

REPOA Brief



The EAC at 18 and beyond: Tanzanians yearn for improved cross-border movement of people

By Cornel Jahari

Key messages

An increasing number of Tanzanians in both urban and rural areas support free movement of people for trade and employment across East Africa's international borders.

More men than women support free cross border movement of people.

Despite openness to free cross border movement, Tanzanians report difficulties when crossing existing borders.

Introduction and Background

East Africa has a long history of migration and trade networks. The first attempt to promote the free movement of goods, capital, labour, and services in the region can be traced back to 1919 when Kenya, Uganda, and the United Republic of Tanzania established a Customs Union under British colonial rule (Stefan & Moritz, 2011).

The former East African Community was formed in 1967 following the signing of a Treaty of cooperation between Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda. The free movement of persons within the region was one of the key elements of cooperation. Unfortunately, the EAC disintegrated in 1977 due to political differences between the Partner States. Nonetheless, after two decades the East African Community was re-established in 1999 by the same three states. The three founding members of the Community were later joined by Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan and recently the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Efforts to bring people and business together as a basis for cooperation was implemented under two spheres. First, through the formation of a Customs Union. This has been implemented since 2005, as defined in Article 75 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the EAC. This means that the EAC Partner States agreed and established free trade (or zero duty imposed) on goods and services amongst themselves and agreed on a common external tariff (CET), such that imports from countries outside the EAC zone are subjected to the same tariff when sold to any EAC Partner State. However, goods moving freely within the EAC must

comply with the EAC rules of origin and with certain provisions of the Protocol for the Establishment of the EAC Customs Union.

Second, the Partner States agreed to adopt measures to achieve free movement of persons, labour, goods, and services within member states and to ensure the enjoyment of the right of establishment and residence of their citizens within the community. To facilitate citizen's enjoyment of the aforementioned rights and freedoms, the Partner States concluded the Protocol for Establishment of the East African Community Common Market which became fully-fledged in January 2010.

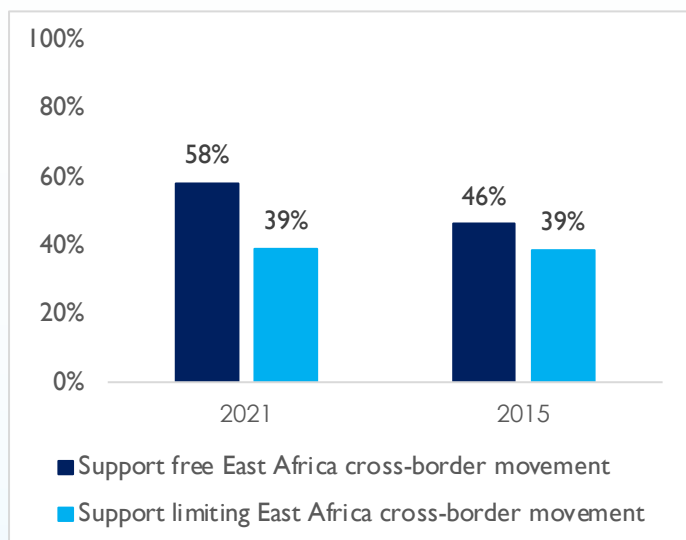
This policy brief presents the summary of the findings from the Round 8 of the Afrobarometer survey conducted in Tanzania in March-April 2021 concerning citizens' perceptions on the free movement of people within East African borders.

Findings

✘ Advocate for a free movement across East African borders

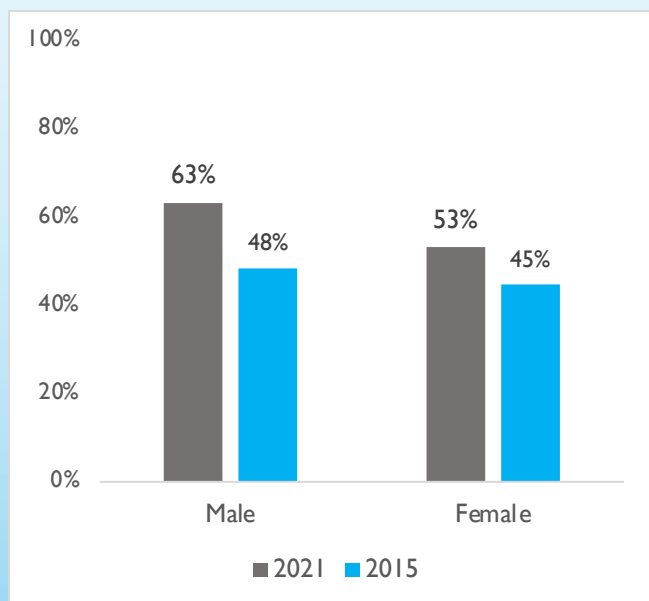
Almost 6 out of 10 (58%) Tanzanians interviewed support the free movement of people across international borders to trade or work in other countries. This is a significant increase compared to 2015 when less than half (46%) of Tanzanians supported the free movement of people across borders. However, the share of Tanzanians who want their government to limit cross-border movement of people and goods has remained the same at 39% between 2015 and 2021.

