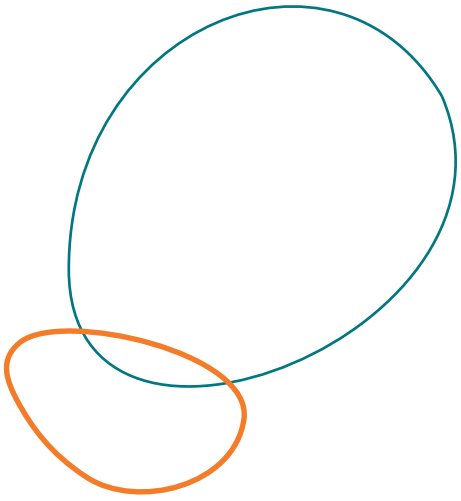
The Anna Lindh Intercultural Trends Survey 2020

Analytical Report



Contents

Introduction 6
Inside the Anna Lindh/Ipsos Survey 6

Representation of the Mediterranean 6
Characteristics of the Mediterranean region 6
Attractiveness of Europe and the SEM countries as places to live 8

Dialogue and contacts 9
Barriers to cross-cultural encounters 9

Cross-cultural encounters and method of interaction 10

Cross-cultural media reporting 11
Interest in news and information about the other country group 11
Media sources for cross cultural communication 11

Gains from digital technology 13

Key values when bringing up children 14

Women's roles in society 15

Cultural and religious diversity 16
Perceptions about diversity 16
Tolerance towards other cultures 17
Initiatives to support cohesive living 18
Measures to prevent polarisation and hate speech 19

Gains from intercultural cooperation 20

Ipsos MORI's standards and accreditations 21

Introduction

Inside the Anna Lindh/Ipsos Survey

The Anna Lindh Foundation Intercultural trends report presents analysis based on data from the fourth wave of the Intercultural trends survey – a study carried out across the Euro-Mediterranean to measure cross-cultural trends and social change. This unique public opinion polling exercise was carried out in eight European countries and five countries bordering the Southern and Eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea (SEM). The survey findings serve as a tool for understanding change, informing policy, promoting dialogue, and encouraging regional and intercultural cooperation.

This wave of the Survey comes at a time of unique relevance for the Euro-Mediterranean region. Issues persist within countries around polarisation, mistrust, youth unemployment and, in some cases, hate speech. Social changes related to migration, growing digital connectivity, climate change and – as witnessed during the current COVID-19 pandemic – health, are interconnected and global in nature. Intercultural dialogue and cooperation remain key to navigating this changing world, and reliable data remains essential to understanding and addressing social problems in the Euro-Mediterranean.

The Intercultural Trends survey, now in its fourth iteration, was undertaken by Ipsos – a global survey agency, on behalf of the Anna Lindh Foundation. In Europe, interviews were conducted in Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Romania and Sweden, while in countries bordering the Southern and Eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea (SEM), interviews were conducted in Algeria, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania and Morocco.[1] In total, 13,264 citizens were interviewed.

Respondents were asked about a range of topics related to intercultural dialogue, focussing on their perceptions of people from other cultures, their values, and their behaviours. In a first for the Intercultural Trends Survey, respondents were also asked about their attitudes towards digital technology and its impact on intercultural dialogue.

Fieldwork took place from 9 March to 16 June 2020, with a pause in-between to account for the COVID-19 pandemic. Fieldwork in Mauritania took place between 28 August 2020 and 09 October 2020. In all countries, a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) methodology was followed. Random probability sampling was used in all countries except Mauritania, where quota sampling was used.

This report highlights some key observations from the survey findings, primarily analysing the data at the country-group level (European countries and countries in the SEM), while also drawing on individual country differences and differences based on respondents' sociodemographic characteristics. All findings presented are based on weighted data. A post-stratification weight was calculated that corrects for imbalances in the samples with respect to gender, age and employment status.

Representation of the Mediterranean

Characteristics of the Mediterranean region

There is a shared perception among respondents in European and SEM countries of a Mediterranean region characterised by hospitality, a common cultural heritage and a common history, though respondents in SEM countries are more likely to hold strong negative associations related to conflict, instability, and migration issues. Nevertheless, there is much variation among countries and respondents, particularly in the SEM, and it is clear that there exists no single homogenous picture of the Mediterranean.

Around two thirds of respondents in each country grouping (65% in Europe and 67% in SEM countries) 'strongly characterise' the Mediterranean with hospitality, while 47% in Europe and 56% in SEM countries think that a common cultural history and heritage 'strongly characterise' the region. Over two thirds of European respondents (67%) and almost half (48%) of SEM respondents also strongly associate the Mediterranean with a Mediterranean way of life and food.

When looking at other characterisations, associations begin to diverge between the two country groupings. Over half (60%) of respondents in SEM countries strongly characterise the Mediterranean with migration issues, compared with around four in ten European respondents. As might be expected, respondents in Greece and Lebanon – two countries that have been host to large numbers of migrants and refugees over the last decade – are most likely to associate the region with migration issues (79% and 73%, respectively). Nevertheless, despite over a quarter of a million ref-

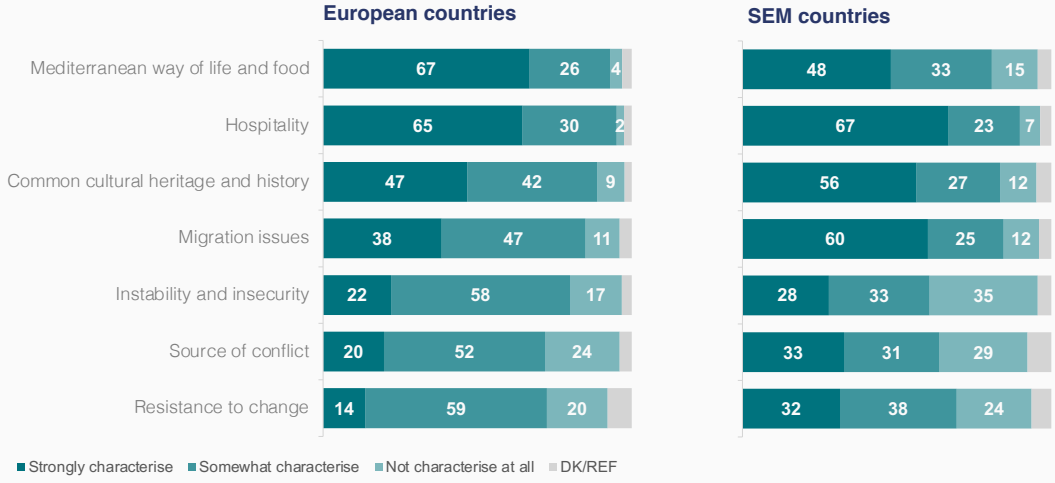
1 Fieldwork in Lebanon was completed before the 4 August 2020 Beirut explosion.

ugees settling in Jordan as of 2019, only a quarter of respondents in Jordan (26%) 'strongly characterise' the region as being associated with migration issues – down from 42% in the last wave of the survey. Similarly, while Germany has welcomed over 1.4 million refugees, only a third (34%) strongly characterise the region in this way – a comparatively low figure.[2]

While respondents in both country groups hold generally positive associations of the Mediterranean, SEM respondents are more likely to hold strong negative associations. A third of SEM respondents 'strongly characterise' the Mediterranean as a source of conflict (33%) and as resistant to change (32%), compared with just 20% and 14% of European respondents, respectively. Despite this, SEM respondents are also more likely to oppose certain negative characterisations. For instance, 35% of SEM respondents say that the region is 'not at all' characterised by instability and security.

