

Conditionality or Partnership? The European Union's Governance
Assistance and Democratic Accountability in Tanzania

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Abstract:

This study examines the evolving EU-Tanzania relationship, focusing on development cooperation, challenges, and emerging opportunities. It explores the transition from a donor-recipient model to a strategic partnership based on mutual accountability, national ownership, and shared development goals. Using a qualitative research design and documentary analysis of policy documents, reports, academic literature, and agreements, the study applies thematic analysis. Findings show that the European Union (EU) remains a key development partner supporting governance, infrastructure, education, renewable energy, climate action, trade, and regional integration. However, challenges persist regarding governance, human rights, conditionality, trade, and institutional capacity. Despite these challenges, opportunities exist in green growth, digital transformation, sustainable infrastructure, the blue economy, investment, and human capital development through frameworks such as the Global Gateway Strategy, Samoa Agreement, and Tanzania Development Vision 2050. The study concludes that mutual trust, policy dialogue, and respect for national priorities are crucial for strengthening EU-Tanzania cooperation and achieving sustainable development.

Keywords: European Union, Tanzania, Development Cooperation, Partnership, Sustainable Development, Global Gateway Strategy.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The relationship between Africa and Europe have, since time immemorial, been closely linked due to the proximity of these two giants: at their closest juncture the continents are 15km's apart at the Strait of Gibraltar. A history of colonial occupation, shared development interest and propinquity made these relations possible. In our most recent history two major economic evolution underpin the Africa-Europe relations, most notably from 1975 to 2000, and 2000 to the present day.¹

The former period heralding the signing of the 1975 Lome Convention and the subsequent introduction of non-reciprocal trade preferences, and the latter giving birth to the Cotonou Partnership Agreement providing a trade framework fenced around the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA).² Europe and Africa are neighbours: continents bound together by a shared history, culture, geography, and by the close exchanges between our peoples. Cooperation between the European Union and Africa has reflected the rich and diverse nature of relations between the two continents.

In 2007, the EU and African Heads of State adopted the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) as a framework for cooperation based on shared interests, common principles, solidarity, and a forward-looking vision for EU-Africa relations. It seeks to establish a partnership of equals, determined to tackle issues of common concern together.³ Since its adoption, the Partnership has both deepened and extended cooperation. It is today the main vehicle for achieving our joint vision for shared prosperity and peace, at the service of the peoples of Europe and Africa.

A few days after her election as President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen embarked on her first official trip, a trip to Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia and the headquarters of the African Union. It was symbolic and in line with her calls for a 'comprehensive strategy for Africa'.⁴ The visit was supposed to announce to the world, specifically to African leaders and other actors like China, Russia, the US and the Gulf states, that the EU was making Africa a priority, and was ready to work with the African Union "within the spirit of a true partnership of equals".⁵ Von der Leyen promised a comprehensive strategy for Africa by March 2020.

Since Tanzania's independence, EU-Tanzania relations have evolved through frameworks such as the Lomé Convention (1975) and the Cotonou Agreement (2000), focusing on poverty reduction, sustainable development, governance, and regional integration. Today, the EU continues to support Tanzania in areas including

¹ Olivier, G. (2011). From colonialism to partnership in Africa–Europe relations?. *The International Spectator*, 46(1), 53-67.

² Waeijen, W. (2011). Continuing ACP-EU relations in a changing context, a critical assessment of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement (Bachelor's thesis).

³ Suutarinen, V., & Miranda, A. B. (2014). EU-Africa Relations following the 4th EU-Africa Summit. *Revista "Cuadernos Manuel Giménez Abad"*, (7), 205-209.

⁴ Von der Leyen, U. (2019). A Union that strives for more. My agenda for Europe. Political guidelines for the next European Commission, 2024(11), 2019.

⁵ Series, S. C., & Action, C. O. S. T. First 100 Days in Office for von der Leyen Commission: Many Promises, Lots of Bureaucracy.

infrastructure, education, health, and agriculture, alongside ongoing debates over budget support.⁶

The EU is a significant trade and investment partner for Tanzania. EU companies contribute substantially to the Tanzanian economy through foreign direct investment, with continued potential for further investment in sectors that support economic growth and development.⁷

In Zanzibar, the EU implemented the Zanzibar Non-State Actors Support Programme (ZANSASP), allocating EUR 3 million from 2015–2018 to strengthen democratization and good governance through capacity building, civil society support, accountability, participatory development, and policy advocacy.⁸

The European Union (EU) has been a major governance partner for Tanzania, supporting reforms aimed at strengthening democratic institutions, public financial management, the rule of law, and accountability. Through programmes such as the Good Financial Governance initiative and various budget support arrangements, the EU has assisted Tanzania in improving audit systems, parliamentary oversight, revenue collection, and transparency in public expenditure management.⁹ In recent years, EU support has also extended to digital governance, gender equality, and institutional reforms, reflecting a broader approach that combines financial assistance with policy dialogue and capacity building.

In addition, the EU has invested significantly in civil society and human rights initiatives to enhance democratic participation and accountability in Tanzania. Support has been directed toward civil society organizations, media freedom, youth engagement, women's political participation, and access to justice. These interventions are intended to strengthen civic oversight and encourage inclusive governance.¹⁰ Overall, EU governance assistance demonstrates a partnership-oriented approach, although elements of political conditionality remain visible because some forms of support are linked to governance performance, reform commitments, and accountability standards.

Following Magufuli's death, Samia assumed the presidency as provided by the Constitution, despite reported resistance from factions loyal to her predecessor. After

⁶ Gregoire, A. (2023, August). Tanzania's economic diplomacy: Balancing EU, China, and EAC relations (Voices from Tanzania, No. 5). Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Country Office Tanzania.

⁷ European Union. (2022). EU investment in Tanzania: An overview of trends, developments and opportunities. European Union. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/tanzania/eu-investment-tanzania-overview-trends-developments-and-opportunities-march-2022_en

⁸ Carlestam, N. (2026). In Transition: Civil Society Organizations and The Changing Dynamics of Swedish Aid in Tanzania: A sensemaking and postcolonial analysis of organizational interpretations of aid withdrawal in relation to broader global structures.

⁹ European Commission. (2024). Tanzania. Directorate-General for International Partnerships.

¹⁰ European External Action Service. (2025). EU awards TZS 17.8 billion in grants to strengthen civil society in Tanzania.

taking office, she consolidated her position within CCM by gradually sidelining Magufuli loyalists and introducing new officials through cabinet reshuffles.

