

Ensuring a Just Digital and Green Transition

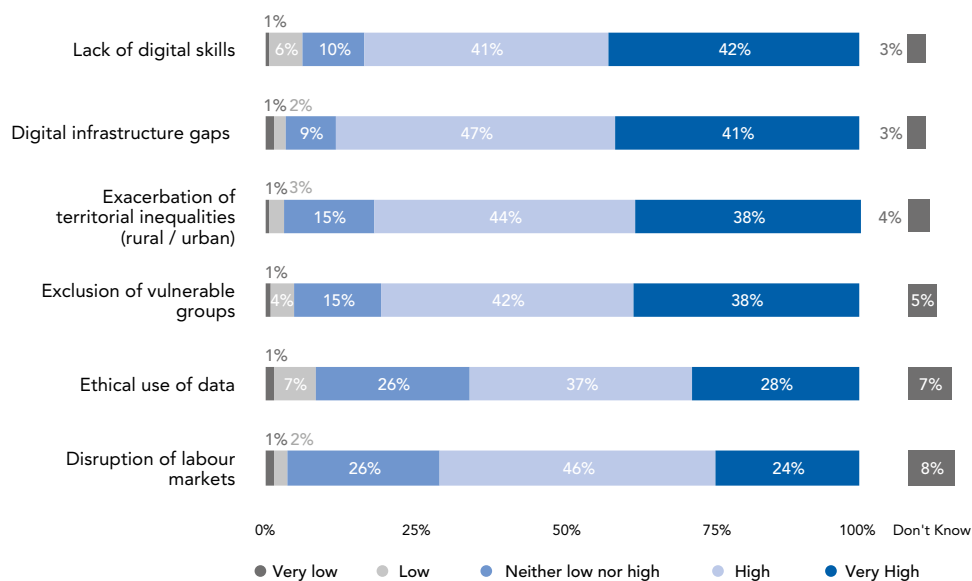
This block of questions looked for respondents' assessment on the challenges for both an inclusive digital and green transition. Questions also invited participants to evaluate EU-SMCs cooperation priorities in these fields. Additionally, it asked respondents to indicate cooperation priorities to increase resilience to social impacts resulting from climate change.

Main findings:

- The lack of digital skills combined with the gaps in digital infrastructure were identified as the main challenges facing the digital transition.
- One third of the respondents considered the access to the internet of the vulnerable population, as the main cooperation priority for an inclusive digital transition.
- When discussing green transition challenges, ensuring that investments respect environmental and social standards, and the lack of green skills were underscored as main concerns.
- Cooperation priorities on inclusive green transition should focus efforts on the enhancement of green skills (through education system reforms, vocational training, and reskilling).
- When it comes to identifying specific actions for EU-SMCs cooperation to foster an inclusive green transition, respondents depicted a combination of three main elements: awareness raising, green partnerships and green technology transfer.
- As far as increasing resilience to climate change impacts is concerned, respondents prioritised protecting food systems by developing agriculture sector resilience and supporting local communities to mitigate scarcity challenges.

Question 17 and 18 were linked, as the first one asked about the challenges related to digital transition and the second asked which cooperation areas should be prioritised. The “Lack of digital skills” combined with the “Gaps in digital infrastructure” obtained the highest percentages (see graph 25). Other challenges underlined were “Territorial inequalities” combined with the “Exclusion of vulnerable groups”.

