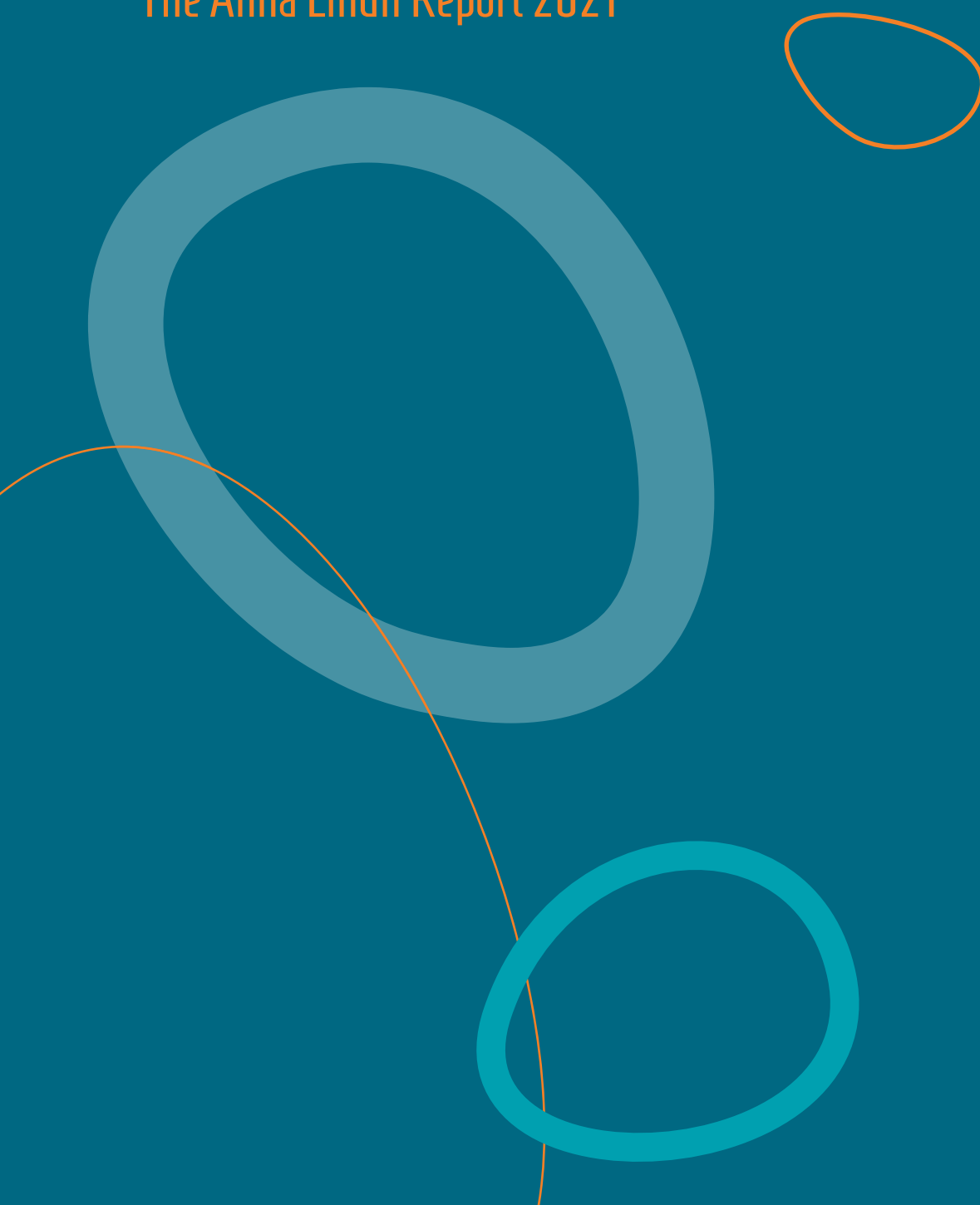


# **Intercultural Trends and Social Change in the Euro-Mediterranean Region**

*The Anna Lindh Report 2021*





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# **Intercultural Trends and Social Change in the Euro-Mediterranean Region**

The Anna Lindh Report 2021





# Foreword



## HRH Princess Rym ALI

President of the Anna Lindh  
Foundation

The EuroMed region, like the rest of the world, is emerging from a pandemic that left many people physically isolated, yet connected via technology. It is comforting, therefore, to see that, according to the Survey conducted by Ipsos — in eight European countries and five from the Southern and Eastern shores of the Mediterranean — a majority of respondents agree that cultural barriers are less of an obstacle to dialogue during digital communication and that there are clear benefits to online cultural dialogue.

The virus that spread throughout the planet in the last couple of years knows no borders, no colours, no ethnicity, no religions or cultures, leading the United Nations to promote the message that 'no one is safe until everyone is safe'. The same principle could be applied to other issues with which we humans are confronted on a daily basis. Indeed, no one is really safe from racism, poverty, climate change, conflict, terrorism, until everyone is safe from these ills. In that sense, our EuroMed region provides a striking example of how interdependent our countries and our societies are.

I am certain you will discover many interesting results emerge from the Survey, though some may not come as a total surprise. Being aware of the results yielded by such a rigorous study is extremely important, however, as it provides solid ground to analyse where we stand in terms of real dialogue, its potential, its obstacles; to have objective data on which to rely, instead of falling into the trap of interpretations based on perceptions or unfounded beliefs, especially in an era in which, as 'social media' trends are diffused among us by bots, the truth can often take a back seat.

And it is precisely why the Anna Lindh Foundation, through its extensive network of some 4,500 NGOs, prefers to listen to people through direct lines of communication, take their pulse, build on their expectations and, more importantly, take concrete actions.

There is a vibrant, active, committed youth within our civil societies, many of whom do share a similar vision with a common interpretation of values of 'convergence of cultures' rather than the proponents of a clash of civilisation, as loud as the latter's voices may be today.

Our civil societies find common ground that some governments struggle to reach. Through our cultural, educational and media programmes targeting the youth, our message of acceptance of the other can be further spread.

It is a crucial time to be pushing for concrete actions in this field, based on ethical and humanistic values, with civil societies that are faced with increasingly complex dilemmas. Democratic transition on the southern shore of the Mediterranean cannot progress without the development of a culture of democracy. That culture has to simultaneously allow all voices, while pushing back extremist discourse that promotes hate speech.

One thing is clear, however, and that is that all around our region, the youth understand that we do not have the luxury to delay action on climate change and the environment. How we treat our earth has an impact on migration and how we treat our migrants has an impact on our youth and the future of our common development.

All that the youth in our region needs is an enabling environment. The Anna Lindh Foundation, along with its partners such as the EU, the Arab League and UNESCO, provides a space that allows the youth to exchange, debate and connect, and where the human being remains at the centre, as the region emerges from the economic and social impact of the pandemic.

Josep FERRÉ

Executive Director of the  
Anna Lindh Foundation

The Anna Lindh Report on Intercultural Trends and Social Change in the EuroMed region arrived at its fourth edition in 2021, providing ample data to support with scientific evidence and expert analysis the mission and daily action for dialogue of the Anna Lindh Foundation.

The ALF has a catalytic and leverage function in the Euro-Mediterranean between civil society organisations and policy makers for the promotion of intercultural relations and public policies which aim to challenge all forms of discrimination and stigmatization of social and cultural groups in society, to promote inclusion as the way to avoid inequalities and to provide opportunities to achieve more cohesive societies.

The Report is based on a region-wide public opinion poll among a representative sample of the Euro-Mediterranean population and surveyed, to date, more than 52,000 people from across the Mediterranean, and the qualitative analysis and contextualisation by relevant experts in the field.

It represents a tool to give a voice to thousands of citizens and gather their opinion and perceptions on issues of common concern and to provide guidance to policy makers, practitioners and stakeholders for a deep understanding of the complexity and richness of the human dynamics in the region.

The evidence-based information and analysis can be a resource to generate renewed thinking and orientations for grassroots and policy action for the promotion of intercultural dialogue, cohesion of culturally diverse societies, the promotion of mutual understanding and regional cooperation across the Euro-Mediterranean region.

What is also of particular importance is the recurrent validation by EuroMed populations over time of the need to invest in dialogue measures to better live together in intercultural societies, to prevent and tackle hate speech, to have a shared approach to face the environmental emergency, to provide more opportunities to young people, to empower women or to reverse gender stereotypes.

During this tough period of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the Anna Lindh Foundation has acquired significant experience in the use of digital technologies which became the main vehicle to ensure Euro-Mediterranean exchanges at all levels and civil society participation at a time of social distancing, drastic reduction of physical mobility and a demanding social, cultural and economic context.

This significant challenge to the pursuit of the Foundation's mandate made us more certain than ever that nothing can replace face-to-face interactions for mutual knowledge, understanding and joint action; however, we know as well that the digital sphere can offer an important opportunity to facilitate broader participation in a very effective manner, to complement and help sustaining contacts and in some cases also contribute to reduce the cultural barriers among people from diverse backgrounds, as is also confirmed by a large majority of respondents North, South, East and West of the Mediterranean.



Audrey AZOULAY

Director-General of UNESCO

“The sea continues to be the ideal meeting place for all the people of the world who wish to take part in common action.” Sixty years on, this quote by Vittorino Veronese, the former Director-General of UNESCO, remains relevant, especially as it relates to the Mediterranean.

However, from the shores of this sea to the rest of the world, the COVID-19 pandemic has become a systemic crisis that has widened existing divides. Women and young people are particularly affected: far too many of them feel that they no longer control their destiny. The fear of downward social mobility, learning delays, heightened tensions and migration-related tragedies – which regularly transform the sea into a cemetery of unmarked graves – have contributed to the impression that our horizons are shrinking.

At the same time, there is reason for hope, as the 2021 report of the Anna Lindh Foundation underlines. Its ambitious survey of 13,000 Euro-Mediterranean citizens shows that the vast majority of those living around this sea share the same values of solidarity and inclusion.

The report also reveals the strength of their shared identity – the Euro-Mediterranean identity – which, according to Euro-Mediterranean citizens, revolves around three values in particular: hospitality, the Mediterranean way of life, and shared heritage.

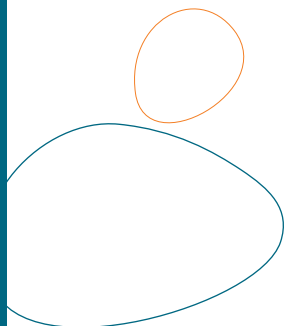
In the Mediterranean, culture serves to instil a deep, enduring and dynamic connection. That is why the Mediterranean diet was inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2010, and now brings together seven Mediterranean States. More generally speaking, it is because of this capacity to create joint values and shared futures that UNESCO defends cultural and natural heritage, including the riches that can be found in the Mediterranean region.

Another message highlighted in this report is the potential of women to shape the future. UNESCO is drawing on this potential by prioritizing gender equality across the globe. This issue is one which Euro-Mediterranean citizens strongly support. In fact, along the sea's southern shore, more than two-thirds of respondents said that women should play a greater role in education, arts and culture.

Young people are another asset needed to forge the world of tomorrow. Building on this shared conviction, UNESCO and the Anna Lindh Foundation work together to prioritize youth and support investment in education.

Indeed, the incredible energy of young people – their ability to innovate and imagine other futures – can help open up worlds of possibility. This is why UNESCO ensures the voices of youth are heard, for example through our initiative “Youth as Researchers”, and helps them adapt to the requirements of the labour market, with our project “Youth Employment in the Mediterranean”.

Creating common values, by focusing on young people and women in particular – this is how we will fulfil the Mediterranean destiny, a destiny based on encounters and exchanges, as this report so clearly shows. There is much work to be done, but even greater potential to be achieved.



## David Maria SASSOLI

President of the European Parliament

I am pleased and honoured to be given the opportunity to preface this new edition of The Anna Lindh/Ipsos Report on Intercultural Trends and Social Change in the Euro-Mediterranean region. This Report comes at an extraordinary time: two years into a pandemic that will mark an entire generation and which created restrictions to our social interactions. This has been the case in Europe where physical borders, which seemed to be a thing of the past, suddenly re-emerged; this has been the case, to a much greater extent, between Mediterranean countries even though our shared sea – *mare nostrum* – is a quintessential place for exchange.

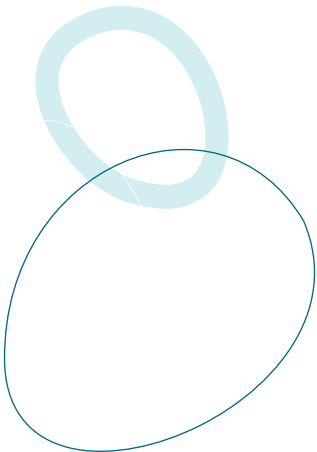
The crisis curtailed our opportunities for intercultural and cross-border interactions and dialogue, even though these values are at the heart of both the European Union and the Union for the Mediterranean identity. In this challenging context, the Anna Lindh Foundation has been creative and committed, ensuring continuity of their activities, also remotely, by promoting meetings and interactions between people throughout the EuroMed region when they were needed the most. I would like to congratulate and warmly thank Élisabeth Guigou, former president of the ALF, as well as her successor, Her Royal Highness Princess Rym Ali. Both show a wholehearted commitment to fostering dialogue in the EuroMed and Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (SEM) regions.

This Report is a breath of fresh air during this pandemic, bringing to light the commonly shared desires of EuroMed and SEM citizens; it is wonderful to see that the cohesion in values throughout the two regions has been strengthening year after year, raising hope for the future.

It is important to recognise the deep impact these last two years has had on the EuroMed and SEM youth, together with the accompanying restrictions; they are the future, and we owe future prospects to them. This means we must give them a voice and listen to them; it is imperative that we foster interactions and exchanges between young people. We must recognise them as full citizens. For several years, the European programme, *Jeunes leaders politiques/Young Political Leaders*, has been contributing to this effort by promoting exchanges between young people from all over the world and supporting their efforts to build a fairer world.

Both Europe and its Mediterranean neighbours must rise up and meet today's challenges dealing with climate change, employment and migration. We must come up with innovative solutions through massive investments in education, with a specific focus on digital and artistic skills which help to develop critical thinking and informed debate.

Building this cohesive society that is more inclusive and environmentally sustainable, necessitates new insights and a better understanding of how our lifestyles and collective awareness are evolving. The Anna Lindh/Ipsos Report is part of this effort to nurture a society that is more equitable and tolerant. I would like to reiterate my thanks to the Foundation for being such a valuable and dynamic contributor to our common future.



## Haifa ABU GHAZALEH

Assistant Secretary General  
Head of Social Affairs Sector  
League of Arab States

I would like to thank the Anna Lindh Foundation for their efforts in producing the 2021 Report on Intercultural Trends and Social Changes in the Euro-Mediterranean Region.

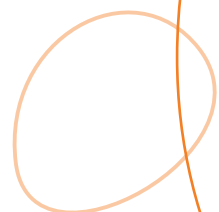
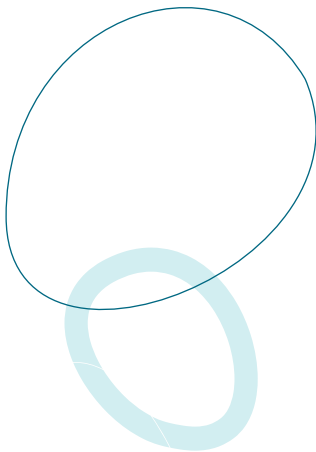
The report offers an analysis based on data from the 4th survey about intercultural trends, which was conducted throughout the Euro- Mediterranean region, highlighting several interesting subjects and characteristics, comprising common grounds, potential gains from cooperation, cultural and religious diversity, as well as the role of women, and intercultural tolerance.

It also covers a range of other issues which are very helpful on conflict prevention, spreading the values and principles of dialogue, peace, rapprochement and intercultural cooperation. These values are the cornerstone of efforts to confront the threats to international peace and security, which also poses a threat to our nations.

The League of Arab States has always believed that human civilisations and cultures — as diverse as they could be — are a product of continued communication among the people of different nations. Communication is essentially the bedrock of sound human interaction. Knowing and understanding 'the other' is the way for the advancement of mankind.

This, of course, happens in a manner that maintains the identity and beliefs of every nation, within a framework of cultural diversity, mutual respect and respect for the right to be different.

We in LAS aim to achieve all this through cooperation and partnership with the European Union and its various organisations, in order to achieve the ultimate goal of living together in peace and prosperity.



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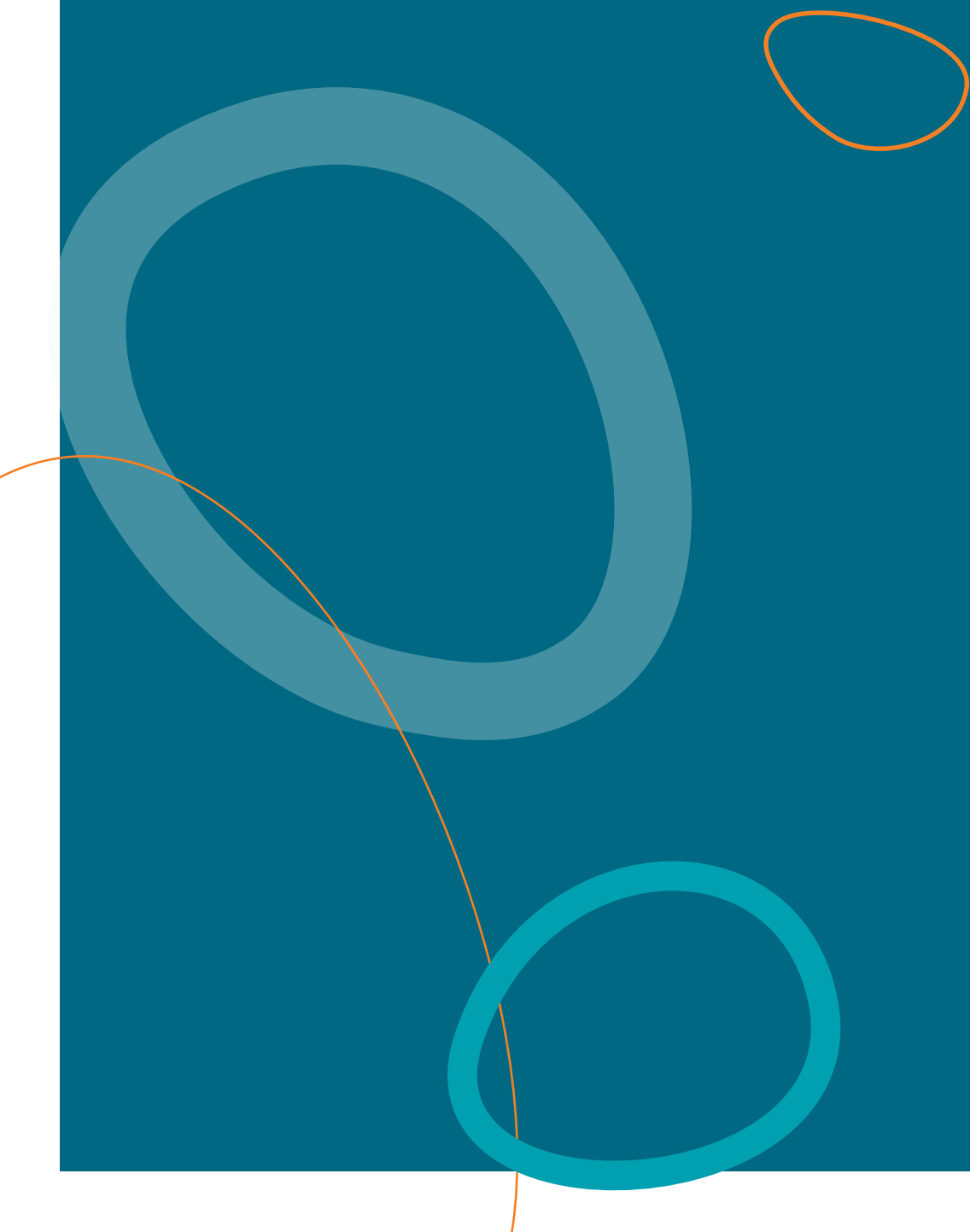
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# Overview



# Inside the Anna Lindh/Ipsos Intercultural Trends Survey

Anne ESSER and Robert WRAGG

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 remain 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; in countries bordering the SEM, interviews were conducted in Algeria, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania and Morocco. (Fieldwork in Lebanon was completed before the 4 August 2020 Beirut explosion.) 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 ALF/Ipsos 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), whilst also drawing on individual country differences and differences based on respondents' socio-demographic 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

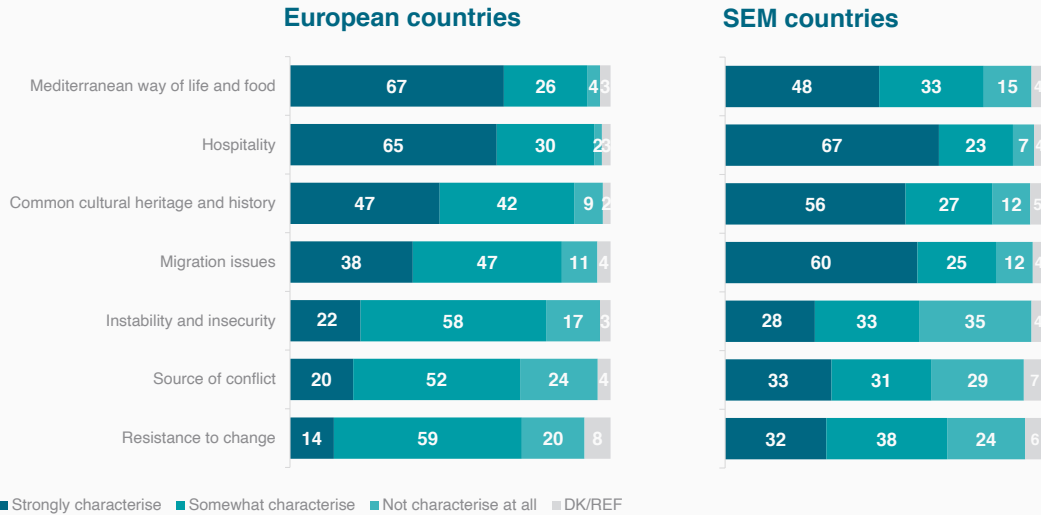
There is a shared perception among respondents in European and SEM countries of a Mediterranean region characterised by hospitality, a common cultural heritage and a common history, though respondents in SEM countries are more likely to hold strong negative associations related to conflict, instability, 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 homogeneous 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, whilst 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 (Chart 1.1).

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 refugees 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, whilst Germany has welcomed over 1.4 million refugees, only a third (34%) strongly characterise the region in this way – a comparatively low figure. (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.)



**Chart 1.1: 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 (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

Whilst 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 insecurity.

Whilst 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.

**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 whilst 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 percent would move to a European country, whilst 14% said they would move to another SEM country.

Among European respondents, 40% said they would prefer to remain in their country of residence, whilst 36% would move to

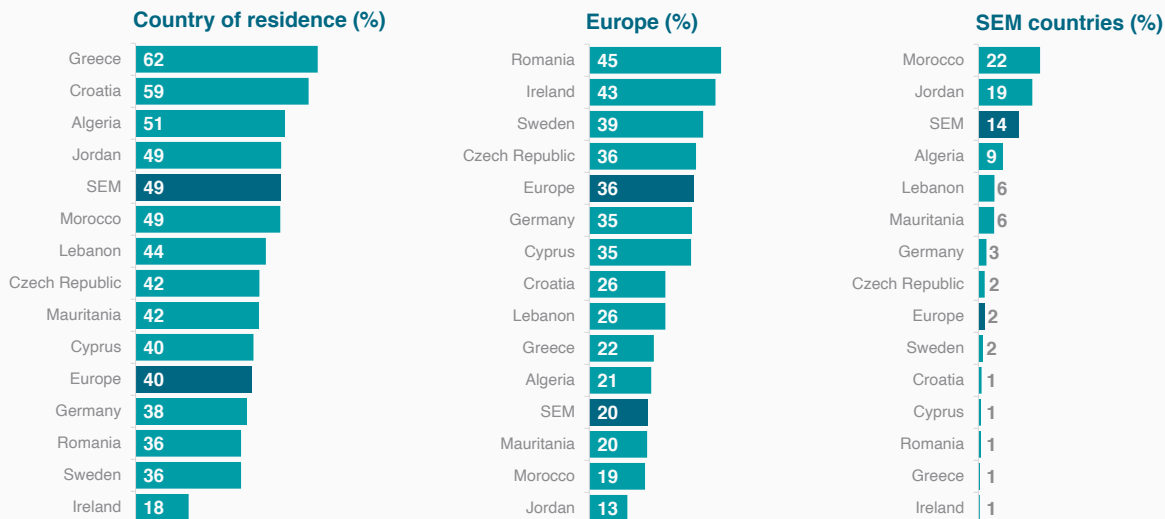
another European country. Just 2% of European respondents would choose to start a new life in an SEM country.

Whilst 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, whilst 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%) (Chart 1.2).

Looking at the individual country results, respondents in Greece are most likely to stay in their own country, whilst 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%).

Chart 1.2: Preferred countries to start a new life - 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 (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**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 (Chart 1.3).

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 curricula in recent years (47% vs 35% in Europe, respectively; 41% vs 32% in SEM countries, respectively).

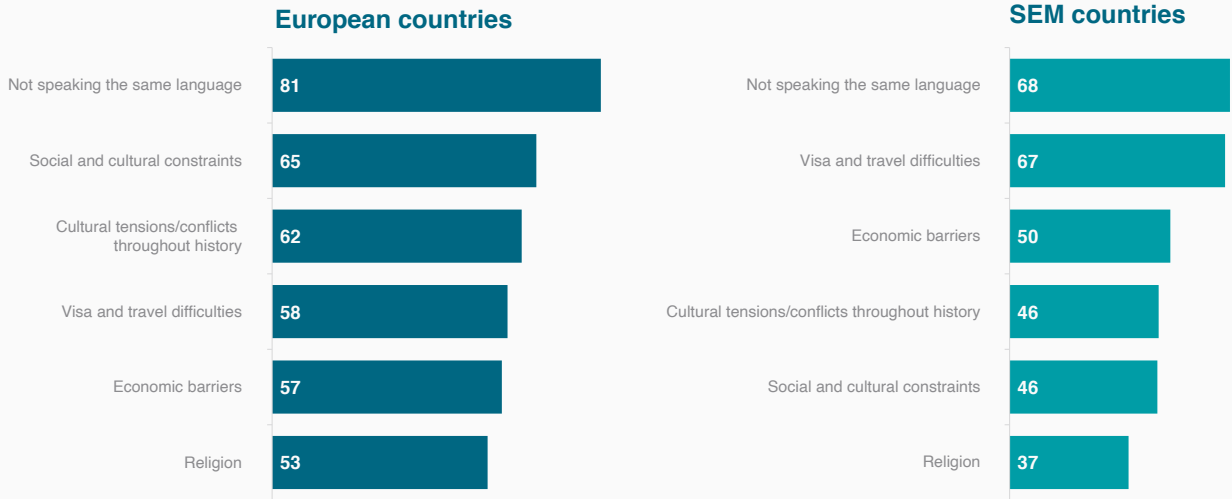
At a country level, respondents in Germany and Czech Republic are the most likely to say that cultural tensions or conflicts throughout history (73% and 65%, respectively), or religion (64% and 58%, respectively), are barriers to cross-cultural encounters. In both instances, respondents in Morocco are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

The Survey data suggest that social media is an important method

**Chart 1.3: Barriers to cross-cultural encounters**



**Survey question:** To what extent, if at all, are each of the following a barrier when meeting with or talking to people from different cultures?  
**Base:** All respondents (%), by region (% a 'big barrier' and 'somewhat a barrier') (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

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.

Whilst there are well-documented reasons for encouraging more face-to-face interaction, the data suggest 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 (Chart 1.4).

