

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT



Grasping the Scope of Expectations for the Renewed Partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood

The first block of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey aimed to define which challenges respondents expect the renewed partnership to address and what Mediterranean resources and actors the European Union (EU) should mobilise for this endeavour. It also sought to collect respondents' assessments of the achievements and shortfalls of the partnership as well as their recommendations regarding the changes that should be implemented in the context of its renewal.

Main findings:

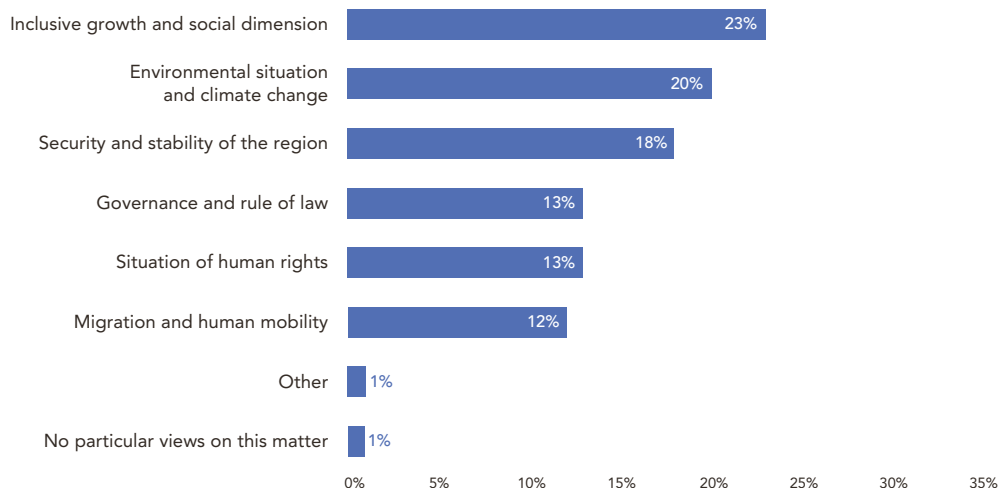
- There is a strong consensus amongst respondents of the Survey that inclusive growth and the social dimension is the challenge for which greater efforts are needed in the context of a renewed partnership between the EU and Southern Neighbourhood Countries (SNCs).
- Promoting an inclusive socioeconomic agenda for the benefit of youth, women and vulnerable groups is also seen as an opportunity that should be seized to give a new impetus to the partnership in the current situation.
- Respondents overall recognise the EU's contribution to sustainable and inclusive economic development as its main added value. EU respondents are more prone to highlight the EU's ambitions for climate neutrality than respondents from southern neighbourhood countries.
- Overall, environmental and climate change tend to be perceived as more pressing issues by EU respondents than by respondents from southern neighbourhood countries.

- The United Nations (UN) and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) are by and large deemed the most effective partners for the EU in dealing with most of the challenges posed by the partnership, ahead of other regional organisations involving neighbouring regions (e.g. African Union, Gulf Cooperation Council).
- To further support regional (UfM) and sub-regional frameworks (e.g. Western Mediterranean Forum), before mentioning the need to increase its financial support, a majority of respondents were of the opinion that the EU should encourage the frameworks to be more inclusive by engaging non-state actors, academic institutions and youths.
- Corruption, insufficient governance and institutional capacity are identified by respondents from both shores as the main constraint on cooperation between the EU and its southern partners.
- The EU's support to civil society, diversity, culture and education is perceived by respondents from both shores as the EU's most successful action in the southern neighbourhood.
- By 2030 the EU partnership with its neighbourhood will need to be more inclusive in order to be perceived as successful.

Defining the Extent of Challenges and Opportunities

Question 1 of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey invited respondents to choose and rank three top challenges for which greater efforts should be made in the framework of a renewed partnership between the EU and its southern partners. Almost a quarter of respondents (23%), and amongst them a very large proportion of civil society representatives and experts, ranked inclusive growth and the social dimension as the first priority challenge to be addressed. The second most prioritised challenge (20%) is the one that focuses on the environmental situation and climate change, particularly favoured by policy-makers. Respondents were less inclined to prioritise migration and human mobility, the human rights situation, governance and the rule of law.

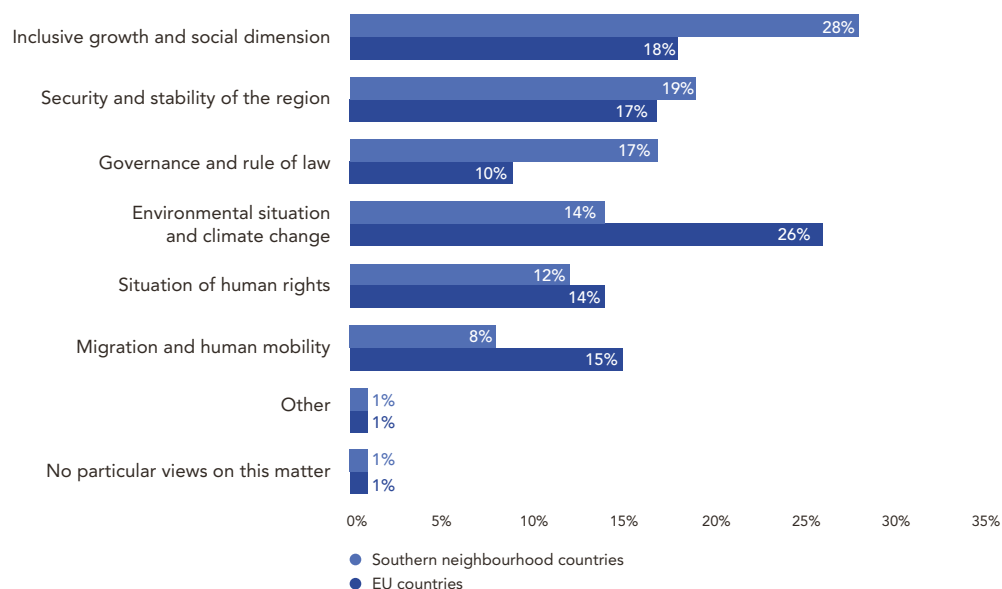
Graph 1: Q.1 For which of the following challenges are greater efforts needed?
(Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

There are significant differences between the patterns of answers from southern and northern participants. For instance, southern neighbourhood respondents prioritise the challenge of inclusive growth and the social dimension to a larger extent (28%) than EU respondents (18%). Conversely, the challenge of the environmental situation and climate change is significantly more important for EU participants (26%) than for southern respondents (14%) (see graph 2). In addition, EU respondents (15%) are more prone to prioritise migration and human mobility than southern respondents (8%).

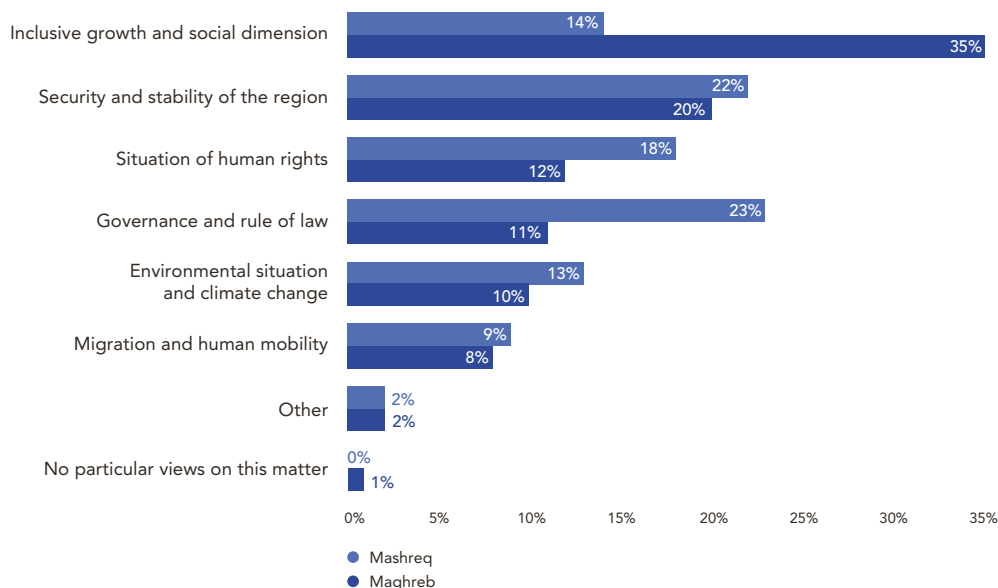
Graph 2: Q.1 For which of the following challenges are greater efforts needed?
(Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

Another notable aspect of the breakdown of answers is that Maghreb respondents prioritise the challenge of inclusive growth and social dimension to a much larger extent (35%) than Mashreq respondents (14%) (see graph 2b). Conversely, the latter prioritise the challenge posed by governance and the rule of law to a larger extent (23%) than Maghreb respondents (11%).

Graph 2b: Q.1 For which of the following challenges are greater efforts needed?
(Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

In their comments, some respondents highlighted the inter-relationship between all the challenges listed:

Tous les défis cités sont étroitement liés et interdépendants, mais sans une croissance économique inclusive et sans aborder la dimension sociale il sera difficile de relever les autres défis.

— French respondent

All the areas abovementioned are very important; however, if the top three are addressed, then the rest will automatically follow.

— The West Asia-North Africa (WANA) Institute

Other respondents hinted at more specific aspects related to these challenges:

Migration should be tackled from an “inclusive growth and social dimension” perspective, and not from a securitisation angle.

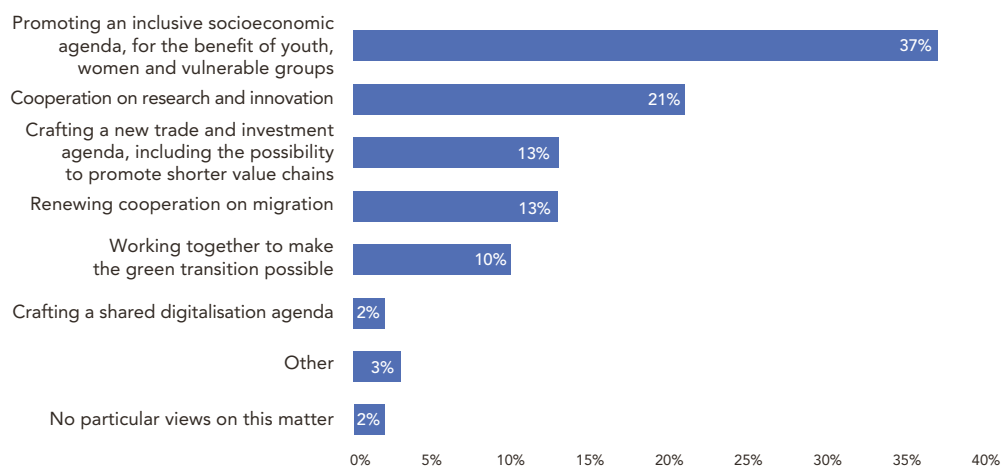
— Spanish respondent

Le principal problème au Moyen-Orient est le chômage, l'endettement et la création d'emplois pour les jeunes. Et ne pas laisser la jeunesse au vide, aux groupes extrémistes et terroristes. Bien entendu, sans stabilité, la région n'aurait pas une économie florissante. Et s'il y a un Etat de droit qui respecte les institutions, les lois et les valeurs, les choses seront excellentes.

— Hashemite University - International Relations and Strategic Studies Program

Building on the challenges identified in Question 1, **Question 2** invited respondents to identify the main opportunities to be seized in the context of a renewed partnership. Echoing the results of Q.1, more than one third of respondents (37%), including a majority of respondents representing civil society, ranked the promotion of an inclusive socioeconomic agenda, for the benefit of youths, women and vulnerable groups as the first opportunity to seize.

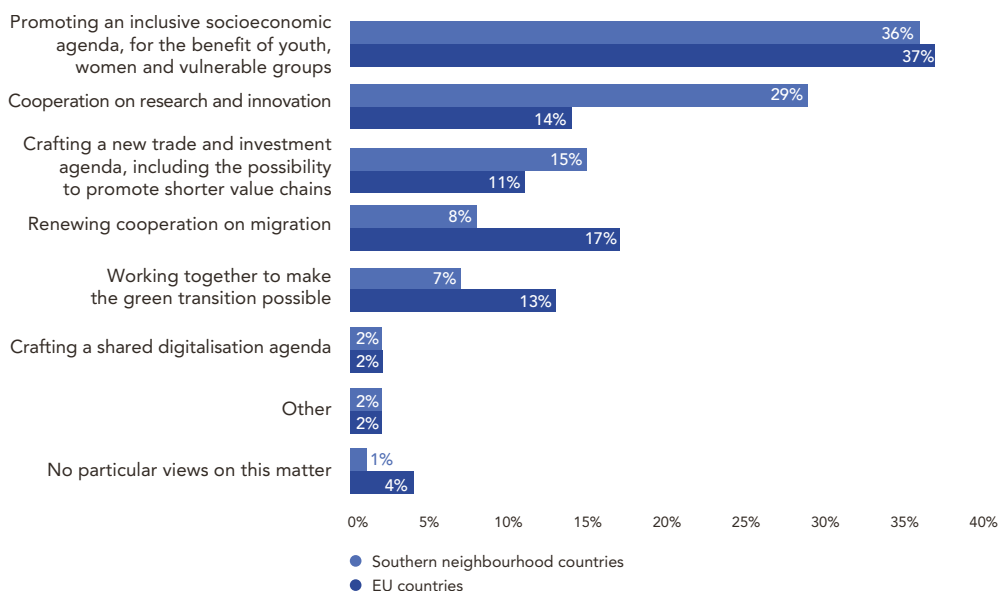
Graph 3: Q.2 While dealing with these challenges, what are the main opportunities that the European Union and its southern partners should jointly seize? (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

The ranking of top opportunities to be seized was quite similar on both shores of the Mediterranean. Interestingly enough, cooperation on research and innovation was ranked almost twice as high a priority by participants from the South (29%) as by those from the North (14%) (see graph 4). The differences of patterns in the ranking of EU respondents and respondents from southern neighbourhood countries with regards to the green transition and migration are the same as those observed in the first question.

Graph 4: Q.2 While dealing with these challenges, what are the main opportunities that the European Union and its southern partners should jointly seize? (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

In their comments, some respondents focused on inclusiveness as a method of co-operation and policy-making:

Institutionnaliser un mécanisme formel de dialogue entre la Commission européenne et le voisinage sud de la Méditerranée qui inclut des acteurs de la société civile pour une collaboration fructueuse à long terme.

— Majalat project

Reinforcing cooperation at all levels (from local to national to Mediterranean) between all actors (public, private, governmental and non-governmental) to reach a healthy and resilient Mediterranean Sea.

— Mediterranean Protected Areas Network (MedPAN)

Identifying Relevant Pathways and Actors to Enhance Cooperation

Questions 3 and 4 intended to highlight the salience of regional and international partners and to identify which pathways of cooperation the EU should support in the framework of its cooperation with the southern neighbourhood countries.

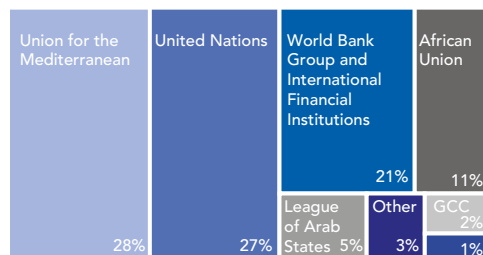
In **Question 3**, respondents identified which organisation would be most effective for the EU to partner with to deal with each of the challenges identified previously. The UN was most favoured by respondents with regards to challenges such as human rights and equality (36%), governance and rule of law (27%), migration (27%) as well as peace, security and stability in the region (26%). The World Bank Group and International Financial Institutions have been chosen as most effective partner regarding the challenge of inclusive economic growth and social dimension (27%). Finally, the UfM had, for each challenge listed, significantly high occurrences in the respondents' answers. It was ranked first concerning environmental degradation and climate change (28%).

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is mostly mentioned in reference to peace, security and stability in the region, as it is respondents' third most favoured partner in this area, right behind the UN and the UfM.

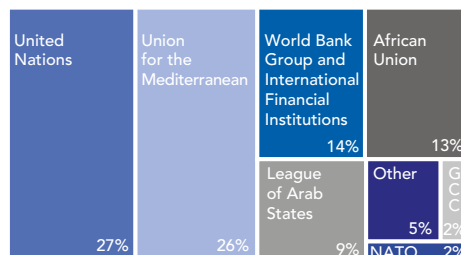
On the other hand, other regional subgroupings involving southern neighbourhood countries, such as the League of Arab States, and some of their own neighbours, such as the African Union (AU) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), lag significantly behind in the respondents' rankings. Amongst these, the AU, although comparatively less favoured by respondents, is recognised as more effective with regards to the challenge of migration than other challenges (see graph 5).

