating a risk of instability, and needs to be prevented.

Another dimension is the emphasis on the threat of escalated conflict resulting from the impacts of climate change and altered mobility patterns (GD, 2019; *Adaptation Strategy*, 2021). Climate-induced displacement and migration is depicted as factors contributing to potential conflict in both the *Adaptation strategy* (2021, p19), and the GD (2019, p21) documents. Where in the later, the consequences of climate change are anticipated to pose increased risks of conflict and forced migration. The EUs adaptation aid aims to manage climate-induced displacement through managing the interconnecting between human mobility, security, and climate change (*Adaptation Strategy*, 2021), emphasizing the nexus of mobility and climate change merely in relation to security and conflict. The proposed solutions are also only targeted externally, ignoring, and obscuring the internal climate-induced (im)mobilities within the EU (IDMC, 2022). Associated factors such as risks of health and lives and risks to infrastructure, are illuminated, and there is single mention of displacement. Yet, the issue of climate-induced mobilities within Europe remains overlooked as there are very few times that it is illuminated in their own importance, and in those cases, they are briefly and abstractly mentioned. This indicates that the EU is obscuring their own vulnerability, in terms of internal climate risks and that it is only portrayed as a concern for other regions.

The potential for displacement of people due to floods is explicit in the Flood Directive (2007), showcasing that there is a potential risk of people movement due to climatic hazards. The directive aims to ensure management plans at the community level to prevent, protect and mitigate floods (Flood Directive, 2007). However, the directive treats floods as a natural phenomenon, which underappreciates that the damages and risk it poses to people are due to combination of historical-structural factors such as access to health care, housing and education (Schlosberg et al., 2017; Wiegel et al., 2019). Further mention of climate-induced mobility is found in the Climate Pact (2020), which acknowledges the existence of climate-induced migration as one of several impacts of climate change, particularly on those who are vulnerable and living in poverty. The documents recognises that questions of this nature, “*raises important issues of justice, democracy, equity, equality, and solidarity.*” (Climate Pact, 2020, p 4). Yet, the document does not expand on either of the implications of those contested concepts or the issue any further. This raises questions, as these concepts are of great importance in relation to climate-induced (im)mobilities and climate justice (Saraswat & Kumar, 2016; Schlosberg et al., 2017).

In contrast, the Union civil protection Mechanism (UCPM), which aims to enhance collaboration in the union for “*preventing, preparing for and responding to natural and man-made disasters*”, (UCPM,

2021, p 1) highlights the significance of climate change as a trigger for more severe environmental disasters. Several consequences of these disasters are listed, such as loss of livelihoods and lives. Yet, there is no mention of migration, displacement, or people movement, despite its intended purpose of serving as a guide for civil protection from those precise disasters that cause climate-induced (im)mobilities. It is stated that particular focus should be given to the consequences disasters have on vulnerable groups when developing disaster resilience goals, which arguably would include the groups more prone to climate-induced (im)mobilities as these tends to be more vulnerable due to structural factors (Wiegel et al., 2019). Yet no definition or exposition of what this attention would entail, nor what vulnerability is are provided.

These findings showcase that EU are aware that climate-induced mobilities are occurring but tends to merge it with other issues that is greater illuminated. Not completely obscuring it, yet not considering it enough.

5.2 Governance techniques

The EU has two main objectives recognized in its climate change policies: reaching a climate neutral economy by 2050 through the green transition and improving climate adaptation. The EU employs a range of instruments and techniques of governmentality to achieve its objectives, including *“innovate funding mechanisms”* and *“The union civil protection mechanism (UCPM, 2021)”*. Key instruments recognized for climate adaptation are adaptation strategies developed and maintained by national, regional, and local authorities, which the commission is responsible to regularly assess the progress of based on member states reports.