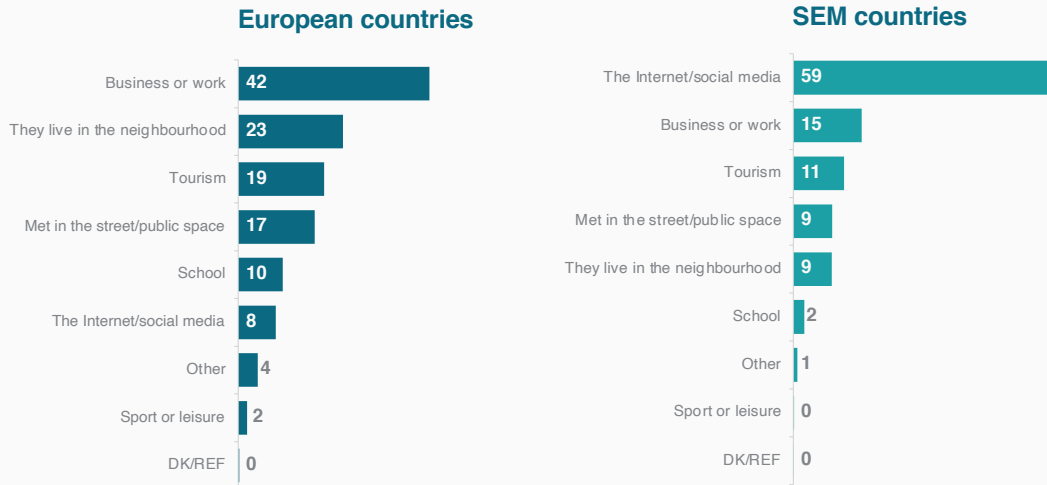
**Cross-cultural media reporting: Interest in news and information about the other country group**

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 homogeneous, 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, whilst 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 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.

**Chart 1.4: Cross-cultural encounters - by region**  
Method of interaction



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

**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.

**Base:** Respondents who have talked to or met someone from a SEM/European country in the past 12 months (%), by region (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

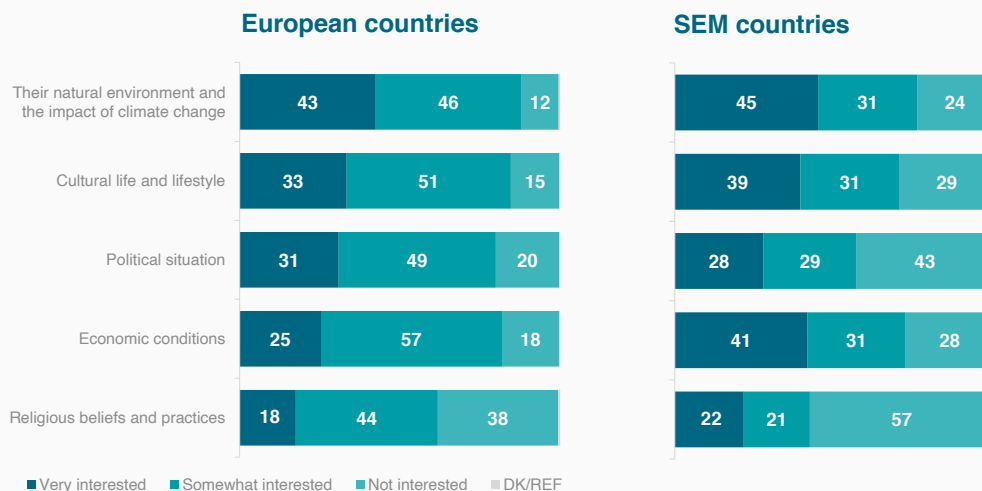
Levels of interest were higher among European respondents with friends and relatives in SEM countries, and among SEM respondents with friends or relatives in European countries. For example, in Europe, 38% of those with friends or relatives in SEM countries were 'very interested' in knowing about the 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 (Chart 1.5).

**Media sources for cross-cultural communication**

TV remains the most trusted media source for cross-cultural reporting

**Chart 1.5: Interest in news and information about SEM / European-countries**



**Survey question:** Thinking about the countries bordering the southern and eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea (asked in European countries)/European countries (asked in SEM countries), how interested are you in knowing about their [TOPICS A-E]?

**Base:** All respondents (%), by region (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

across the EuroMed, 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, whilst 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

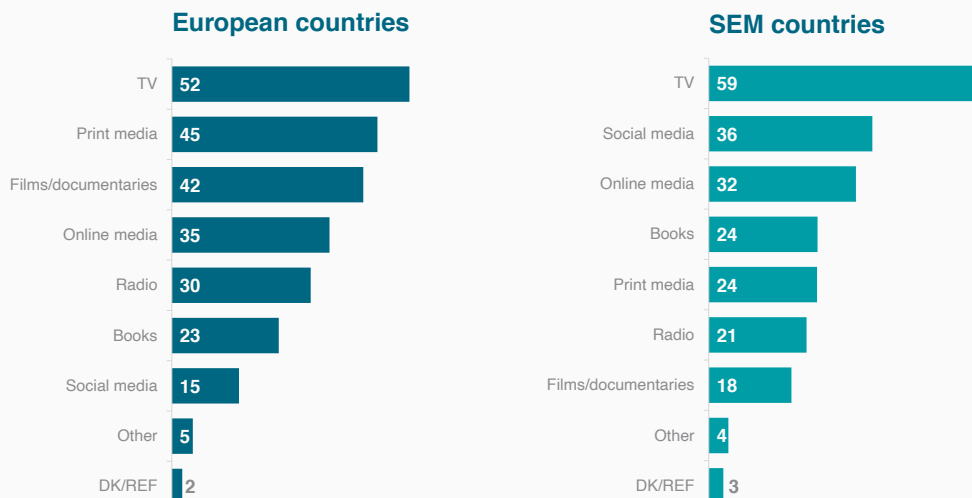
rural areas cite 'TV' as their most trusted media source, compared with 57% in large towns or cities. Similarly, 29% in rural areas cite 'radio' as their most trusted media source, compared with 20% in large towns and cities. Conversely, 27% cite 'online media' as their most trusted media source, compared 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 (Chart 1.6).

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) (Chart 1.7).

**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.

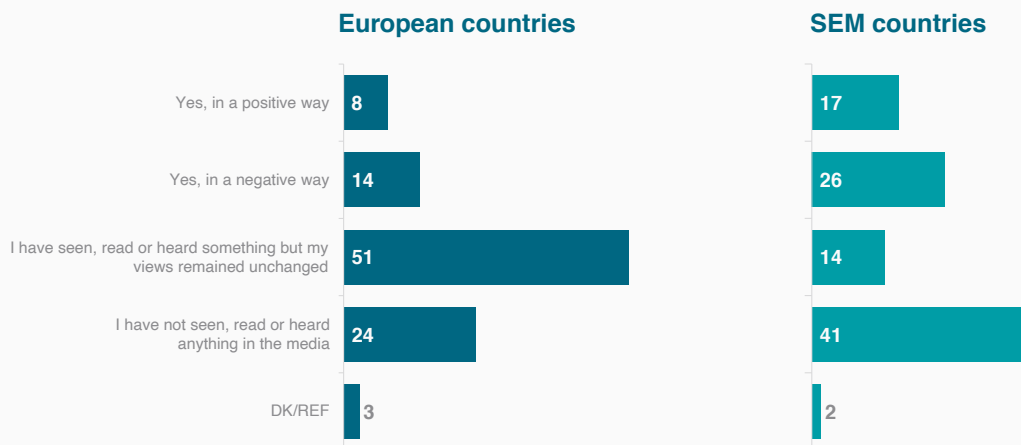
**Chart 1.6: Most trusted media sources for cross-cultural reporting**



**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 (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**Chart 1.7: Media role in shaping public perception**



**?** **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 (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

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, whilst 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 (A.B. Youssef, 2011).

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 play 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,

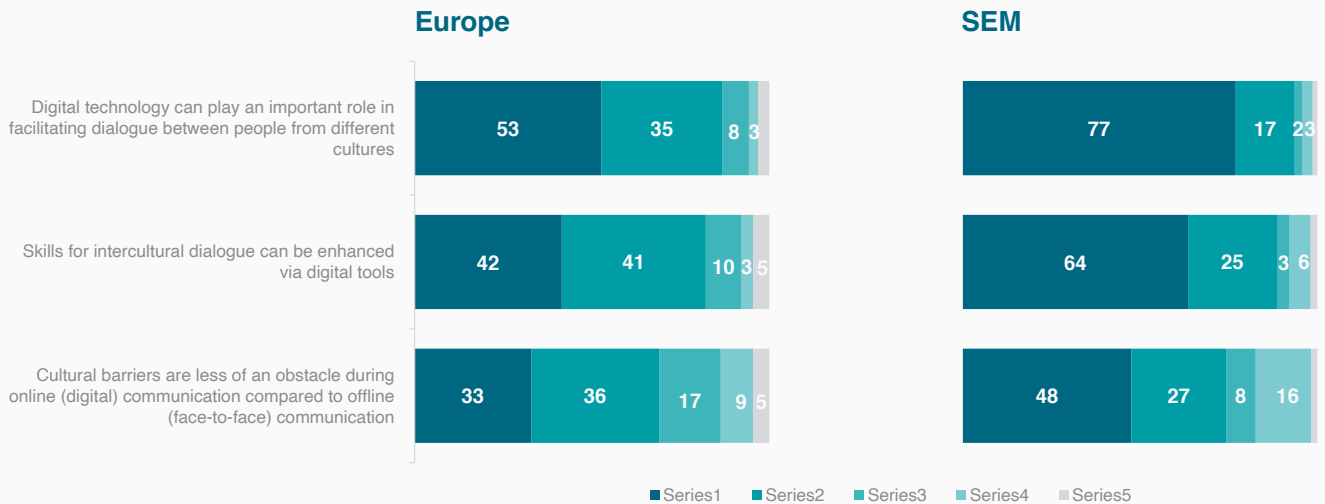
68% of respondents under thirty years old in European countries ‘strongly agree’ that digital technology can play an important role in facilitating dialogue, compared with 53% in Europe overall.

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 (Chart 1.8).

**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 suggest 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, whilst respondents in European countries are more likely to prioritise respect for other cultures, family solidarity and independence (Chart 1.9).

Chart 1.8: 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 group (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

Whilst religious beliefs/practices 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, whilst among SEM respondents, the reverse is true. Whilst 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.

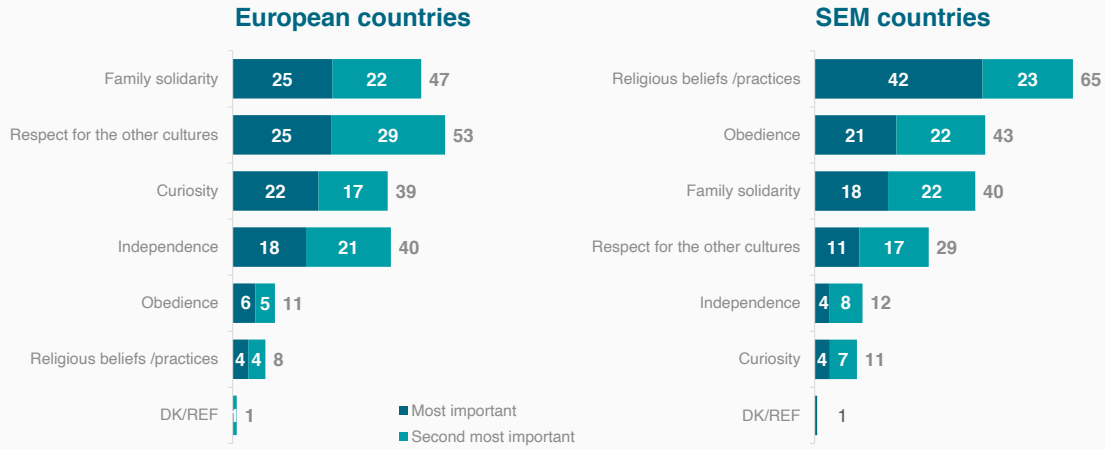
Whilst family solidarity is important to respondents in both country groupings when raising children, respondents in Europe were more likely to select it as a priority value (47% compared with 40%, respectively). Interestingly, family solidarity appears to be more important to respondents in Europe than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

**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 science and technology, or 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, whilst almost a third think women should play a lesser role.

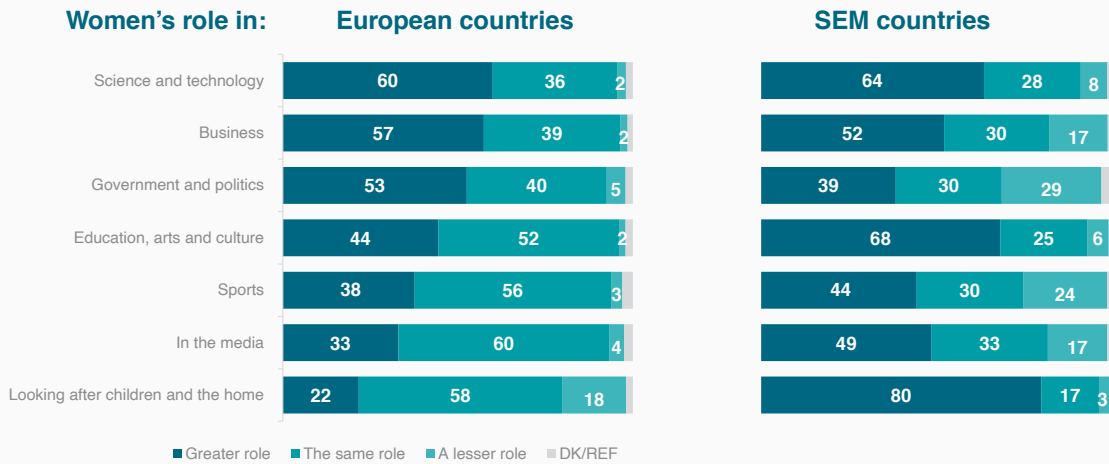
As illustrated in the chart below, eight in ten respondents (80%) in SEM countries believe that women should play a greater role in looking after children and in the home, compared with just one in five in Europe (22%). These views appear to be consistent across the SEM. Conversely, only 39% of SEM respondents 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 (Chart 1.10).

Chart 1.9: 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 (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

Chart 1.10: Perceptions about women's roles in society



**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 (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

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).

Whilst 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 (Gender Inequality Index (GII), 2020) 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, whilst 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 respondents 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**

As seen in Chart 1.11, 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

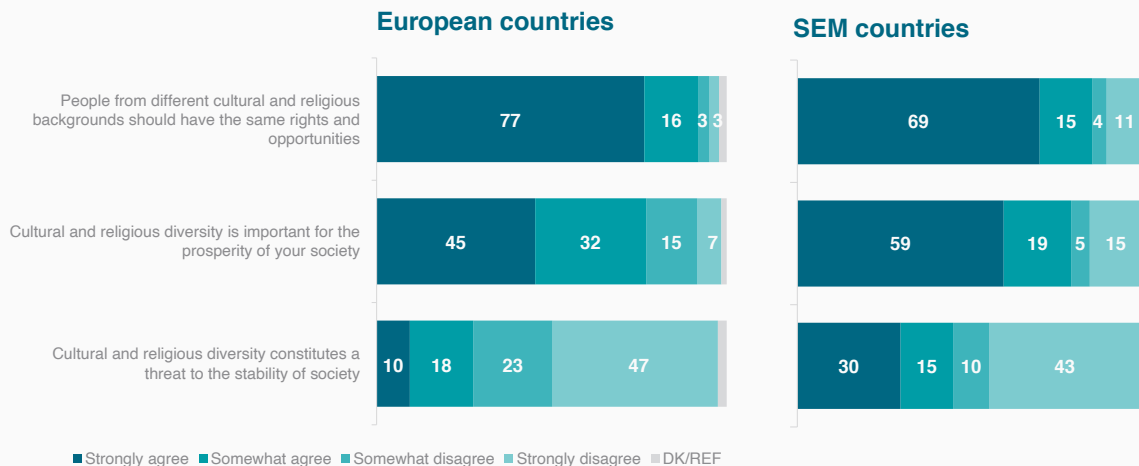
country groupings hold positive, rather than negative, perceptions of religious and cultural diversity. Respondents in SEM countries are more likely than those in European countries to ‘strongly agree’ that cultural and religious diversity is important for the benefit of society, but are also more likely to agree that cultural and religious diversity constitutes a threat to the stability of society.

Over two-thirds 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 likely 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.

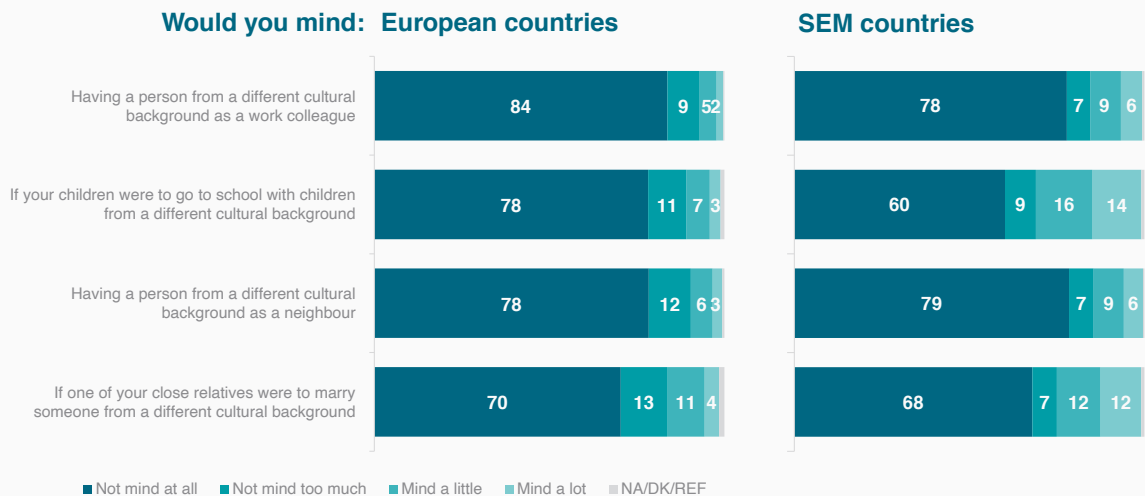
Three in ten SEM respondents ‘strongly agree’ that cultural and religious diversity constitutes a threat to the stability of society, though there are considerable differences within the region. The majority of respondents in Algeria and Mauritania – countries with comparably low rates of immigration – agree with this statement, but only around one-third of respondents in Morocco and Lebanon share this view.

**Chart 1.11: Perceptions about religious and cultural diversity**



**Survey question:** How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?  
**Base:** All respondents (%), by region (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

Chart 1.12: 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 (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

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 sometimes inadequate structures to accommodate arrivals.

### Tolerance towards other cultures

Overall, respondents in both country groups appear equally tolerant towards other cultures in most settings, though the data suggest that respondents in SEM countries are less tolerant when it comes to their children’s education (Chart 1.12).

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.

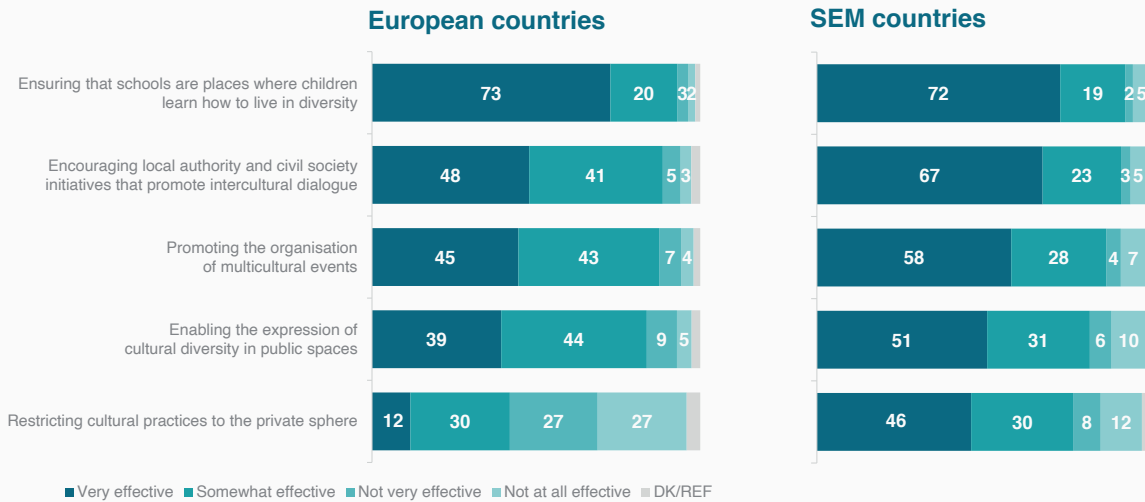
Clear differences can be observed when disaggregating the data by socio-demographic characteristics. Respondents with higher education levels are far less likely to object to any of the four scenarios described above. Respondents from SEM countries with friends or relatives in Europe are also less concerned 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

In both regions, actions that expose people to cultural diversity – in school, in public spaces, through civil society initiatives, and through multicultural events – are seen as being more effective in promoting cohesion than actions that restrict people’s exposure to cultural diversity (Chart 1.13).

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 and 67% in SEM countries think this is a ‘very effective’ action) were seen as the most effective in both regions.

**Chart 1.13: 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 multicultural environment?  
**Base:** All respondents (%), by region (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

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 42% in Europe). Respondents in Algeria are especially likely to believe in the effectiveness of such restrictive measures, 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**

As seen in Chart 1.14, 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.

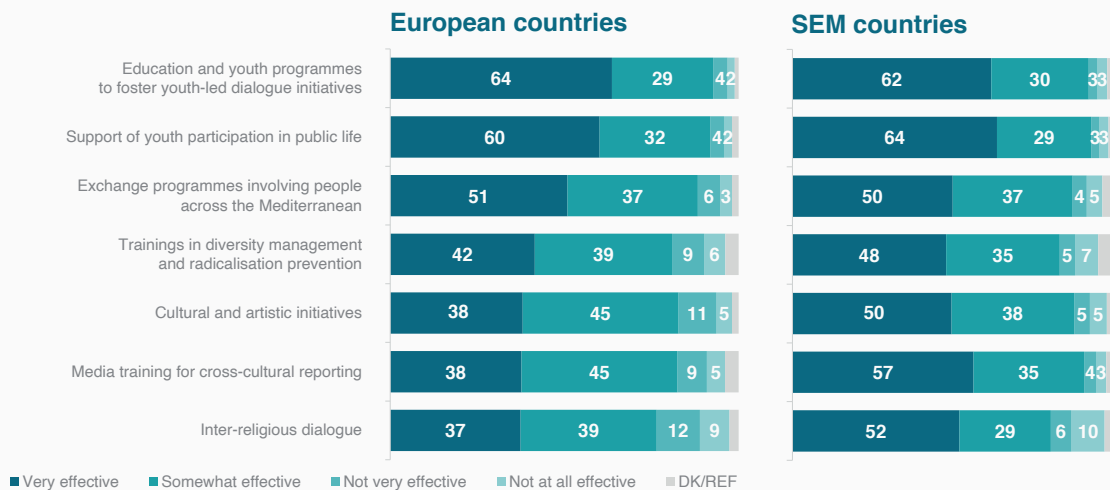
A larger proportion of respondents in SEM countries than European countries – particularly in Algeria, Morocco and Lebanon – saw media training for cross-cultural reporting as either 'very effective' or 'somewhat effective' (92% vs 83%, respectively).

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 polarisation (37% compared with 53% respectively).

**Gains from intercultural cooperation**

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

Chart 1.14: Tackling polarisation and hate speech

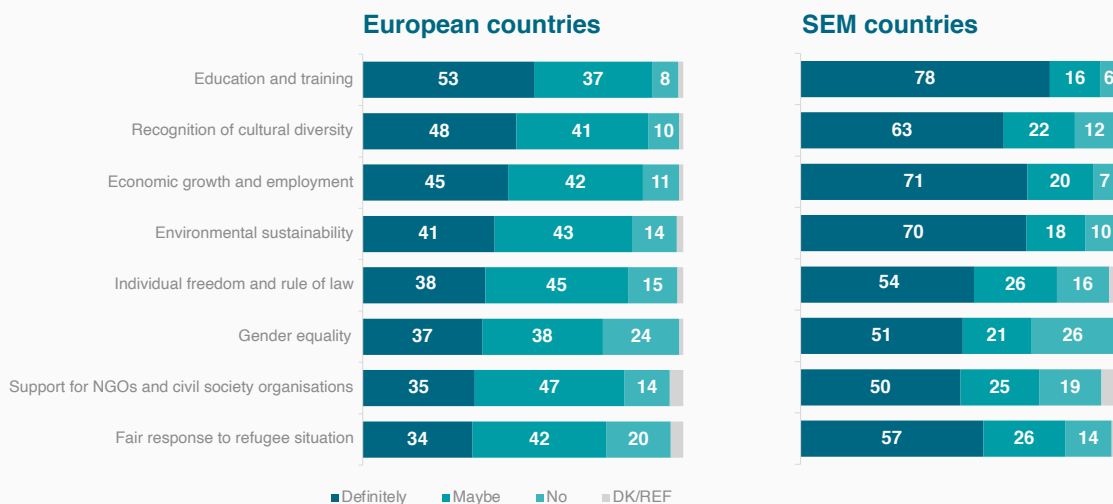


**Survey question:** Many countries, in Europe and in the countries on the southern and eastern Mediterranean shores, are facing challenges, such as hate speech and opposing cultural views. How effective do you think that each of the following mechanisms will be in preventing and dealing with these challenges?  
**Base:** All respondents (%), by region (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

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 (Chart 1.15).

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

Chart 1.15: Gains from EuroMed 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 (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

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 EuroMed.

Notably, despite their desire for women to play a greater role in the home (as noted earlier), 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 who had seen, read or heard anything in the media that had positively influenced their view of people in countries bordering the southern and eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. ■

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# Intercultural Dialogue in the EuroMed Region: Trends 2009-2021

Eleonora INSALACO

This article aims to present a perspective on the way intercultural dialogue across the Euro-Mediterranean region has evolved from the time the Anna Lindh Foundation was created until 2021, one year since the outburst of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic is probably one of the most characterising variables impacting people's values and mutual perceptions, as well as exposure to cross-cultural interaction, in modern history and definitely during the sixteen years of activity of the Foundation. The pandemic has exposed human beings to their vulnerability, in a very harsh way, but it has also helped them to feel and experience their interconnectedness and interdependence to each other; it has shown how solidarity and cooperation are key practices for the survival of human beings and no longer concepts or values to be promoted by others.

The state and evolution of intercultural relations and intercultural dialogue across the Mediterranean will be presented through the analysis of the impressive wealth of data gathered by the Anna Lindh Foundation since 2009 through four consecutive waves of the Intercultural Trends Survey carried out among a representative sample of Euro-Mediterranean societies and exploring their values, aspirations, fears and behaviour towards and with people from different cultural and religious backgrounds.

Throughout time, the intercultural trends analysis allows the identification of some constant attitudes whilst detecting some behavioural or attitude changes which may be explained as a consequence of the global and regional social, economic and political variables present in the given period of implementation of the Survey.

## Openness to diversity and cooperation

The Surveys already showed a steady increase in the appreciation of cultural and religious diversity as a source of prosperity for societies, called on by the majority of citizens to grant to minorities within society the same opportunities and rights as the majority of populations. More in particular, between 2016 and 2020 a percentage increase was registered of between four (84.5% in 2016 and 88.5% in 2020) in relation to ensuring the same rights and opportunities to minorities, and seven (71% in 2016 and 77.5% in 2020) in considering diversity as a source of economic gain. It is worth noting that in 2016, a drop was registered in the appreciation of diversity as a source of prosperity, whilst 2020 showed an increase in the appreciation, but it has not yet reached the levels of 2012 (82% of Europeans and 81% of Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (SEM)), with a regional average of 80.5%). Furthermore, between 2012 and 2020 a wider openness to diversity among young people is noted, as compared to

people above 30 years of age; for example, when comparing 2012 and 2020 data, younger people north and south of the Mediterranean have continuously shown more conviction on the need to ensure equal rights and opportunities to cultural minorities. (For 2012: in Europe, 91% of youth vs 89% of people above 30 years of age; in SEM, 86% of youth vs 84% of older people. For 2020: in Europe, 96% of youth vs 93% of people above 30 years of age; in SEM 85% of youth vs 83% of older people.)

On the other hand, fear of diversity has decreased over time, moving from 53% of SEM in 2016 considering diversity as a potential threat to social stability, to 45% in 2020; whilst for Europeans, a change from 36% to 28%, a constant trend among Europeans since 2012 when fear towards diversity was registered among 48% of the population. In 2020, both in Europe and SEM the proportion of older respondents who believe that diversity is a threat outnumbers the proportion of young respondents; in previous waves, the opposite was seen in SEM countries (in 2012 and 2016, the proportion of young SEM respondents who believed that diversity is a threat was higher than the proportion of older people). It is significant to highlight these trends during a historic period where due to the COVID-19 pandemic, poverty is on the rise with a potential impact on social cohesion and inclusion, which are key elements for intercultural dialogue; nevertheless, trends show social resilience which has been confirmed through consecutive waves of the Survey.

