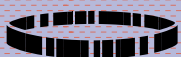


# Africa's youth opinion on the Africa-Europe partnership

A MIF Now Generation Network  
survey ahead of the 7<sup>th</sup> AU-EU  
Summit, 24-25 November 2025



Mo Ibrahim Foundation

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# Introduction

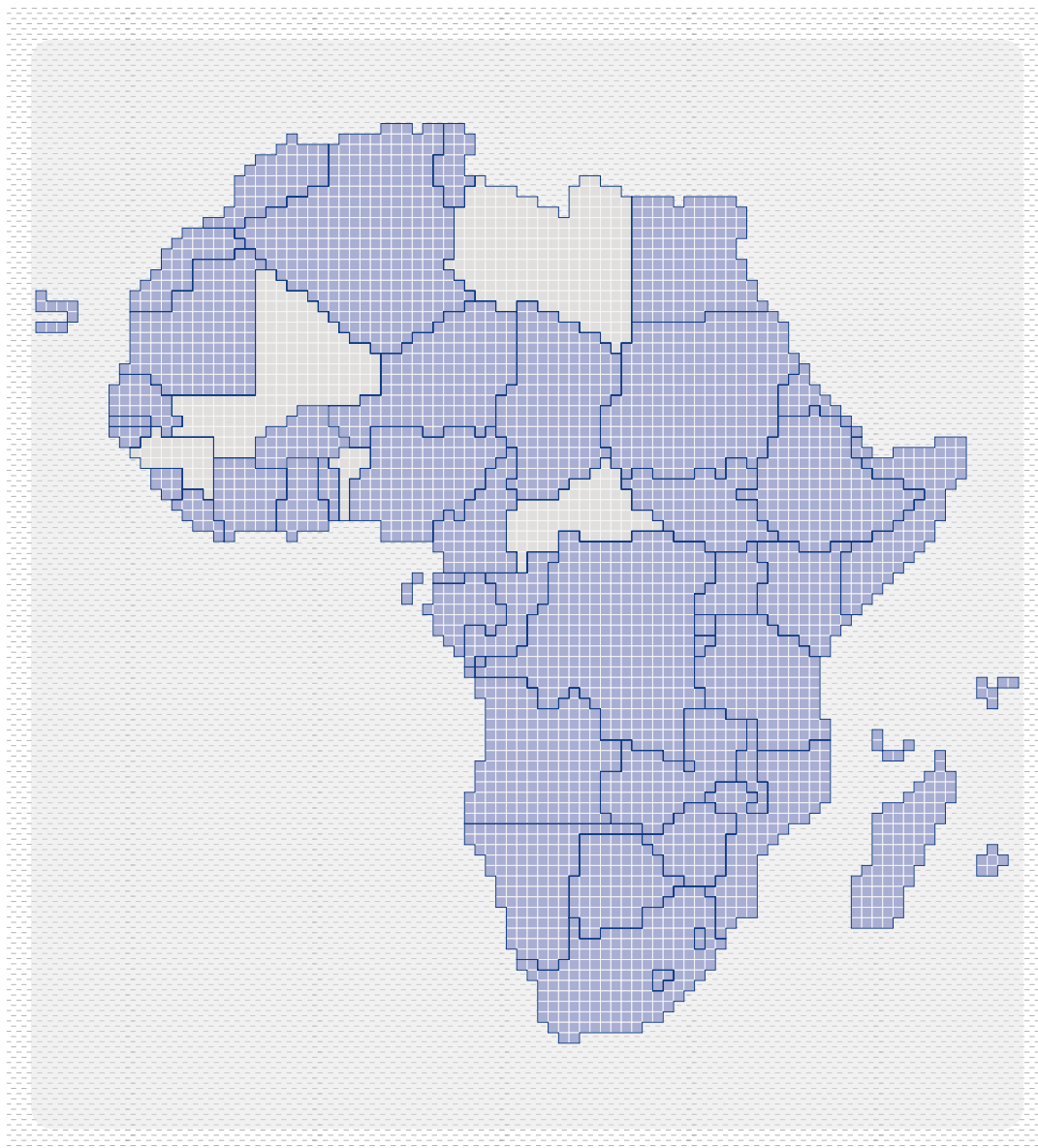
On 24-25 November 2025, the leaders of the 27 European Union (EU) member states and the 54 African Union (AU) member states will meet in Luanda for the 7<sup>th</sup> AU-EU Summit.

