EU CHALLENGES AND INSTRUMENTS

GENERAL

The second block of the Survey aimed to capture respondents' assessments on both EU instruments and challenges. Three questions relate to the role of the EU and its member states. Questions 11 to 16 were directed specifically to those respondents with an advanced knowledge of the EU policy framework on migration and refugee management. 234 respondents answered these questions that focus on policy initiatives or frameworks such as the EU Relocation System and the European Agenda on Migrations.

Main findings

• Overall, a majority of the Survey's respondents consider that the management of the migration and refugee situation since 2014 by the European Union has been very negative or negative. Respondents from the EU-28 countries are more critical of the EU response than respondents from Southern and Southeast Mediterranean countries.
• More specifically, respondents, and in particular respondents from Southern and Southeast Mediterranean countries, consider that the poor management of the migration and refugee situation since 2014 is mainly due to unilateral decisions taken by EU member states, rather than by EU institutions.
• Respondents consider that EU member states should better share and redistribute the "burden" among themselves.
• Improving coordination between the European Commission and the member states is pivotal for the success of the European Commission's relocation plan (the Temporary EU Relocation System).
• The highest priority of the European Agenda on Migration should be to develop a new policy on legal migration. The results of the Survey reveal consistent support for better exploiting legal migration opportunities, in particular enhancing the mobility of students, researchers and businesspeople. The border management pillar of the European Agenda on Migration comes last in the priority scale of respondents.
• Addressing the root causes of irregular migration in origin countries is considered as the most adequate response to reduce the incentives for irregular migration in the Euro-Mediterranean region.
• Better implementing the EU Visa Code to include humanitarian visas enabling third-country nationals to apply in situ for entry to EU territory on humanitarian grounds, activating and further developing the EU Temporary Protection Directive from 2001, establishing an "exceptional scheme to offer refugees immediate protection" are identified – in this order – as the main elements to improve asylum procedures.
• Respondents consider that achieving greater convergence among member states in the EU asylum system is the most important line of action among the strands proposed by the European Commission to reform the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). More Southern and Southeast Mediterranean respondents than EU-28 respondents considered that reinforcing the mandate of the European Asylum Support Office was a priority.

The first question of this block aimed to capture respondents' assessment on the management of the migration and refugee situation since 2014 by the European Union.

In general terms, most of the Survey's respondents consider that the management of the migration and refugee situation since 2014 by the European Union has been very negative or negative. Less than a fourth of the respondents consider that EU management has been positive or very positive (see Graph 13). Respondents from EU-28 countries are more critical of EU management than respondents from MPC countries. Experts have the most critical view on EU management while policy-makers are the least critical in relative terms (see also Graph 13).

Graph 13: How do you assess the European Union management of the migration and refugee situation since 2014?
(The graph below compares the % of negative and very negative answers with % of positive and very positive answers)
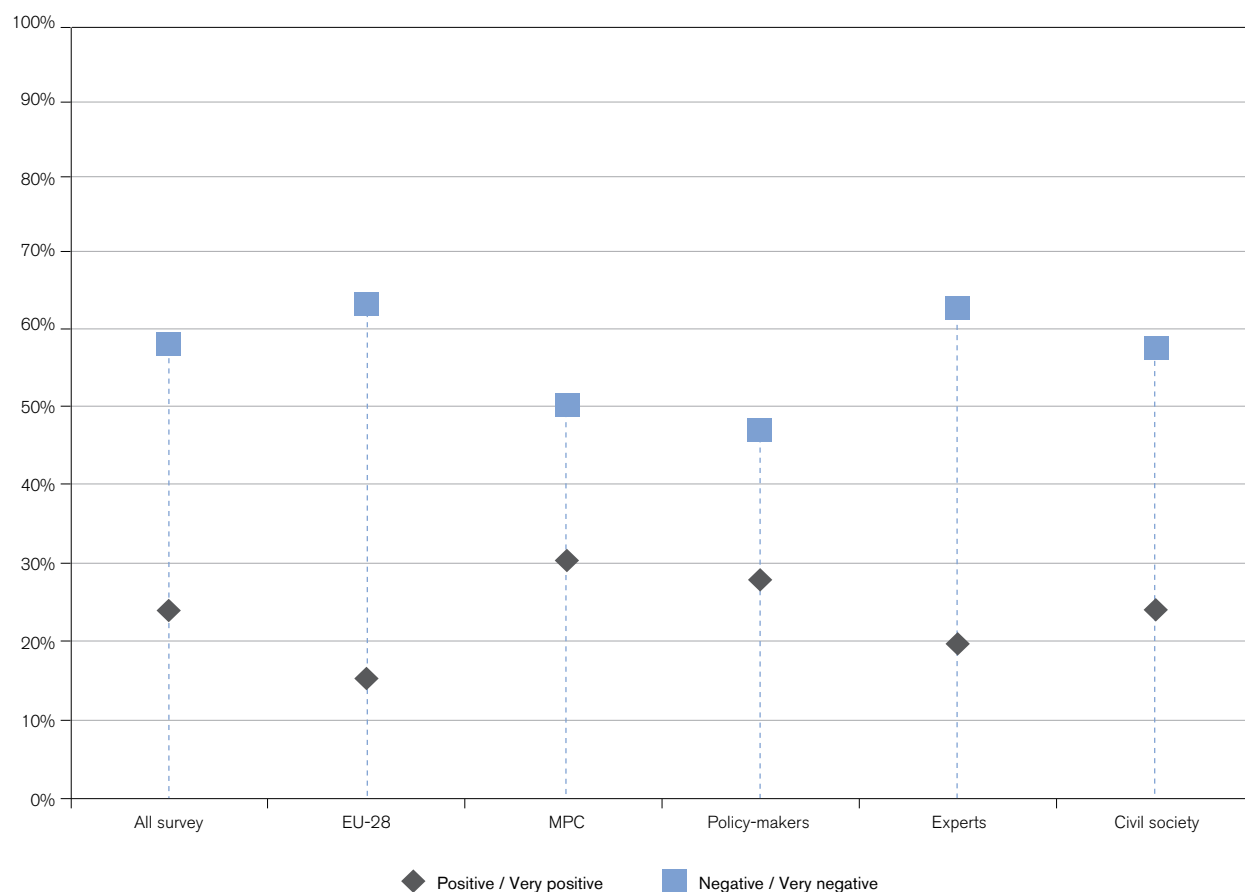
◆ Positive / Very positive   ■ Negative / Very negative

Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 7th Euromed Survey/Question 8

Looking in more detail at geographical distribution, one observes that respondents from non-Mediterranean EU countries are the most critical, followed by those from Mediterranean EU countries, while those from Maghreb and particularly Mashreq are less critical (see Graph 14).

Graph 14: How do you assess the European Union management of the migration and refugee situation since 2014?

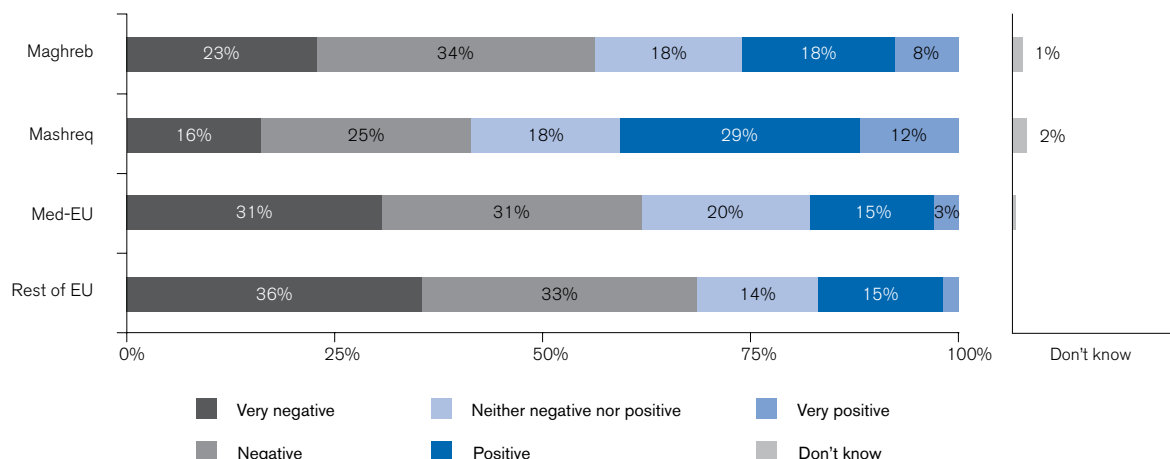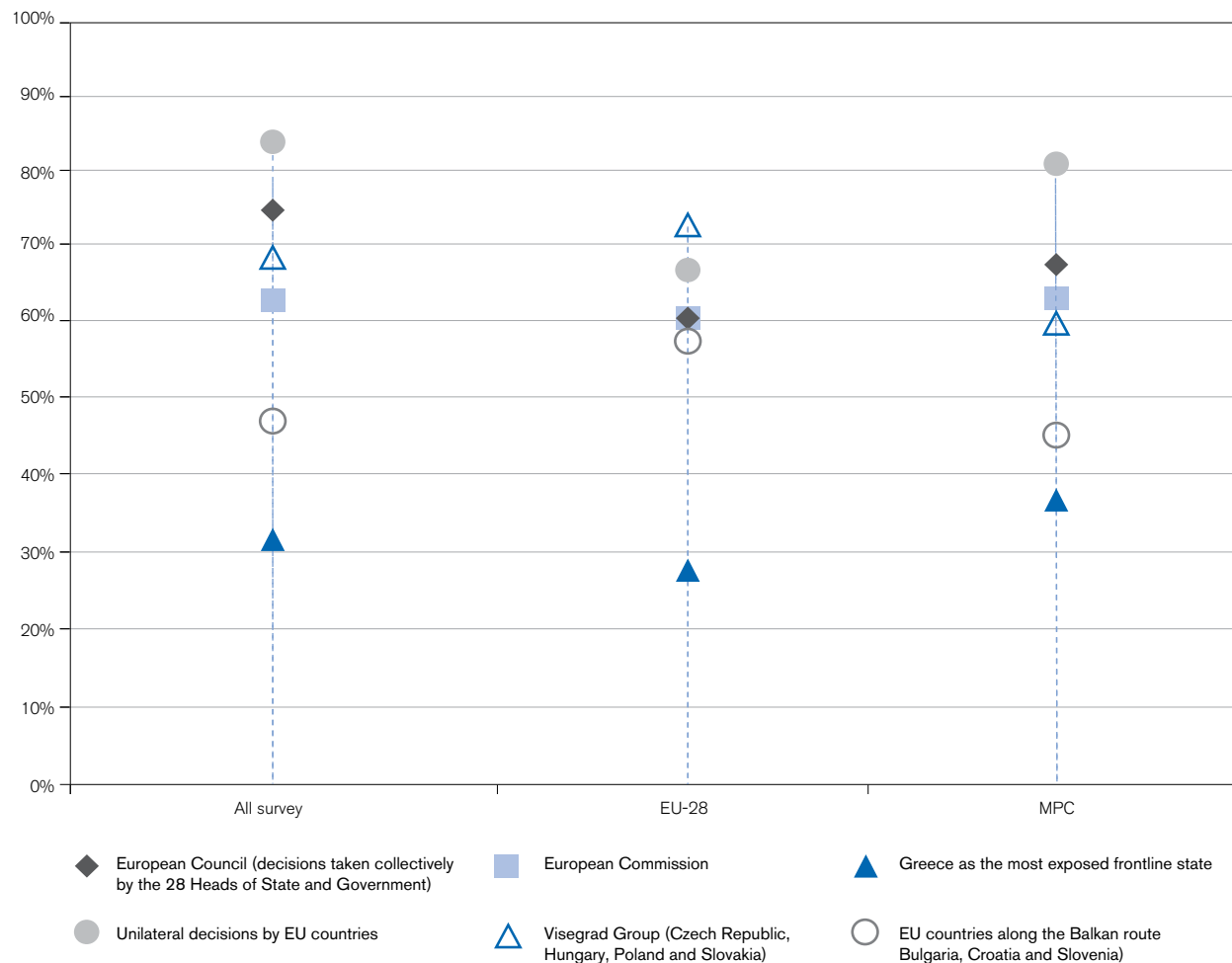Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 7th Euromed Survey/Question 8

Looking at the country of origin of European respondents, it appears that Greek respondents are the least critical, while a majority of respondents from other EU countries (and in particular from Spain) have a negative and very negative perception (see Graph Q8 in Set of Results at www.iemed.org/euromedsurvey). Answers from MPC respondents show that Turkish and Syrian participants have the worst perception of EU management, while Jordanian participants to the Survey have a rather positive perception of it (see Graph Q8 in Set of Results at www.iemed.org/euromedsurvey).

When asked to elaborate on their negative perception of EU management of the migration and refugee situation since 2014, participants relate this assessment mainly to unilateral decisions by EU countries. Participants see Greece as the most exposed frontline state. Looking for geographical differentiation of perception between EU-28 and MPC respondents, one can observe that the former are more critical of the Visegrad Group while the latter attribute the poor management mostly to unilateral decisions by EU countries and the European Council (see also Graph 15).

Graph 15: Responsibilty of EU actors on the negative management of the migration and refugee situation since 2014. Respondents by country group.

(The graph below shows the % of high and very high responsibility)

European Council (decisions taken collectively by the 28 Heads of State and Government)

European Commission

Greece as the most exposed frontline state

Unilateral decisions by EU countries

Visegrad Group (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia)

EU countries along the Balkan route Bulgaria, Croatia and Slovenia)

Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 7th Euromed Survey/Question 9

If one reads the results taking into account the professional affiliation of the respondents, it appears that the main difference concerns the assessment of the Visegrad Group's responsibility for the negative management: policy-makers are less critical than experts and civil society (see Graph 16). Civil society is also slightly more critical about the European Commission than other categories of respondents, while experts are more critical than others towards EU countries along the Balkan route.