The EU prioritises mainstreaming of sustainability in all EU policies as a means of achieving progress in tackling climate adaptation and a green transition. The LIFE program is intended to act as a catalyst to serve this purpose (LIFE, 2021), though the exact methods of mainstreaming remain somewhat vague. The concept of mainstreaming within governmentality pertains the creation of framework for how policies is to be perceived and managed. This can result in that seemingly normative policies become subject to power dynamic, as through mainstreaming certain objectives and narratives shape the landscape of what is considered “normal” in policy (De Roeck, 2019), which can lead to obscuration of certain political questions, such as climate-induced (im)mobility. The EU also aims to mainstream knowledge to the public and encourages citizens to be informed, through initiatives such as the Climate Pact (2020). Providing relevant information and knowledge based on scientific claims (*Climate Pact, 2020*), with the intention to strengthen citizens capacities to independently withstand and minimise risks from climate change. Thus delegating the responsibility onto individuals to reduce

their own vulnerabilities, which is, what is referred to by Dean(2004) “technologies of agency”, a feature typically identified in neoliberal policy approaches (Remling, 2023).

Development and use of technological tools are highlighted as key techniques, coupled with economic instruments and initiatives, to facilitate the transition towards a sustainable society by decoupling economic growth from resource use (GD, 2019; Climate Law, 2021). The EU mobilises public and private investments, technical assistance, and financial mechanisms to support this transition, but challenges remain due to financial constraints, such as the insufficient implementation of EU legislation on the nature and biodiversity strategy (LIFE, 2021), and a recognisable financial gap in the budget for investments to meet adaptation needs (*Adaptation Strategy*, 2021).

Data collection and sharing are frequently cited as a crucial for improving technical solutions and financial investments in climate adaptation and disaster management, which are areas that could aid to reduce risk of climate-induced (im)mobility. In particular data sharing from members is urged, yet the requirements to do so is vague as it is on participatory and voluntarily basis, despite the importance of it and the acknowledged shortage of data in areas, such as “*climate-related losses and physical climate risk*” (*Adaptation Strategy*, 2021, p6).

Major parts of the proposed solutions in the EU documents are thus influenced by the rationality of ecomodernism, meaning that environmental issues should be governed through application of economics and technological innovation (Machin, 2019; Oels, 2005). Such a rationalisation hinges on the belief that no real structural systematic change is required to solve climate change, as solutions reflects conventional neoliberal strategies (Remling, 2018). This contrasts with transformative solutions, which includes profound change to social, economic and political structures, and are argued by many sustainability researchers to be vital for a systematic sustainability change (Abson et al., 2017; Blackburn & Pelling, 2018; Olsson et al., 2014). Yet, transformation is rarely mentioned in the documents and when it is, it remains within neoliberal conventional ways, such as investing in innovative technology (GD, 2019). Strategies that continually will increase risks as they do not change the structures that contributes to the underlying risks of climate-induced (im)mobility.

The Just Transition Mechanism (JTM), is a finance mechanism that targets territories and sectors most affected by climate transition and aims to ensure resilience for vulnerable citizens, which logically ought to include climate-induced (im)mobilities (JTF, 2021). However, the analysis of the JTM concludes otherwise. The JTM is meant to support territories that are “vulnerable”, but the findings show that “vulnerable” implies those states and territories that rely on fossil fuels and are expected to suffer economical losses during the transition, with the proposed solutions of economic

incentives to reduce the risk of loss for those actors. Although the intentions of the JTM is to ensure a “just” transition, and “*leave no one behind*” (GD, 2019, p16), the absence of concrete definitions and consideration of climate justice raises questions of true legitimacy and inclusiveness. Climate justice encompasses the inclusion of the most vulnerable and marginalised societies in decision making, policies and adaptation practises (Saraswat & Kumar, 2016; Schlosberg et al., 2017), which the EU fails to include, making the commitment and definitions of vulnerability and justice conflicting to the proclaimed aim and neglecting those that are in risk of climate-induced (im)mobility.