It also emerges from the Survey that EuroMed populations throughout the years consistently identify investment in intercultural education as the most efficient tool for facilitating social cohesion within multicultural societies (93% European and 91% SEM in 2020; 89% European and 82% SEM in 2016), arts and the organisation of multicultural events are also considered efficient (88% of European and 86% SEM), with higher recognition for the impact of these kinds of initiatives between six and four percent in the four years. The latest Survey has also identified an important contribution to this agenda to be played by civil society and local authorities, most probably based on the consideration that cities are spaces where more and more populations with different cultural backgrounds coexist, and that sustainability of dialogue and exchange measures need the political and financial investment of local authorities.

## Youth perceptions and expectations

The results from the latest Survey (2020) show that people in the EuroMed have grown increasingly interested in knowing about the cultural, political and economic life on the other side of the

Mediterranean. In SEM countries, there is a greater interest in news and information from the other side of the Mediterranean for the youth as compared to over-30s, whilst in EU countries there is mostly a greater interest on the side of over-30s. Regarding the interest of youth under 30 versus over 30 in the news and information from the other side of the Mediterranean and tracking the evolution of such comparison over the four waves of the Survey, we see the following: in SEM countries, from the 2009 Survey until 2016 Survey, there is a greater interest for under-30s as compared to over-30s in the news and information about European countries. With only one exception, such interest is apparent in the economic, cultural and religious fields, with a positive difference of 4%, 8% and 6%, respectively, in 2009; 4%, 5% and 1%, respectively, in 2012; and 8% for cultural and 2% for religious in 2016. The exception comes in the economic field in 2016, where the surveyed over-30s are more interested than the surveyed under-30s by 6%.

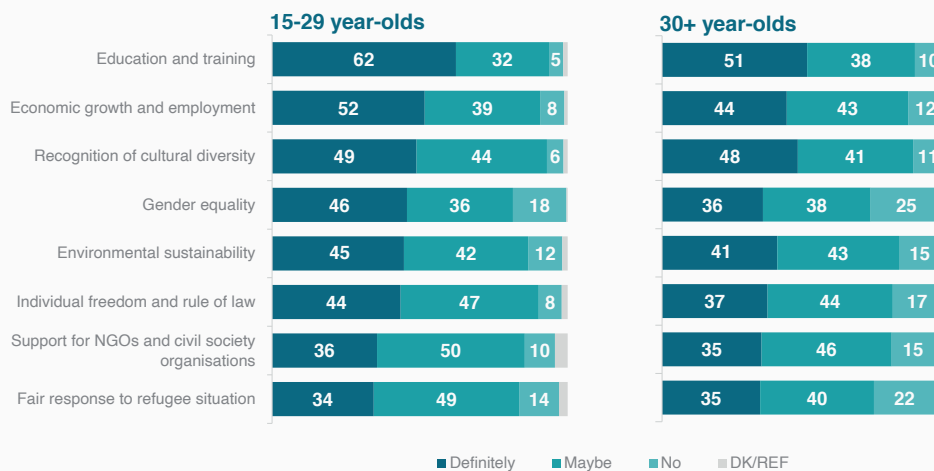
In 2020, data still register higher interest on the part of youth, with only one exception in the field of religion, with a 3% higher interest by over-30s, whilst a higher level of interest is seen by youth in all areas: 13% for cultural, 9% for economic conditions, 3% for environmental issues, and 2% for political situations. As for the European youth versus over-30s' interest in news and information from the SEM countries, in most cases there is little difference; when any is seen, it is mostly for over-30s. For instance, in 2016, 7% of European over-30s compared to 3% of under-30s were interested in economic and religious news and information from the SEM countries. In 2020, higher levels of interest among older populations were registered regarding wanting to know more about

environmental issues, which is the area of major interest for youth (85% of youth and 89% of over-30s).

In 2020, 68% of the SEM population look to social media and online media as the most trusted sources of information as well as cross-cultural interaction. This trust is significantly higher than in 2016, when it was already considered significant for 59% of SEM populations; the increase may also be linked to the challenges posed by the travel and social interaction restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The importance of digital tools for cross-cultural communication is also supported by the belief of around 90% of people that these tools can aid in the promotion of intercultural dialogue and competences, and 77% consider that the cultural barriers are less present online in contrast to face-to-face exchanges. In light of the above, it is central to invest in media and digital literacy as well as researching the digital solutions which can best facilitate cross-cultural exchanges, rather than using the most promoted tools by communication corporations. Younger populations throughout the different waves of the Survey have, especially among SEM populations, regularly emphasised their reliance on social media and online tools for cross-cultural communication and information to a greater extent than the over-30 population.

Regarding the gains young people expect from EuroMed cooperation, and tracking the evolution of these expectations over the years, in both Europe and SEM countries there is a gap in expectations between the under- and over-30s in favour of the young. As seen in Charts 2.1 and 2.2, even when such gaps are not wide, almost with no exception, there is a higher degree of expectation by the

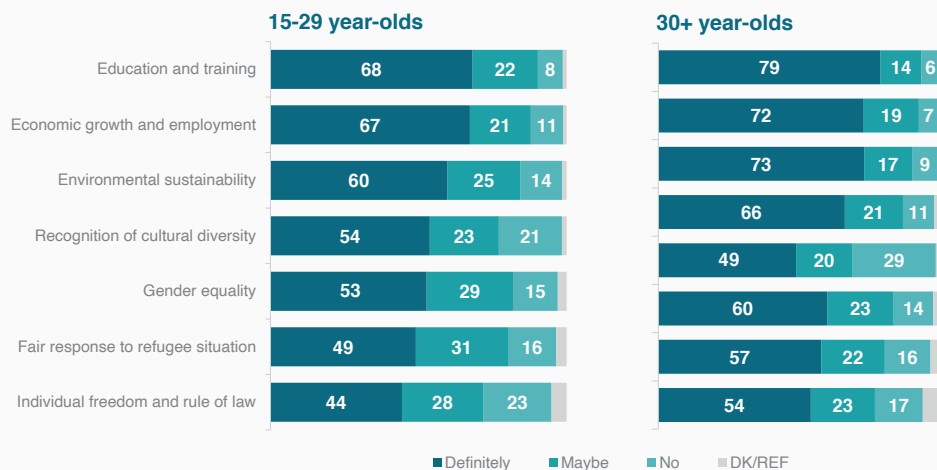
Chart 2.1: Gains From EuroMed cooperation (European countries) - by age



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

**Base:** All respondents (%), European countries, by socio-demographics (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**Chart 2.2: Gains from EuroMed cooperation (SEM countries) - by age**



**Survey question:** Your country, along with other European countries, has decided to reinforce closer cooperation with countries on the southern and eastern shore of the Mediterranean. Which of the following do you think your society can improve by reinforcing such cooperation?  
**Base:** All respondents (%), SEM countries, by socio-demographics (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

youth. In 2020, taking as a reference four areas in which EuroMed cooperation could bring social gains, it is noticeable that youth believe in the positive outcomes of the process: in the areas of entrepreneurship, innovation, and youth employment, 92% vs 91%, respectively; individual freedom and rule of law, 81.5% vs 79%, respectively; gender equality, 82% vs 78.5%, respectively; and with a quite significant difference for the promotion of cultural diversity and prevention of extremism, 85% vs 77%, respectively. It is, however, to be noted that the strongest advocate for the benefits of closer EuroMed cooperation are the surveyed young people in Europe; this may be attributed to the fact that the generation of people 15-29 years of age surveyed in Europe have directly experienced the benefits from more integration and cooperation at the EU level and benefited from free mobility and possibility of education and employment in other EU countries.

**Cross-cultural communication, digital tools and migration**

Cross-cultural encounters have steadily increased since 2009 across the region with, however, a decrease in Europe in the year of the pandemic, whilst registering a significant increase between 2016 and 2020 in SEM countries (in Europe, from 35% in 2009 to 53% in 2016 and 52% in 2020; and in SEM, from 24% in 2009 to 35% in 2016 and 46% in 2020). The difference in the level of cross-cultural encounters in the year of the pandemic might be due to the different ways being reported as spaces for encounter: for Europeans, business is the first source of contact, whilst for SEM the digital space is and has been throughout the years the main tool for meeting and talking to people from other countries. Business or work is a common way of

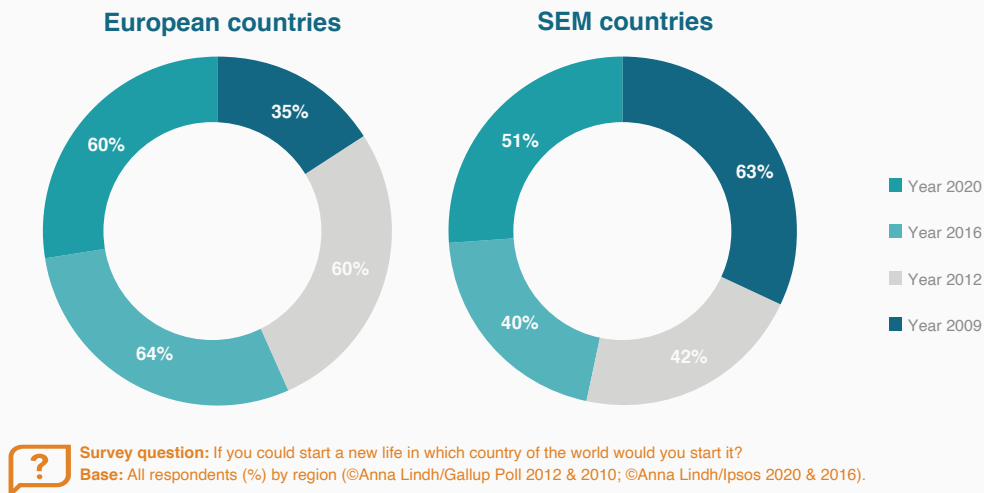
interaction both in Europe and in SEM countries over all waves of the Survey (in Europe, 38% in 2009, 35% in 2012 33% in 2016 and 42% in 2020; in SEM, 22% in 2009, 33% in 2012, 18% in 2016 and 15% in 2020). Internet chatting with people from the other side is a more popular method of interaction in SEM than in Europe (in SEM, 24% in 2009, 19% in 2012 and 25% in 2016; in Europe, 4% in 2009, 6% in 2012 and 5% in 2016).

The diversity of the method of interaction appears also to have an impact on the views developed as a result of the encounter, with 41% of SEM compared to 27% of Europeans reporting to have modified their views of the other into a positive direction as a result of the encounter. A large majority of SEM people (77%) also believes that digital tools can play an important role in facilitating intercultural dialogue, a view shared also by younger Europeans (68% vs 53% of Europeans above 30 years of age).

Social media and online media are also the most trusted sources of information for SEM countries and this trend has been consistent since 2016 (68% in 2020 and 59% in 2016 vs 50% for Europeans in 2020 and 46% in 2016). A large majority of SEM and Europeans also consider that barriers present in face-to-face cross-cultural interactions are less present through the use of digital tools. In this regard, it would be worth researching the most effective digital platforms for cross-cultural interaction going beyond market trends, as well as exploring the potential exposed during the pandemic for the use of digital platforms to reach out to wider audiences, exploring innovative and creative methods; exchanging good practices and experiences



**Chart 2.3:** Trends towards migration and mobility: a new life in a new country



among peers, as well as promoting environmentally sustainable working methods and investing in the infrastructure and skills needed to bridge the digital divide across the region and within societies.

When referring to intercultural relations, meeting in the street or the public space or living in the same neighbourhood have been increasingly reported as the main spaces for encounters in Europe, and decreasing trends in SEM countries over the course of the past eleven years. Taking the average of the two methods of interaction shows that in Europe, they have collectively jumped from 17.5% in 2009 and 2012 to 32.5% in 2016 and 40% in 2020.

Increased levels of interaction in Europe can be attributed to increasing migratory waves towards Europe, though Survey data in this regard provide some interesting information concerning people's inclinations towards migration. Contrary to majority media narratives, it is mainly Europeans who are inclined to start their life in a different country than their country of origin, with a rising trend toward migration and mobility that began with 35% in 2009 and rose to 60% in 2012, 64% in 2016 and 60% in 2020; conversely, though, it can be noted that in 2020, a majority of SEM people also wished to migrate—the trend is not consistent throughout the years, and the number is lower when compared to Europeans, ranging from 63% in 2009, to 42% in 2012, 40% in 2016 and 51% in 2020. In 2016 and 2020, 64% and 60%, respectively, wished to migrate (Chart 2.3).

Migration is considered a strong feature of the Mediterranean region; 38% of European and 56% of SEM respondents in 2020 confirmed

the 2016 data. It is interesting to see that since 2009, migration routes have changed, especially among SEM countries where 37% of people in 2009 wished to start their life in Europe, 16% in an African country and 13% in a Gulf country; in 2020, only 1% look at Africa as a potential destination, 5% at the Gulf, 20% at Europe and an increase towards other SEM countries at 14%. For Europeans, the main migratory trend is towards other European countries (36%) and America (7%), whilst only 2% oriented towards an SEM country.

In relation to migration and the image people have of the Mediterranean, it is also worth mentioning the increasing association that EuroMed people make of the region with the value of hospitality that is seen as a main feature of the Mediterranean: for Europeans, 95% in 2020 mentioned this aspect (89% in 2009, 95% in 2012, 88% in 2016) and 90% of SEM agreed in 2020 (81% in 2009, 93% in 2012, 87% in 2016).

**Women's role in society and value priorities**

Intercultural dialogue can help in the dismantling of stereotypes which hinder women's full integration within their respective societies by constructing new and varied images of them as agents for the promotion of intercultural dialogue and change in the region. Indeed, a change in the narrative about women and images of women can shift the prevalent cultural paradigm. The Survey presents views regarding the involvement of women in certain spheres of life, with a large majority of the EuroMed population concurring that women should participate more in fields of technology, science and business. In contrast, in 2020 only 39% of the SEM population agreed

that women should be more involved in politics, as opposed to 53% of the European population. Moreover, whilst a majority of the SEM population (68%) believes that women should be more involved in the education sector and encourage women's participation in the media (49%), still a vast majority insist that women should look after children and the house (80%), as opposed to 22% of the European population. Although the percentage is much smaller for Europeans, overall, 58% of the population are still satisfied with the current role women play within the family.

This data confirms the trend recorded in 2016 when, for the SEM, the cultural field was the area people wished to see an increased role for women (65%), as compared to the business sector (53%) and involvement in politics (40%), with 27% actually wishing a reduced role of women. As for Europeans in 2016, 54% called for a greater role of women in business, 53% in politics and 47% in cultural and social life. In 2012, the Intercultural Trends Survey introduced for the first time a question concerning women's role in society that, although it cannot be compared to the latest findings because of the different formulation of the question asked to EuroMed populations, it shows us that at that time, 56% of Europeans and 66% of SEM wished for an increased role of women in society within the following five years, and that 58% and 53%, respectively, thought that women were already playing a greater role at the time compared to the five previous years.

Work to promote equality requires a systemic approach at the legal, cultural and grassroots level, with collaboration from both men and women. Concrete initiatives stemming from the ALF experience in the field call for work with young people, using innovative tools and digital technology, and providing through the media success stories of women in fields which have seen a prevalence of men's roles. Internationally, gender equality is promoted by international cooperation.

At the value level, comparing the results between 2009 and 2020 shows a stable trend in both country groups, where respect for other cultures and family solidarity stay at the top of European values and religious beliefs stay at the top of SEM values, with the exception of 2012 when it became second to family solidarity. In SEM countries, data in 2016 and 2020 show a steady increase in conveying the value of obedience to children that is considered the most important value for 43% of people. At the European level, an increase is noted in the importance given to curiosity (17% in 2009, 15% in 2012, 27% in 2016, 39% in 2020) and independence (24% in 2009, 28% in 2012, 30% in 2016, 40% in 2020), whilst a relative drop of the values of respect for other cultures and family solidarity can be observed in 2020, though they are still on top of the list of priority values. One of the reasons for such an increase in curiosity and independence in 2020 could potentially also be linked to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic which have stimulated interest for information about other countries whilst at the same time impacting people's sense of independence with social restrictions put in place. In SEM countries,

Survey data show a steady increase in the appreciation of the value of respect for other cultures (18% in 2009, 28% in 2012, 28% in 2016, 29% in 2020).

### Convergent interest towards a shared approach for the climate emergency

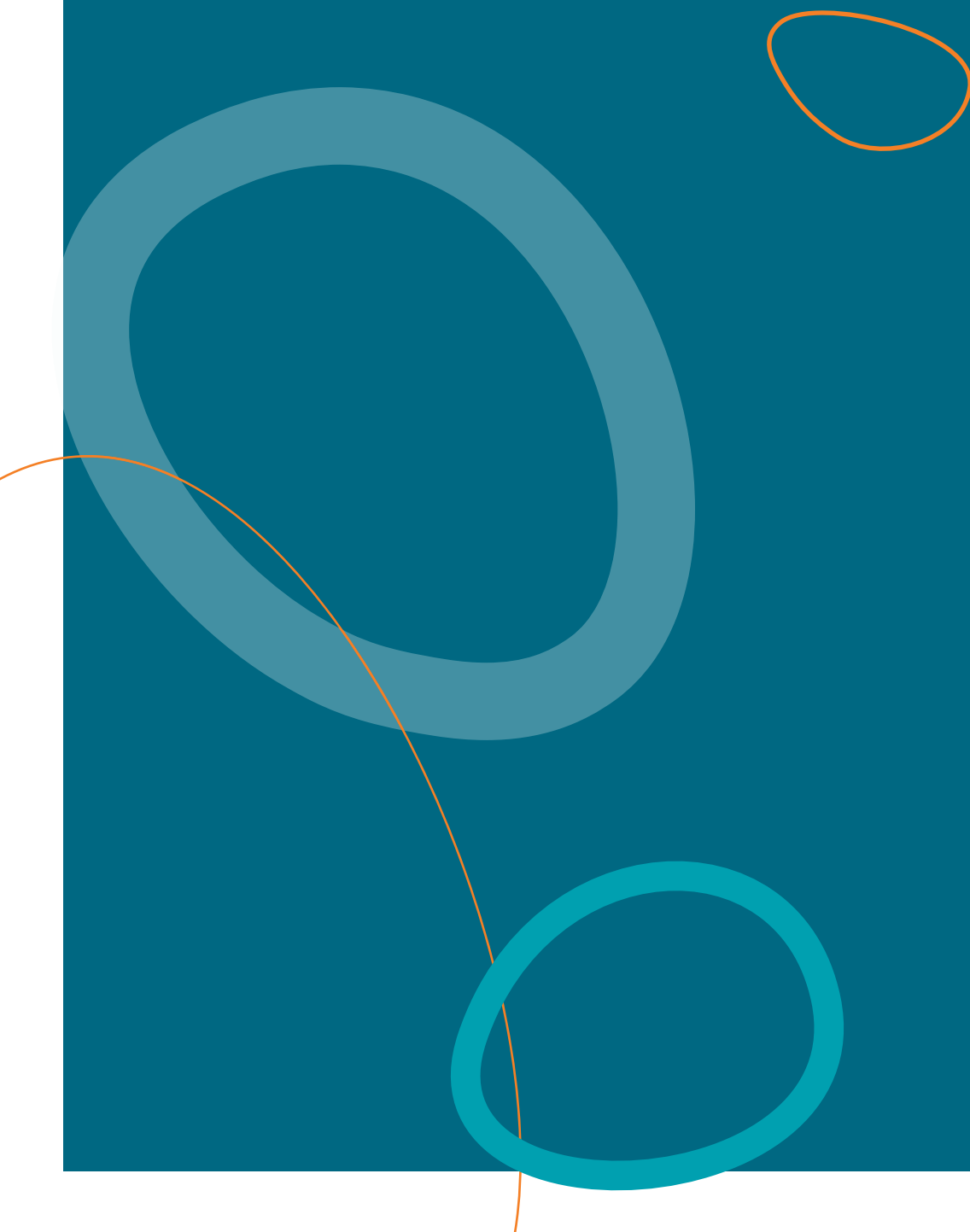
The Mediterranean is one of the regions most impacted by climate change and environmental degradation. Factors such as population and economic growth, urbanisation, migration and poverty call for urgent action in light of the 2030 SDGs. Survey data show that the natural environment and climate change are the areas of greatest interest to people from both shores of the Mediterranean. This data is not only relevant to orientate media production in line with trendy topics for coverage, but also as a point of convergence for the strengthening of EuroMed cooperation. Indeed, an important majority of over 80% of people from North and South of the Mediterranean consider environmental sustainability as one of the main gains to be derived from closer cooperation around the Mediterranean, confirming the conviction seen in 2016. This shows awareness of environmental issues, and that these issues cannot be dealt with at the national level, but require an integrated approach.

Following civil society consultation and expert analysis carried out by the ALF, it would be important to advocate for a Mediterranean Green Deal that goes beyond the EU's Green Deal, because the two coastlines of the Mediterranean are connected, and only cooperation from both sides can lead to a solution. In this context, it is also relevant to consider the subject of environmental migration and its current absence from the media, reflecting upon the question of whether adequate reporting on the matter could address some of the prevalent stereotypes on migrants. Within the current context, there is a need for a terminology shift from 'climate change' to 'climate emergency' in order to convey the sense of danger and urgency on the matter globally and for the EuroMed region, as well as to stress the importance of collaboration amongst three different parties: the government, civil society and the community, as there is no ideal solution characterised solely by either a top-down or bottom-up approach. A systemic approach calling on all of the areas of work of the ALF and impacting on mutual perceptions and learning could be the one sought, requiring actions which can be complementary in the fields of education, the media, civil society action, arts and culture, youth and gender empowerment and research. ■

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Eleonora Insalaco is the Head of Operations and Intercultural Research at the Anna Lindh Foundation.

# **EuroMed Intercultural Trends Analysis**



# The Impact of Digitalisation and Education on the Promotion of Intercultural Dialogue in the EuroMed Region

Karl DONERT

Examining digitalisation and education’s impact on intercultural dialogue, Karl Donert discusses the ways in which knowledge is increasingly created, shared and obtained through digital spaces and digitalised formats, which allows for widespread communication not being limited to an individual’s physical sphere of influence. He argues that digitalisation should be seen as a tool to create online ‘social spaces’ where cultures can meet, share and grapple with one another, utilising debate and critical thinking, to encourage cross-cultural understanding.

Intercultural dialogue is a process that comprises exchange between individuals, groups and organisations with different backgrounds, opinions and views. This is an indispensable feature of an inclusive society, in which no one is marginalised. Intercultural dialogue acts as a powerful instrument of negotiation and understanding through critical and constructive engagement, allowing people to establish a deeper understanding of diverse world views and practices. It is a key instrument for building bridges between people, thereby helping to establish societies based on mutual respect.

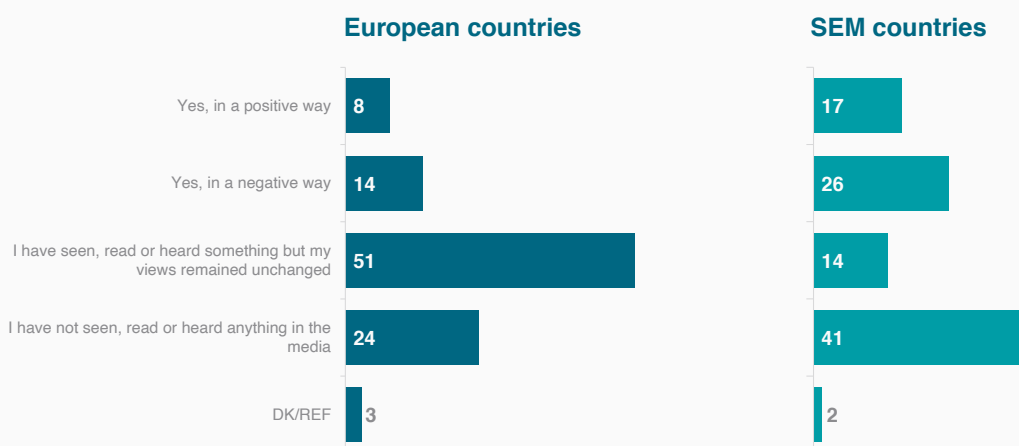
Dialogue takes into account embedded value systems and provides a way of balancing an appreciation of diversity with shared, collaborative principles for cooperation. In practice, this calls for negotiation and compromise, allied to a commitment to mutual understanding across cultural contexts.

Culture is recognised as an essential component of human development, a source of identity and creativity. Culture is relevant to education as it supports the varied ways people learn and transmit knowledge according to their different geographical, historical and linguistic backgrounds. As a result, education strategies that are responsive to local cultures, contexts and needs are generally considered to be the most effective in fostering cohesive societies.

**Education can play an essential role in fostering intercultural dialogue and in preparing future generations for dialogue.**

Digitalisation involves the transformation of different information types, such as texts, sounds, imagery, video and data, into a digital format. This enables their widespread communication and provides

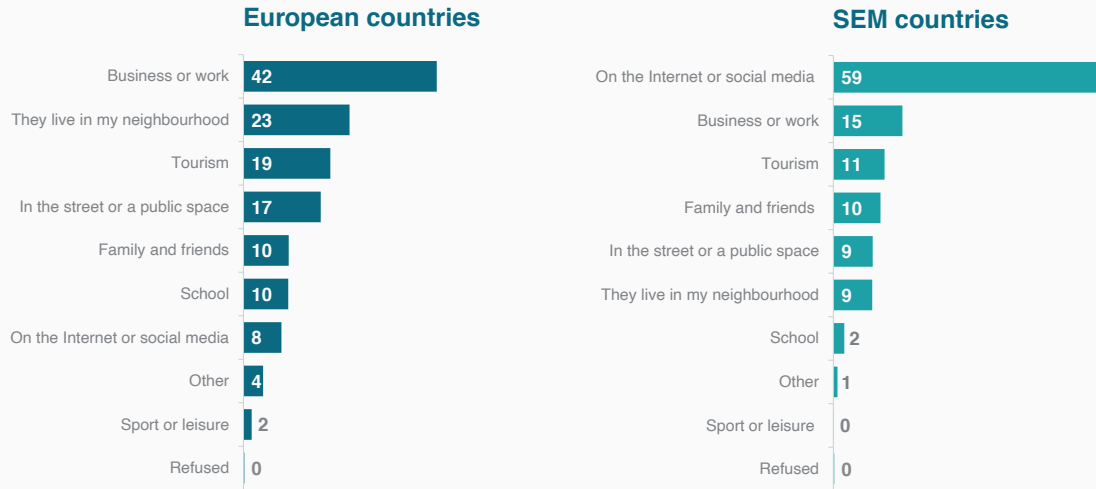
**Chart 3.1: Media role in shaping public perception - by region**



**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 (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**Chart 3.2: Cross-cultural encounters - by region**



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

**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.

**Base:** Respondents who have talked to or met someone from a SEM/European country in the past 12 months (%), by region (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

opportunities for collaboration and for enabling participatory democracy. For intercultural dialogue to take place digitally, digital spaces need to be able to facilitate engagement and discourse. Digitalisation should be viewed as offering tools which can help create online 'social spaces' where cultures can meet, share and grapple with one another.

**The ongoing importance of education**

Education can play an essential role in fostering intercultural dialogue and in preparing future generations for dialogue. According to the Anna Lindh/Ipsos Intercultural Trends Survey data, 73% of respondents in Europe and 72% in Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (SEM) countries consider that 'ensuring that schools are places where children learn how to live in diversity' is a 'very effective' action for helping people live better together in multicultural environments. As such, intercultural education should be a priority for policymakers and civil society organisations, encouraging respect for cultural diversity whilst nurturing shared values. However, whilst the data suggest that respondents appreciate the value of schools to intercultural societies, it is noticeable that few reported cross-cultural encounters occurred at schools, vis-à-vis other settings (10% European and 2% SEM countries), though it should also be noted that this is likely a reflection of the age of the sample profile.

