

# PROSPECTS FOR EURO-MEDITERRANEAN RELATIONS: INCREASING RELEVANCE OF MIGRATION MANAGEMENT AND THE SWITCH OF ATTENTION AWAY FROM THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT

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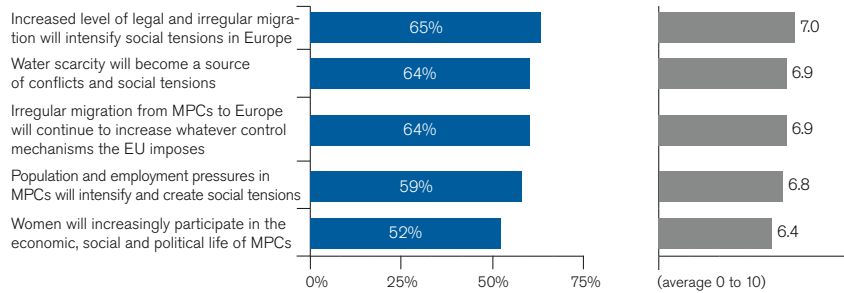
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As in previous years, in question 26 of the third Euromed Survey respondents were asked to rank a number of potential scenarios in the medium to long term in the Mediterranean according to probability. For comparative purposes, most of the hypotheses listed were taken from past Surveys – “*regime change becoming the rule in the Mediterranean*” being the only new proposed outlook out of eleven. This article will present and discuss the most likely scenarios in the region in the coming years, with a particular emphasis on migration and on the Arab-Israeli conflict, which are the issues that have experienced the most remarkable variation in the ranking of probabilities over time.

When comparing the probabilities attributed by respondents to the various scenarios since the first Euromed Survey in 2009 (see graphs 1, 2 and 3), at least two general observations can be made. First of all, the top 5 scenarios remain, with some exceptions, more or less the same throughout the three-year period. Indeed, migration, water scarcity and population and employment pressures continue to be regarded by respondents as issues of great concern, even if their relative weight has varied somewhat over time. Secondly, the Arab-Israeli conflict and its negative impact on the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, which used to be the top scenario in terms of probabilities in 2009, has significantly lost its relevance over time, to the point that in the Euromed Survey 2011 it does not even rank amongst the top 5 – coming only sixth in the ranking of probabilities. A tentative hypothesis to be made here in order to account for such a dramatic drop is that, while the Arab-Israeli conflict will remain an ever present handicap for Euromed relations, it is no longer perceived as a particularly pressing matter, having loomed as it has over the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership – and now over the Union for the Mediterranean – since the very beginning. Yet these preliminary conclusions should be carefully nuanced, as leaving aside their relative position in the ranking of probabilities, when comparing their actual average grades (see the rightmost side of the graphs displaying the average probability grade attributed to each of the proposed scenarios), some of these divergences appear as less clear-cut and conclusive.

**Graph 1: Mid- to long-term hypotheses in the Mediterranean 2011**

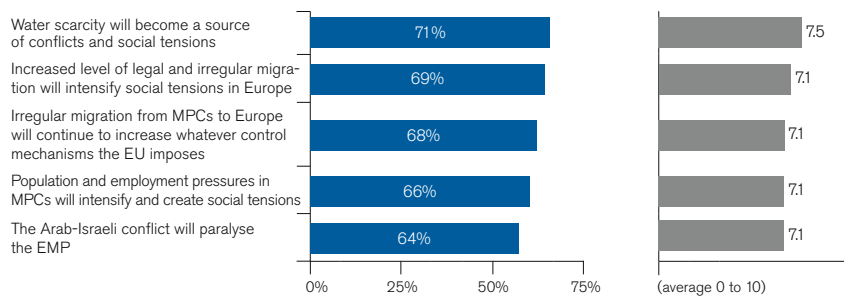
(% of respondents giving a 7 or a higher value to the probability of the following scenarios)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 3rd Euromed Survey

**Graph 2: Mid- to long-term hypotheses in the Mediterranean 2010**

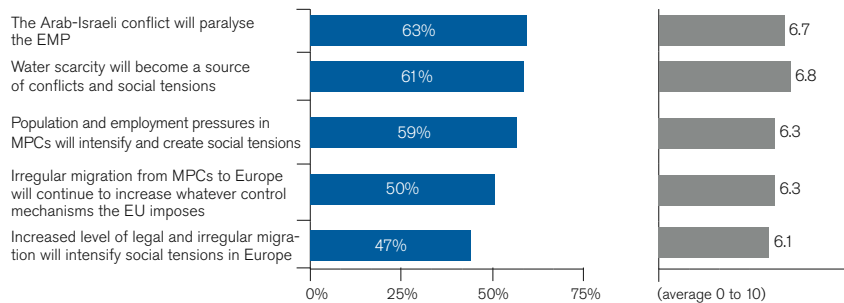
(% of respondents giving a 7 or a higher value to the probability of the following scenarios)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 3rd Euromed Survey

