

# IMPACT OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM

The second block of the Survey aimed to capture respondents' perception about the impact of violent extremism. Questions 7 and 8 look into the mechanisms through which violent extremism can affect security and stability and put the threat of violent extremism into perspective, looking into other existing threats. Questions 9 and 10 relate to specific terrorist attacks and specific terrorist groups and Question 11 focuses on the phenomenon of foreign fighters.

## Main findings

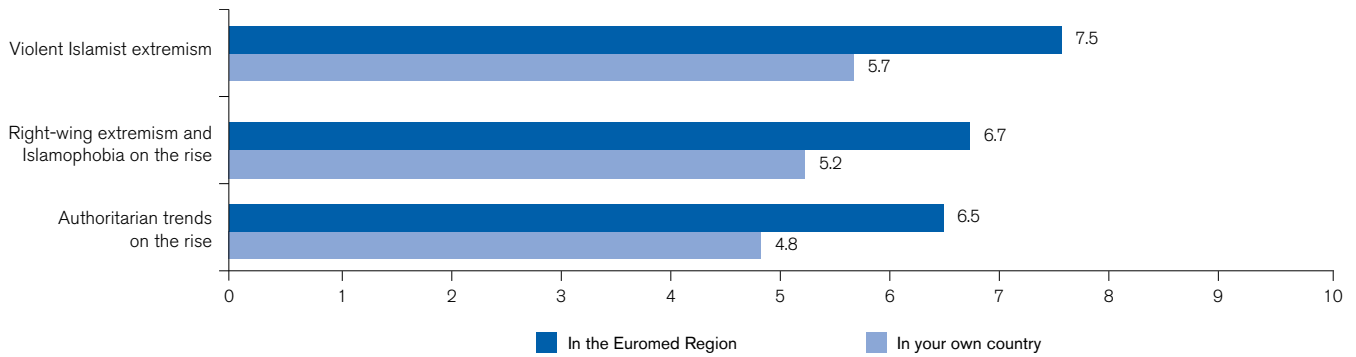
- Violent extremism is perceived as the main threat in the Euro-Mediterranean region. However, other phenomena also affect the stability and security of the region and in particular right-wing extremism and Islamophobia as well as authoritarian trends.
- European respondents fully acknowledge how right-wing extremism and Islamophobia affect the security and stability of their respective countries but when it comes to the Euro-Mediterranean region as a whole, they are more concerned with the authoritarian trends. In turn, respondents from Southern and Southeast Mediterranean countries, while acknowledging the effects of authoritarian trends in some of their countries, think that right-wing extremism and Islamophobia constitute the main threat to the stability of the Euro-Mediterranean region as a whole.
- These threats are linked with each other. Violent extremism fuels Islamophobic and nationalist discourses in some countries and is used to legitimate authoritarian trends in others.
- Looking back to specific attacks that have hit Euro-Mediterranean countries over the last few years, the attacks in Paris are seen as having had the most harmful impact on the stability of the Euro-Mediterranean region as a whole, followed by the attacks in Tunisia.
- The main perverse effect of those attacks is that they risk undermining cohesion in culturally diverse societies.
- Defeating Daesh will neither be easy nor sufficient. In a possible “post-Daesh” scenario, some existing organisations such as Al-Qaeda are likely to take the lead or new organisations are likely to emerge.
- Respondents, especially those from the Maghreb, associate the threat of violent extremism with the threat from foreign terrorist fighters.
- Tackling the foreign fighters threat requires as a matter of priority improving cooperation between countries (including information sharing). Dealing with foreign fighters returning to their home countries only through a repressive angle will not be enough. Preventing them from returning to their country of origin is not an option for a majority of respondents.

## ON SECURITY AND STABILITY

The objective of **Question 7** was to put “Violent Islamist extremism” into perspective, comparing its impact with two other phenomena. Respondents were invited to evaluate these threats first in their own country and second in the Euro-Mediterranean region as a whole.

Overall, “Violent extremism” is seen as the most significant threat to stability and security, followed by “Right-wing extremism and Islamophobia” and by “Authoritarian trends”.

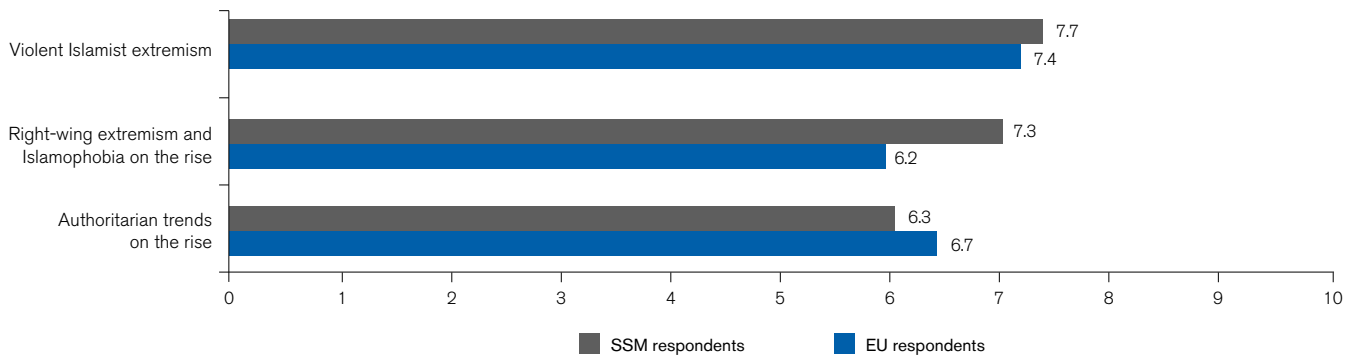
**Graph 15: To what extent do you consider that the following phenomena threaten the stability and security?**  
(mean 0-very low extent, 10-very high extent)



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

However, it can be observed that the perception of these threats is consistently more acute when looking at responses from EU countries and SSM countries.

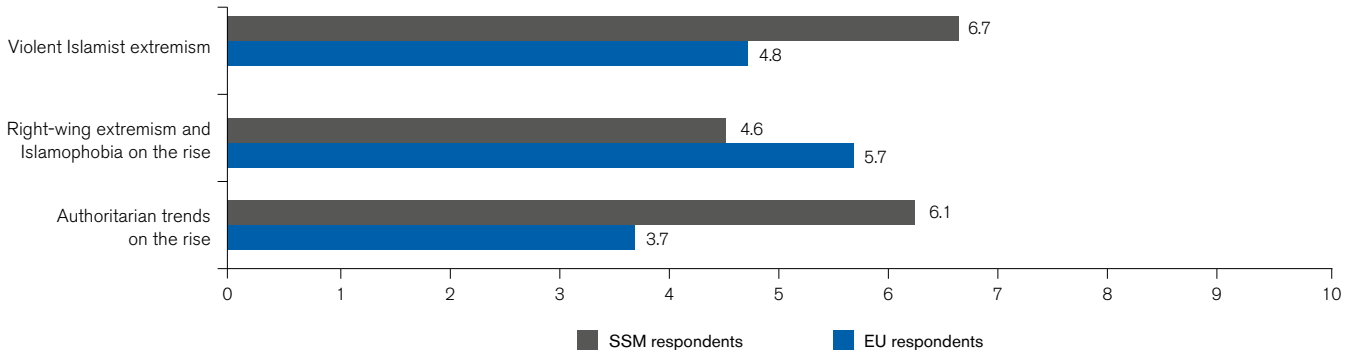
**Graph 16: To what extent do you consider that the following phenomena threaten the stability and security of the Euro-Mediterranean countries and societies as a whole?**  
(mean 0-very low extent, 10-very high extent)



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

European respondents are prone to acknowledge that Islamophobia and right-wing extremism constitute a bigger threat to their respective countries (see Graph 17), they are less prone to do so for the whole Euro-Mediterranean region (while respondents from Southern and Southeast Mediterranean countries do consider this threat as more significant for the whole region, see Graph 16).