**Digital technologies have the potential to promote critical thinking and problem solving by providing channels through which citizens can access and analyse key information...**

**Media and the impact of digitisation**

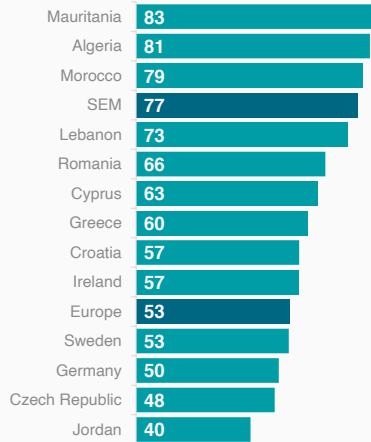
Communicating news across cultural differences is a central challenge for the contemporary media. The Survey data suggest that the media can both positively and negatively influence the perceptions of respondents (Chart 3.1). The data suggest that the media has become an influential force in SEM countries, influencing 43% of respondents either positively (17%) or negatively (26%), with only 14% stating their views were not changed by the media. In comparison, European respondents are less influenced by the media, with 51% stating the media had not changed their views. It is important to note that in both SEM and European countries, a number of respondents had not engaged with the media (41% and 24%, respectively).

Access to an independent and pluralistic media creates empowered citizens by keeping them informed and facilitating the flow of content. It encourages the acquisition of civic knowledge and facilitates discussion of current issues. Education through media can be an important means of developing valuable knowledge and skills that can support people to reject discrimination (McDougall et al., 2018). At the same time, media literacy builds critical thinking skills which are essential to responsible media consumption; this includes recognising how messages shape our perceptions and beliefs, recognising what is left unsaid, and recognising bias and spin.

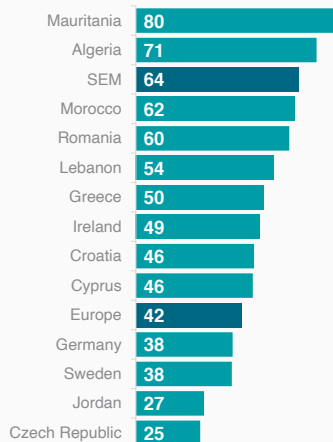
Due to the rise in online media, individuals can now themselves be *prosumers* – producers as well as consumers, with the ability to create and share content. Generally, young people tend to be very active in technology-rich environments. Social media has

**Chart 3.3: Impact of digital technology - by country**

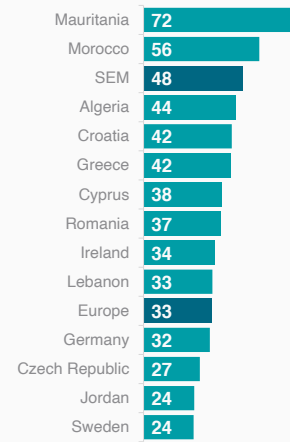
**Digital technology can play an important role in facilitating dialogue between people from different cultures**



**Skills for intercultural dialogue can be enhanced via digital tools**



**Cultural barriers are less of an obstacle during online (digital) communication compared to offline (face-to-face) communication**



**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 (% agree –sum of “strongly agree” and “somewhat agree” responses”), by country (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

become one of the main channels of communication for information creation and news consumption; interestingly, a larger proportion of participants in SEM countries (36%) see social media as a trustworthy media source for cross-cultural reporting, in comparison with European respondents (15%), who tend to be more trusting of other media sources, including print media. Such relatively high levels of trust towards social media among respondents in SEM countries raises questions about the potential spread of misinformation. Due to the democratic nature of social media, anyone can publish and promote news, thus the quality and the accuracy of the information that is shared on these platforms is disputable.

Digital technologies affect not only the processes of domestic life, but they also transform intercultural relations and impact on the methods of interaction where cross-cultural encounters take place. The Survey results suggest there is also a higher dependence on digital technologies for cross-cultural communication in SEM countries, with 59% of respondents in SEM countries reporting that their interactions with people from other cultures over the last 12 months occurred mostly through social media or the Internet, compared with 8% in European countries (Chart 3.2). People from Algeria (74%), Lebanon (47%) and Morocco (47%) most frequently interacted with someone from a European country through the Internet or social media.

Digital technologies have the potential to promote critical thinking and problem solving by providing channels through which citizens can access and analyse key information and use synchronous and

asynchronous tools to provide an engaging dialogic experience. The Survey indicated that participants believe digital technology has a large impact on, and can play an important role in, facilitating intercultural dialogue. In Europe, and to an even greater extent in SEM countries, respondents ‘strongly agree’ that digital technology can play an important role in facilitating dialogue between people from different cultures (53% and 77%, respectively). A third in Europe (33%) and almost half in SEM countries (48%) also ‘strongly agree’ that cultural barriers are less of an obstacle online than during face-to-face communication (Chart 3.3). Active use of digital technologies enhances intercultural interaction and catalyses the processes of global integration.

**Digitalisation and the pandemic**

Digitalisation has transformed all facets of society, not just work environments, but also in terms of social and educational contexts. Data from the Survey should be set in the context of the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, where normal methods of intercultural communication have been limited by restrictions on movement. The pandemic directed many people to adopt digital communication methods, and this may be reflected in the Survey findings, particularly with regards to use of social media among SEM respondents, though it is also the case that the Survey took place during the early stages of the pandemic and the findings may not yet reflect the true extent of the impact of COVID-19 on online interaction.

It remains unclear whether changes in the use of digital technologies will outlast the pandemic, and what this may mean for the future

of intercultural dialogue. However, given the high usage of digital technologies and communication shown in the Survey, it can be assumed that digitalisation has provided openings for new forms of cultural expression to develop and new, culturally diverse social networks to be created.

### Recommendations

As digital technology becomes more fundamental to everyday life, a process that has been accelerated by the global pandemic, understanding people's communication and media behaviour, and its potential impact on intercultural dialogue, is increasingly important. There needs to be an acknowledgment of the necessity for improved digital media literacy across the Euro-Mediterranean region, not just in schools but also for lifelong learning.

Technology can create possibilities for intercultural dialogue. Through Cloud Computing and smart tools, virtual spaces for intercultural dialogue – covering large geographic areas – ought to be developed. These spaces can provide opportunities for citizens to engage directly with information, ideas and knowledge, as well as with each other, from different locations.

Intercultural education should be a priority. Innovative education programmes, which allow the acquisition of transferable skills for intercultural communication, such as debate and critical thinking, to encourage cross-cultural understanding, should be developed. Training teachers to embed transferable skills for intercultural communication in schools and colleges will be essential to encouraging intercultural dialogue and tolerance. Both formal and non-formal educational contexts should be developed so that young people are able to advance intercultural dialogue through their use of information technologies. Their actions can serve as examples for new, mobile and even more intercultural generations.

People encounter intercultural dialogue in their daily lives. The 'shared spaces' in which intercultural dialogue processes take place are increasingly likely to be found in the media or in virtual online environments. As pillars of social cohesion, young people need to be well placed to advance intercultural dialogue in both educational and digital settings in a post-COVID Euro-Mediterranean context. ■

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Karl Donert is a Geographer and Consultant; and former President and current Vice President of EUROGEO.

## Dialogue in action | Cyprus

### 'Burst your Bubble', Change through Participatory Theatre

Burst Your Bubble aimed to respond to the need to promote activism among youth in Europe in order to promote and defend human rights. Conflicts, the tension between countries, and rejection and non-acceptance of human beings from other places in the world for their sociology, economical or religious condition.

Hence, Rooftop Theatre Ltd aimed to endow youth workers with resources, strategies and tools to make people aware of their social role, which is to embrace all and to give a voice to those who do not have one. In doing so, Rooftop Theatre wanted to address the need to prevent the isolation of people belonging to marginalised groups; through the arts, and more specifically through theatre, this conversation can be disseminated to the wider public and create mechanisms for empowerment.

With all of this in mind, Rooftop Theatre set out to raise awareness among 23 youth workers from nine European countries about the need for participants as active citizens,

and for activism in human rights using theatre for social change techniques as a means to build a more inclusive society. The training course developed a variety of non-formal skills, knowledge, and attitudes regarding theoretical and practical frames for inclusion, involvement in the society, and activism in human rights in practical youth work.

Rooftop Theatre has edited an eBook with a compilation of the methodologies and development of workshops formed in training. The tool is available at: <https://toolbox.salto-youth.net/2861>

The duration of the activity was one year, plus a training course of nine days and was funded under the framework of the Erasmus+ programme, KA1 Mobility of Youth workers.

Project website: [www.rooftoptheatregroup.com/index.php/euprojects/item/143-course](http://www.rooftoptheatregroup.com/index.php/euprojects/item/143-course)

Rooftop Theatre Ltd.

Partners: IKOS Istanbul, Sfera Italy, Sfera Serbia, Ways Denmark, Warm Hands Albania, Peti Maj Slovenia, Vzajemopomich Ukraine, ENO Greece.

# Impact of Environmental Issues on the Promotion of Intercultural Dialogue in the EuroMed Region

Mariam TRAORE CHAZNOEL and Katherine BARWISE

Discussing the impact of environmental issues on the promotion of intercultural dialogue in the EuroMed region, Mariam Traore Chazalnoel and Katherine Barwise focus on the relevance of the 2020 Survey data to environmental migration governance and the EU's flagship policy framework, the Green New Deal. Potential relevance of the findings are highlighted that could be of great relevance to the governance of current and future flows of migrants, including those moving in the context of climate and environmental change. Further discussion is held on the EU-wide impact of its policy.

Climate change and environmental degradation have great impacts on the migration of people in the EuroMed region. Environmental migration takes place both within and across countries as the region faces an increase in the frequency and intensity of forest fires, droughts, heatwaves, and permafrost melt. In 2019 for instance, Spain recorded that 23,000 people were displaced from their homes because of increasing wildfires, storms and torrential downpours leading to flooding (IDMC, 2020). Saami pastoralists in Northern Scandinavia find their livelihoods and traditional routes disrupted by erratic temperatures induced by climate change, adversely impacting winter, and summer grazing pastures (Kelman and Warg Næss, 2019). Circular labour migration in the context of climate change impacts is increasing from the drought-hit Southern Mediterranean to Northern Europe's agricultural sectors. All people in the EuroMed region, both migrants and non-migrants, are affected or likely to be affected by climate change and environmental degradation.

**Environmental migration is multi-causal, since climate and environmental issues intersect with economic, demographic and security drivers to shape the decision to migrate.**

In many cases, environmental migration is multi-causal, since climate and environmental issues intersect with economic, demographic and security drivers to shape the decision to migrate. This is of relevance to the EuroMed region as many people moving across borders are perceived to be 'economic' migrants. Yet, the negative impacts of climate change on livelihoods and economic survival often play a significant role in the decision to migrate.

The data commissioned by the Anna Lindh Foundation reveal interesting findings that could be of great relevance to the governance of current and future flows of migrants, including those moving in the context of climate and environmental change. As the European Union (EU) moves forward with its flagship policy framework, the EU Green Deal, almost all major aspects

of the European economy and the lives of people in Europe will be impacted. It will also be felt beyond the European continent, especially among Europe's closest neighbours.

Noticeably, respondents from both European countries and countries on the Southern and Eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea (SEM) display similar levels of interest in news and information related to climate change and the environment. Nearly half of all respondents from both sides of the Mediterranean indicate they are very interested in the topic (43% in European countries and 45% in SEM countries, respectively) (Charts 4.1 and 4.2). Only a minority of people surveyed in both regions say they are 'not interested' in the topic (12% in Europe and 24% in SEM countries). The levels of interest in the topic are similar across the age groups surveyed and across educational levels. Therefore, it appears that interest in climate and environmental issues transcends borders, educational levels and generations.

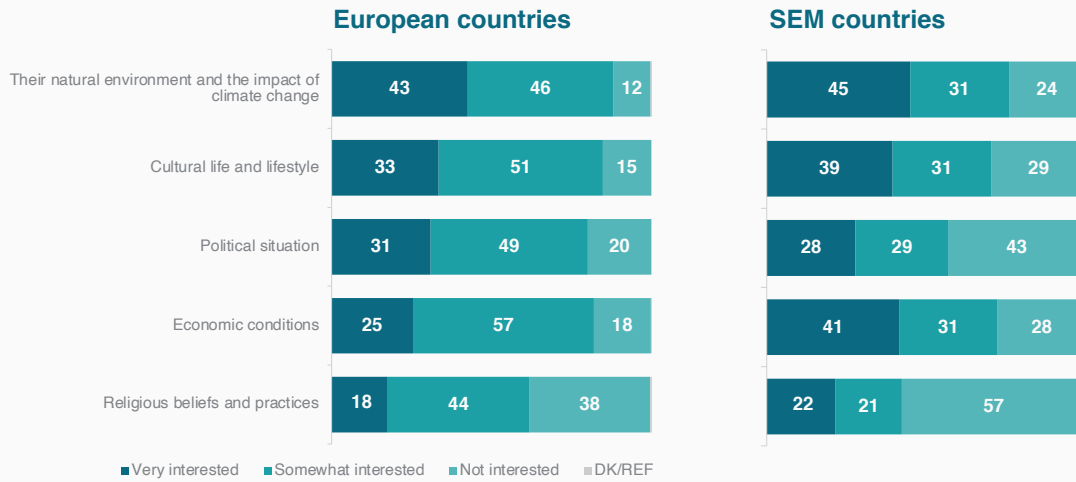
This strong interest in environmental issues might be linked to people observing and directly experiencing the impacts of climate and environmental degradation on their daily lives. Some SEM countries are especially vulnerable to adverse climate impacts such as Mauritania and Morocco, and these impacts might directly and indirectly drive migration decisions. For instance, in a survey of Moroccan migrants conducted in 2017, most respondents indicated that environmental reasons such as drought and water scarcity motivated their decision to migrate.

**Interest in climate and environmental issues transcends borders, educational levels and generations.**

Current research also reveals that migrants and their families experience the impacts of climate change in specific ways in their places of destination. In urban areas for instance, migrants are more likely to be exposed to environmental stressors, such as poor indoor air quality, heat and cold stress, noise and air pollution (European Environment Agency, 2020).

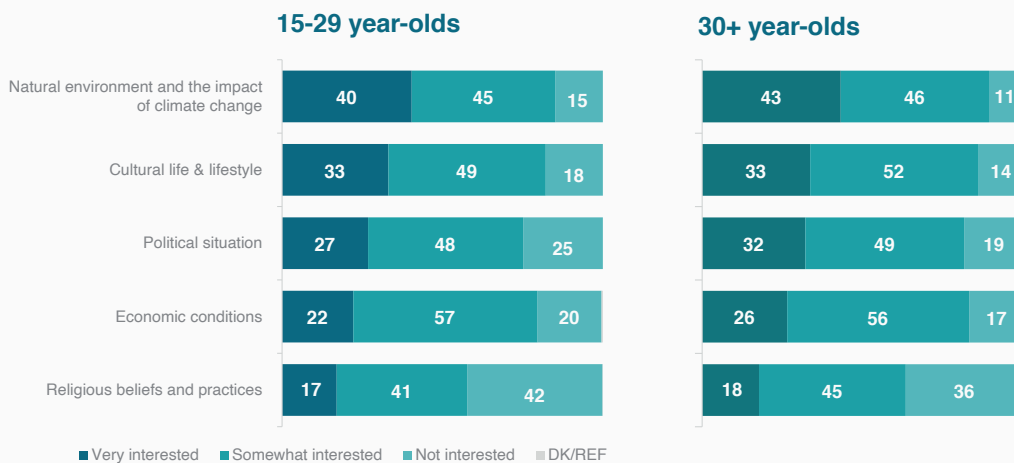


**Chart 4.1: Interest in news and information about SEM / European countries - by region**



**?** **Survey question:** Thinking about the countries bordering the southern and eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea (asked in European countries)/European countries (asked in SEM countries), how interested are you in knowing about their [TOPICS A-E]?  
**Base:** All respondents (%), by region (@Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**Chart 4.2: Interest in news and information about SEM countries - by age**

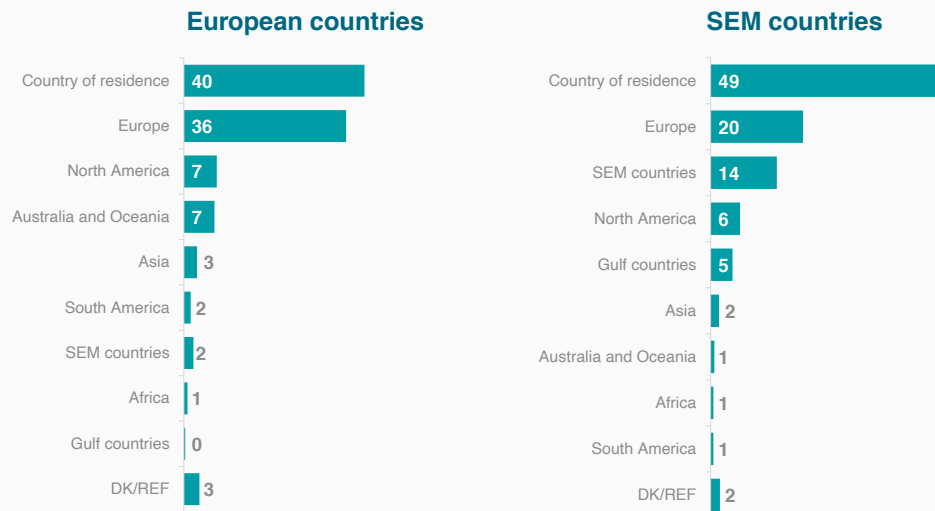


**?** **Survey question:** Thinking about the countries bordering the southern and eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea (asked in European countries)/European countries (asked in SEM countries), how interested are you in knowing about their [TOPICS A-E]?  
**Base:** All respondents in European countries (%), by socio-demographics (@Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

When asked 'if you could start a new life, in which country of the world would you start it', the Survey also reveals (Chart 4.3) that the largest group among both European (40%) and SEM (49%) respondents would rather start a new life in their countries of residence than move to another. However, more than half of the respondents in both regions would consider migrating to another country. A similar share of European respondents say they would start a new life in another European country (36%) than remain in their country of residence (40%). This proportion is higher than among SEM respondents, where only 20% of the people surveyed would choose to start a new

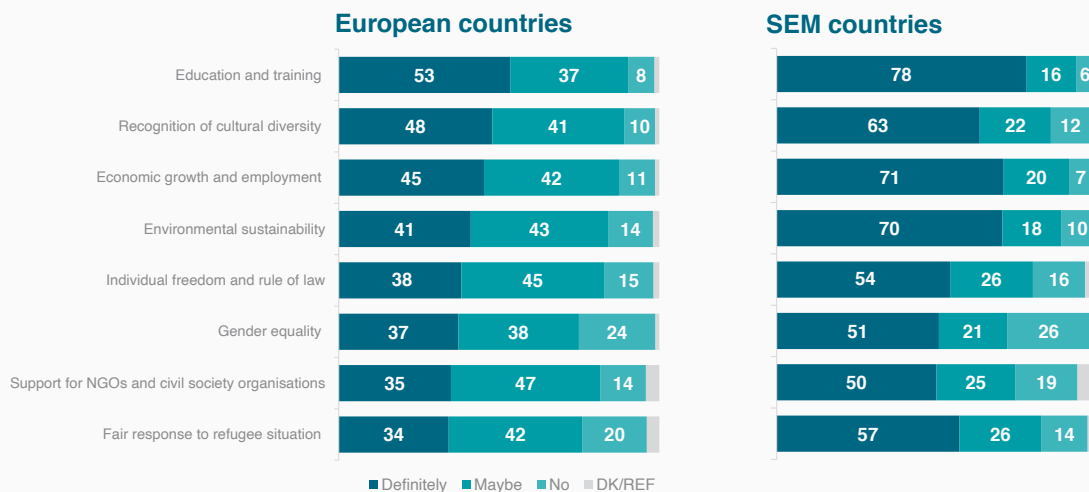
life in Europe. Most European Mediterranean adults consider that migration levels should be reduced, yet it seems that only a relatively small proportion of people from SEM countries are keen to migrate to Europe. In terms of policy development, all the major global policy discussions related to environmental migration highlight that policy goals should first and foremost aim to support climate adaptation and mitigation measures in countries and regions of origin, to avoid the forced migration of people. This is aligned with the wishes of people who are mostly keen to live productive lives in their countries of origin.

**Chart 4.3: Preferred countries to start a new life - by region**



**Survey question:** If you could start a new life, in which country of the world would you start it?  
**Base:** All respondents (%), by region (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**Chart 4.4: Gains from EuroMed cooperation - by region**



**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 (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

For both groups of respondents, Europe is the preferred destination for those who say they would start a new life in another country, maybe owing to geographical proximity and common cultural values as evidenced in the Survey. Many studies in Europe have highlighted the importance of nature and climate action for migrant integration and inclusion. In the United Kingdom for instance, ethnic groups mingle in urban parks, fostering a sense of community and attachment to place (Peters et al., 2010). In that respect, current climate and environmental European policies could be instrumental in promoting social cohesion between migrants and communities of destination.

A large majority of SEM respondents (70%) say that their societies would ‘definitely’ see gains from closer EuroMed cooperation in terms of environmental sustainability, whilst 18% think they would ‘maybe’ see such gains. These figures are 41% and 43% respectively for European respondents (Chart 4.4). In general, SEM respondents expect to gain more than European respondents, but the overwhelming majority from both regions do think that one way or another, their societies would benefit from closer EuroMed cooperation when it comes to environmental sustainability. Furthermore, both regions expect to benefit from closer cooperation in other areas that greatly

influence environmental migration, such as economic growth and a fair response to the refugee situation.

These figures, coupled with the common interest in climate and environmental issues analysed above, are an encouraging sign that environmental sustainability represents a common ground across the EuroMed region, irrespective of nationality, desire to migrate, age and education levels.

**All the major global policy discussions related to environmental migration highlight that policy goals should first and foremost aim to support climate adaptation and mitigation measures in countries and regions of origin, to avoid the forced migration of people.**

### Conclusions and recommendations

The findings in this Survey have implications for policies relating to migration, climate, environment, and international cooperation across the EuroMed region and beyond. In polarised societies and regions, issues relating to environmental sustainability can provide a common ground. This is important in the EuroMed region because the overarching migration narrative tends to be negative.

Environmental issues are largely absent from policy and discussion about the governance of migration, inclusion and social cohesion. The EU Migration and Asylum Pact frames climate change predominantly as a driver of migration, with the role of the EU being to, 'address the challenges of climate change' so that 'people feel that their future lies at home'. (It also refers to the 'potential of migrant workers to contribute to the green and digital transitions by providing the European labour market with the skills it needs'.)

However, as highlighted in the Survey, in general, people do not need to be persuaded to stay in their home country. Public policy in countries across the region should therefore take a wider view aligned with the objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other international frameworks. For example, policies should be designed and implemented to help people to live productive and dignified lives and ensure that the worst of climate impacts are avoided. This can be supported by EU investment in sustainable development programmes which foster climate adaptation and mitigation in EU Member States and Partner Countries for the achievement of the SDGs. The EU Green Deal and the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument can assist with this.

Finally, it is also important to leverage environmental policy to promote safe, orderly and regular migration for those who do move (Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration). Environmental conditions across the region have an impact on why people move, how they move, and how they fare in communities of destination. We have seen repeatedly how people on the move, when integrated and their rights upheld, can be part of the solutions needed in our societies. Fostering the green transition and increasing coherence between migration and environment policies such as the EU Green Deal can also positively impact migration and social cohesion across the EuroMed region, and beyond. ■

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## Dialogue in action | Hungary

### Artemisszió Foundation and MIRA Community

Artemisszió Foundation is a private NGO established in 1998. Its mission is to help people cross barriers that separate cultural and social groups. It fights racism, discrimination and hate speech.

The activities of the Artemisszió Foundation are based on intercultural learning in four major areas: conducting programmes for migrants and refugees in order to foster their social integration; working with schools for the promotion of intercultural pedagogy, democracy and media literacy; delivering intercultural trainings for various target groups (health care agents, journalists, young people); developing methodologies (forum theatre, community reporting, digital storytelling) for implementing actions on activism.

MIRA is Artemisszió's intercultural community. It welcomes refugees, foreign nationals living in Hungary, and Hungarians interested in meeting people from different cultures. Members of MIRA share a common vision of society, according to which all people living together in Hungary deserve to feel recognized and supported, regardless of their citizenship status, place of origin, culture, religion, socio-economic status, or colour of skin. Hence, MIRA offers a space for encounters, the possibility of participating in, and contributing to, collective programmes and encourages mutual learning and exchange of competences.

The aim of MIRA's mentoring programme is that refugees and immigrants living in Hungary find their place and become successful members of their new society. In the mentoring programme, each participant gets a volunteer Hungarian mentor whose task is to help them with everyday questions such as getting a doctor's appointment, or registering their

kids for kindergarten. They also practice the language in a friendly and fun way — going out together in the city — but more importantly, the mentor's task is to create a safe and friendly environment where questions about the culture, the differences and the new life can be asked and will be heard. The mentor is the local connection; a companionship whose presence contributes deeply to establish meaningful connection with the new home.

*'She helped me to become a psychologist here. I knew I liked art therapy but I didn't know how to find my pathway here. So that's the main thing, the mentoring (...) I have a lot of memories, we went around Budapest and she introduced a lot of things to me. We even got tattoos together!'* (AZ)

In Artemisszió, we organise language classes in Hungarian and English primarily, but foreign members of our community take on the role of teacher, allowing us to offer Farsi, Arabic, and Spanish, among others, depending on the actual offer and needs. The teachers are volunteers, often not professionals, but locals who are offering their help. Artemisszió organises the classes, supervises their work by regular meetings and gives them support.

*'Whilst I was teaching, I was also learning about myself also. I experienced many things and I felt like I was developing in teaching skills and to be more empathetic to people and stuff like this. On a personal level, I didn't change a lot but probably a bit yes.'*

We received the Global Pluralism Award in 2019 for our work.

Artemisszió Foundation

# Hate Speech and Cultural Divides Within and Across Societies

Atte OKSANEN

Examining hate speech and cultural divides within and across societies, Atte Oksanen focuses on the global rise in hate speech as a recognised phenomenon. He utilises the Anna Lindh/Ipsos Intercultural Trends survey data to advocate for methods of dialogue, including education and youth programmes, to instil the values which are conducive to intercultural dialogue. He argues that values instilled during childhood can impact on people’s likelihood to engage in and support initiatives that aim to encourage intercultural dialogue, based on values of freedom of speech.

Interpersonal and intergroup violence – motivated by hate – is a major threat for European and global society. Although hate-motivated violence has occurred throughout human history, recently a fundamental change has taken place as a result of the technological development of the Internet and social media (Keipi et al., 2017). Despite the major potential of social media in giving people fast access to information, it is also one of the biggest factors driving the increase of hate speech.

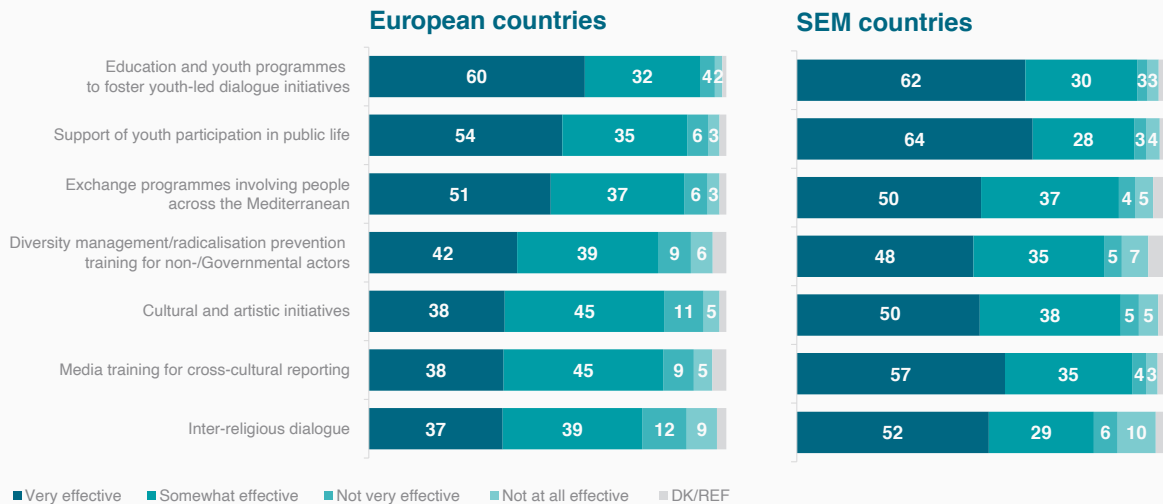
Rhetoric used by politicians in several Western countries on social media has changed, becoming more divisive. The series of terror attacks in the 2000s has fuelled this rhetoric and instilled fear into the public (Oksanen et al., 2020). Due to this, public debate has become increasingly affective and inflamed by fear. This climate of fear is not conducive to laying the foundations for open cultural dialogue; therefore, it is often challenging to open civil discussion over social media.