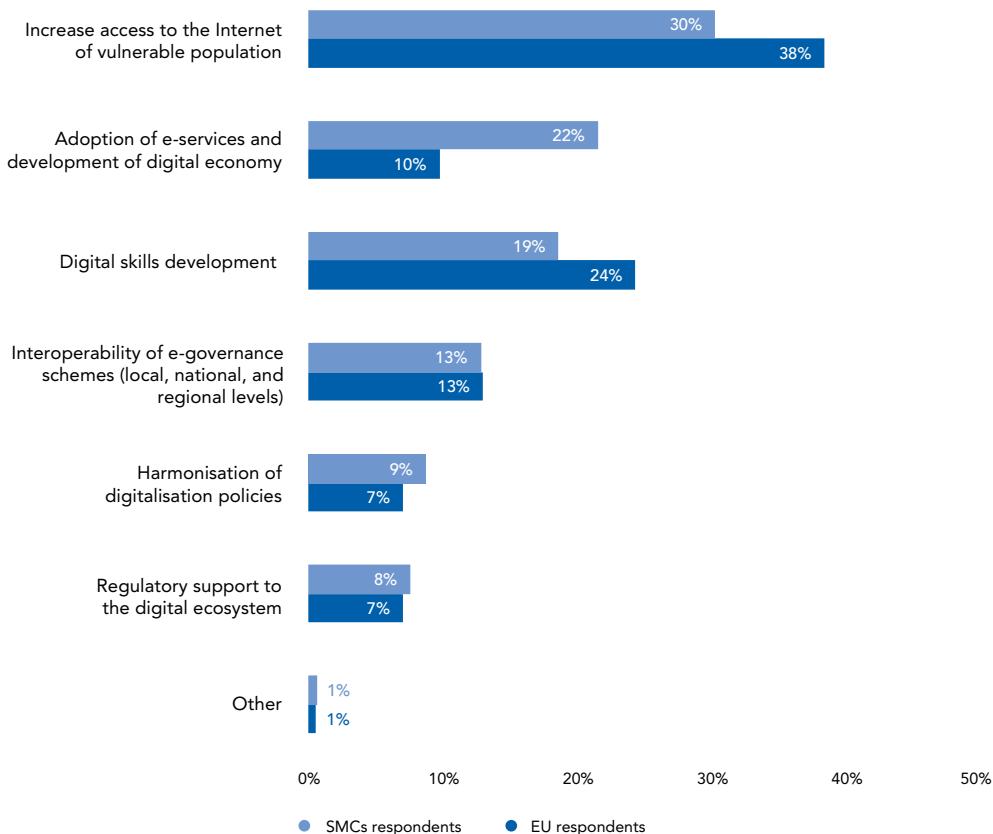
Graph 25: Q.17 To what extent are the following elements a challenge for an inclusive digital transition?



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 13th Euromed Survey

Results on EU-SMCs cooperation priorities considered the access to the internet of vulnerable populations (35% of the answers) as a key issue followed by the need to develop digital skills (22%). As in former questions, cooperation priorities were differently evaluated when looking at the geographical breakdown of answers (see graph 26). SMCs respondents considered that together with the “Access to internet for vulnerable population”, the “Adoption of e-services” and the “Development of digital economy” should also be important priorities for cooperation. As for views from the EU, respondents clearly underlined the importance of the “Internet access for vulnerable groups” while the second priority brought forward was “Digital skills development”.

Graph 26: Q.18 What should be the main EU-SMCs cooperation priority for an inclusive digital transition?



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 13th Euromed Survey

Some of the open comments highlighted the challenges of digital literacy as well as the importance of regulating the governance of digitalization:

Poor digital infrastructure and lack of digital skills are linked with the inequalities between rural and urban areas.

— Romanian respondent

Digital skills are not easy to acquire if the person is poorly educated or barely literate. High priority should be given to education.

— Moroccan respondent

Cooperation provided by the EU in exchange for a guarantee of non-interference by local authorities in the way the public in SMC uses the Internet.

— Italian respondent

Update of the legal system on digitization, including the protection of personal data, the protection of vulnerable groups and children during their use of the Internet, and the fight against fake news.