While Europeans are less likely to hold such strong associations, a majority nevertheless 'somewhat' characterise the region as being associated with instability, insecurity, and resistance to change.

Characteristics of the Mediterranean region



Survey question: Different people have different thoughts about what the Mediterranean region represents. I will read out a set of ideas and images; please tell me if you think these characterise the Mediterranean region strongly, somewhat or not at all.

Base: all respondents (%), by region

2 This question has not been asked in Germany before. As such, there is no survey data available from previous waves against which to draw a comparison.

Attractiveness of Europe and the SEM countries as places to live

In SEM countries, a similar share of respondents would prefer to start a new life in their own countries as to move abroad, while in Europe, a majority would choose to move abroad. Of those who would choose to leave, both European and SEM respondents are more likely to look to a European country rather than an SEM country as their preferred destination.

Among SEM respondents, around half (49%) would stay in their country of residence. Twenty per cent would move to a European country, while 14% said they would move to another SEM country.

Among European respondents, 40% said they would prefer to remain in their country of residence, while 36% would move to another European country. Just 2% of European respondents would choose to start a new life in an SEM country.

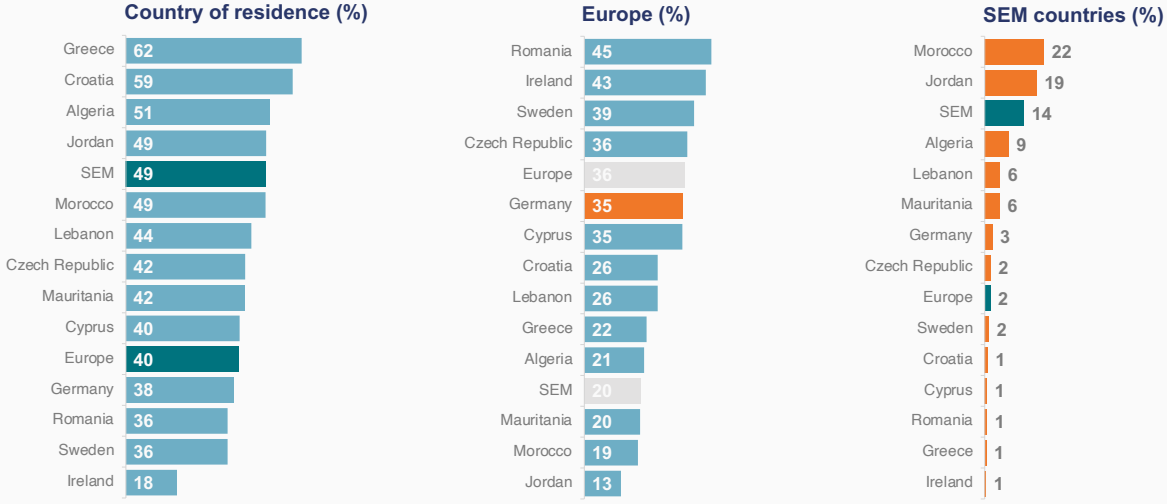
While at first, this might suggest that emigrating to Europe is an attractive proposition to people living in the SEM region, there is notable variation between countries, and this sentiment is certainly not consistent across all SEM countries. For instance, only 13% of respondents in Jordan would choose to start a new life in Europe, while respondents in this country are among the most likely to move to an SEM country (19%). In Jordan, as in other SEM countries, some respondents also view North America (7%) and the Gulf countries (6%) as preferential destinations. Conversely, Lebanon is the SEM country with the highest proportion of respondents who would choose to start their new life in Europe (26%).

Looking at the individual country results, respondents in Greece are most likely to stay in their own country, while respondents in Ireland are more likely to want to start a new life abroad. Notably, respondents in Ireland are among the most likely to look to another European country to start a new life (43%) and are the least likely to want to start a new life in an SEM country (1%).

Similar preferences can be seen among Romanian respondents, among whom just over a third (36%) would stay in their own country. Conversely, respondents in Romania are the most likely to want to start a new life in another European country (45%) but are among the least likely to emigrate to an SEM country (1%).

Preferred countries to start a new life

Results by country



Survey question: If you could start a new life, in which country of the world would you start it?
Base: all respondents (%), by country

Dialogue and contacts

Barriers to cross-cultural encounters

Language differences were the most frequently cited barrier faced when meeting people from SEM/European countries among both Europeans and people in SEM countries (81% and 68% respectively say that 'not speaking the same language' is either 'a big barrier' or 'somewhat of a barrier'). Other practical barriers such as visa and travel difficulties were perceived to be a 'big barrier' or 'somewhat of a barrier' by over two thirds (67%) of respondents in SEM countries (compared with 58% in European countries). Respondents in SEM countries are more likely than respondents in European countries to see visa and travel difficulties as a 'big barrier' (42% compared with 22%, respectively). Such travel-related barriers were likely to be exacerbated at the time of the survey due to travel restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

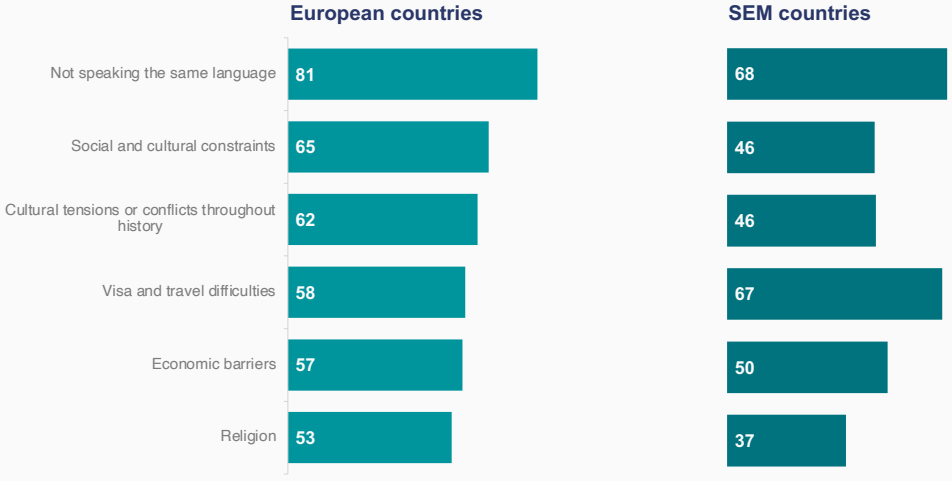
Cultural issues were more prominent among respondents in European countries. 'Social and cultural constraints' were identified as 'a big barrier' or 'somewhat of a barrier' by 65% of Europeans, compared with just 46% of SEM respondents. More specifically, 'cultural tensions/conflict throughout history' were identified as 'a big barrier' or 'somewhat of a barrier' by 62% of Europeans, compared with 46% of SEM respondents. Despite their limited interest in religion, Europeans perceive religion to be a much bigger barrier to dialogue than people in SEM countries do, with over half (53%) of European respondents viewing religion as either a 'big barrier' or 'somewhat of a barrier', compared with just 37% of SEM respondents.