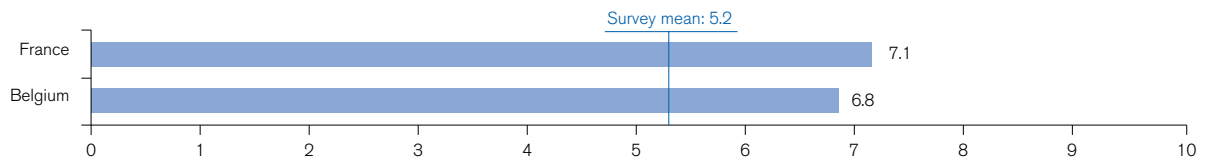
**Graph 17: To what extent do you consider that the following phenomena threaten the stability and security of your own country?**  
(mean 0-very low extent, 10-very high extent)



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

The results of the Survey show an acute awareness among EU (and also Israeli) respondents about the threat of right-wing extremism and Islamophobia in their own countries, in particular in France and Belgium.

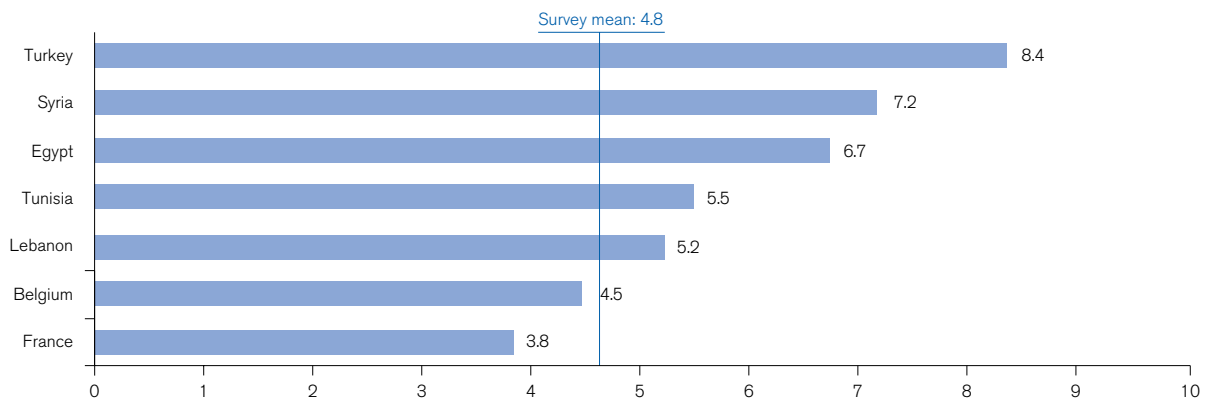
**Graph 18: To what extent do you consider that right-wing extremism and Islamophobia threaten the stability and security of your country?**  
(mean 0-very low extent, 10-very high extent)



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

In turn, respondents from Southern and Southeast Mediterranean countries are more prone to consider that authoritarian trends threaten the stability of the security of their respective countries (see Graph 17) than they are to consider this threat as significant for the Euro-Mediterranean region (while EU respondents do consider this threat as more significant for the whole region, see Graph 16).

**Graph 19: To what extent do you consider that Authoritarian trends on the rise threaten the stability and security of your country?**  
(mean 0-very low extent, 10-very high extent)

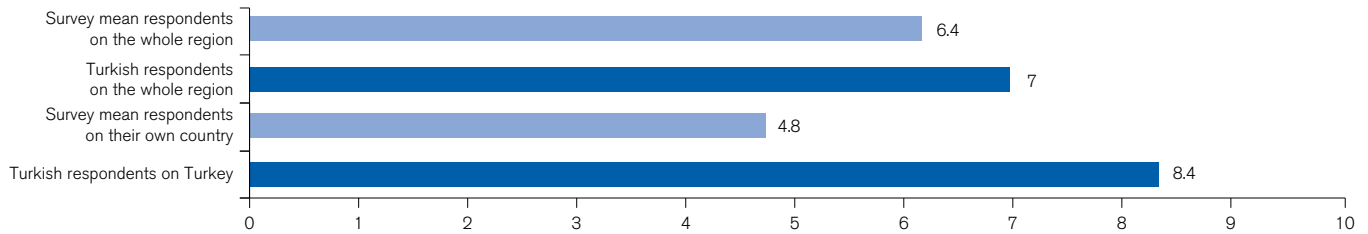


Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 8th Euromed Survey

Turkish respondents identify the rise of authoritarian trends both in Turkey and in the whole region as the most significant threat.

**Graph 20: To what extent do you consider that Authoritarian trends on the rise threatens the stability and security?**

(mean 0-very low extent, 10-very high extent)



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

Below is a selection of comments formulated in relation to the main threats.

À mon sens, ce qui menace la stabilité du pays c'est l'échec chaque année de toute réforme des secteurs sociaux, notamment l'éducation et la santé ainsi que l'absence de mesures rigoureuses pour améliorer la gouvernance de ces secteurs ainsi que d'autres secteurs.

Moroccan respondent

In most of the Arab world, external intervention (in all forms) is a more likely reason than the ones above. This of course is particularly true for Palestine.

Palestinian respondent

I would also like to mention the rise of right-wing extremism as a strong threat to Turkey's stability and security. But in Turkey right-wing extremism is not related to Islamophobia; on the contrary with ultra-nationalist and Islamist extremism.

Turkish respondent

Instead of authoritarian trends, I would prefer to name the factor of controversial counter-terrorism and national security measures which can be subjectively perceived or furthermore framed as experiences of humiliation and repression by the state inviting "us" versus "them" discourses.

German respondent

In the open comments, respondents also establish links between the three different phenomena, thereby anticipating Question 8:

The Western world insists on its basic values, but sees itself forced to limit the implementation of those values to some of that in order to be able to fight extremism and avoid losing the values altogether. The main risks are that the right-wing populists gain support and take over if nothing is done against Islamic extremism, and that on the other hand measures against extremism end up stirring up more extremism.