Graph 16: Responsibilty of EU actors on the negative management of the migration and refugee situation since 2014. Respondents by institutional affiliation.

(The graph below shows the % of high and very high responsibility)
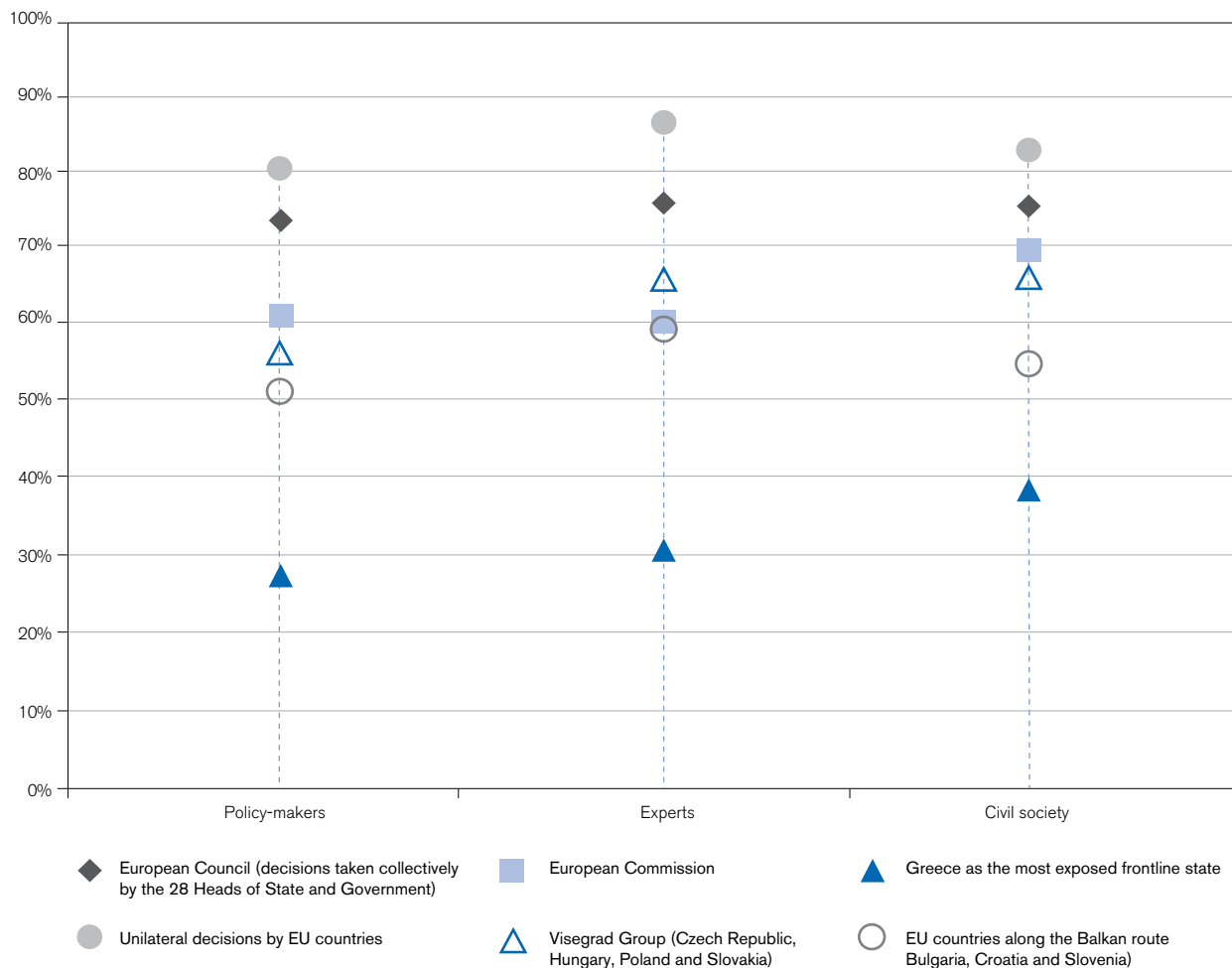
Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 7th Euromed Survey/Question 9

Open-ended answers from participants allow further understanding of how respondents see the issue of the responsibility of different actors within the EU. A large consensus emerges among respondents about the need for a coordinated and unified strategy, as well as about the problematic character of unilateral responses by those actors.

> I would consider the tension between the Commission preparing a fairly comprehensive policy mix, though this came too late, the Council and, most importantly, the various member states (I would not single out the Visegrad Group as the UK, Denmark or Austria were equally objecting to Commission proposals) as cause for the insufficient EU policy response.
>
> United Kingdom respondent

> Les décisions unilatérales ne font qu'aggraver la situation. C'est une question à résoudre dans la concertation.
>
> Tunisian respondent

The lack of an actual European response organised by the European Commission NOT the member states alone is the main problem. This is of course due to the fact that some countries have decided to take unilateral decisions and that most countries have failed to respond to the refugee crisis in a humanitarian way…the Visegrad countries are the best example of this.

German respondent

Unilateral decisions were often taken under the pressure of events. The main problem was, apart from Greece's weakness, the refusal of the Visegrad countries to cooperate in a meaningful EU-led system of migration management.

Greek respondent

L'absence de politique migratoire européenne (contrôle des frontières extérieures notamment) et de coopération entre les Etats-membres a été à l'origine d'une très mauvaise gestion de la situation au niveau européen.

French respondent

The Commission tried but belatedly and was also timid in its proposals given the scale of the crisis. The Council could only move at the speed of the most hostile to refugees among member states. The Visegrad Group is largely responsible, even if it is not alone, for that. Greece cannot be responsible for the poor response: its geographical situation exposes it and it is a victim of the Dublin Regulation.

Egyptian respondent

There has to be leadership from the top in this area, and there has not been. Without that, countries will inevitably do what is in their personal interests, and the results will be a mess. The Heads of State carry the greatest burden of responsibility, for if they have signed up to protect refugees, they should work to achieve that goal. Greece needs assistance, not blame.

United Kingdom respondent

Some respondents underline the lack of a strategic vision about migration issues at European level, while others relate the migration challenges to the broader foreign policy agenda of some states:

Institutional weakness of the EU vs. national prerogatives, despite Schengen framework, lack of vision and long-term strategy (migration was clearly identified decades ago as a major coming challenge for the EU but little has been done in the meantime), inadequate integration policies and/or means of support.

French respondent

Aujourd'hui, on assiste à un déni de la sécurité humaine pour un intérêt politique pour la sécurité nationale tout en prêchant de manière paradoxale l'intervention pour préserver et défendre les droits de l'Homme de la démocratie sans se soucier des impacts de ces interventions sur le devenir des pays cibles (Libye et Syrie, à titre d'exemple).

Moroccan respondent

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The following question was more solutions-oriented and aimed to capture the assessment of respondents regarding what the EU and its member states should pursue. Better sharing and redistributing the "burden" among member states ranks first among the proposed options. The following identified options are respectively: better integrate internal and external policies (including through strengthening the role of EU delegations on migration issues); upgrade and improve the implementation of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS); provide legal alternatives to irregular secondary movements; focus less on a reactive and security-based approach; improve mechanisms to filter out refugees from irregular migrants; and, finally, effectively apply the EU's return system.

Looking at differences according to the origin of respondents, one can observe that Southern and Southeast Mediterranean respondents are keener on the option of better sharing and redistributing the "burden" among member states. Meanwhile, respondents from EU-28 countries tend to think that the following two options should be pursued as a matter of priority: improve mechanisms to filter out refugees from irregular migrants, and effectively apply the EU's return system (see Graph 17).

Graph 17: To what extent do you consider that the following options should be pursued by the EU and its member states? Respondents by country group.
(The graph below shows the % of high and very high extent)
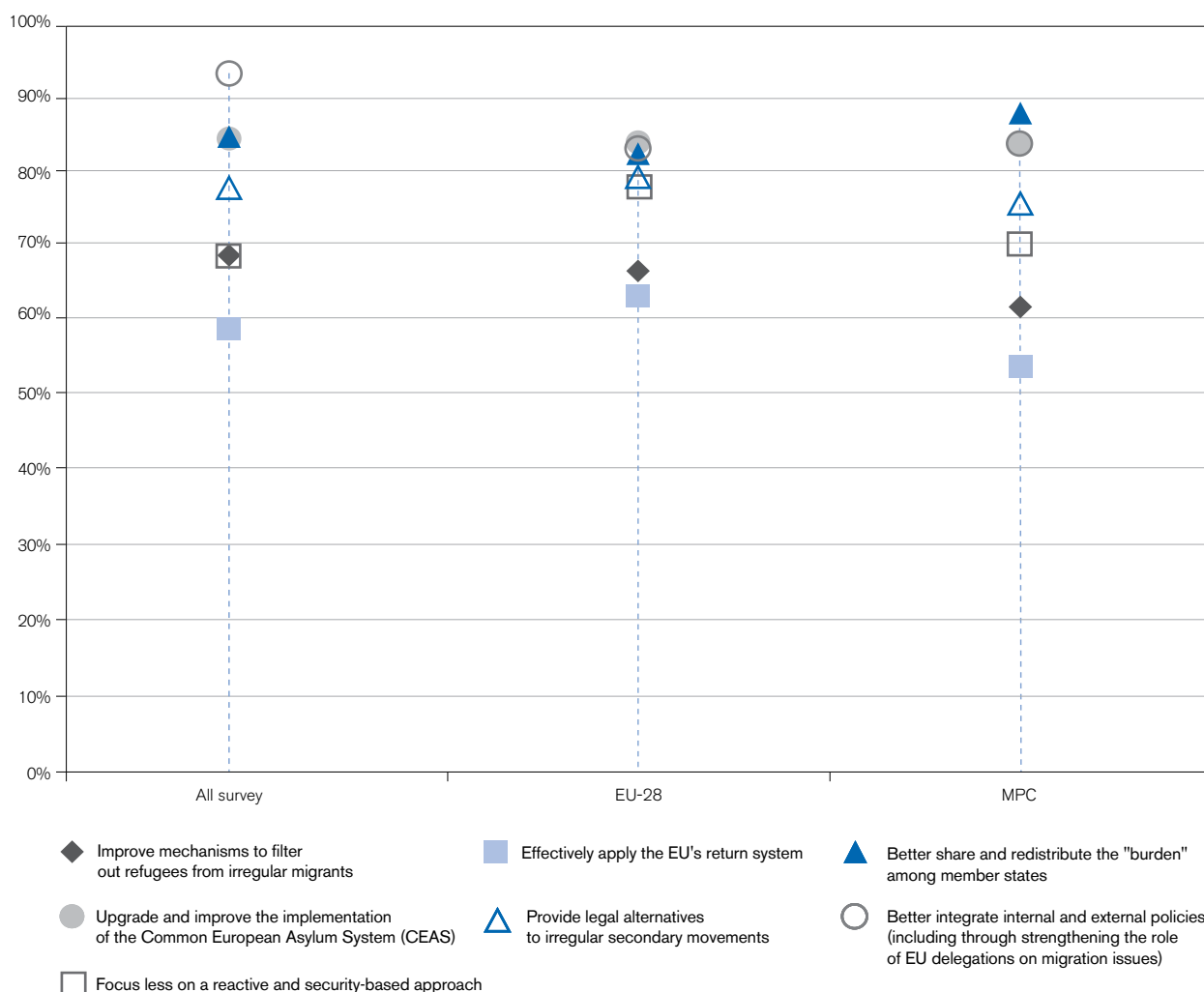
Improve mechanisms to filter out refugees from irregular migrants

Upgrade and improve the implementation of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS)

Focus less on a reactive and security-based approach

Effectively apply the EU's return system

Provide legal alternatives to irregular secondary movements

Better share and redistribute the "burden" among member states

Better integrate internal and external policies (including through strengthening the role of EU delegations on migration issues)

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Some remarkable differences emerge when analysing answers by professional affiliation (see Graph 18). Experts think to a greater extent than other groups that there should be less focus on a reactive and security-based approach. In turn, policy-makers are more favourable than other respondents to improving mechanisms to filter out refugees from irregular migrants and to effectively apply the EU's return system, while they are less keen on better sharing and redistributing the "burden" among member states, and to upgrading and improving the implementation of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS).