Some barriers are more prominent among certain age groups than others. Across both Europe and SEM countries, adults aged over thirty are more likely than adults under thirty to say that language differences are a 'big barrier' to intercultural dialogue, which may reflect increases in foreign language teaching in school curriculums in recent years (47% vs 35% in Europe, respectively; 41% vs 32% in SEM countries, respectively).

At a country level, respondents in Germany and Czech Republic are the most likely to say that cultural tensions or conflicts throughout history (73% and 65%, respectively), or religion (64% and 58%, respectively), are barriers to cross cultural encounters. In both instances, respondents in Morocco are among the least likely to view cultural tensions (29%) or religion (21%) as a barrier. While

Barriers to cross-cultural encounters

Results by country group (% a "big barrier" and "somewhat of a barrier")



Survey question: What do you think are the main barriers when meeting with or talking to people in or from countries bordering the southern and eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea (asked in European countries)/European countries (asked in SEM countries)?

Base: all respondents (%), by region

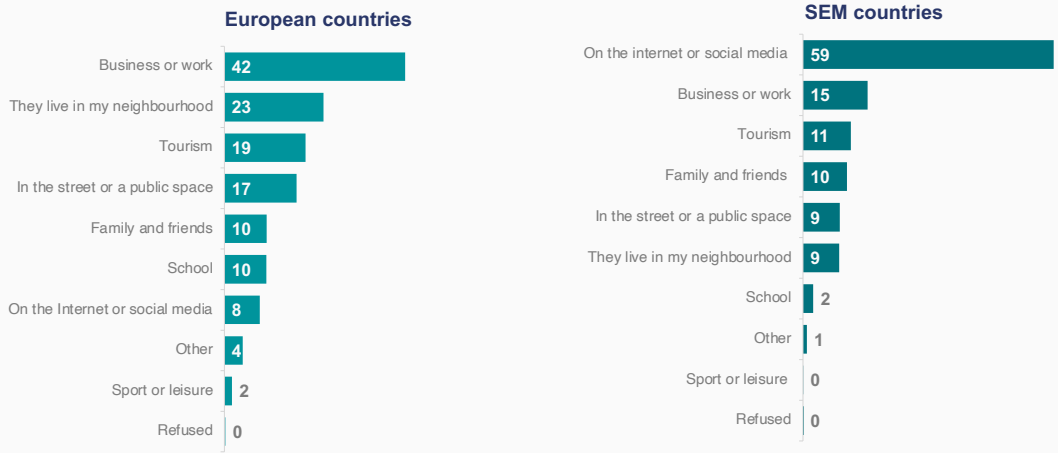
cultural issues feature less prominently among respondents from SEM countries overall, over two thirds (64%) of those in Mauritania view cultural tensions or conflicts throughout history as either a 'big barrier', or 'somewhat of a barrier' to cross-cultural encounters.

Respondents in Mauritania are also most likely to say that visa and travel difficulties are a barrier to cross cultural encounters (80% of respondents think visa and travel difficulties are either 'somewhat of a barrier' or 'a big barrier'), closely followed by respondents in Algeria (75%) and Jordan (73%). Respondents in Mauritania are also more likely to say that economic barriers are an issue (69%).

Cross-cultural encounters and method of interaction

Cross-cultural encounters

Method of interaction



Survey question: Thinking of this/these person(s) you have interacted with, was this mainly through:

Base: respondents who have talked to or met someone from a SEM/European country in the past 12 months (%), by region

Note: 'Family and friends' and 'sports and leisure' categories were created after fieldwork had been completed. Some verbatim responses to 'other specify' were recoded into these two categories.

The survey data suggests that social media is an important method of communication used by people in SEM countries to interact with people from European countries. Of those SEM respondents who said they had talked to someone from a European country in the last 12 months, 59% said their interactions were online or through social media. Conversely, respondents in European countries are much more likely to say that their interactions with people from SEM countries were face-to-face – for example during business or work (42%), or with people who live in their neighbourhood (23%), rather than online (8%).

The internet and social media have enabled virtual interaction between people from different countries and cultures, where many of the practical barriers associated with face-to-face interaction, such as visa requirements or travel difficulties (a 'big barrier' to almost half of SEM respondents) are less apparent. A majority of respondents in both SEM countries (74%) and European countries (69%) also either 'strongly agree' or 'somewhat agree' that cultural barriers are less of an obstacle to dialogue during digital communication than during face-to-face interaction.

While there are well-documented reasons for encouraging more face-to-face interaction, the data suggests that there are also clear benefits to online intercultural dialogue. Among those who said their cross-cultural interactions were mostly online, 42% overall said these interactions changed their opinion of people from other cultures in a positive way – a higher proportion than from any other method of communication.

Cross-cultural media reporting

Interest in news and information about the other country group

Respondents in European countries displayed higher overall levels of interest in information about all topics related to the other country group (when combining 'very interested' and 'somewhat interested' responses). Although people in SEM countries were more likely to be 'very' interested' in information about European countries, responses were less homogenous, and many SEM respondents also reported being 'not interested'. Global issues such as the impact of climate change received widespread interest across both European and SEM country groups, while information related to national issues such as politics were of less interest, other than to those with friends or relatives living in European/SEM countries.

In both Europe and in SEM countries, respondents were more interested in knowing about the natural environment and the impact of climate change than any other topic (43% 'very interested' in Europe; 45% 'very interested' in SEM). Comparatively, respondents in both country groups displayed little interest in knowing about religious beliefs and practices (18% 'very interested' in Europe, 22% 'very interested in SEM countries; 38% 'not interested' in Europe, 57% 'not interested' in SEM countries'). Less than a third of respondents in either country grouping were 'very interested' in hearing about the political situation in the other.

Respondents in SEM countries were more likely than those in European countries to say they were 'very interested' in information about the other countries' cultural life and lifestyle and economic situation.

Levels of interest were higher among European respondents with friends and relatives in SEM countries, and among SEM respondents with friends or relatives in European countries. For example, in Europe, 38% of those with friends or relatives in SEM countries were 'very interested' in knowing about the political situation in the SEM, compared with just 26% of those without. In SEM countries, 30% of those with friends or relatives in European countries were interested in knowing about the political situation in Europe, compared with 21% of those without.

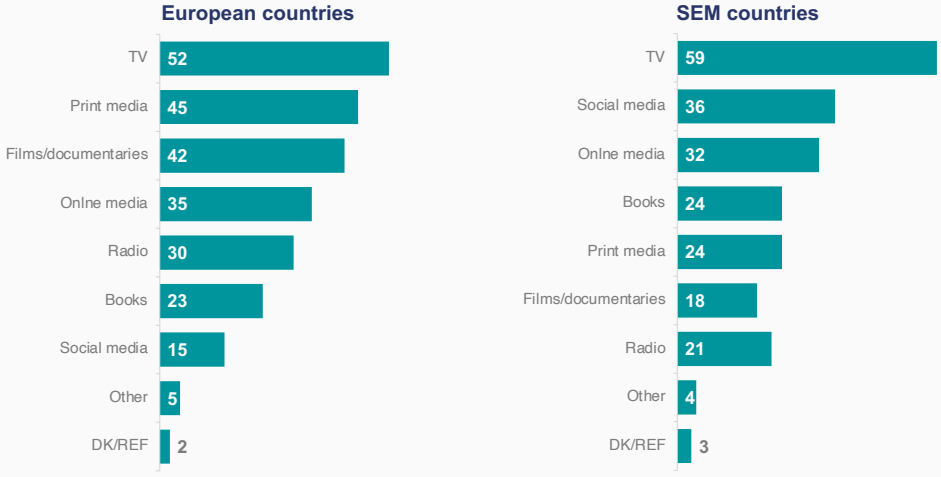
Media sources for cross cultural communication

TV remains the most trusted media source for cross cultural reporting across the Euro-Mediterranean, though online and social media are also trusted sources for large sections of the population, particularly young people and people in SEM countries. Over a third of respondents (36%) in SEM countries said that social media was their most trusted media source for cross-cultural reporting, second only to TV, and closely followed by online media (the most trusted source for 32% of SEM respondents). Young people in SEM countries are particularly trusting of social media, with trust as high as 41% among the 15-29 group, compared with 33% among those over 30. Respondents in European countries are less trusting of social media (15%), though over a third say that 'online media', such as news websites or online magazines, are their most trusted media sources.