The spread of hate speech is a recognized problem in the European Union and various measures have been taken to fight illegal hate speech. Indeed, hate speech is a major risk factor for deepening cultural divides and increasing polarisation within and between countries. For these reasons it is important to analyse and assess the effectiveness of different initiatives in overcoming these challenges. This article analyses the hate speech phenomenon and potential solutions to it using data from the fourth wave of the Anna Lindh/Ipsos Intercultural Trends Survey 2020.

### Global rise of hate speech

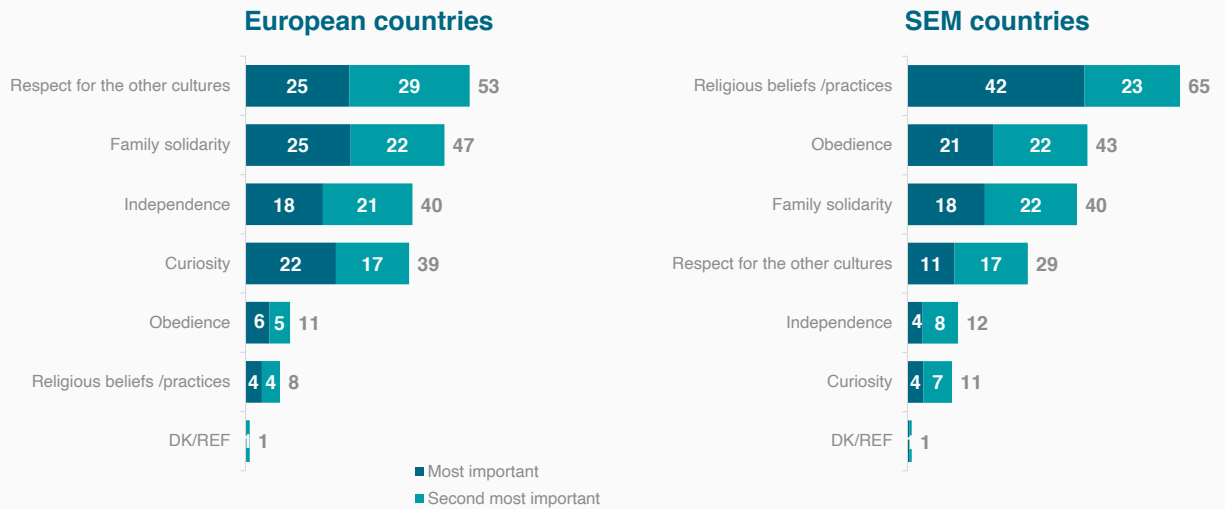
Hate speech targets individuals and/or groups of people with intensive, hostile or threatening content. It can take many forms and may concern ‘race’, colour, language, religion or belief, nationality or national or ethnic origin, as well as descent, age, disability, sex, gender, gender identity and sexual orientation. (ECRI, 2016), among others. The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance defines hate speech as entailing:

**Chart 5.1: Tackling polarisation and hate speech - by region**  
Measures to prevent and deal with 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 (@Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

Chart 5.2: Key values when raising children - by region



**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 (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

‘...the use of one or more particular forms of expression—namely, the advocacy, promotion or incitement of the denigration, hatred or vilification of a person or group of persons, as well as any harassment, insult, negative stereotyping, stigmatization or threat... based on personal characteristics...’ (ECRI, 2016).

Different studies have demonstrated that the Internet and especially social media have facilitated the spread of hate speech in many societies (Keipi et al., 2017; Reichelman et al., 2020). Although various organised hate groups – especially in the US – were already active online in the 1990s, the phenomenon has started to concern large groups of people with the rise of social media. Studies have shown that there was a dramatic increase in hate speech in the 2010s, for example, during the crisis in Syria and the mass immigration that followed (Kaakinen et al., 2018). Critical incidents such as terrorist attacks are also associated with increases in hate speech (Oksanen et al., 2020).

Hate speech has become a part of mainstream political discourse in several Western democratic states in recent years. Within the EU, several populist politicians have been accused of using social media and hate speech as a means to activate voters. Expansion of this type of rhetoric is extremely dangerous in the long run and risks compromising dialogue between European countries and their neighbours.

Hate speech is extremely harmful to both individuals and societies. Victims of hate speech report lower general well-being, social trust

and self-esteem than others (Keipi et al., 2017). It has a negative impact on social cohesion by increasing the potential for intergroup conflicts within and between societies (Awan and Zempi, 2016; Williams and Burnap, 2016; Kaakinen et al., 2018). Hate speech can also corrode trust in institutions and can lead to a climate of fear within societies (Oksanen, 2020).

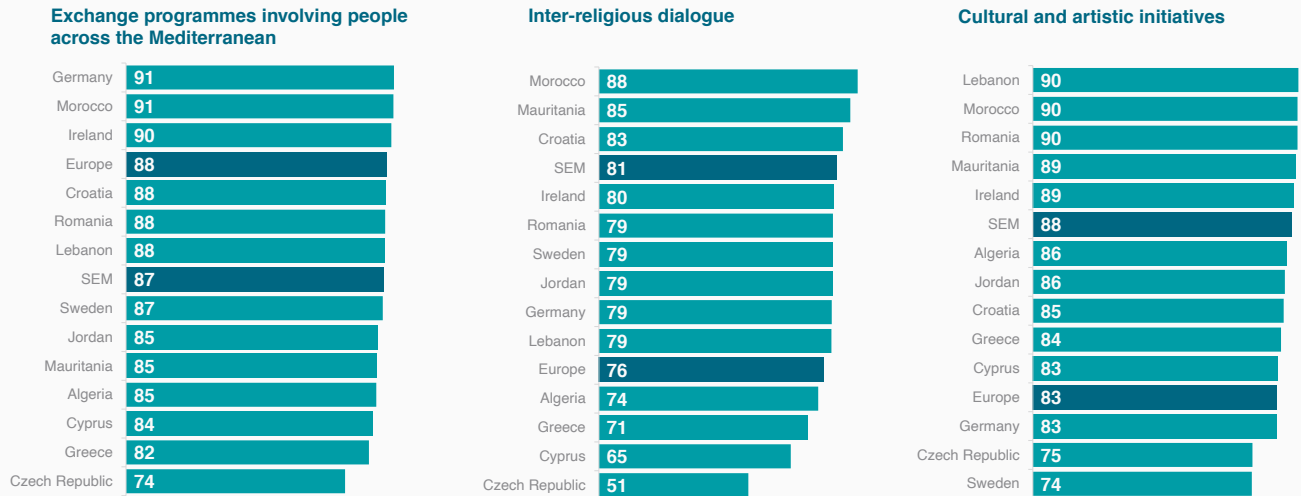
**Tackling hate speech and polarisation**

Hate speech is an extremely complex problem and there are no easy solutions. The Survey explored potential ways to deal with hate speech and opposing cultural views. Participants were asked to rank seven mechanisms for preventing and dealing with the above challenges from very effective to not at all effective.

Charts 5.1 and 5.3 show that people in both SEM (Southern and Eastern Mediterranean) and European countries see education and youth programmes as very effective methods for preventing and dealing with hate speech. Conversely, whilst over half (52%) of participants in SEM countries consider inter-religious dialogue to be ‘very effective’, just 37% of the participants in European countries agreed. Significance testing shows that participants in SEM countries also see media training and cultural and artistic initiatives as more effective than participants in EU countries.

Values instilled during childhood can impact on people’s likelihood to engage in and support initiatives that aim to encourage intercultural dialogue. As seen in Chart 5.2, 42% of participants from SEM countries identified religious beliefs or practices as the most important

**Chart 5.3: Tackling polarisation and hate speech - by country**



**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 (% effective –sum of “very effective” and “somewhat effective” responses”), by country (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

key value when raising children, whilst only 4% of participants in European countries thought the same. Extremist religious views might hinder open dialogue with others, in which case initiatives to encourage dialogue and acceptance of different religious affiliations may need to be developed.

**Any open dialogue is based on the individual's ability to express opinions without fear of threats, retaliation, or censorship.**

The Survey also asked about digital technologies, tools and communication methods to facilitate intercultural dialogue. Participants in both European and SEM countries consider that digital technology can be a useful tool for encouraging dialogue. Participants of SEM countries had a more positive reaction to the use of digital technologies than participants from European countries. For example, 77% of respondents in SEM countries strongly agreed that digital technology can play an important role in facilitating dialogue between people from different cultures, compared with 53% in European countries.

**Opportunities for dialogue**

It is impossible to talk about dialogue between European and SEM countries without talking about freedom of speech. Any open dialogue is based on the individual's ability to express opinions without fear of threats, retaliation, or censorship. Hate speech effectively censors people, making them less willing to express themselves publicly for

fear of retaliation. Overcoming hate speech is therefore a matter of freedom of speech.

Currently, a difference lies between European and SEM countries in freedom of speech according to the Freedom of Speech Index; there are also limitations within Eastern Europe. The most efficient way to overcome hate speech and cultural polarisation is via democratisation, secularisation and education. Societies which allow different voices to be heard have the best potential for understanding other cultures.

**Fake news and conspiracy theories also flourish online and feed into the fear originating in hate speech.**

Nevertheless, hate speech is a very complex phenomenon and there are no easy solutions to overcome it. With regards to social media, for instance, it has been only recently that Facebook, Google and Twitter have started to act against hate speech on their platforms. Online hate speech is often triggered by extreme political, ideological or religious views. Fake news and conspiracy theories also flourish online and feed into the fear originating in hate speech. This is concerning given that the Survey shows that people in SEM countries and young people are more likely to trust social media to provide them with news than many other media sources. It is important that social media companies run fact-checks on the news items shared on their pages. Relying only on social media as an information source could be otherwise problematic.

### Conclusion and recommendations

Hate speech is toxic for victims, societies and even for those who disseminate it (Keipi et al., 2017). According to the Survey, the majority of people in European and SEM areas find different societal and cultural initiatives effective in overcoming hate speech. Digital technologies were also seen as having potential for opening dialogue between people from different cultures. There are, however, major differences between European and

SEM countries, especially on the role of religion and respect for other cultures as values when raising children. Dialogue could be challenging without effective interventions, as dialogue can only take place when other opinions can be expressed freely. ■

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Atte Oksanen is a Professor of Social Psychology at Tampere University, Finland.

## Dialogue in action | Egypt

### Youth debates on Dialogue between different cultures reduces extremism

The 'Dialogue between different cultures reduces extremism' youth debate was organised in Alexandria in July 2020 and attended by youth from civil society institutions in Alexandria and the Nile Delta.

The debate consisted of one team supporting an argument and another team opposing it. The supportive team presented the issue and defined concepts related to dialogue and extremism through the UN definitions, as well as identifying the axes on which its strategy will be based to prove the issue.

The opposing team presented its examples and arguments on behalf of the view that dialogue may increase in extremism, which is happening in terrorist groups. Each team worked to clarify its point of view with arguments and proofs, whilst clarifying that criticism shall be directed towards the idea and not towards people. By doing so, the debate organisers aimed at promoting a constructive dialogue based on the acceptance of the other.

Another multi-country debate was organised on the theme of youth, dialogue and digital entrepreneurship. The motion of the debate was titled, 'Digitalizing businesses must be obligatory after the COVID-19 pandemic era in EuroMed Region'.

The debate tackled the evolving technologies which provide new opportunities to connect small businesses to customers online with rising concerns of cyber security breaches and downsizing of employees who will be replaced by such powerful transformation, in addition to the COVID-19 pandemic circumstances which forced millions around the world to stay in quarantine and work from home.

The debaters were from Egypt, Macedonia, Croatia and Poland along with a diverse audience from all around the EuroMed region. The format provided a very good platform for two teams to represent two different points of views supported with arguments and facts, and offering recommendations and solutions to such a controversial topic.

The debaters had reached a common ground that digitizing businesses is important, but it needs to be implemented in several phases with different tools and methodologies. It also needs a hybrid system which can fit all people and support places which can't switch to a technologically equipped and virtual setting.



# Overcoming Polarisation in Media and Culture

Lurdes VIDAL and Elisabetta CIUCCARELLI

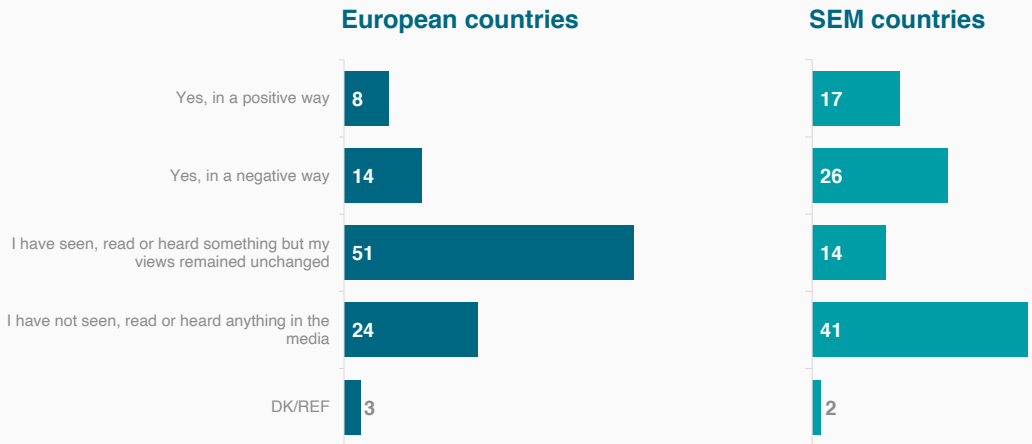
Using the 2020 Survey data, Vidal and Ciuccarelli investigate the ways in which media consumption shapes perceptions of the ‘other’ across the EuroMed region, and the different ways in which various media sources impact on these perceptions. They find that the role of cultural and artistic expression is also important when examining intercultural relations, as messages can be conveyed transcending language and cultural codes; intercultural dialogue is dependent on removing or limiting language barriers and needs to be inclusive of diverse populations from different segments of society.

It is widely accepted that media consumption is key to shaping people’s perceptions of ‘others’. Media, entertainment, education, artistic activities and all forms of popular culture play prominent roles in how we construe our reality and that of others. They affect our perceptions of ourselves and of how we expect others to behave, thus conditioning our interactions and relationships.

In the last decade, attention has turned to the biased and stereotypical media reporting of minority populations or traditionally discriminated-against groups. These groups have often been portrayed through cultural stereotypes, which marginalise and caricature individuals and communities outside the dominant segments of society. In recent years, there have been increased efforts from both journalists and international human rights organisations across Europe to identify, analyse and deconstruct clichés, whilst preventing biased and stigmatising reporting on migration and diversity.

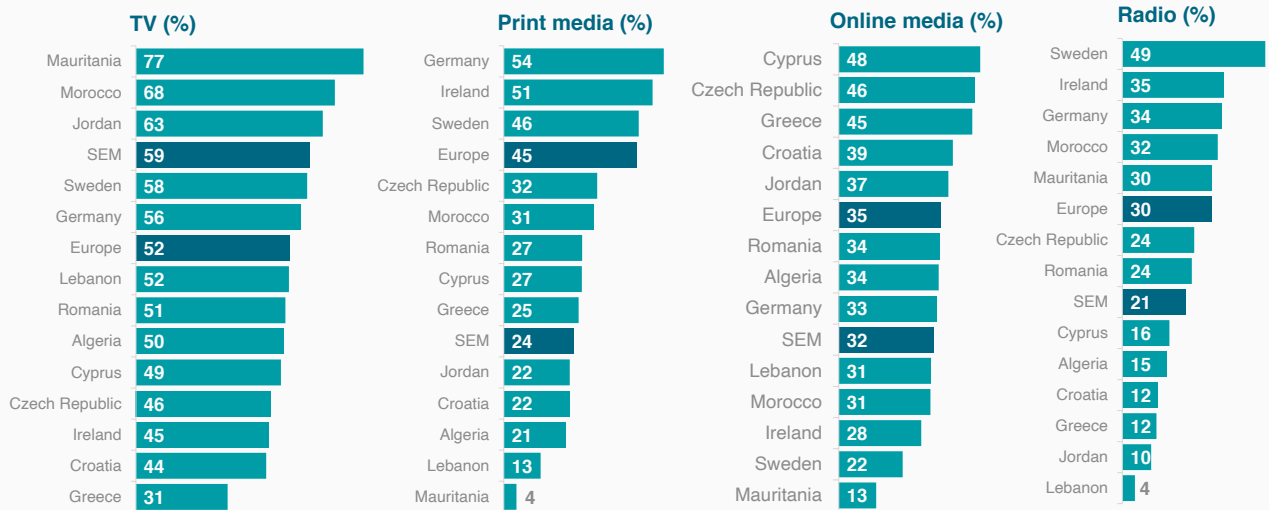
Despite these efforts, the increase of far-right xenophobic discourses in the social and political spheres has had a strong impact on the way media and societies assume and normalise these narratives. The work of the Observatory of Islamophobia in the Media on the presence of anti-Muslim hate speech in the main Spanish media outlets from 2017 to 2019 exemplifies this. The Observatory’s annual reports prove that, through awareness-raising activities and by providing tools to practitioners, Islamophobia can be curbed. However, there is a persistent undercurrent of Islamophobia that remains unaltered despite these efforts. The reports show that, although the proportion of Spanish news articles that included Islamophobic expressions dropped from 62% to 37% over the last three years, the majority of news stories published in the Spanish media regarding Muslims and Islam still focus on negative issues, thereby promoting a persistent negative image of Muslim communities and Islam in Europe (IEMed, Fundación Al Fanar and Oberaxe, 2020).

**Chart 6.1: Did media cause a change in views about people from SEM / European countries?**

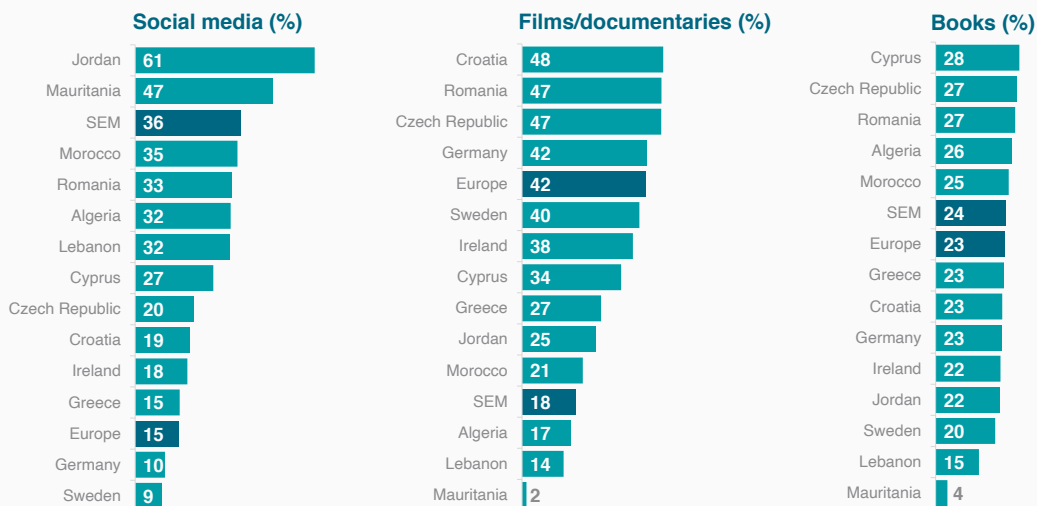


**Survey question:** During the past 12 months, have you seen, read or heard anything in the media that has influenced your view of people in countries bordering the southern and eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea (asked in European countries)/European countries (asked in SEM countries)?  
**Base:** All respondents (%), by region (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

Chart 6.2: Most trusted media sources - by country

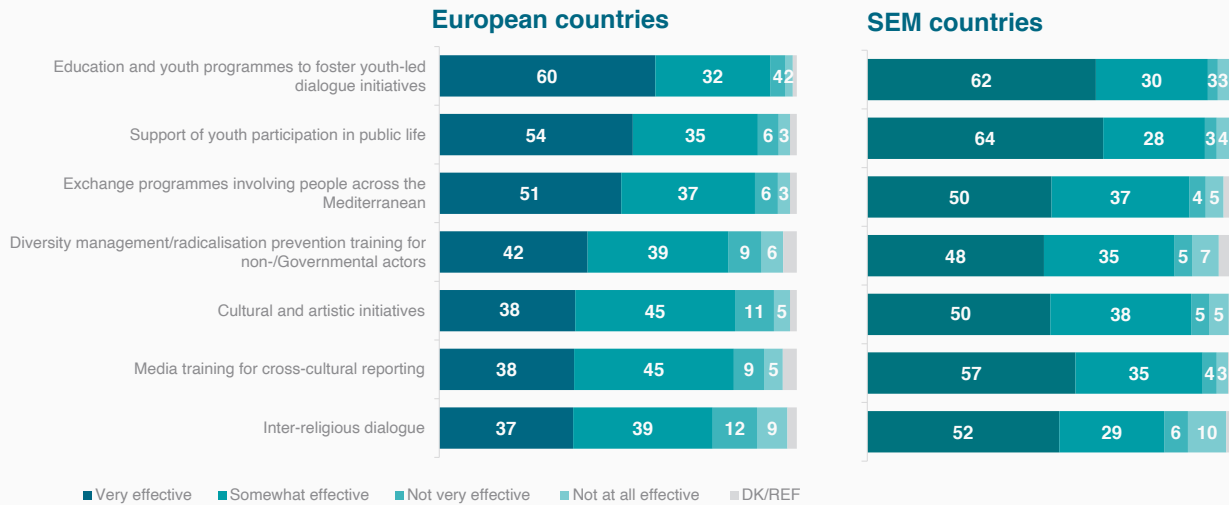


**Survey question:** Which of the following sources do you trust most for information about countries bordering the southern and eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea (asked in European countries)/European countries (asked in SEM countries)?  
**Base:** All respondents (%), by country (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).



**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 country (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**Chart 6.3: Tackling polarisation and hate speech (measures to prevent and deal with 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 (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

Little is known about how societies across the Mediterranean perceive each other and, more precisely, on how media and cultural references influence mutual perceptions. The ALF/Ipsos Intercultural Trends Survey illuminates these intercultural perceptions.

**Findings from the Survey data**

The Survey data suggest that in Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (SEM) countries, the media does play some role in shaping respondents’ opinions about people from European countries. Whilst just 14% of SEM respondents said that their views remained unchanged after reading, seeing, or hearing something in the media about people from European countries, 26% said it had had a negative impact, whilst 17% said it had a positive impact (Chart 6.1). It should also be noted that 41% of respondents say they have not seen, read or heard anything in the media about people from European countries.

**In light of the abundant growth of fake news and conspiracy theories on some media platforms in recent years, it is of the utmost importance to understand the extent to which people trust the various stories...**

In European countries, 51% of respondents said their views remained unchanged after seeing, reading or hearing something in the media about people from SEM countries, whilst 14% said their views had changed in a negative way and 8% said their views had changed in a positive way.

In light of the abundant growth of fake news and conspiracy theories on some media platforms in recent years, it is of the utmost importance to understand the extent to which people trust the various stories they see, read, or hear through different media sources.

In both European and SEM countries, the most trusted media source is still TV (52% in Europe and 59% in SEM countries), even among younger people aged 15-29 years old. In contrast to European countries – where print media (45%) still hold prestige as a reliable media source – social media (36%) and online media (32%) rank second after TV in SEM countries (Chart 6.2).

In liberal political environments, the media can act independently from the state, which explains the high levels of trust in traditional outlets seen in European countries. In contrast, authoritarian governments are more likely to control media narratives, limiting freedom of speech in SEM countries. In this context, therefore, social and online media are considered spaces in which, due to lesser capacity for state control, freedom of expression is tolerated to a greater extent and people can access a wider range of information. It is important to note, however, that access to a wider range of information does not necessarily mean that such information is more reliable.

This trend can be seen in Germany or Sweden, for instance, where trust in social media is minimal relative to other media sources, with 10% and 9% of respondents, respectively, considering social media their most trusted media source for information about SEM countries. This may be, in part, due to the potential for polarisation that social

media can perpetuate. Conversely, 61% of respondents in Jordan and 47% in Mauritania say that social media is their most trusted media source for information on European countries.

The Survey results demonstrate that there is interest in news related to the natural environment and the impact of climate change in the other country group (in European countries, 89% are either 'very interested' or 'somewhat interested' in hearing about news related to climate change in SEM countries; whilst in SEM countries 86% are either 'very interested' or 'somewhat interested' in relation to European countries).

Climate change is both a shared concern and a common challenge that interests people across the EuroMed. It could be argued that the media has a responsibility to respond to their audiences' interests and concerns. Given there is clear demand from respondents on both shores of the Mediterranean to consume news and information about sustainability and environmental issues, the media should provide in-depth coverage of the environmental challenges faced in countries across the region. We need to consider, then, the role of the media in shaping people's actions and encouraging civic engagement, and question whether media platforms are devoting appropriate attention to the topic of climate change.

Respondents also expressed high levels of interest in the cultural lives and lifestyles of their neighbouring country group, with 84% either 'very interested' or 'somewhat interested' in European countries, and 70% either 'very interested' or 'somewhat interested' in SEM countries.

### The challenge for organisations working in the field of intercultural communication is to promote multicultural events that are meaningful, whilst appealing to large audiences that go beyond cultural boundaries.

Globalisation has brought plenty of European cultural productions to SEM countries through cinema, TV, music and arts, often produced in and depicting Western societies. However, there is an obvious imbalance in terms of SEM productions released to European audiences, with minimal media representation of SEM countries in European countries. The high levels of interest shown by respondents lends strength to calls for more cultural diversity in the media. This is undoubtedly one of the most effective strategies for reaching diverse audiences and dismantling distorted stereotypes.

Through cultural and artistic expression, the complexity of societies can be portrayed, and messages can be conveyed that transcend languages and cultural codes. As Chart 6.3 demonstrates, arts are largely considered by European and SEM respondents as effective mechanisms for helping people live better together in multicultural societies. For example, 83% of European respondents and 88% of SEM respondents believe that cultural and artistic initiatives

are either a 'very effective' or 'somewhat effective' method for preventing and dealing with hate speech and polarisation.

There is also evident enthusiasm for multicultural events on both shores of the EuroMed region (88% of respondents see multicultural events as either 'very' or 'somewhat effective' in Europe, and 86% as either 'very' or 'somewhat effective' in SEM countries); coupled with strong support for educational and civil society initiatives to promote mutual understanding.

### Globalisation has brought plenty of European cultural productions to SEM countries through cinema, TV, music and arts, often produced in and depicting Western societies. However, there is an obvious imbalance in terms of SEM productions released to European audiences, with minimal media representation of SEM countries in European countries.

The challenge for organisations working in the field of intercultural communication is to promote multicultural events that are meaningful, whilst appealing to large audiences that go beyond cultural boundaries. However, there are two prerequisites to the success of these events: supporting people to learn other languages – especially access to resources for learning SEM languages – and facilitating travel for people in SEM countries.

Indeed, as the Survey reveals, 67% of people in SEM countries consider visa and travel difficulties as either 'a big barrier' or 'somewhat of a barrier' to cross-cultural encounters, whilst a similar proportion (68%) perceive 'not speaking the same language' to be either 'a big barrier' or 'somewhat of a barrier'. 'Not speaking the same language' is the most frequently mentioned barrier among European respondents (seen as either 'a big barrier' or 'somewhat of a barrier' by 81% of respondents).

Attempts to enforce real intercultural dialogue are dependent on removing language and travel barriers and need to be inclusive of diverse populations from different segments of society. To this end, cultural and artistic expressions can be excellent vehicles for engaging citizens within and across countries in shared dialogue, whilst overcoming issues related to language barriers. Such exchanges can emphasize commonalities and improve mutual perceptions, which are currently deteriorating at an alarming pace due to spiralling hate speech rooted in socio-political polarisation (James, A. P., 2020). (The Macron-Erdogan spat is an example on how political polarisation fuels hate speech and harms mutual perceptions.)