President Samia initiated several reforms between 2021 and 2023. She lifted bans on rallies, released opposition figures and relicensed media outlets, which created optimism. Between 2023 and 2024, the government established an ostensibly independent electoral commission and made superficial amendments to electoral laws, while actual control over appointments, budgets and decisions remained with the presidency. This allowed CCM to maintain its authoritarian framework while projecting an image of liberalisation.¹¹

In the 2025 Tanzanian general elections, President Samia Suluhu Hassan was declared the winner with 97.7% of the vote after major opposition parties were excluded from the contest. The ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) dominated parliamentary elections, winning 270 of 272 directly elected seats, while ACT-Wazalendo secured the remaining two seats.¹²

Democratic governance in Tanzania is based on constitutional institutions, multiparty elections, political participation, accountability, and the rule of law. Since the reintroduction of multiparty politics in 1992, Tanzania has developed key democratic institutions, including the presidency, parliament, judiciary, electoral bodies, local governments, and civil society, while maintaining relative political stability in East Africa.¹³

Despite institutional progress, Tanzania's democratic governance faces challenges related to accountability, electoral competitiveness, judicial independence, media freedom, and corruption control. Effective governance requires not only political stability but also transparent institutions, rule of law, and meaningful citizen participation.¹⁴

Recent political developments in Tanzania have combined governance reforms with continuing concerns over democratic accountability. Under President Samia Suluhu Hassan, the government introduced the Independent National Electoral Commission Act, 2024 and the Presidential, Parliamentary and Councillors' Elections Act, 2024 to strengthen electoral management ahead of the 2025 General Election.

The government also advanced consultations on the proposed Tanzania Development Vision 2050, emphasizing inclusive governance, sustainable development, and institutional modernization. Despite these reforms, the 2025 General Election remained controversial due to the exclusion of major opposition actors, allegations of electoral irregularities, and post-election protests. Regional and international observers,

¹¹ H Banda, Tanzania: Samia strips Polepole of diplomatic status amid widening CCM rift, The Africa Report, 8 August 2025, www.theafricareport.com/389592/tanzania-samia-strips-polepole-of-diplomatic-status-amid-widening-ccm-rift/.

¹² Independent National Electoral Commission. (2025). 2025 general election report. Independent National Electoral Commission. <https://www.inec.go.tz>

¹³ World Bank. (2026). Worldwide Governance Indicators. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/worldwide-governance-indicators>

¹⁴ BTI Transformation Index. (2026). Tanzania country report 2026. Bertelsmann Stiftung.

including the African Union Election Observation Mission, expressed concerns over electoral integrity, political freedoms, civic space, and political participation.

1.2 The nature of the problem

The EU is a major development partner for Tanzania, providing governance assistance to strengthen democratic institutions, rule of law, public financial management, civil society, and accountability through financial support, technical cooperation, policy dialogue, and capacity building.¹⁵

Despite these long-standing interventions, Tanzania continues to experience recurring governance challenges, including concerns over electoral integrity, limited civic and political space, constraints on media freedom, and questions regarding the independence and effectiveness of oversight institutions.¹⁶ These developments raise important questions about the extent to which EU governance assistance has contributed to meaningful improvements in democratic accountability.

Scholarly debate differs on whether EU governance assistance reflects genuine partnership or political conditionality. Some studies highlight its role in strengthening institutions and reforms, while others emphasize limits caused by sovereignty concerns, domestic politics, and inconsistent conditionality.

In Tanzania, existing research has largely examined EU development cooperation, aid effectiveness, or democracy promotion separately, with limited attention to how governance assistance shapes democratic accountability through the interaction of conditionality and partnership.

This gap is important amid recent political and electoral developments. The study examines whether EU governance assistance has advanced democratic accountability in Tanzania through conditionality, partnership, or both. It contributes to debates on EU external governance, democracy promotion, and development cooperation while providing policy insights for stronger EU-Tanzania governance relations.

1.3 Research objective

The study examines the relationship between the European Union's governance assistance and democratic accountability in Tanzania by analyzing the evolution of EU support, its influence on governance processes, and whether it operates through conditionality, partnership, or both. It is guided by one general objective and several specific objectives.

¹⁵ Abioro, T. A., Isaiah, A. A., & Fagbohun, F. O. (2025). Electoral Democracy, Collaborative Partners, and the First Component of the APRM in Tanzania. In *Political Governance and the African Peer Review Mechanism: A Comparative Analysis* (pp. 111-125). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.

¹⁶ Max Liambilah, A. (2025). Dictator in Chief? The State of Constitutional Collapse and Human Rights Violations in Tanzania During the 2025 Election Cycle. *The State of Constitutional Collapse and Human Rights Violations in Tanzania During the*.

1.3.1 General objective

To examine whether the European Union's governance assistance promotes democratic accountability in Tanzania through conditionality or genuine partnership.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

- i. To examine the evolution of EU governance assistance in Tanzania.
- ii. To assess the role of EU governance assistance in promoting democratic accountability.
- iii. To analyze whether EU governance assistance reflects political conditionality or partnership.
- iv. To identify the implications for EU-Tanzania relations.

1.4 Research questions

- i. How has EU governance assistance evolved in Tanzania?
- ii. How has EU governance assistance influenced democratic accountability?
- iii. Does EU governance assistance primarily operate through conditionality or partnership?
- iv. What are the implications for bilateral relations?

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This section outlines the methodology used to examine EU governance assistance and democratic accountability in Tanzania, including the research design, data sources, collection methods, and analysis procedures. It also explains how these methods ensure the credibility and validity of the findings.

2.1 Research design

A research design is a procedural plan that is adopted by a researcher to answer questions in a valid way. It is very objective and accurate. Normally, a research design will determine the type of analysis a researcher should carry out to get the desired results.¹⁷ This study adopts a qualitative case study design because it enables an in-depth exploration of the relationship between the European Union's governance assistance and democratic accountability within Tanzania's real-world political and institutional context.

The qualitative approach is suitable for analyzing complex governance processes and institutional interactions. Tanzania was selected as a case study due to its long-standing EU partnership and experience with governance assistance and democratic developments, allowing assessment of whether EU support reflects conditionality, partnership, or both.

¹⁷ Vogt, W. P., Gardner, D. C., & Haeffele, L. M. (2012). When to use what research design. Guilford Press.