Danish respondent

L'extrémisme violent génère et entretient les deux autres substrats proposés ici.

Mauritanian respondent

The difficulty here lies in the fact that authoritarianism feeds violent extremism, and in Europe, for strictly internal political reasons, Islamophobia is on the rise as the new scapegoat.

French respondent

The authoritarian trend, albeit unfortunate from a civil rights perspective, has side aspects that might help curb violence. Some within European countries seem to be willing to make that trade.

Lebanese respondent

L'islamophobie et la xénophobie ont leur part incontestable dans la montée des violences pas seulement depuis 2001.

Moroccan respondent

I believe right-wing extremism and Islamophobia and violent extremism feed each other.

Egyptian respondent

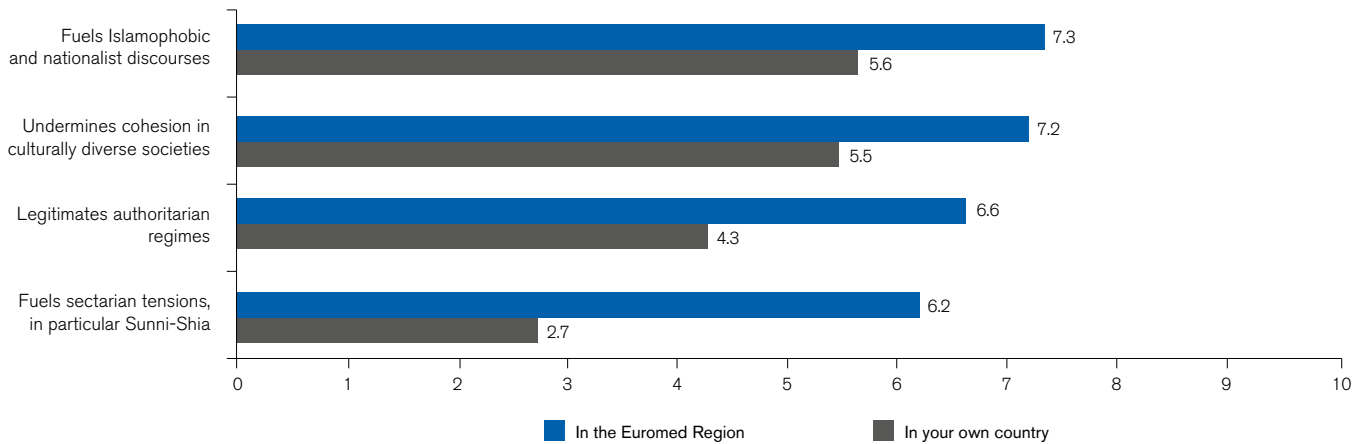
**Question 8** goes beyond the immediate, direct and most visible effects of violent extremism for countries' stability, namely the harm caused by terrorist attacks, and focuses on four non-exclusive mid- and long-term indirect consequences of violent extremism. Respondents were asked to evaluate through which mechanisms these attacks were threatening long-term stability of the Euro-Mediterranean region.

Results show that terrorist attacks are harmful mainly because they undermine cohesion in culturally diverse societies and because they fuel Islamophobic and nationalist discourses. The third element put forward is that they are used to legitimate authoritarian trends.

Answers from respondents regarding their own countries show the same patterns, but these indirect consequences are considered to affect their country to a lesser extent than the Euro-Mediterranean region as a whole (see Graph 21).

**Graph 21: In addition to the harm caused by terrorist attacks as such, to what extent do you consider that the following indirect effects of violent extremism threaten the stability of the Euro-Mediterranean space and your own country?**

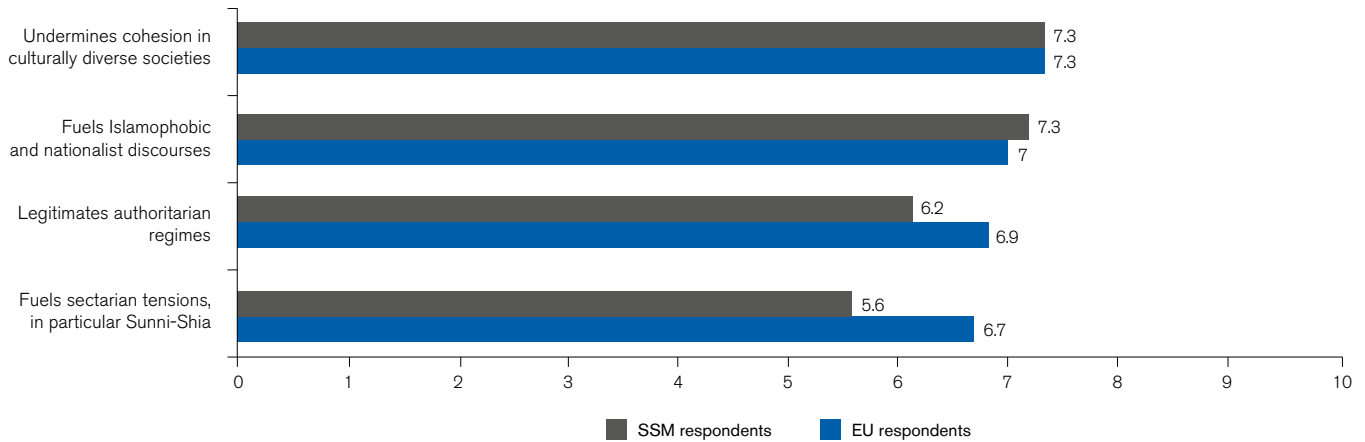
(mean 0-very low extent, 10-very high extent)



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

Answers of respondents from EU countries as well as from Southern and Southeast Mediterranean countries are rather homogeneous overall with a slight variation when it comes to the legitimization of authoritarian regimes and the sectarian tensions, whereby EU respondents show a higher concern (see Graph 22).

**Graph 22: In addition to the harm caused by terrorist attacks as such, to what extent do you consider that the following indirect effects of violent extremism threaten the stability of the Euro-Mediterranean space? (mean 0=very low extent, 10=very high extent)**



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

In the open comments, a number of respondents added that violent extremism also leads to securitisation of policies, which can be at the expense of civil rights and freedoms:

[...] terrorist attacks may not legitimate authoritarian regimes, but [they] have legitimated security policies and approaches with consequences for human rights and freedom guarantees.

Spanish respondent

L'approche sécuritaire revient en force au détriment des libertés [...].