Ahead of the Summit, the Mo Ibrahim Foundation (MIF) considered it important and valuable to highlight the views of the majority of Africa's population, its youth, who currently represent about 70% of the continent's people.

The current note is the result of a survey completed by MIF's Now Generation Network (comprising 256 members from 49 countries across Africa), who provided their views on the overall state of intercontinental relations, the progress made on commitments from the 6<sup>th</sup> AU-EU Summit held in Brussels in 2022, and the key priorities they consider should be addressed at the 7<sup>th</sup> Summit.

African countries: NGN member representation (2025)

● Members ● No members



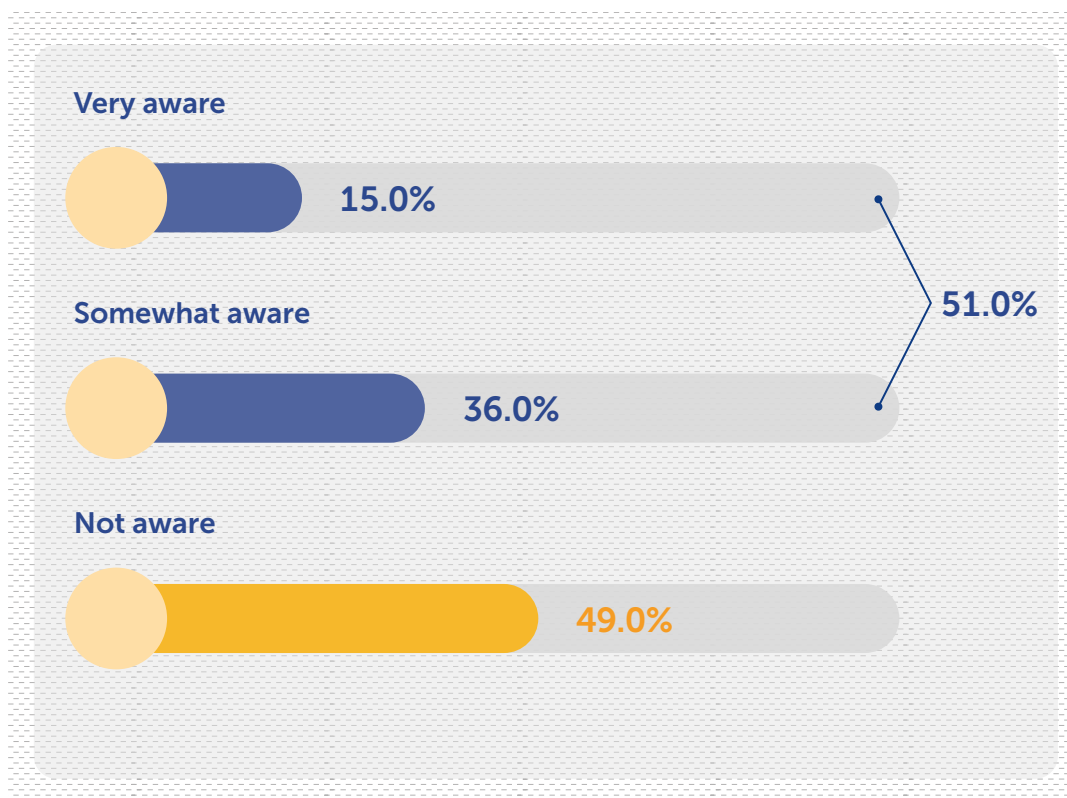
## A. Assessment of the 6<sup>th</sup> Summit

*The last AU-EU Summit was held in February 2022, in Belgium. How aware are you of that 6th Summit and of the commitments made, including the EU's Global Gateway specific outreach for Africa?*

Almost half of respondents are unaware of the 6<sup>th</sup> AU-EU summit and its commitments. An additional 36% of respondents said they were somewhat aware. Only 15% stated they were very aware of the 2022 summit and its commitments towards Africa.

How aware are you of the 2022 AU-EU Summit and its commitments such as the Global Gateway Africa-Europe Investment Package?

● % responses



*If you were aware of the 6<sup>th</sup> Summit, what is your assessment of the implementation of the commitments made at the 6th Summit, and of the specific implementation in Africa of the Global Gateway?*

Of the 51% that were aware of the 6<sup>th</sup> Summit and its commitments, responses reveal a generally mixed to negative sentiment, with a general impression of a slow delivery of commitments, and strong calls for increased transparency, joint accountability and ownership for effective progress on the Global Gateway in Africa.