The Survey highlights the urgent need to promote intercultural dialogue among European and SEM media elites. Indeed, media training for cross-cultural reporting is considered as either a 'very effective' or 'somewhat effective' means of tackling polarisation and

hate speech for 92% of respondents in SEM countries, and 83% of respondents in European countries. More frequent and better quality cross-cultural reporting – both in online and traditional media – need to go hand-in-hand with the promotion of artistic and cultural initiatives in order to improve dialogue across the EuroMed region. These actions are essential to resist the prevailing normalisation of stereotyping, stigmatising and hate speech. ■

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### Dialogue in action | Ireland

## Transforming Hate in Youth Settings: an innovative approach from the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI)

Hateful language and behaviour is regularly witnessed in youth work settings, though youth workers insist that hateful behaviour is unacceptable and must stop. However, a punitive approach does not change attitudes or behaviour outside of youth on its own. Hence, a key is to identify what would create real change and understand that those who use hateful language are themselves coming from marginal backgrounds or life circumstances and have significant needs.

With this in mind, the National Youth Council of Ireland along with the other organisers of the project adopted a needs-based approach, as engaging through compassionate dialogue was the only transformative solution.

When developing the approach, the organisers explored how 12 young adults overcame and transformed various forms of conflict, such as drugs, crime, war, violence, racism and personal adversity. Using non-formal youth work practice, and art as tools for critical social engagement, several experimental approaches were piloted to gain more insights into a 'Transformative Practice'. One method included mapping the behaviours based on needs and root causes, resulting in a 'Tree of Needs', which proved to be a catalyst in developing Transformative Practice.

Two of the youth leaders used the Tree of Needs tool with young people and colleagues in their youth organisations,

National Youth Council of Ireland

and reported back on their successes: by adopting a needs-based approach it shifted the approach of youth workers and, in doing so, it changed the attitudes of young people.

As a result, 24 youth leaders received training to deliver further Transforming Hate-trainings. Simultaneously, the National Youth Council of Ireland developed an Educational Tool and Practice Manual. This manual outlines an innovative approach on how to transform hate in youth work settings. A particularly beneficial aspect of developing the manual was that the trainers who contributed to it came from minority and marginalised communities and had personally experienced hate. An extension project followed, completed in 2019, during which the organisers developed an Activity Pack for Youth Workers.

Implementing the project has changed how the National Youth Council of Ireland conducts trainings and supports the youth work sector. The project demonstrated how a needs-based approach, empathetic listening, compassionate dialogue and self-awareness, together with a focus on structural oppression and the deep causes of hate, can and does transform hate and builds safer and more inclusive communities. This approach has also been increasingly adopted by the youth work sector in Northern Ireland.

Project website: [www.youth.ie/programmes/equality-inter-cultural/no-hate-speech/](http://www.youth.ie/programmes/equality-inter-cultural/no-hate-speech/)

# The Role of New Media in Shaping Intercultural Perceptions

Krzysztof WASILEWSKI

Grappling with the possibilities of new media, Krzysztof Wasilewski examines the uptake, importance and influence of new media on intercultural dialogue and the role of media and political systems in shaping media consumption across European and SEM countries. The differences in media impact on intercultural communication are highlighted, revealing an interesting discovery regarding individual level of education and media's impact on perceptions with diverging results in SEM and European countries, possibly due to the difference in structure of media systems.

In the modern world, the mass media shapes our understanding and perceptions of foreign nationalities, cultures and traditions. The development and wide accessibility of new media, defined as social and online media, has made it possible to interact with multiple people simultaneously, regardless of their geographical location. To state Haslett (2019), 'new media have profoundly altered our views of culture and communication as well as significantly changing social practices through which we engage and interact with one another'. Most scholars agree that new media has significantly reshaped intercultural communication by both enhancing and limiting intercultural transactions (Shuter, 2011). In addition, new media has the potential to create a more democratic public sphere, in which marginalised groups, such as ethnic minorities, can gain social and political autonomy (McNair, 2000). It remains unclear if and how this potential will be fulfilled in the global media system dominated and controlled by corporations, yet there is no doubt that contemporary intercultural communication takes place, first and foremost, through media platforms. This article will examine the uptake, importance and influence of new media on intercultural dialogue and the role of media and political systems in shaping media consumption across European and Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (SEM) countries.

**In comparison, 17% of SEM respondents have changed their views about European countries in a positive way due to media reporting, whilst 26% perceive European countries in a more negative way after engaging with media reporting.**

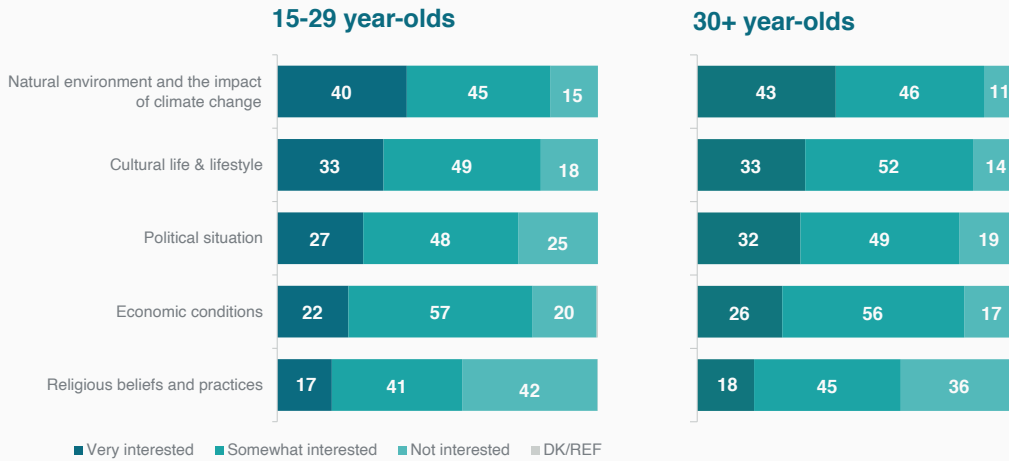
According to the Anna Lindh/Ipsos Intercultural Trends Survey, people in the Euro-Mediterranean are generally interested in hearing about information on the other country group. The research indicates that, in both regions, respondents display a similar level of interest in news about the other region regardless of their age. For example, 33% of 15-29-year-olds from European countries are 'very interested' in the cultural life and lifestyle of residents of SEM countries, whilst 49% are 'somewhat interested'. Similarly, among those over 30 years old, 33% are 'very interested' and 52% are 'somewhat

interested'. Again, responses among those in SEM countries remain fairly consistent across age groups, with 47% of 15-29-year-olds in SEM countries reporting that they are 'very interested' in the cultural life and lifestyle in European countries, whilst 31% report being 'somewhat interested'. Similarly, 31% of over-30s are 'somewhat interested', though fewer over-30s than 18-30s report being 'very interested' (34% compared with 47%). It should be noted, however, that across all age groups and response options, there are more people from SEM countries than European countries who say they are 'not interested' in news and information about the other country group (Chart 7.1).

There are some notable differences between respondents in European and SEM countries when it comes to the media's impact on people's views about the other. Only 8% of respondents in European countries say they have 'seen, read or heard something' in the media about people in SEM countries that has led to a positive change in their views about people in SEM countries. On the other hand, 14% say that media reporting has had a negative impact on their views. Nevertheless, a majority (51%) of respondents say their views have remained the same despite their media consumption, whilst 24% have not seen, read or heard anything about SEM countries in the media. In comparison, 17% of SEM respondents have changed their views about European countries in a positive way due to media reporting, whilst 26% perceive European countries in a more negative way after engaging with media reporting. Only 14% of SEM respondent's opinions remain unchanged despite media coverage, whilst 41% have not seen, read, or heard anything about European countries in the media (Chart 7.2).

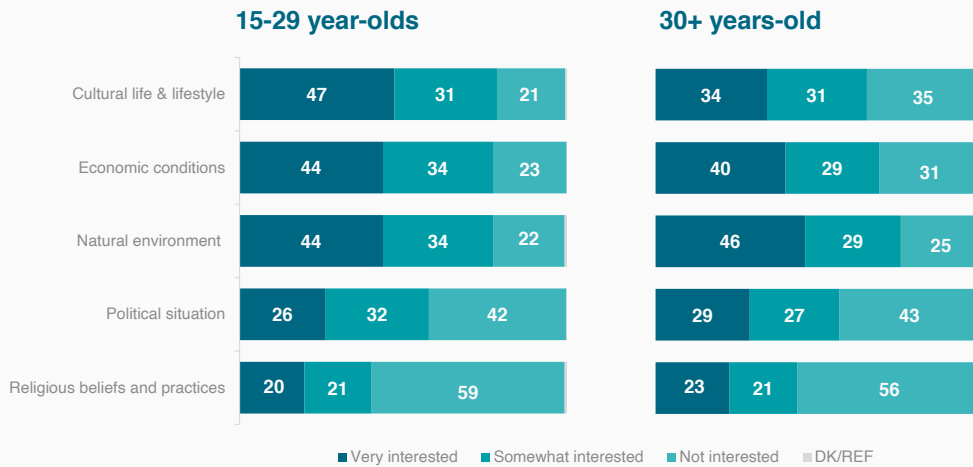
As one of the main sources of knowledge about foreign nationalities and cultures, the media can – and does – impact the way we think about others (Cheng, 2012). What is more, according to the Survey, twice as many people in SEM countries as in European countries have developed a negative picture of the other after being exposed to the media (26% in SEM countries, compared with 14% in Europe). The Survey data reveal an apparent contradiction between SEM and European countries in relation to the association between levels of education and the possible influence of the media. In European countries, more educated respondents are more likely to maintain

**Chart 7.1.a: Interest in news and information about SEM countries - by age**



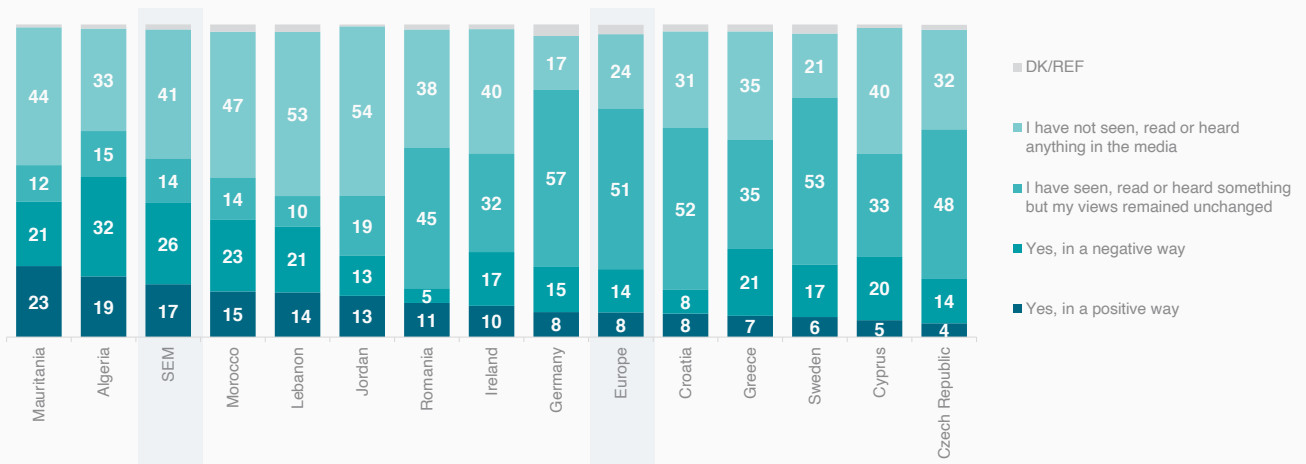
**Survey question:** Thinking about the countries bordering the southern and eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea (asked in European countries)/European countries (asked in SEM countries), how interested are you in knowing about their [TOPICS A- E]?  
**Base:** All respondents (%), by socio-demographics (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**Chart 7.1.b: Interest in news and information about European countries - by age**



**Survey question:** Thinking about the countries bordering the southern and eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea (asked in European countries)/European countries (asked in SEM countries), how interested are you in knowing about their [TOPICS A-E]?  
**Base:** All respondents (%), by socio-demographics (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

Chart 7.2: Media role in shaping public opinion - by country



**?** **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 country (@Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

their opinion about the other, regardless of the media coverage. Conversely, in SEM countries, those with university-level education are more likely than those with lower levels of education to develop a negative opinion about European countries following exposure to the media (Chart 7.3).

**These findings suggest that new media is becoming increasingly important for intercultural communication, especially in the SEM countries.**

There are several factors that could contribute to the above disparity, including the structure of the media systems in the respondent's country, their political and economic pluralism (or lack thereof), as well as the audiences' consumption habits (Boomgaarden, Song, 2019). Research by Mitchell et al., 2014 shows that when they can, people usually choose the outlets they already agree with and which reinforce their views and opinions. Therefore, in countries where people are exposed to a variety of media outlets which represent different ideological and cultural affiliations, there is space for individuals to choose the outlets they agree with and which reinforce their views and opinions. In contrast, in countries where media systems are dominated by only one outlet, usually controlled by state authorities, its coverage has a much greater impact on the audience. The data from the Survey reflect this, as over half of respondents in European countries (51%) have maintained their opinion on SEM countries, regardless of media coverage; whereas only 14% of SEM respondents have maintained their opinion of European countries regardless of media coverage.

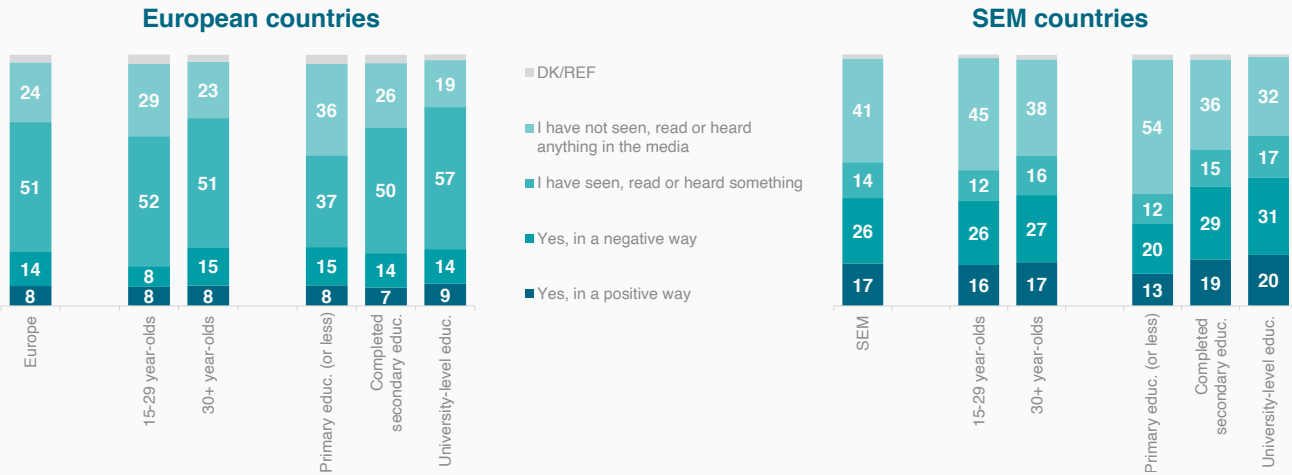
The structures of media systems affect people's trust in different media sources. Over half of the respondents in both country groups point to television as their most trusted medium when it comes to intercultural reporting (52% among respondents in European countries and 59% among respondents in SEM countries). However, in European countries, the subsequent four places go to print media (45%), films/documentaries (42%), online media (35%), and radio (30%). In the SEM countries, on the other hand, social media takes second place, with over a third (36%) of respondents viewing it as their most trusted media source, followed by online media (32%).

**... in SEM countries, those with university-level education are more likely than those with lower levels of education to develop a negative opinion about European countries following exposure to the media.**

These findings suggest that new media is becoming increasingly important for intercultural communication, especially in the SEM countries. In European states with pluralistic media systems, so-called legacy media (such as newspapers, radio, television) are considered to be more reliable when it comes to intercultural reporting. By consequence, people treat the Internet as a source of unchecked and often fake news, meaning it has a lesser influence on people's views and opinions. Indeed, the Survey data suggest that social media is the least trusted source for cross-cultural reporting among respondents in European countries. Conversely, in SEM countries where the traditional media landscape may be dominated



**Chart 7.3: Media role in shaping public opinion - by age group and level of education**



**?** **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 socio-demographics (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

by one or few outlets, which are often controlled by state authorities, the Internet offers its users more freedom and independence. Thus, online media offers variance in the representation of foreign states and nationalities that gives consumers a wider breadth of news to interact with, making it seem more trustworthy and thus more likely to influence their views and opinions.

The Survey data show that the media plays an active role in the contemporary process of intercultural communication. Despite some differences between the respondents in the eight European countries and five SEM countries, it can be generalized that the media remains an important source of information about foreign countries, nationals and cultures. In particular, new media seems to play an influential role in the process of intercultural communication, especially for media users in SEM countries. New media provides an alternative to traditional media outlets, which, in some countries, may be viewed as less independent (Mitchell et al, 2014). ■

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## Dialogue in action | Spain

### 'A Sea of Words'

'A Sea of Words' is a competition that places young people, their motivations and their concerns at the heart of the action, with the support of the Heads of Network and the headquarters of the Anna Lindh Foundation in Alexandria. Since 2008, this annual project has involved different actors of intercultural dialogue in order to contribute to the construction of a common future based on shared values and to face together the various problems of societies.

Organized by the European Institute of the Mediterranean, these stories and writing competitions are aimed at young people between 18 and 30 years old; 2,839 stories have been received since the launch of this initiative, with 1,345 coming from the countries of the North and 1,494 from the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean. The Heads of Network are invited to participate in the selection process and to retain five texts. This collaboration makes it possible to strengthen the links between national networks of Euro-Mediterranean civil society.

The young participants can submit their contributions in one of the official languages of their countries, which makes visible the linguistic richness of the Euro-Mediterranean space. It is therefore through writing and creation that young people in the Euro-Mediterranean region, key players in change, speak up and express their personal experiences and their emotions in front of social, political, cultural or environmental transformations, having an impact on the lives of people and the societies in which they live.

Each year, this action culminates in a real intercultural exchange in which between 10 and 20 young people from both shores selected by an international jury are invited to dialogue and share their experiences during a stay in Barcelona.

During this stay, they are invited to participate in a debate setting out their aspirations and motivations, as well as a creative writing workshop and cultural visits. This meeting leads to the creation of intercultural meeting spaces

between young people. These moments shared together make it possible to strengthen the debate around different social issues, to identify shared values in the region and to go beyond the stereotypes that separate us. These activities based on knowledge and the sharing of experiences have a positive impact on mutual perceptions, making it possible to go beyond barriers. The desire to include young people in the process of developing Euro-Mediterranean policies and to make their voices heard is also present. In October 2017, the three winners of the competition, from Jordan, Morocco and Italy, were able to express their wishes and ambitions to politicians at a meeting of the ALF Board of Directors held in Madrid.

The different themes tackled during the 13 editions of the competition raise awareness among young people and contribute to the creation of a more egalitarian future through knowledge of the political, social, cultural and economic environments and complexities of the countries of the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean, as well as the European Union. Each year a new theme is proposed: '1001 actions for intercultural dialogue' in 2008; 'Building bridges of trust to overcome conflicts', 2009; 'Justice, equality and inclusion in the Mediterranean and in Europe', 2010; 'Modes of participation: democracy and citizenship', 2011; 'The future of young people and the dialogue between cultures', 2012; 'Building citizenship', 2013; 'Youth Fighting Hate Speech Online', 2014; 'The future we want requires sustainable development', 2015; 'Combating all forms of violence against women', 2016; 'Youth, stereotypes and radicalisation', 2017; 'Memory and Identity: Rethinking Cultural Heritage', 2018; 'Youth engagement for social change', 2019; 'Global warming in the Mediterranean and the 2030 Agenda', 2020.

# Opportunities for Strengthening Mutual Understanding and Tackling Key Challenges through Media

Shadi ABU-AYYASH

Analysing the role of media reporting in intercultural dialogue, Shadi Abu-Ayyash focuses on television, the key source of information for both European and SEM respondents, addressing the need for policymakers to pay greater attention to the role that media can play in addressing social challenges as an information source and bridge for dialogue. Argument is made for media-orientated initiatives, including specialised co-produced media literacy programmes and audio-visual for younger generations, to effect positive impact on intercultural understanding and societal change.

This article explores the impacts of media consumption across the Mediterranean on intercultural dialogue between European countries and countries on the Southern and Eastern shore of the Mediterranean (SEM), based on data from the Anna Lindh/Ipsos Intercultural Trends Survey. In doing so, it explores the challenges and opportunities that media platforms provide for intercultural dialogue in the Euro-Mediterranean context.

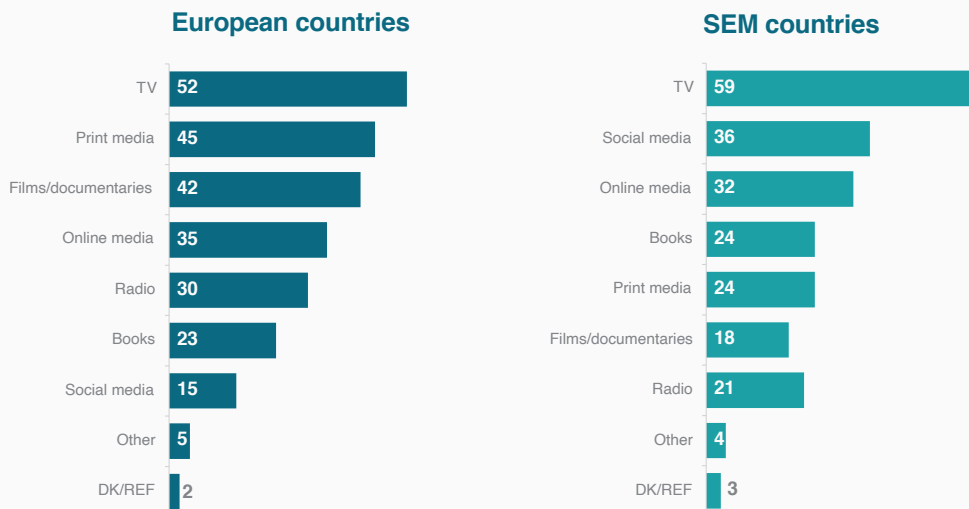
Whilst digital diplomacy and political communication are seen as contemporary methods for enhancing international relations in our digitized world, less attention is given to the roles that media can play in addressing social challenges. Media, in its various forms – as a communicative tool for mediation or disseminating ideas – can play a key role in strengthening dialogue and cross-cultural relations

at the grassroots level, among peoples of different cultural contexts, including people on both shores of the Mediterranean.

In this context, policymakers should pay greater attention to the media in its various roles, both as an informative agency and as a bridge for dialogue, and should incorporate media-based strategies into policies and programmes that aim to address social challenges and promote intercultural dialogue.

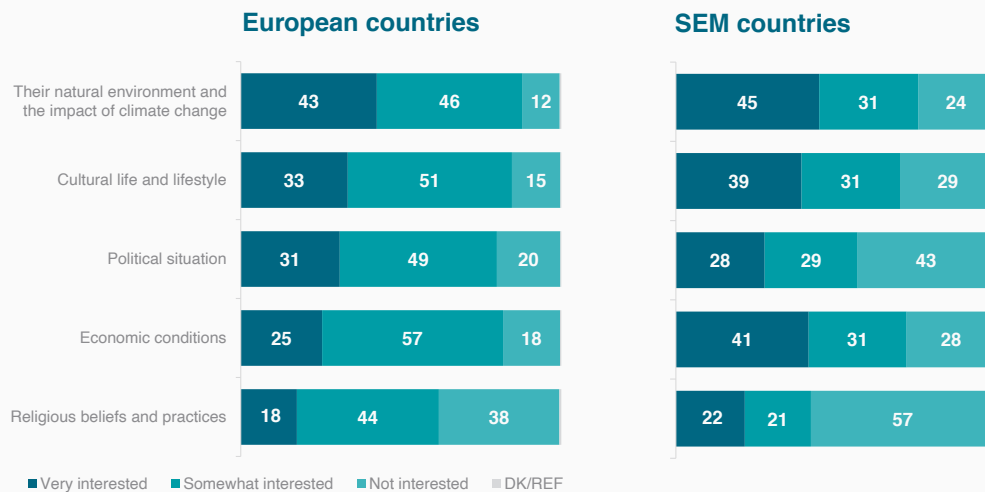
This article advances the argument that dedicated media-oriented initiatives, including specialised media literacy programmes for younger generations and audio-visual co-production of TV, print and online media content, could have a positive impact on mutual understanding and social change.

**Chart 8.1: Most trusted media sources for cross-cultural reporting - by region**



**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 (@Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**Chart 8.2: Interest in news and information consumption in European and SEM countries**



**Survey question:** Thinking about the countries bordering the southern and eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea (asked in European countries)/European countries (asked in SEM countries), how interested are you in knowing about their [TOPICS A-E]?  
**Base:** All respondents (%), by region (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**Most trusted media sources for cross-cultural reporting**

Intercultural dialogue in the context of the EuroMed region is influenced by a range of factors, including media content in both traditional and new media formats.

Online and social media are widely used platforms for the consumption of information in the EuroMed region, particularly in SEM countries, and occupy an advanced position in relation to most trusted sources of information on cross-cultural reporting. Online media (including news websites and online magazines) are reported as being the most trusted media source for information about European/SEM countries for 35% and 32% of European and SEM respondents, respectively, whilst social media is the most trusted media source for 36% of SEM respondents (Chart 8.1). Conversely, social media is the most trusted media source for just 15% of respondents in European countries. Nevertheless, despite the increasing number of online and social media users around the globe, the Survey data indicate that TV remains the most trusted source of information for respondents in European and SEM countries (for 52% and 59% of respondents, respectively).

**Intercultural dialogue in the context of the EuroMed region is influenced by a range of factors, including media content in both traditional and new media formats.**

As TV content, which includes news programmes and live performances among other outputs, is so heavily relied upon, it is

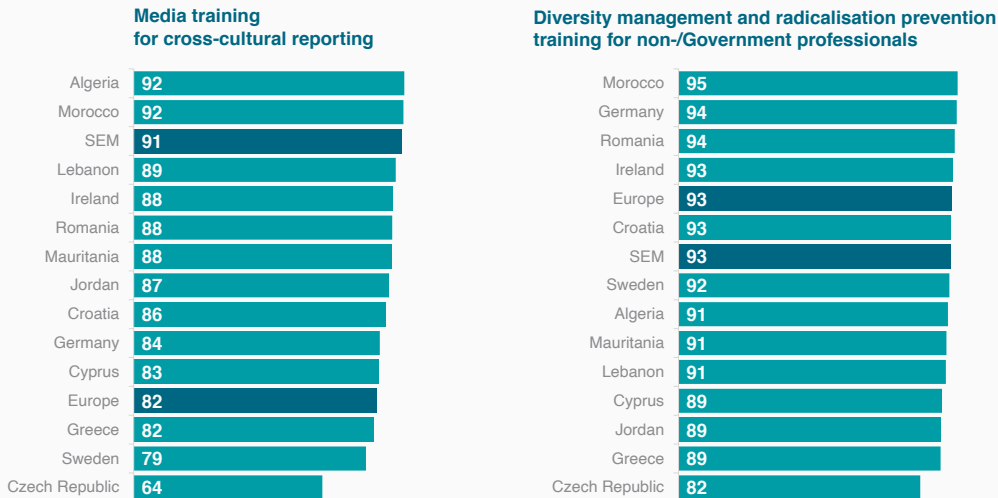
essential that policymakers and organisations working in the field of intercultural dialogue – such as the Anna Lindh Foundation – invest time and effort in utilising TV screens to reach their audiences and advance their missions.

Collaborative production of media content, involving people from different countries across the EuroMed, that is targeted towards a general audience – especially younger generations, is one approach that could be utilised to encourage intercultural dialogue on a large scale. Such production, which could emerge in the form of documentaries, talk shows, or intercultural news programmes produced in collaboration between local, regional and international TV networks and other forms of streaming media, may contribute to better understanding among people within the EuroMed region.

Similar efforts should be made to target the consumers of print, online and social media, as the Survey data suggest that people on both shores of the Mediterranean also rely on these mediums for the consumption of news and information about the other. Again, cross-border collaborations that bring different social and cultural perspectives could be a useful approach in promoting intercultural dialogue through these mediums.