2.2 Data sources

Secondary sources are created using primary sources and analyzing those materials in order to discover new aspects or in order to make new connections. Often times, secondary sources find publication in academic journals or in books and provide other researchers with additional resources for inclusion in their own explorations.¹⁸ This study used secondary data from credible sources, including EU and Tanzanian government documents, international organizations, academic articles, books, and policy reports. Multiple sources ensured comprehensive and reliable analysis of EU governance assistance, democratic accountability, and EU-Tanzania relations.

2.3 Data collection

Data collection refers to the systematic process of gathering information to test hypotheses and support research findings. Researchers employ various methods to collect data, including visual observation, textual interpretation, surveys, interviews, and experimental interventions.¹⁹ Data were collected through document analysis of policy documents, government reports, EU publications, international reports, academic articles, books, and scholarly works. This method was chosen to provide reliable insights into governance policies, institutional practices, and democratic outcomes in Tanzania.

2.4 Data analysis

John W. Creswell (2018) defines data analysis in qualitative research as the process of organizing, preparing, reading, coding, generating themes, and interpreting data to develop a meaningful understanding of the research problem.²⁰ This study employed thematic analysis to analyze the collected data. Thematic analysis is a qualitative data analysis method used to identify, organize, analyze, and interpret recurring patterns or themes within a dataset.²¹ It enables researchers to systematically examine textual data by coding relevant information and grouping similar codes into broader themes that address the research objectives.

Documents were reviewed and coded around key concepts related to EU governance assistance and democratic accountability. The identified themes, including conditionality, partnership, institutional reforms, and governance challenges, guided systematic interpretation of the findings.

¹⁸ Kipping, M., Wadhwani, R. D., & Bucheli, M. (2014). Analyzing and interpreting historical sources: A basic methodology. *Organizations in time: History, theory, methods*, 305-329.

¹⁹ Taherdoost, H. (2021). Data collection methods and tools for research; a step-by-step guide to choose data collection technique for academic and business research projects. *International journal of academic research in management (IJARM)*, 10(1), 10-38.

²⁰ Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.

²¹ Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp0630a>

3. RESULTS

This section presents findings from thematic analysis of reviewed documents, organized around the study objectives and key themes, including the evolution of EU governance assistance, its impact on democratic accountability, and the role of conditionality and partnership in EU-Tanzania relations.

3.1 Evolution of EU Governance Assistance in Tanzania

In East Africa, the EU has been particularly active in countries such as Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Somalia, providing development aid and promoting good governance initiatives. The EU's support in East Africa often focuses on improving governance through the establishment of democratic institutions, promoting human rights, and ensuring that public resources are managed transparently.²²

Tanzania and the EU have maintained a long-standing partnership focused on sustainable development, policy dialogue, and reforms. Their cooperation has been guided by the Cotonou Agreement (2000–2020) and the Africa-EU Strategy since 2007, emphasizing political dialogue, development cooperation, and trade.²³

The Cotonou Agreement (2000–2020) shifted EU cooperation toward democratic governance, human rights, rule of law, and political dialogue. It linked development assistance with governance commitments while supporting institutional reforms, accountability, civil society development, and regular EU-Tanzania political dialogue.²⁴

Since 2021, EU governance assistance has been implemented through NDICI-Global Europe and the Samoa Agreement, focusing on democratic governance, green and digital transitions, inclusive growth, gender equality, and institutional capacity building. Through budget support, governance programmes, and civil society support, the EU promotes transparency, accountability, citizen participation, and effective public institutions in Tanzania.²⁵

This evolution reflects the EU's transition from a traditional aid donor to a strategic governance partner that combines development cooperation with the promotion of democratic values and sustainable institutional reforms.

²² Mohamud, A. E., & Ga'al, A. O. (2025). European Union's good governance efforts in East Africa. *Multidisciplinary Journal of Horseed International University (MJHIU)*, 3(1), 20-30.

²³ Ali, M. I. (2020). *The Foundations of Tanzania's Skepticism on Economic Partnership Agreement with European Union (2002-2019)* (Master's thesis, University of Dodoma (Tanzania)).

²⁴ European Commission. (2021). *The Cotonou Agreement*. Publications Office of the European Union.

²⁵ Partnership Agreement between the Members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States and the European Community and its Member States (Cotonou Agreement). (2000). *Official Journal of the European Communities*, L317, 3–353.

3.2 EU Governance Assistance Programs

The EU values its long-standing partnership with Tanzania under the Samoa Agreement and encourages continued efforts toward a fully functioning multiparty system. It emphasizes inclusive dialogue with opposition parties and civil society to promote reconciliation and democratic development.²⁶

The EU supports Tanzania's electoral processes through assistance and election observation aimed at promoting credible, transparent, and inclusive elections. This includes support for electoral institutions, voter registration, training, civic education, civil society, and independent assessment of electoral processes with recommendations for improvement.²⁷

The EU has deployed Election Observation Missions in Tanzania during the 2000, 2005, 2010, and 2015 general elections, demonstrating its commitment to democratic consolidation. These missions assess the electoral process, engage key stakeholders, and provide recommendations to improve future elections and strengthen democratic governance. Through this dual approach of assistance and observation, the EU seeks to promote electoral integrity while reinforcing broader principles of accountability, human rights, and political inclusiveness in Tanzania.²⁸

Under the 2021–2027 Multi-Annual Financial Framework (MFF), the European Union's partnership with Tanzania focuses on three priority areas: Green Deals, Human Capital and Employment, and Governance. The framework supports sustainable development, inclusive growth, institutional strengthening, and aligns with the EU's Global Gateway strategy.

The Green Deals priority promotes sustainable economic development through public-private partnerships, supporting sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, forestry, tourism, energy, water, and transport. It aims to strengthen environmental resilience and foster inclusive, sustainable economic growth in Tanzania.²⁹ The Human Capital and Employment and Governance priorities complement this agenda by addressing social and institutional development. Human Capital and Employment focuses on improving living standards through skills development, job creation particularly for women and youth social protection, and support for MSMEs, including through digitalization and access to finance.³⁰ The Governance priority seeks to strengthen public institutions,

²⁶ Council of the European Union. (2025, November 2). Tanzania: Statement by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union on the elections in Tanzania (Press release No. 895/25). <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2025/11/02/tanzania-statement-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-european-union-on-the-elections-in-tanzania/>

²⁷ Capacity4dev. (2026). Electoral assistance. European Commission. <https://capacity4dev.europa.eu>

²⁸ European External Action Service. (2015). EU Election Observation Mission to Tanzania. <https://www.eeas.europa.eu>

²⁹ European Commission. (2024). Tanzania. Directorate-General for International Partnerships. https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/countries/tanzania_en

³⁰ Abioro, T. A., Isaiah, A. A., & Fagbohun, F. O. (2025). Electoral Democracy, Collaborative Partners, and the First Component of the APRM in Tanzania. In *Political Governance and the African Peer Review Mechanism: A Comparative Analysis* (pp. 111-125). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.

improve service delivery, enhance the rule of law and accountability, and expand digital governance. It reflects the EU's integrated approach to promoting economic transformation, democratic governance, and institutional reform in Tanzania.