5.3 Forms of knowledge

The EU frequently employs various rationalizing arguments, such as emphasizing the need for scientifically grounded actions, policies, and decisions-making. The EU also strives to employ strategies to enhance and expand its knowledge base and is continually drawing from various sources of expertise (*Climate Pact*, 2020; *Adaptation Strategy*, 2021; *Climate Law*, 2021). The EU relies on scientific knowledge claims such as the IPCC reports and on its own assessment performances. However, the use of science appears to be selective, focusing mainly on quantitative and natural science aspects when referring to climate change, rather than addressing socio-economic vulnerabilities associated with it. This supports previous studies remarking that the objectivity of scientific knowledge is not so neutral as ideated, it is rather employed to serve as justification of certain policies (Cairney, 2015; King, 2016; Remling, 2018).

The EU asserts that it draws its knowledge from diverse sources, including communities and citizens knowledge, to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach. This is a well put together strategy, as the integration of various forms of knowledge is proven to be a beneficial way to approach adaptation work (Fornalé, 2020; Schlosberg et al., 2017). The practises of increasing knowledgebase and to delegate responsibility to individuals, municipalities and businesses are however deemed as soft-incremental measures, meaning measures that are non-confirmative and sometimes inconsequential, which according to Remling(2023) follows a policy discourse that implies a conception where strategies are in no need of structural changes. A discourse also found by Remling(2023) to be visible throughout member states national policies.

The forms of knowledge used are many times aligning with an ecomodernist agenda, with references such as urging the need for innovation, new technologies (GD, 2019, p18), improvements in data and monitoring, and advancement in systematic approaches (*Adaptation Strategy*, 2021, p5). This rationalization is further evident in economic and financial justifications (Machin, 2019), through their employment of cost-benefit and “win-win” arguments (Oels, 2005). These arguments are

utilised to motivate both public and private investment in climate adaptation and the green transition, with the arguments that such investments will generate long-term economic benefits by “*by reducing risks, increasing productivity, and stimulating innovation*” (Adaptation Strategy, 2021, p2), and depicted as wise and “*no regret*” investments (Adaptation Strategy, 2021, p2). Depicting the goal as gaining economic benefits rather than increasing the safety of people and thus those in danger of climate-induced (im)mobility.

Another example to be drawn, is the EU solidarity fund, a fund to provide financial assistance to members in distress in the aftermath of major disasters, specifically “*natural disasters causing physical damage*” (Solidarity Fund, 2020, p1), which I would assume includes damages related to climate-induced (im)mobilities. These disasters are measured in terms of financial costs of damages, and the amount of eligible omitted aid is based on those estimated expenditures. Sanctions and spendings on reconstruction must equally be economically justified, thus putting loss and aid in purely monetary losses. This financial rationalisation risks obscuring the dimension of non-economic losses(NEL), as these are rarely viable to put monetary value upon (Jackson et al., 2023).

The EU solidarity fund is also the only document where the reference to concrete assistance for people in displacement was found,

Providing temporary accommodation and funding rescue services to meet the needs of the population concerned (Solidarity Fund, 2020, p3).

However, the language used is ambiguous, as it goes without specifying the extent of rescue services to be provided and that “*temporary accommodation*” is defined as until the people can return to their original homes that ought to be repaired, which dismisses cases where this is not viable, or reparation have not been economically justified. This suggests that risks and disasters are approached with a short-term, rather than a long-term perspective, and that despite changing circumstances, policies demonstrate the desire to persevere or restore condition as they were prior to disaster to build “*resilience*” (Schlosberg et al., 2017). If so, this allows individuals to return to areas with high likelihood of recurring climate risks, even though it may be considered irresponsible. This lack of long-term planning and consideration of root causes and changed circumstances may create vulnerability over time (Oliver-Smith et al., 2017).