As such, building on the experience of the Anna Lindh Foundation in advancing collaborative initiatives among the people of the two regions, further initiatives that encourage collaborative media-culture production for TV screens, print media and online media platforms may have a positive impact on mutual understanding and intercultural dialogue.

**Chart 8.3: Media training for cross-cultural reporting - by country**



**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 (% effective –sum of “very effective” and “somewhat effective” responses), by country (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**Topics of interest in news and information consumption**

Results from the Survey indicate that the topic of the natural environment and the impact of climate change occupies the top spot in the list of interests in other countries among people in both European and SEM countries, with 43% and 45% of respondents reporting that they are ‘very interested’ in hearing about the environment and climate change in the other, respectively (Chart 8.2). This result confirms the notion that – as universal matters affecting humanity’s shared future – climate change and the environment can unify people around the globe, including people on both shores of the Mediterranean.

We can interpret this result as a further opportunity for encouraging cross-border production of media content. Such production should acknowledge the important role that media can play in educating younger audiences on topics of interest such as climate change. With this in mind, organisations aiming to promote intercultural dialogue through media platforms should also incorporate media literacy programmes into their strategies.

Media literacy refers to the ability to use, critically understand and create media and communications in a variety of contexts (Ofcom, 2012) and has been described as the core of intercultural dialogue (Manuel Pérez Tornero, 2012). Media literacy programmes can be a vital tool for educating young people and adults on key social challenges such as climate change, conflict and radicalisation by improving audiences’ abilities to critically evaluate and properly understand media content and key messages delivered through media platforms.

**Measures to prevent and deal with conflict and radicalisation**

It remains important to point out, however, that media platforms can be a double-edged sword in their ability to negatively frame and represent the other, consequently contributing to misinformation and negative portrayals, on the one hand; and for their capability to advance constructive intercultural dialogue in all sectors of society, on the other hand.

Interestingly, the vast majority of Survey participants (82% in European and 91% in SEM countries) agree that media training for cross-cultural reporting can be either a ‘somewhat effective’ or ‘very effective’ measure in tackling societal issues such as hate speech and polarisation (Chart 8.3).

Building on the Survey results, national and regional policymakers must also consider investing in media training to enhance media professionals’ capabilities in cross-cultural reporting of qualitative and quantitative news and information, including journalists and content producers. Such an effort can be viewed as a direct response to the pressing need to empower media professionals, including young content producers on both shores, to tackle social challenges such as hate speech, conflict and radicalisation.

**Role of women in the media sector**

The vast majority of poll participants in both geographical settings (93% in Europe and 82% in SEM countries) agree that women should play either ‘the same role’ or ‘a greater role’ in the media, including TV and cinema. This could be an important indicator for policymakers to consider developing policies and programmes that

encourage women's participation in media production, including in the field of cross-cultural dialogue, where women could play a major role in media-oriented efforts.

### Conclusion

Media is becoming part of the fabric of everyday life, including with regards to intercultural communication. Medium, message and content themes are aspects of the communication process that contribute to shaping intercultural relations and dialogue in the EuroMed context.

In light of the Survey results, this paper argued that by taking the lead in adopting initiatives that promote cross-cultural content for TV, online media and other communication mediums, as well as incorporating media literacy programmes and media training for cross-cultural reporting into intercultural dialogue strategies, policymakers and organisations working in the area of intercultural dialogue could take an essential step forward in advancing strategic cross-cultural dialogue efforts. Such a step would not only contribute to advancing intercultural dialogue in the long run, but would also confront misperceptions, negative stereotypes and disinformation in the EuroMed context.

As the Survey shows, media – as a contemporary driver of change – could have a noticeable influence on intercultural dialogue. The more opportunities there are for media and culture creatives across the EuroMed to get involved in collaborative production, the more chances exist for the media to make a positive impact on the promotion of intercultural relations and dialogue in the long-term. Training for cross-cultural media reporting and media literacy programmes are necessary elements of such a collaboration and are essential for achieving this goal.

Finally, if the COVID-19 crisis has taught us a lesson, it is that humans have many common interests that unite them, and that solidarity and collaboration is a major way to move forward. In light of this lesson, intercultural dialogue across the Mediterranean could achieve its strategic goals when close collaboration takes place among civil society organisations, universities, artists, media personalities and culture activists through the door of media co-production. Media co-production offers opportunities for advancing cultural exchanges, strengthening mutual understanding and addressing society's most pressing challenges. ■

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## Dialogue in action | Austria

### SAG's MULTI — multilingual rhetoric contest

With the aim of promoting multilingualism and internationality of young people and encouraging them to take a personal stand and move an audience with a speech, 'SAG's MULTI!' has held multilingual rhetoric contests since its beginnings.

These contests are divided into three categories according to contestant age. Each participant gives a speech in which he/she switches between his/her first language, or a foreign language and German.

Every year, SAG's MULTI! provides a leitmotif with numerous sub-topics for the contests in question. The participants choose a topic of their choice (either a leitmotif or one of the subtopics) and give a speech during which they demonstrate their rhetorical skills and language skills.

Examples of leitmotifs from last year's competitions: 'Who am I when I don't have to be anyone?', 'This is worth living for that!', 'Think out loud'. The participants have to convince the jury of their language skills. At least one member of the jury will be a native speaker of the foreign language. The contest is divided into three stages: pre-selection, main competition and finals.

EDUCULT and 'Wirtschaft für Integration'

Almost 30% of the students in Austria have a family language other than German. With up to 600 young people participating in the SAG's MULTI! event every year, the contest reaches many multilingual pupils in all of Austria. Last year, 52 languages (in combination with German) were spoken during the contest. The contest language statistics from last year were led by English with 156 speakers (127 times as a foreign language learned), ahead of Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian with 75, and Turkish with 58 participants. The range of the languages spoken during the contest is extremely broad, including Arabic, Chinese, Italian, Pashto, Sorani to Urdu or Vlach language. Hence, SAG's MULTI! provides visibility to the language talents of young people in Austria, especially the ones coming from a migrant background. Regardless of their place of birth, nationality, religious and cultural background, these young people compete and come together to discuss and take positions on a relevant societal issue.

In 2020 the project reached a new dimension, with the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation broadcasting the contest virtually and via TV, reaching many new audiences in Austria.

# The Fight Against Civilisational Prejudices Means A Fight Against Gender Stereotypes

Latifa EL BOUHSINI

Exploring the deeply rooted roles that societies have attributed to men and women, Latifa El Bouhsini discusses the important developments recorded during the last two centuries that have succeeded in impacting the status of men and women, as well as the perceptions that accompanied them. She further analyses where the strength of this so-called male domination system lies, and the significant upheaval being seen in the male privilege system in its cessation of rights, resources and powers to women, and the resulting broadening of equality.

### Overview

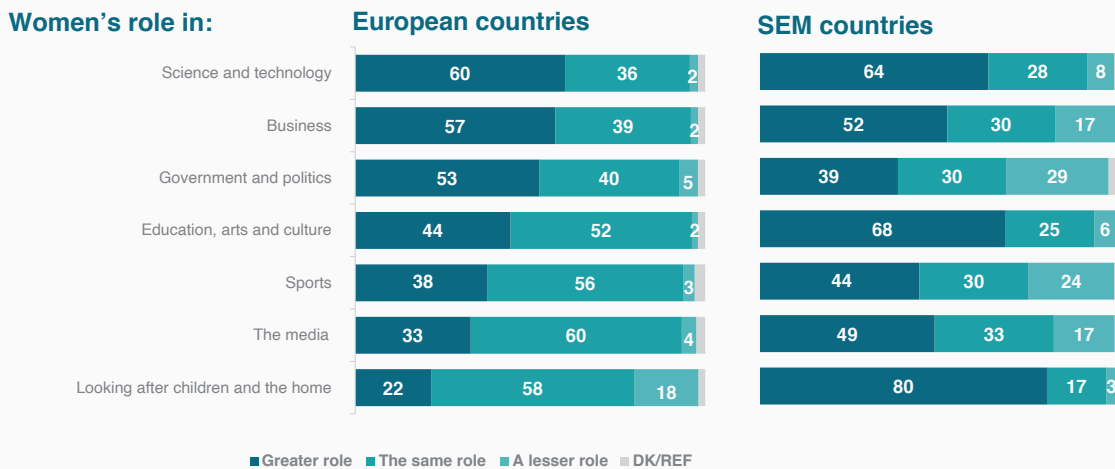
Although the roles that societies have attributed to men and women are deeply rooted, the fact remains that the important developments recorded during the last two centuries have succeeded in impacting, respectively, the status of men and women as well as the perceptions that accompanied them. The strength of this so-called male domination system lies in its capacity for resistance and reproduction. This observation is valid for all human societies even if changes are at work and differ depending on the context (Héritier, 2020). The male privilege system is experiencing a significant upheaval to cede rights, resources and powers to women. In doing so, equality between men and women is broadened and touches various fields, including the symbolic and the imaginary. However, it is clear that in this area the rational and the emotional, the private and the public are intertwined, which requires measuring perceptions over the long term.

The male privilege system is experiencing a significant upheaval to cede rights, resources and powers to women. In doing so, equality between men and women is broadened and touches various fields, including the symbolic and the imaginary.

### Qualitative data analysis

The Anna Lindh/Ipsos Intercultural Trends Survey in 2020 reveals significant differences between the attitudes and perceptions of European respondents who, in their majority, are in favour of an increased role of women in science and technology (60%) whilst the vast majority of respondents from Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries (SEM) want women to take more care of children and home

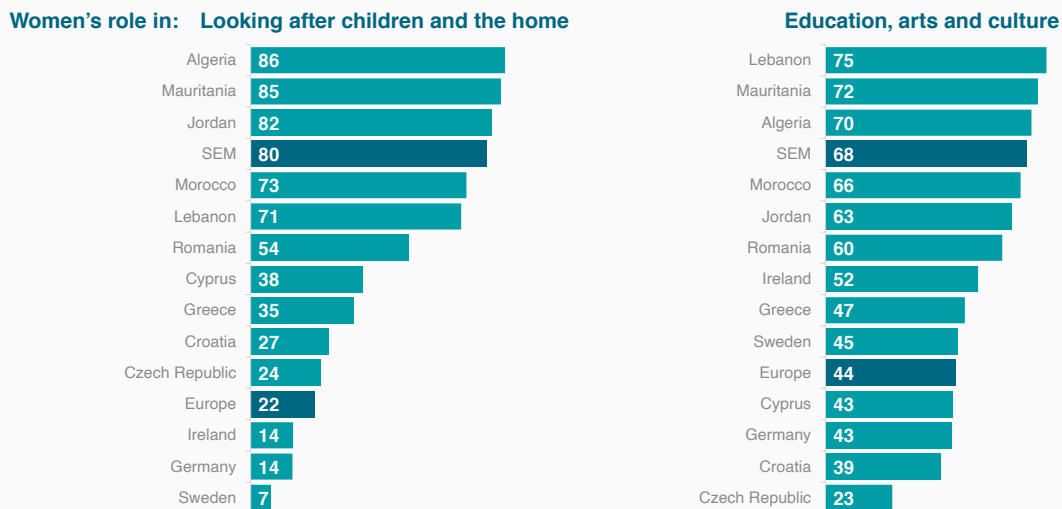
Chart 9.1: Perceptions about women’s role in society - by region



**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 (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**Chart 9.2: Perceptions about women’s role in society - by country**



**?** **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 (% "greater role"), by country (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

(80%). There is a certain consistency in the perceptions of European respondents with higher percentages for science and technology, business (57%) and political decision-making (53%), against a lower proportion for the maintenance of children and the house (22%), which decreases as the level of education rises (primary 33%, secondary 24%, higher 16%). It is therefore necessary to underline the contrast with the reality of the behaviour mentioned in the 2020 report of the World Economic Forum on parity: ‘In all the countries where these data are available, we observe that women spend at least twice as much time than men to care, unpaid housework, children and other family chores’ (World Economic Forum, 2020) (Chart 9.1).

However, for the SEM countries, there is at first glance a mismatch between the attribution of a more important role to women in science and technology (64%), the business field (52%), decision policy (39%) and that relating to the maintenance of children and the house (80%) (Chart 9.2). The underlying idea probably refers to the supposed ability of women to reconcile private and public / professional life. We accept a priori the idea of women’s access to new fields without, at the same time, admitting the consequences inherent to them, namely a questioning of the traditional distribution of roles. However, it is surprising that the rates relating to the maintenance of children and the house are almost identical for both men (81%) and women (79%), all ages combined (78% for 15-29 years and 81% for those over 30), and even higher for people with different levels of education (primary 80%, secondary 82%, higher 78%). This high percentage, particularly among women, is probably due to the absence of early childhood care structures in these countries, or possibly to the attachment of women to a supposed

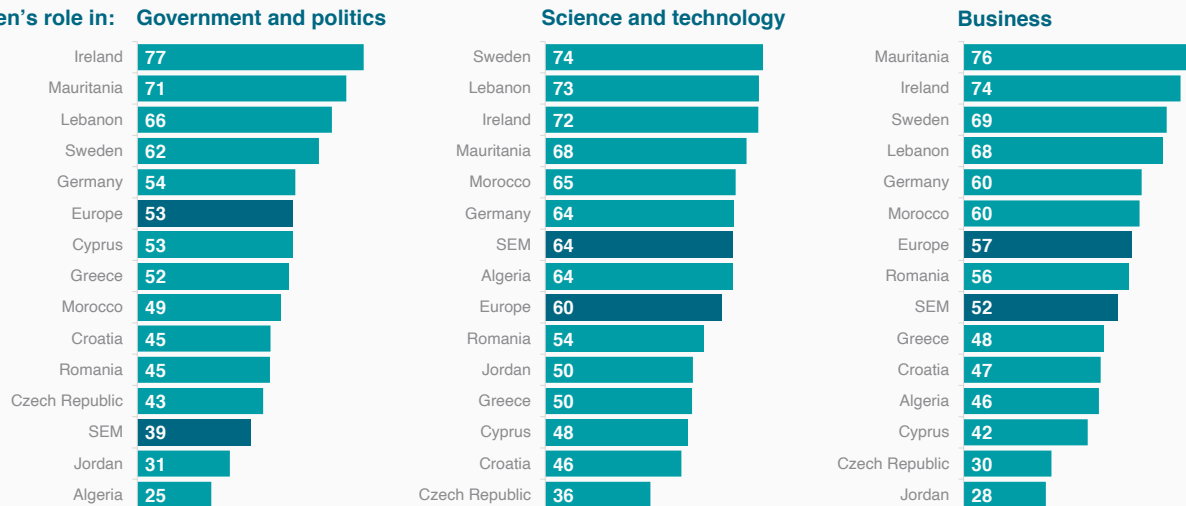
**This high percentage, particularly among women, is probably due to the absence of early childhood care structures in these countries, or possibly to the attachment of women to a supposed 'power' that they hold, and that they do not want to let go of...**

‘power’ that they hold, and that they do not want to let go of, as the dynamic of change underway is fluctuating. As for the percentage of men, it most likely reflects the refusal to get involved in the education of children. That said, the fertility rate is experiencing a significant overall decrease according to the World Bank: 4.6 for Mauritania and 2.10 for Lebanon (World Bank DataBank, 2019), which makes the load less difficult. The increasing importance of birth control is explained by, among other things, the desire of women to control the resource of time and have it available for work. In addition, significant reforms targeting the status of women have been undertaken by a number of SEM countries over the past two decades. For example, the adoption of the quota to strengthen the representativeness of women in the political field in Morocco and Jordan (Sabbagh, A., 2005), the law regarding violence against women in Lebanon (2014), Algeria (2015) and Morocco (2018), as well as the reform of the family code in Morocco (2004). As a result, these reforms would probably have a greater impact on the evolution of mentalities in the future.

Examining the results by country for the other areas does not allow them to be grouped according to geographic and/or civilisational affiliation; however, in the media sector, Mauritania (70%) and



**Chart 9.3: Perceptions about women’s role in society - by country**



**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 (% "greater role"), by country (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

Lebanon (63%) have the highest rates. In the field of sports, Morocco records a high rate (53%), whilst Lebanon (61%) and Sweden (62%) show similar trends. These two areas can be associated — one with visibility and influence, the other with relation to the female body. Thus, the results show (Chart 9.3) that the incessant rhetoric that attributes to Islam, the majority religion in the SEM countries, the will to freeze women irreversibly in the status of cloistered women with an arduous control over their bodies, shows its limits.

The nuance should also distinguish access to a paid activity from that of a salaried job or management of a company with the differentiated impact on the status of women, because access to a remunerated activity does not automatically mean the acquisition of power, and even less so the contribution as actors to growth and economic progress. Added to this reality is that the female participation rate, according to World Bank indicators, declined globally from 51% to 47% between 2000 and 2019 (World Bank DataBank, 2019). The large number of women in the informal sector in SEM countries prove that the exercise of so-called economic activity does not necessarily reflect a choice; it is more of a necessity to provide for the needs of the family (OECD, 2020). This reality shows the fragility of the economic status of women and contrasts with the perceptions which, for their part, are undergoing change.

**Conclusions**

The Survey has the merit of illustrating a complexity that emerges both between the two groups of countries and within the same group. Although the fragility of the situation of women is still a palpable reality that the COVID-19 epidemic has only brought to light and

accentuated further, it is clear that there are changes affecting perceptions, including among SEM countries. Some are irreversible, such as those concerning women’s access to knowledge. The general trend is rather positive, whether European or SEM, with respondents speaking in favour of women’s access to ‘non-traditional’ roles. The changes that have affected the status of women can be explained first by the recognition of discrimination, the expression of political will, the dynamics of society and the voice of women (Chékir, H., 2014). The refusal of alienation, the ability to organise and the development of negotiation strategies by women, have allowed the progress. Furthermore, the aspiration for equality and freedom that flows from universality is understood in the sense that there is no role model to follow; rather, there are experiences that inspire, enrich and enlighten, hence, the importance of openness and dialogue taking into account the difference in temporality and the diversity of territories and processes.

**Recommendations**

The fight against negative prejudices, including those relating to the hierarchy between cultures, can involve the fight against gender stereotypes based also on the hierarchy between men and women; hence the importance of joint actions aimed at them jointly, such as:

- Exchange opportunities between civil society actors, especially between organisations led by young feminists from both shores.
- The development of research in the fields of human and social sciences, in particular history, sociology, anthropology, philosophy with the subject of gender issues.

- The development of research on the revival of the religious factor (here, Islam) can constitute an object of cooperation between universities and research centres. The positive effects of this effort on perceptions will benefit the different countries, especially those that have been shaped through mobility and successive waves of emigration.
- Investing in the media and in the reform of education systems in order to promote the involvement of women and question negative stereotypes targeting them. ■

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### Dialogue in action | Germany

#### 'Fighting gender stereotypes and views on women's role in society'

Since 2013, Kreisau-Initiative e.V. has been implementing the youth exchange project 'HER-Story' for young people between 16 and 19 years old from Germany, Croatia and Poland.

The initial idea of the project was to shed light on the underestimated role of women in history and the reception of these women nowadays. The first project addressed the role of women in the resistance group 'Kreisau Circle' (German: Keisauer Kreis) against National-Socialism during the Second World War in Germany. These women were often confronted with the stereotype that they only prepared beverages and food for their husbands engaged in the resistance. In reality, however, these women were usually very well educated, informed and actively engaged in the activities of the resistance group; they also consciously risked their own lives and those of their children in order to serve a higher goal. Yet, they were never really appreciated or at least paid attention to.

During the course of the project, high school students from Germany, Croatia and Poland dealt with the stories of the women of the Kreisau Circle by interviewing family members who were still alive at that time.

In the following years, the topic was further developed by dealing with individual stories of women in resistance in Germany, Poland and Croatia during the Second World War and after. Additionally, more recent topics such as gender equality, the development of women's rights, sexual identity etc. complemented the historical aspect of the project. The young participants not only interviewed historical witnesses, but also young female activists who stand up for women's rights in present times. Filming is an essential part of the project, allowing the participants to creatively process newly gained experiences and knowledge.

Kreisau-Initiative e.V.

HER-Story is not only a project for girls; boys are also encouraged to participate. The girls in the project especially find it extremely important that boys also deal with these issues. This is an approach that the organisers of HER-Story follow as well. 'Women's rights are Human Rights!' is another conclusion formed by one of the participants.

HER-Story gives its young participants the impulses to enable them to think about gender stereotypes, their own role in society, and how to raise their voices against injustice and discrimination. When asking participants what kind of new inspirations they found during the project, a young woman answered: 'In the future, I want to stand up for what I think; I want to work hard for what I want and become braver'. By showing them not only historical examples but also recent ones of young women being involved in gender related issues, they become aware of social grievances and get inspired to stand up for their own rights.

During the current crisis of the Corona pandemic, it has become even more crucial to raise the topic of gender stereotypes and the role of women in society. As if using a magnifying glass, we can now see much clearer the still-existing injustices and grievances in our societies. The team of the Kreisau-Initiative is looking forward to starting international youth work again in order to deal with these urgent issues with our young participants.

# Empowering Women against Structural and Cultural Inequalities

Dina MATAR

Exploring the ways in which intercultural dialogue can support women’s empowerment within the confines of religious and cultural value systems, Dina Matar argues that, whilst attitudes towards women holding public roles appear to be progressing in countries such as Mauritania and Lebanon, our analysis should move away from a narrow public vs private binary and consider women’s own differential understandings of what it means to be ‘empowered’.

The role and status of women in any society is not a given. However, without doubt the status of women remains constrained by structural and cultural inequalities in terms of perceptions about what they can and cannot do, and in terms of the actual discrimination they face in their everyday lives. In what follows, the Anna Lindh/Ipsos Intercultural Trends Survey upon which I base my analysis shows some variations in general attitudes towards the role of women in society between respondents from select European countries and those of the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (SEM), reflecting in some cases the persistence of patriarchal structures and norms in the latter group. It would be a mistake, however, to suggest outrightly that attitudes towards women’s contributions to political and social lives are more positive in European societies in practice. In reality, the COVID-19 pandemic has shown that women in major industrialised countries, including in Europe, have been disadvantaged by their social and familial responsibilities, if not by persistent social inequalities, particularly in lower income households. It is important, therefore, to reflect on how we can use the findings to enhance opportunities for women and promote their self-confidence and empowerment through intercultural initiatives. This article will explore the social im-

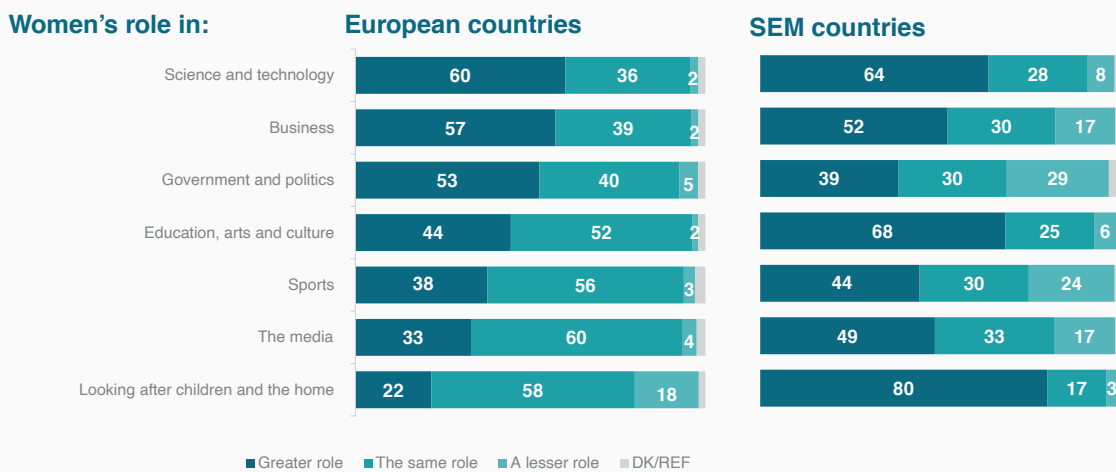
part of intercultural cooperation in terms of its impact on attitudes towards gender roles and other perceived societal gains.

### Attitudes and perceptions

The Survey explores attitudes and perceptions towards women’s current and future roles in society, with respondents in Europe generally displaying more positive attitudes towards women holding public or political roles than respondents in SEM countries. In SEM countries, only 39% of respondents believe that women should play a greater role in government and politics. This ranks lowest of all the domains asked about, which included the future role of women in sport (44%), in the media (49%), business (52%), science and technology (64%), education, arts and culture (64%) and looking after children and the home (80%) (Chart 10.1).

In contrast, over half the respondents in the European countries surveyed feel that women should play a greater role in government and politics (53%), with very few – only 2% – believing they should play a lesser role. In SEM countries, 29% said women should play a lesser role in the future.

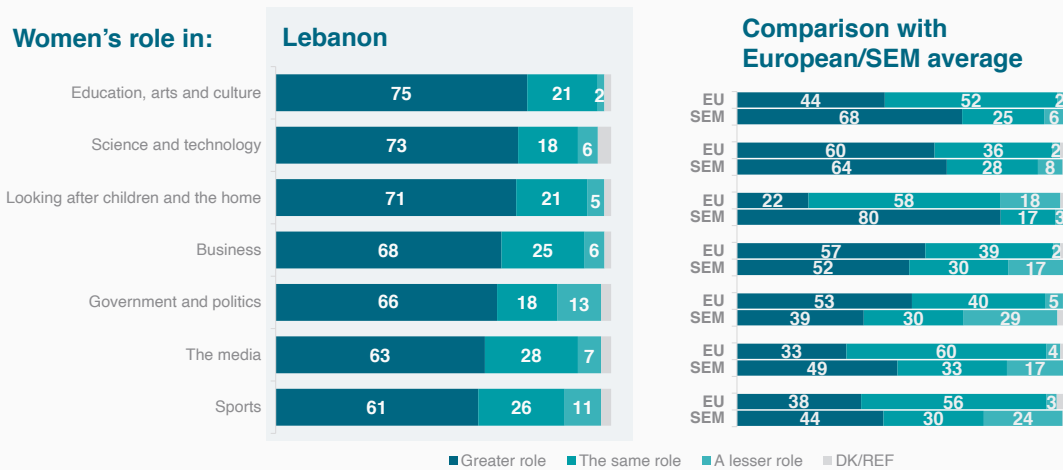
Chart 10.1: Perceptions about women’s role in society - by region



**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 (@Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**Chart 10.2: Perceptions about women’s role in society - by country and country group**



**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 country and country group (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

Across the SEM countries, the resistance to women playing a greater role in government and politics could be attributed to worries that women taking on a more prominent role in politics and public life would challenge patriarchal structures and negatively impact childcare. Male respondents in the SEM countries are less likely than female respondents to want to see women playing a greater role in government and politics (35% compared with 42%, respectively) and more likely than female respondents to want to see women playing a lesser role in government and politics (33% compared with 24%, respectively).

**The resistance to women playing a greater role in government and politics could be attributed to worries that women taking on a more prominent role in politics and public life would challenge patriarchal structures and negatively impact childcare.**

The specific social and economic dynamics of each country influence representations and responses. When studying the data more closely, country by country, Lebanon and Mauritania bucked the trend, with 66% of respondents in Lebanon and 71% of respondents in Mauritania voting for a larger role for women in government and politics (Charts 10.2 and 10.3).