3.3 Democratic Accountability in Tanzania

Tanzania reintroduced multiparty democracy in 1992 after nearly three decades of single-party rule. This led to the formation of numerous opposition parties under the Political Parties Act of 1992, with registration requiring compliance with statutory requirements, including the submission of party constitutions to the Registrar of Political Parties. Among other provisions, these constitutions set out rules of engagement, division of responsibilities, governance structures, and accountability mechanisms.³¹

The existence and functioning of political parties in Tanzania are guided by several laws. The major one is the country's Constitution of 1977 which, under article 3(1), defines the country as a democratic, secular, and socialist state that adheres to multiparty democracy. Article 3(2) of the Constitution further provides that all matters pertaining to the registration and administration of political parties are governed by the provisions of the Constitution and of the law enacted by parliament for that purpose.³²

Although the Constitution addresses multiparty politics, it has notable weaknesses, particularly its failure to recognize independent candidates. Article 39(1)(c) requires presidential candidates to be members of and nominated by a political party, a provision that has been widely debated by political parties, civil society, the media, and the public. Similarly, article 67(1)(b) provides that any person shall be qualified for election or appointment as an MP if he or she is a member and a candidate proposed by a political party.³³

Electoral accountability is a key mechanism through which Tanzanians hold leaders accountable. Since the first multiparty elections in 1995, citizens have regularly elected national and local leaders, although electoral disputes and allegations of irregularities particularly in Zanzibar's 1995, 2000, 2005, 2015, and 2020 elections have undermined accountability, most notably following the annulment of the 2015 presidential election. Such events weakened public confidence in electoral institutions and reduced the ability of elections to function effectively as instruments of democratic accountability.³⁴

³¹ Babeiya, E. (2021). *Internal Party Democracy in Tanzania* (pp. 265-291). Oxford University Press.

³² The United Republic of Tanzania. (1977). *The Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, 1977* (Revised ed., 2005). Government Printer. Office of the Solicitor General e-Library.

³³ Mateng'e, F. J. (2012). *Protesting the independent candidacy in Tanzania's elections: A bona fide cause?* *Journal of Politics and Law*, 5(1), 18–28.

³⁴ Mateng'e, F. J. (2012). *Protesting the independent candidacy in Tanzania's elections: A bona fide cause?* *Journal of Politics and Law*, 5(1), 18–28.

Parliamentary oversight is a key pillar of democratic accountability in Tanzania, with Parliament responsible for scrutinizing government expenditure, approving budgets, debating policies, and holding ministers accountable. A notable example is the 2014 Tegeta Escrow Account scandal, in which parliamentary investigations exposed major financial irregularities. Parliamentary investigations contributed to the resignation of several senior government officials, including cabinet ministers, demonstrating Parliament's potential oversight capacity.³⁵

Democratic accountability in Tanzania has improved since the restoration of multiparty democracy through stronger electoral competition, parliamentary oversight, judicial review, decentralization, and citizen participation. However, it continues to face challenges such as executive dominance, limited institutional independence, electoral disputes, restricted civic space, and unequal political competition. Strengthening the autonomy of oversight institutions, enhancing electoral integrity, protecting media freedom, and promoting meaningful citizen participation remain essential for deepening democratic accountability and consolidating democracy in Tanzania.³⁶

3.4 Conditionality versus Partnership

Conditionality and partnership represent two approaches to development cooperation. Conditionality involves donor-imposed political, economic, or governance requirements, while partnership emphasizes mutual respect, ownership, dialogue, and shared responsibility. The EU's relations with African countries, including Tanzania, have increasingly shifted toward partnership following the Cotonou Agreement (2000) and the Samoa Agreement (2023). In Tanzania, conditionality during the Structural Adjustment Programmes of the 1980s and 1990s required economic liberalization, privatization, reduced public spending, and institutional reforms. While these measures supported economic stabilization and private sector growth, critics argue they weakened social services and contributed to poverty and inequality.³⁷

Political conditionality also characterized relations between Tanzania and the European Union after the reintroduction of multiparty politics in 1992. The Cotonou Agreement (2000) established democracy, human rights, good governance, and the rule of law as essential elements of cooperation between the EU and African, Caribbean, and

³⁵ Katomero, J., Hoppe, R., & Wesselink, A. (2017). Tales of accountability: A Q-method study of discourses amongst Tanzanian members of parliament. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 55(3), 423–453.

³⁶ Mateng'e, F. J. (2023). The challenges of enforcing public accountability: Experience from Tanzania. *Polish Political Science Review*, 11(2), 30–51.

³⁷ Hydén, G., & Karlström, B. (1993). Structural adjustment as a policy process: The case of Tanzania. *World Development*, 21(9), 1395–1404.

Pacific (ACP) countries. Under Article 96 of the Agreement, the EU could suspend development cooperation if these principles were seriously violated.³⁸

Following the 2015 elections, the EU raised concerns over political freedoms, media independence, and the annulment of the Zanzibar election, emphasizing democratic standards as conditions for cooperation. In 2018, some European donors also adjusted aid due to concerns over civil society restrictions, media freedom, and human rights, showing the link between governance performance and development assistance.³⁹

Partnership represents a more collaborative model of development cooperation in which donors and recipient countries jointly determine development priorities based on mutual interests, dialogue, and shared responsibility. Rather than imposing reforms, partnership emphasizes country ownership, mutual accountability, policy dialogue, and long-term cooperation.⁴⁰

The transition toward partnership gained international recognition through the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), which introduced five key principles:

- a) Country ownership,
- b) Alignment,
- c) Harmonization,
- d) Managing for results,
- e) Mutual accountability.

Under this framework, development partners are expected to support nationally determined priorities instead of imposing externally designed programmes.⁴¹

The EU's relationship with Tanzania increasingly reflects this partnership approach. Under the 2021–2027 Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP), the EU and Tanzania jointly identified three priority areas of cooperation:

- i. Green Deal and sustainable economic transformation,
- ii. Human capital and employment,
- iii. Good governance and inclusive development.