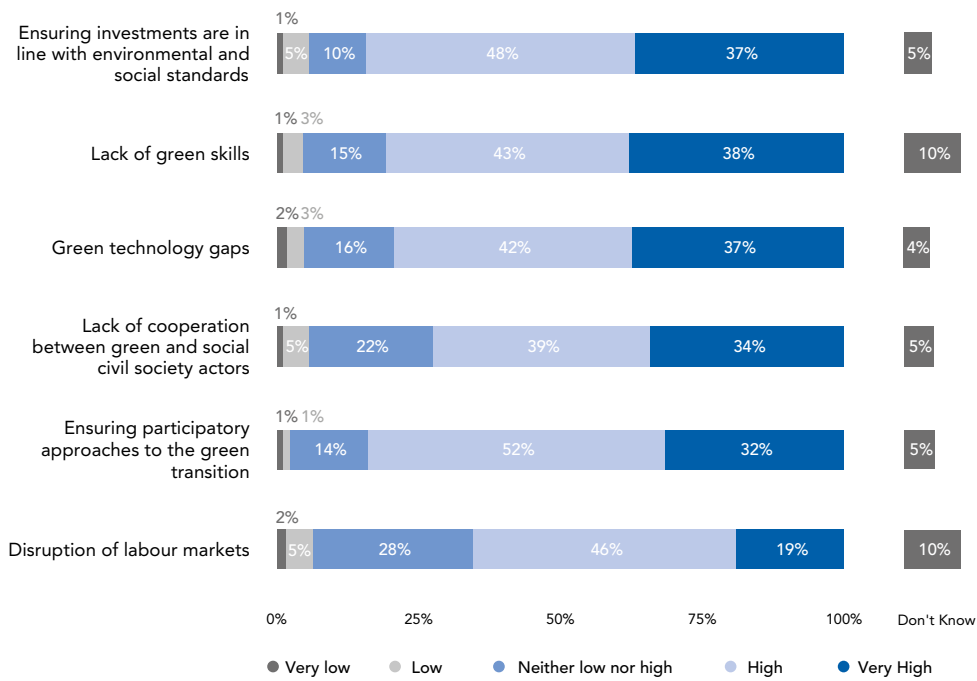
— Algerian respondent

Governance of digitalisation should be put first: data protection, fight against digital surveillance and accessibility of services.

— German respondent

In relation to the green transition, **Question 19** and **20** followed the same design as previous questions on digital transition. First, a question on the main challenges for an inclusive green transition followed by a question on cooperation priorities. Respondents considered the need to “Ensure investments in line with environmental and social standards” as the first challenge followed by the “Lack of green skills” (see graph 27). “Participatory approaches to green transition” came in third place and with similar results to “Green technology gaps”.

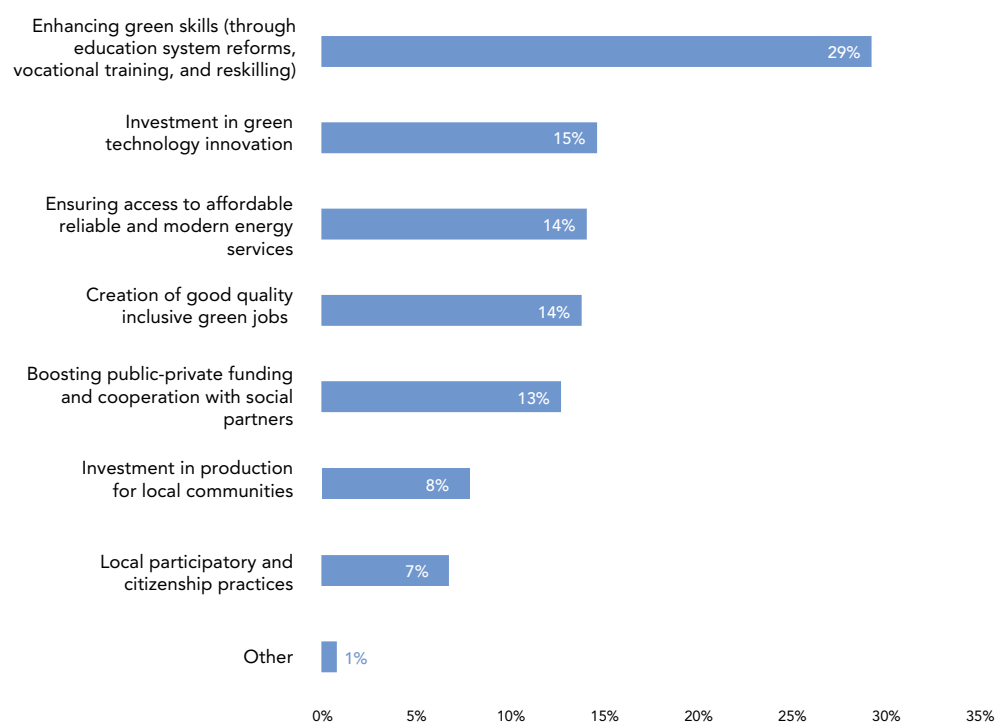
Graph 27: Q.19 To what extent are the following elements a challenge for an inclusive green transition?