The EU further legitimise its actions through their own competences and emphasises past successes in the field of sustainability and climate adaptation. With references to past resilience efforts, national adaptation strategy development, mainstreaming adaptation in policies and budgets, and recognition of its climate adaptation knowledge platform as a key reference for adaptation

(*Adaptation Strategy*, 2021, p3). The EU presents itself as setting an international example with references such as, “*The EU is setting a credible example*”,(GD, 2019, p20) and “*The Global Commission on Adaptation recognised the EU as a pioneer in integrating considerations of climate risk into decision-making*” (*Adaptation Strategy*, 2021, p3). Furthermore, the EU argues that they can use its influence and expertise to mobilise partners countries towards sustainable development, using an authoritative language to rationalise their actions and decision in the EU and global relations. Despite their claims of superiority, various documents highlight persistent gaps in adaptation knowledge, failure to meet environmental objectives, and insufficient implementation of adaptation actions (GD, 2019; *Adaptation Strategy*, 2021). Communicating dual narratives, one where it affirms to the public that the threats of climate change is under control due to its competence yet illuminates severe downfalls in their efforts.

5.4 Presupposed identities

At the final level of analysis, the focus shifts to the formation of identities and how they are constructed to align with the regimes of practices.

The EU, as an agent, is depicted in a multifaceted manner, oscillating between a unified entity, and being distinguished into separate agents. The most coherent distinction is between the EU itself and its member states, yet the concept of solidarity is frequently emphasized and encouraged within the EU to achieve certain objectives. The EU exerts an authoritative role over its members, but also places responsibility and regulations on them, with various levels of enforcement, ranging from voluntary to “rigorously enforced” (GD, 2019, p6). The EU dismiss themselves from having responsibility regarding various areas, with respect to the member states sovereignty, transferring certain responsibilities to local, or regional authorities, citizens, or private sectors.

In the international context, the EU presents itself as a global leader and provider of aid to other regions towards climate adaptation and mitigation (GD, 2019). This may lead to the creation of an identity of “superiority” for the EU compared to other nations, which are referred to as vulnerable and in need of support. Yet, the EU fails to adhere to their own regions vulnerabilities and neglect to focus on internal climate-induced vulnerability and (im)mobility. Simultaneously the EU presents itself as a protector of their own citizens and works to preserve the unions security, its economic stability, and competitiveness against outer threats that are supposedly coming from the same countries that are given support. The EU assigns issues such as climate-induced mobility, to only be a threat when it comes from other regions and not an internal one.

The EU emphasizes the importance of the individual citizens, especially in the Climate Pact (*Climate Pact*, 2020). They ascribe identities on European citizens as active, engaged and empowered, and ascribe them responsibilities to “play their role” in climate adaptation and the transition (*Adaptation Strategy*, 2021). However, a dual identity may be presupposed as occasionally it is also stated that citizens are to be protected from suffering losses from climate change, especially against energy poverty, loss of jobs and finances. Ascribing some communities and groups within the EU to be “vulnerable,” but merely in relation to economic factors, thus excluding large parts of those in risk of climate-induced (im)mobility.

The concept of vulnerability and the accompanying presumed identity of it may entail various things, and it is highly relevant to consider these in relation to climate-induced (im)mobility (Wiegel et al., 2019). It is, for example stated in the UCPM that there is need to pay extra attention to vulnerable groups when designing and implementing disaster risk plans (UCPM, 2021, p9), yet no definition of what this means or what being vulnerable entails follows. They do however include that gender-sensitive protection is needed to address the specific gender-dimensions of vulnerabilities, an important dimension to include, but they still fail to mention further intersecting structural factors that conclude to contextual vulnerabilities and climate-induced (im)mobility, such as, race, age, class, ability status and colonial history (Kashwan & Ribot, 2021; Sovacool et al., 2023).