Graph 18: To what extent do you consider that the following options should be pursued by the EU and its member states? Respondents by Institutional affiliation.
(The graph below shows the % of high and very high extent)

Legend:

◆ Improve mechanisms to filter out refugees from irregular migrants

■ Effectively apply the EU's return system

▲ Better share and redistribute the "burden" among member states

● Upgrade and improve the implementation of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS)

△ Provide legal alternatives to irregular secondary movements

○ Better integrate internal and external policies (including through strengthening the role of EU delegations on migration issues)

□ Focus less on a reactive and security-based approach
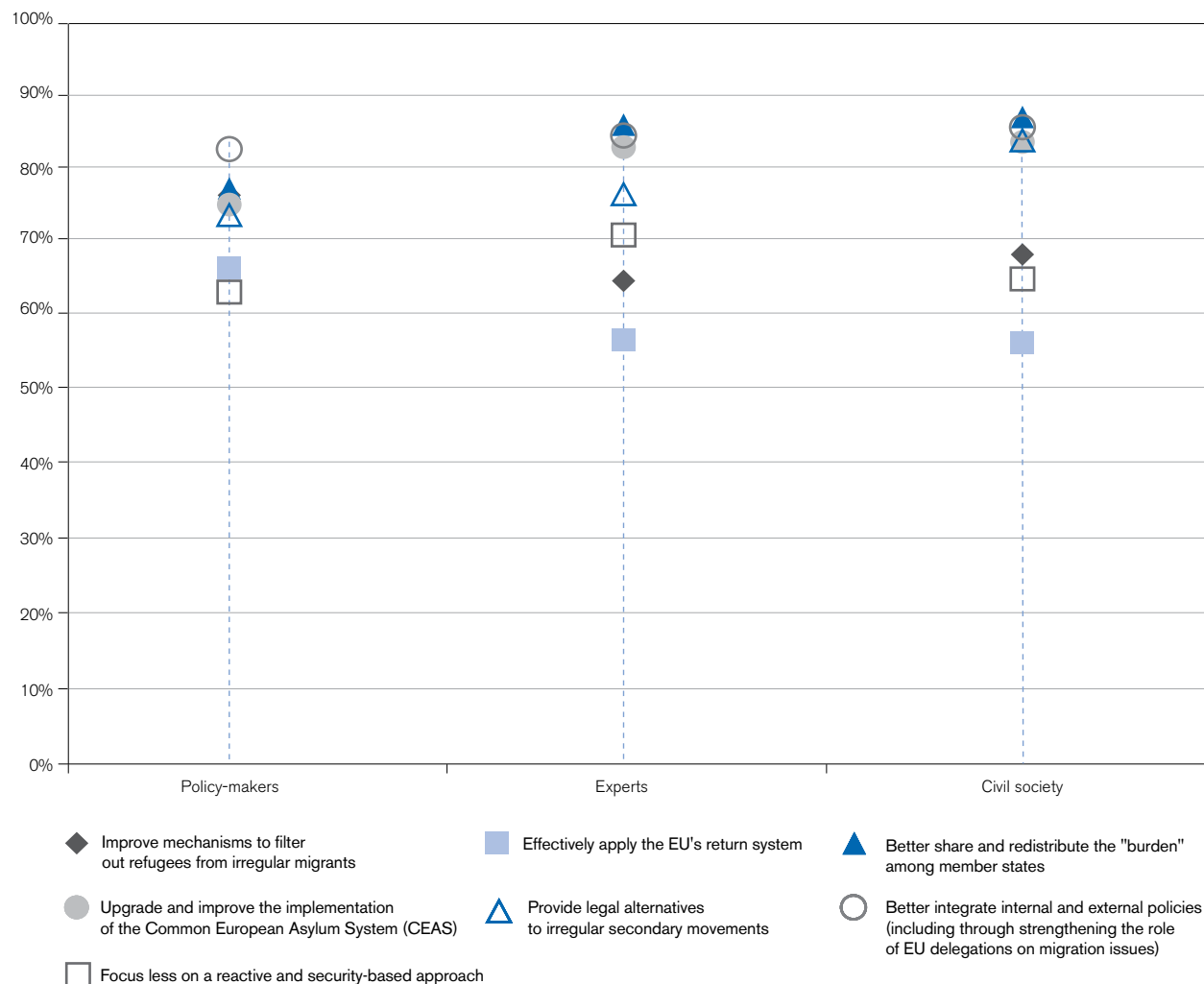
Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 7th Euromed Survey/Question 10

In their comments, many respondents emphasise the need to look at root causes in origin countries:

> Have a more effective role on ending the political crisis in home countries. Have a more effective role on improving socioeconomic situations at home countries.
>
> Lebanese respondent

> Give more consideration to the situation in "sending" countries and motivations behind migrant flows (political refugees but even economic migrants) and develop proper mechanisms of support that should encourage potential migrants to stay in their countries of origin instead of migrating. Political action changing push-pull factors of migration to that effect should also be taken.
>
> Swedish respondent

> I do not blame any European country for handling the crisis of refugees and migrants. I blame them for not helping other regions such as the Middle East and Africa to promote peace and prosperity.
>
> Syrian respondent

Several respondents also underline the need for a deep political change concerning opening real and effective channels for refugees:

> Use a resilient strategy: transform limits into opportunities. Migration brings dynamism to economies if governed with some well-thought criteria. We have entire little towns that are dying because of population decline. Not all migrants would like to go there (young males and females would like to be in cities) but families fleeing war would prefer that to detention centres.
>
> United Kingdom respondent

> It is necessary to provide legal alternatives not only to irregular secondary movements, but also to discourage asylum seekers in third countries from risking their lives to enter the EU for a first time (e.g. through resettlement). The EU should also emphasise the need for the international community (and other regions of the world) to participate in responsibility sharing.
>
> Greek respondent

> Creating viable legal access to the EU is the most important and burning issue to bring forward.
>
> Finnish respondent

> Adopter une attitude d'abord en phase avec les textes fondateurs de l'UE en matière d'accueil et d'asile.
>
> Palestinian respondent

> The Syrian refugee crisis is evidence that the EU and South and Eastern Mediterranean countries live in the same neighbourhood. Hence, it should be more engaged in the political solution of refugee-generating problems. It should also better face up to populist movements hostile to refugees, migrants and populations of migrant origin. Norms of global economy generating migrants in search of better livelihoods need reconsideration.
>
> Egyptian respondent

> Avoir une vision globale respectant les droits des migrants et les droits humanitaires internationaux en vigueur.
>
> Netherlands respondent

Other respondents consider that there is also a need to establish legal channels of entry for migrants:

> Assouplir les conditions de migration régulière temporaire comme celle qui était accordée aux travailleurs espagnols et portugais dans les années 60 et 70. La migration temporaire peut contribuer à stabiliser les rapports avec les pays d'origine tout en les poussant à plus de responsabilisation dans la maîtrise des problèmes migratoires.
>
> Algerian respondent

> Should facilitate legal migration to prevent the flow of illegal migration and non-refugees to Europe and re-concentrate on migration and development in the first country of asylum.
>
> Lebanese respondent

> The mechanisms for filtering out refugees from irregular migrants are never going to be efficient: whatever system you devise, people will find ways to work within it, whether they are refugees or not. If you improve the legal means for people to enter the EU, the ones who are not fleeing for their lives are less likely to risk losing their lives in the attempt.
>
> United Kingdom respondent

Some respondents from MPC countries underline the importance of other elements when thinking about options to be pursued in the future:

> Appliquer un système de retour qui doit être accompagné au même degré d'intérêt et de flexibilité des accords sur les visas avec les pays concernés. De plus, opter pour des négociations « gagnant-gagnant » lors des négociations des accords de réadmission sans mettre le fardeau sur les pays de transit.
>
> Moroccan respondent

> Il faut chercher à intégrer les réfugiés et les migrants, aussi bien que trouver des solutions en amont (développement socio-économique des pays d'origine) et finalement répondre aux premiers besoins (vitaux) des réfugiés et migrants.
>
> Tunisian respondent

> Le retour doit être bien réfléchi, il devrait combiner une approche de droit avec un projet générateur de revenu et d'emploi, par exemple à travers de l'aide à la création de la petite entreprise
>
> Moroccan respondent

Participants were also asked to rank what measures of the European Commission's relocation plan (the Temporary EU Relocation System) should be prioritised. In general terms, respondents think that improving coordination between the European Commission and the member states is the main priority, followed far behind by the modification of the relocation scheme breakdown by member state (see Graph 19) and by the penalisation of member states for failing to fully implement the Common European Relocation Mechanism.

MPC respondents prioritise, to a lower extent than others, the coordination between the EU Commission and member states and, in a more nuanced way, the possibility of penalising member states.

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Graph 19: The European Comission's relocation plan (the Temporary EU Relocation System) has not been implemented consistently. What measures should be prioritised?

(First element to be prioritised in % by groups of countries)

Penalising Member States for failing to fully implement the Common European Relocation Mechanism — 27% / 29% / 24%

Modifying the relocation scheme breakdown per Member State — 18% / 19% / 16%

Improving coordination between the European Commission and the Member States — 54% / 52% / 59%

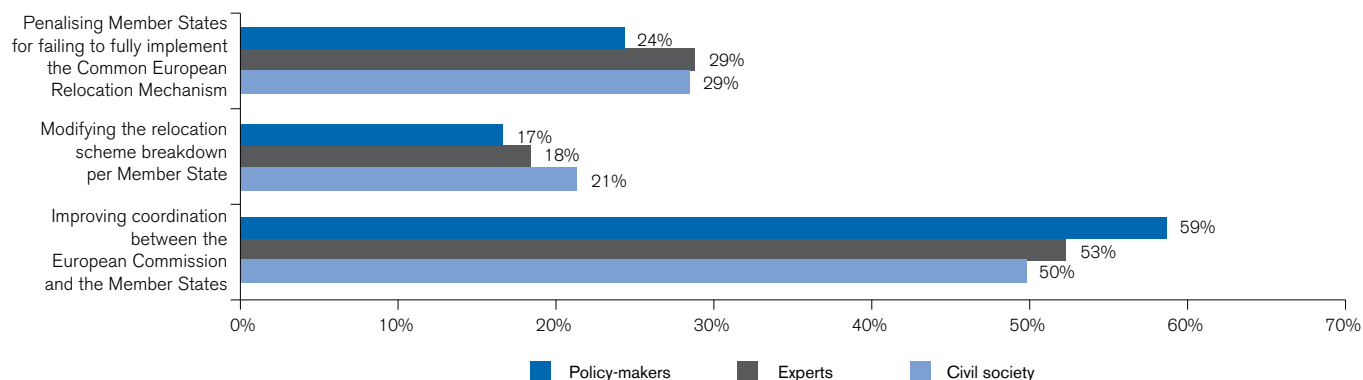Legend: ■ All survey   ■ EU-28   ■ MPC
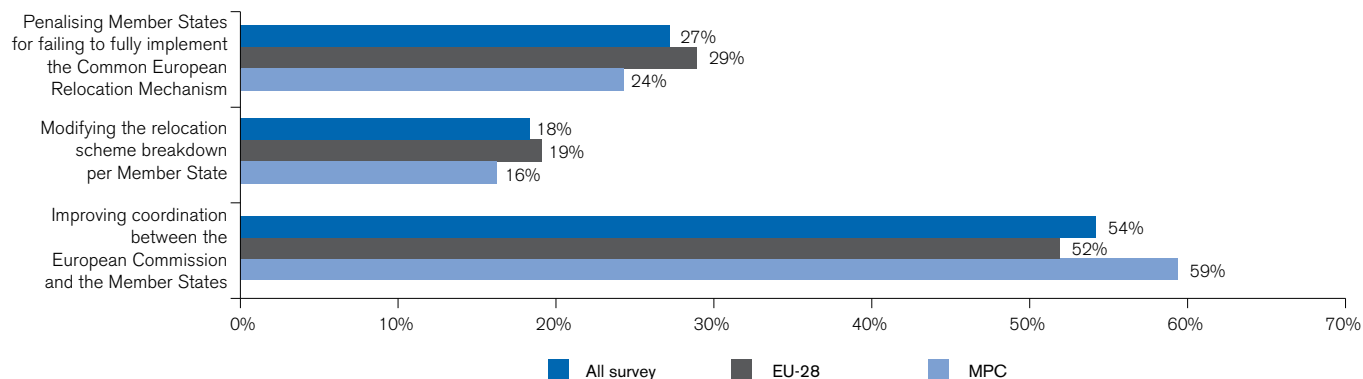
Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 7th Euromed Survey/Question 11

Looking at professional affiliation, no significant difference emerges (see Graph 20). Some slight variance occurs between policy-makers and other categories about the possibility of penalising member states failing to fully implement the relocation system (lower priority accorded by the former) and to improving coordination between EU Commission and member states (considered as a higher priority by policy-makers).

Graph 20: The European Commission's relocation plan (the Temporary EU Relocation System) has not been implemented consistently. What measures should be prioritised?

(First element to be prioritised in % by institutional affiliation)

Penalising Member States for failing to fully implement the Common European Relocation Mechanism — 24% / 29% / 29%

Modifying the relocation scheme breakdown per Member State — 17% / 18% / 21%

Improving coordination between the European Commission and the Member States — 59% / 53% / 50%

Legend: ■ Policy-makers   ■ Experts   ■ Civil society

Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 7th Euromed Survey/Question 11

Open-ended answers give useful insights into how respondents see the issue of relocation.

Le nombre de relocalisations est très largement insuffisant. Par ailleurs, les variables utilisées pour repartir les réfugiés ne tiennent pas compte des desiderata des réfugiés, ce qui risque de poser des problèmes (mouvements secondaires).

French respondent

This is only the reaction to the biggest problem: the lack of intra-EU solidarity among member states. The burden is on border member states and those central European countries always opposed any changes to the rule of "first safe country" application before the crisis erupted in 2014.

Polish respondent

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Looking at possible solutions, there is a division between two groups. Some respondents underline the need for a binding system of relocation, through sanctions imposition.

> The biggest mistake for this relocation plan was to present it first as a non-mandatory instrument for member states. Given the level of the crisis and the severe implication for the European and external political stability, each member state should be bound by the system in place, which should be made effective through imposition of sanctions if not respected.
>
> Belgian respondent

> Penalising member states not conforming with EU decisions (as has been the case in other policy areas) is necessary but should take place only after discussion between the EC and these member states to address their concerns.
>
> Greek respondent

Other participants consider that sanctions are not the best solution and that alternative solutions have to be explored.