**Graph 3: Mid- to long-term hypotheses in the Mediterranean 2009**

(% of respondents giving a 7 or a higher value to the probability of the following scenarios)



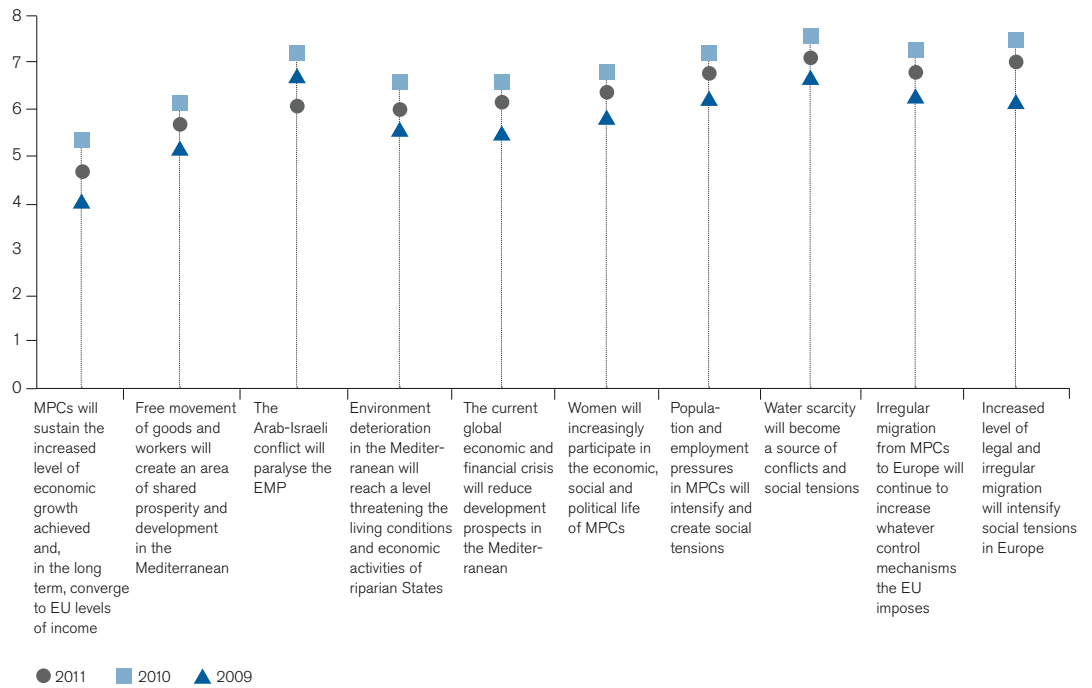
Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 3rd Euromed Survey

For instance, while ranking first as most probable scenario in 2009, the Arab-Israeli conflict as an inhibiting factor for the EMP received an average probability grade of 6.7 on a scale from 0 to 10 – where 0 stood for “no probability” and 10 for “very high probability” (see graph 3). In contrast, this same scenario received a higher average grade of 7.1 (see graph 2), while it only came fifth in the ranking of probabilities. The same is true for the migration scenarios. Despite receiving an average grade of 7.3 in 2010, the scenario of migration as a source of increasing tensions in Europe came only second in the ranking, while in 2011 it emerges as the most likely scenario with a lower average probability grade (see graph 1). A tentative explanation here could be that in 2010 there was an overall higher sense of urgency in all the suggested scenarios compared to the other two Surveys, possibly due to the prevailing sense of unease prior to the Arab Spring. This can be seen in graph 4, which shows that in 2010 all scenarios

were attributed a higher probability grade than in 2011 and in 2009. Moreover, it is also worth noting that the sense of urgency has seen an increase in all scenarios since the first Euromed Survey in 2009 except for the Arab-Israeli conflict, as mentioned before. All in all, these results tell us that we should interpret the rankings with due care and not come to overly simplified conclusions.

**Graph 4: Mid- to long-term hypotheses in the Mediterranean**

(on a scale from 0-10, where 0 stands for 'no probability' and 10 for 'very high probability')



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 3rd Euromed Survey

### Migration Management, Water Scarcity and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: a Closer Look

One of the elements that stands out in the monitoring of the answers since 2009 is the evolution of the classification of the hypotheses according to the average obtained, in which we see that those related with irregular immigration occupy the first two positions, ahead of water scarcity and the social tensions derived from the dysfunctions of the labour market in MPCs, notably emphasising elements such as the growing role of women in the political and social life of MPCs or the impact of the economic crisis on growth prospects.