Figure 1: Advocate for free movement across East African borders | Tanzania | 2015 | 2021



The support for free cross-border movements is more prevalent among men (63%) than women (53%) in 2021 while in 2015 the support was slightly less and stood at 48% and 45% for men and women, respectively.

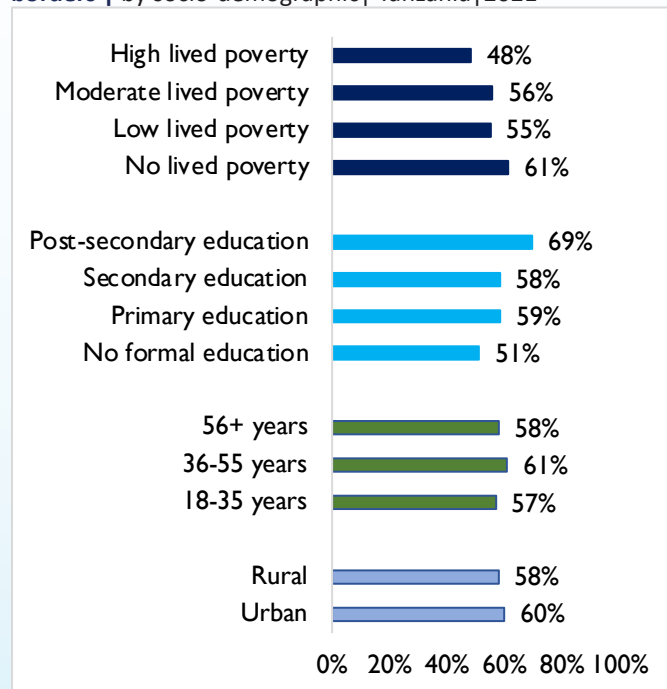
Figure 2: Differences in support for free movement across East African borders among men and women | Tanzania | 2015 | 2021



The support for cross-border movement was 60% and 58%, for rural and urban respectively. This is indicative of no discernible differences in support

for free cross-border movement of people between urban and rural residents. Nevertheless, support for the free cross-border movement is also high among highly educated (69%) and non-poor (61%) respondents.

Figure 3: Advocate for a free movement across East Africa borders | by socio-demographic | Tanzania | 2021

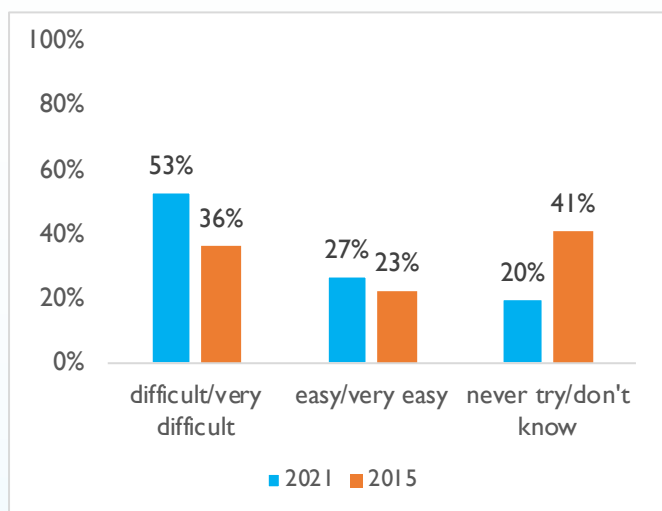


(% of respondents who “agree” or “agree very strongly” that people living in East Africa should be able to move freely across international borders to trade or work in other countries).