Graph 5: Q.3 Most effective regional and multilateral partner(s) for the European Union in dealing with:

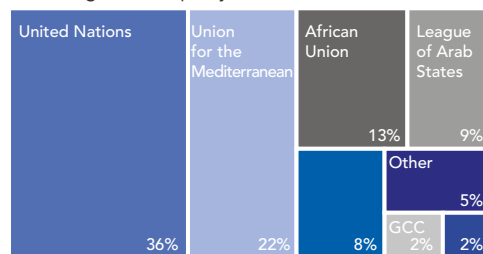
Environmental degradation and climate change



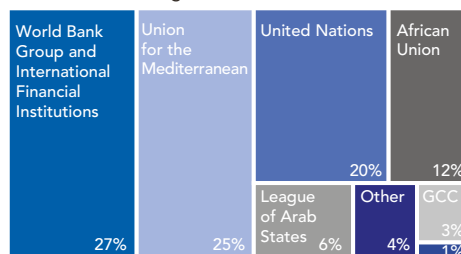
Governance and rule of law



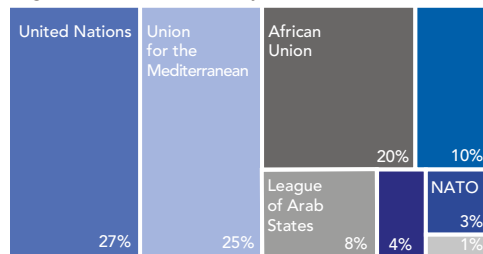
Human rights and equality



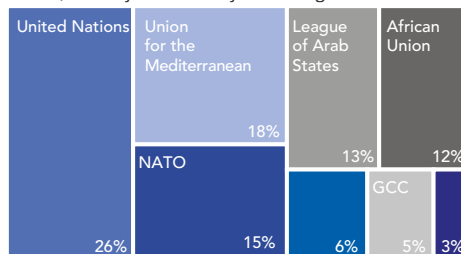
Inclusive economic growth and social dimension



Migration and human mobility



Peace, security and stability of the region

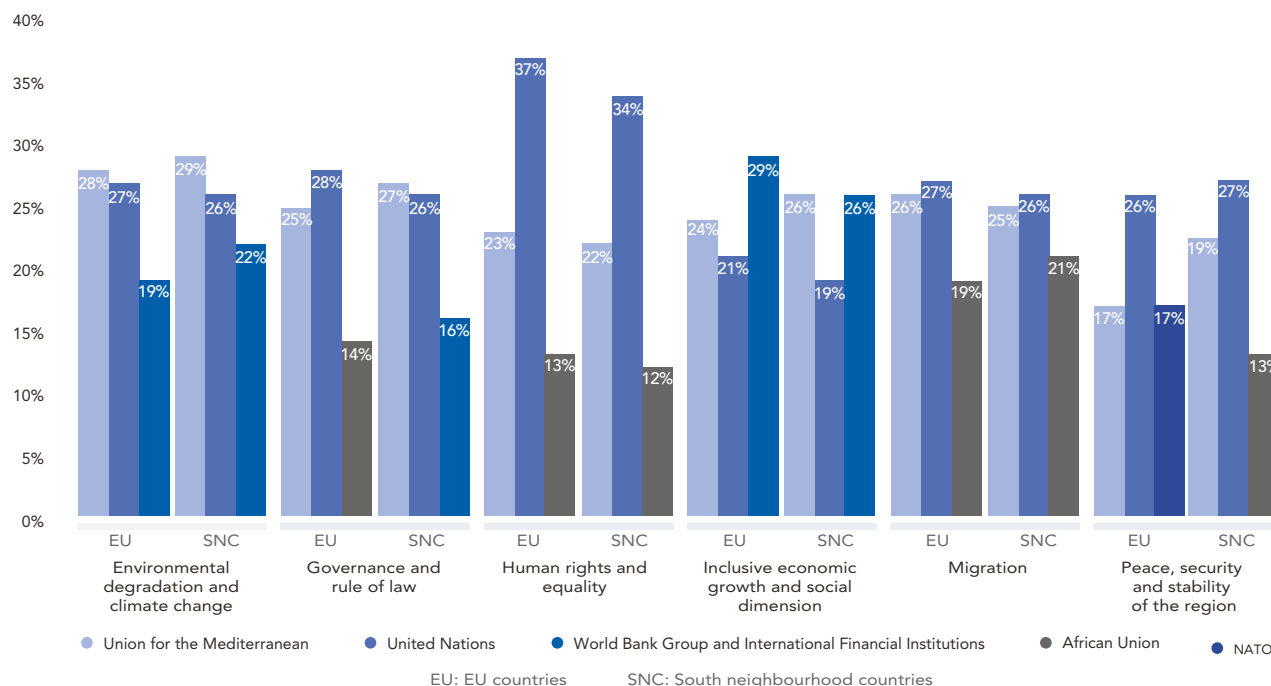


● Union for the Mediterranean ● League of Arab States ● African Union ● Gulf Cooperation Council
 ● NATO ● United Nations ● World Bank Group and International Financial Institutions ● Other

Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

Taking a closer look at the breakdown of answers on both shores, patterns of responses are rather homogeneous, apart from two specific results. On the one hand, while respondents from both shores highlight the World Bank Group and International Financial Institutions as the most effective partner in dealing with inclusive economic growth and social dimension, EU respondents do so to a more significant extent than respondents from southern neighbourhood countries, who elevate them at the same level as the UfM. On the other hand, with regards to the challenge of governance and rule of law, southern neighbourhood respondents have slightly favoured the UfM over the UN whereas for EU country respondents, the UN stands out more clearly in the lead (see graph 6).

Graph 6: Q.3 Most effective regional and multilateral partner(s) for the European Union in dealing with:

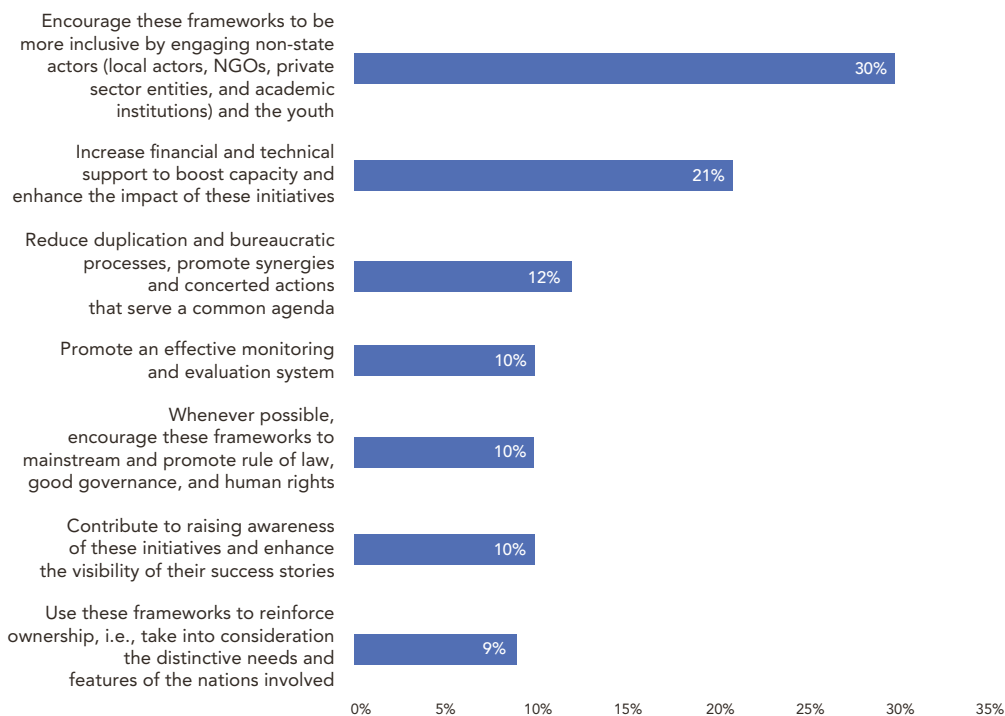


Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

Question 4 let respondents share their point of view on what the EU could do to further support regional and sub-regional frameworks – such as the UfM, the 5+5 Dialogue, the WestMED initiative, the EastMed Gas Forum or the Agadir Agreement – as well as their potential in addressing the challenges of the Mediterranean region.

This question was open-ended, i.e. respondents were invited to formulate their answer without having to choose among pre-defined categories. The following picture emerges from the analysis of all answers. Almost one third of all respondents' answers (30%) referred in one way or another to the necessity to encourage the frameworks to be more inclusive by engaging non-state actors, including local actors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private sector entities, academic institutions and youths. Meanwhile, 21% of respondents recommended increasing financial and technical support to boost capacity and thereby enhance the impact of these initiatives. The remaining answers were rather evenly distributed amongst four other categories developed on the basis of the open-ended answers to the question (see graph 7).

Graph 7: Q.4 What could the European Union do to further support these institutional frameworks and their potential in addressing the challenges in the region?
(Categories developed from the open-ended answers)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

Some answers provided further details on the kind of actions to be taken by the EU with regards to this specific aspect of the cooperation:

The EU could use its leverage as a trade partner for the promotion of and respect for human rights (including political-civil and socioeconomic rights) and international law.

— Western Sahara Resource Watch

As per my perspective, the European Union should be more inclusive in its policies as up to now all it has created is a division of 'us' versus 'them'. The EU should further foster the cooperation beyond the EU states.

— Albanian respondent

L'UE devrait limiter le nombre des initiatives et essayer d'harmoniser les objectifs de celles existantes ainsi que les soutenir financièrement.

— Moroccan respondent

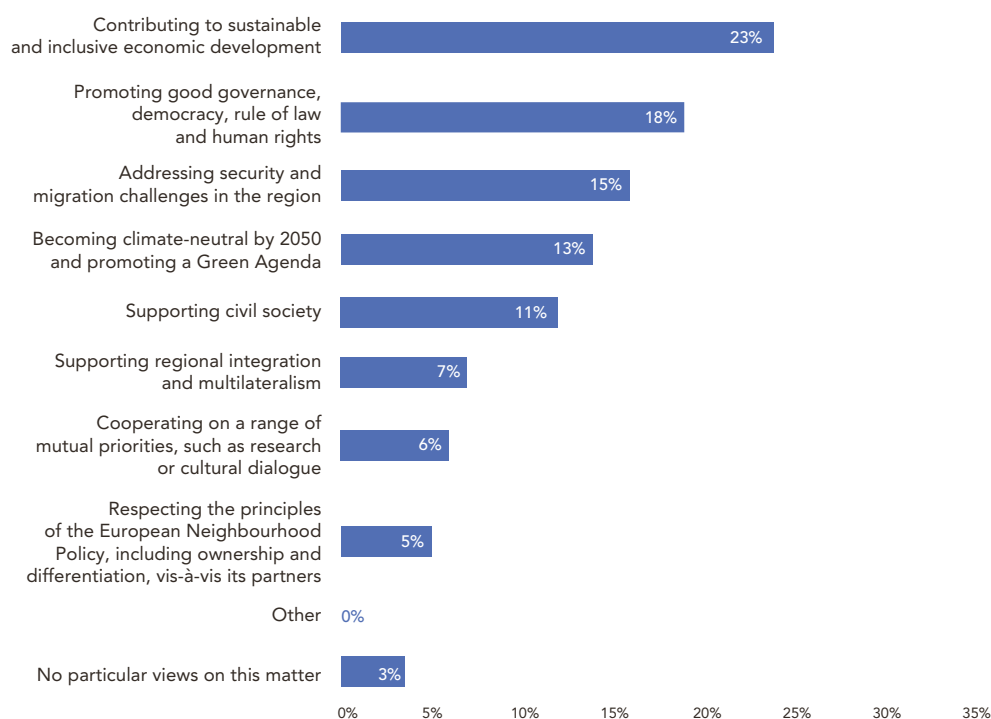
Assessing the European Union's Actions and Perspectives

Question 5 of the Survey invited respondents to choose and rank three options which represent the EU's added value compared to other global players increasingly involved in the Mediterranean region.

Almost one third of all respondents (23%) – with an even distribution of answers between experts, policy-makers and civil society representatives – designated the EU's contribution to sustainable and inclusive economic development first, just preceding the EU's promotion of good governance, democracy, rule of law and human rights (18%). This latter option was preferred by a larger proportion of respondents representing civil society representatives than by policy-makers.

Principles and actions often branded as distinctive features of the EU's foreign policy and in particular in the context of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), including ownership, differentiation and support for multilateralism and regional integration, are not perceived by respondents as the most distinctive added value of the EU in the framework of its involvement in the Mediterranean region.

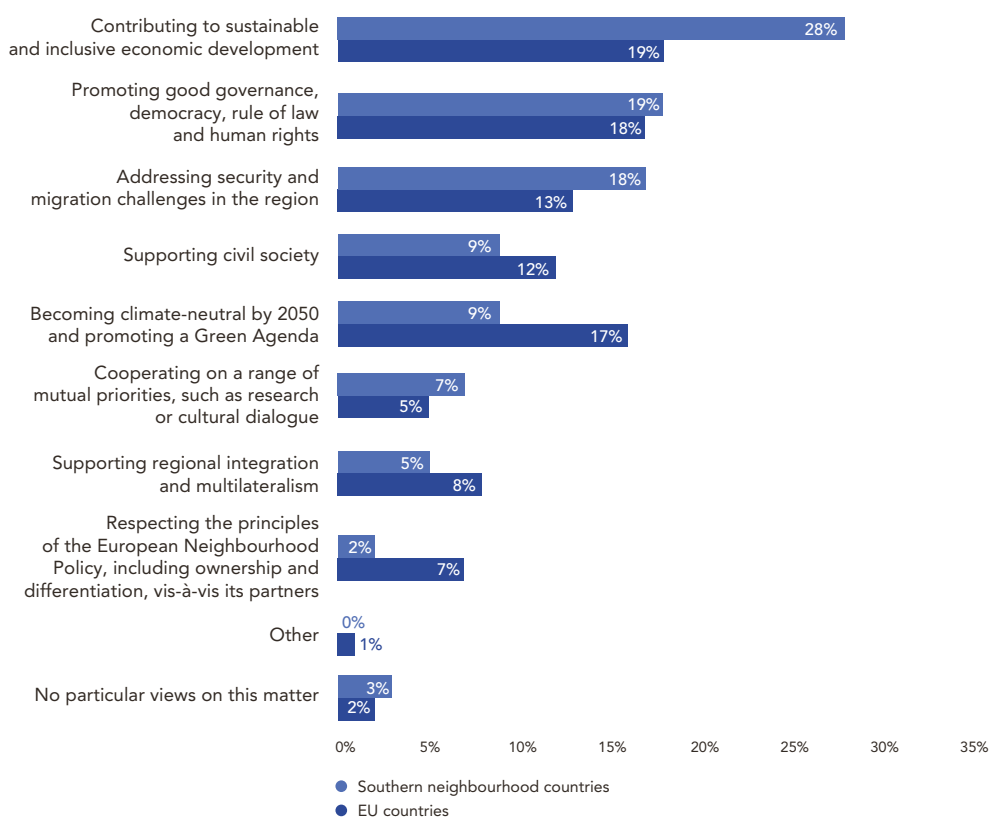
Graph 8: Q.5 What is the European Union's added value compared to other global players that are increasingly active in the region? (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

Although both northern and southern neighbourhood respondents similarly considered these two options in the first rank of the EU's added values, the breakout of results for the first option between the two shores reveals a notable contrast as respondents from southern neighbourhood countries recognise the added value of the EU in contributing to sustainable and economic development to a much larger extent (28%) than EU respondents (19%). Indeed, for southern neighbourhood respondents the EU's capacity to address security and migration challenges of the region is recognised as an added value (18%) twice as much as the EU's ambitions for climate neutrality and Green Agenda promotion (9%). Reversely, EU respondents put more emphasis on becoming climate neutral and promoting the Green Agenda (17%) than on addressing security and migration challenges in the region (13%) as the EU's added values compared to other global players (see graph 9).

Graph 9: Q.5 What is the European Union's added value compared to other global players that are increasingly active in the region? (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

In their comments, some respondents highlighted the EU's comparative advantage to act in the Mediterranean region:

By virtue of the geographical proximity and the common cultural and civilizational heritage, we believe that the European Union is more qualified than other global actors to cooperate with the countries of the region to face the various challenges.

— Egyptian respondent

Other respondents pointed at necessary adjustments to be made by the EU while facing other global players in the Mediterranean:

Any of these goals need to become focused on outcomes that are benchmarked according to their effectiveness.

— The Mediterranean Growth Initiative / ELIAMEP

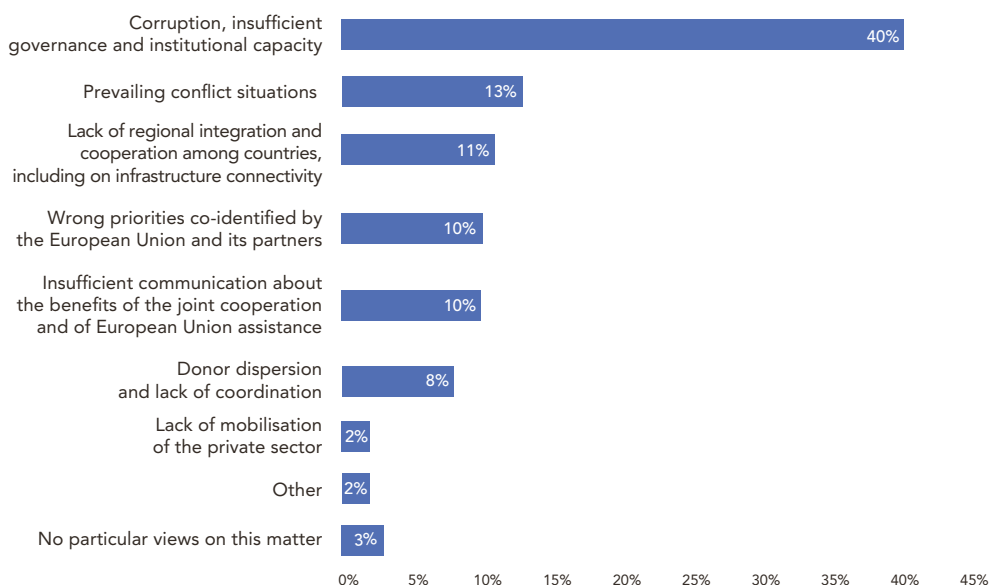
Let's not forget that the eastern Mediterranean is a highly problematic area, and it doesn't seem like Europe is doing much over there as compared to the US and Russia.

— Egyptian respondent

In contrast to the previous questions, **Question 6** aimed to expose the shortfalls of the cooperation framework between the EU and its southern partners and, to that end, proposed that respondents choose and rank three major constraints that limit its success and impact on improving the lives of peoples in southern countries.

Over one third of respondents (40%) – amongst which almost half from civil society, mostly represented by NGO-related respondents – ranked corruption, insufficient governance and institutional capacity as the first major constraint for the cooperation framework, way ahead of the second, namely the prevailing conflict situations and other items.

Graph 10: Q.6 What are the major constraints limiting the success of the cooperation between the European Union and its southern neighbours?
(Ranked as first option)

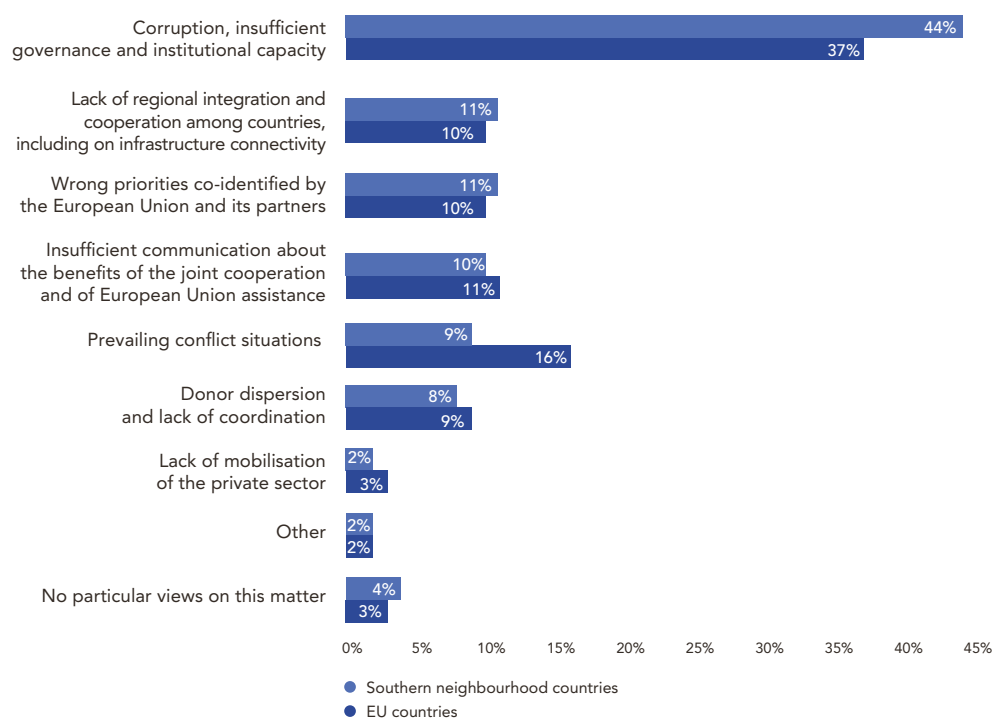


Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

The comparison of answers of respondents from both sides of the Mediterranean reveals some relevant nuances. Respondents from both shores chose corruption, insufficient governance and institutional capacity as the first constraint, although this choice was more significantly marked for the respondents of southern neighbourhood countries.