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 13th Euromed Survey

Results for cooperation priorities indicated that enhancing green skills (through education system reforms, vocational training, and reskilling) is the most pressing matter with a third of the answers, followed by four options that obtained almost the same percentage: cooperation related to green technology innovation, modern energy services, the creation of inclusive green jobs and public-private funding (see graph 28).

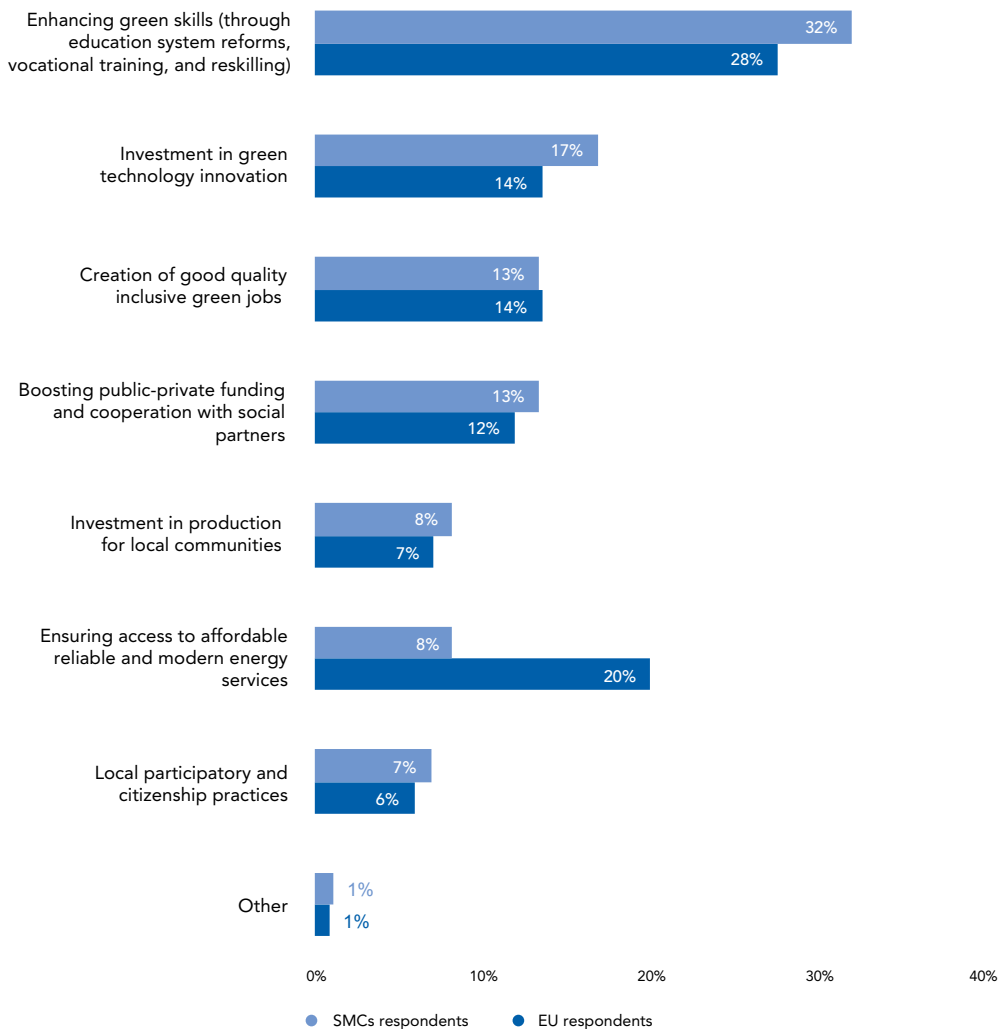
Graph 28: Q.20 What should be the main EU-SMCs cooperation priority for a green and inclusive agenda?