Respondents note that while there has been some progress, for instance with increased trade interest from Europe, substantial financing mobilised under the Global Gateway and dialogue around the green transition, many pledges remain unfulfilled or are advancing at a slow pace.

Key concerns include Africa's lag in digital transformation, a lack of tangible economic impact, insufficient grassroots engagement, and geopolitical tensions leading to reduced EU aid.



In practice, several projects have advanced under the Global Gateway framework notably in digital connectivity, renewable energy, and transport. However, coordination gaps, limited local value creation, and bureaucratic delays have constrained their full impact.



Overall, the 6<sup>th</sup> AU-EU Summit commitments and Global Gateway initiative represented an ambitious, broad framework for a deepened partnership between Africa and Europe. Implementation is underway, particularly in investment, infrastructure, and institutional agreements. However, the 'quality' of implementation - in terms of ownership, impact, reciprocity, and accountability - lags behind the ambition



There is slow and uneven implementation: while the EU pledged €150 billion under the Global Gateway Africa-Europe Investment Package, many projects remain in early planning or feasibility stages.



We've observed a palpable transition from simple commitments to the actual launch of specific initiatives and financial packages, primarily leveraging the Global Gateway. Despite this, progress is sluggish and highly susceptible to global economic and political obstacles. The Global Gateway is required to deliver concrete results, ensure projects genuinely reflect African priorities, and strictly uphold transparency and accountability to prevent unsustainable debt accumulation.



We would like to see more information on the status of the Global Gateway from the AU perspective. A lot of the reporting is from the EU's side but as a partnership, accountability and transparency must be a joint responsibility.

## B. Expectations for the 7<sup>th</sup> Summit

*The 7<sup>th</sup> Summit will take place in a few weeks in Angola. What are your expectations and what are the priorities you would wish to see discussed?*

1. A call for a change of paradigm and process: co-ownership of project definition, mutual accountability, alignment with Africa's priorities

NGN members expect the 7<sup>th</sup> AU-EU Summit to go beyond promises and deliver tangible results calling for a shift from declarations to pragmatic, co-owned actions that strengthen the Africa-Europe partnership through shared prosperity and accountability.

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The 7<sup>th</sup> AU-EU Summit in Angola will be a key moment to renew and rebalance the Africa-Europe partnership. Expectations are high for concrete results, not just promises.

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The summit should focus on creating a more balanced, action-oriented partnership. It's also vital that African voices drive the agenda rather than react to European priorities.

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I expect African countries to present themselves as potential partners, collaboration and relationship-wise, and not as beggars. I expect them to discuss potential future partnerships in climate change, on resources, on attractive and fair investment.

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Stronger monitoring, transparency, and African leadership/ownership are critical going forward. This needs to be unpacked at the upcoming 7<sup>th</sup> AU-EU Summit in Luanda.



The partnership would benefit from stronger African leadership, clearer co-implementation frameworks, and increased transparency in project selection and financing.



Integrating youth, civil society, and private sector actors in monitoring and delivery, will be essential to achieving a truly transformative and equitable AU-EU partnership.



The rhetoric needs to move definitively beyond 'donor-recipient' to a genuinely reciprocal, continent-to-continent partnership, focussing on Africa's role in the G20, UN Security Council reform, and global supply chains.



A redefined AU-EU relationship built on mutual respect, shared prosperity, and equal voice. The summit should demonstrate that Europe recognises Africa as a strategic partner, not a dependent continent.



As a priority, ensure that the slow implementation is fast tracked to guarantee that by 2030 all the commitments are achieved. Explore workable solutions to address geopolitical and economic disruptions and global crises. This includes issues such as inflation, debt distress in African countries, and shifting EU priorities which have diverted attention and resources.

## 2. Call to focus on key priorities: jobs, access to energy, digital transformation, alignment with Agenda 2063 and AfCFTA acceleration

Respondents called for decisions that advance the economic transformation of Africa: upgrading from raw material exports to value added production, promotion of fair trade and green industrialisation, accelerating the AfCFTA integration and the Global Gateway Investment package plans to reduce costs of trade.