In addition, EU respondents prioritise prevailing conflict situations as a first-rank constraint twice as much as respondents from southern neighbourhood countries. The first-rank answers opting for the remaining constraint were also notably more evenly distributed by southern neighbourhood countries respondents than by EU respondents.

Graph 11: Q.6 What are the major constraints limiting the success of the cooperation between the European Union and its southern neighbours? (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

Some respondents hinted at some other relevant constraints to the cooperation framework. The following particularly reflect the recurring opinions of respondents:

Unequal trade agreements result in a net transfer of wealth from south to north. If this imbalance is not corrected, there will not be a rapprochement between the countries of the different shores but only distancing. This is also the case from a political point of view.

— Un Ponte Per / Medlink

En ce qui concerne les priorités de l'UE, le contrôle des migrations et la lutte contre le terrorisme ne sont que les symptômes d'autres problèmes qui devraient être priorisés par l'UE et ses partenaires comme la justice sociale, le développement durable et le respect des droits humains.

— Belgian respondent

Rather than wrong priorities, Europe continues to address the wrong people, the ones who have always been at the receiving end of funds and grants. Please revisit youth engagement, starting by not categorizing them as disadvantaged. Youth in the north of the Mediterranean need to work jointly with the youth in the south of the Mediterranean towards joint environmental and socio-political goals.

— Egyptian respondent

Identifying which NGOs and civil society groups to work with is essential since many are corrupt and act as fronts for money laundering. One thing for sure, working with organizations governed by current or previous politicians/government employees or any of their family members should be avoided at all cost.

— Institute of the Environment - University of Balamand

Question 7 invited respondents to identify in their open-ended answers (without any imposed pre-established categories) the most successful action of the EU in the southern neighbourhood.

Amongst all respondents, one third hinted in one way or another at the EU's support for civil society, diversity through female, youth and vulnerable groups' inclusion, culture and education as its most successful action in southern neighbourhood countries. However, in Question 5, when considered in comparison to other actors' role in the region, this particular aspect of the EU's action was clearly less recognised by respondents as one of its added values. Only 7% of respondents mentioned the EU's achievements as a security provider.

Graph 12: Q.7 What is the most successful action of the European Union in the southern neighbourhood or in your own country? (Categories developed from the open-ended answers)



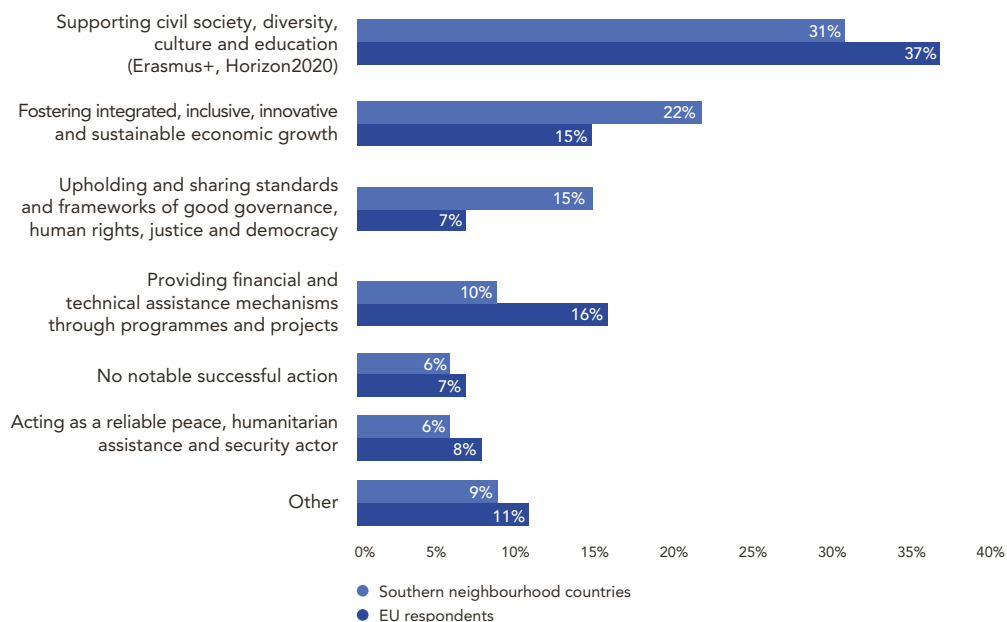
Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

Respondents from both shores of the Mediterranean acknowledge in the largest proportion the EU's support for civil society, diversity, culture and education as the most successful EU action in southern neighbourhood countries (see graph 13).

However, and in line with other findings of the Survey mentioned above, respondents from southern neighbourhood countries identify the EU's fostering of integrated, inclusive, innovative and sustainable economic growth to a larger extent (22%) than respondents from EU countries (15%). Similarly, southern respondents acknowledged the successful action of the EU in upholding and sharing standards and frameworks of good governance, human rights, justice and democracy twice as much (15%) as respondents from EU countries (7%).

In turn, EU respondents chose the EU's provision of financial and technical assistance mechanisms through programmes and projects as its most successful action to a larger extent (16%) than southern neighbourhood respondents (10%).

Graph 13: Q.7 What is the most successful action of the European Union in the southern neighbourhood or in your own country? (Categories developed from the open-ended answers)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+ are the programmes that respondents most cited in their answers to illustrate the EU's successful action in the southern neighbourhood. The comments of various respondents included specific examples of the EU's successful action and sometimes indicated how they could be further optimised:

Europe has been able to consolidate its interventions in the MENA region holistically within certain sectors (i.e. higher education). However, it should ensure that resources are rationally allocated with no overlap with further actors operating in the region and if possible should guarantee higher levels of authority on resources management and expenditures.

— Italian respondent

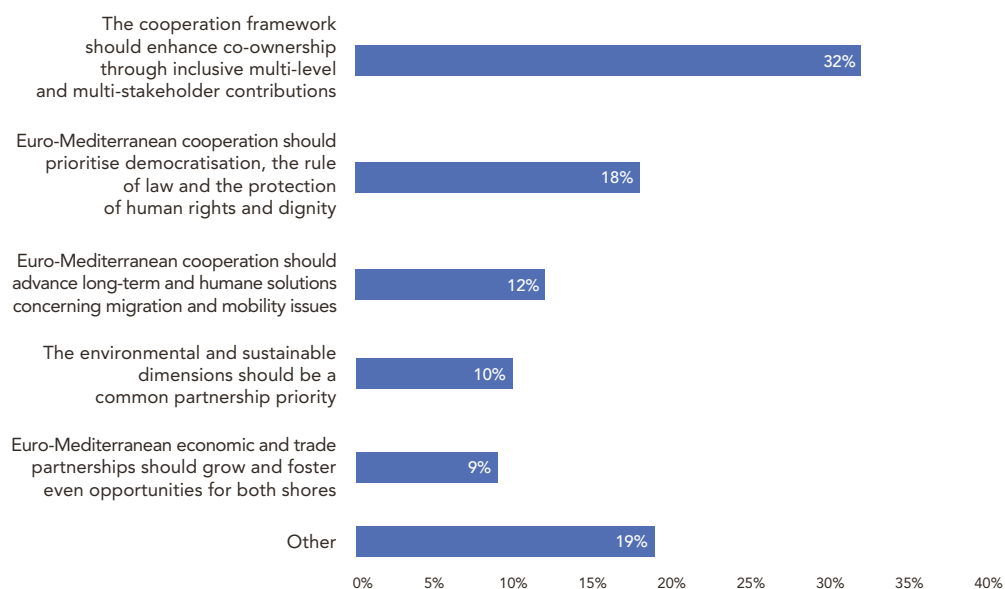
The inclusion of Israel in EU programs allow Israelis to be exposed firsthand to EU institutions and people, thus mitigating a popular notion in Israel (within selected socioeconomic communities) that the EU is not to be considered as a honest broker player.

— Israeli respondent

Through **Question 8**, respondents were given the possibility to indicate which changes could be implemented by 2030 to be able to assess that the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation has delivered.

As for the previous question, the overall results revealed a clear tendency in favour of one category amongst those developed based on the open-ended answers. Indeed, approximately one third of all respondents (32%) assessed that the cooperation framework should enhance co-ownership through inclusive multi-level and multi-stakeholder contributions.

Graph 14: Q.8 What should change by 2030 in order for you to assess that the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation has delivered? (Categories developed from the open-ended answers)

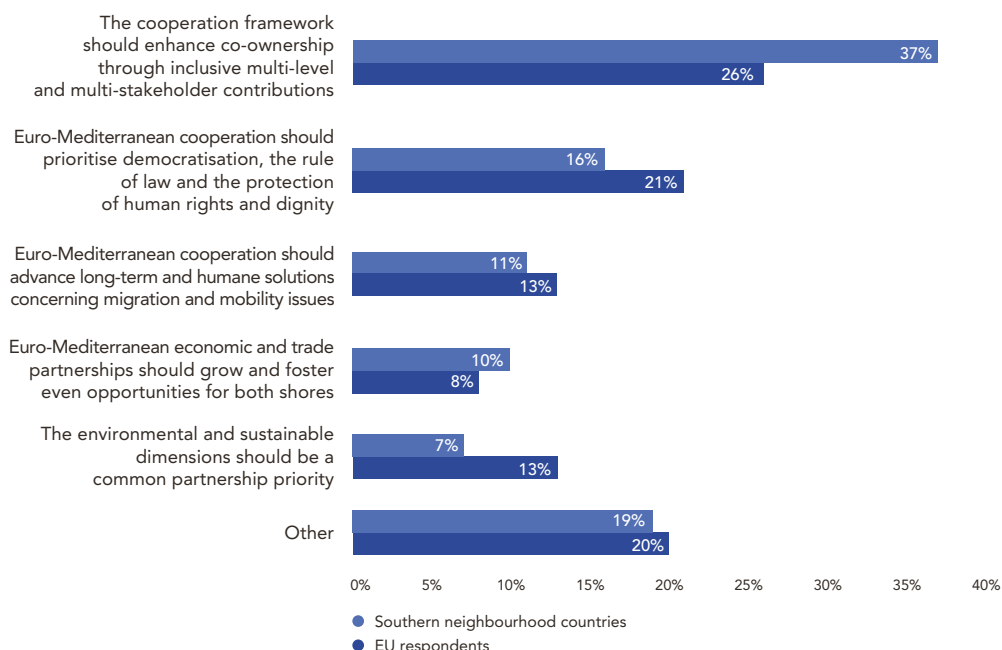


Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

This assessment was more pronounced amongst answers from southern neighbourhood respondents than amongst answers from EU country participants.

Regarding other categories, the proportion of answers between both shores differed only slightly. However, it is worth noting that respondents from EU countries deemed that the environmental and sustainable dimensions should be a common partnership priority almost twice as much (13%) as southern neighbourhood country respondents (7%).

Graph 15: Q.8 What should change by 2030 in order for you to assess that the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation has delivered? (Categories developed from the open-ended answers)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

Some answers highlighted the need for the EU to reaffirm its action as a regional bloc:

The EU institutions at their top level should develop a strategy toward the Euro-Mediterranean region that responds to the superior interest of the Union, and not to those of the single member states. The way the EU has acted in helping negotiate the nuclear deal between Iran and the USA should serve as a reference.

— Italian respondent

Bien entendu, la géographie et l'histoire régissent les relations entre les deux rives. N'oubliez pas que les intérêts communs sont grands et nombreux, que ce soit en matière d'énergie (pétrole et gaz), de lutte contre le terrorisme et l'extrémisme, le commerce et les échanges économiques. Demeure aussi la nécessité aussi pour l'UE d'affronter d'autres blocs dans le bassin méditerranéen, caractérisés notamment par la présence russe, chinoise, voire américaine.

— Hashemite University - International Relations and Strategic Studies Program

Others hinted at the multidimensional nature of the change to be implemented, insisting particularly on the improvement of perspectives for youths and diverse actors:

A more equitable development platform that can generate deliverables to the target populations. For instance, investing in youth projects should be followed by investor fairs and opportunities in home countries rather than simply forcing brain-drains of talented youths in MENA to Europe.

— Luxembourg respondent

By 2030, the cooperation should ensure that funds are getting to the right parties who are transparent and who like to see achievements on the ground. Also, much more accountability to government institutions on the use of such funds. The EU should better identify who are the private institutions and groups that deliver on objectives and forge medium and long-term agreements to achieve results.

— Institute of the Environment - University of Balamand

Human Development, Governance and Migration

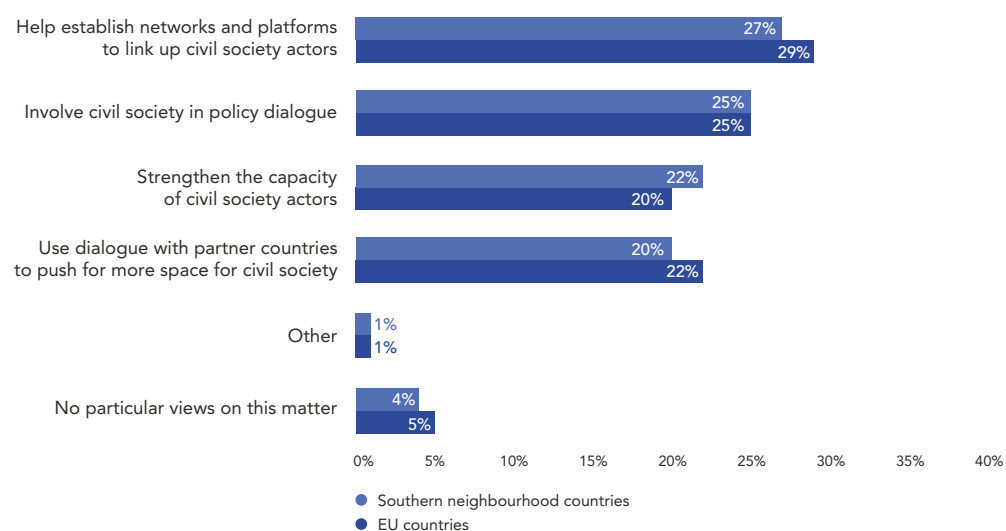
Questions 9 to 11 aimed to assess the respondent's perceptions of the EU's action in terms of supporting civil society democracy and good governance, human rights, as well as implementing external aspects of its New Pact on Migration and Asylum.

Main findings:

- EU support for civil society should be mainly focused on establishing networks and platforms linking up civil society actors, according to a majority of respondents, who also recognise the importance of involving civil society in policy-making.
- In order to support reforms in the fields of good governance, a majority of European respondents think that the EU should be more assertive and make use of conditionality, a method that is also supported by a significant number of respondents from southern neighbourhood countries. However, the latter are more prone to considering that this result would best be achieved through enhanced engagement with civil, economic and social actors.
- Concerning the priorities of the external dimension actions outlined by the New Pact on Migration and Asylum, respondents clearly agree that building economic opportunities and addressing root causes of irregular migration should be the top priority.

Question 9 proposed several options by which the EU could further support civil society to fully play its role. Answers show limited variation among the four options, with no significant differences between northern and southern respondents. A majority of respondents were of the opinion that “helping to establish networks and platforms to link up civil society” actors would be the best option for the EU to continue supporting civil society. Echoing other results of the Survey related to inclusive policy processes, more than a quarter of respondents also identified the “involvement of civil society in policy dialogue” as their top option (see graph 16).

Graph 16: Q.9 What could the European Union do to further support civil society in Southern Mediterranean Countries in fully playing its role? (Ranked as first option)

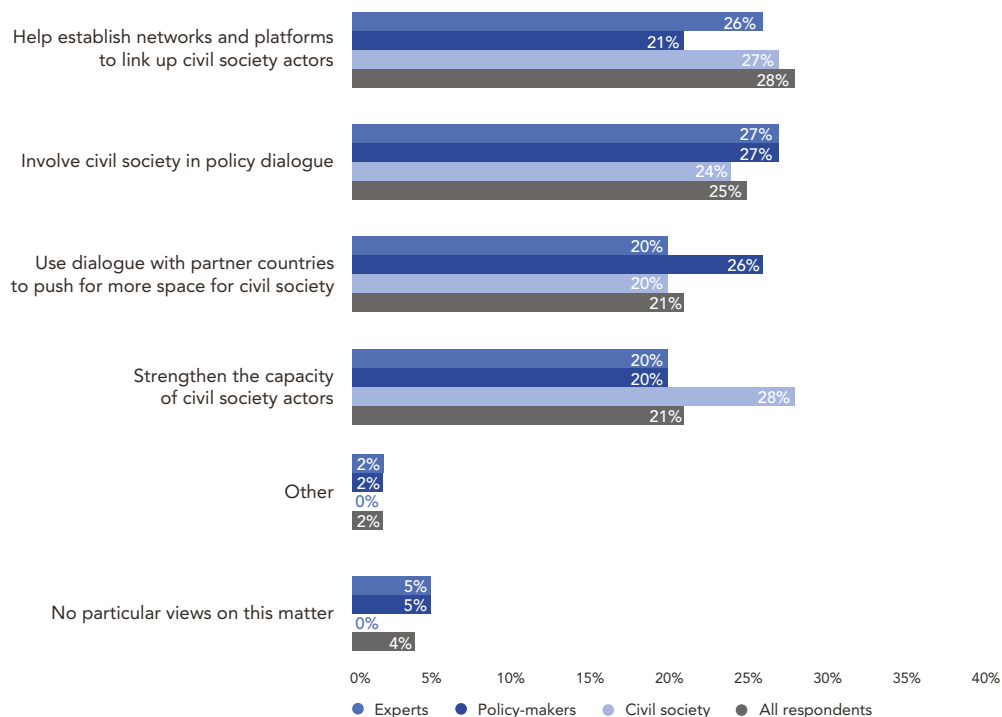


Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

In a regional breakdown of answers from southern neighbourhood respondents, Mashreq respondents prioritise the involvement of civil society in policy dialogue (31%), while Maghreb respondents prioritise the establishment of networks and platforms.

In turn, there is more variation according to the professional affiliation of respondents. Civil society respondents were more prone to identify “strengthening civil society actors’ capacities” as their top option, while, rather predictably, policy-maker respondents considered that the priority should be to involve civil society in policy dialogue (see graph 17).

Graph 17: Q.9 What could the European Union do to further support civil society in Southern Mediterranean Countries in fully playing its role? (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

In the open comments, some respondents elaborated on the sequence between these options, and in particular the importance of empowering civil society organisations (CSOs) as a required step to fully contribute to policy dialogue:

The dialogue should be established between the civil societies and the policy-makers of the relevant countries without interference or supervision of the EU. That is why the EU must empower and strengthen the capacities of the civil societies first so they can be involved in a policy dialogue.

— Algerian respondent

Strengthening the capacity of civil society actors is the most important as all other issues derive from it, such as establishing networks, or involving civil society in policy dialogue.

— Belgian respondent

Comments also reflected how platforms and dialogue can help to improve the role of civil society:

It's a delicate matter, and pushing for dialogue per se with countries will not possibly have the expected outcome. The impulse needs to also come from the bottom and through specific joint initiatives that can gradually change processes and mindset, empower key actors, etc. This is to generate gradual and peaceful changes rather than revolutions.