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 13th Euromed Survey

A breakdown by geographical origin allows further insight on this result. “Ensuring access to affordable and modern energy services” showed differentiated results: it was second option for EU respondents and sixth for SMCs participants (graph 29) but further differences were observed when breaking down SMCs respondents between Maghreb and Mashrek answers (see graph 30).

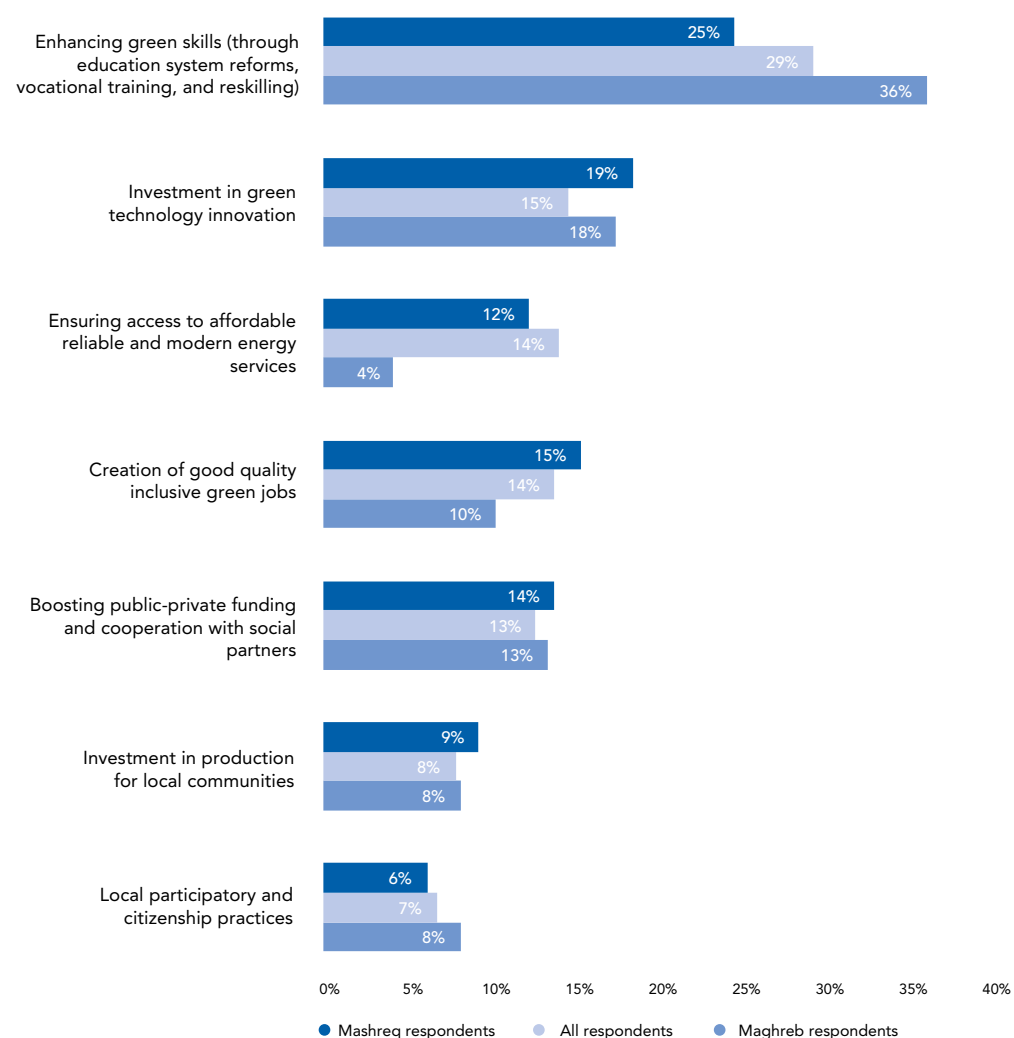
Graph 29: Q.20 What should be the main EU-SMCs cooperation priority for a green and inclusive agenda?