This reliance on social media – a platform which operates more freely of the impartiality and accuracy regulations often associated with broadcast journalism, and through which 'fake news' has spread in recent years, could suggest that more needs to be done to train young people to reflect critically on the media they consume.

Interestingly, across both country groups, respondents in rural areas are more likely than those in large towns and cities to say that 'TV' and 'radio' are their most trusted media sources for intercultural reporting, while they are notably less trusting of online media. In Europe, 57% of respondents in rural areas cite 'TV' as their most trusted media source, compared with 49% in large towns or cities. Similarly, 37% in rural areas cite 'radio' as their most trusted media source, compared with 36% in large towns and cities. Conversely, just 32% cite 'online media' as their most trusted media source, compared with 38% in large towns and cities. A similar pattern can be observed across SEM countries: 64% of SEM respondents in rural areas cite 'TV' as their most trusted media source, compared with 57% in large towns or cities. Similarly, 29% in rural areas cite 'radio' as their most trusted media source, compared with 20% in large towns and cities. Conversely, 27% cite 'online media' as their most trusted media source, compared with 33% in large towns and cities. There were no statistically significant differences between respondents in rural areas and respondents in large towns and cities in terms of trust in social media.

Most trusted media sources for cross-cultural reporting



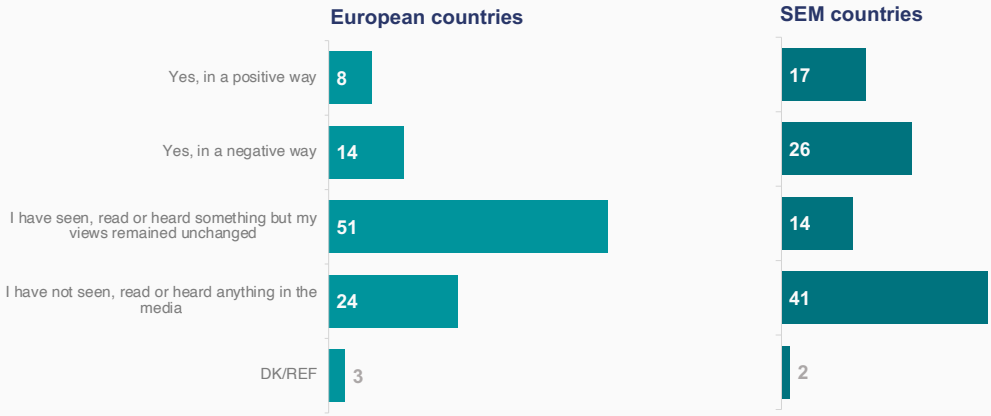
Survey question: Which of the following sources do you trust most for information about countries bordering the southern and eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea (asked in European countries)/European countries (asked in SEM countries)?

Base: all respondents (%), by region

Overall, more respondents said that media stories had had a negative, rather than positive, impact on their views. Interestingly, those who said they had seen, read, or heard something about people in SEM/European countries on social media were no more likely to say it had a negative impact on their perceptions of other cultures than those who saw, read, or heard something on TV (around a third each said it had a negative impact, compared with a fifth who said TV had a positive impact and a quarter who said social media had a positive impact).

Media role in shaping public perception

Did media cause a change in views about people from SEM/European countries?



Survey question: During the past 12 months, have you seen, read or heard anything in the media that has influenced your view of people in countries bordering the southern and eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea (asked in European countries)/European countries (asked in SEM countries)

Base: all respondents (%), by region

Gains from digital technology

For the first time, respondents were asked about the impact of digital technology on their perceptions of, and interactions with, people from other cultures. The results suggest that digital technology is playing both an increasingly prominent role in shaping perceptions of other cultures and in creating new (virtual) opportunities for cross-cultural communication. Notably, most respondents think that digital technology is likely to have a positive rather than negative impact on intercultural dialogue, though people in SEM countries are especially optimistic about its impact.

As discussed throughout this report, digital technology is gaining traction across the Mediterranean. Respondents in SEM countries are more likely to use online forms of communication, including social media, to interact with people in European countries. Respondents in SEM countries – especially young people - are also more likely to see social media as a trusted source of cross-cultural information, while respondents in Europe rely on other forms of online media for cross-cultural information. This aligns with the growth of digital economies, spread of information and communication technology (ICT), and improved access to the internet in the Mediterranean region – particularly in the Southern Mediterranean – over the last decade.[3]

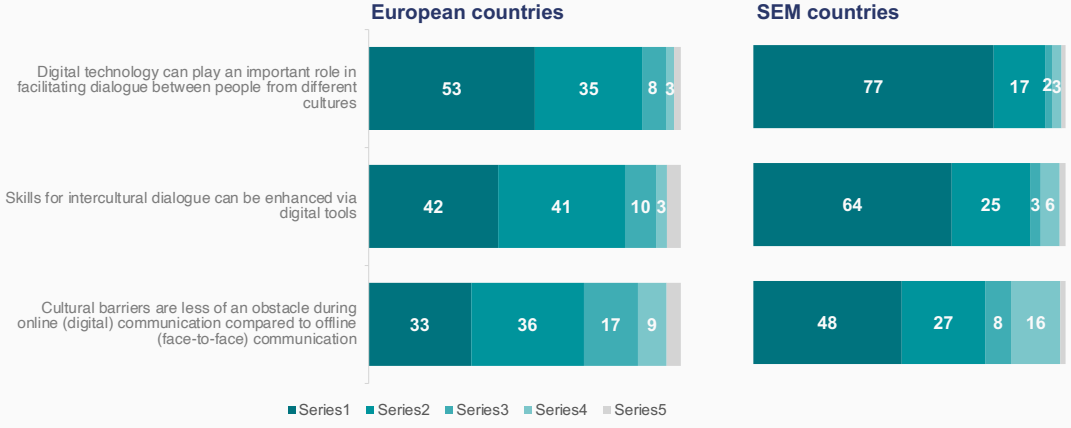
As might be expected given their high use of online and digital technology for information and communication, respondents in SEM countries are most convinced of the prospects of digital technology for improving intercultural dialogue. Almost eight in ten respondents in SEM countries (77%) 'strongly agree' that digital technology can pay an important role in facilitating dialogue between people from different cultures, compared with 53% of respondents in European countries. Two thirds of SEM respondents (64%) also strongly agree that skills for intercultural dialogue can be enhanced via digital tools, compared with 42% of respondents in Europe.

Age appears to make little difference when it comes to attitudes towards digital technology in SEM countries. Rather, SEM respondents record consistently positive responses across all groups. On the other hand, age is a significant determinant in European countries. For example, 68% of respondents under thirty year's old in European countries 'strongly agree' that digital technology can play an important role in facilitating dialogue, compared with 53% in Europe overall.

