

Building Economic Opportunities and Addressing Irregular Migration

Questions in this block aimed to reflect on critical factors driving irregular migration and to understand respondents' perceptions of the future of irregular flows. Also, it invited respondents to evaluate cooperation between the EU and their countries in tackling drivers of outwards irregular migration.

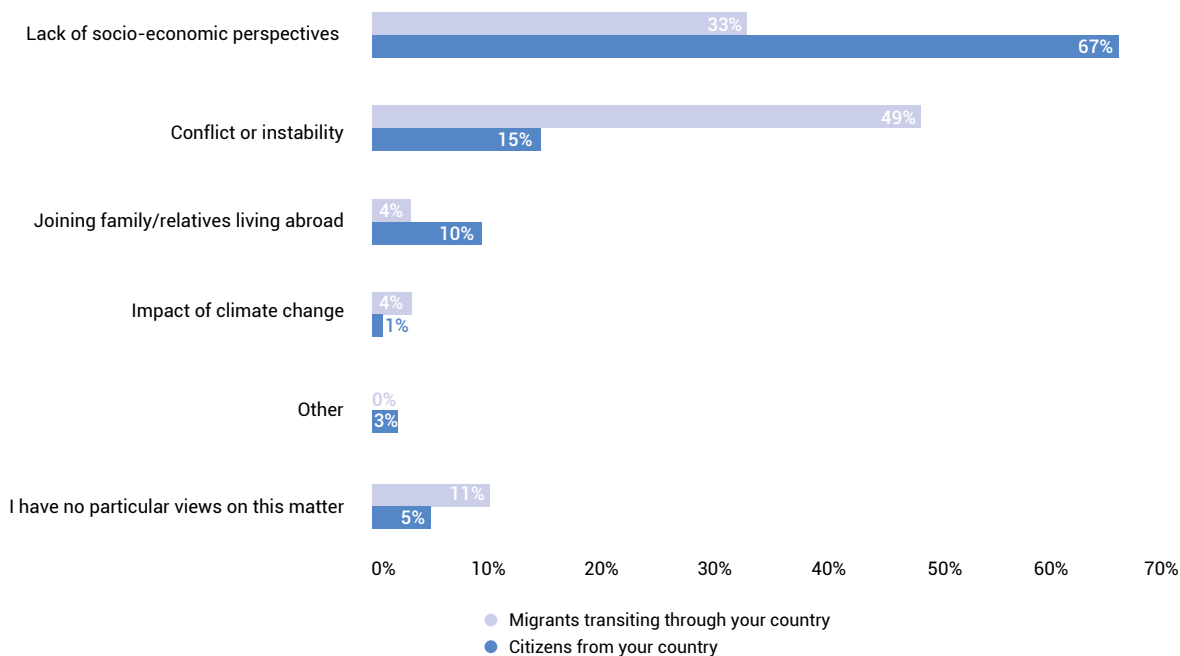
Main findings:

- The lack of socio-economic perspectives is considered the main critical driver of irregular migration for migrants departing from the Southern Mediterranean. For irregular transit migrants however, conflict and instability were underlined as the primary driving factor.
- Overall, respondents considered that irregular migration is likely to continue to increase, although this forecast varies depending on the driving factors considered.
- Most respondents assessed the EU's contribution towards tackling driving factors of outward irregular migration as insufficient, particularly when assisting third country migrants.
- In a regional breakdown of responses, the evaluation of the EU's contribution diverges across the two sub-samples considered in this survey. Mashrek respondents expressed less negative opinions.

Question 8 of the survey invited respondents to assess the main drivers of outwards irregular migration. This was assessed for both migrants transiting through their country and for citizens from their own country in order to grasp the motivations of migrants and the implications for countries which are specific to each type of flow. For the latter, Graph 10 shows that more than two-thirds of respondents (67%) ranked “Lack of socio-economic perspectives” as the primary driving factor, followed by “Conflicts and instability” and “Joining family/residents living abroad.” Conversely, respondents were less inclined to choose “Lack of socio-economic perspective” as the first determinant of irregular migration when considering migrants transiting through their country, prioritizing instead conflict and instability as the main pushing factor. It is worth noting that the impact of climate change was not considered an important driver in either case.

GRAPH 10

Q.8 What is the main driver of outwards irregular migration from your country?