Moroccan respondent

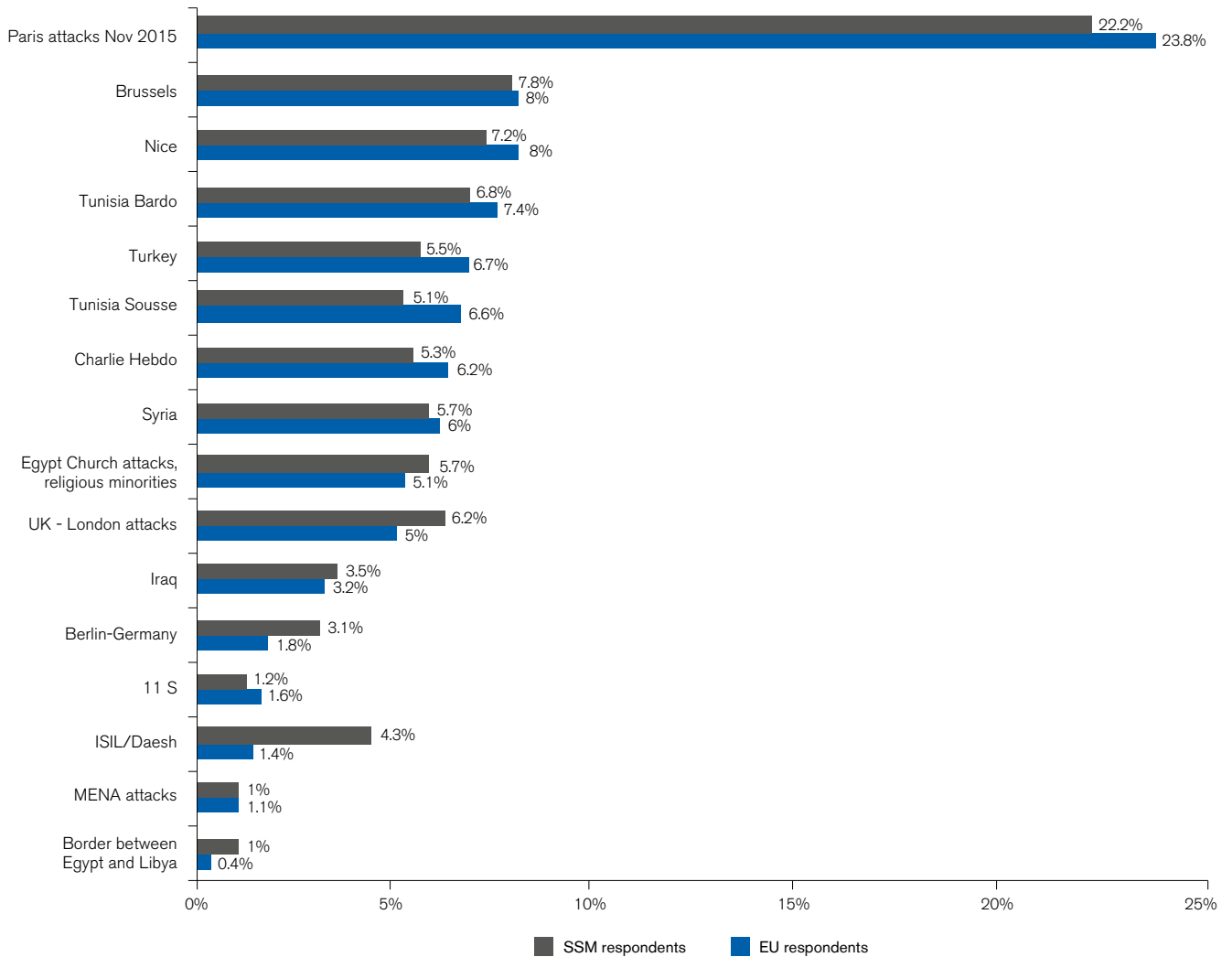
## TERRORIST ATTACKS AND TERRORIST GROUPS

**Question 9** was open-ended and aimed to sound out respondents on the terrorist attacks they perceived as most harmful to the stability of the Euro-Mediterranean region.

The ad hoc categories shown in Graph 23 were developed based on the results obtained (some respondents referred to a specific attack, while others gave a more general answer indicating a country that has been targeted rather than a specific attack). Results show that 56% of the answers referred to attacks that happened in EU countries while 44% referred to attacks in the Southern and Southeast Mediterranean countries. Overall, the most mentioned country is France: 38% of respondents refer to one of the main attacks that hit the country over the last few years. The most-frequently chosen specific attack is the November 2015 attacks in Paris (24% of all responses). Tunisia is the second most mentioned country (13%).

When looking at the most recurrent answers, it can be seen that there are no major differences between the answers from the North or the Southern rim of the Mediterranean (see Graph 23).

**Graph 23: In your opinion, which terrorist attack(s) do you consider the most harmful to the stability of the Euro-Mediterranean region as a whole over the last few years?**  
(categories developed from the open-ended answers)



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

As illustrated in the open comments, respondents fear that attacks in EU countries may jeopardise social cohesion, polarise attitudes towards Muslim populations and trigger a securitisation of policy responses at the expense of civil liberties. In Southern and Southeast Mediterranean countries, respondents stressed the political, social but also economic impacts of such attacks. Open responses also show that beyond national effects, respondents are fully sensitised with the truly regional Euro-Mediterranean impact of such attacks.

The Paris attacks in November 2015 were indiscriminate (everybody could have been a target, including Muslims), the attacks on the Charlie Hebdo office targeted specifically the concept of freedom of expression. These attacks were more dangerous because they specifically tried to amplify a divide within Europe (Muslims and non-Muslims) and between Europe and the Middle East.

German respondent

While the attacks (in European cities) garnered the most attention as they hit at the heart of the EU, other attacks on the southern banks of the Mediterranean had a major socioeconomic impact in the countries affected, such as the Bardo and Sousse attacks in Tunisia as well as the Russian flight downing in the Sinai. The economic impact of these attacks continues to exert tremendous pressures on those countries causing further instability and disintegrating social cohesion.

Moroccan respondent

Terrorist attacks across the MENA region are constantly undermining the state capacity and the economic performance from most of their countries. This brings more instability into the region as a whole as it affects negatively not only the country which suffered the attack but also its neighbours. Moreover, it fosters the expansion of terrorism to other countries.

Spanish respondent

### Some of the answers point out how specific countries are affected:

Attacks in Europe can have an impact on public opinion and change election results, fostering extremist propaganda. Attacks in Southern Mediterranean countries raise the tension level, leading to radicalisation and other attacks.

Italian respondent

Le Bataclan a été une horreur car l'attaque a touché tout le monde sans distinction de race, de religion, de classe sociale, l'objectif était la terreur, la division, la remise en question du modèle français et européen d'ouverture et de partage. Le Bardo car il vise le seul État du Printemps arabe qui a en partie réussi sa Révolution, et les attaques ont touché le tourisme, sa principale ressource économique, créant le chaos, la récession, le chômage, la fuite des investisseurs...

Tunisian respondent

Je pense que ces attaques reflètent assez bien le jeu de miroir qui est en train de s'installer et qui risque de fausser au passage l'analyse des experts sur la question. En effet, les attaques en Europe ont engendré les fantasmes sur le « Musulman barbare » (cf. PEGIDA en Allemagne), alors que l'attaque du musée Bardo se veut une forte symbolique d'un rejet de l'Occident, des touristes occidentaux et de leurs valeurs.