At a country level, respondents in Mauritania are consistently the most likely to appreciate the potential gains of digital technology for intercultural dialogue. Eighty-three percent of respondents in Mauritania agree that digital technology can play an important role in facilitating dialogue, 80% agree that skills for intercultural dialogue can be enhanced via digital tools, and 72% agree that cultural barriers are less of an obstacle during online communication – higher than any other country in all instances. Conversely, respondents in Jordan, Czech Republic and Sweden are among the least likely to view digital technology as beneficial to intercultural dialogue.

3 A.B. Youssef. Digital Economy Perspectives in the Mediterranean Region. Economy ant Territory. 2011. [Online]. Available at https://www.iemed.org/observatori-en/arees-danalisi/arxius-adjunts/anuari/med.2011/benyoussef_en.pdf

Impact of digital technology



Survey question: With regard to the use of digital technology, please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:
Base: all respondents (%), by country and country group

Key values when bringing up children

There is both a clear divide in the values that respondents in European and SEM countries see as the most and least important when raising children, and a gap between each country group's perceptions of the other. Data suggests that respondents in SEM countries overestimate the value that Europeans place on religion and underestimate the value they place on family solidarity. In reality, respondents in SEM countries appear much more likely than Europeans to prioritise religious beliefs and obedience when raising children, while respondents in European countries are more likely to prioritise respect for other cultures, family solidarity, and independence.

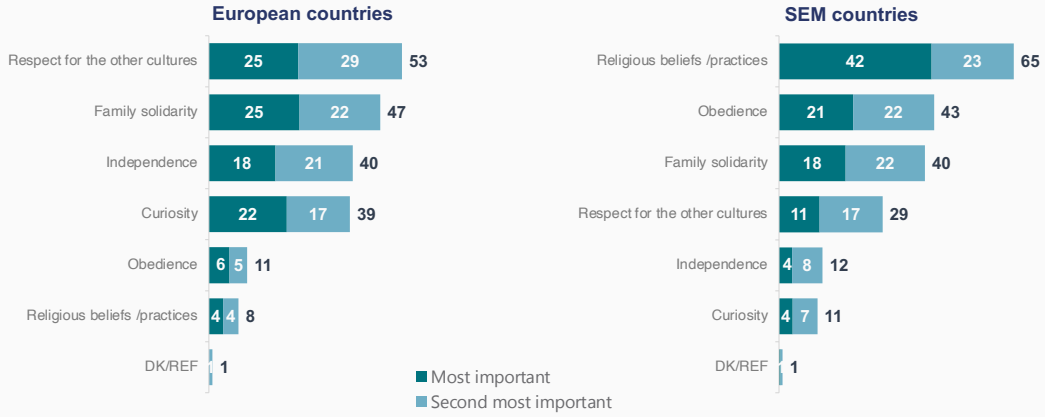
Whle religious beliefs/practicies is the most important value to the largest share of respondents in SEM countries, it is the least important value among respondents in European countries. Indeed, respondents in SEM countries were more than eight times more likely than those in European countries to say that religious practices were either their 'most important' or 'second most important' value when raising children.

Respondents in SEM countries are also more likely to prioritise obedience (43% compared with 11% in European countries). Respondents from Europe underestimated the importance of obedience for parents in the SEM, while among SEM respondents, the reverse is true. While respondents in Europe are less likely to prioritise obedience when raising children, they are more likely to prioritise certain individualistic values such as independence (40%, compared with 12% in SEM countries) and Curiosity (39%, compared with 11% in SEM countries).

Respondents in Europe prioritised 'respect for other cultures' ahead of all other values (53% view it as their 'most important' or 'second most important' value when raising children), though it was less of a priority for respondents in Czech Republic and Romania than in other European countries (32% and 35%, respectively). In SEM countries, respondents mentioned respect for other cultures less often, with less than a third of respondents choosing it as one of their priority values. Conversely, it is a priority for almost half of respondents from Lebanon – a highly religious and culturally diverse country.

While family solidarity is important to respondents in both country groupings when raising children, respondents in Europe were more likely to select is as a priority value (47% compared with 40%, respectively). Interestingly, family solidarity appears to be more important to respondents in Europe than SEM respondents had anticipated. Conversely, respondents in Europe overestimated the importance of family solidarity to SEM respondents.

Key values when raising children



Survey question: In bringing up their children, parents in different countries may place different emphasis on different values. Assuming that we limit ourselves to six values only, I'd like to know which one of these is most important, to you personally, when raising children? And the second most important?

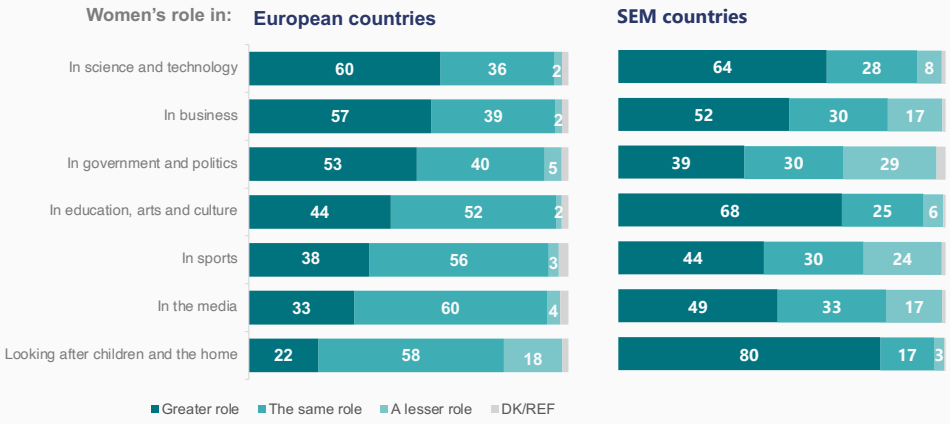
Base: all respondents (%), by region

Women's roles in society

Overall, there is noticeable support in both country groupings for women assuming greater roles in settings traditionally dominated by men, such as in science and technology, or in business. Nevertheless, respondents in SEM countries overwhelmingly agree that women should play a greater role in looking after children and in the home – a domain traditionally assigned to women. Less than half of respondents in SEM countries think women should be playing a greater role in government and politics, while almost a third think women should play a lesser role.

Perceptions about women's roles in society

Should women be playing a greater role?



Survey question: Compared to their present role in your country, do you think that women should be playing a greater, the same, or lesser role in each of the following domains:

Base: all respondents (%), by region

As illustrated in the chart below, eight in ten respondents (80%) in SEM countries believe that women should play a greater role in looking after children and in the home, compared with just one in five in Europe (22%). These views appear to be consistent across the SEM. Conversely, only 39% of SEM respondents would like to see women play a greater role in government and politics, though there is much more variation between countries with regards to women's political involvement.

Despite this, SEM respondents do not see women's role in society as being confined to the private sphere. Rather, over two thirds of SEM respondents would like to see women play greater roles in education, arts and culture (68%) and around two thirds would like to see women play greater roles in science and technology (64%). Respondents in SEM countries are also more supportive of women playing greater roles in the media and in sports than in European countries (49% compared with 33% and 44% compared with 38%, respectively).