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 13th Euromed Survey

Mashrek respondents depict a similar pattern as previously described, while Maghreb respondents display a more irregular pattern; “Green skills enhancement” was the top choice for a significantly larger percentage compared to Mashrek respondents (see graph 30). It is worth mentioning that the importance perceived for “Ensuring access to affordable and modern energy services” and for “Creation of good quality inclusive green jobs” is higher among Mashrek respondents than Maghreb ones.

Graph 30: Q.20 What should be the main EU-SMCs cooperation priority for a green and inclusive agenda?



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 13th Euromed Survey

Open comments elaborate on the role of green technology transfer and access and on managing the green transition:

All of the above options are relevant, but without proper development of and wide access to effective green technologies it may remain rather unrealistic to expect effective results.

— Swedish respondent

Work on the transfer of green technology in the North-South Cooperation Framework is the first step for a successful, effective and equitable transition.

— Algerian respondent

We should ask the question “could the green economy techniques support the employment or unemployment rates?” and we should have realistic answers especially in SMCs which have the highest indicators of informal sector workers.

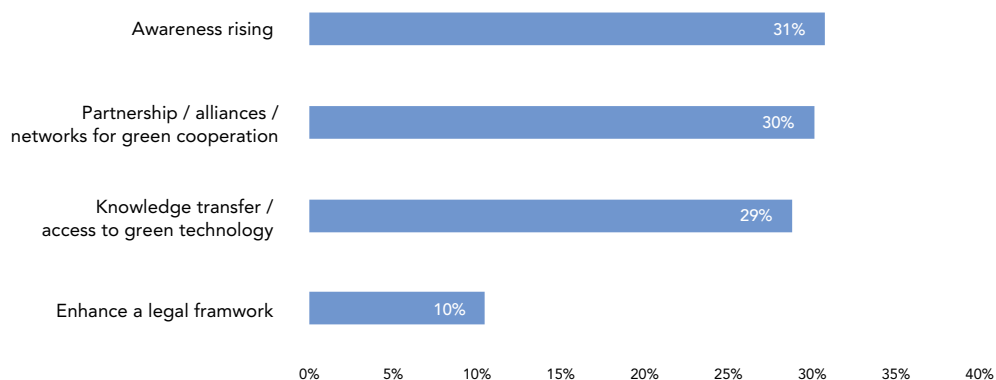
— Danish respondent

We need to create successful models that help to get government and popular support as well as investment to overcome the difficulties in the transition to digitalization and a green economy.

— Libyan respondent

The open-ended **Question 21** aimed to grasp respondents' suggestions on concrete actions for the EU-SMCs cooperation to foster inclusive green transition. Categories developed from open-ended answers showed the importance of measures combining three main elements: awareness, green partnerships and green technology transfer (see graph 31).

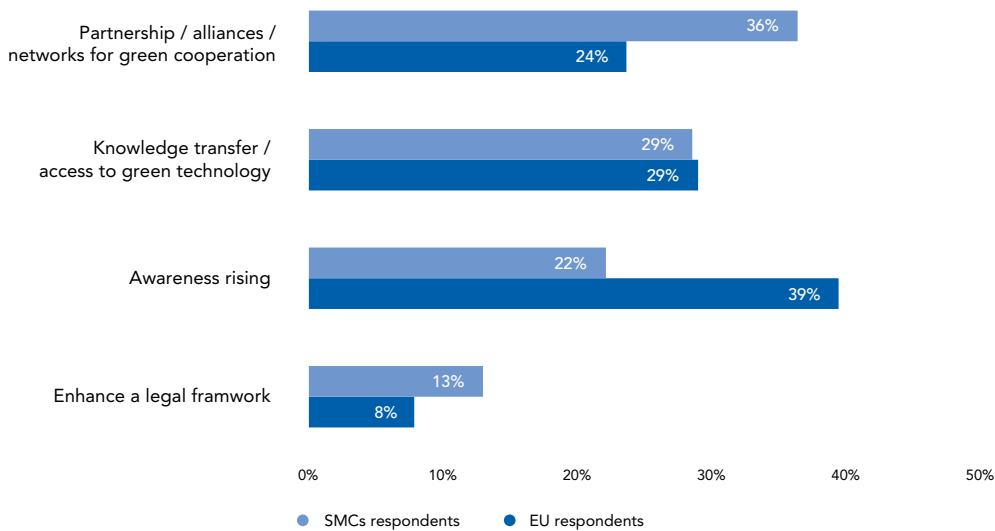
Graph 31: Q.21 What concrete actions should EU-SMCs cooperation prioritise to foster an inclusive green transition? (Categories developed from open-ended answers)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 13th Euromed Survey