They also put emphasis on partnerships to increase growth in the green and digital transitions focussing on the renewable energy sector and digital connectivity.

Prioritising youth employment and skills development was cited as key to Africa's growth.

NGN voices also highlighted that there can be no sustainable development in Africa without peace, security and good governance, with the hope that the summit will involve discussions on strengthening conflict prevention systems, addressing corruption and improving electoral accountability.

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It would be desirable to see the summit move beyond declarations to tangible commitments. Priorities should include strengthening trade and investment flows, reforming the global financial architecture to give African nations fairer access to capital and advancing partnerships in energy transition and digital infrastructure. I also hope discussions address youth employment and mobility - areas critical for a sustainable, mutually beneficial Africa-Europe relationship.

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Going forward, the Global Gateway should be aligned more closely with Agenda 2063, AfCFTA priorities, and the SDGs.

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I expect the Summit to move beyond declarations toward concrete, co-owned action plans. Priorities should include investment in health system strengthening, youth employment, and digital innovation as pillars for Africa's resilience. I also hope to see a genuine commitment to equitable partnerships that empower African institutions and local expertise. Finally, climate resilience, education, and inclusive governance should remain at the core of Africa-Europe cooperation.

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Leaders should focus on turning the 'Joint Vision 2030' into real projects that create jobs, build industries, and expand access to energy, digital tools, and education.



A frank, joint, and measurable review of the \$150 billion Africa-Europe Investment Package is crucial. Leaders must address areas of slow progress, such as debt restructuring and local content in projects.



The 7<sup>th</sup> AU-EU Summit in Angola will be a key moment to renew and rebalance the Africa-Europe partnership. Expectations are high for concrete results, not just promises.



I would like to see improved, people-centred governance delivered by leaders on the continent. Lack of money is not the issue but the inability of our leaders to be held accountable. As such, the focus should be on strengthening electoral systems and addressing corruption and mismanagement of funds.



The following issues should be addressed: youth, innovation, and human capital development; peace, security and non-interference; strengthening African governance and institutional autonomy; climate and energy justice.

## C. General assessment of the current Africa-Europe partnership

### *What is your general assessment of the current Africa-Europe partnership?*

Major challenges noted are the power imbalances and dynamics that tamper with trust and joint accountability, as well as a political narrative dominated by migration management.

For the partnership to progress, respondents consider that its success depends on African agency, transparent governance, and alignment with continental priorities with horizontal partnerships based on mutual respect and shared interests.



The Africa-Europe partnership is at an inflection point. Africa needs equitable investment, technology transfer. Europe needs to engage Africa as a peer, not a project.



The current Africa-Europe partnership shows strong potential but remains uneven. While co-operation in areas like trade, climate, and migration has deepened, power imbalances and unmet commitments - especially around fair investment, technology transfer, and mobility - continue to limit trust and shared progress.



Progress highlights growing interdependence between the two continents amid global shifts. However, power imbalances persist, with Europe often setting the agenda. Implementation on the ground is uneven, and migration management continues to dominate the political narrative. African partners call for greater ownership and fewer conditionalities, while trade patterns remain skewed towards raw material exports.



The relationship between Europe and Africa often appears more exploitative than genuinely collaborative. While Europe provides aid to Africa, this support is frequently accompanied by underlying interests through which Europe benefits - both directly and indirectly. For the relationship between both continents to become genuinely mutual and beneficial, there must be greater transparency, respect for Africa's sovereignty, and a commitment to fair, equitable engagement free from undue influence.



The current Africa-Europe partnership has made progress in areas like peace, education, and health, but it still reflects unequal power dynamics. It often feels more donor-recipient than a true partnership of equals. There's a need to prioritise co-ownership, local leadership, and sustainable investments in human capital and innovation. For the partnership to be transformative, it must center on mutual respect, trust, and shared long-term goals.



The Africa-Europe partnership lacks real strength and balance. It remains largely transactional, with limited mutual trust or equitable decision-making. Europe still drives most of the agenda, while African priorities are often underrepresented in implementation. Until the partnership moves from aid and rhetoric to genuine co-investment, capacity building, and shared accountability, it will struggle to deliver meaningful outcomes.



We are in an era where Africans are working on building a new profitable, fair and just relationships with Europe. Where Africa is not taken advantage of but also benefits from this relationship in a fair manner. Africa is on the path of a change in their relationship and collaboration with Europe for the best.





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