While European respondents are less likely overall to agree that women should play a greater role in the family and in the home, 39% of very religious respondents think women should play a greater role in these settings. Those with lower levels of education are also more supportive of women taking on a greater domestic and care role.

In Europe, six in ten respondents would also like to see women play a greater role in science and technology. Overall, support for women's increased role in science and technology is highest in Ireland, Mauritania, Sweden and Lebanon, ranging from 68% to 76%. Over 70% of respondents in Mauritania would also like to see women play a greater role in the media. The data from Mauritania is particularly encouraging given the country's well-documented patriarchal traditions[4] and may suggest that progress is being made in some domains, though evidently not all.

A high proportion of respondents in Mauritania and Lebanon (71% and 66%, respectively) also think women should play a greater role in government and politics, while significantly fewer agree in Algeria and Jordan (25% and 31%, respectively).

A majority of respondents in European countries would appreciate more female representation in government and politics. However, the figures diverge once the data is disaggregated by gender. Fewer men than women are in favour of women playing a greater role in government and politics (46% of male European respon-

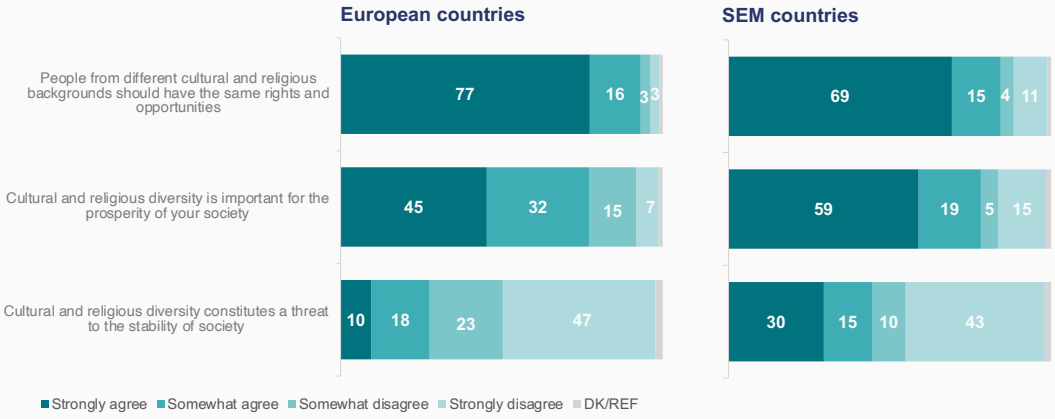
4 http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii

dents compared with 59% of female European respondents). In SEM countries, women with lower levels of education are more supportive of women playing a greater role in government and politics (44% among women with primary education or less, compared with 38% of those with university level education), possibly reflecting a desire for greater representation among this group.

Cultural and religious diversity

Perceptions about diversity

Perceptions about religious and cultural diversity



Survey question: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
Base: all respondents (%), by region

Many countries around the world are characterised by religious and cultural diversity. Nevertheless, people have different views on the benefits and challenges that come with multiculturalism. Overall, a majority of respondents in both country groupings hold positive, rather than negative, perceptions of religious and cultural diversity. Respondents in SEM countries are more likely than those in European countries to 'strongly agree' that cultural and religious diversity is important for the benefit of society, but are also more likely to agree that cultural and religious diversity constitutes a threat to the stability of society.

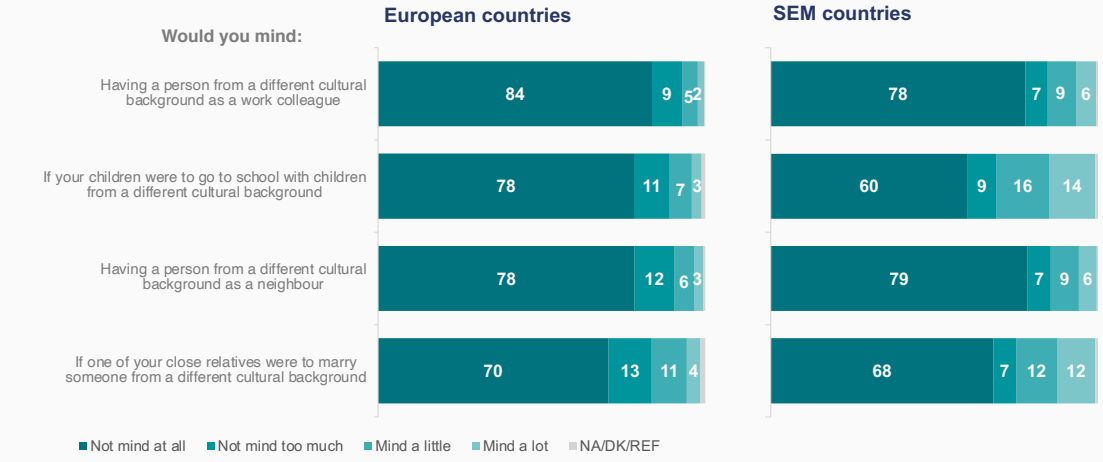
Over two thids of respondents in both European and SEM countries 'strongly agree' that people from different cultural and religious backgrounds should have the same rights and opportunities, though respondents in European countries are slightly more like to 'strongly agree' (77% compared with 69% in SEM countries).

A slightly higher proportion of respondents in SEM countries 'strongly agree' that cultural and religious diversity is important for the prosperity of their society (59% compared with 45% in Europe, respectively). Overall, when looking at the combined 'strongly agree' and 'somewhat agree' responses, over two thirds of respondents in almost every country agree with the above statement. Respondents in Lebanon and Jordan – two SEM countries with large immigrant and refugee populations – were more likely to agree than in any other country, with 88% and 89% of respondents either 'strongly' agreeing or 'somewhat' agreeing that cultural and religious diversity is important for the prosperity of their societies.

Three in ten SEM respondents 'strongly agree' that cultural and religious diversity constitutes a threat to the stability of society, though there are considerable differences within the region. The majority of respondents in Algeria and Mauritania – countries with comparably low rates of immigration - agree with this statement, but only around one-third of respondents in Morocco and Lebanon share this view. Noticeably fewer respondents in European countries agreed with this statement, with just 10% strongly agreeing that diversity is a threat to stability. Respondents from Cyprus and Greece deviated substantially from the European average, with 56% and 49% either agreeing or strongly agreeing, compared with 28% overall. As two of the main EU destinations for migrants and refugees travelling by sea, respondents in Cyprus and Greece may experience migration, and the diversity that comes with it, differently than in other European countries, as Greece and Cyprus predominantly act as transit countries with improvised and sometime inadequate structures to accommodate arrivals.

Tolerance towards other cultures

Cultural diversity and tolerance



Survey question: I am now going to read out a number of scenarios. For each of them, please tell me whether you would mind a lot, mind a little, or whether you would not mind too much, or not mind at all.

Base: all respondents (%), by region

Overall, respondents in both country groups appear equally tolerant towards other cultures in most settings, though the data suggests that respondents in SEM countries are less tolerant when it comes to their children's education.

Few respondents in either region would object to having a person from a different cultural background as a work colleague, a neighbour, or marrying a close relative. Respondents in SEM countries, however, would be more likely to object to their children going to school with children from other cultural backgrounds, though six in ten (60%) would not mind at all.

Respondents from European countries are more likely to object to a close relative marrying a person from a different culture, with a notable difference between Sweden – where 90% of respondents would 'not mind at all' and Czech Republic– where 68% of respondents 'would not mind at all'.