— Italian respondent

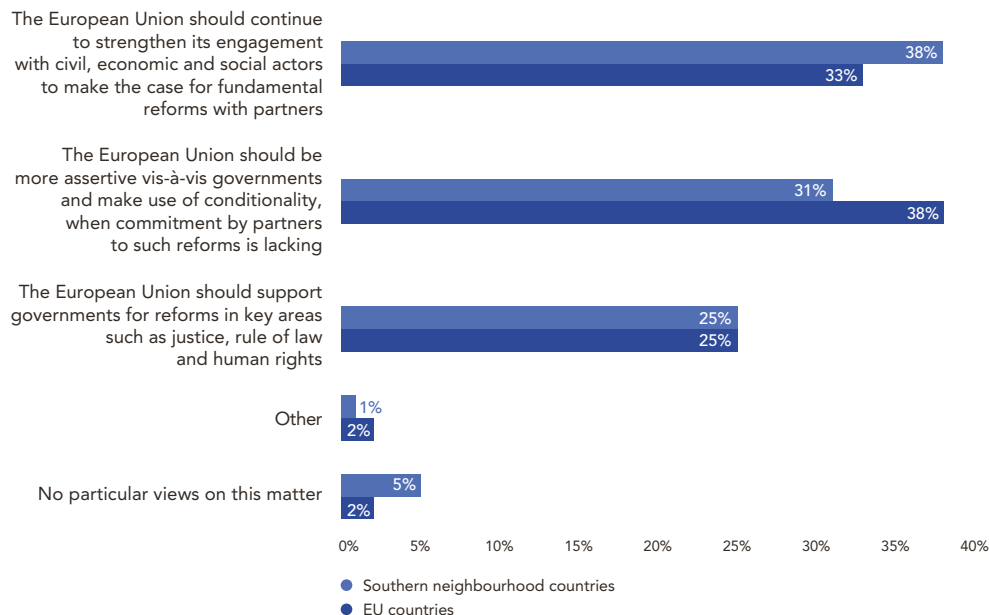
Establishing platforms bringing together civil society representatives from both shores of the Mediterranean and consulting them systematically can help develop ownership, address joint concerns and design joint strategies (e.g. Majalat project). The dialogue with partner countries can indeed be used to push for more space for civil society, but this should be done by 'walking the talk', i.e. condition support on respect for human rights and protection of this space – in law and practice.

— EuroMed Rights

Question 10 was focused on how to support reforms in the fields of good governance, democracy, the rule of law and human rights. The three options proposed related to different engagement modalities, ranging from the use of conditionality when reforms are lacking to direct engagement with civil, economic and social actors.

The majority of respondents from southern neighbourhood countries chose as first priority that the EU should enhance its "engagement with civil, economic and social actors to make the case for fundamental reforms with partners". The majority of EU respondents prioritised the use of conditionality to foster partner countries to commit to reforms on good governance, democracy, the rule of law and human rights, while the majority of southern neighbourhood respondents prioritised the engagement with civil, economic and social actors (see graph 18). A southern neighbourhood breakdown shows that Mashreq respondents consider conditionality (39%) as important as the engagement with civil and social actors (39%), while Maghreb ones clearly prioritise the latter (42%).

Graph 18: Q.10 When it comes to supporting reforms in the fields of good governance, democracy, the rule of law and human rights (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

A breakdown of results by professional affiliation shows that 26% of civil society respondents identified the use of conditionality as the best avenue for the EU to pursue in order to support reforms in the field of governance, democracy, the rule of law and human rights. Meanwhile, 48% of respondents favoured engagement with civil, economic and social actors.

Open comments introduce interesting insights into how to operationalise the principle of conditionality and articulate it with other actions.

I do not see any importance to European conditionality, and up to the present time the European Union has not been able to use this tool effectively in light of its double standards, and the influence and emergence of international and regional actors that can offset European support, especially the Gulf states and China, which will be reflected in European policies in the future.

— Algerian respondent

This is an impossible choice to make between these different options, as they are intertwined and reinforce each other. They can be related in a sequence: (1) the EU strengthens its engagement with independent civil, economic and social actors, (2) taking civil society views into account, the EU supports governments for reforms in key areas such as justice, rule of law and human rights, (3) if this soft power approach does not work, the EU is more assertive vis-à-vis governments and makes use of conditionality.

— EuroMed Rights

We believe that the three options referred to can be used at the same time, according to each individual case and according to the issues raised. In some cases, government support is necessary for introducing reforms in the areas of justice and rule of law. In other cases, it may be indispensable to benefit from conditionality when partners are less committed to reforms.

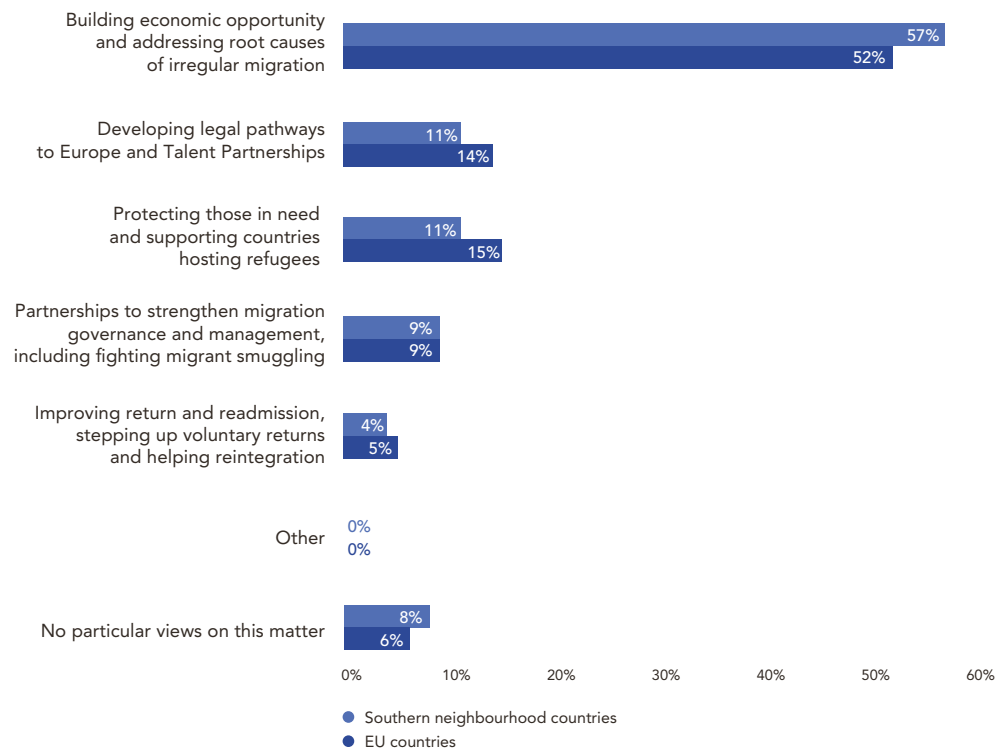
— Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs

While emphasizing the importance of always supporting drivers of change, it is necessary to decisively support reforms in terms of governance that make change possible. Instruments such as the 2030 Agenda can be deployed as agents of change, rather than conditionality or changes at the level of institutions that can be sterile.

— Spanish respondent

Question 11 aimed to assess the perceptions in relation with the five priorities for action on the external dimension outlined by the New Pact on Migration and Asylum presented by the EU in September 2020. Respondents unequivocally agreed that building economic opportunities and addressing root causes of irregular migration was the most important pillar (see graph 19).

Graph 19: Q.11 Most important external dimension actions of the New Pact on Migration and Asylum (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

The dispersion of answers between EU respondents and respondents from the southern neighbourhood was rather limited. The percentage of respondents from southern neighbourhood countries choosing “building economic opportunities and addressing root causes of irregular migration” as their top option was five points higher than for EU respondents, reaching up to 65% in the case of Maghreb respondents. In turn, EU respondents were slightly keener on referring to legal pathways or to the protection dimension as their top priority.

A number of respondents formulated concerns about how the external dimension of migration management is conceived:

Des préoccupations existent quant à l'externalisation accrue du contrôle aux frontières et de la gestion des migrations. Cette situation ne peut que conduire à une augmentation des violations des droits de l'homme. En effet, la « coopération extérieure » de l'UE sur les questions de migration avec des pays tiers a lieu dans des pays qui ne disposent pas d'un cadre efficace pour la protection des droits des personnes en déplacement, comme la Turquie ou la Libye.

— Majalat project

It is not sufficient to subcontract transit countries, or to externalise migration policies, or to create hot spots and to harmonize asylum policies. The EU should, in partnership with the Arab League and the African Union, translate the Malta migration recommendations into concrete actions, mainly be devising, inclusive economic policies and co-development strategies.

— Belgian respondent

Other comments elaborated on the need to think about causes of migration from a more complex and global perspective and more generally to reassess the link between various paradigms (migration and root causes, on the one hand, development and talent partnerships, on the other):

Building economic opportunity and addressing root causes is essential, but it is not helpful to link it so directly to migration and asylum. It is necessary for other reasons – to promote energy transition, manage the impact of climate change, reduce security challenges and more.

— Swedish respondent

Il est regrettable dans les discours de l'UE d'associer le développement de la migration légale à l'attirance des talents, ce qui est en contradiction flagrante avec les objectifs de développement de ces pays qui ont plus que jamais besoin de leurs talents pour la mise à niveau de leurs économies.

— Moroccan respondent

Legal pathways should concern broader population strata than simply “talent partnerships”. People have transnational families, friendships, etc.

— Tampere Peace Research Institute

Inclusive, Resilient and Sustainable Economies

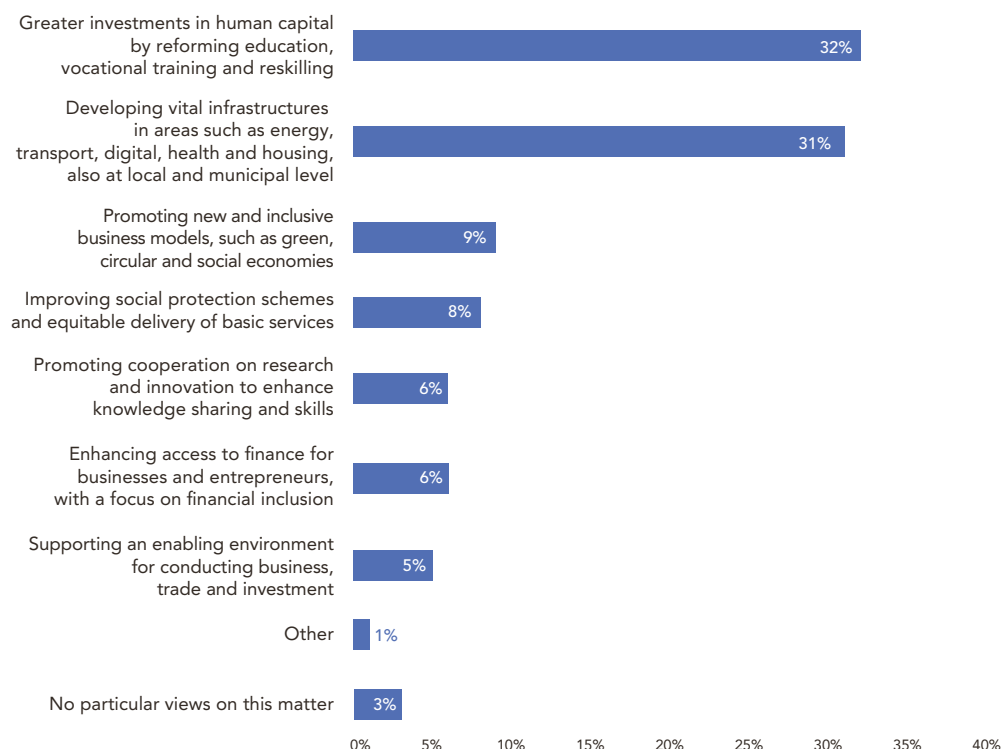
This section of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey was mainly focused on how to face the socioeconomic challenges of southern neighbourhood partner countries, in particular in the post Covid-19 context, in order to foster inclusive, resilient, sustainable and connected economies.

Main findings:

- Fostering inclusive economies can be best achieved through a combination of reforms in the field of education, vocational training and re-skilling, with the development of vital infrastructures (such as energy, transport, digital, health and housing).
- A comprehensive recovery plan requires, as a matter of priority, an effort to reform public finances of southern neighbourhood countries. Grants and macro financial assistance are also seen as important, in support of these reforms, to boost the recovery of these countries.
- According to respondents, a key element to stimulate trade relations between the EU and its southern partners should be deepening regional economic integration.
- “Enhance access markets by including services and investment” is also seen as crucial to stimulate regional trade by southern neighbourhood respondents, while “better use of agreements already in place” would be more important according to EU respondents.
- A clear majority of respondents considered that EU Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) should be focused on investments yielding a positive impact on job creation and contributing to sustainable development.
- To effectively support a digitalisation agenda in the southern countries, the EU should first support the adaptation of education and vocational training.

Question 12 turned to the effective ways to foster more inclusive economies in the southern neighbourhood countries. Out of the seven options, respondents considered investments in human capital, i.e. reforming education, vocational training and re-skilling, as first priority, closely followed by developing vital infrastructures (such as energy, transport, digital, health and housing) while the remaining options had a lower percentage of answers (see graph 20).

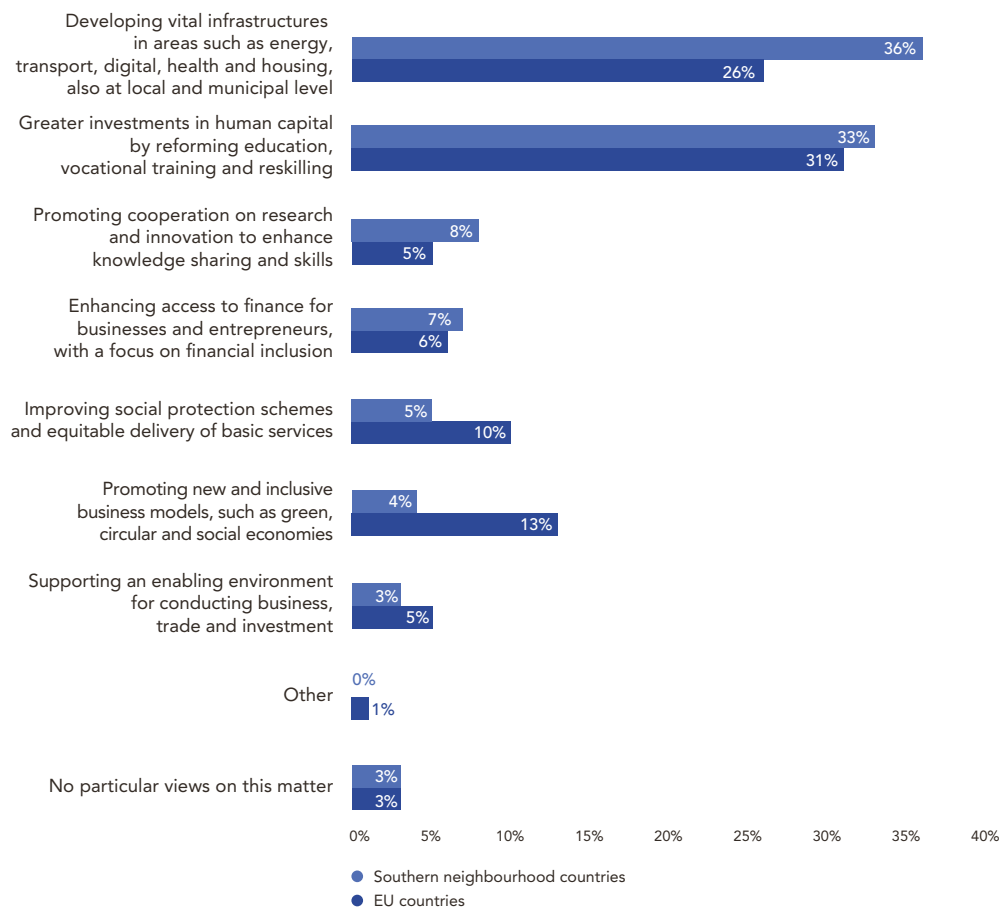
Graph 20: Q.12 Most effective ways to foster more inclusive economies in the southern neighbourhood countries (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

A breakdown of answers shows a number of different patterns. More than a third of southern neighbourhood respondents ranked in first position the development of vital infrastructures, 10 percentage points more than EU respondents. In turn, the first priority for EU respondents was investments in human capital. In the case of “promoting new and inclusive business models, such as green, circular and social economies”, EU respondents tripled the percentage of southern ones and doubled in the case of “improving social protection schemes and equitable delivery of basic services” (see graph 21).

Graph 21: Q.12 Most effective ways to foster more inclusive economies in the southern neighbourhood countries (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

Some open comments to Q.12 cast light on the nexus between inclusive growth and good governance:

It can be noted that economic difficulties are an underlying concern of citizens of the southern neighbourhood, as recent protests in Tunisia in January 2021 shows. From a human rights and rule of law perspective, fighting corruption, for instance, is key in fostering resilient and sustainable economy, since this phenomenon undermines good governance and hinders economic development.

— French respondent

The EU considers the private investors as the engine of inclusive growth, decent job creation, efficient provision of public services and goods. Nevertheless, the lack of any mechanism enhancing transparency, accountability and responsibility is the main challenge in this regard.

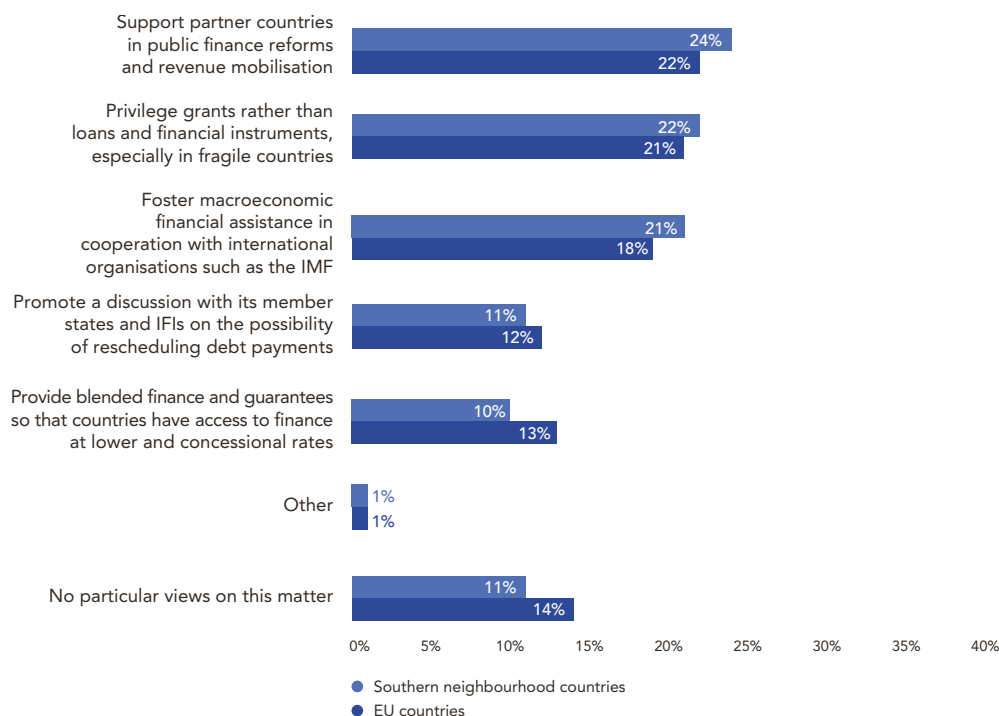
— Arab NGO Network for Development, Lebanon

Inequalities stem primarily from differential access to opportunities. To re-establish the capacity of societies to provide equal opportunities to their citizens, functional service provision is an overarching condition but needs to be accompanied by effective policies limiting rent-seeking and power grabbing by elites.

