

Continuity and change better characterise the patterns of EU-Pakistan relations in post-9/11 era. This study looks into the factors that account for the characteristics of continuity and change in EU-Pakistan relations since 9/11, and examines, in the light of these factors, the opportunities and challenges for change in the relations. The main research question that drives this study is: What factors do account for continuity and change in EU-Pakistan relations since 9/11? The study follows qualitative research method and inductive approach to seek answer of the research question through an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. It draws inspiration from the theory of discursive institutionalism, which helps understand the characteristics of EU foreign policy behaviour.

This research study finds that continuity and change in EU-Pakistan relations are determined by the combination of the degree of EU's security interests vis-à-vis Pakistan and the latter's performance in compliance with normative principles enshrined in EU foreign policy, namely human rights, democratic principles, the rule of law and good governance. Same factors help identify the opportunities and challenges for change in EU-Pakistan relations. The study provides evidence that the normative principles weigh significantly in EU foreign policy; however, in case of conflict between interests and normative principles, the tilt is usually in favour of the former. The area of EU-Pakistan relations remains almost devoid of academic research. This study fills this gap by investigating the subject scientifically and comprehensively. The major contribution of this study is to identify the underlying factors and develop general principles that explain the patterns not only of EU-Pakistan relations but also of other similar cases.