French respondent

### Other answers underline the regional and sub-regional impact of terrorist attacks:

L'attaque du Mali par les groupes terroristes et le fait qu'ils ont mis en place pendant quelques mois un « état islamiste » a boosté le terrorisme dans la région et l'intervention française pour rétablir l'ordre a constitué un justificatif « légitime » pour les terroristes d'intensifier leurs attaques et opérations (Cote d'Ivoire, Niger, Burkina...). Concernant la Libye, la chute de Ghaddafi a été à l'origine d'une grave déstabilisation de la sous-région (dissémination des armes, soulèvement de groupes terroristes...).

Mauritanian respondent

The continuation of the war in Syria would create new extremist and terrorist entities along the lines of ISIS and other organisations such as Gabht al-Nosra, Ahrar al-Sham, and thus the effects of this extremist and violent environment will expand to the outside world. The terrorist attacks in Turkey reflected the extent of Turkey's involvement in the conflicts in the Middle East and its embrace of a number of extremist Islamic movements and extremist groups in Syria, which has prolonged the conflict and threatens to turn Turkey into a transit route for extremists and terrorists to Europe.

Polish respondent



Targeting civilians, especially if there are women and children, creates waves of anger and hate that lead to a circle of violence.

Palestinian respondent

Some answers point to the need to make a distinction between the terror attacks and the violence in conflict zones:

I would rather believe that the instability of the region is not necessarily linked to a specific attack, but rather to instability in some of the countries like Libya, Syria and Iraq. On the public opinion effects, probably the Paris attack and the Bardo and Sousse attacks seriously affected the perception of security of Europe on one side and inflicted a serious economic loss in a country like Tunisia.

Italian respondent

I think it is very difficult to pinpoint just two attacks; the attacks in Europe (such as the ones in Paris and Brussels) definitely had an immense impact but if one considers numerous attacks in Libya and Syria as terrorist attacks then these are decisively more harmful in the long term.

Polish respondent

Some respondents also express some doubts regarding the need to single out specific attacks:

I don't think ranking terrorist attacks is a desirable approach, in a way. The back side is that thinking in those terms might just function like a confirmation of "message received" and could encourage a continuation as "the bigger, the better", a race in a way of who can scare more. Purposely ignoring or leaving out the details, such as anonymising those who want to become famous no matter for what – terror just as well, if it works. If the response or the result is not the expected one, it may become much less interesting to continue.

Swedish respondent

All terrorist attacks are harmful to the stability of the Euro-Mediterranean region, as they amplify the existing tensions between the Arab and the Western countries, cultures and individuals. On the one hand, they fuel the worldwide Islamophobia and, on the other, the anti-Western tendencies in the Arab Muslim world.

Israeli respondent

It is not the individual attack but the constant "flow" of attacks in many different countries that changes matters by giving a sense of insecurity and fear and a sense of a need to take drastic measures to counter that. This is very harmful to the general perception of the balance to be found between security and liberty. There is clearly a tendency that people are ready to renounce on certain issues so far regarded as essential (private life, data protection, extended police powers...).

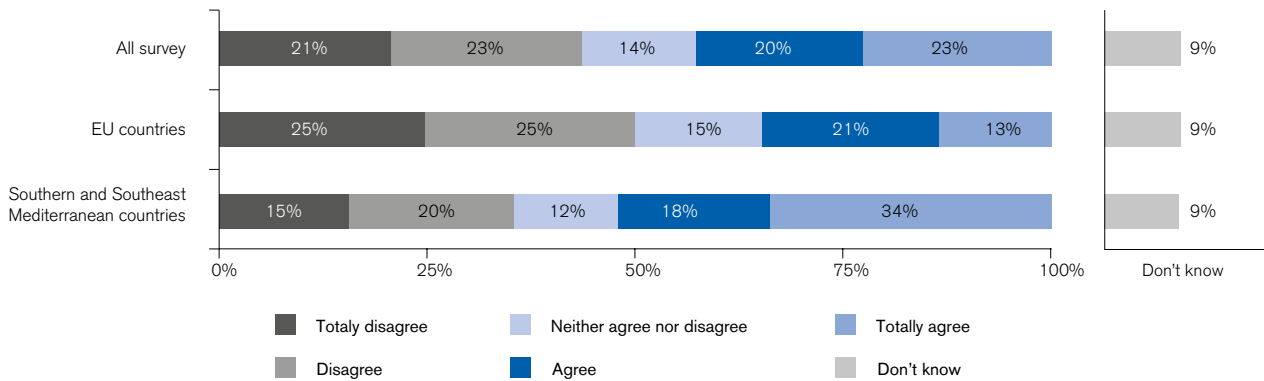
Danish respondent

**Questions 10a to 10c** were designed to focus on Daesh and more precisely to capture the opinion of respondents on whether Daesh is likely to be completely defeated soon (10a), to what extent defeating or weakening Daesh would be a major contribution to the eradication of violent extremism in the region (10b) and which groups could become a major threat in a possible post-Daesh scenario (10c).

Regarding the likelihood of Daesh being defeated soon, the Survey shows a rather balanced percentage of answers ranging from totally disagree to totally agree (see Graph 24), with EU respondents being less optimistic (34% agree or completely agree that Daesh will be defeated

soon) while Southern and Southeast Mediterranean respondents are rather optimistic (52% agree or totally agree). However, it also appears that respondents from the Mashreq (49% agree or completely agree) and Turkey (39%) seem to be less optimistic than respondents from the Maghreb (59%).

**Graph 24: Regarding specific terrorist groups: Do you agree that Daesh is likely to be completely defeated soon?**



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

Some open-ended answers illustrate the complexity of the fight against Daesh:

Daesh might be dislodged from Mosul and Raqqa. However, that won't spell the end of the group. The decentralised model it has created means that affiliates will continue to exist and operate with loose links to the central leadership in places like the Sahel, Libya, Egypt, Yemen, and Afghanistan. The group will continue to exist within Syria in the absence of a solution to the conflict. In all likelihood, if and when the Syrian conflict is brought to an end subscribers to Daesh ideology will carry their extremism with them back to their countries of origin. The idea of Daesh will also continue to exist and serve as an avenue to express resentment and frustration within Europe among immigrants of second and third generation.

Moroccan respondent

It might be defeated militarily but the mentality will prevail as long as there are organisations that abuse the sense of alienation and discrimination. It might be defeated in Syria and Iraq but they build up their next power base in Libya. Failed countries are easy prey, and I am afraid we will have to live much longer with this phenomenon.

German respondent

Others hint at what it would take to defeat Daesh and the need to simultaneously act in different areas in order to do so:

Not that soon, as there are governments and social groups that benefit from their existence. If the supporting sources are drained, then the defeat of Daesh would be easier.