— Italian respondent

Question 13 dealt with EU priorities to develop a comprehensive recovery plan and confront new challenges in southern neighbourhood countries. The most popular option among respondents relates to the role of the EU in supporting public reforms and revenue mobilisation in southern neighbourhood countries. Close behind are two options referring to EU financial assistance mechanisms.

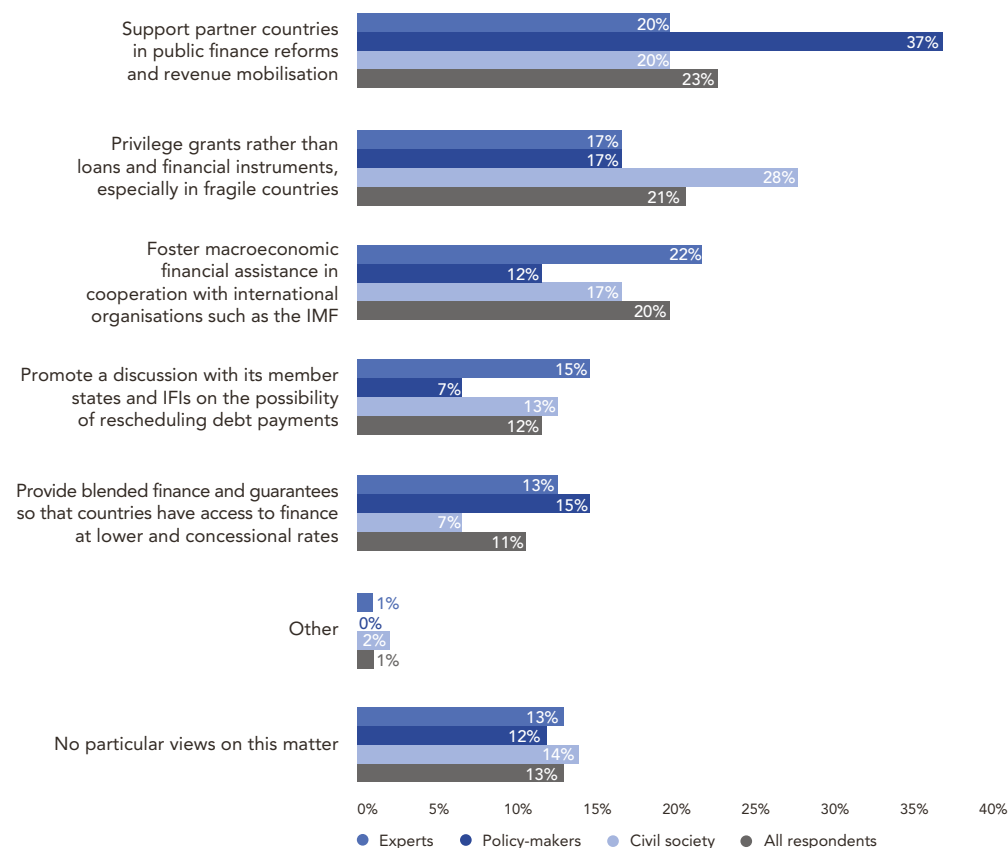
Graph 22: Q.13 European Union priorities to develop a comprehensive recovery plan and confront new challenges in Southern Mediterranean Countries
(Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

While there are no major differences between the patterns of answers from respondents from the EU and from southern neighbourhood countries, a breakdown by type of institutions reveals a greater dispersion of answers (see graph 23). 37% of the policy-makers taking part in the Survey chose “support partner countries in public finance reforms and revenue mobilisation” as their first option. In turn, the first option for almost one third of civil society respondents was “privilege grants rather than loans and financial instruments, especially in fragile countries”. The patterns of the answers from experts (academic, think tank and media) are closer to the average results, although the top answer was “foster macroeconomic financial assistance in cooperation with international organisations such as the IMF”.

Graph 23: Q.13 European Union priorities to develop a comprehensive recovery plan and confront new challenges in Southern Mediterranean Countries
(Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

Very consistently with other results of the Survey, in their comments respondents reiterated the necessity to fight corruption as a requirement to make the recovery possible and sustainable, and encourage the EU to be very cautious when providing assistance:

Any further financial assistance to governments should be assertively conditional on reform and extremely tight auditing, otherwise it not only helps finance corrupt political leadership but also blocks the way before any reforming agents.

— Daraj (independent digital media platform), Lebanon

The EU has to stress the fight of corruption and transparency to assure these financial supports, and that grants will be implemented in specific sustainable projects. Corruption is the major issue in the southern countries, which that impedes realizing a great development.

— Algerian respondent

Some respondents were even more specific in this regard, inviting the EU to concentrate its support on local governments and civil society:

Financial support needs to reach private sector and local government not through central government – as most ridden by inefficiencies. Capacity-building on tracking finance against private sector projects and local government projects.

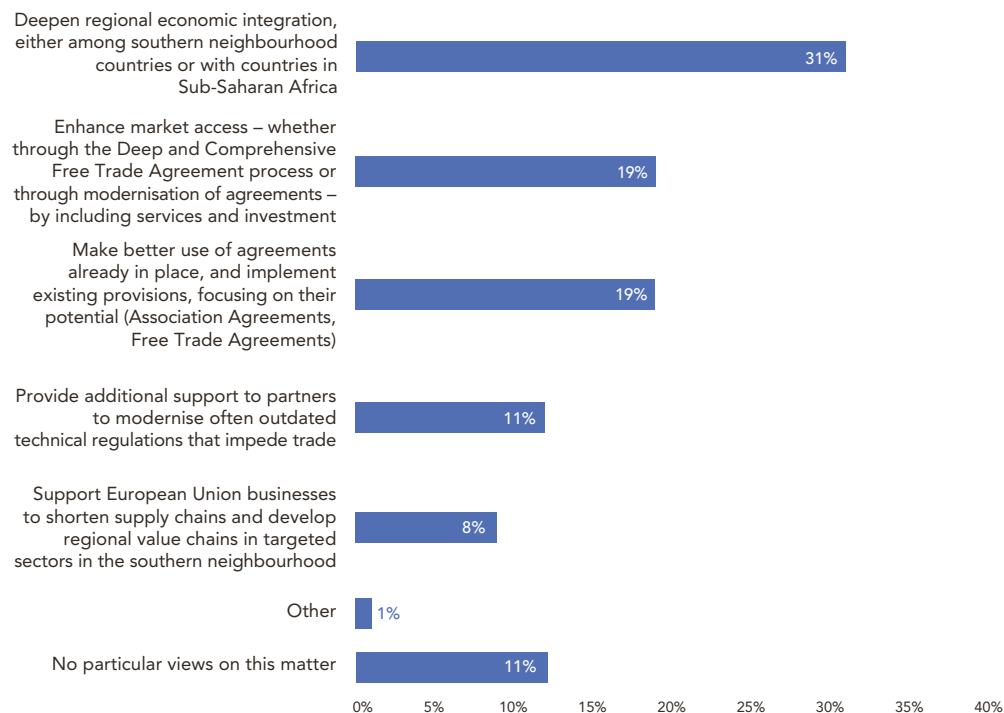
— The Mediterranean Growth Initiative / ELIAMEP

Allocate grants and budgets for civil society organisations to take part in the development of economic reforms in the states. Civil society support is very important to guarantee transparency and accountability by the governments.

— Palestinian Center for Media, Research and Development

Question 14 was focused on what should be done to stimulate trade relations between the EU and its southern partners. Out of the five possible options, nearly one third of participants were of the opinion that this would be achieved through a deepening of regional economic integration, either among southern neighbourhood countries or with countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

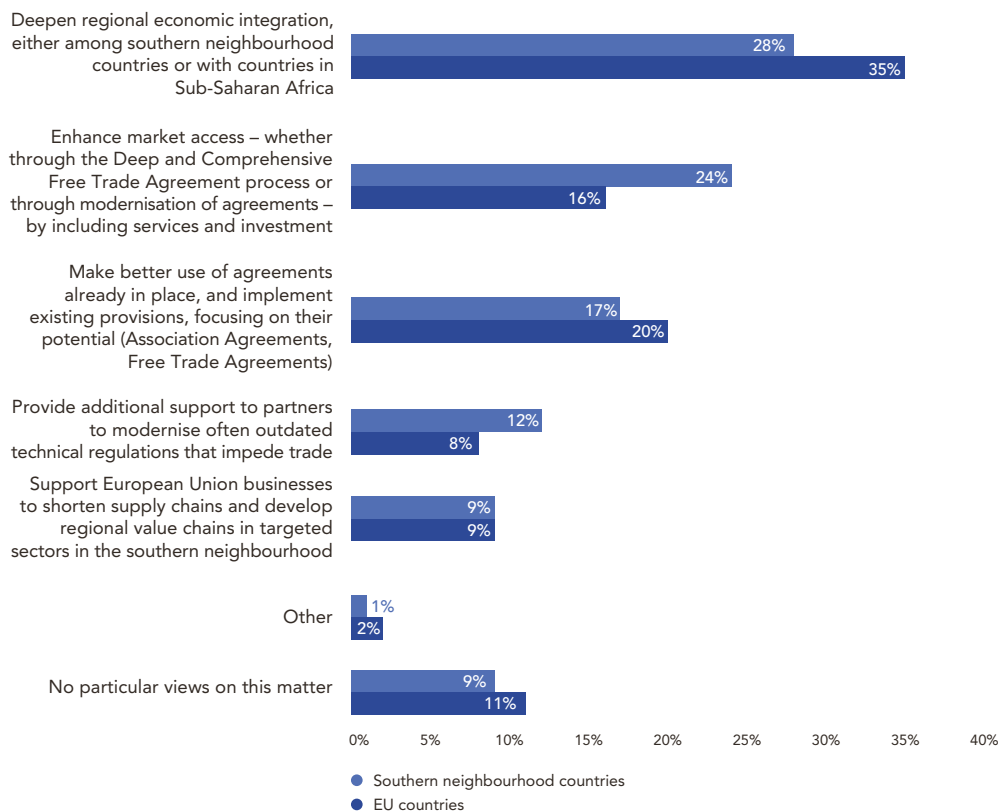
Graph 24: Q.14 What should be done to stimulate trade relations between the European Union and its southern partners? (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

Results broken down according to the geographical origin show a slightly nuanced picture (see graph 25). Respondents from southern neighbourhood countries are less keen than their southern counterparts to “make better use of agreements already in place” and keener on “deepening regional integration...” or “enhance market access” (their second most frequently identified option as number one).

Graph 25: Q.14 What should be done to stimulate trade relations between the European Union and its southern partners? (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

Open comments mentioned the importance of considering coherence and fairness in trade agreements:

Increase and deepen first sub-regional integration (Maghreb) then regional integration (Arab Free Trade Zone) and encourage triangular integration (EU-Arab Countries-African Union). It is not necessary to create new mechanisms or organisations or fora. Just improve the performance of those in existence. Free trade agreements with the EU should be encouraged with safeguards for the less-developed economies. Offshoring some European industries in the southern region creates prosperity and stability in the region and prosperity and security in Europe.

— Belgian respondent

Les accords de libre-échange proposés laissent les pays du Sud dont les économies sont fragiles incapables de faire face à la concurrence des économies européennes.

— Moroccan respondent

The EU should be able to convince (reluctant) member states to offer increased trade preferences to southern neighbours (notably by softening its rules of origin restrictions) and envision for the medium term the creation of a common trade and investment area with the South. This would unlock a huge development and investment potential that would create the platform for future investments by joint EU-southern neighbours companies in the sub-Saharan African market.

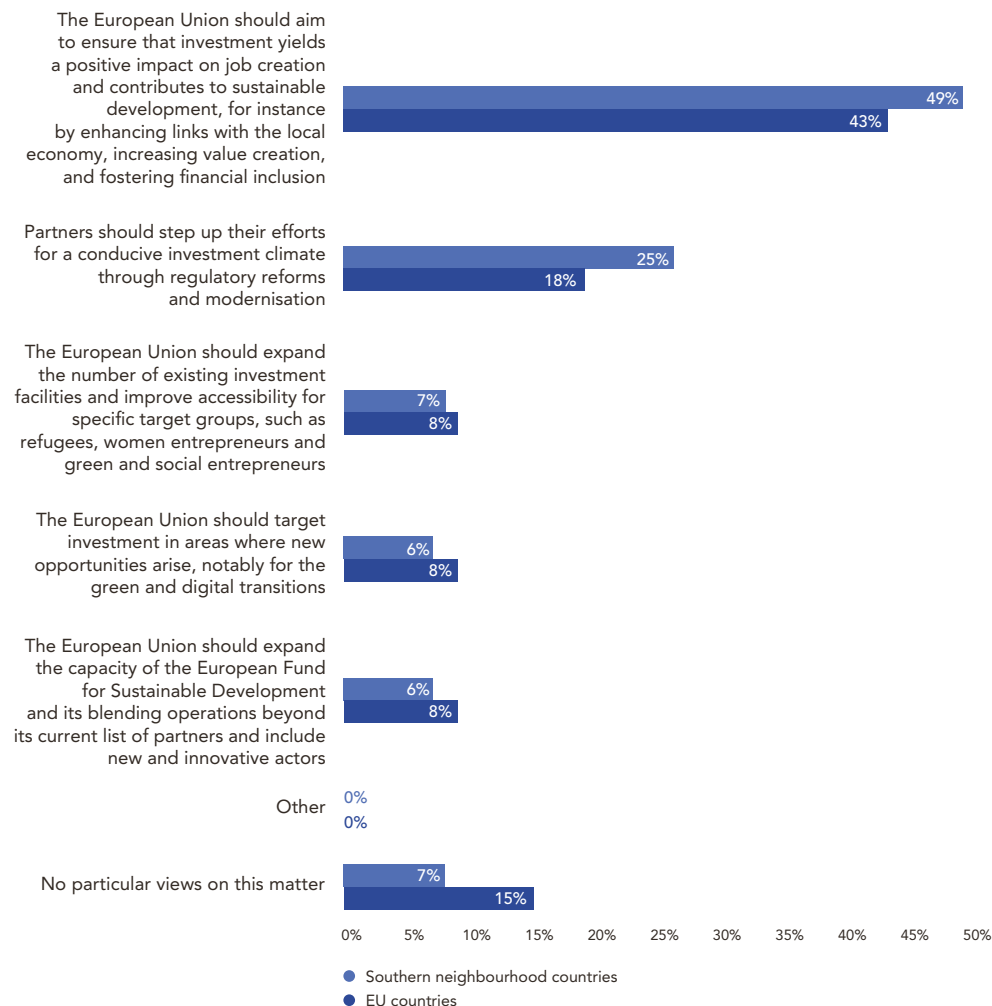
— Italian respondent

Policy coherence for development is a legal obligation for the EU according to article 208 of the Lisbon Treaty. Particularly important in this regard are EU trade and investment policies that should have clearly defined development objectives through contributing to development of productive sectors and employment generation. In this context, stimulation of trade initially requires ex-ante and ex-post rights-based and sustainability impact assessments. It is important to note that the other priorities listed (including DCFTAS, EU businesses engagement, etc.) have been criticized and opposed by civil society groups in the region.

— Arab NGO Network for Development, Lebanon

Question 15 proposed different options to boost EU FDI in southern neighbourhood countries. Options ranked as first and second options concentrated a very significant percentage of answers. Almost half of respondents chose as their top option the answer referring to the objectives of FDI (job creation and contribution to sustainable development). The second most frequently given option as the top answer was the creation of a favourable investment climate through regulatory reforms and modernisation.

Graph 26: Q.15 What should be done to boost European Union Foreign Direct Investment to southern neighbourhood countries? (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

Open comments to the question introduced proposals on possible targets of EU direct investments:

Il faut envisager un appui fiscal aux entreprises qui investissent dans les pays de Sud, en particulier quand il s'agit d'activités économiques haut de gamme.

— Finnish respondent

As much as I am supportive of projects that prioritise empowerment of specific target groups including women, refugees, green and social entrepreneurs, I believe that such an outcome could be a natural result of a more strategic planning undertaken at a macro level.

— Daraj (independent digital media platform), Lebanon

Cooperation actors and regional authorities could support foreign direct investments through the mobilisation of their network of expertise in countries of the southern Mediterranean.

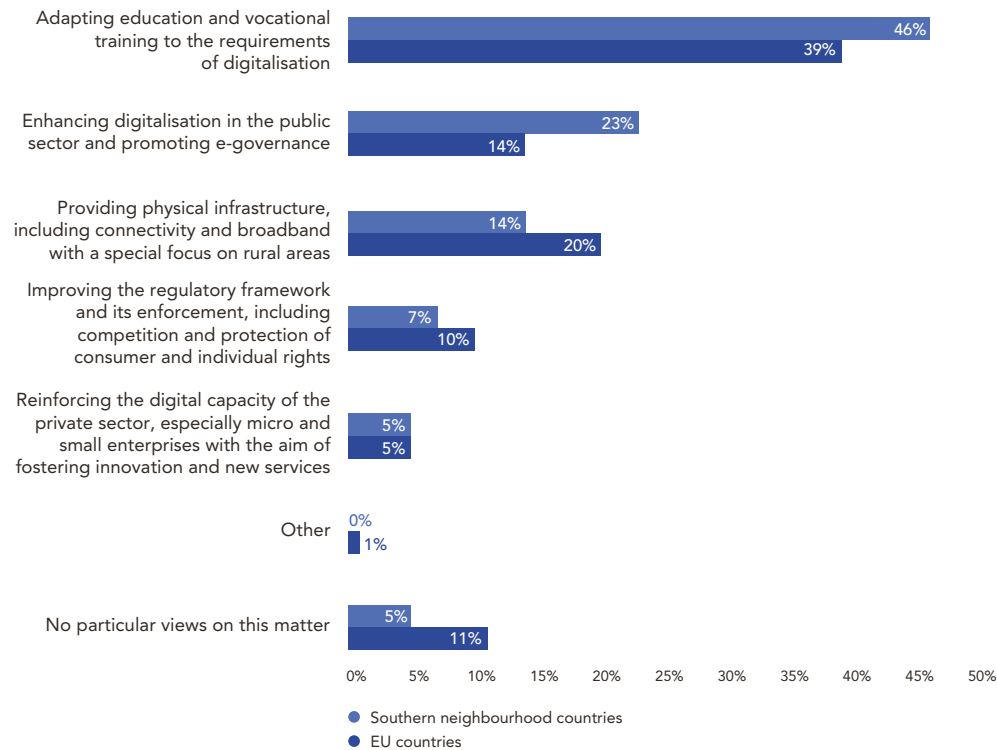
— Région Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur

It is important to note that priorities of blending should not be pursued, as pooling public resources and using ODA to subsidise private companies most often owned and domiciled in OECD countries would not bring additionality and address development needs of the partner countries.