Rather than prescribing policy reforms unilaterally, these priorities were negotiated jointly between the Government of Tanzania and the European Union, reflecting

³⁸ European Commission. (2000). Partnership agreement between the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States and the European Community and its Member States (Cotonou Agreement). Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

³⁹ Chikohomero, R., & Mjenga, O. R. (2020). Electoral reform in Tanzania. ISS Southern Africa Report, 2020(41), 1–20.

⁴⁰ Fowler, A. (2000). Beyond partnership: Getting real about NGO relationships in the aid system. IDS Bulletin, 31(3), 1–13.

⁴¹ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2005). The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. OECD.

Tanzania's national development agenda under Vision 2025 and the Third Five-Year Development Plan (FYDP III).⁴²

Another example is the Global Gateway Strategy, through which the EU supports investments in renewable energy, transport infrastructure, digital connectivity, education, and climate resilience in Tanzania. These initiatives are implemented through dialogue with national institutions and local stakeholders rather than through unilateral donor directives, illustrating a shift from donor-recipient relations toward cooperative development partnerships.⁴³

The recently adopted Samoa Agreement (2023) further strengthens this partnership model. Unlike earlier agreements that primarily emphasized aid conditionality, the Samoa Agreement focuses on equal partnership, sustainable development, climate action, peace and security, youth empowerment, digital transformation, and mutual political dialogue. Although democracy, human rights, and the rule of law remain fundamental principles, greater emphasis is placed on cooperation, shared responsibility, and jointly agreed development objectives.⁴⁴

For example, during the Structural Adjustment Programmes, Tanzania implemented economic reforms largely because these were required by international financial institutions to access loans. By contrast, under the EU's 2021–2027 Multiannual Indicative Programme, Tanzania and the EU jointly selected priority sectors such as green growth, employment, and governance through mutual consultation, demonstrating a partnership approach rather than externally imposed conditionality.⁴⁵

While conditionality has promoted democratic and economic reforms, it has been criticized for weakening national ownership and creating unequal donor-recipient relations. Partnership emphasizes mutual trust, shared responsibility, and collaboration. EU-Tanzania relations increasingly reflect this approach, while maintaining democratic governance, human rights, and the rule of law as key foundations.

4. CHALLENGES

EU-Tanzania relations have evolved into a strategic partnership covering trade, development cooperation, governance, climate action, education, and infrastructure. However, political, economic, and institutional challenges continue to affect the effectiveness of this cooperation. These challenges arise from differences in governance

⁴² European Commission. (2021). Multiannual Indicative Programme 2021–2027: Tanzania–European Union partnership. European Commission.

⁴³ European Commission. (2022). Global Gateway: Africa-Europe investment package. European Commission.

⁴⁴ Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, & European Union. (2023). The Samoa Agreement. OACPS.

⁴⁵ European Commission. (2021). Multiannual Indicative Programme 2021–2027: Tanzania–European Union partnership. European Commission.

expectations, trade policy preferences, development priorities, and the implementation of jointly funded programmes.⁴⁶

4.1 Governance, Democracy, and Human Rights

One of the most persistent challenges in EU-Tanzania relations concerns governance, democracy, and human rights. The EU regards democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and good governance as fundamental principles guiding its external relations and development cooperation.⁴⁷ These principles are embedded in cooperation frameworks such as the Cotonou Agreement and the Samoa Agreement, which provide the legal basis for political dialogue between the EU and African, Caribbean, and Pacific countries.

In Tanzania, disagreements have emerged when the EU has criticized restrictions on political competition, media freedom, and civil society activities. Following the 2015 general elections, particularly the annulment of the Zanzibar presidential election, the EU Election Observation Mission raised concerns regarding electoral transparency and the credibility of the electoral process.⁴⁸ During the period 2016-2020, the EU and several member states also expressed concern about limitations on opposition political parties, independent media, and civil society organizations. These disagreements created diplomatic tensions and occasionally slowed political dialogue between the two partners, although relations improved after President Samia Suluhu Hassan assumed office in 2021.⁴⁹

4.2 Conditionality versus National Sovereignty

Another major challenge is the tension between EU aid conditionality and Tanzania's commitment to protecting national sovereignty. The EU frequently links development assistance to improvements in democratic governance, accountability, anti-corruption measures, and respect for human rights. Tanzania, however, has occasionally argued that externally imposed conditions may undermine national ownership of development policies and limit the government's ability to determine its own development priorities.⁵⁰

The debate over conditionality intensified when European donors reviewed or redirected aid due to concerns over civic freedoms and governance reforms. Tanzania emphasized that cooperation should respect national priorities rather than rely on

⁴⁶ European Commission. (2025). Tanzania: International partnerships. Directorate-General for International Partnerships.

⁴⁷ European Commission. (2023). The Samoa Agreement. Publications Office of the European Union.

⁴⁸ European Union Election Observation Mission. (2015). Final report: United Republic of Tanzania general elections 2015. European Union.

⁴⁹ European Commission. (2025). Tanzania: International partnerships. Directorate-General for International Partnerships.

⁵⁰ Carothers, T., & de Gramont, D. (2013). Development aid confronts politics: The almost revolution. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

external political conditions, making conditionality a recurring source of tension in EU-Tanzania relations.

4.3 Trade and the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)

Trade relations have faced challenges, particularly over the EU–EAC Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). Although concluded in 2014, Tanzania declined to sign due to concerns that trade liberalization could expose domestic industries to competition from more advanced European producers before achieving sufficient competitiveness.

Tanzania argued that rapid market opening could reduce tariff revenues, weaken industrialization efforts, and undermine infant industries in manufacturing and agriculture. As a result, the EPA has not entered into force for the EAC as originally envisaged, limiting the expansion of EU-Tanzania trade cooperation. Nevertheless, Tanzania continues to benefit from preferential access to the European market through the Everything But Arms (EBA) arrangement, which allows duty-free and quota-free access for most Tanzanian exports.⁵¹

4.4 Differences in Development Priorities

Differences in development priorities create challenges in EU-Tanzania cooperation. While the EU emphasizes climate action, renewable energy, biodiversity, digital transformation, and the Green Deal, Tanzania prioritizes poverty reduction, industrialization, infrastructure development, employment creation, and agricultural modernization. For example, under the 2021–2027 Multiannual Indicative Programme, EU assistance prioritizes green economic transformation, climate resilience, and environmental governance. Tanzanian policymakers have occasionally argued that environmental commitments should not restrict the country's efforts to exploit natural resources, expand mining activities, or accelerate industrial development necessary for economic transformation.⁵² Balancing environmental sustainability with industrial growth therefore remains an important policy challenge in the relationship.