Jordanian respondent

You cannot defeat Daesh or any other non-state actor with a bombing campaign. This short-sighted Counter Terrorism strategy is likely to undermine long-term goals of removing "terrorists". In fact, and in particular, the drone campaign in countries like Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia may be fuelling more adherents to the Daesh or other extremist ideologies.

Dutch respondent

What would the complete defeat look like? We are talking about an ideology that is adaptive and is claiming a Caliphate that has deep roots in a perversion of a very well established religion.

UK respondent

Looking at history, terrorist groups survive decades (Spain, Ireland, Kashmir, Chechnya). Daesh has the support and logistics of some quarters in neighbouring countries. Daesh mantra will go on as long as there is a perception of double standards vis-a-vis Muslim communities, injustice, unfair treatment of Muslim groups in an indiscriminate manner.

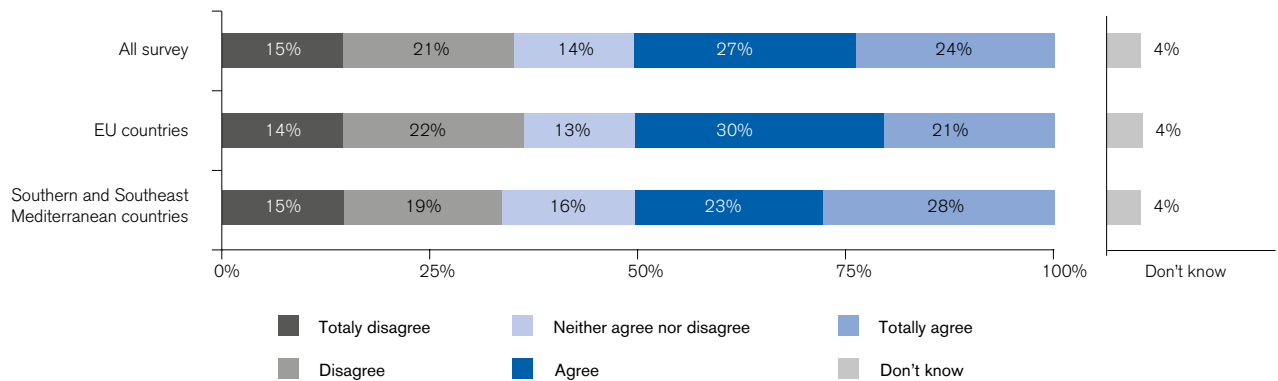
Algerian respondent

Their territorial power will shrink; nevertheless, ideological and conflict ideas will be furthermore spread by communication channels and personal networks, and will decentralise the risk of Daesh-linked terror attacks.

German respondent

Question 10b goes one step further and asks whether the hypothetical defeating or weakening of Daesh would represent a major contribution to the eradication of the violent extremism threat in the Euro-Mediterranean region. Overall, 51% of respondents agree or totally agree with this statement. Mirroring the results of Question 10a, results here show that the percentage of those who totally agree with this statement is higher among respondents from Southern and Southeast Mediterranean countries (28%) than among respondents from EU countries (21%).

**Graph 25: Do you agree that defeating or weakening Daesh will be a major contribution to the eradication of the violent extremism threat in the Euro-Mediterranean region?**



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

While acknowledging the importance of defeating Daesh, some respondents elaborate in their open comments on why this would not be enough:

Daesh is an expression of deeper political and sectarian problems and in the region. When these are addressed will we see a decline in violent extremism.

Danish respondent

I am not sure that defeating Daesh will contribute completely to end the violence in the Middle East or the world. I agree that Daesh is a terrorist organisation and it should be defeated but the question here concerns whether the reasons that led to the emergence of Daesh disappeared or still exist.

Palestinian respondent

ISIL may be defeated militarily in Syria and Iraq but the root of the threat, radical-Islamist violent ideology, remains and will be further promoted by either the same organisation or a new one.

Finish respondent

Daesh is a symptom of the illness of the entire Arab region: lack of democracy, lack of citizen rights, lack of economic development, lack of stability and peace.

Lebanese respondent

The next major threat may not even exist yet. Few predicted that Daesh would be the next big threat until it was.

UK respondent

Daesh n'est pas la seule cause. Il faut revenir à l'origine de l'émergence de telles organisations. À savoir, les pensées fondamentalistes wahhabites de quelques pays arabes et leurs alimentations pour d'autres agendas socio-économiques voire géopolitiques de la région en question.

Moroccan respondent

The defeat or weakening of Daesh might have an impact on the radicalisation of European Muslims (loss of a trend). However, in the whole Euro-Mediterranean region there are many other active violent extremist groups that can replace Daesh.

German respondent

L'extrémisme islamiste persistera encore une bonne vingtaine d'années comme phénomène sectaire minoritaire. Il trouvera toujours des jeunes fragiles psychologiquement pour mener des opérations meurtrières.

Algerian respondent

Of course it will be. Even if the idea of Daesh remains alive through the people, it won't be so easy to believe in the power of this ideology if the state doesn't exist. Fidelity in this case is based on the belief in the powerful.