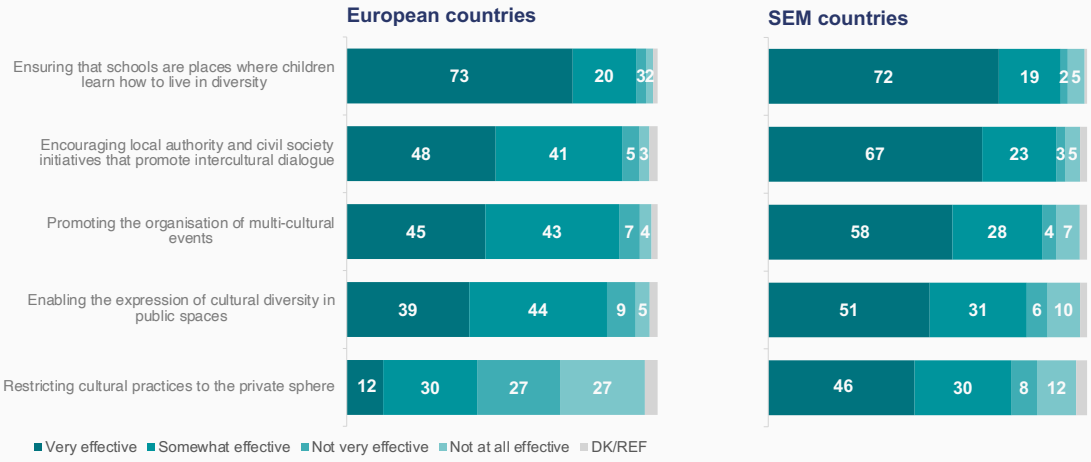
. Respondents in Ireland, Lebanon and Sweden tend to be most tolerant across the four statements.

Clear differences can be observed when disaggregating the data by socio-demographic characteristics. Respondents with higher education levels are far less likely to object to any of the four scenarios described above. Respondents from SEM countries with friends or relatives in Europe are also less concerned about close friends or relatives marrying someone from a different cultural background (70% compared to 60% without friends or relatives in Europe).

Initiatives to support cohesive living

Living together in multicultural environments

Actions that can help people live better together



Survey question: Today's societies are becoming more and more diverse as a result of migration. How effective do you think that each of the following actions would be in helping people live better together in a multi-cultural environment?

Base: all respondents (%), by region

In both regions, actions that expose people to cultural diversity – in school, in public spaces, through civil society initiatives, and through multi-cultural events – are seen as being more effective in promoting cohesion than actions that restrict people's exposure to cultural diversity.

Ensuring that schools are places where children learn to live in diversity (73% of respondents in Europe and 72% in SEM countries think this is 'very effective'), and encouraging local authority and civil society initiatives that promote intercultural dialogue (48% of respondents in European countries in 67% in SEM countries think this is a 'very effective' action) were seen as the most effective in both regions.

Morocco, Ireland and Germany are the countries in which most respondents consider these actions to be either 'very effective' or 'somewhat effective' (ranging from a combined total of 93% to 96%). Fewer – though still a majority - of respondents in Czech Republic, Greece and Cyprus thought either action would be 'very effective' or 'somewhat effective' (ranging from 66% to 88%).

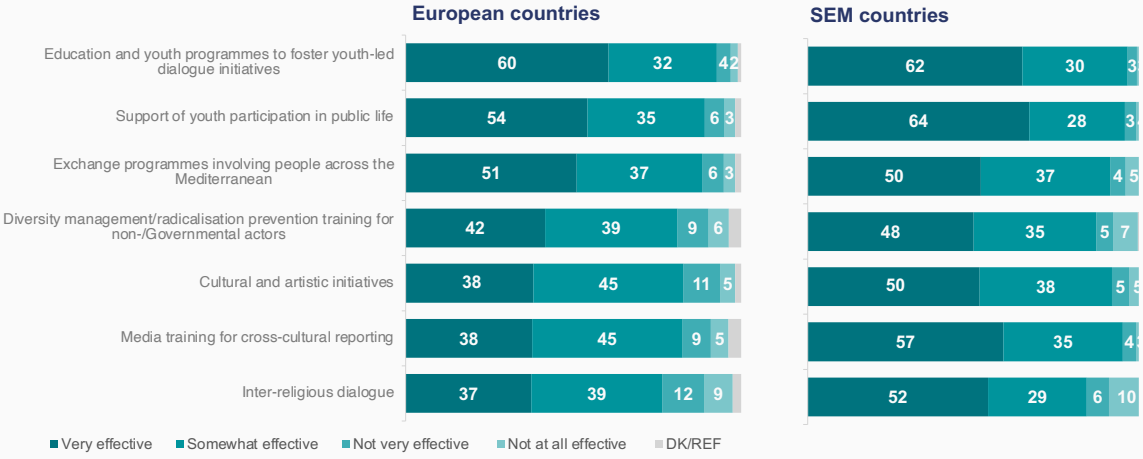
Around nine in ten respondents in each country group also view the promotion of multicultural events as a 'very effective' or 'somewhat effective' action, - particularly in Ireland (94%) and Mauritania (94%). In both country groups, around 85% of respondents thought that the expression of cultural diversity in public spaces could contribute to social cohesion.

Fewer respondents think it would be effective to restrict cultural practices to the private sphere. However, respondents in SEM countries are more likely to see this as either a 'very effective' or 'somewhat effective' action for promoting social cohesion (76% compared with 422% in Europe). Respondents in Algeria are especially likely to believe in the effectiveness of such restrictive measure, with almost nine in ten respondents seeing this as either a 'very effective' or 'somewhat effective' approach. In Europe, respondents who have completed university are less supportive of measures to restrict cultural expression than those with lower levels of education (54% among those with primary education or less compared with 35% of those who have completed university-level education).

Measures to prevent polarisation and hate speech

Tackling polarisation and hate speech

Preventing and dealing with challenges such as hate speech and polarisation



Survey question: Many countries in Europe and in the countries on the southern and eastern Mediterranean shores, are facing challenges such as hate speech and opposing cultural views. How effective do you think that each of the following will be in preventing and dealing with these challenges?

Base: all respondents (%), by region

In both country groups, measures targeting young people are assumed to be most effective in preventing hate speech and polarisation. Interestingly, respondents aged thirty and over are more convinced as to the effectiveness of youth-based initiatives than those under-thirty. All other measures were considered to be at least 'somewhat effective' by the vast majority in both regions, with SEM respondents more optimistic overall. In general, there are only minor differences between countries.