4.5 Aid effectiveness and coordination problems

Despite being a major development partner, EU assistance in Tanzania has faced coordination challenges among EU institutions, member states, and other donors. Differences in funding procedures, reporting requirements, and implementation mechanisms have increased administrative burdens and slowed project delivery. Weak coordination may result in duplication of projects, increased transaction costs, and delays

⁵¹ European Commission. (2025). Tanzania: International partnerships. Directorate-General for International Partnerships.

⁵² Lindahl, J. (2025). Bridging Ambition and Action?: The EU's Green Deal, Global Gateway and the role of Team Europe Initiatives.

in the delivery of development programmes, thereby reducing the overall efficiency of development assistance.⁵³

4.6 Limited institutional capacity

Implementation of jointly funded projects is also affected by limited institutional and administrative capacity within some implementing agencies. Challenges include procurement delays, shortages of skilled personnel, weak monitoring systems, and complex reporting procedures. Large infrastructure, governance, and environmental programmes supported by the EU have occasionally experienced implementation delays because of bureaucratic bottlenecks and limited technical capacity within implementing institutions.⁵⁴

These delays can postpone the expected economic and social benefits of development projects and reduce public confidence in externally funded programmes. Strengthening administrative capacity, procurement management, and monitoring systems therefore remains essential for improving the effectiveness of EU-Tanzania cooperation.

4.7 Competition from other global partners

Tanzania's increasingly diversified foreign policy presents another challenge for the EU. In recent years, Tanzania has expanded cooperation with China, India, Türkiye, and Gulf states, many of which provide infrastructure financing and investment with fewer governance-related conditions than traditional Western donors. This diversification gives Tanzania greater flexibility in choosing development partners and reduces dependence on EU development assistance.⁵⁵

As a result, the EU has less leverage in promoting governance reforms than it possessed during earlier periods when Tanzania relied more heavily on Western aid. Competition among external partners for influence in Tanzania's development agenda has therefore become an increasingly important feature of contemporary EU-Tanzania relations.

4.8 Global Economic and Geopolitical Shocks

Global crises have also affected the partnership. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted trade, tourism, and development projects, while the Russia-Ukraine war contributed to rising food, fertilizer, and energy prices, increasing economic pressure on Tanzania and

⁵³ Delputte, S., & Orbie, J. (2014). The EU and donor coordination on the ground: Perspectives from Tanzania and Zambia. *The European Journal of Development Research*, 26(5), 676-691.

⁵⁴ European Commission. (2025). Tanzania: International partnerships. Directorate-General for International Partnerships.

⁵⁵ Huliaras, A. (2010). EurAfrica: Strengthening the special relationship. *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, 16(2), 147-158.

other developing countries.⁵⁶ In response, the EU expanded cooperation through initiatives such as the Global Gateway Strategy, which supports investments in energy, transport, digital infrastructure, and climate resilience in Tanzania. Nevertheless, both partners continue to face difficulties in mobilizing sufficient financial resources while responding to global economic uncertainty and competing development demands.

EU-Tanzania relations remain strategically important but continue to face tensions over governance, conditionality, trade, development priorities, and institutional capacity. The partnership's future success depends on balancing EU democratic and human rights priorities with Tanzania's goals of sovereignty, economic transformation, and policy autonomy.

5. EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES

EU-Tanzania relations are shifting from a donor-recipient model toward a strategic partnership focused on mutual interests, sustainable development, trade, and investment. Emerging opportunities in green growth, digital transformation, regional integration, climate action, the blue economy, and peace and security provide a foundation for deeper cooperation. These opportunities are reinforced by the Samoa Agreement (2023), the EU's Global Gateway Strategy, and Tanzania's Development Vision 2025 and Third Five-Year Development Plan (FYDP III).⁵⁷

5.1 Green Economy and Climate Change Cooperation

A key opportunity in EU-Tanzania cooperation is the green economy and climate action. Through the European Green Deal, the EU promotes renewable energy, climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable resource management. Tanzania's potential in solar, wind, hydro, and geothermal energy make it an attractive partner for green investment. For example, under the 2021–2027 Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP), the EU has prioritized investments in sustainable agriculture, renewable energy, water resource management, forestry, fisheries, and climate-smart infrastructure. These initiatives not only contribute to environmental sustainability but also create employment opportunities, improve food security, and support Tanzania's transition toward a low-carbon economy.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Arndt, C., Diao, X., Dorosh, P. A., Pauw, K., & Thurlow, J. (2022). Russia-Ukraine war and the global crisis: Impacts on poverty and food security in developing countries (Vol. 20). Intl Food Policy Res Inst.

⁵⁷ Coll Morell, J. M. (2013). Aid valuenomics: the institutionalization of the linkages among culture, entrepreneurship and endogenous development: a new governance of an innovative international aid System: lessons from the European Commission and Tanzania.

⁵⁸ European Commission. (2021). Multiannual Indicative Programme 2021–2027: Tanzania–European Union partnership. Directorate-General for International Partnerships.

5.2 Trade and investment expansion

Trade and investment continue to present considerable opportunities for strengthening EU-Tanzania relations. The EU remains one of Tanzania's largest export markets and an important source of foreign direct investment. Tanzanian exports to the EU include coffee, tea, tobacco, fish products, horticultural products, minerals, and cut flowers, while European companies invest in tourism, manufacturing, energy, financial services, and transport infrastructure.⁵⁹

Tanzania benefits from the EU's Everything But Arms (EBA) initiative, which provides duty-free and quota-free access to European markets. Enhancing industrial capacity, value addition, and export diversification could strengthen Tanzania's competitiveness and attract more European investment.

5.3 Digital transformation and innovation

Digital transformation has emerged as another important area of cooperation. The EU's Global Gateway Strategy promotes investment in digital infrastructure, broadband connectivity, cyber-security, digital governance, and technological innovation across Africa.⁶⁰ Tanzania's rapid expansion of mobile technology, electronic financial services, and digital public administration provides opportunities for collaboration in digital skills development, e-government, artificial intelligence, and digital entrepreneurship. EU-supported digital initiatives can enhance public administration, tax collection, e-commerce, financial inclusion, and access to education and healthcare. These efforts support Tanzania's goal of developing a knowledge-based economy.

5.4 Blue economy development

The blue economy offers significant opportunities for Tanzania due to its Indian Ocean coastline and marine resources. Sustainable development of fisheries, maritime transport, coastal tourism, and marine conservation can promote economic growth while protecting ocean ecosystems.