Polish respondent

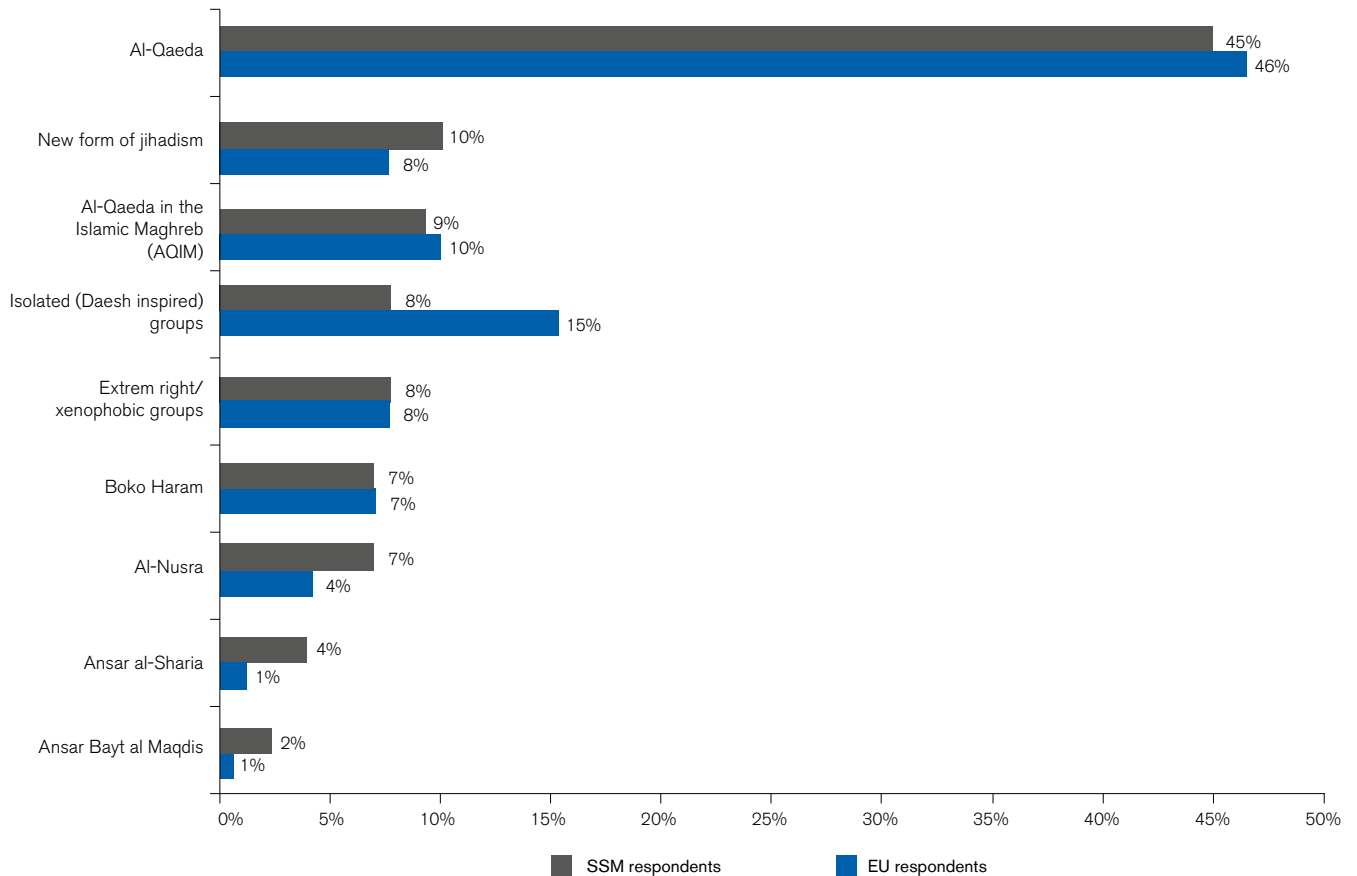
In this possible “post-Daesh” scenario, some existing organisations could take the lead or other organisations could come up, as mentioned repeatedly by respondents in their open comments. The objective of Question 10c was to enquire about which organisations are likely to raise their profile in such a scenario and become a major threat. Nine main categories can be established on the basis of respondents' answers (see Graph 26).

Overall, more than 90% of respondents mentioned “Violent Islamist groups”. Seven percent of respondents mentioned extreme right and xenophobic groups. Al-Qaeda is undoubtedly the terrorist group that would most threaten the Euro-Mediterranean region in such a scenario according to 45% of respondents who cited it (they were given the possibility to name up to two) while another 11% cited the African branch AQIM. Twelve percent of respondents believe that the groups that become major threats will be small, isolated and Daesh-inspired groups and 9% mentioned “New forms of Jihadism”.

Respondents from EU countries as well as from Southern and Southeast Mediterranean countries agree on considering Al-Qaeda as the most significant threat (see Graph 26). The rather limited differences lie in the other categories. EU respondents tend to show more concern with the “Isolated (Daesh-inspired) groups” while respondents from Southern and Southeast Mediterranean countries believe to a greater extent than EU respondents that major threats can derive from groups such as Ansar al-Sharia, Al-Nusra or Boko Haram, without forgetting the “New forms of Jihadism” that may appear.

**Graph 26: In a “post-Daesh” scenario, which terrorist group(s) could become a major threat in the Euro-Mediterranean region?**

(categories developed from the open-ended answers)



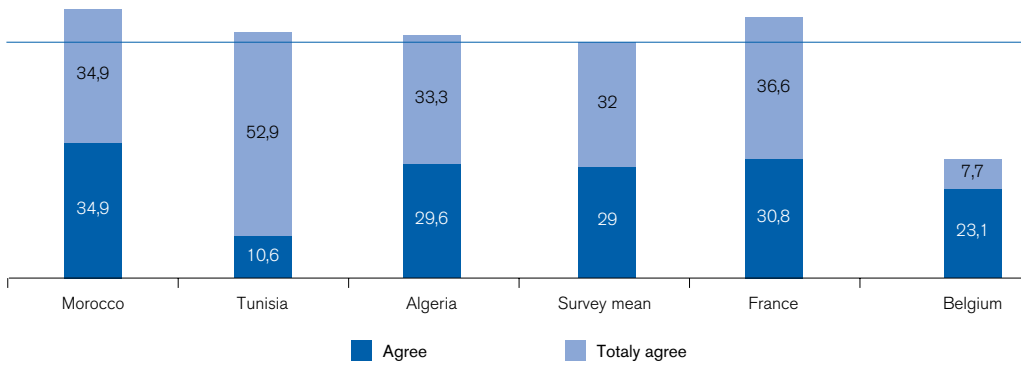
Source: Compiled by the IEMed based on the results of the 8th Euromed Survey

## DEALING WITH FOREIGN TERRORIST FIGHTERS

The last part of this block focuses on the figure of the foreign terrorist fighters. **Question 11a** asks if they represent the main aspect of the violent extremism threat, and **Question 11b** is about how to deal with this issue.

A majority of respondents seem to agree that foreign fighters are one of the most threatening manifestations of violent extremism. 61% of them agree that foreign terrorist fighters represent the biggest threat posed by violent extremism. Respondents from Southern and Southeast Mediterranean countries and in particular in Maghreb countries (as illustrated in Graph 27) seem to be even more inclined to associate the violent extremism threat with foreign fighters than EU respondents (68% of the former and 55% of the latter agree that foreign terrorist fighters represent the main threat). Graph 27 shows that the threat of foreign terrorist fighters is perceived in a particularly acute manner among Tunisian respondents. Graph 27 also illustrates the variance in the answers given by EU respondents, in particular between French and Belgian respondents.