**Table 1:**

	2011	2010	2009
Increased level of legal and irregular migration will intensify social tensions and xenophobia in Europe	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>
Irregular migration from originating MPCs to Europe will continue to increase whatever control mechanisms the EU may impose	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Water scarcity will become a source of conflicts and social tensions in the Mediterranean	3 <sup>rd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>
Population and employment pressures in MPCs will intensify and create dramatic social tensions	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Women will increasingly participate in the economic, social and political life of MPCs	5 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>
The current global economic and financial crisis will reduce development prospects in the Mediterranean for a long period	6 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>

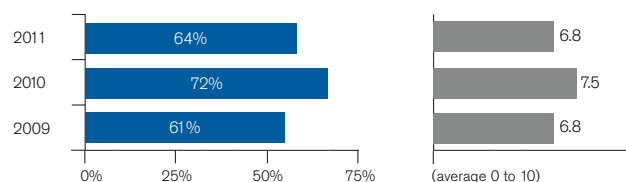
(This classification is based on the averages obtained for each of the elements in question 26 of the Survey).

Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 3rd Euromed Survey

In the 2011 results, although water scarcity does not come first, achieving an average of 6.8, it is necessary to keep in mind its central place and its possible effect on social instability in the Mediterranean in the medium and long term. Insufficient access to water affects both living conditions and food safety as it has an effect on agricultural production. But, above all, we should take into account that “the existence in the area of many international river basins and of common underground basins where different countries compete in a zero-sum game elevates the concrete risk of water conflicts aggravated by climatic change.”<sup>1</sup>

**Graph 5: Mid- to long-term hypotheses in the Mediterranean Water scarcity will become a source of conflicts and social tensions**

(% of respondents giving a 7 or a higher value to the probability of the following scenario)

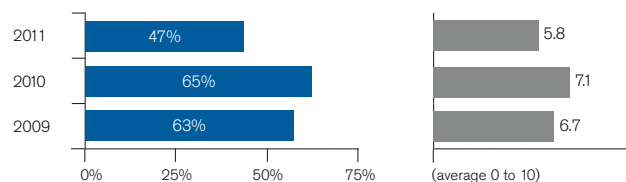


Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 3rd Euromed Survey

It is also worth noting in this classification the decrease in answers attaching a high probability to the hypothesis of the Arab-Israeli conflict having a potential effect on the paralysis of Euro-Mediterranean relations. As previously noted, the dual downward classification, in terms of the average and position with respect to the remaining hypotheses – from being first in 2009 it is ninth in 2011 –, can be explained by the fact that the Arab-Israeli conflict has always been seen as an obstacle in the Euro-Mediterranean relations. Therefore, it is possible to speak of a structural blockage factor. Now that Euro-Mediterranean relations themselves take this blockage for granted, respondents may be focusing on other more circumstantial elements.

**Graph 6: Mid- to long-term hypotheses in the Mediterranean The Arab-Israeli conflict will paralyse the EMP**

(% of respondents giving a 7 or a higher value to the probability of the following scenario)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 3rd Euromed Survey

In relation to the first two hypotheses that in 2011 place migrations at the centre of the prospective debate in the medium and long term, these results can be interpreted in two ways.

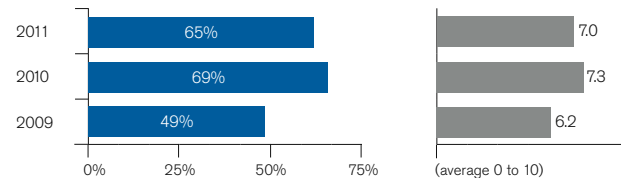
On the one hand, we find in first position the relations between migrations and social tensions and xenophobia, taking us to the debate on integration in Europe and, more specifically, the integration of the around six million immigrants from Mediterranean countries living throughout the EU. The evolution that we can see in the graph could be linked to two elements. The first element concerns the social tensions more related to the labour market and to access to social benefits as seen in the harshening of national legislation in this respect (Italy, France, Spain,

1. Ferragina, Eugenia, “The Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation in the Water Sector: Assessment of Progress and Emerging Perspectives”, *Euromed Survey Report 2010*, IEMed, 2011.

Greece) and the EU itself (Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Union on illegal immigration). The second element would be the rejection of immigrants (xenophobia), highly linked to the growing debate in Europe about inter-religious coexistence and the establishment of a European Islam.