The EU has increasingly supported sustainable fisheries management, marine biodiversity conservation, and integrated coastal zone management through its international ocean governance initiatives. Enhanced cooperation in the blue economy could improve livelihoods, increase export earnings, strengthen food security, and promote sustainable management of marine resources.⁶¹

⁵⁹ European Commission. (2025). Tanzania: International partnerships. Directorate-General for International Partnerships.

⁶⁰ European Commission. (2022). Global Gateway: Joint communication on the Global Gateway. European Commission.

⁶¹ European Commission. (2025). Tanzania: International partnerships. Directorate-General for International Partnerships.

5.5 Regional integration and infrastructure development

The EU supports East African Community (EAC) regional integration by promoting connectivity and infrastructure development. Tanzania's strategic location and the Port of Dar es Salaam provide opportunities to enhance regional trade through investments in transport corridors, railways, ports, energy, and cross-border infrastructure. Projects supported under the Global Gateway Strategy complement Tanzania's national infrastructure development agenda and regional integration objectives.⁶²

5.6 Human capital development

Human capital development is a key area of EU-Tanzania cooperation, with EU support in education, vocational training, health, youth employment, and gender equality. Programmes such as Erasmus+ enhance skills development, research collaboration, and academic exchanges between Tanzanian and European institutions. Such cooperation contributes to knowledge transfer, innovation, and capacity building in higher education.⁶³

5.7 Peace, security, and governance cooperation

Peace and security are emerging areas of EU-Tanzania cooperation, with Tanzania contributing to regional peace, mediation, and conflict prevention. The EU supports African-led peace initiatives and institutional strengthening, while collaboration increasingly addresses terrorism, organized crime, cybercrime, maritime insecurity, and human trafficking. Strengthened collaboration in these areas contributes to regional stability while supporting sustainable development objectives.⁶⁴

5.8 Sustainable financing through the global gateway

The EU's Global Gateway Strategy presents one of the most important new opportunities for Tanzania. Unlike traditional development assistance, Global Gateway emphasizes long-term investment in sustainable infrastructure, renewable energy, transport, health systems, education, and digital connectivity through partnerships with governments and the private sector.⁶⁵

For Tanzania, this initiative offers opportunities to mobilize additional financing for strategic infrastructure projects while supporting sustainable industrialization and private-sector development. The emphasis on quality investment, transparency, and

⁶² European Commission. (2022). Global Gateway: Joint communication on the Global Gateway. European Commission.

⁶³ European Commission. (2025). Tanzania: International partnerships. Directorate-General for International Partnerships.

⁶⁴ European External Action Service. (2024). European Union–United Republic of Tanzania Joint Partnership Dialogue: Joint communiqué. European External Action Service.

⁶⁵ European Commission. (2023). The Samoa Agreement. Publications Office of the European Union.

environmental sustainability complements Tanzania's national development priorities and strengthens the transition from aid dependency toward investment-driven development.⁶⁶

EU-Tanzania relations are evolving from a traditional aid model toward a strategic partnership focused on sustainable development, investment, innovation, and regional cooperation. Frameworks such as the European Green Deal, Global Gateway Strategy, 2021–2027 Multiannual Indicative Programme, and Samoa Agreement create opportunities in renewable energy, digital transformation, trade, infrastructure, education, governance, and peace building.

6. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings show that EU-Tanzania relations have shifted from a donor-recipient model to a strategic partnership focused on trade, sustainable development, governance, climate action, education, and regional integration. This reflects a broader move toward mutual accountability, shared interests, and long-term cooperation, consistent with the Samoa Agreement (2023) and the EU's Global Gateway Strategy.

The study found that EU-Tanzania development cooperation has contributed to socio-economic development through support for infrastructure, renewable energy, education, health, governance reforms, and environmental sustainability. The EU's role extends beyond financial assistance to include technical expertise, capacity building, and policy dialogue.

The findings reveal that EU-Tanzania relations face political and institutional challenges, particularly regarding governance, democracy, and human rights. Differences between the EU's emphasis on electoral integrity, rule of law, and civic freedoms and Tanzania's focus on sovereignty and non-interference have influenced political dialogue and development cooperation. These findings support Santiso's (2001) argument that political conditionality remains an important but often controversial instrument of international development cooperation.⁶⁷

The findings show that the debate between conditionality and partnership continues to influence EU-Tanzania relations. While the EU links cooperation to governance reforms, Tanzania emphasizes national ownership, mutual respect, and shared priorities. This reflects broader concerns that external conditions may weaken local ownership of reforms. The findings therefore suggest that future cooperation is likely to depend more on constructive dialogue and negotiated partnerships than on traditional conditionality.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ European Commission. (2022). Global Gateway: Joint communication on the Global Gateway. European Commission.

⁶⁷ Santiso, C. (2001). Good governance and aid effectiveness: The World Bank and conditionality. *The Georgetown Public Policy Review*, 7(1), 1–22.

⁶⁸ Carothers, T., & de Gramont, D. (2013). Development aid confronts politics: The almost revolution. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Trade relations offer opportunities but also challenges. While the EU remains a major export market for Tanzania, disagreements over the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) reflect Tanzania's concerns about protecting local industries, maintaining tariff revenues, and balancing global integration with domestic industrialization. These findings support broader development literature that emphasizes the importance of allowing developing countries sufficient policy space to nurture domestic industries before full market liberalization.⁶⁹

Despite these challenges, the findings reveal substantial emerging opportunities capable of strengthening future EU-Tanzania relations. Cooperation in the green economy, renewable energy, climate resilience, and environmental sustainability has become increasingly important under the European Green Deal and the Global Gateway Strategy. Tanzania's abundant renewable energy resources and commitment to sustainable development provide favourable conditions for expanding investment in clean energy, climate-smart agriculture, and natural resource management.⁷⁰ Such cooperation not only addresses climate change but also contributes to employment creation and sustainable economic growth.

The findings also identify digital transformation as an emerging area of strategic cooperation. Tanzania's expanding digital economy, combined with EU investment in digital infrastructure, innovation, and technological capacity building, creates opportunities to improve public service delivery, financial inclusion, research collaboration, and private-sector competitiveness.⁷¹ Similarly, cooperation in the blue economy, particularly in fisheries, maritime transport, coastal tourism, and marine conservation, offers considerable potential given Tanzania's strategic location along the Indian Ocean. These findings demonstrate that future cooperation is increasingly shifting toward investment, innovation, and knowledge sharing rather than traditional aid transfers.