There are variations of additives to vulnerability in the documents, with references such as, vulnerability in the forms of poverty or lack of education (*Adaptation Strategy*, 2021, p1), workers and sectors that are vulnerable because of economic losses due to the transition (JTF, 2021, p4), and “*the most vulnerable*”, as those most exposed to harmful effects of climate change and disasters (GD, 2019, p16). None of these references are thorough in acknowledging the complexity that the concept holds. The presupposed identity of being vulnerable is thus very abstract and provides little value when the need to address structural causes of vulnerability in relation to climate-induced (im)mobilities, is substantial (Saraswat & Kumar, 2016; Wiegel et al., 2019).

6 Analysis and discussion

The following discussion will be framed around key points from the results that captures the deeper rationality of the governmentality, and which answers the posed research questions. The discussion is concluded with recommendations for policy work and future research.

6.1 Obscuring the issue and illuminated discourses

Climate change is illustrated as a significant threat to European nations, jeopardising the economy, people's health, wellbeing, and the stability of EU. The various consequences of climate change are addressed by the EU through implementation of the green transition and climate adaptation plan, which heavily emphasises economic and technological strategies and is known as an ecomodernist discourse (Machin, 2019).

Climate change is framed as an anticipated threat and risks against the EU, which strengthen previous studies (Boas et al., 2019; Fröhlich, 2017; Trombetta, 2014), that point towards a prominent securitisation discourse within the EU. This discourse is problematic as it constructs a monocausal link between climate change and mobilities, which neglects the socioeconomic and political structures that create susceptibility to climate-related disasters (de Haas, 2021). The findings further present an additive relation created between migration, climate change and threat which creates the underlining assumption that migration and human mobility is posing threats towards societies *in* Europe to be protected from. An already recognised discourse in political and public debates (Bello, 2022; Butros et al., 2021; Fröhlich, 2017), that is highly problematic due to its racist and xenophobic features. Yet these policies continue to feed that discourse and fails to acknowledge the human rights and justices of people disproportionately affected by climate change. It fails to acknowledge the susceptibility of the EU to internal climate risks and fails to see the rights and safety of individuals at risk, to instead favour the security of economic and state.

The results demonstrates that EU does not prioritise climate-induced (im)mobility and it is currently obscured in internal policies. The absence raises questions about whether this omission is deliberate or not, given that the issue is presented as an occurring concern for other regions, and given the numerous opportunities to highlight it throughout the policies. It is therefore likely that the omission is a deliberate construction and an obscuring of their own vulnerabilities, and therefore, to bluntly answer the research question, the EU is not dealing with internal climate-induced (im)mobilities.

The governmentality of the EU draws on specific forms of knowledge that reinforce the dominant discourses of securitisation and ecomodernism. This approach selectively highlights scientific evidence that supports political agendas, while ignoring issues not deemed as fitting the agenda (Remling, 2018). For example, that climate-induced mobilities is recognised as a significant problem in other regions, but not in Europe, despite increasing numbers of disasters and displacement the past year, thus not adhering to the latest science proving this is a growing issue to be expected in Europe (IDMC, 2022; IPCC, 2022).

This study has confirmed previous research findings, (Butros et al., 2021; Geddes & Somerville, 2012), which indicates that EUs migration approach aims to restrict entry of certain people that are deemed to be a threat to the EUs stability because of the anticipated number of migrants and their place of origin, thereby creating a dichotomy between those within and outside the EU. This separation is manifested through the migration-threat additive and through the EUs portrayal of itself as superior to other regions deemed in need of aid from the EU, a perspective that may foster xenophobic attitudes towards non-European migrants and refugees (Bettini, 2013).

Notably, the results do not suggest any trace of xenophobic discourse within the EU, a worry of mine that was raised in the literature review. Instead, this study highlights the urged and importance of solidarity between member states to ensure security against outer threats. While no internal xenophobic notions were found, analysing national policies may yield other important insights on this subject, which further studies should investigate.