**Graph 7: Mid- to long-term hypotheses in the Mediterranean Increased level of legal and irregular migration will intensify social tensions and xenophobia in Europe**

(% of respondents giving a 7 or a higher value to the probability of the following scenario)

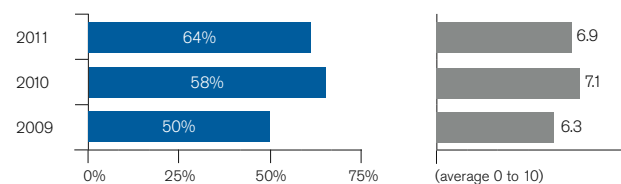


Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 3rd Euromed Survey

On the other hand, the scenario placed in second position refers to a debate on migration flows in the region, more specifically on irregular flows and the growing EU strategy of trying to block the entry of these people. This result could be a reflection of the fact that, in the last few years, the Mediterranean has seen how migration management policies have become a major geopolitical element in the context of international relations in the region. Source and destination countries are developing their respective foreign policies bearing in mind the issues related to migration flows.

**Graph 8: Mid- to long-term hypotheses in the Mediterranean Irregular migration from MPCs to Europe will continue to increase whatever control mechanisms the EU imposes**

(% of respondents giving a 7 or a higher value to the probability of the following scenario)



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 3rd Euromed Survey

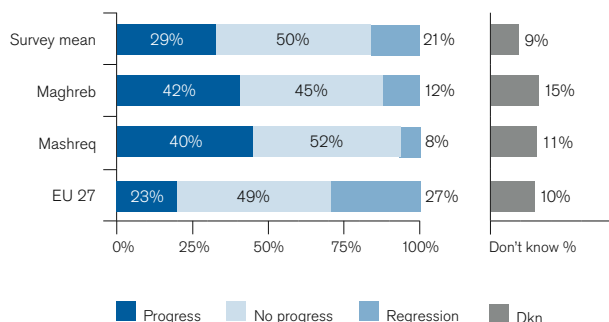
In this context, the security border control and surveillance approach has gradually been established, mainly from the moment that border management became a key element for the internal security of the EU, and is conceived as a solution to the instability of the neighbouring or geographically close countries. Border management places itself at the centre of the foreign dimension of the JHA area and is included in most action plans of the European Neighbourhood Policy (Wolff, 2008).

In this respect, it will be interesting to see how Euro-Mediterranean programmes related to migrations are assessed in the fourth Euromed Survey as they could help to contrast the 2009 results, in which 51% of respondents considered that there had been no progress or a regression in the achievement of the priorities defined in the 2005 Working Programme in the migration field.<sup>2</sup>

2. The summit on the occasion of the 10th anniversary in 2005 prepared a working programme for the next five years that represented a step forward to establish a significant basis for cooperation and management of the current challenges in the region. In this document, migration occupied a central place, as shown by the decision to encourage the creation of a fourth basket related to justice, security, migration and integration. This fourth basket was finally established in the 9th Euro-Mediterranean Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs held in Lisbon (5th-6th November 2007) under the label "Migration, Social Integration, Justice and Security".

**Graph 9: Euromed 2009**

Among the priorities defined in 2005 Five Year Programme, do you consider progress was achieved or there was no progress or even regression in: Reduce significantly the level of illegal migration and trafficking in human beings

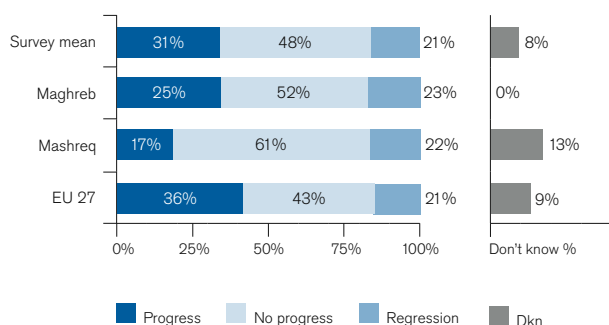


Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 3rd Euromed Survey

Specifically, among the priorities in which there had been less progress was the objective of significantly reducing the level of irregular immigration and the trafficking of people, in which 71% of respondents negatively assessed the policies or programmes in this field (“no progress” and “regression”). Southern countries made a less negative assessment (57% in the Maghreb and 60% in the Mashreq). It is interesting to note how, with respect to the fight against irregular immigration, in the north the view is more critical – only 23% of the EU-27 respondents considered that there had been progress in this field –, while in southern countries the assessment almost doubled this view, reaching 42% in the Maghreb and 40% in the Mashreq. Finally, another poorly regarded field was the promotion of opportunities to emigrate legally, with a negative assessment of 70% (75% in the Maghreb and 83% in the Mashreq, compared to 64% in EU countries).

**Graph 10: Euromed 2009**

Among the priorities defined in 2005 Five Year Programme, do you consider progress was achieved or there was no progress or even regression in: Promote legal migration opportunities



Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 3rd Euromed Survey

We can conclude, in the light of the results analysed, that Euro-Mediterranean regional objectives such as the reduction of irregular immigration or the promotion of opportunities so that there is a legal way to emigrate, notably involving border management, have negative assessments of their evolution, indicating the need to redouble efforts to be able to advance towards a framework that provides regional coherence to migration management.