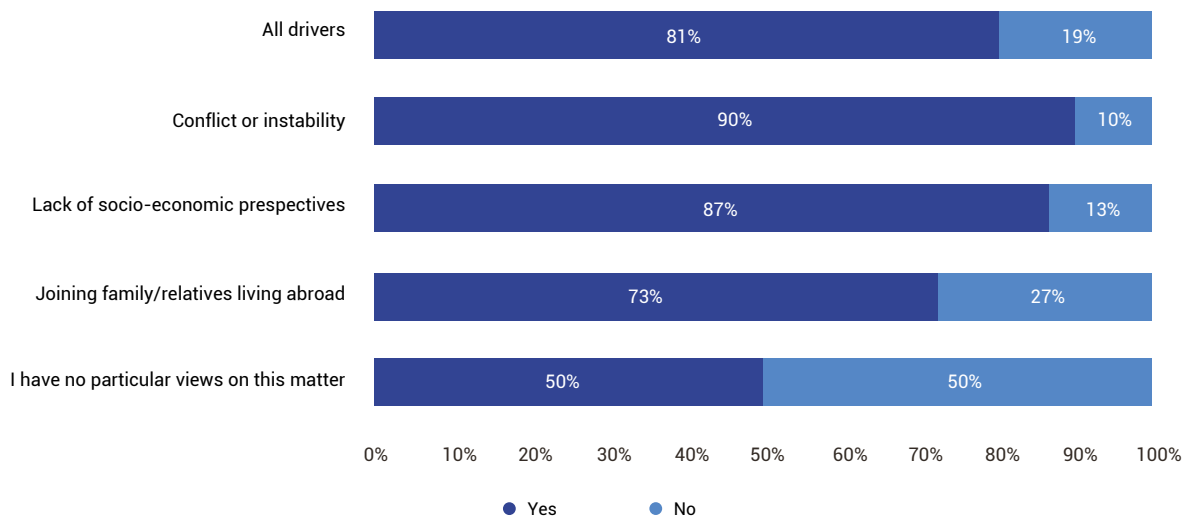


Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EMM5-EuroMeSCO Euromed Survey

In relation to the main drivers identified in the previous question, **Question 9a** and **Question 9b** went on to ask respondents whether they think that irregular migration is likely to continue to increase. In the case of irregular migration from the same country as the respondents' one, 81% of the total views expressed, considering all the driving factors, were affirmative. Additionally, at a more disaggregated level, Graph 11 shows that a significant majority of respondents who chose conflict or instability or lack of socio-economic perspectives agreed that these drivers were likely to continue to increase.

GRAPH 11

Q.9 In relation with the main driver you identified in Q.8, do you think that irregular migration is likely to continue to increase?
Citizens from your country

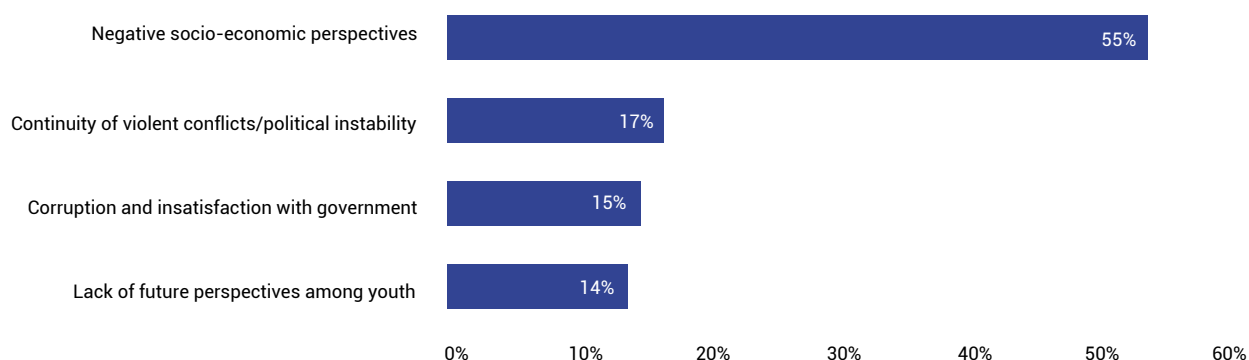


Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EMM5-EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

In this question, respondents were also asked to share their point of view on the possible reasons why irregular migration is likely to continue to increase. This question was open-ended, meaning that respondents formulated their answers without choosing among pre-established categories. Graph 12 was built from the analysis of all responses. It shows that over half of the open-ended answers (55%) suggest that irregular migration of citizens from their country is likely to continue because of the negative socio-economic perspectives. In comparison, 17% of answers hinted at political instability and violent conflicts as the primary cause.