> Due to the critical state of the EU right now, it is not advisable to have "penalties" as a tool against member states.
>
> Egyptian respondent

> I am convinced that top-down imposition of a given destination to refugees and of a given quota of refugees to destination states cannot work on a significant scale and in a sustainable way. An incentive-based system directly targeting refugees and receiving communities is in my view an alternative worth experimenting.
>
> Italian respondent

> Considering the political instability at this moment, it may not be the right time to prioritise penalties for not fulfilling their obligations but rather agree on better coordination and adapt the relocation breakdown taking both a more global approach regarding consequences in case of failure to find sustainable solutions, and considering ongoing harmonisation processes within EU structures.
>
> Turkish respondent

> Penalising member states will be politically very difficult but modifying the relocation scheme would be a serious precedent that will weaken the Commission. Incentives to hostile member states may be one measure to consider. Not only coordination but also support from the Commission to member states with insufficient capacity or that are hostile to relocation is required.
>
> Egyptian respondent

> Each member state should contribute to the management of this crisis according to its resources. The extent of each one's contribution (in this case hosting beneficiaries of international protection) should be based on a commonly agreed distribution key that will reflect each member state's ability to host and integrate beneficiaries of international protection.
>
> Cypriot respondent

> (...)It could be more effective to explore possibilities to move the money around Europe to compensate the countries that have a higher burden or financially encourage the member states to accept more refugees.
>
> Lithuanian respondent

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Respondents were also asked to rank several proposals from the European Agenda on Migration according to a priority scale. In general terms, participants think that the highest priority is to craft a new policy on legal migration. At 15 points distance comes the proposal of strengthening the common asylum policy and reducing the incentives for irregular migration. The last priority is linked to border management (saving lives and securing external borders).

MPC respondents are more inclined than others to the option of developing a new policy on legal migration. In turn, strengthening the common asylum policy is for MPC respondents less of a priority than for EU-28 respondents (see Graph 21).

Graph 21: Ranking European Agenda on Migration (EAM) proposals according to what should be prioritised.
(First European Agenda on Migration proposal to be prioritised in %)
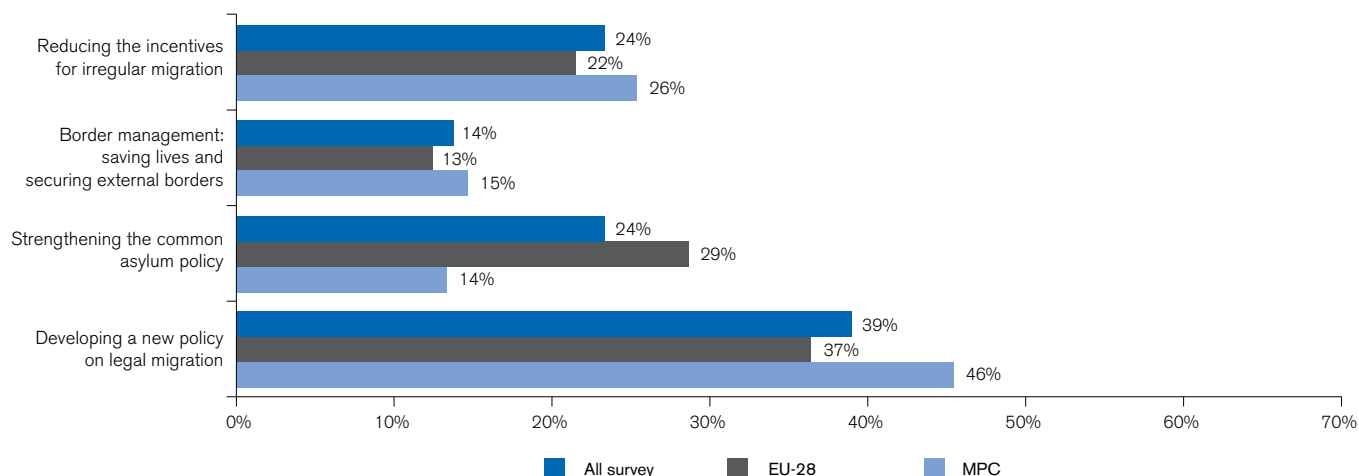
Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 7th Euromed Survey/Question 12

Reducing the incentives for irregular migration and strengthening the common asylum policy are mainly concerns for policy-makers (see Graph 22), while civil society's respondents and experts consider that developing a new policy on legal migration is the key priority. For all categories, border management comes last in the ranking of priorities.
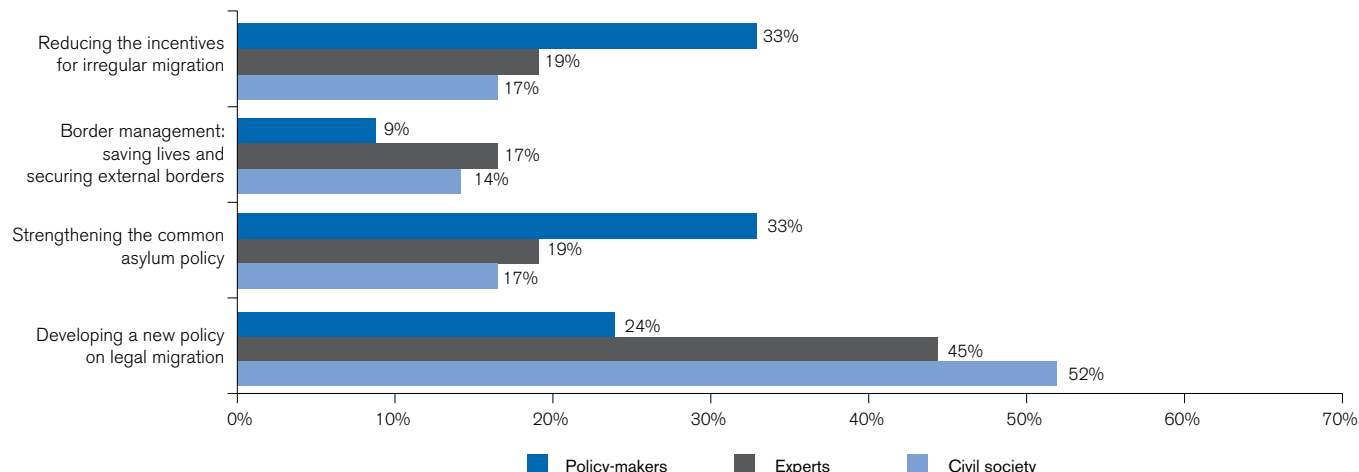
Graph 22: Ranking European Agenda on Migration (EAM) proposals according to what should be prioritised.
(First European Agenda on Migration proposal to be prioritised in %)

Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 7th Euromed Survey/Question 12

Some respondents underline the need to reframe the existing policy framework:

> Intensifier la coopération internationale en matière de stratégie et de gestion de la migration.
>
> Moroccan respondent

> Saving lives is definitely important, but we would save more lives by opening alternative ways to legally access the EU. The only interesting, innovative and safe way I have seen up to now is the humanitarian air-Corridor that the Italian government led by Renzi has helped three different religious associations to set up. Partnerships between diverse state and non-state actors are crucial.
>
> United Kingdom respondent

> I think the EAM lacks of a truly human rights-based approach. And it makes a strong differentiation between highly qualified migrants (very welcome) and irregular migrants, and not considering push factors, such as EU member states' extraterritorial responsibilities. Even if they are named differently, all the priorities have this security and control approach.
>
> Spanish respondent

Several respondents coincide in underlining the need to develop a long-term strategy taking into account root causes, instead of focusing only on short-term measures.

> It is striking to see that the agenda mainly focused on emergency responses and left aside long-term strategy in developing and improving the legal migration channels – also addressed at the very end of the agenda.
>
> Belgian respondent

> Further enhance the EU development and cooperation action with countries that have significant segments of their population prone to seeking asylum in other countries. EU support policies and mechanisms should be more sensitive to the stabilisation of those countries that generate important numbers of asylum seekers.
>
> Lebanon respondent

IEMed.

IEMed.

It is necessary to take a wider perspective on migration as a global phenomenon, considering inter-dependencies playing a part in migrants' determination to relocate, while finding incentives for potential migrants to remain in their countries of origin. Strengthening political and economic stability in "sending" countries, better infrastructure, etc., is more likely to succeed.

Swedish respondent

Pour réduire l'incitation à émigrer, il faut une politique de développement inclusive et cela est du ressort des pays d'origine. C'est donc sur les pays d'origine qu'il faut faire pression pour une meilleure égalité et une politique de développement créatrice d'emplois et d'opportunités. La police à distance fonctionne mais fait des Etats tiers des gendarmes anti-migratoires.

Palestinian respondent

Saving lives should not be separated from securing external borders. "Securing borders" is one cause of loss of life. The common asylum policy doesn't only need strengthening: it should be reformed. Reducing incentives for irregular migration will not be achieved through migration policy measures alone: addressing the informal economies especially in Mediterranean countries.

Egyptian respondent

Another question focused on irregular migration. Participants were asked to what extent a number of options offered an adequate response to reduce the incentives for irregular migration in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

Addressing the root causes of irregular migration in origin countries was identified as the most adequate response by respondents (independently of their origin) followed by broadening labour migration opportunities (see Graph 23). The option of effectively applying the EU's return system is the least mentioned option although it was mentioned by more than 50%. Tailored communication in origin countries aiming at dissuading potential irregular migrants, and fighting smugglers and traffickers are both considered more adequate responses by MPC respondents than EU-28 ones.

Graph 23: To what extent do the following elements offer an adequate response to reduce the incentives for irregular migration in the Euro-Mediterranean region? Respondents by group of countries.
(The graph below shows the % of high and very high extent)

Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 7th Euromed Survey/Question 13

Legend:
- ◆ Broadening labour migration opportunities
- ■ Tailored communication in origin countries aiming at dissuading potential irregular migrants
- ▲ Effectively apply the EU's return system
- ● Fighting smugglers and traffickers
- △ Addressing the root causes of irregular migration in origin countries
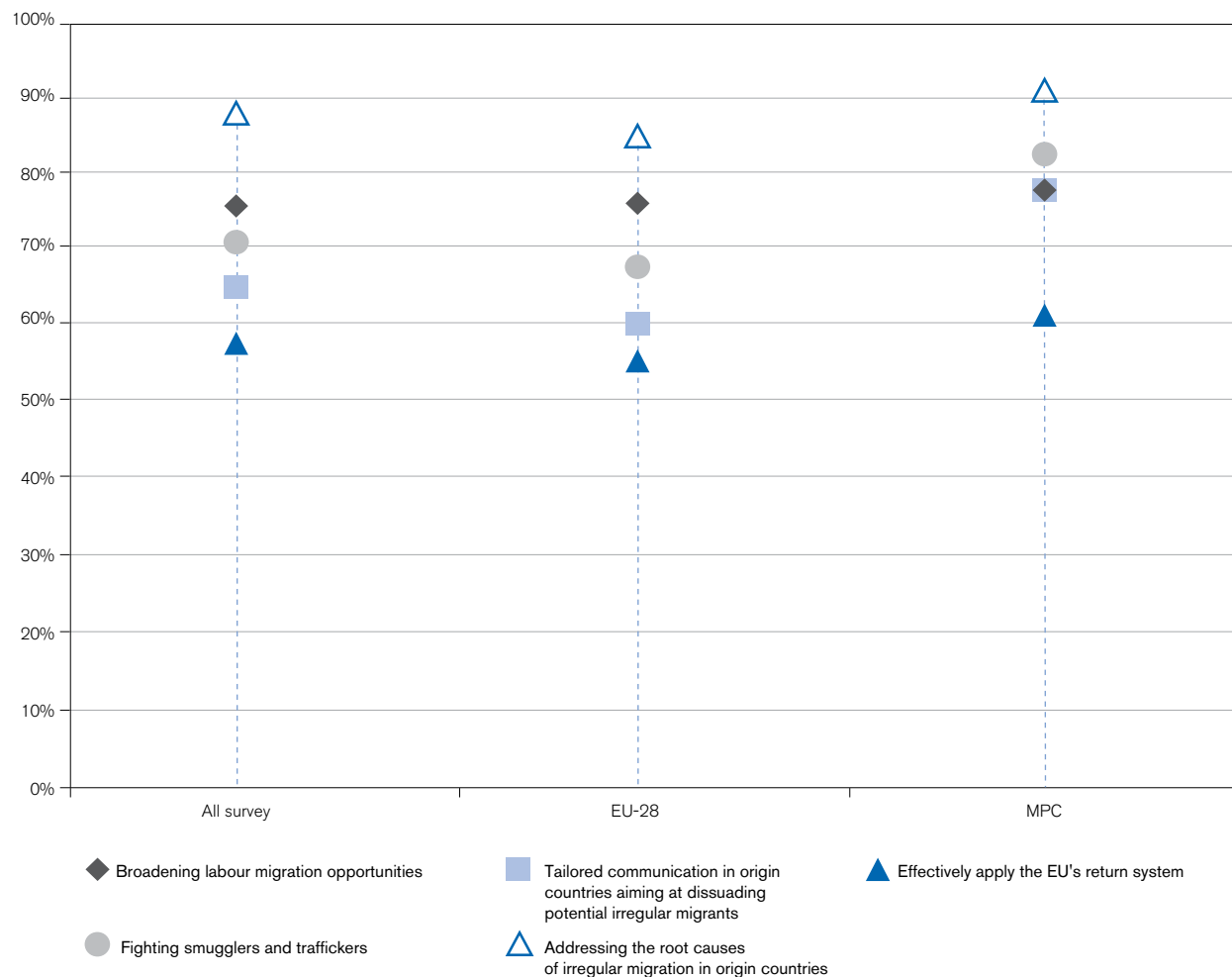
Civil society respondents are most favourable to the idea of broadening labour migration opportunities. It also appears that experts are more prone to the idea of fostering a tailored communication in origin countries aiming at dissuading potential irregular migrants than other groups, while fighting smugglers and traffickers ranks higher in the order of priorities as identified by policy-makers (see Graph 24).