— Arab NGO Network for Development, Lebanon

The final question of this section, **Question 16**, concerned how to effectively support a digitalisation agenda in the southern countries. "Adapting education and vocational training" was the first option chosen, doubling the percentage of answers of "digitalisation in the public sector and promoting e-governance", which was the second. However, the second option for respondents from EU countries was different. In this case it was "providing physical infrastructure, including connectivity and broadband with a special focus on rural areas", an option that came third among southern neighbourhood respondents (see graph 27).

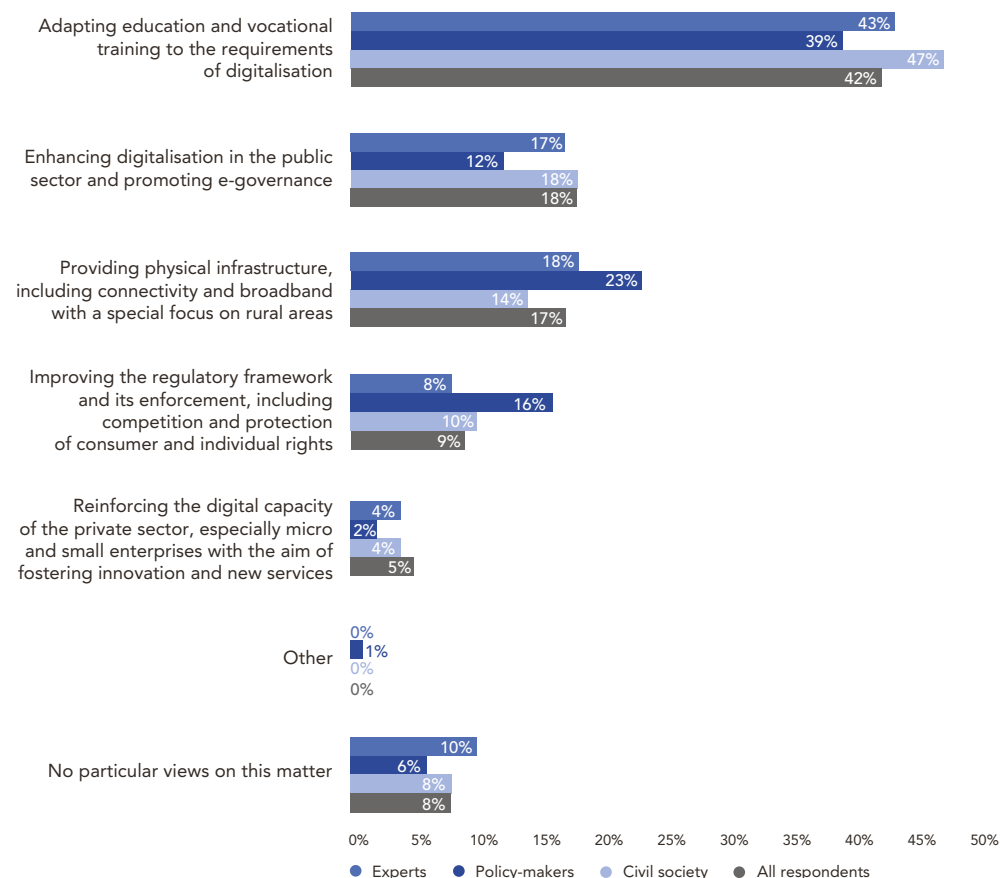
Graph 27: Q.16 Most effective ways to support a digitalisation agenda in the southern neighbourhood countries? (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

A breakdown of answers by institutional affiliation shows that policy-makers ranked “providing physical infrastructure” in second place and “improving the regulatory framework” in third place. These percentages are quite differentiated from the rest of the answers (see graph 28).

Graph 28: Q.16 Most effective ways to support a digitalisation agenda in the southern neighbourhood countries? (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

In their open comments, respondents stressed the importance of matching digitalisation with good governance:

Corruption is a big obstacle for digitization, especially in the public sector. Therefore, a successful digitalization goes in parallel with enhancing good governance.

— Lebanese respondent

The development of IT infrastructures should not lead to giving authoritarian regimes more power to tap into communications and monitor their populations, in particular rights defenders who dare speak out against human rights abuses.

— EuroMed rights

The EU should take into consideration the digital divide and preparedness of partner countries prior to promoting a digitalization agenda. Giving an immediate role to private sector without transparency and monitoring mechanisms and without ensuring safeguards for protection of human rights would endanger outcomes. In this context the EU should establish a regional hub bringing together civil society, academia, private sector and partner countries that undertakes a mapping and an overview of digital solutions in the southern partner countries.

— Lebanese respondent

Environment, Energy and Climate Change Resilience

This section of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey aimed to assess respondents' top priorities on policies to be implemented in order to support the energy transition in southern neighbourhood countries and on measures to address climate and environmental change in the Mediterranean region.

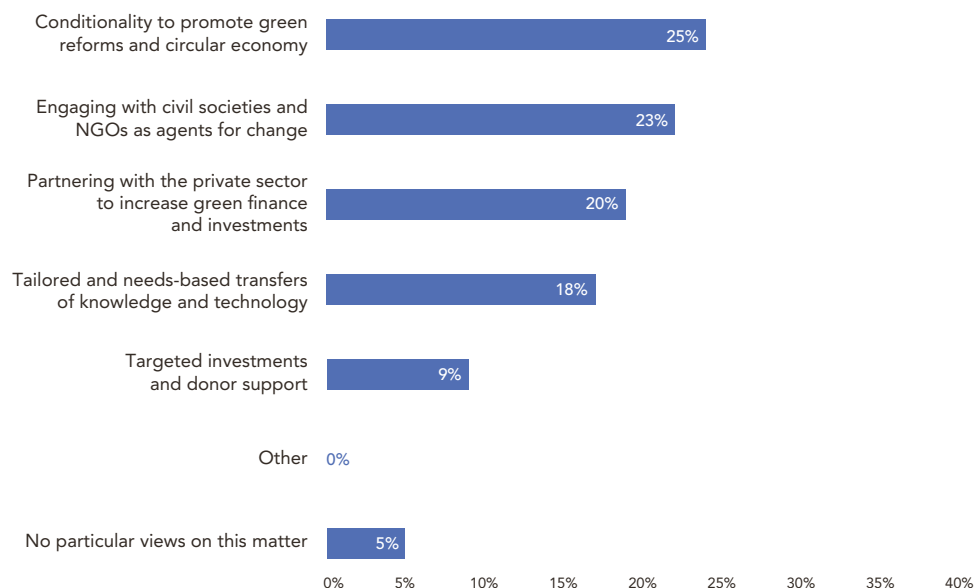
Main findings:

- A significant number of respondents think that conditionality to promote green reforms and circular economy is the most efficient measure that could support the green transition in southern neighbourhood countries.
- When coming to the role of the EU in accompanying the energy transition in southern neighbourhood countries, a majority of respondents believe that the EU should concentrate on smaller-scale and more centralised projects.
- Respondents mostly agree on the need to integrate approaches to promote sustainable water security as the top priority to address climate and environmental change in the Mediterranean region.

Supporting the Green Transition in SEM Countries

Question 17 invited participants to choose and rank their three preferred options out of five different ways to support the green and sustainable transition in the southern neighbourhood countries in terms of efficiency. A quarter of respondents (25%) chose conditionality to promote green reforms and circular economy as their first preference (see graph 29). The second and third options ranked as first preferences were engaging with civil societies and NGOs as agents for change (23%) and partnering with the private sector to increase green finance and investments (20%).

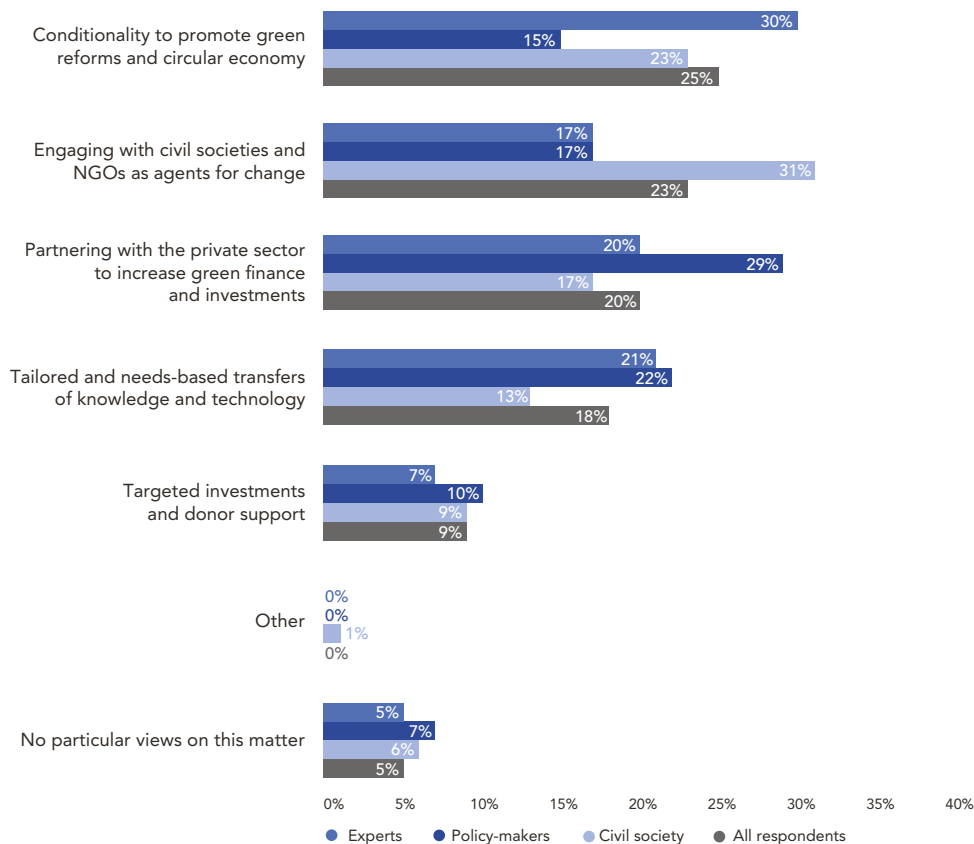
Graph 29: Q.17 Effective ways to support the green and sustainable transition in the southern neighbourhood countries (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

It is worth mentioning that 30% of the experts responding to this question chose conditionality to promote green reforms and circular economy as their top priority, while only 15% of the policy-makers selected the same option as their favourite. Instead, 29% of the policy-makers chose partnering with the private sector to increase green finance and investments as their top priority. Lastly, 31% of respondents from CSOs selected engagement with civil society and NGOs as agents for change as their preferred option (see graph 30).

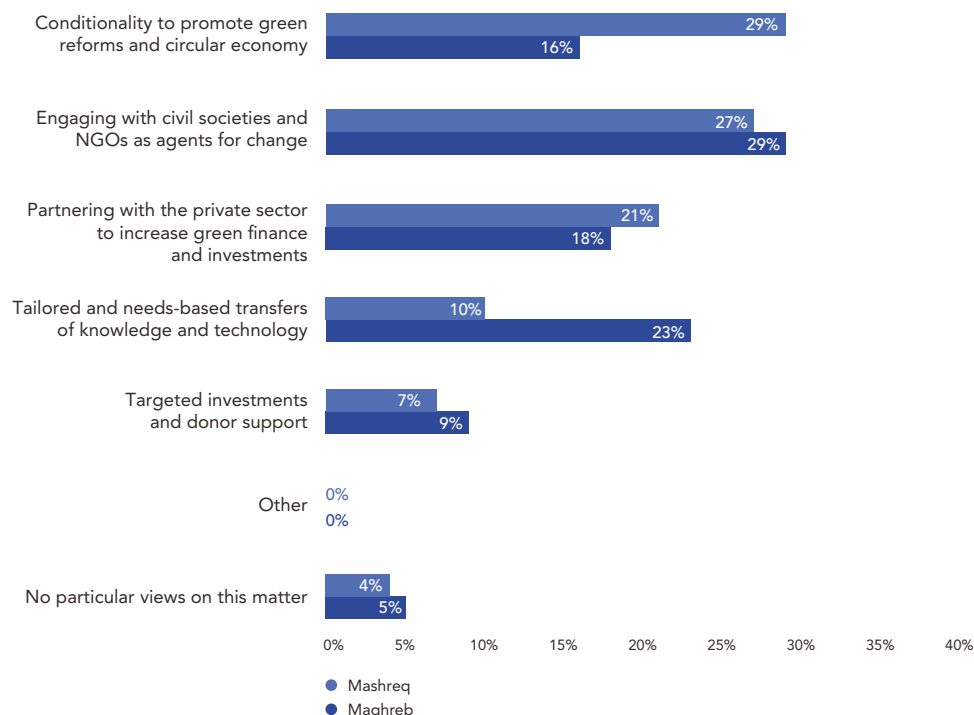
Graph 30: Q.17 Effective ways to support the green and sustainable transition in the southern neighbourhood countries (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

Additionally, it is worth mentioning that almost 29% of respondents from Mashreq selected conditionality to promote green reforms and circular economy as their top priority, while only around 16% of respondents from Maghreb selected the same option as their preferred one (see graph 31).

Graph 31: Q.17 Effective ways to support the green and sustainable transition in the southern neighbourhood countries (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

In open comments to these questions, some respondents expressed the view that the focus on the green transition in the southern neighbourhood was misplaced, while others stressed the importance of communication and awareness-raising:

I think there are more important problems than a green transition in the southern neighbourhood countries: education, health, economic and career opportunities. The focus on the green issue is misplaced.

— Institute for Growth and Fluctuations, University of Hamburg

En matière de transition écologique, la coopération de l'Union européenne avec ses voisins du sud devrait, en outre, porter sur la mise en valeur appropriée des terres arables grâce au savoir-faire technologique des pays d'Europe, la promotion de l'économie bleue qui peut constituer une source de richesse capitale et mettre, au-delà du voisinage sud de l'Union européenne, l'ensemble du continent africain sur la voie du développement durable.

— Institut Royal des Études Stratégiques (IRES)

Conditionality should come after a large awareness campaign with private and public stakeholders on the positive effects of greening the industry and means of implementation (including possible ad-hoc financial support).

— Italian respondent

Other comments focused on the role of civil society in supporting the green transition in the southern neighbourhood:

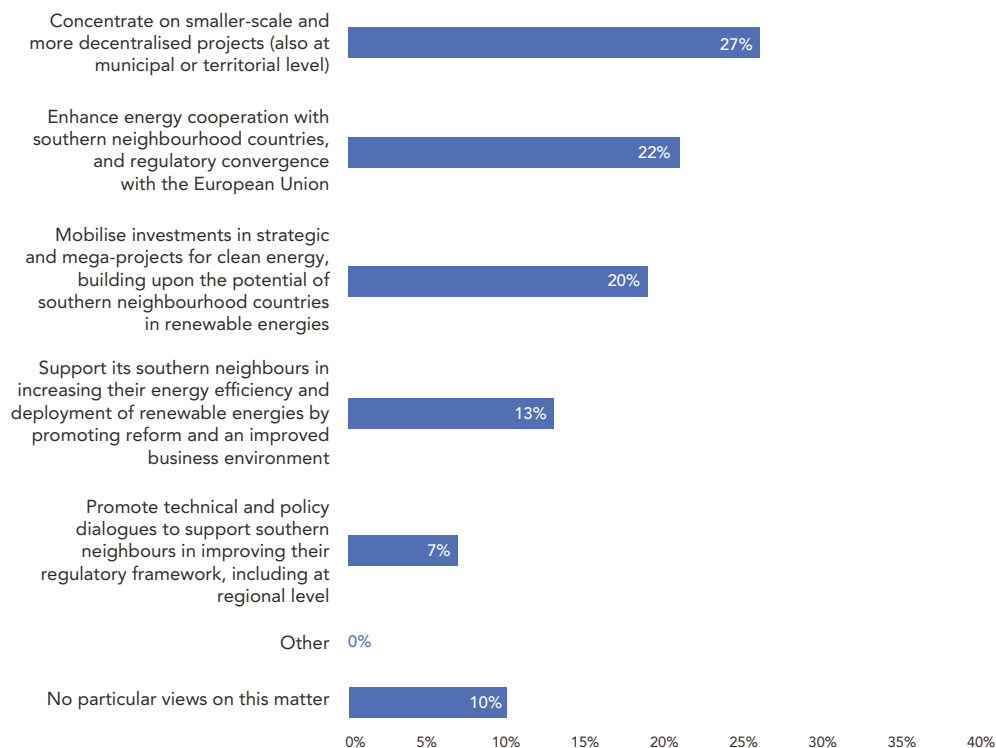
Local actors, including civil society and NGOs, are key partners and watchdogs for the EU to avoid greenwashing and misuse of funds earmarked for the green and sustainable transition.

— EuroMed Rights

The Role of the EU in the Energy Transition of Southern Neighbourhood Countries

Question 18 was designed to identify which actions the EU could consider to accompany the energy transition in southern neighbourhood countries. Participants were asked to choose and rank their three top preferences out of five different types of policies or actions. Slightly more than a quarter of respondents (27%) think that the EU should concentrate on smaller-scale and more decentralised projects (also at municipal and territorial level) as a top priority (see graph 32). 22% of participants, instead, believe that the EU should prioritise the enhancement of energy cooperation of southern neighbourhood countries and of regulatory convergence with the EU. In 20% of cases, respondents chose as their top preference mobilising investments in strategic and mega-projects for clean energy, building upon the potential of southern neighbourhood countries in renewable energies.

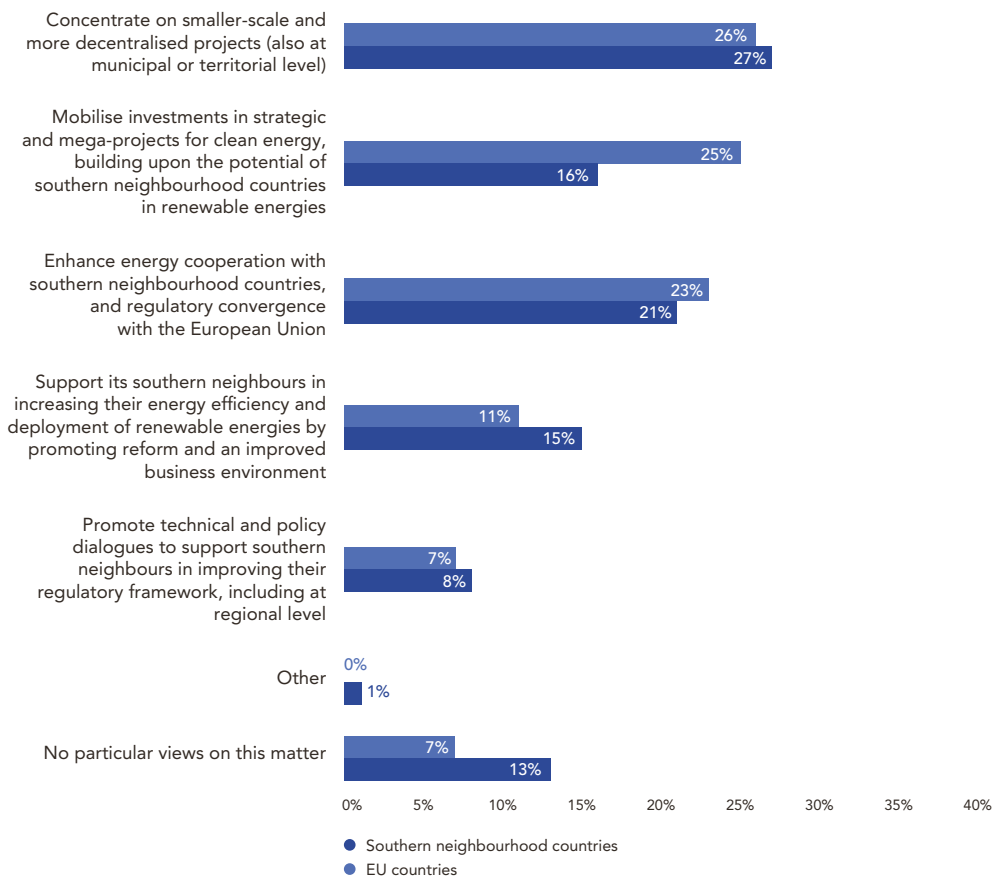
Graph 32: Q.18 What should the European Union do to accompany the energy transition of the southern neighbourhood countries? (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

While more than 25% participants from both EU and southern neighbourhood countries chose the need to concentrate on smaller-scale and more decentralised projects as their first preference in a similar percentage, EU respondents are less prone than southern neighbourhood participants to consider the mobilisation of investments in strategic and mega-projects as their top priority (16% and 25%, respectively) (see graph 33).