6.2 Ecomodernism

The environmental discourse of an ecomodernist governmentality is noticeable, as the aim to reconcile economic growth and sustainability by utilizing technological and financial initiatives is evident in the EU strategies (see *GD*, 2019; *Adaptation Strategy*, 2021; *UCPM*, 2021). This discourse construct the “truth” of the issues and the viable response options through governing based on economic rationality (Machin, 2019). Through using techniques of mainstreaming knowledge and sustainability to citizens and in policies, the EU discursively continues to create the frames of policies, which deems there to be no other alternative than those presented through the ecomodernist agenda. Despite the fact that the favouring of maintaining economic development may impede trade-offs of increased climate risks (Blackburn & Pelling, 2018), and the general lack of addressing root-causes of structural issues such as vulnerability, meaning that these strategies rather increase than minimise the risk of climate-induced (im)mobilities.

The findings highlight the prevalent reliance on economic initiatives, funds, and investments from both public and private sector, indicating a dependence on financial means to put policies into action. The lack of funding for necessary environmental and adaptation measures further indicate that policies may not matter unless they are economically justified and prioritized, which indicates trade-offs based on economic rationality, a policy trade-off that tends to appear between climate risk and development (Blackburn & Pelling, 2018). The rationalising arguments that commonly is used by ecomodernism and is visible in the EU policy documents, is of a presumed win-win situation to invest in ecomodernist initiatives. This rationalisation is however highly questionable and there is a need to ask whose interest an ecomodernist strategy creates a “win” for. It is evident that an ecomodernist agenda seems to forestall the emergence of alternative approaches due to its business-as-usual narrative towards climate strategies, which contradicts the transformative and inclusive solutions, which many sustainability scholars argues to be vital for sustainable change (Abson et al., 2017; Machin, 2019; Olsson et al., 2014). Rather, it increases the risk of climate risks as continued business-as-usual strategy is not managing climate change in the extent needed (IPCC, 2022), nor deals with root causes of vulnerability and climate-induced (im)mobility. Deeming the outcomes of ecomodernist initiatives to not be a win-win situation for all, or in the long term as it is not inclusive, transformative nor climate justice oriented.

The ecomodernism agenda also entails justifications based on economic metrics; a tendency observed in the European documents. To rely solely on economic measures to rationalise strategies and solutions may oversimplify complex problems, particularly as climate-disasters results in both economic and non-economic losses (NEL) (Serdeczny et al., 2018). By focusing on putting losses in economic metrics, NELs are often overlooked and although those losses may be included in calculations and response strategies, their quantification is challenging and pose ethical dilemmas, as it does not fully capture the loss of lives, livelihoods, ecological and environmental resources (Serdeczny et al., 2018).

6.3 Vulnerability and Climate Justice

The presupposed identity that is prominent in the findings is an active liberal citizen who is themselves responsible for adapting to climate change by acquiring knowledge and being informed, thus holding them accountable for their own safety (see *Climate Pact, 2020; Adaptation Strategy, 2021*). This delegation of responsibility to individuals is a neoliberalist strategy serving the interests of governors, as they allocate their own responsibility upon the individuals capacities and thus reduce governance strategies to support long-term resolving of risks (Crosweller & Tschakert, 2021).

Moreover, this identity formation obscures marginalised groups and individuals who do not fit into the presupposed identity of an active and-, capable citizens, which makes these kinds of strategies conclude in increase of risks (Blackburn & Pelling, 2018). It fails to recognise that some individuals face systematic barriers that prevent them to conform to this identity, and by focusing on making individual responsible, it also undermines the need for systematic change and neglects underlying vulnerabilities.

The findings additionally highlight an abstract use of the concept of vulnerability in the EU policies, which is problematic since vulnerability is a critical determinant of which people, communities, and areas are more susceptible to climate-induced (im)mobilities (Ayeb-Karlsson et al., 2022; de Haas, 2021; Marino & Ribot, 2012; Piguet, 2022). Through more effectively addressing vulnerabilities, policies, could help prevent the risk of climate-induced (im)mobilities without explicitly targeting them. Yet instead of a holistic application of this concept, a vague and contested approach is employed, resulting in insipid policies.