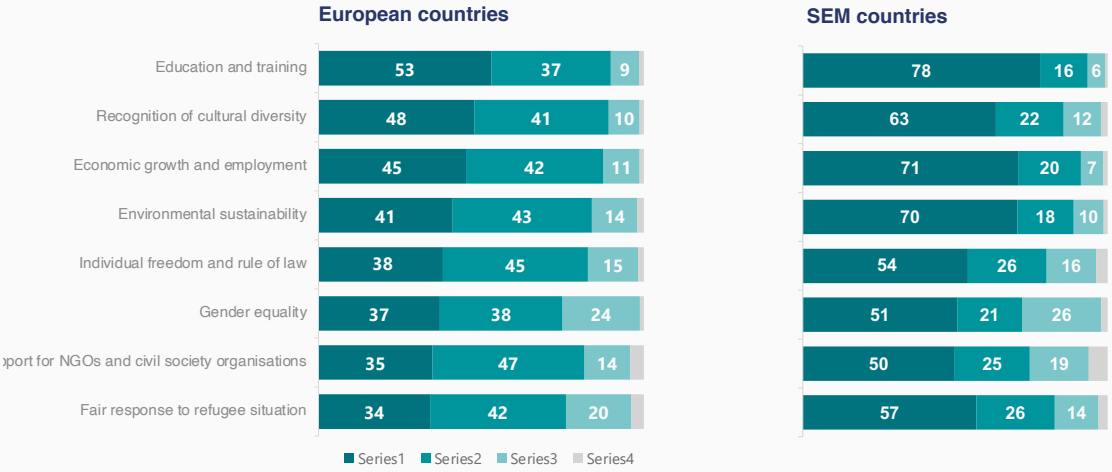
Notably, a large number of respondents in Morocco, a traditional host country which has recently started to transition into a transit country, perceived the proposed measures to be effective. In both regions, those respondents who are more tolerant of people from different cultural backgrounds are more optimistic as to the efficacy of the above measures.

A larger proportion of respondents in SEM countries than European countries – particularly in Algeria, Morocco and Lebanon – saw media training for cross-cultural reporting as either 'very effective' or 'somewhat effective' (92% vs 83%, respectively).

As might be expected given their apparent apathy towards religious values and their professed disinterest in religious issues (as discussed earlier in this report), respondents in Europe are less likely than respondents in SEM countries to see inter religious dialogue as a 'very effective' method for dealing with polarization (37% compared with 53% respectively).

Gains from intercultural cooperation

Gains from Euro-Med cooperation



Survey question: Your country, along with other European/SEM countries, has decided to reinforce closer cooperation with countries on the southern and eastern shore of the Mediterranean/with European countries. Which of the following do you think your society can gain by reinforcing such cooperation?

Base: all respondents (%), by region

Respondents in SEM countries appear more assured of the benefits of intercultural cooperation between European and SEM countries, particularly regarding its potential for increased economic growth and employment. Respondents in Europe see the potential benefits in terms of education and training opportunities but are far less optimistic that intercultural cooperation will lead to a fair response to the refugee situation. Those respondents in Europe who have seen, read, or heard something in the media that positively influenced their view of people in SEM countries are more likely to appreciate the potential benefits of greater intercultural cooperation.

Seven in ten respondents in the SEM countries think that greater intercultural cooperation can 'definitely' improve environmental sustainability in their societies (compared to four in ten in Europe). When looking at the combined responses, however, 84% of respondents in Europe also think the intercultural dialogue will 'definitely' or 'maybe' improve environmental sustainability in their societies. When viewed alongside the data regarding interest in information from other countries, these findings may indicate that climate change and environmental sustainability present an opportunity for dialogue and collective action to address an issue which affects, and interests, people across the Euro-Mediterranean.

Notably, despite their desire for women to play a greater role in the home (as noted earlier in this report), over half of respondents in SEM countries think that their society can 'definitely' benefit from greater gender equality as a result of intercultural cooperation (51%, compared with 37% in Europe)

It is noticeable that in those SEM countries that have EU member state partnership agreements regarding migration controls at the external frontier of Europe, such as Morocco (72%), respondents feel more strongly that intercultural cooperation will lead to a fair response to the refugee situation.

In both regions, respondents who were interested in news from the other region were more positive about the impact of cooperation on all the different areas covered. In European countries, this was also the case among respondents had seen, read or heard anything in the media that has positively influenced their view of people in countries bordering the southern and eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea.

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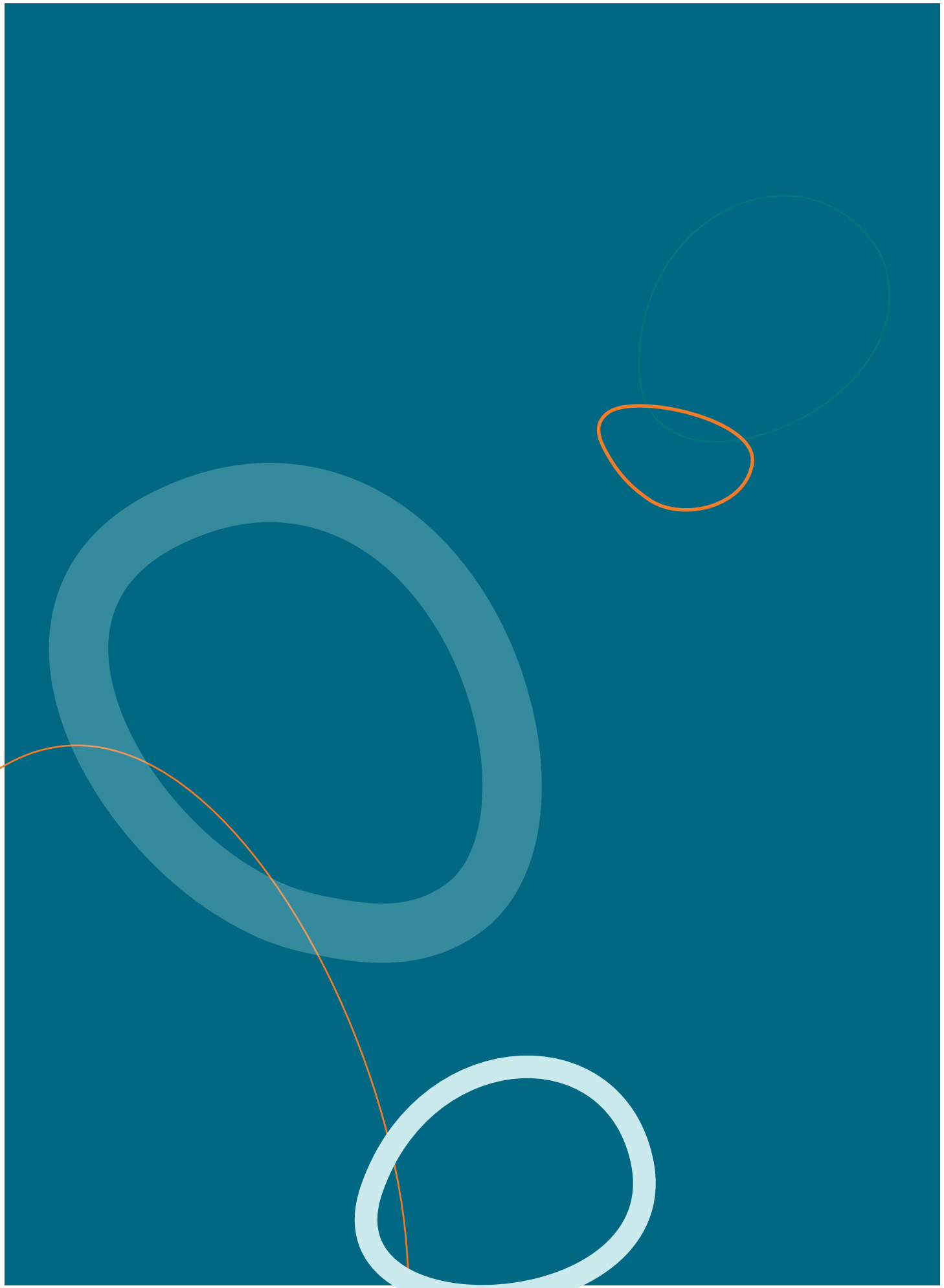
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