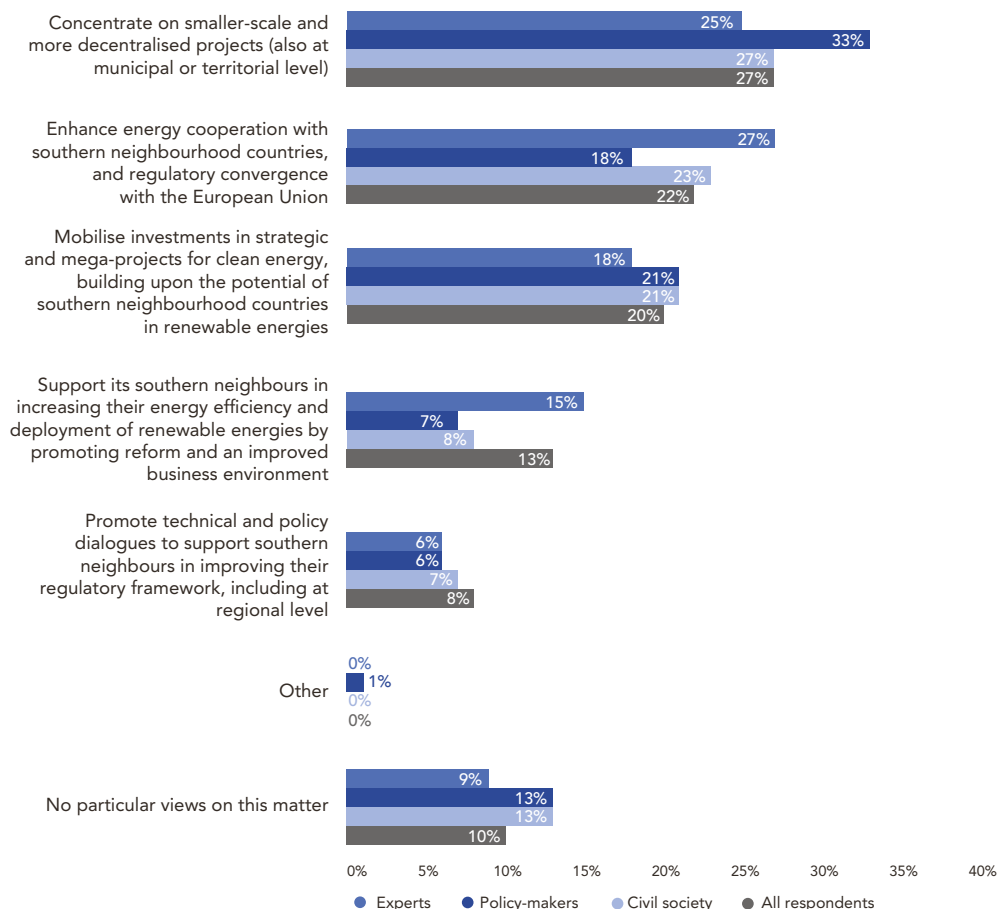
Graph 33: Q.18 What should the European Union do to accompany the energy transition of the southern neighbourhood countries? (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

In addition, policy-makers appear to prioritise concentration on smaller-scale and decentralised projects in larger proportions than experts (33% and 25%, respectively), while experts prefer the option of enhancing energy cooperation with southern neighbourhood countries and regulatory convergence with the EU more than policy-makers (27% and 18%, respectively) (see graph 34).

Graph 34: Q.18 What should the European Union do to accompany the energy transition of the southern neighbourhood countries? (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

In their comments, some respondents further elaborated arguments and proposals on the energy transition:

La transition énergétique des pays du voisinage sud devrait être abordée dans une approche collective, dans un cadre régional (voisinage sud) ou continental (Afrique). La coopération devrait alors porter sur l'accroissement des capacités du voisinage sud en matière de valorisation et d'utilisation rationnelle des ressources énergétiques locales, particulièrement les énergies renouvelables, notamment l'hydro-électrique, le solaire et l'éolien. Le développement des énergies renouvelables ainsi que l'amélioration de l'efficacité énergétique pourraient répondre à la fois aux impératifs de la transition énergétique en Europe et de la sécurité énergétique des pays du voisinage ainsi qu'aux exigences d'adaptation au changement climatique.

— Institut Royal des Études Stratégiques (IRES)

Les examens des feuilles de route des Organisations de la Société Civile (OSC) devraient mieux s'aligner sur les acteurs et les priorités des OSC en matière de climat et de justice sociale, et créer des synergies avec les stratégies par pays en matière de droits de l'homme, le plan d'action pour l'égalité des sexes, la convention d'Aarhus dans chaque contexte national, avec une sensibilisation des parties prenantes concernées. En outre, les délégations de l'UE devraient mener des consultations régulières pour atteindre un large éventail d'acteurs de la société civile issus de la base, des groupes de jeunes et des réseaux régionaux, y compris ceux qui ont des liens avec les défenseurs de la justice climatique dès le début du processus de programmation. Les consultations devraient comprendre des orientations et des informations claires et être transparentes sur les attentes et les résultats; des informations régulières sur les opportunités et le processus devraient être fournies, en s'appuyant sur le processus du site de suivi de la programmation conjointe.

— Majalat project

Other comments formulated alternative ideas:

Making the UfM Energy Cooperation Platform really effective is also a priority.

— Italian respondent

Invest in formal and non-formal education that builds the knowledge and skill base for the energy transition.

— Committee for International Voluntary Service

Promote EU best practice examples via exchange and education programmes.

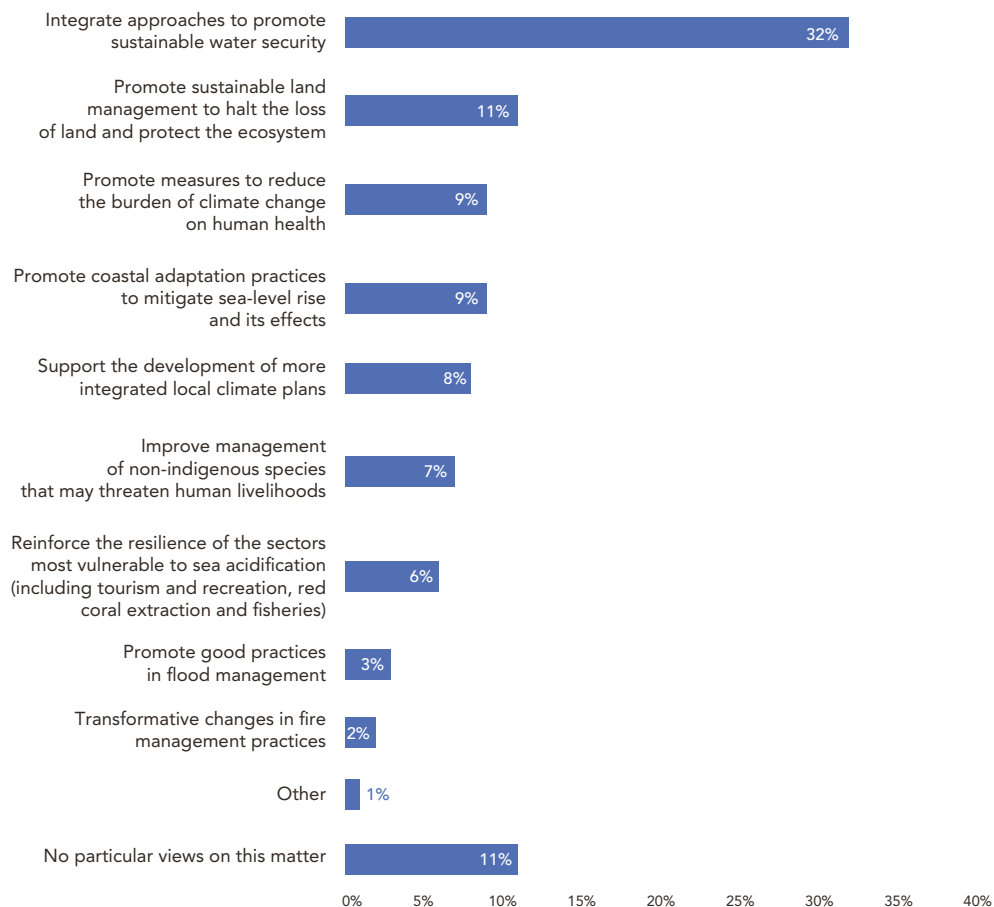
— German respondent

Addressing Climate and Environmental Change in the Mediterranean

Question 19 turned to the measures to be adopted to address climate and environmental change in the Mediterranean region. Respondents were invited to choose and rank their three top priorities out of nine potential actions to target the issue.¹ It is worth noting that a significant majority selected water security as their top priority, while the other eight options were chosen by a much lower number of participants. Specifically, 32% of respondents identified the need to integrate approaches to promote sustainable water security as their first preference, while 11% chose the promotion of sustainable land management to halt the loss of land and protect ecosystem as their top priority. All the other options were selected by less than 10% of the participants (see graph 35).

1. MedECC 2020 Summary for Policymakers. In: Climate and Environmental Change in the Mediterranean Basin – Current Situation and Risks for the Future. First Mediterranean Assessment Report [Cramer W., Guiot J., Marini K (eds.)] Union for the Mediterranean, Plan Bleu, UNEP/MAP, Marseille, France, 34 pp., in press

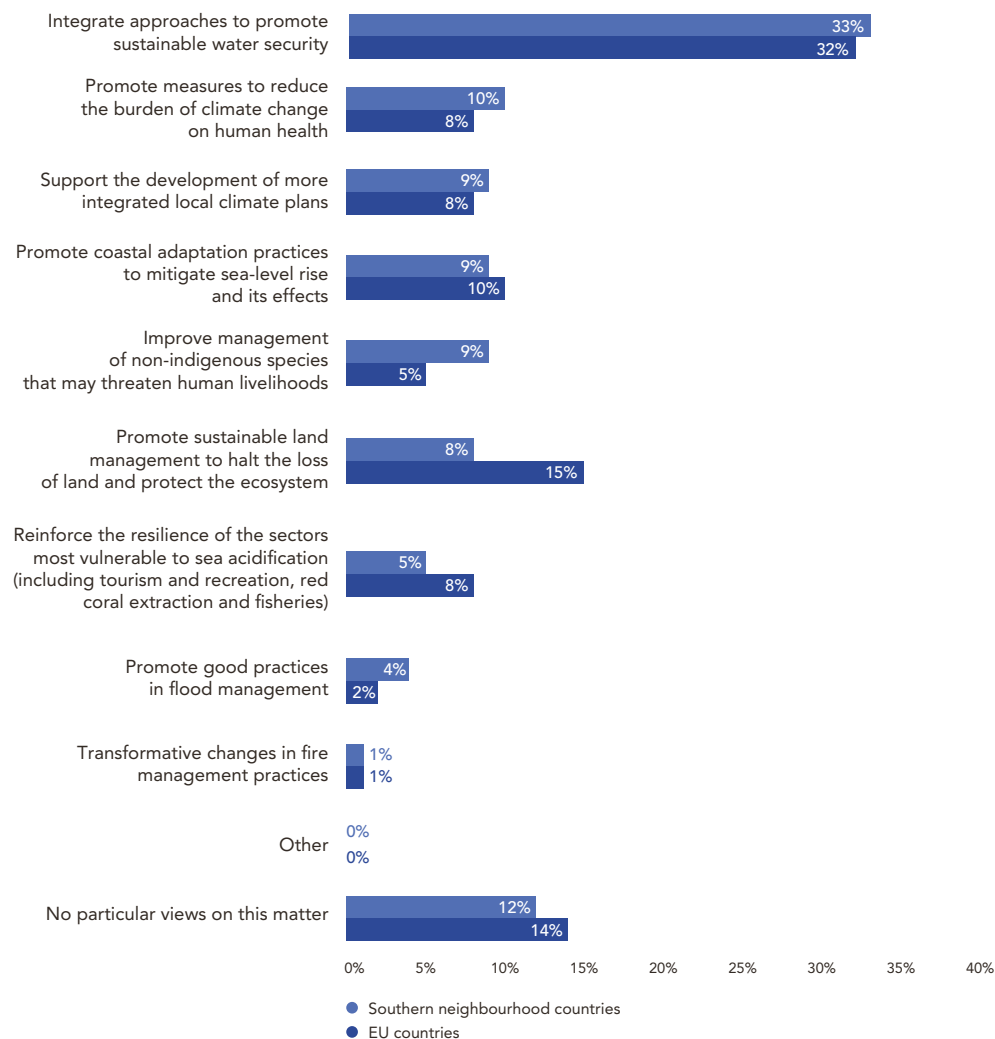
Graph 35: Q.19 Priority measures to face climate and environmental change in the Mediterranean (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

While more than 30% participants from both EU and southern neighbourhood countries chose the need to integrate approaches to promote sustainable water security as their first preference, EU respondents were more inclined than southern neighbourhood participants to consider the promotion of sustainable land management to halt the loss of land and protect the ecosystem as their second priority (15% and 8%, respectively) (see graph 36).

Graph 36: Q.19 Priority measures to face climate and environmental change in the Mediterranean (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

In the following comments, respondents elaborated on their answers on how to address climate change in the region:

La gestion de l'eau est un paramètre inéluctable des stratégies d'adaptation au changement climatique. De fait, la question de l'eau revêt une importance critique dans le contexte sud-méditerranéen et africain, dont les pays sont menacés par le stress hydrique à l'horizon 2040. Il en découle l'impératif de mettre en place une agenda et des plans climatiques locaux intégrés, construits selon une approche Nexus et permettant une coordination poussée entre les politiques sectorielles et les stratégies locales et nationales dédiées à la question. Du fait de son expérience en la matière, le soutien de l'Union européenne pourrait s'avérer crucial pour les pays de son voisinage sud pour l'élaboration et l'harmonisation de tels plans.

— Institut Royal des Études Stratégiques (IRES)

A massive review of the situation within each country is needed. What competences are available in each country and which competences are needed but are missing? Supranational/regional plans need to be put in place to face these issues concertedly with an active participation of civil society.

— Egyptian respondent

All the points listed have their importance on the environment and the impact of climate change. The southern region, within the framework of the international events, promotes its engagement in MEDCOP and the recommendations resulting from the dialogues of the Mediterranean of the future. The issue of plastic waste, which mobilised project stakeholders and policy-makers, is also of a great interest.

— Région Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur

Peace and Security Cooperation

The last block of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey provides insights into how respondents assess the cooperation between the EU and its counterparts in the southern neighbourhood in preventing and countering violent extremism, and into maritime security and counter-terrorism in the Sahel.

It also aims to define the different actions that the EU could take to contribute more effectively to solving conflicts in the region, as well as to boosting its response to emerging cybersecurity and violent extremism threats exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, in cooperation with its southern partners.

Main findings:

- There is a strong consensus around the assertion that efforts by EU member states to unify their positions and speak with one voice is the most appropriate means to contribute more effectively to solving conflicts in the region.
- In general, opinions on issues related to peace and security cooperation by southern neighbourhood respondents are less critical than EU respondents. For instance, the cooperation between the EU and its counterparts in the southern neighbourhood in preventing and countering violent extremism since the 2015 ENP Review was only perceived as positive by southern neighbourhood respondents.
- Similarly, when asked to assess the maritime cooperation in the Mediterranean between the EU and its southern partners, southern neighbourhood respondents showed more tendency to have a positive view of it compared to EU respondents. The latter exhibited a certain level of scepticism about this cooperation, with a significant proportion of EU respondents assessing it as bad or very bad.

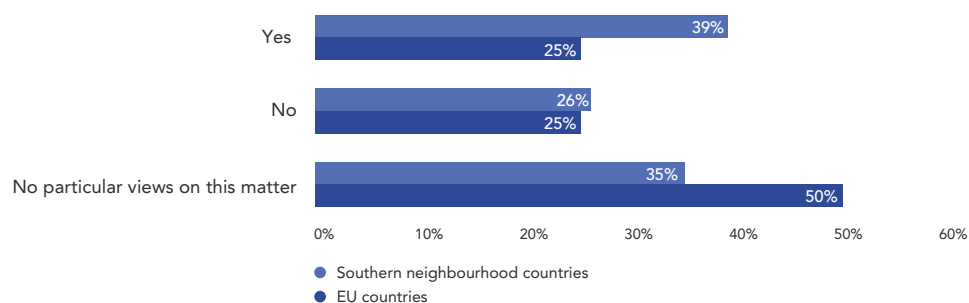
- As far as the cooperation between the EU and its southern partners to counter terrorism in the Sahel is concerned, again, EU respondents were slightly more inclined to have a negative view of this cooperation than southern neighbourhood respondents.
- When it comes to identifying possible actions that the EU could take, in cooperation with its southern partners, to bolster its responses to emerging cybersecurity and violent extremism threats, respondents think the EU's provision of education, promotion of physical and cultural activities, and improvement of employment opportunities for youth in the southern neighbourhood should be the main priority.

The EU's Engagement with its Southern Mediterranean Neighbours in Preventing and Combating Violent Extremism (P/CVE)

Question 20 was designed to capture the opinion of respondents on whether the cooperation between the EU and its counterparts in the southern neighbourhood in preventing and countering violent extremism since the 2015 ENP Review is working.

Exactly half of the respondents from EU countries expressed “no particular views on this matter” and fewer respondents from the southern neighbourhood countries (35%) answered that way. For the rest, respondents from southern neighbourhood countries were less critical of the cooperation with 39% believing it to be working compared to 25% of EU respondents (see graph 37).

Graph 37: Q.20 Is it working the cooperation between the European Union and its counterparts in the southern neighbourhood in PVE and CVE since the review of the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2015?