Graph 24: To what extent do the following elements offer an adequate response to reduce the incentives for irregular migration in the Euro-Mediterranean region? Respondents by institutional affiliation.
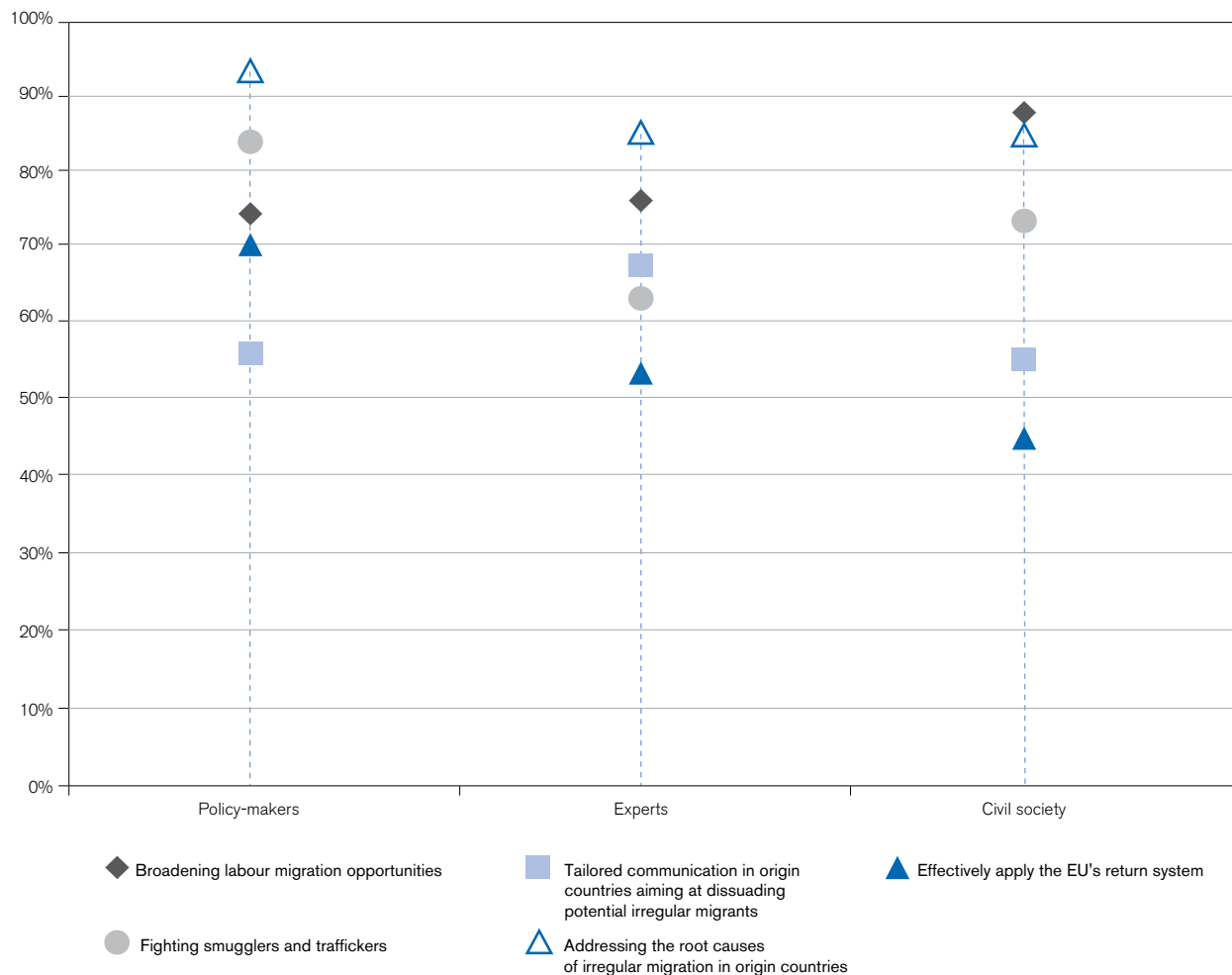(The graph below shows the % of high and very high extent)

◆ Broadening labour migration opportunities

🟦 Tailored communication in origin countries aiming at dissuading potential irregular migrants

▲ Effectively apply the EU's return system

⚫ Fighting smugglers and traffickers

△ Addressing the root causes of irregular migration in origin countries

Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 7th Euromed Survey/Question 13

A number of comments related to this question once more address the need to look at the origins of mobility and root causes when defining an adequate policy response to irregular migration.

Expanding the protection area and income generation possibilities of host countries immediate to the conflict areas (e.g, Lebanon, Jordan, etc.), for people to lose the incentive to reach Europe.

Lithuanian respondent

Addressing the root causes of irregular migration is the key response, but is a long-term one. In the meantime, return policy can be seen as a necessary short-term response.

Greek respondent

> By looking at Frontex reports of recent years, it is striking that, along with border controls, the market for smugglers and human traffickers increases. The prices for smugglers' services are much higher than in previous years. To fight smugglers and human traffickers it is essential to open a safe, regular channel of migration and to show (with films) in origin countries how dangerous these journeys are.
>
> United Kingdom respondent

> Facts indicate that better communication and information in sending countries is desperately needed.
>
> Italian respondent

Other participants underline the need to enhance labour mobility.

> La mesure qui permettrait de lutter le plus efficacement contre la migration irrégulière serait de faciliter la circulation.
>
> French respondent

> It is striking how the EU never considers demand for labour in the informal economies of its member states as incentives for irregular migration.
>
> Egyptian respondent

> Mobility agreements are essential to match labour demand and supply.
>
> Spanish respondent

> I would add broadening opportunities for legal migration channels for refugees such as through resettlement, humanitarian visa and family reunification.
>
> United Kingdom respondent

Participants were then invited to review the relevance of different actions that could serve the purpose of improving asylum procedures. Respondents assessed that all options identified were worth exploring and only slight differences emerge. However, the most popular actions are to better implement the EU Visa Code to include humanitarian visas enabling third-country nationals to apply in situ for entry to EU territory on humanitarian grounds and to activate and further develop the EU Temporary Protection Directive from 2001 that establishes an exceptional scheme to offer refugees immediate protection (see Graph 25). EU-28 respondents are more inclined to establish EU competence to process asylum procedures, and to put a greater focus on reception capacities.

Graph 25: To what extent do the following elements offer an adequate response to improve asylum procedures? Respondents by group of countries.
(The graph below shows the % of high and very high extent)

Better implement the EU Visa Code to include humanitarian visas enabling third-country nationals to apply in situ for entry to EU territory on humanitarian grounds

Allow asylum seekers to work and earn their own money while their applications are being processed

Activate and further develop the EU Temporary Protection Directive from 2001 that establishes an "exceptional scheme to offer refugees immediate protection"

Establish EU competence to process asylum procedures

Greater focus on reception capacities

Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 7th Euromed Survey/Question 14

Policy-makers are less inclined than other respondents to better implement the EU Visa Code to include humanitarian visas enabling third-country nationals to apply in situ for entry to EU territory on humanitarian grounds (see Graph 25 bis). Experts and civil society respondents are more favourable than policy-makers to activate and further develop the EU Temporary Protection Directive from 2001 that establishes an exceptional scheme to offer refugees immediate protection. Civil society respondents seem to be more interested than other participants in the idea of establishing an EU competence to process asylum procedures.

Graph 25 (bis) : To what extent do the following elements offer an adequate response to improve asylum procedures? Respondents by institutional affiliation.

(The graph below shows the % of high and very high extent)

Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 7th Euromed Survey/Question 14

Legend:

◆ Better implement the EU Visa Code to include humanitarian visas enabling third-country nationals to apply in situ for entry to EU territory on humanitarian grounds

■ Allow asylum seekers to work and earn their own money while their applications are being processed

▲ Activate and further develop the EU Temporary Protection Directive from 2001 that establishes an "exceptional scheme to offer refugees immediate protection"

● Establish EU competence to process asylum procedures

△ Greater focus on reception capacities
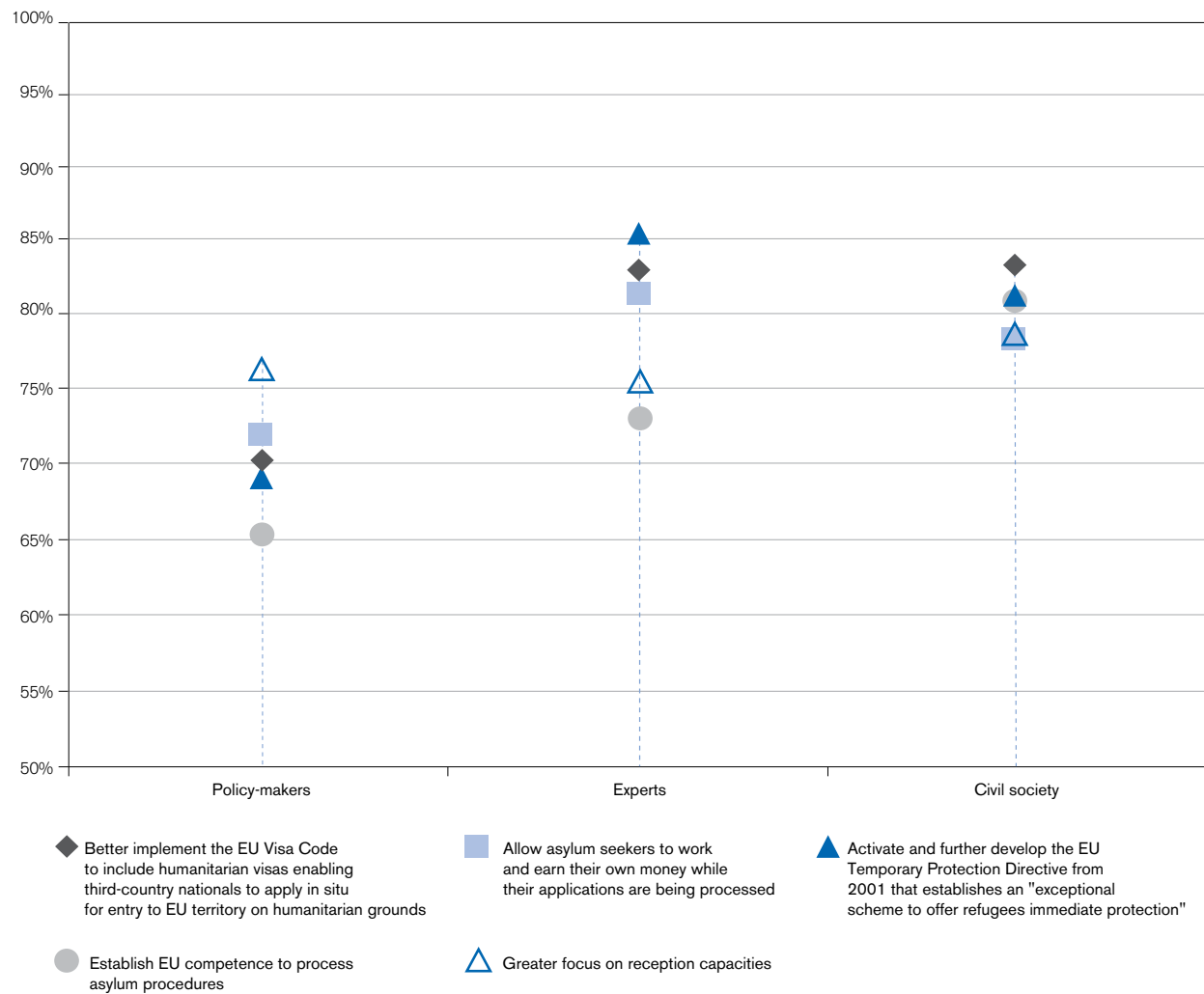
However, some respondents used open-ended answers to express their scepticism about some of the proposed solutions:

> Whilst the system does not work in its present form, I doubt that an EU competence to process asylum procedures would necessarily work any better.
>
> Finnish respondent

> EU management of asylum is unthinkable. The systems are very diverse and EU capabilities and knowledge, ability to interact with security/police forces is very limited. They simply cannot do it without the state backing.
>
> Spanish respondent

> Not all the aforementioned elements can provide an adequate response and the overall effort risks failing if the responsibilities are not shared among all member states without exception. It is very short-sighted to believe that only few of them can bear the burden, without negative consequences for the whole EU.
>
> Greek respondent

> Visa and asylum policies should not be mixed up. The idea of EU level processing would require a fundamental change that member states are unlikely to accept (they would no longer control who and how many they let in...).
>
> Danish respondent

Other participants also point to the need for alternative solutions:

> Temporary protection would enable immediate protection, while not making a definite decision on asylum status. It would also enable burden sharing among member states.
>
> Greek respondent

> Il faut surtout activer l'examen des demandes de visa et d'asile. Mais une fois refusée la requête d'asile, comment contrôle-t-on le renvoi du demandeur ? Les demandes d'asile sont examinées à l'échelon national. Il faut fixer un délai de maximum 2 mois pour statuer sur la demande.
>
> Palestinian respondent

> The EU scheme needs to be reformed; the temporary protection scheme is problematic for a variety of reasons. The first thing to consider is that those who come to the EU are those who do not share the values of their places of origins but would like to join the "European dream".
>
> United Kingdom respondent

> All the suggested measures are very pertinent. The criteria for their application should not invalidate them though. Other measures could include reunification of refugee families. The EU visa code could allow highly-skilled third-country nationals to apply in situ for entry to EU territory to search for work.
>
> Egyptian respondent

The following question aimed to assess which of the actions proposed by the European Commission to reform the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) had to be prioritised. In general terms, respondents consider that achieving greater convergence among member states in the EU asylum system is the most relevant of the proposed actions (see Graph 26).