Vulnerability arises from lack of access and capabilities, (Jackson et al., 2017; Watts & Bohle, 1993) prompting policymakers to examine why some individuals lack these resources. A common mistake in assessing vulnerability in relation to climate hazards is to simply identify who is vulnerable, such as those in poverty, without addressing the root causes of why they are in poverty (Kashwan & Ribot, 2021; Watts & Bohle, 1993). To truly address vulnerability in the context of climate adaptation, it is therefore crucial to consider individuals ability to shape the political economy, as this shapes the structures that creates vulnerability and security (Ribot, 2014). This requires asking questions such as who does the political economy benefits and who holds responsibilities over the shaping of social, economic, and political norms, and structures.

Climate policies often focus solely on the hazard itself, neglecting the social dimensions that turn a hazard into a disaster (Kashwan & Ribot, 2021; Oliver-Smith et al., 2017; Ribot, 2014). This creates a constructed narrative suggesting that climatic hazards and disasters can be separated from the social conditions and root causes of vulnerabilities, and fails to consider the cross-scale and spatial effects of them (Kashwan & Ribot, 2021). To trace the causality of risk and vulnerability would shift the narrative away from attributing vulnerability to the rather abstract and objective threat of climate change towards socio-political structures, and with this, shift responsibility towards institutions.

This apparent simplicity of how vulnerabilities is understood and employed in the EU policies, shows a disregard for true climate justice. If climate change and, more specifically, climate-induced (im)mobilities truly shall be managed, there is requirement to acknowledge and address social justice

issues associated with climate change impacts, particularly those vulnerable populations who are most affected by climate change but contributes the least to its cause. To achieve climate justice involves inclusive decision making, equitable resource distribution and measures to mitigate and adapt to climate risks (Ribot, 2014). The EU claims to pursue a fair and just transition, but its measures fall short of this goal. The concepts of “just”, “equity” and “democracy” are used vaguely, and a proper definition of their implication would need to be provided in the policies. The EU's narrow approach to justice primarily aims to ensure a just transition for those who are contributing to a green transition based on economic growth, while obscuring marginalised communities, vulnerable groups, and continues to cause environmental damage. The EU's policies hold significant influence over the political discourse and objectives of the member states, as observed through the neglect of climate-induced (im)mobility. Making it imperative to stop with this abstract use of contested concepts in the EU policies and instead take responsibility for climate justice.

6.4 Recommendations and future research

To address the issue of climate-induced (im)mobilities, improvement is needed in the EU policies. A first step would be to bring attention to the issue in political spheres and policies. This involves recognising the role of power structures and discourses that shapes the perceived issue and determining the viable solutions. Based on the analysis, climate-induced (im)mobilities is not portrayed to be an issue inside the EU, hence there is no targeted strategies nor concrete measures in the policies to address it. This is due to the discursively constructed framework of the EU whereby climate-induced mobilities are only considered a problem when it cannot be managed by other regions.

Furthermore, ecomodernism and neoliberalism is noted to set the standards for policies, with decision based on economic measures and certain narrow scientific knowledge (Remling, 2018). Dominant discourses are not necessarily the most rational but rather the most convincing and appealing to the masses through regularity and maintaining “normality” (Remling, 2023). Despite contradicting evidence to the rationality of ecomodernism, the discourse continues to dominate the EU policies (GD, 2019; *Adaptation Strategy*, 2021; Climate Law, 2021). To challenge ecomodernism, a more convincing alternative must be presented. It is not feasible to expect a systematic change in the short-term, but progress can still be made within the realm of what is considered convincing. A viable option would be to question the securitisation discourse that the EU perpetuates, which frames the nexus of human mobility and climate change to be an outer threat to be protected against. Instead, policies must prioritise human rights and climate justice to truly show solidarity with those most

vulnerable to climate change, some of whom are within the EU, and move towards a more inclusive approach, which could allow for more transformative narratives and solutions (Schlosberg et al., 2017). A complete discourse shift may be hard to achieve, but to shift away from a state-centric to a more human-security approach, might be feasible.