✳ The complexity of crossing borders in East Africa

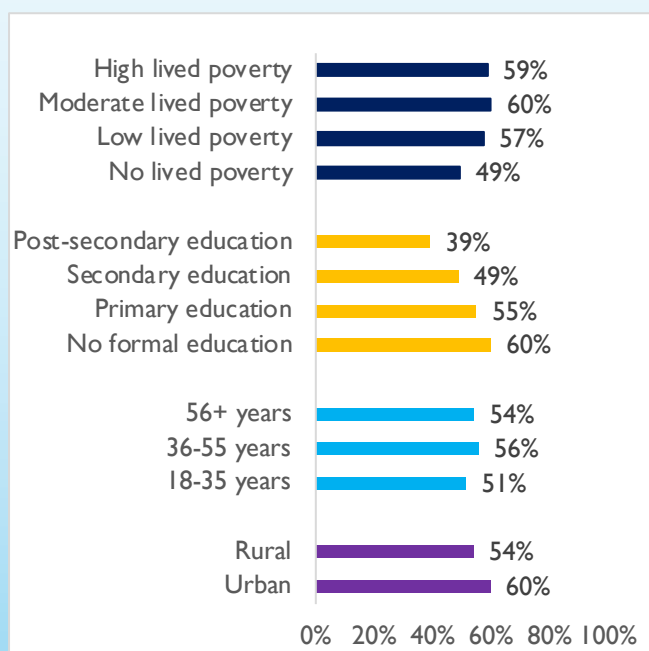
More than half of Tanzanians (53%) claimed in 2021 that it was “difficult” or “very difficult” for people from Tanzania to cross East Africa’s international borders to work or trade in other countries compared to a little over a third (36%) in 2015. The proportion of Tanzanians finding it relatively easy to cross borders with the region remained relatively the same at 27% compared to 23% in 2015. Overall, considerably more Tanzanians reported to have attempted to cross regional borders as indicated by the halving of those who had never experienced border crossing to 20% from 41% between 2015 and 2021.

Figure 4: The complexity of crossing international borders in East Africa | Tanzania | 2021



Poorly educated (60%) and urban respondents (60%) find it more difficult to access international borders than their well-off and better-educated counterparts.

Figure 5: The complexity of crossing international borders in East Africa | by socio-demographic | Tanzania | 2021



(% of those who said it is difficult/very difficult to move across borders for people in Eastern Africa to cross international borders to work or trade in other countries)

Conclusions

Tanzanians have historically not shown great enthusiasm for the free movement of people across the EAC borders. Survey results show that their indifference is likely explained by the difficulties they experience themselves in crossing the other EAC borders, which tend to be more acute for the poor and those less educated. To enhance further integration of movement of people and goods, the following recommendations are outlined:

- East African members states need to strengthen reforms to facilitate stronger regional integration, including cross-border movements of people, goods, and capital within the EAC.
- Tanzanians should build confidence to increase a sense of mutual trust with their neighbours in the EAC countries to facilitate cross-border relations.
- Tanzanians should explore opportunities and to take risks, supported by the Government providing information on the opportunities that exist within the East African countries.

References

EAC. (n.d.). Labor Migration Statistics Report in Africa Second edition: Regional Migration Profile. Stefan, R., & Moritz, B. (2011). The East African Community: Regional integration between aspiration and reality



Afrobarometer surveys

Afrobarometer is a pan-African, nonpartisan survey research network that provides reliable data on African experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance, and quality of life. Eight rounds of surveys have been completed in up to 39 countries since 1999. Round 8 surveys (2019/2021) cover 34 countries. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice. The Afrobarometer team in Tanzania, led by REPOA, interviewed a nationally representative, random, stratified probability sample of 2,398 adults in March-April 2021. A sample of this size yields country-level results with a margin of error of +/-2 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. Previous surveys were conducted in Tanzania in 2001, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2014, and 2017.

REPOA Resource Centre

Our Resource Centre provides a good environment for literature research, quicker, easier access and use of knowledge and information. It has full internet connection for online library to support Master's & PhD candidates, researchers and academicians with free access to latest journals, books, reports, webcasts, etc.

Opening Hours

Tuesday to Thursday from 10:00am to 1:00pm, 2:00pm to 05:00pm.

Friday from 10:00am to 1:00am

The online library opens 24 hours



157 Migombani/REPOA streets, Regent Estate,
PO Box 33223,
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
Tel: +255 (22) 2700083
Mob: +255 (0) 784 555 655
Website: <https://www.repoa.or.tz>
Email: repoa@repoa.or.tz

Branch Office
2nd Floor Kilimo Kwanza Building 41105 Makole
East, Kisasa, Dodoma, Tanzania

@REPOA 2023

Findings and opinions expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of REPOA and any of her partners.