

### **Trust, Temperature Fluctuations, and Migration**

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Long Abstract. This paper studies the relationship between generalized trust, temperature fluctuations, and international migration. Climate change is expected to increase both the likelihood and severity of extreme weather events. Such extreme events will challenge the ability of communities to survive in their current form. Migration from most affected areas such as Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America towards Europe and the United States is predicted to increase significantly because of climate change. Therefore, it is of crucial importance to understand how to foster the resilience of a country to climate change, that is, to strengthen its ability to cope with climatic stress and mitigate the need to migrate. However, there is a lack of empirical evidence on what factors can mitigate climate-induced migration, and in particular, on the role played by informal institutions. In this paper, we investigate for the first time the role of generalized trust, that is, trust in other members of society, in potentially mitigating the effect of temperature fluctuations on migration to the European Union by facilitating collective action in adaptation. The resilience of a country depends on the country's vulnerability and its adaptive capacity. Vulnerability and the adaptive capacity of a country depend not only on the availability of human and physical capital but also on its formal and informal institutions. Informal institutions, such as trust, are expected to play a major role in increasing the resilience of a country by fostering adaptation. However, a priori generalized trust can be expected to have an ambiguous effect on migration. On the one hand, countries with a higher trust may exhibit a higher adaptive capacity to temperature fluctuations and so lower climate-induced migration. On the other hand, trust may also facilitate migration by increasing the likelihood that communities invest in risk-sharing through migration and enjoy reliable networks supporting migrants. Hence, it is an empirical question whether trust mitigates or increases the impact of climate change on migration. We find that for moderate temperature fluctuations, trust mitigates the impact of weather on migration. This effect is driven by the role of trust in increasing adaptive capacity. However, for severe temperature fluctuations, communities with higher trust experience more migration. Overall, the former effect dominates the latter, so the net effect is that trust mitigates migration. Our findings point to important policy implications concerning the role of trust in fostering adaptation by facilitating collective action, and the need for targeted interventions to support adaptation and increase resilience in low-trust societies in which collective action may be harder to achieve.