GRAPH 12

Q.9 In relation with the main driver you identified in Q.8, why is irregular migration likely to continue to increase for the citizens from your country? (categories developed from the open-ended answers)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EMM5-EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

In their comments, some respondents provided further details on the reasons why irregular migration is likely to continue to increase. In many instances, they stressed the socio-economic dimension as a determinant factor:

Economic and social conditions are worsening, and young people are looking for opportunities to build a better future with better education and health care. Social disintegration and weakening social links after all these conflicts have encouraged people to leave their countries. Many people have lost hope of an improvement in the political, economic and security situations.

- Libyan respondent -

Poverty has been rising through the past 5 years, and the labour market has been unable to create enough adequate jobs due to a weak institutional environment. In addition, the water conflict with Ethiopia could threaten the livelihood of millions.

- Egyptian respondent -

Hope that things might change is fading and stark inequalities in access to socio-economic opportunities.

- Algerian respondent -

Comments also emphasized other driving factors:

To find freedom, human rights, and security.

- Palestinian respondent -

Due to the lack of an international will to resolve the Syrian conflict.

- Syrian respondent -

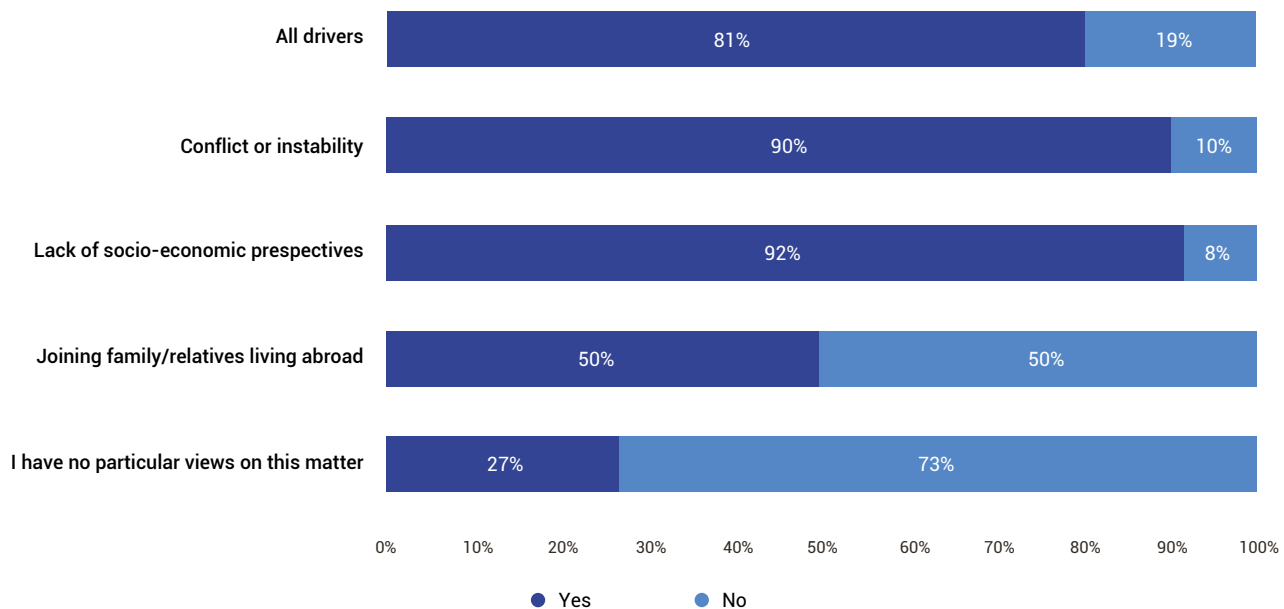
Insufficient development programs targeting the youth, limited capacities and mandate of civil society organisations, corrupted political and economic integration systems.

- Algerian respondent -

Question 9b addressed the primary driver of irregular migration in the case of migrants transiting through the respondent's country. Again, the graph shows a similar pattern to the one presented in Graph 11.

GRAPH 13

Q.9 In relation with the main driver you identified in Q.8, do you think that irregular migration is likely to continue to increase?
Migrants transiting through your country