Graph 26: The European Commission has presented a proposal to reform the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). To what extent should the following actions be prioritised? Respondents by group of countries.
(The graph shows displays the % of high and very high extent)

◆ Achieving greater convergence among member states in the EU asylum system

● Regulation of secondary movements within the EU

■ Reinforcing the Eurodac system (EU asylum fingerprint database)

△ Reinforced mandate for the EU's asylum Agency (European Asylum Support Office, EASO)

▲ Amend the Dublin Regulation which establishes the criteria for determining which member states responsible for examining an application for international protection
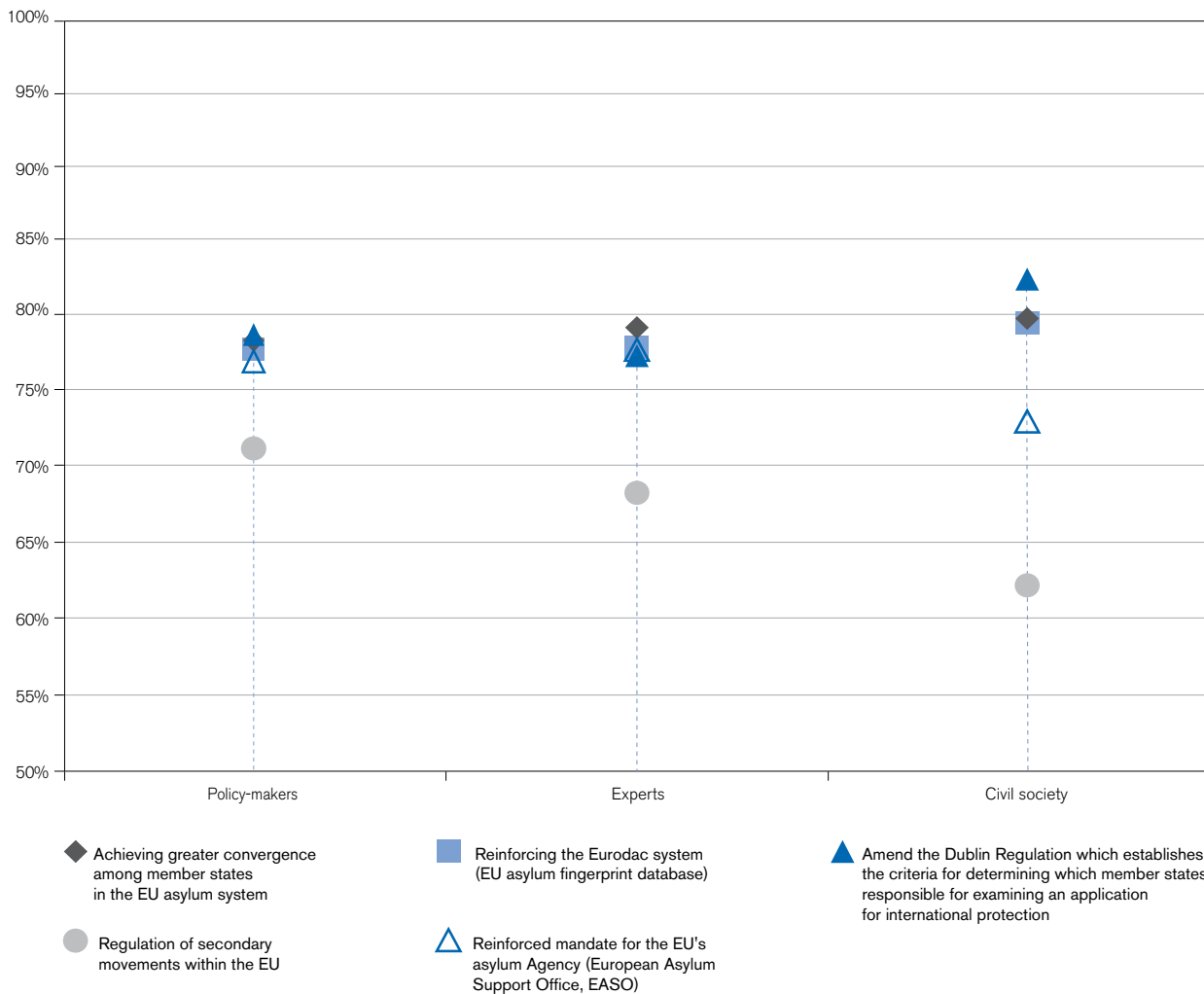
Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 7th Euromed Survey/Question 15

Regulation of secondary movements within the EU, and amending the Dublin Regulation (which establishes the criteria for determining which member state is responsible for examining an application for international protection) is rated as more important by EU-28 respondents than by MPC ones. The latter consider as a higher priority than EU-28 respondents a reinforced mandate for the EU's asylum agency (European Asylum Support Office, EASO).

Looking at professional affiliation of respondents, the only slight difference concerns the amendment of the Dublin Regulation that is identified as more important by civil society respondents than by others. In turn, policy-makers tend to think that regulating secondary movements within the EU is more of a priority than other respondents (see Graph 27).

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Graph 27: The European Commission has presented a proposal to reform the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). To what extent should the following actions be prioritised? Respondents by institutional affiliation.
(The graph below shows the % of high and very high extent)

◆ Achieving greater convergence
among member states
in the EU asylum system

⬤ Regulation of secondary
movements within the EU

◼ Reinforcing the Eurodac system
(EU asylum fingerprint database)

△ Reinforced mandate for the EU's
asylum Agency (European Asylum
Support Office, EASO)

▲ Amend the Dublin Regulation which establishes
the criteria for determining which member states
responsible for examining an application
for international protection

Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 7th Euromed Survey/Question 15

Here are some of the comments formulated by some respondents in relation to this question:

An integrated CEAS system, including alternative possibilities to stay on humanitarian or work grounds, recognition of qualifications, or as the case may be return, but with certain guarantees regarding observance of the refugees' human rights.

Swedish respondent

Dublin should be replaced by a burden-sharing scheme for examining asylum applications. Centralisation of asylum procedures through EASO is also necessary.

Greek respondent

It is not to control that EU attention should be devoted but rather to push factors and integration in destination countries.

Italian respondent

You should also involve local, national and European judicial courts more directly. We would need many more experts in the field of asylum to deal with the claims. Many more officials (with human rights and international law expertise and not security) to monitor. There are so many job opportunities that the EU is not able to concretise. Look at how much Canada is improving through migration.

United Kingdom respondent

Judicial guarantees to appeal decisions on requests should be improved alongside reforms of the system and strengthening the mandate of the EASO.

Portuguese respondent

A number of open-ended answers related in particular to the issue of secondary movements:

Regulating secondary movements should go hand in hand with the amendment of the Dublin Regulation. Regulating secondary movements could be an incentive for hostile or reluctant member states to respect the common asylum system. Regulation 51/2001 should also be considered for amendment.
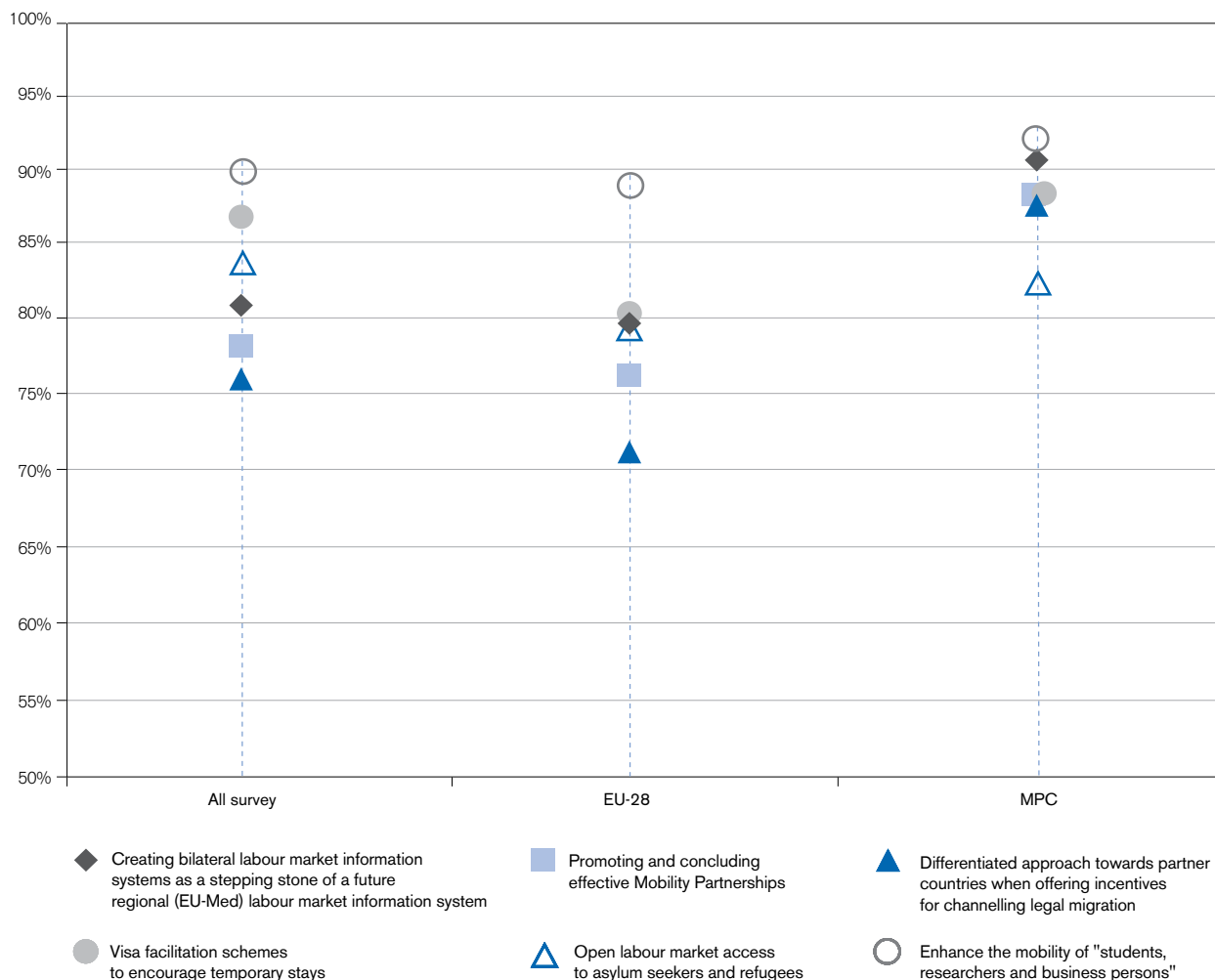
Egyptian respondent

Regulating secondary movements could be very important in the sense of liberalisation (mutual recognition of protection decisions).

Italian respondent

Participants were finally asked to what extent different legal migration channels should be promoted to enhance human mobility in the Euro-Mediterranean region. The possibility of enhancing the mobility of students, researchers and business persons is the best assessed in the Survey, followed closely by all the other options (see Graph 28).

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Graph 28: To what extent should the following legal migration channels be promoted to enhance human mobility in the Euro-Mediterranean region? Respondents by group of countries.
(The graph below shows the % of high and very high extent)

Legend:

◆ Creating bilateral labour market information systems as a stepping stone of a future regional (EU-Med) labour market information system

■ Promoting and concluding effective Mobility Partnerships

▲ Differentiated approach towards partner countries when offering incentives for channelling legal migration

● Visa facilitation schemes to encourage temporary stays

△ Open labour market access to asylum seekers and refugees

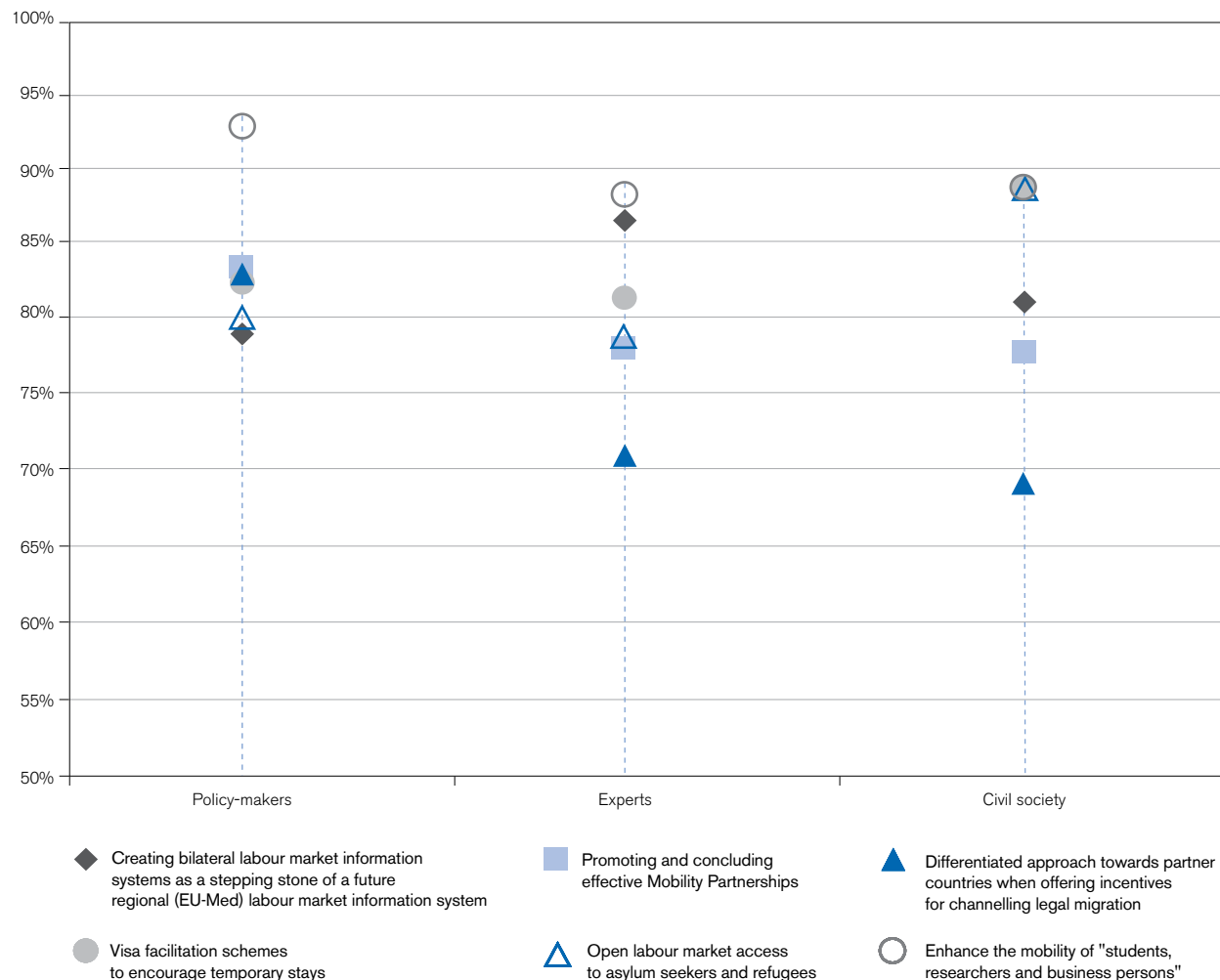○ Enhance the mobility of "students, researchers and business persons"

Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 7th Euromed Survey/Question 16

MPC respondents are more inclined than EU-28 ones to creating bilateral labour market information systems as a stepping stone to a future regional (EU-Med) labour market information system, as well as to a differentiated approach towards partner countries when offering incentives for channelling legal migration.

Civil society participants are more favourable than others to open labour market access to asylum seekers and refugees, and to establish visa facilitation schemes to encourage temporary stays (see Graph 29). Policy-makers are the most inclined to promote and conclude effective mobility partnerships and to establish a differentiated approach towards partner countries when offering incentives for channelling legal migration, as well as to enhance the mobility of students, researchers and business persons. Experts are more open than other categories to the possibility of creating bilateral labour market information systems as a stepping-stone to a future regional (EU-Med) labour market information system.

Graph 29: To what extent should the following legal migration channels be promoted to enhance human mobility in the Euro-Mediterranean region? Respondents by institutional affiliation.
(The graph below shows the % of high and very high extent)

Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 7th Euromed Survey/Question 16

Legend:
- ◆ Creating bilateral labour market information systems as a stepping stone of a future regional (EU-Med) labour market information system
- ⬛ Promoting and concluding effective Mobility Partnerships
- ▲ Differentiated approach towards partner countries when offering incentives for channelling legal migration
- ● Visa facilitation schemes to encourage temporary stays
- △ Open labour market access to asylum seekers and refugees
- ○ Enhance the mobility of "students, researchers and business persons"

The EU should avoid creating high, unrealistic expectations to third countries, given the unfavourable labour market situation in many EU member states. On the other hand, many EU member states need to better identify the needs of their labour markets and admit that high unemployment rates may coexist with vacancies in certain sectors or professions.

Greek respondent

What about a "European" rather than a "bilateral" labour market information system.

Polish respondent

Il faut éviter une sorte de migration sélective qui vide les pays d'origine des jeunes les plus qualifiés. Une évaluation des besoins des marchés doit se faire ici et là. L'immigration circulaire reste toujours une bonne option. La facilitation des visas casserait l'emprise des passeurs sur les flux migratoires (irréguliers).

Palestinian respondent

Mobility partnership should also be reformed focusing less through a security lens on migration and with fewer instrumentalist approaches. In Europe there is also a lack of low-skilled migration, not only a high-skilled one. Above all, we need the dynamism that migration brings in the labour market, their entrepreneurial capacity and their resilience.

United Kingdom respondent

Selective mobility has been the guiding line in all migration-related policies thus far, including mobility partnerships. This is a faulty logic and strengthens inequalities and the perceptions of injustice further.

Finnish respondent

Visas for search for employment in EU member states should also be considered. These visas could have a fixed six-month duration, for example. This type of visa could first be delivered to highly-skilled workers or to workers in shortage occupations in the EU labour markets.

Egyptian respondent

Creating alternative possibilities to stay for reasons of work or other reasons.

Swedish respondent

## BORDER MANAGEMENT: SEA RESCUE, SECURING THE EXTERNAL BORDERS AND HOTSPOTS

This second part of the block has three questions focusing on border management. Respondents were asked to assess the reintroduction of controls at internal Schengen borders as well as the performance of some of the most important instruments deployed to deal with the inflow of refugees and migrants.

Main findings

• The opinion on the reintroduction of Schengen internal border controls is rather negative, both as an instrument to manage the present migration and refugee situation and as a scenario to be used further.
• The reintroduction of internal border controls is seen as inconsistent with the EU member states' international obligation towards refugees.
• The main priority in order to restore the full functioning of the Schengen area is to support frontline states.
• Asked about the performance of various operations deployed in the Mediterranean, respondents identify that, overall, the Italy-led Mare Nostrum sea rescue operation performed rather well. Southern and Southeast Mediterranean respondents consider that the EU CSDP operation EUNAVFOR MED has performed better. Policy-makers, in turn, consider that the Frontex-led operation Triton border control and surveillance operation performed best.
• Results show very low support for outsourcing or externalising border control to third countries.

This block dedicated to border management starts with an assessment of the temporary reintroduction of internal Schengen borders. Results show that respondents do not have a positive opinion about the reintroduction of Schengen controls, both as an instrument to manage the present migration and refugee situation and as a scenario to be further used (see Graph 30). Results are quite convergent, with only limited variations following geographical or professional patterns.

Graph 30: Some Schengen countries reintroduced controls at internal Schengen borders in autumn 2015. Do you agree with the following statements?
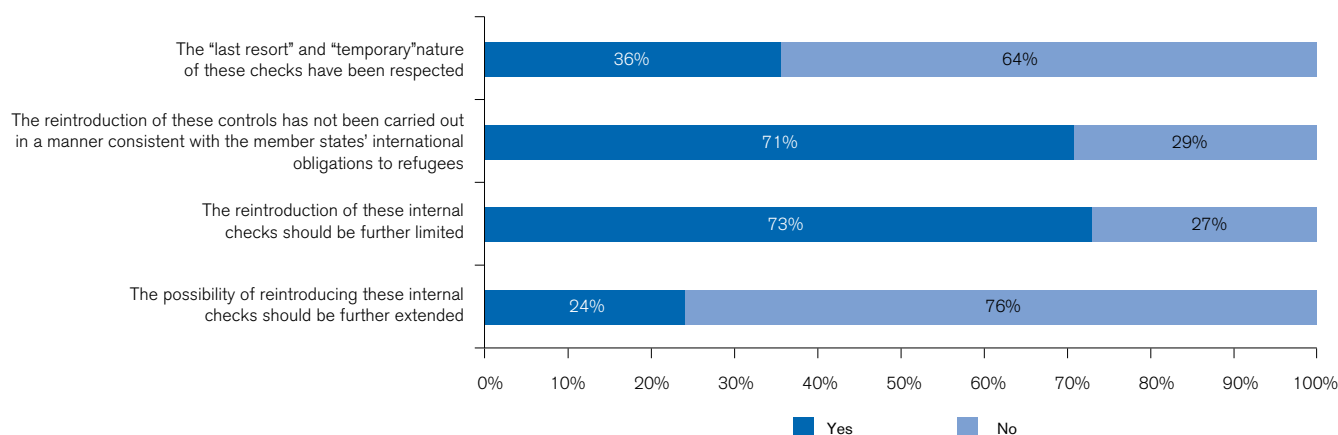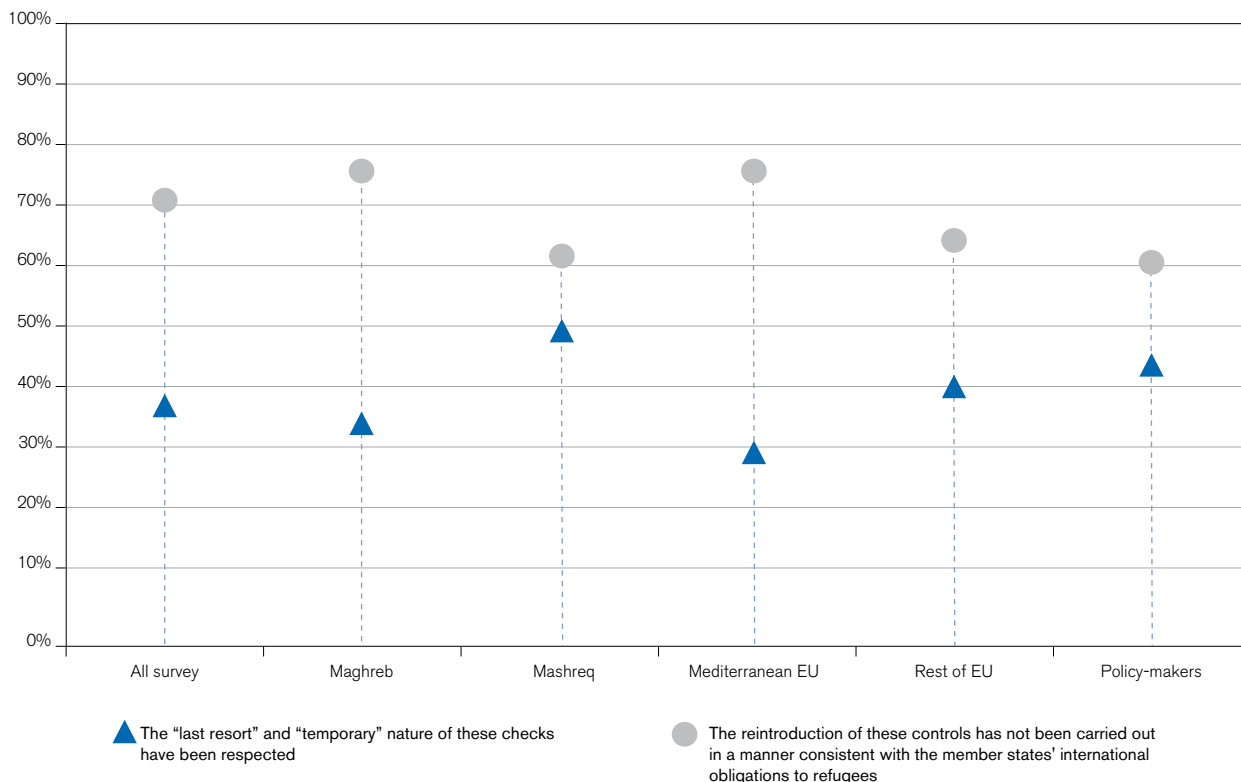

Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 7th Euromed Survey/Question 17

The reintroduction of controls is broadly seen as inconsistent with the EU member states' international obligation towards refugees (71% of all respondents) but this percentage is almost 10 points below this Survey mean among Mashreq respondents, the rest of the EU respondents, as well as among policy-makers (see Graph 31). The same trend can be observed regarding the assessment of respect for the temporary nature of these checks. Only 36% of the respondents think that the "temporary" nature of the reintroduction of these checks has been respected. Respondents from Mashreq, the rest of the EU and policy-makers stay above this mean, while Maghreb and EU Mediterranean countries are below (see Graph 31).

Graph 31: Some Schengen countries reintroduced controls at internal Schengen borders in autumn 2015. Do you agree with the following statements?