Additional measures needed would be the inclusion of analysis of vulnerability when developing policies on climate adaptation and general climate change related policies. Actions must be ensured to reduce risk over various timescales and not recreate the issue they are trying to solve (Oliver-Smith et al., 2017), for example when there is temporary or permanent relocation, people should not be put in a more vulnerable situation than prior the disaster. This implies to trace who have access to resources and power and thus also turn attention to agencies and institutions that “allow” a hazard to become a disaster (Oliver-Smith et al., 2017), which cause climate-induced (im)mobilities. Climate-related hazards will not be fully removed, but we can address the vulnerabilities to decrease the disasters. Effective strategies must account for the local contextual variations and provide comprehensive definitions and elaborations to effectively address vulnerabilities. Future research needs to investigate how this could be employed in national strategies and in practise.

To comprehend the roots of vulnerability, political debates on power structures and the allocation of agency of causation can be initiated. This approach enables attribution of responsibility to the institutions that often hold significant influence in shaping causes of vulnerabilities. Such institutions, as the EU, must be held accountable and recognise the structural issues of vulnerabilities if we are to achieve climate justice.

7 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to identify and analyse the shaping and construction of EUs internal policies on climate-induced (im)mobilities through identifying the dominant discourses and regimes of practises, which constructs the prevalent policies. This aim was achieved through using the method Discourse analysis and the theoretical framework “analytics of government”. Based on the theoretical framework, four sub-research questions were applied to strategically guide the analysis. These questions investigated *forms of visibility, techniques, forms of knowledge and presupposed identities*.

The findings of the study highlight that the EU portrays climate change as an objective, external security threat and that climate-induced mobility is only portrayed as a problem to the EU when it is external and connected to conflict and migration from non-EU countries. Thus, internal climate-

induced (im)mobilities is obscured and is not managed. Further, a securitisation discourse is illuminated as both climate change and the outer threats that it induces, such as economic instability and mass flows of migration are considered threats to the EU's security. This is accompanied by an ecomodernist discourse, a conclusion that can be gathered due to the various techniques and forms of knowledge applied such as economical rationalisation, green growth strategies, selective use of scientific knowledge and economical metrics. This discourse overlooks the non-economic losses of climate-related disasters and is contradicting the transformative initiatives argued by many sustainability scholars to be needed for a more sustainable and inclusive strategy forward, and thus neglects the need for systematic change.

This study highlights the limitations of current EU CCA policies and their limited holistic approach. The presupposed identities of a superior EU and solidarity among members were identified, alongside the presupposed identity of an active European citizen, responsible for managing their own climate adaptation. However, this neglects the systematic barriers faced by marginalised and vulnerable groups. There is also in general, prominent abstraction in the use of the concept vulnerability and justice, which is problematic as it obscures the historical and social structural factors of climate change disasters and fails to address the root causes of vulnerabilities, and thus reasons for climate-induced (im)mobility. To achieve climate justice, policymakers must examine why certain individuals have limited capabilities and opportunities that produce vulnerabilities and develop adaptive strategies. Through tracing the causality of risk and vulnerability, could shift responsibility away from the abstract threat of climate change, towards institutions, which would challenge the business-as-usual narratives.

The recommendations forward include adopting a more human-centred approach and advocating for climate justice initiatives. Identifying and addressing the root causes of vulnerability, holding institutions accountable, and preventing and reducing the risks of the increasing climate-induced hazards are essential and must be part of the political agenda. No one is immune to climate change.

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