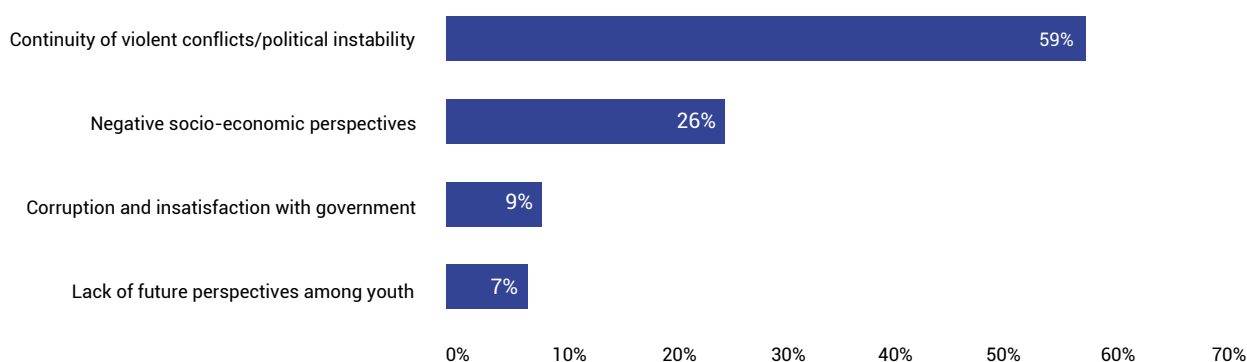


Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EMM5-EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

Furthermore, Question 9b invited respondents to share their thoughts on the possible reasons why irregular migration of migrants transiting through the respondent's country is likely to continue to increase. Over half of their answers (59%) hinted that irregular migration is expected to continue because of political instability and the surge of violent conflicts. In comparison, 26% stressed the importance of negative socio-economic perspectives as the main driver.

GRAPH 14

Q.9 In relation with the main driver you identified in Q.8, why is irregular migration likely to continue to increase for migrants transiting through your country? (categories developed from the open-ended answers)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EMM5-EuroMeSCO Euromed Survey

In their comments, respondents provided some detailed insights on the main drivers of irregular migration they identified in Question 8:

Economic conditions have deteriorated internationally after the pandemic, and the worst impacted were the poorest countries who are also least safe. Thus, the number of people escaping for a better future will increase.

- Libyan respondent -

As long as the socioeconomic situation does not improve, people will always look elsewhere for job opportunities and better standards of life.

- Tunisian respondent -

Conflict and absence of life perspectives.

- Algerian respondent -

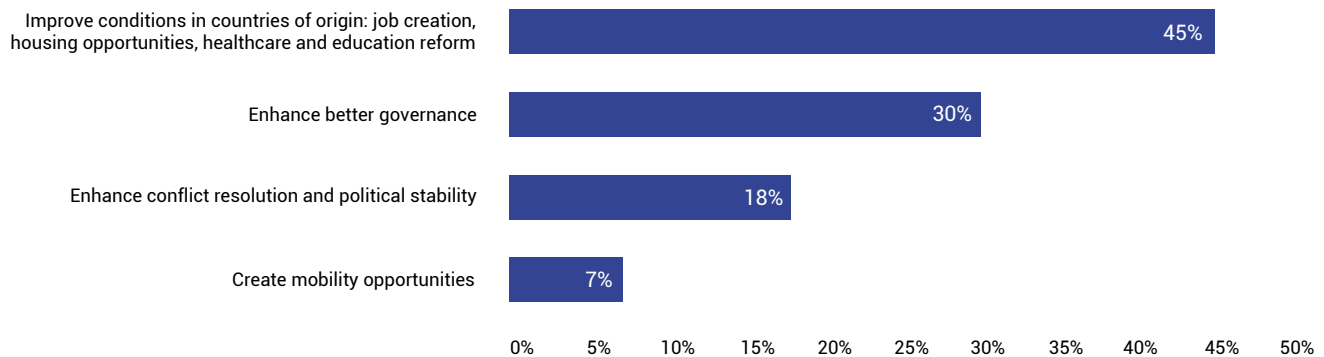
Many countries close to and neighbouring Egypt suffer from conflicts and prospects for stability are still far away.

- Egyptian respondent -

Again, taking into account the drivers of Question 8, the open-ended **Question 10** aimed to grasp respondents' suggestions on which type of state interventions can help reduce irregular migration. Respondents highlighted the need to improve conditions in countries of origin (45%). Job creation, access to housing, education and healthcare reform as well as infrastructure development are the recurring areas for improvement mentioned. Participants call for development strategies and increased investment on behalf of the government as well as international development aid. As second line of action, one third of the answers (30%) suggested that the EU should foster better governance, followed by conflict resolution and the creation of mobility opportunities.

GRAPH 15

Q10. Taking into account the main driver/s you identified in Q8, what should be done to reduce irregular migration?



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EMM5-EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

Some of the open-ended answers elaborated on possible measures and mechanisms which could generate better development outcomes in the region:

It would be necessary to implement proactive policies involving significant European economic investment in the countries of the region, especially those that enjoy political and security stability. Such an approach will probably only bear fruit in the medium term, but it is the ideal strategy for a real development boom in the region, which will inevitably reduce, in the long term, the migratory flows to Europe.