(The graph below shows de % of "yes" by groups of countries)

▲ The "last resort" and "temporary" nature of these checks have been respected

● The reintroduction of these controls has not been carried out in a manner consistent with the member states' international obligations to refugees

Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 7th Euromed Survey/Question 17

Unilateral national actions are not usually beneficial. But if there was an attempt to prohibit them, radical Eurosceptic, anti-EU and anti-immigration parties would win.
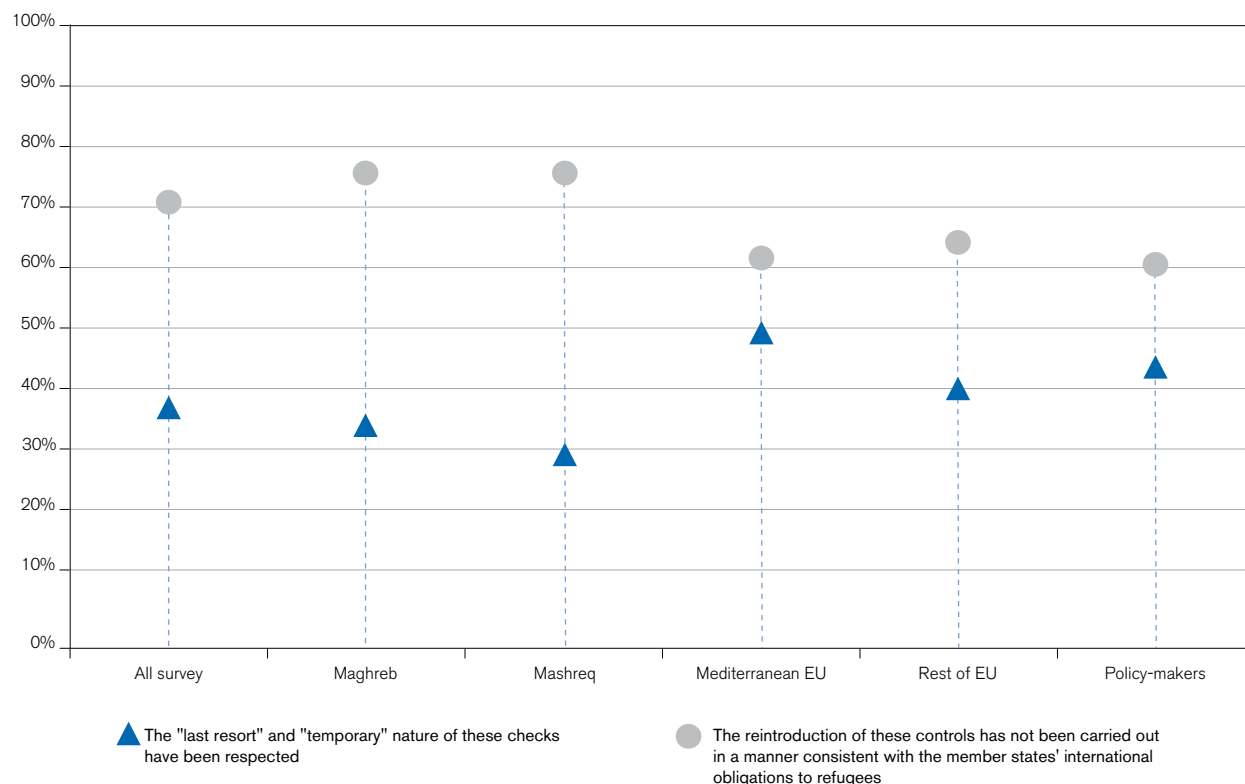
Czech respondent

The temporary character of these measures should be made clear, as well as the applicability limits and at least provisional limits to extension or renewal of the provisions and the criteria that apply.

Swedish respondent

In line with the results described above, there is a strong opposition to further extend internal checks (71% of the answers) combined with a high percentage of respondents approving further limits on the reintroduction of internal checks (67%). Here, differences among groups of respondents are less significant, although two differentiated groups follow closer patterns again: Maghreb and EU Mediterranean countries on the one hand, and Mashreq, the rest of the EU and policy-makers on the other (see Graph 32).

Graph 32: Some Schengen countries reintroduced controls at internal Schengen borders in autumn 2015. Do you agree with the following statements?

(The graph below shows de % of "yes" by groups of countries)

▲ The "last resort" and "temporary" nature of these checks have been respected

● The reintroduction of these controls has not been carried out in a manner consistent with the member states' international obligations to refugees

Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 7th Euromed Survey/Question 17
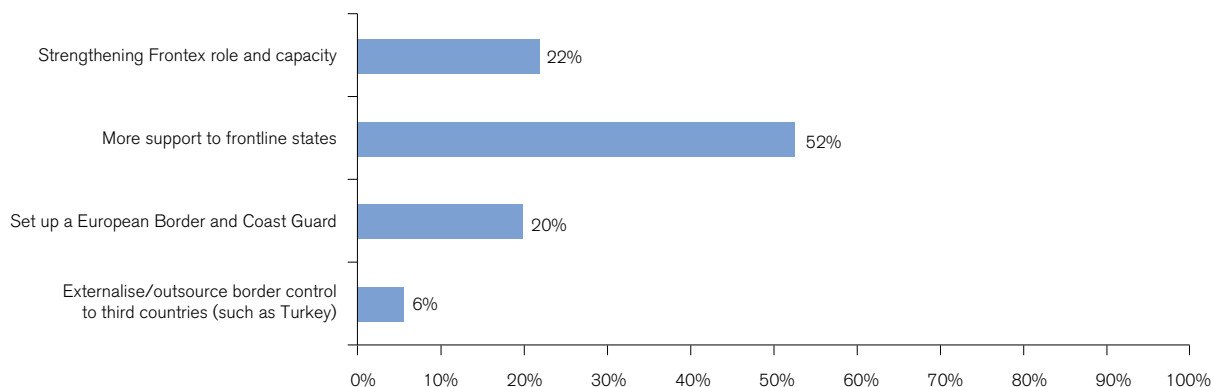
Border controls have never managed to reduce irregular crossings. They only make journeys (on land or by sea) more dangerous. Have EU countries read the Frontex reports of the last 3 years? What were these attempts trying to achieve? It is not clear. Most people wanted to help migrants. It is clear from the number of volunteers helping them. This only helps the far right.

United Kingdom respondent

In order to restore the full functioning of the Schengen area, including the protection of the Schengen external borders, respondents think that supporting frontline states is the best option (52% of the answers). On the other side, only 6% mentioned externalising to third countries as a measure that should be promoted. In between, 22% of the respondents mentioned strengthening the Frontex role and capacity and 20% mentioned setting up a border Coast Guard.

Graph 33: In order to restore the full functioning of the Schengen area, including the protection of the Schengen external borders, what measure should be promoted as a matter of priority?
(% of answers by all respondents)

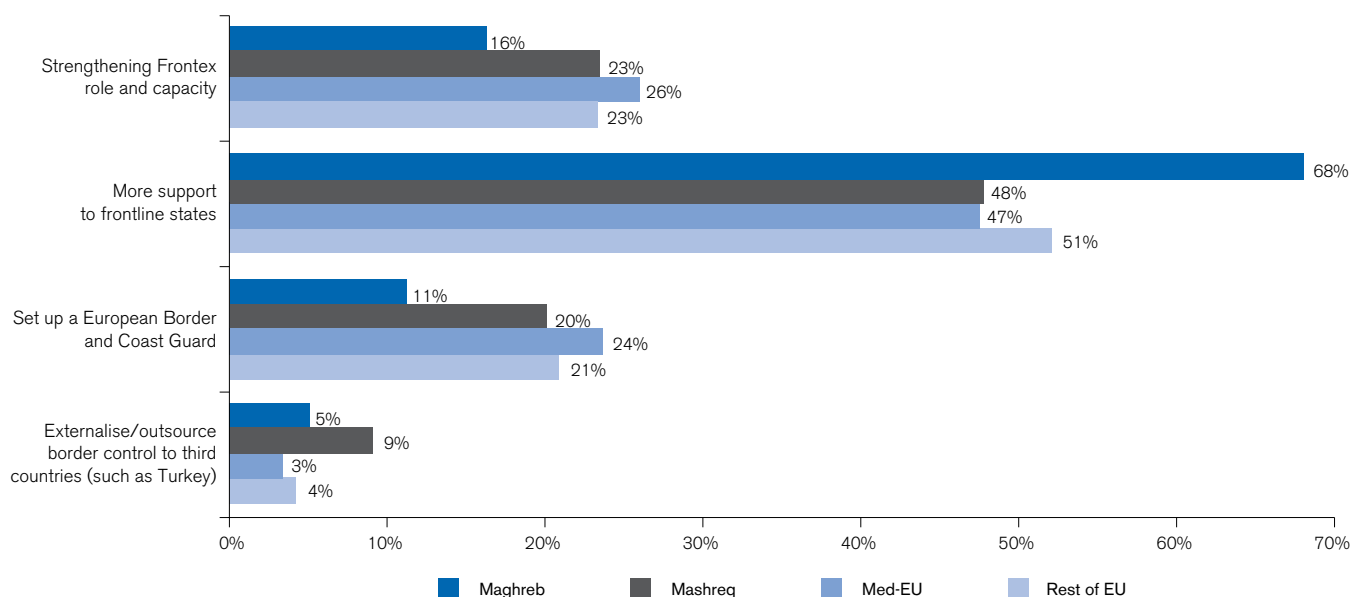| Measure	%
Strengthening Frontex role and capacity	22%
More support to frontline states	52%
Set up a European Border and Coast Guard	20%
Externalise/outsource border control to third countries (such as Turkey)	6%

Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 7th Euromed Survey/Question 18

Some variations among groups of respondents can be highlighted. In responses from Maghreb countries, support for frontline states is assessed as a priority for almost 70% of respondents. In EU Med countries, this figure is below the mean (47%), while this category is the only one for which the addition of strengthening Frontex (26%) and setting up a European Border and Coast Guard (24%) is higher than more support for frontline states (see Graph 34).

Graph 34: In order to restore the full functioning of the Schengen area, including the protection of the Schengen external borders, what measure should be promoted as a matter of priority?
(% of answers by group of countries)

Measure	Maghreb	Mashreq	Med-EU	Rest of EU
Strengthening Frontex role and capacity	16%	23%	26%	23%
More support to frontline states	68%	48%	47%	51%
Set up a European Border and Coast Guard	11%	20%	24%	21%
Externalise/outsource border control to third countries (such as Turkey)	5%	9%	3%	4%

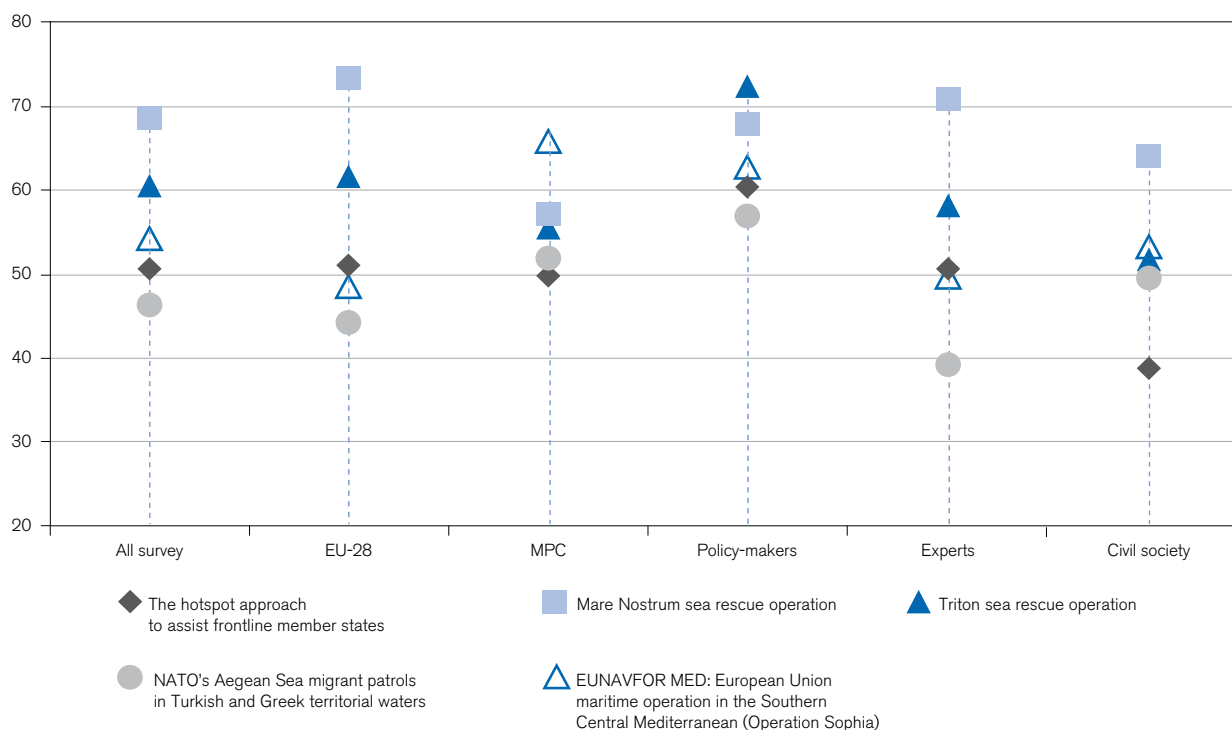Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 7th Euromed Survey/Question 18

The next question related to specific operations carried out in the Mediterranean. Overall, the Italy-led Mare Nostrum sea rescue operation is assessed as having had a good or very good performance in the Survey mean and by almost all groups of respondents.

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However, the assessment of the performance of these missions in dealing with the inflows of refugees and migrants varies depending on the group of respondents. MPC respondents better rated the performance of the EU EUNAVFOR MED operation while policy-makers better rated the performance of the Frontex-led Triton border control and surveillance operation (see Graph 35), which is also the second best performing instrument according to the overall results.

Instruments that are assessed to have a lower performance, though with some variations among groups, are the NATO Aegean Sea migrant patrols (lowest assessments is given by experts) and the Hotspots approach to assist frontline member states (civil society respondents place it in the lower position). See Graph 35

Graph 35: How would you assess the performance of the following instruments in dealing with the inflow of refugees and migrants? Respondents by group of countries and institutional affiliation.
(The graph below shows the % of good and very good answers)

The hotspot approach
to assist frontline member states

NATO's Aegean Sea migrant patrols
in Turkish and Greek territorial waters

Mare Nostrum sea rescue operation

EUNAVFOR MED: European Union
maritime operation in the Southern
Central Mediterranean (Operation Sophia)

Triton sea rescue operation

Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 7th Euromed Survey/ Question 19

The hotspot approach was not really a method established in order to assist frontline member states. It was rather a method introduced in order to respond to inflows to the EU and an obligation that, inevitably, frontline states had to assume and undertake on behalf of the whole EU (and thus with the assistance of the EC and other member states).

Greek respondent

Militarisation of refugee and migration policies should be completely avoided. Mare Nostrum was a good operation that included rescue among its objectives. Rescue in Triton is only secondary. It is carried out by NGO operations, not essentially by Triton as such. More resources should go to rescuing migrants crossing the Mediterranean.

Egyptian respondent

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