A geographical breakdown illustrates a significant difference in the order of priorities. According to survey results, EU respondents considered actions related to awareness raising as a main concern, whereas SMCs respondents prioritised concrete actions (partnerships, alliances, networks) for green cooperation (see graph 31bis).

Graph 31bis: Q.21 What concrete actions should EU-SMCs cooperation prioritise to foster an inclusive green transition? (Categories developed from open-ended answers)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 13th Euromed Survey

Ensuring that the cost of transition for economies of SMCs, especially for vulnerable groups, is minimal, such as labour market disruption or diminished competitiveness.

— Egyptian respondent

Implementing (long-term) legislation and policies related to sustainability and green transition; as any initiatives or practices which are individual or from non-state actors have the risk of being short-lived if the legal and political ecosystem is not encouraging.

— Spanish respondent

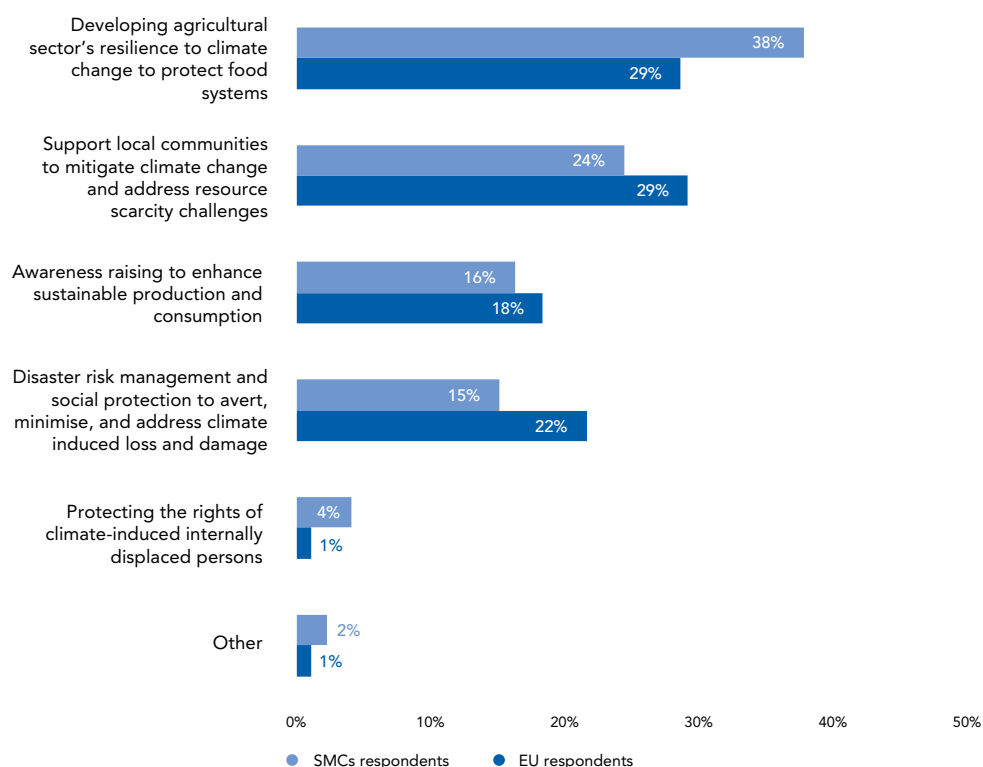
This transition is as important for the EU countries as it is for the SMCs. Delays are being recorded on both coasts of the Mediterranean.