Regional integration also emerged as an important finding. Tanzania's strategic geographical position within the East African Community (EAC) enables it to serve as a gateway connecting several landlocked countries to international markets through the Port of Dar es Salaam.⁷² Continued EU investment in transport corridors, energy infrastructure, and regional connectivity can strengthen trade integration while supporting Tanzania's ambition to become a regional logistics and commercial hub. This

⁶⁹ ADAM, I. (2018). The Economic Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the East African Community (Doctoral dissertation, School of Public Policy, Central European University).

⁷⁰ The United Republic of Tanzania. (2025). Tanzania Development Vision 2050. National Planning Commission.

⁷¹ Rwigema, P. C. (2020). Digital technology and its relevance to political and social economic transformation. Case study of east african community region. *The Strategic Journal of Business & Change Management*, 7(4), 1402-1436.

⁷² Cooksey, B. (2016). Tanzania and the East African Community: A comparative political economy. European Center for Development Policy Management. Discussion Paper, (186).

reflects the EU's broader strategy of promoting regional integration as a driver of sustainable economic development.

The findings suggest that despite disagreements over governance, human rights, conditionality, and trade, EU-Tanzania relations remain resilient through dialogue and cooperation. The shift toward a strategic partnership focused on investment, sustainable development, digital innovation, climate action, and regional integration highlights the importance of balancing democratic values with Tanzania's development priorities and policy autonomy.

7. CONCLUSION

This study examined EU-Tanzania relations by analyzing development cooperation, partnership challenges, and future opportunities. The findings show a transition from a donor-recipient relationship to a strategic partnership based on mutual interests, policy dialogue, and shared responsibility for sustainable development.

The study found that the EU remains a key development partner for Tanzania through support in governance, education, infrastructure, climate resilience, renewable energy, human capital, and regional integration. Frameworks such as the 2021–2027 Multiannual Indicative Programme, Global Gateway Strategy, and Samoa Agreement reflect efforts to align cooperation with Tanzania's priorities and promote sustainable growth.

The findings reveal that EU-Tanzania relations face challenges related to democratic governance, human rights, conditionality, trade liberalization, and sovereignty. Differences between Tanzania's emphasis on policy autonomy and the EU's governance-oriented approach continue to shape bilateral cooperation.

Disagreements over the Economic Partnership Agreement, institutional capacity, aid coordination, and geopolitical changes show that partnerships are influenced by both shared goals and differing interests. Effective cooperation therefore requires continuous dialogue, flexibility, and mutual respect rather than reliance on conditionality alone.

Despite existing challenges, the study identifies opportunities for stronger EU-Tanzania cooperation in green growth, digital transformation, sustainable infrastructure, the blue economy, regional connectivity, and human capital development. Tanzania's strategic location, natural resources, youthful population, and Development Vision 2050 create potential for increased European investment, technology transfer, and knowledge exchange.

The findings suggest that EU-Tanzania relations are increasingly shaped by partnership-based cooperation rather than traditional aid dependency. While conditionality remains present, the relationship reflects shared ownership, mutual accountability, and negotiated cooperation, illustrating the transformation of donor-recipient relations into more balanced strategic partnerships.

The study emphasizes the need to strengthen institutional dialogue, policy coordination, inclusive governance, and cooperation in renewable energy, digital innovation, blue economy, and regional infrastructure. Sustainable cooperation requires

mutual trust, respect for national priorities, and adaptable frameworks responsive to socio-economic and geopolitical changes.

The study concludes that the future of EU-Tanzania relations depends on the quality of partnership rather than the volume of aid. A relationship based on mutual respect, shared responsibility, policy coherence, and long-term investment is more likely to achieve sustainable development, economic growth, and regional stability in Tanzania and East Africa.

7.1 Recommendation

The study recommends strengthening EU-Tanzania cooperation through regular dialogue, mutual trust, and respect for shared priorities. Governance, democracy, and human rights should remain central to cooperation but addressed through constructive engagement that promotes national ownership of development policies.

The study recommends expanding cooperation in strategic sectors such as renewable energy, climate resilience, digital transformation, sustainable agriculture, blue economy, infrastructure, and industrial development to promote economic growth, employment, technological advancement, and sustainable development.

The study recommends strengthening Tanzania's institutional capacity, public financial management, and project implementation systems, while the EU should simplify procedures and maintain technical and financial support. Greater cooperation in research, education, innovation, and technology transfer would enhance knowledge exchange and evidence-based policymaking.

Future research should examine the long-term impacts of EU-funded programmes and assess how frameworks such as Tanzania Development Vision 2050, the Global Gateway Strategy, and the Samoa Agreement shape EU-Tanzania relations. Such studies would enhance understanding of the effectiveness and sustainability of international development partnerships.

The findings show that EU-Tanzania relations have shifted from a donor-recipient model to a strategic partnership focused on trade, sustainable development, governance, climate action, education, and regional integration. This reflects a broader move toward mutual accountability, shared interests, and long-term cooperation, consistent with the Samoa Agreement (2023) and the EU's Global Gateway Strategy.

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Despite these challenges, the findings reveal substantial emerging opportunities capable of strengthening future EU-Tanzania relations. Cooperation in the green economy, renewable energy, climate resilience, and environmental sustainability has become increasingly important under the European Green Deal and the Global Gateway Strategy. Tanzania's abundant renewable energy resources and commitment to sustainable development provide favourable conditions for expanding investment in clean energy, climate-smart agriculture, and natural resource management.⁷⁶ Such cooperation not only addresses climate change but also contributes to employment creation and sustainable economic growth.

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⁷⁴ Carothers, T., & de Gramont, D. (2013). *Development aid confronts politics: The almost revolution*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

⁷⁵ ADAM, I. (2018). *The Economic Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the East African Community* (Doctoral dissertation, School of Public Policy, Central European University).

⁷⁶ The United Republic of Tanzania. (2025). *Tanzania Development Vision 2050*. National Planning Commission.

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The findings suggest that despite disagreements over governance, human rights, conditionality, and trade, EU-Tanzania relations remain resilient through dialogue and cooperation. The shift toward a strategic partnership focused on investment, sustainable development, digital innovation, climate action, and regional integration highlights the importance of balancing democratic values with Tanzania's development priorities and policy autonomy.

⁷⁷ Rwigema, P. C. (2020). Digital technology and its relevance to political and social economic transformation. Case study of east african community region. *The Strategic Journal of Business & Change Management*, 7(4), 1402-1436.

⁷⁸ Cooksey, B. (2016). Tanzania and the East African Community: A comparative political economy. European Center for Development Policy Management. Discussion Paper, (186).

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