- Algerian respondent -

Direct support can be provided through civil society organisations through integrated programmes that include health, educational, humanitarian, medical and food care, under the supervision of donors. Small productive industrial cities can be established so that they produce their daily needs and sell the surplus in local markets so that they are not high on their host countries.

- Jordanian respondent -

Better management of the visa system and support for local economic development to create well-paid job opportunities.

- Moroccan respondent -

Technical cooperation as in the 70s with Europeans actively participating in development projects and infrastructure building; similar projects could trigger a new development effort and gain back cooperation efficiency. The current soft technical cooperation has left the host country with the same level of development.

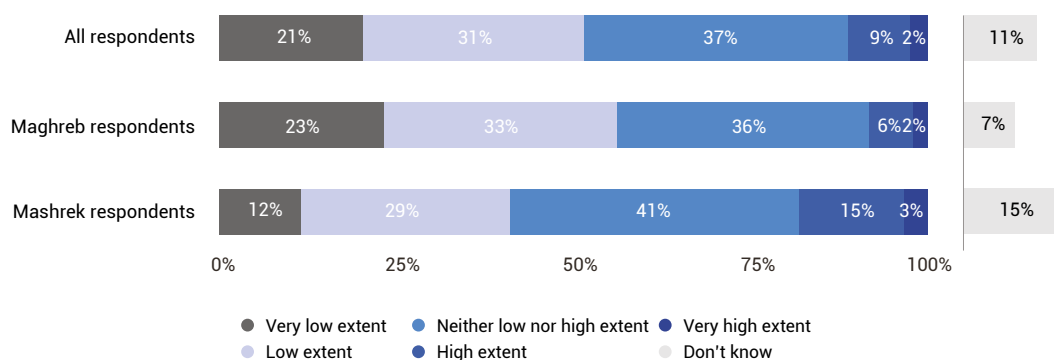
- Tunisian respondent -

Finally, to conclude block 2, **Question 11a** and **Question 11b** asked respondents to assess the EU's contribution in helping their country tackle the drivers they identified in Question 8. The majority of the opinions expressed unfavourable assessments on the issue, regardless of the sub-group considered.

In a regional breakdown of answers, Mashrek respondents gave a less unfavourable opinion concerning the EU's contribution in helping their countries in both cases. On the contrary, Maghreb respondents expressed an unfavourable assessment of the EU help received in this specific domain of international cooperation.

GRAPH 16

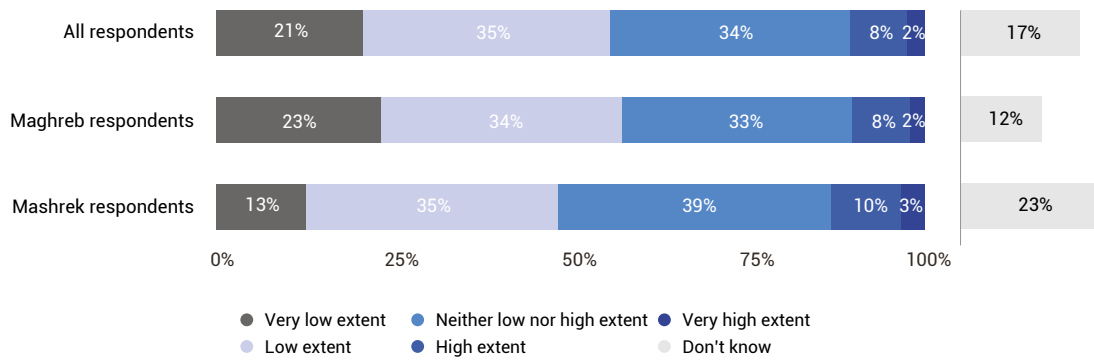
Q.11 To what extent has the EU been successful so far in assisting your country to tackle the driver/s you identified in Q8? Citizens from your country



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EMM5-EuroMeSCO Euromed Survey

GRAPH 17

Q.11 To what extent has the EU been successful so far in assisting your country to tackle the driver/s you identified in Q8?
Migrants transiting through your country



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the EMM5-EuroMeSCo Euromed Survey

The EU has intervened and, in many cases, proposed good projects, however I believe some of the work done was overlapping and many of the projects were looking at short term impact, not to mention bureaucratic challenges (both at the level of the EU organisations and their local partners) and diplomatic consideration (the constraints of working with a government and a political establishment as corrupt as the Lebanese one). All these were factors contributed to diminishing the impact and potential that could have been reached.

- Lebanese respondent -

The EU has been more involved in stabilizing the situation of migrants rather than solving the root causes. The attitude of the EU has been just giving money to keep the migrants from crossing over to the EU.

- Lebanese respondent -