— Algerian respondent

Finally, to close this block, in **Question 22** respondents were asked about cooperation priorities to increase resilience to climate change impacts. Overall results showed that the first choice was “Development of agricultural sector’s resilience to climate change to protect food systems” for nearly a third of respondents (32%). In second place respondents emphasised “Support for local communities to mitigate climate change and address resource scarcity challenges” (27%).

However, there was a greater tendency among SMCs respondents to consider the agricultural sector’s resilience as a priority (38%), while support to local communities obtained a lower percentage compared to the overall results. EU respondents considered both priorities equally important. A third option for EU respondents was “Disaster risk management” with a difference of 7 percentage points compared to SMCs respondents (see graph 32).

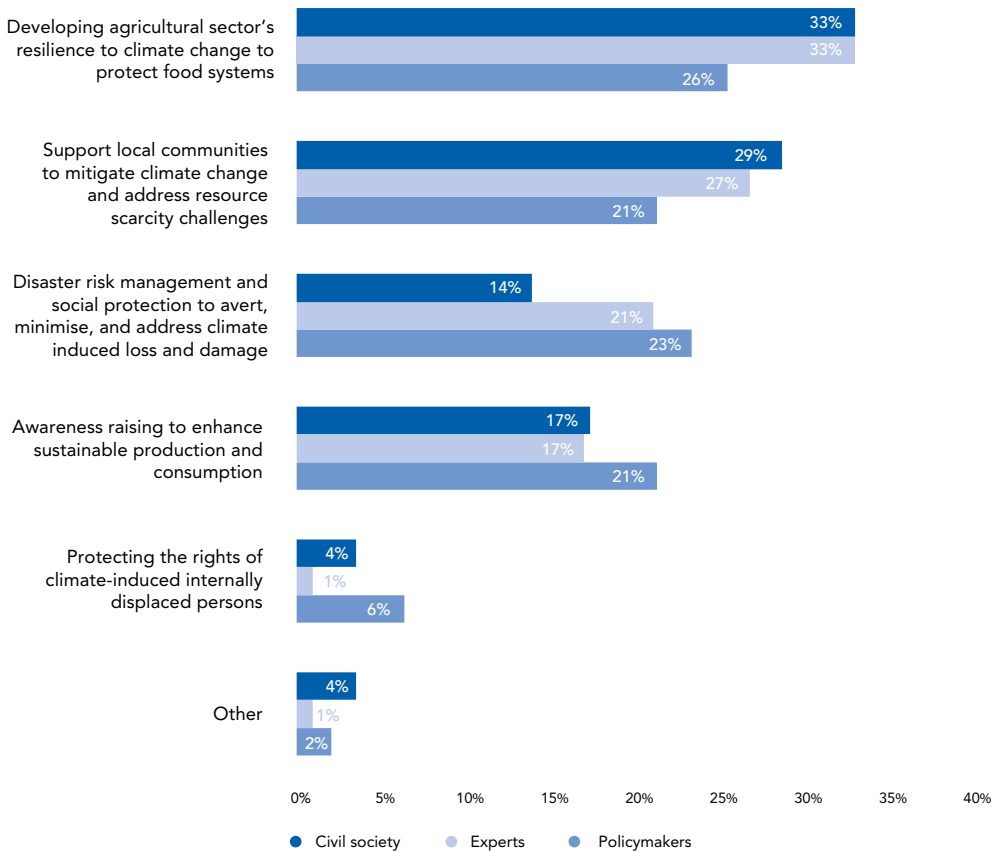
Graph 32: Q.22 What should be the main EU-SMCs cooperation priority to increase resilience to climate change social impacts?



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 13th Euromed Survey

When looking at the breakdown of answers by type of institution (see graph 33), experts followed the survey average, and policymakers displayed differentiated priorities, particularly with regards to "Awareness raising on sustainable production and consumption" and for "Disaster risk management", with a higher percentage. Conversely, civil society respondents gave these areas slightly less importance.

Graph 33: Q.22 What should be the main EU-SMCs cooperation priority to increase resilience to climate change social impacts?



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 13th Euromed Survey