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

As a follow-up to this question, many of those who do not think that cooperation is working, formulated recommendations by particularly insisting on the importance of addressing the root causes of terrorism and violent extremism, as well as elaborating on the nexus between the fight against violent extremism and the promotion of education, on the one hand, and the fight against violent extremism and good governance, on the other:

The current cooperation between the European Union and the SMCs is based on confronting terrorism without addressing the root causes of terrorism and extremism, which are often weak educational infrastructure, lack of job opportunities, widespread ignorance, government corruption and poverty, and political instability in the region.

— Palestinian respondent

Much more should be done to tackle the root causes of violence and terrorism in the region – in terms of good governance, economic growth and human rights.

— Israeli respondent

Conflict, terrorism, corruption and human rights abuses are complex problems that cannot be treated in isolation.

— British respondent

Violent extremist groups must be confronted with more efforts in support of civic education based on the promotion of democratic values and human rights principles in educational curricula.

— The Egyptian Association for the Advancement of Community Participation in Fayoum

How to Bolster Resilience Against Cyber Threats and Violent Extremism?

Question 21 was open-ended and designed to focus on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on global security, including on cybercrime and violent extremism, and especially on young people spending more time online at home, thus becoming more vulnerable to online recruitment and radicalisation.

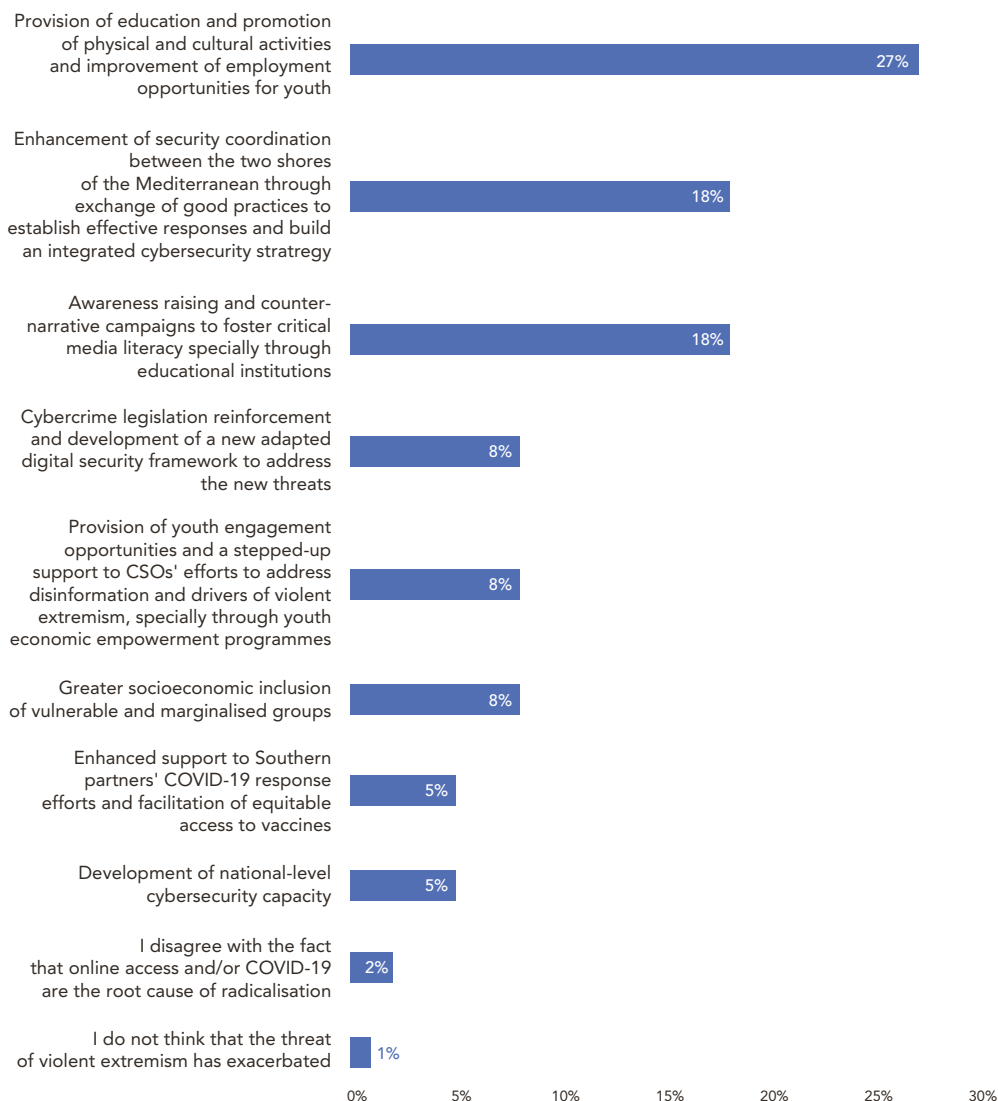
This question aimed to sound out respondents on possible actions that the EU could take, in cooperation with its southern partners, to step up its responses to these emerging security threats.

The ad hoc categories shown (see graph 38) were developed based on the results obtained. The most frequently chosen answer recognises the importance of addressing some of the main drivers considered to be conducive to violent extremism and radicalisation: lack of educational or employment opportunities. Thus, the most recurrent answer is the EU's provision of education, promotion of physical and cultural activities, and improvement of employment opportunities for youths in the southern neighbourhood (27% of all responses).

Security coordination and awareness-raising were the other categories that obtained a significant number of answers (18% each) (see graph 38).

Additionally, a notable aspect of the breakdown of answers is that Maghreb respondents prioritise the enhancement of security coordination between the two shores of the Mediterranean (25%) over the EU's provision of education, promotion of physical and cultural activities, and improvement of employment opportunities for youths in the southern neighbourhood (23%), as well as over awareness-raising campaigns (18%).

Graph 38: Q.21 How should the European Union step up its response to new security threats, in cooperation with its southern partners? (Categories developed from the open-ended answers)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

Here is a sample of comments formulated by respondents who stressed the importance of education and employment of youths in the southern neighbourhood:

Améliorer le niveau de scolarisation et de l'enseignement en intégrant des activités parascolaires utiles surtout sportives et culturelles.

— Moroccan respondent

Invest in global citizenship education, education for health and well-being, education and gender equality, skills for work and life (TVET), teachers, textbook development, right to education, among others.

— Respondent from UNESCO

Sharpen the focus on youth employment and education, so their feelings of despair and injustice can be addressed. Otherwise, extremist groups could take advantage of their vulnerabilities.

— Spanish respondent

Those are chronic problems that are repeatedly aggravated by wider developments. A lot can be done to minimise these threats (like developing more sophisticated and coordinated legislations), but what can really make a difference is creating alternatives that make crime and extremism less rewarding.

— Daraj (independent digital media platform), Lebanon

Open-ended answers referring to security coordination and awareness-raising mentioned the role of media literacy education and technological convergence:

A common strategy to fight organised crime and violent extremism in the digital sphere, in addition to creating a “regional digital centre” to coordinate actions, exchange good practices and foster dialogue.

— Algerian respondent

Perhaps the most important thing that the Covid-19 crisis has taught us is the fact that we are thoroughly interconnected beyond borders and indeed “sitting in the same boat” where such challenges can only be met if we act together. Only a higher degree of cooperation and concerted efforts can help us all survive these challenges. The EU has the prerequisites and basic capabilities to meet such challenges through wider cooperation, including legal and technological convergence.

— Swedish respondent

Media literacy and dialogue programmes are needed in specialised TV channels that are capable of adequately addressing the situation and have the capacity to reach the vulnerable groups.

— Croatian respondent

Resilience to online recruitment and radicalisation involve education and increased awareness. Hence, school curricula should be amended with courses on how to navigate in an increasingly hostile online environment and how to detect and denounce the recruitment attempts.

— Polish respondent

The EU and Conflict Resolution in the Southern Neighbourhood

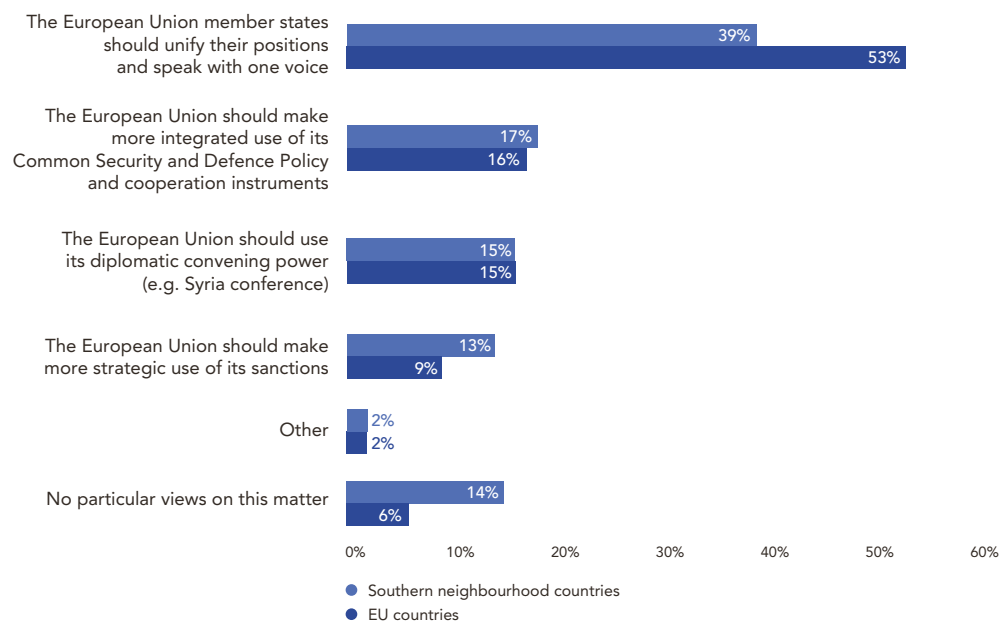
Question 22 invited participants to identify the main options the EU should consider to contribute more effectively to solving conflicts in the region.

Nearly half of respondents (46%) chose the EU member states' efforts to unify their positions and speak with one voice as their most preferred option.

The second most preferred conflict resolution strategy (16%) is for the EU to make more integrated use of its Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and co-operation instruments, followed (15%) by the EU's use of its diplomatic convening power (e.g. Syria conference). Only 11% of respondents identified the fourth and last option as their top priority, which called for the EU's more strategic use of its sanctions.

There were no significant differences in patterns between answers from southern Mediterranean and EU countries, although a higher proportion of respondents from the latter said that their top priority is for EU member states to speak with one voice, as shown in graph 39.

Graph 39: Q.22. Options for the European Union to contribute more effectively to solving conflicts in the region (Ranked as first option)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

In their comments, some participants elaborated on their answers, while others formulated alternative ideas:

The EU should step up its multilateral cooperation with the League of Arab States and the African Union.

— Spanish respondent

The EU should take a stronger stand on human rights violations in the region without excluding any country.

— Jordanian respondent

The EU should not only adopt a coherent strategy and put aside single member's interests, but it should also invest in the development of hard power policies in order to make its voice really heard.

— Czech respondent

Long-term solutions for achieving peace and stability initially require the EU to contribute to a paradigm shift from a state security approach to a focus on human security. Peace-building initiatives should also ensure national ownership, enhanced inclusivity and should be designed and implemented based on the specific needs of the country.

— Lebanese respondent

The real problem lies within the EU: member states often have diverging strategic interests in the region. In this regard the self-proclaimed EU Foreign Policy is pure fiction.

— Italian respondent

La coopération sécuritaire devrait être multidimensionnelle et intensifiée. Pour cela, il faudrait renforcer les capacités des pays vulnérables en matière de prévention et de lutte contre les activités terroristes et assurer un transfert des compétences; adopter une approche socio-économique pour apporter des réponses de fond aux facteurs générateurs de l'insécurité.

— Institut Royal des Études Stratégiques (IRES)

Maritime Security in the Mediterranean and Counter-Terrorism in the Sahel

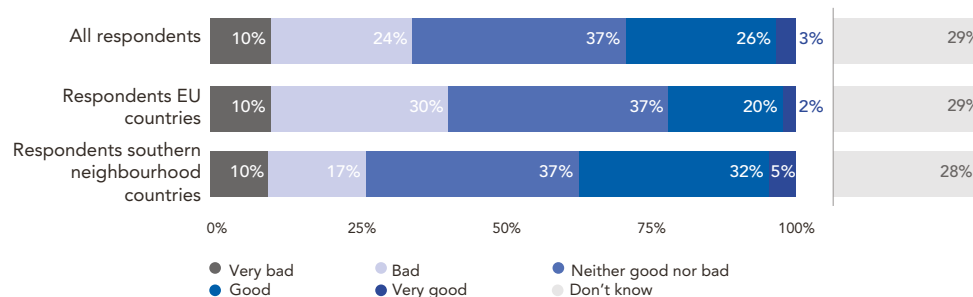
Question 23 focused specifically on key CSDP actions of the EU in the region, namely maritime security in the Mediterranean (EUNAVFOR MED IRINI) and counter-terrorism in the Sahel (EUTM Mali, EUCAP Sahel Mali, EUCAP Sahel Niger).

Respondents were asked to assess the cooperation of the EU with its southern partners in both cases. Reflecting the rather technical nature of these questions, a higher proportion of respondents than in other questions of the Survey chose the “don’t know” answer.

Overall, respondents were rather sceptical, with 34% believing the maritime security cooperation in the Mediterranean to be “bad” or “very bad” in comparison with 29% of respondents deeming it “good” or “very good” (see graph 40). Likewise, 36% of respondents considered the cooperation of the EU with its southern partners on counter-terrorism in the Sahel to be “bad” or “very bad”, while 25% believed it to be “good” or “very good” (see graph 42).

However, there was a greater tendency for southern neighbourhood respondents to have a positive view of the maritime security cooperation (32%) compared to EU respondents (20%). The latter exhibited a certain level of scepticism about it, with 40% believing it to be “bad” or “very” bad (see graph 40).

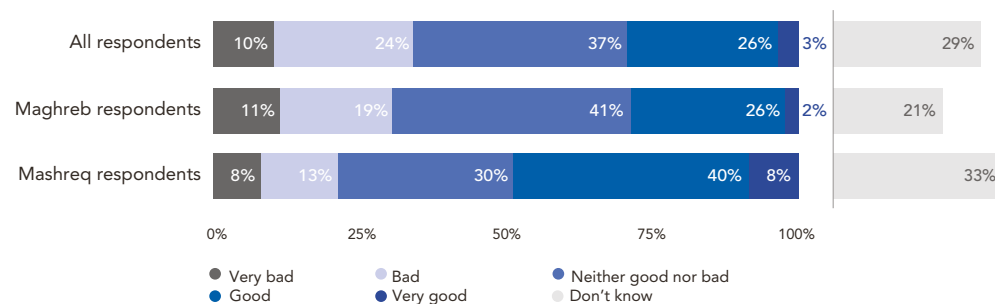
Graph 40: Q.23 How do you assess the cooperation between the European Union with its southern partners on maritime security?



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

There are significant differences between the patterns of answers from Maghreb and Mashreq participants: 48% of Mashreq respondents considered this cooperation to be “good” or “very good” compared to only 28% of Maghreb respondents.

Graph 41: Q.23 How do you assess the cooperation between the European Union with its southern partners on maritime security?



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

In their open comments as a follow-up to the question, some respondents pointed out the importance of prioritising humanitarian or mobility aspects rather than border control:

The priority should be search and rescue (SAR) operations and not border control, especially considering the hosting conditions of migrants in Libya.

— French respondent

Maritime missions should be intended for rescue, and cooperation with riparian states should be designed to govern an orderly migration and not to counter it.

— Un Ponte Per / Medlink

Comments also called on the EU to review its policies of cooperation with Libya on border control:

Il faut encourager les États membres à dépénaliser la solidarité avec les migrants et leur sauvetage, mettre en place un mécanisme de sauvetage européen des migrants en mer Méditerranée. Enfin, des sanctions envers les pays de départs comme la Libye, dont les gardes côtes ne respectent en aucun cas les droits humains, devraient être établies.

— REF - Réseau Euromed France

The EU should first support the most vulnerable, among them the migrants and refugees who are facing inhumane and degrading treatment in Libya.

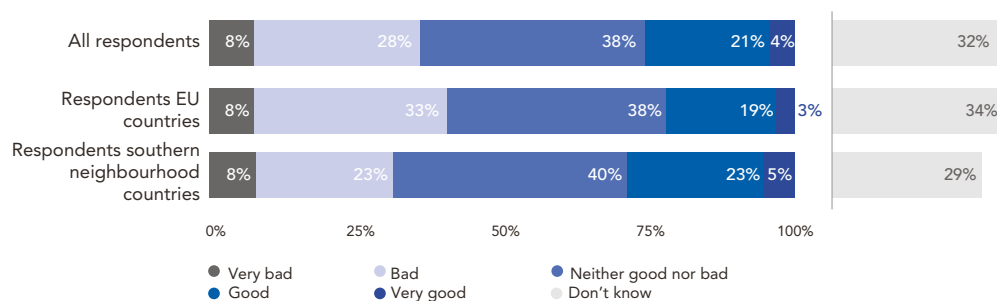
— EuroMed Rights

The EU must stick to its values; stop pushing migrant boats back into the sea, or cooperating with the Libyan Coast Guard, which is involved in grave human rights violations.

— Polish respondent

As for the cooperation between the EU and its southern partners to counter terrorism in the Sahel, again, respondents are more negative than positive about it overall. However, it is worth observing that there are significant variations between EU and southern neighbourhood respondents. The former were more inclined to have a negative view of this cooperation (41% considered it “bad” or “very bad”) than southern neighbourhood respondents (31%), as shown in graph 42.

Graph 42: Q.23 How do you assess the cooperation between the European Union with its southern partners on counter-terrorism in the Sahel?



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

Question 23.4 was a follow-up question as it invited respondents to elaborate on their answer and identify areas for improvement.

Avoir une meilleure connaissance des cultures des nations concernées, développer une approche plus respectueuse des sociétés, soutenir plus résolument le développement socio-économique des populations.

— CERMAC (Centre d'Études et Recherches sur le Monde Arabe Contemporain) UC Louvain

Face à des problèmes régionaux, l'UE oppose des mécanismes nationaux comme EUCAP Niger et EUTM Mali. Il faut penser à la régionalisation de la réponse en régionalisant les missions EUCAP, et en assurant la coordination entre ces missions et d'autres initiatives UE dans la région comme CIVIPOL.

— Moroccan respondent

Adopt a comprehensive approach that takes into account the achievement of sustainable development in these African countries, especially in the poorest areas which represent a fertile environment for recruitment and shelter terrorist groups.

— Egyptian respondent

Expand the political dimension of the missions in the Sahel. What we see are not pure violent insurgencies but classic cases of weak central governance that fail to address the grievances of the peripheries.

— German respondent

Une meilleure coordination entre l'Union européenne, les forces locales de sécurité et l'Union africaine permettrait d'optimiser les résultats des actions menées au Sahel tout en assurant plus grande visibilité aux partenaires africains, garantissant, de ce fait, une appropriation locale de la gestion des conflits.

— Institut Royal des Études Stratégiques (IRES)

Northern countries must be aware that their progress, stability, and security are directly related to the progress, stability and security of their southern neighbours. Greater communication is needed in everything that is being done and what is intended to be done.

— Atalayar (online news magazine) Spain

Réduire la présence militaire de certains pays européens clés, et cela passe par le renforcement qualitatif des moyens de défense des pays du Sahel.

— Algerian respondent