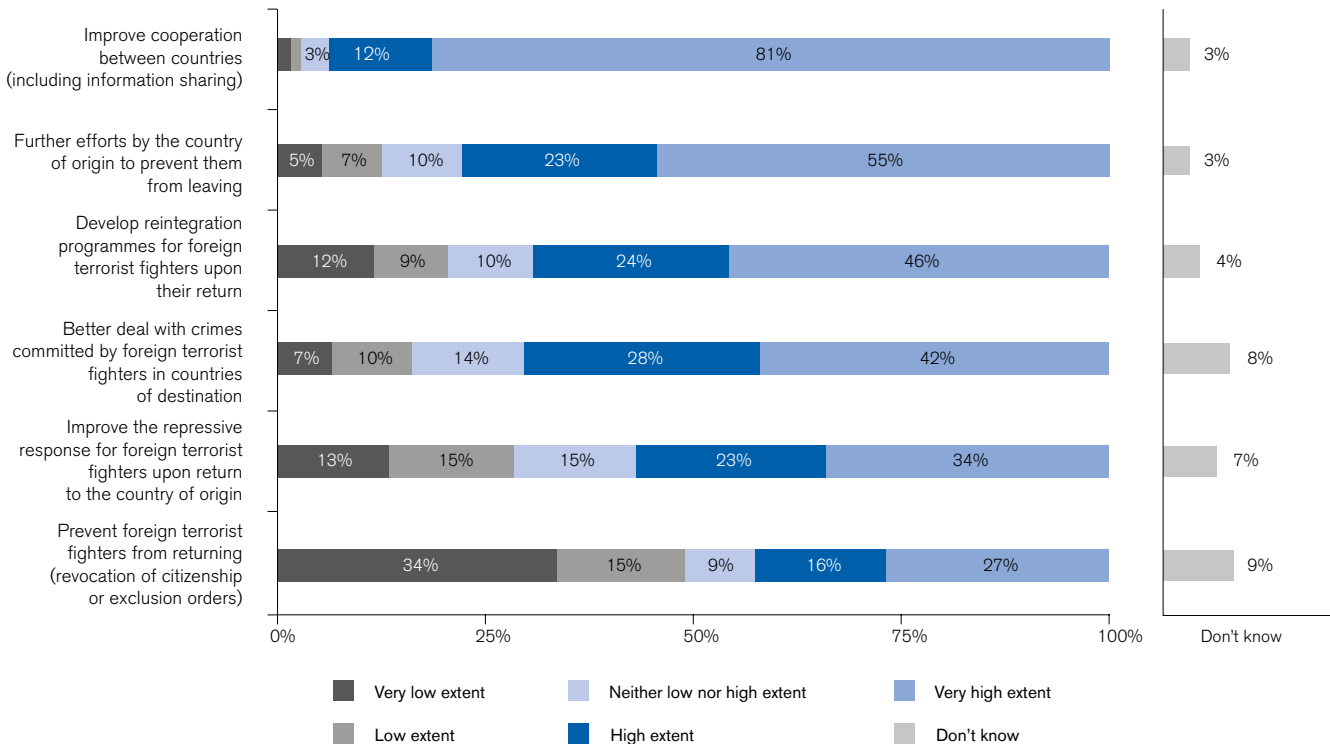
**Graph 27: Do you agree that foreign terrorist fighters (as defined in the United Nations Security Council 2178 resolution) represent the biggest threat posed by violent extremism?**



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

In **Question 11b**, respondents were invited to assess to what extent a number of proposed options should be considered as priorities when it comes to dealing with foreign fighters. Respondents almost unanimously consider that the top priority should be to “Improve cooperation between countries (including information sharing)”. Graph 28 illustrates the intensity of the support for this priority but also the extent to which respondents consider that it is important to “Develop reintegration programmes for foreign terrorist fighters upon their return” and to “Better deal with crimes committed by foreign terrorist fighters in countries of destination”. In turn, respondents support much less the idea of scaling up the repressive response upon the return of foreign fighters and most of them disagree with the idea that foreign fighters should be prevented from returning to their country of origin.

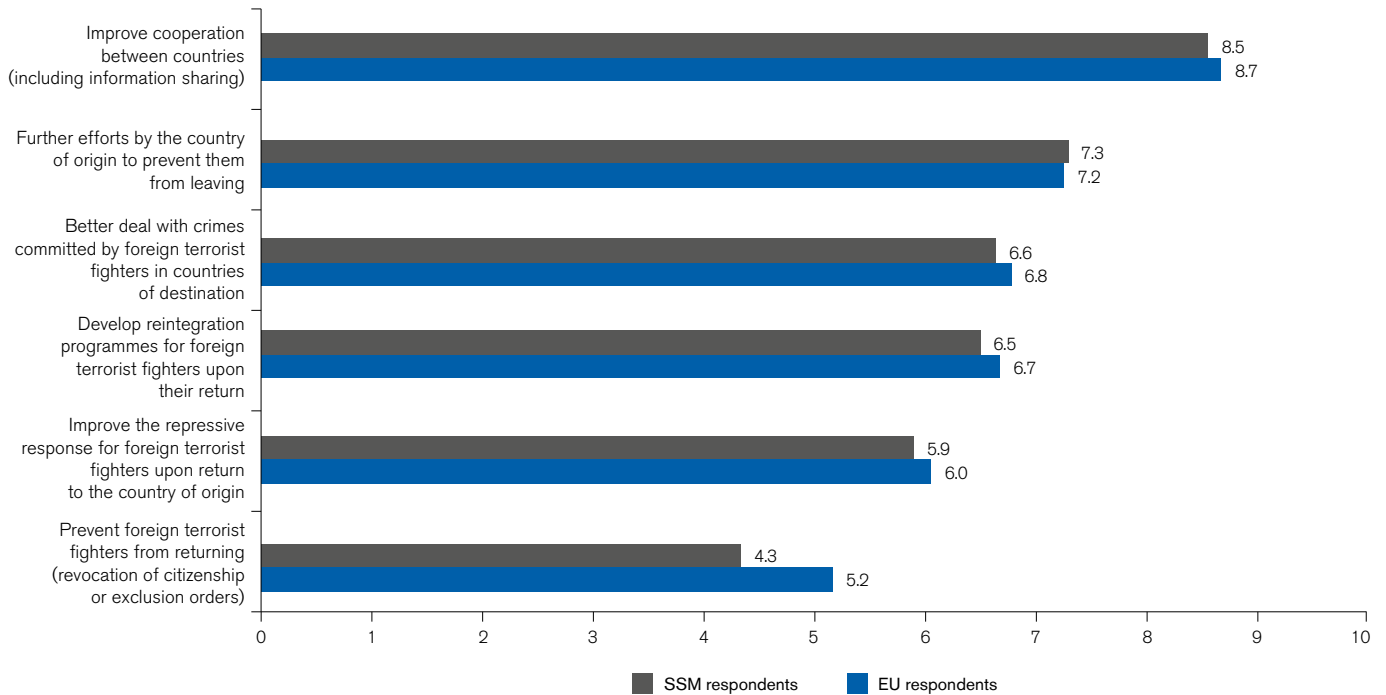
**Graph 28: What should be the priority when it comes to dealing with foreign terrorist fighters (as defined in the United Nations Security Council 2178 resolution)?**



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

The answers are rather homogeneous across the board. The main gap appears in relation with the idea of preventing foreign terrorist fighters from returning: EU respondents seem to be a bit less reluctant with the idea than their counterparts from Southern and Southeast Mediterranean counterparts (see Graph 29).

**Graph 29: What should be the priority when it comes to dealing with foreign terrorist fighters (as defined in the United Nations Security Council 2178 resolution)?**  
(mean 0-very low extent, 10-very high extent)



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

Some open-ended answers illustrate the results above; others stress that the importance of the phenomenon of foreign fighters should not be overrated:

Few attacks have been conducted by foreign fighters. Most terror attacks were committed by home-grown terrorists.

Palestinian respondent

My main concern is not foreign terrorist fighters. I think that Europe's perplexity comes from the fact that those who have attacked Paris, London or Brussels are European citizens.

Spanish respondent