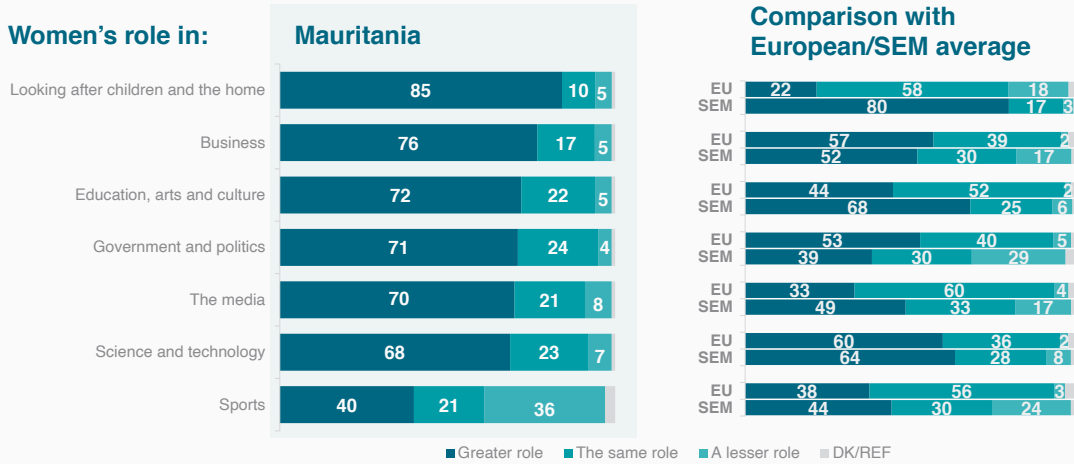
These results, however, must be analysed in their socio-political context. Although 66% of respondents in Lebanon say they are in favour of an increased role for women in politics, in practice Lebanese women are yet to crack the political glass ceiling and

continue to make only piecemeal advancements. Indeed, in 2020 – the year the Survey was carried out – Lebanon ranked 149th out of a total of 152 countries in the political empowerment index according to the Global Gender Gap index, with one of the lowest rates of women’s political participation in the region. The low rates of women’s political participation are attributable not only to women’s under-representation in formal political positions but are also a consequence of women’s position in Lebanon as second-class citizens. The many structural factors that sustain this reality – including personal status codes, social perceptions of women that tie them to the private realms of the family and the household, the limited legal protections afforded to women, and the processes of gendered citizenship more broadly – have been well documented (for example, Al-Ali 2008; Joseph 2010; Kelly and Breslin 2010).

The role of women in family and at home remains prime in SEM countries: eight in ten (80%) respondents in this region believe that women should play a greater role in looking after children and the home and only 3% a lesser role. This compares to just over two in ten (22%) in Europe who think women should play a greater role in the future (and 18% who say they should have a lesser role). This attitude is prevalent across all the SEM countries surveyed (Algeria (86%), Mauritania (85%), Jordan (82%), Morocco (73%) and Lebanon (71%)), another reflection of the patriarchal structure with women often seen as child-bearers and housewives.

Another representation of this is that 68% of respondents in SEM countries believe that women should play a greater role in education, arts and culture, second only to their role at home. This reflects

**Chart 10.3: Perceptions about women’s role in society - by country and country group**



**?** **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 country and country group (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

general attitudes that women are more suited to so-called soft careers that are viewed as less demanding.

These findings may reflect the importance that SEM respondents give to maintaining and supporting religious beliefs and practices. When asked about their key values when raising children, 65% of SEM respondents said that ‘maintaining religious beliefs and practices’ would be their ‘most important’ or ‘second most important’ value, followed by 40% who said that ‘family solidarity’ and 40% who said that ‘obedience’ would be their ‘most important’ or ‘second most important’ values. On the other hand, only 29% of SEM respondents say that ‘respect for other cultures’ is their ‘most important’ or ‘second most important’ value when raising children.

Conversely, the Survey data show that European respondents perceive family solidarity (49%) and respect for other cultures (54%) to be more important than religious beliefs/practices (8%) or obedience (11%) when raising children.

**In addition, what it means to be an 'empowered woman' in SEM countries (and in Europe for this matter) depends on their own situated experiences, socio-economic conditions, country-specific regulations related to women's rights and well-being...**

This raises the question, to what extent can intercultural dialogue support women’s empowerment within the confines of religious

and cultural value systems? The Survey data suggest that people of various religions and cultures do nevertheless see a role for intercultural dialogue in creating positive social change, particularly respondents in SEM countries. Indeed, 51% of SEM respondents believe that closer cooperation with countries in Europe will ‘definitely’ lead to societal gains relating to gender equality. More than six in ten (63%) in SEM countries also think greater cooperation will lead to gains with regards to recognising cultural diversity (Chart 10.4).

**Conclusion**

The Survey data suggest that attitudes are changing, particularly in places like Lebanon and Mauritania where respondents see a greater role for women in the public as well as private sphere. We also see respondents supporting a greater role for women in the arts and cultural sphere, as well as in the media. It is perhaps through these roles that we will see women actively engaged in improving their situation and in initiating dialogue and cooperation with women from other cultures.

Nevertheless, whilst persistent contemporary debate relates to the empowerment of women, confusion remains over what this means. For some in the West, there is a belief that only a concerted move towards a Western-style political culture that delegates religion and ideology to the home space would open the way for the empowerment of women elsewhere.

However, research and critical scholars (such as Nancy Fraser, 1990) have long noted that making a crude binary between what is private and what is public has deflected attention from

**Chart 10.4: Gains from EuroMed cooperation - by country**



**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 (% "definitely a gain"), by country (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

how women themselves perceive their own empowerment and what they seek in life. In this sense, we can expect that whilst religion, patriarchal cultures and ideology are possibly restraining elements for women’s empowerment, negatively impacting their chances for public participation, this might not be the view of the women we are studying or researching.

In addition, what it means to be an ‘empowered woman’ in SEM countries (and in Europe for this matter) depends on their own situated experiences, socio-economic conditions, country-specific

regulations related to women’s rights and well-being and, importantly, to opportunities for improvement and development for women.

In recent years, women’s global activism has been most visible through the #metoo movement, through which women have pursued their rights and their status as social and political actors. The question that we need to answer now is how activism on the ground and the exchange of ideas and images through social media networks can help change women’s participation and attitudes towards their participation. It is in these movements,

where women have identified their own local definition of empowerment, that women should be supported. Organisations working on intercultural dialogue can support such women-led endeavours and practices that cut across cultures and regions without treading on sensitive ideological and religious issues. ■

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## Dialogue in action | Greece

### Designing and Implementing a Gender Equality Plan for a Research Organisation

In April 2019, the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP) for the first time adopted a Gender Equality Plan (GEP), following its approval by the Board of Directors. This Action Plan is the first one in Greece to formulate gender equality and non-discrimination into an explicit goal and to mainstream gender throughout the internal workings of a research organisation. We believe that this strengthens our organisation's commitment to meritocracy and excellence, and has the potential to bring significant cultural change. By adopting a GEP, ELIAMEP followed in the steps of other reputable research foundations abroad and has set a trend that may encourage other research and higher education institutions in Greece to do the same. What is distinctive of the GEP at ELIAMEP is the reflexive process that we have employed: conducting an internal gender audit as a basis for designing the Plan; creating a Community of Practice of scholars and researchers who provide support in every step of the process; reformulating the GEP and its implementation based on ongoing self-assessment; and learning from the experience of research institutions in other countries.

In implementing the GEP, we have undertaken a series of concrete actions to embed a gender-sensitive culture in ELIAMEP's human resource management, its decision-making structures, and in the content of our research and policy proposals. These include the application of gender neutral language and gender balancing measures in our

Foundation's operative and communication documents; the designation of a Gender Equality Officer, who is responsible for the collection of human resources sex-disaggregated data on recruitment, promotion and retention, and for overseeing the implementation of the GEP; the revision of our Foundation's Internal Rules of Operation and human resource documents to include an explicit commitment to gender equality and non-discrimination; and the goal to improve gender balance in the composition of the ELIAMEP's Board of Directors. Last but not least, we have stepped up efforts to integrate a gender dimension in all research proposals and projects that ELIAMEP implements. In this direction, ELIAMEP has organised a series of institutional workshops to train young researchers within and outside of ELIAMEP, and to explore how gender affects a career in research and higher education.

For those organisations that will adopt such policies, an official distinction of the 'Equality Badge' is foreseen as a reward and recognition. ELIAMEP's GEP has been formulated in the frame of the TARGET project 'Taking a Reflexive approach to Gender Equality for institutional Transformation' that is funded by the EU Horizon 2020 Programme

Project website: [www.gendertarget.eu](http://www.gendertarget.eu)

ELIAMEP

# Art, Intercultural Dialogue and the COVID-19 Pandemic

Riham BAH

Examining the importance of art and intercultural dialogue in the COVID-19 recovery, Riham Bahi argues that the pandemic has exacerbated various existing cultural inequalities such as socio-economic inequalities; furthered the spread of disinformation; and amplified marginalisation and segregation within societies. Art and intercultural dialogue can be used to 'build back better', enforcing social solidarity and creating a sense of belonging among the most vulnerable groups in society, improving resilience, and promoting cooperation and a collective response to the pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted humanity's fundamental interconnectedness and interdependence, as well as the need for solidarity in order to 'build back better'. It has also exposed and exacerbated vulnerabilities and inequalities during a crisis of civic trust and low commitment to multilateralism. Few states have exhibited the solidarity and cohesion necessary to find equitable solutions in their responses to the pandemic; therefore, with millions of students out of school, millions of jobs at risk and millions of people projected to enter extreme poverty, the pandemic represents a threat to social peace. Intercultural dialogue has an important role to play in forging trust and cooperation between nations in order to tackle global challenges. Through dialogue, nations can address shared challenges such as structural inequalities and systemic discrimination, which evidence suggests have compounded the negative effects of the pandemic (UNESCO 2020).

The pandemic has exacerbated various existing intercultural challenges. It has increased socio-economic inequalities, furthered the spread of disinformation, and amplified marginalisation and segregation within societies (Council of Europe, 2020). A sharp rise in racism, stereotyping and discriminatory practices against certain nationalities has also threatened diversity within countries. Moreover, the pandemic has necessitated the imposition of restrictions on human rights and fundamental freedoms in the form of travel restrictions, personal data collection and exploitation. Indeed, in many countries, lockdowns have been accompanied by a rise in gender-based violence.

**Art can be a mediator and interpreter, facilitating communication across cultural divides; it acts as a platform for self-expression and helps to highlight the voices of the marginalised.**

On the other hand, the pandemic has led to greater solidarity between neighbours, regardless of nationality, and social relations have been maintained and strengthened during lockdowns through the use of digital tools (Council of Europe, 2020). By actively encouraging intercultural dialogue and interaction, social solidarity can be sustained after lockdowns and physical distancing end, creating a sense of

belonging among the most vulnerable groups in society, improving resilience, and promoting cooperation and a collective response to the pandemic and its associated socio-economic problems.

Culture and the arts can bring people together and encourage greater participation in cultural and social life. For these reasons, they will be crucial in developing a vision for real inclusion during and post-COVID-19. For example, a recent report by the EU discussed the integration of migrants and refugees in societies through the arts and culture. The report confirms that 'participatory arts practices are particularly conducive to integrating refugees and migrants. The arts and culture provide unique opportunities to bring together refugees, migrants and host populations' (European Commission Directorate General for Education, Youth, Sports and Culture, 2017).

**The pandemic has exacerbated various existing intercultural challenges. It has increased socio-economic inequalities, furthered the spread of disinformation, and amplified marginalisation and segregation within societies**

Art can be a mediator and interpreter, facilitating communication across cultural divides; it acts as a platform for self-expression and helps to highlight the voices of the marginalised. In this way, artistic expressions can also be used as a mechanism for alleviating the negative social impacts of COVID-19, such as increased racism against marginalised groups. For instance, the World Health Organisation launched the virtual solidarity shows art initiative in July 2020. Its 'COVID-19 Art Gallery' exhibited a selection of artists who 'educated and cleared up rumours' with the help of their art during the global pandemic. It held events which highlighted the use of art forms to help communities confront the dual pandemics of COVID-19 and racial injustice (World Health Organisation, 2020). Furthermore, UNESCO launched its 'Open your Heart' art campaign in Cambodia in order to counter xenophobia, stigmatisation and disinformation triggered by COVID-19 (UNESCO 2020)

Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (SEM) and European respondents of the Anna Lindh/Ipsos Intercultural Trends Survey

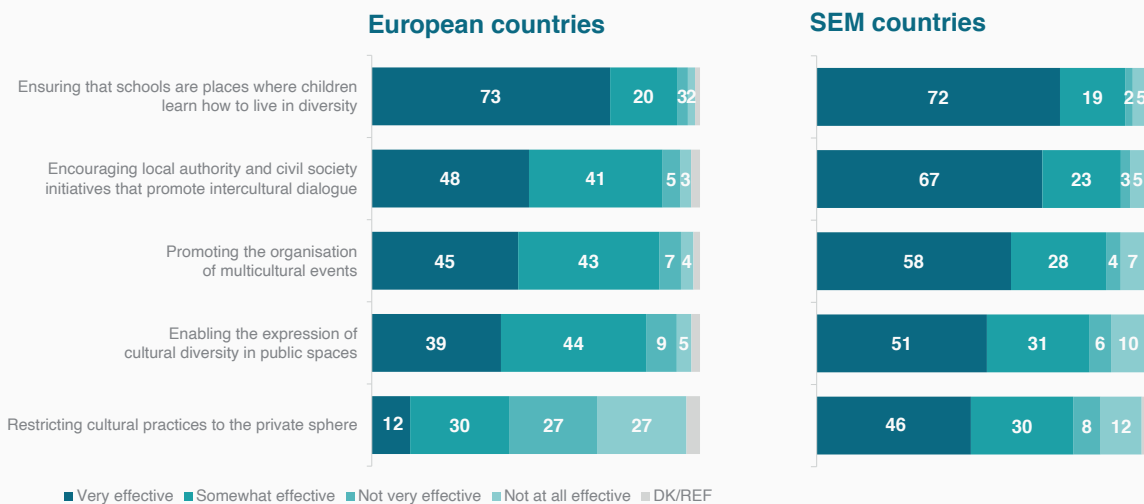


agree overall that exposing people to cultural diversity through civil society initiatives and multicultural events are effective ways of promoting cohesion. Indeed, respondents in both country groups (88% in Europe and 86% in SEM countries) think that cultural and artistic initiatives are either a 'very effective' or 'somewhat effective' measure to prevent and deal with the challenges of hate speech and opposing cultural views.

Respondents were also asked about the extent to which a range of actions would be effective in helping people live better together

in multicultural environments. 'Encouraging local authority and civil society initiatives that promote intercultural dialogue' was perceived to be effective action in both regions, with 89% of respondents in European countries and 90% in SEM countries describing this action as either 'somewhat effective' or 'very effective' in helping people live better together in multicultural environments; second only to 'ensuring that schools are places where children learn how to live in diversity' (93% and 91% of respondents in European countries and SEM countries, respectively, think this is a 'very effective' or 'somewhat effective' action) (Chart 11.1).

**Chart 11.1: Actions that can help people live better together - by region**



**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 multicultural environment?  
**Base:** All respondents (%), by region (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

When asked about barriers to cross-cultural encounters, 81% of European respondents and 68% of SEM respondents cited 'not speaking the same language' as either 'a big barrier' or 'somewhat of a barrier' to dialogue. Indeed, this was perceived to be the biggest barrier by respondents in both country groups. Furthermore, 65% of respondents in European countries and 46% of respondents in SEM countries identified 'social and cultural constraints' as either 'a big barrier' or 'somewhat of a barrier'. A similar proportion of respondents identified 'cultural tensions/conflict throughout history' as either 'a big barrier' or 'somewhat of a barrier' (62% of Europeans compared with 46% of SEM) (Chart 11.2).

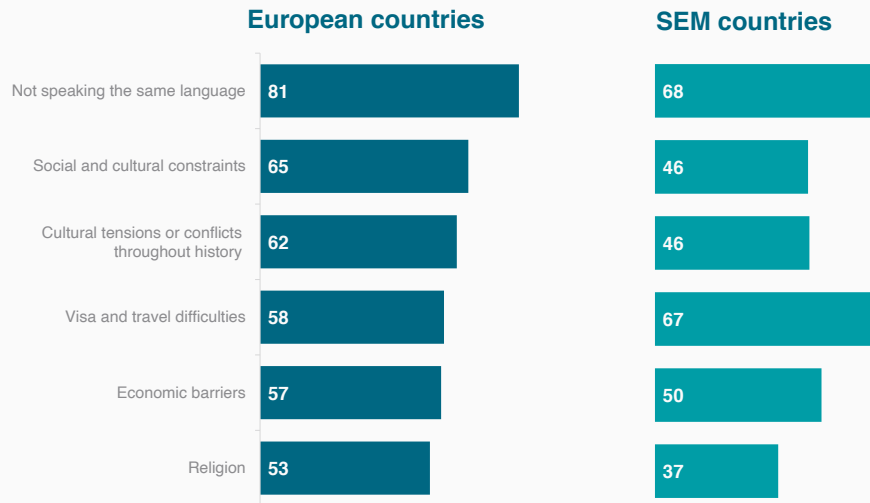
**The post-COVID-19 intercultural dialogue agenda will have a significant role to play in developing new socio-cultural norms that will shape the way we live, work, connect and engage across sub-national, national and civilisational divides.**

The arts can be used as a tool to break down both language barriers and cultural barriers; connecting and engaging in intercultural dialogue through the arts can promote coexistence, diversity and peace. Through artistic expression, people can depict the intricacies and experiences of their cultures and understand cultural differences and similarities without the need for a shared spoken or written language.

Crucially, during the pandemic, digital channels provided a shared 'public space' – a platform through which people from different cultures and nationalities could communicate, engage in artistic expression, and disseminate the values, attitudes and behaviours conducive to dialogue.

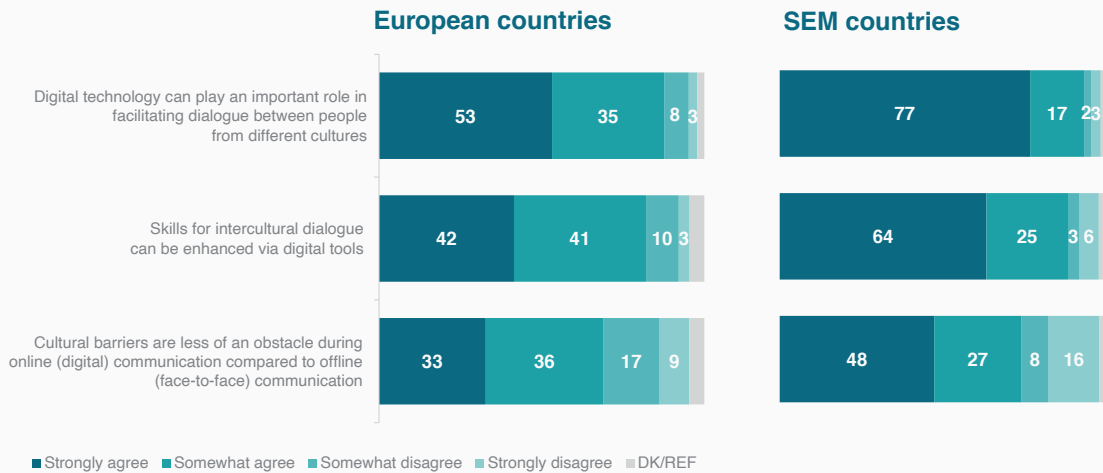
The Survey data suggest that there are clear perceived benefits to digital intercultural interaction. The majority of respondents in both SEM countries (74%) and European countries (69%) either 'strongly agree' or 'somewhat agree' that cultural barriers are less

**Chart 11.2: Barriers to cross-cultural encounters - by region**



**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 (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**Chart 11.3: Impact of digital technology - by region**



**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 group (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

of an obstacle to dialogue during digital communication than during face-to-face interaction. During the COVID-19 pandemic, due to government lockdowns and physical distancing measures, there has been an increase in the use of digital technology, with the pandemic accelerating the development of a unique online space for intercultural dialogue. Eighty-three percent of respondents in Europe

and 89% of respondents in SEM countries also either 'strongly agree' or 'somewhat agree' that 'skills for intercultural dialogue can be enhanced using digital tools' (Chart 11.3). Civil society organisations could leverage such tools in their efforts to encourage dialogue. For instance, they could launch initiatives to teach people to express themselves and their cultures through mediums such

as film or online imagery, which could reach broad audiences on social media and further encourage mutual understanding, free from the aforementioned cultural and language barriers associated with face-to-face interaction. It should be noted, however, that fieldwork for all countries bar Mauritania took place between 9 March 2020 and 16 June 2020, during the earlier stages of the pandemic, with a suspension of fieldwork part-way through. As such, the full impact of the pandemic on respondents' behaviours and attitudes may not yet be reflected in the Survey responses.

### Recommendations

The Survey data draw our attention towards the importance of civil society initiatives, and initiatives that encourage artistic expression, as a means of addressing the misunderstandings and stereotyping which undermine relations between and within societies. Innovative artistic mediums can be used to promote intercultural learning. Furthermore, in times of crises – such as during the COVID-19 pandemic – arts-based activities and programmes can be used to promote community spirit.

In the post-COVID-19 era, which will be shaped by new dynamics of virtual inter-connectivity, dialogue and cooperation will be key to navigating global challenges. Civil society organisations should support projects working with communities to develop actionable tools to strengthen intercultural dialogue. They should launch

initiatives to support artists and encourage creative expression – particularly among minority groups. Projects like the World Health Organisation's COVID-19 Art Gallery can help people to navigate the information overload associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, help them to recognize misinformation, and can highlight the ways in which different cultures have navigated the pandemic, offering opportunities for learning and reflection. Such projects can be pursued by civil society organisations and policymakers as mediums for collecting and documenting shared experiences across cultures and for capturing lessons learned that can be used to build a creative and inclusive post-COVID-19 world.

The post-COVID-19 intercultural dialogue agenda will have a significant role to play in developing new socio-cultural norms that will shape the way we live, work, connect and engage across sub-national, national and civilisational divides. Policymakers need to maintain and improve the intercultural exchanges that have emerged during the crisis; support programmes addressing social inequalities, discrimination and marginalisation; emphasize the importance of civic engagement during and after the pandemic; and highlight lessons learnt from the pandemic. ■

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## Dialogue in action | Romania

### Culture, Religion and Freedom of Religion or Belief, and diversity.

The relationship between culture and freedom of religion or belief is often seen as a negative one, with freedom of religion often invoked to defend human rights violations. In response, many human rights advocates draw a distinction between culture and religion, and what is insinuated is that culture is the problem, not religion. However, the reality is that in many cases, culture and religion are not so distinct, with cultural practices becoming religionised and religious ideas becoming part of the culture. Recognizing this relationship can open up other more positive avenues for the promotion of human rights and freedom of religion or belief.

Working toward a culture of freedom, respect and dignity will not automatically eliminate all instances of discrimination in recruitment or racial or religious hostility in the workplace. However, having this goal in mind is a necessary step to eliminating such problems. To avoid discrimination, policies, which do outwardly limit religious manifestation, need to be justified by the nature of the role, and not go further than necessary. As such, we must aim for compromise, and continuously bear in mind the need to promote the freedom of choice of minorities whilst keeping in mind the imperatives of their business. The ALF Romanian Network identified a range of practices and principles to positively manage religious and cultural diversity in our community, such as: valuing difference; creating a culture of freedom, respect and dignity for all of our colleagues and associates; and reasonable accommodation and universal solutions.

- Valuing difference: developing a diversity strategy which includes business benefits and objectives, and includes specific reference to measures on religious diversity; participating in initiatives testing recruitment processes, including studies, but also developing methods of self-assessment; collecting equality data according to the good practice principles, including questions on religious diversity management in staff surveys.

- Creating a culture of freedom, respect and dignity for all of our colleagues and associates: we should develop tailored programmes on cultural and religious awareness and unconscious bias; setting up a complaint mechanism for perceived hostility in all its forms, clearly including religious discrimination.

- Reasonable accommodation and universal solutions: understood as good faith efforts made by all of us, in order to take reasonable measures to guarantee protection from discrimination to certain categories of people.

A general policy of good practices does not mean that we must grant every request that relates to religion or culture. However, it means that all policies that prove incompatible with the way minorities manifest their religion should be properly considered, and then carefully designed with a compromise in mind, balancing the interests of both the minority and the business.

# Living Together Peacefully In the Euro-Mediterranean Region

Necdet SAGLAM

Utilising the 2020 Survey data to understand individual perceptions of the benefits and challenges of multiculturalism, Necdet Sağlam summarises the support for dialogue, exchange, education, and training programmes; advocating for both short- and long-term perspectives to create lasting change in the region. The EuroMed regional cultural richness is celebrated, based on its cultural diversity; to ensure this is not eroded, dialogue and education must be had at community level and above to aid cultural cohesion and overcome prejudices.

The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that individuals are unique and respecting differences along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. Diversity is about the exploration of difference in a safe, positive and nurturing environment. It is about moving beyond ‘tolerating’ each other to understanding, embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within individuals and societies (Queensborough Community College, 2021; Erbas, I., 2013).

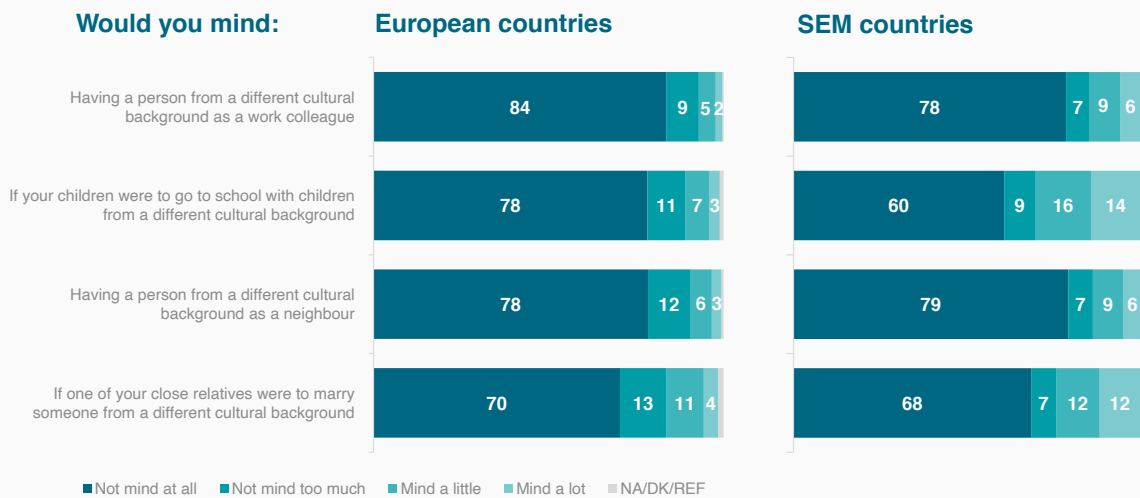
Many countries around the world are characterised by religious and cultural diversity. Nevertheless, people hold different views on the benefits and challenges that come with multiculturalism. The Anna Lindh/Ipsos Intercultural Trends Survey explores these different perceptions. This article provides an overview of the Survey data

with regards to respondents’ perceptions of cultural and religious diversity, their levels of tolerance towards other cultures, and the actions that respondents perceive to be most effective in helping people live better together in multicultural environments, before making recommendations for policymakers and practitioners working in the area of intercultural dialogue.

### Perceptions about religious and cultural diversity

Overall, respondents in both Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (SEM) and European countries are positive about cultural and religious diversity. Almost eight in ten respondents in each country group (77% in European countries and 78% in SEM countries) either ‘strongly agree’ or ‘somewhat agree’ that cultural and religious diversity is important to the prosperity of their society. Respondents in European and SEM countries are more positive still with regards to respecting the rights of people from different cultural and religious

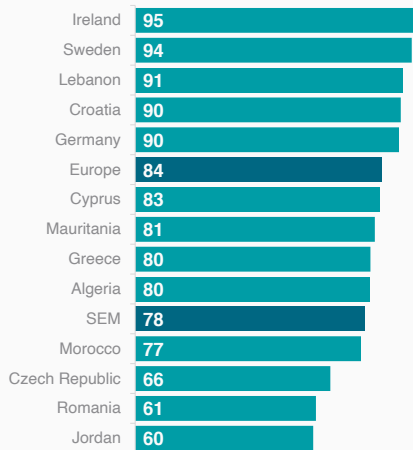
Chart 12.1: Cultural diversity and tolerance - by region



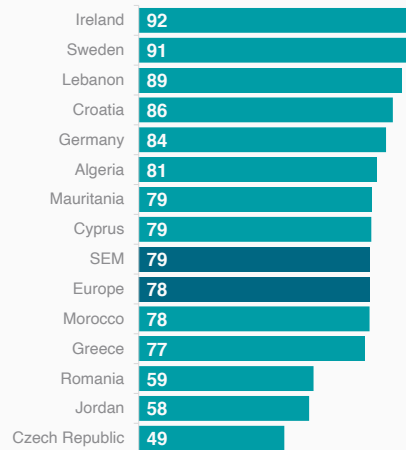
**Survey question:** I am now going to read out a number of scenarios. For each of them, please tell me whether you would mind a lot, mind a little, or whether you would not mind too much, or not mind at all.  
**Base:** All respondents (%), by region (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

Chart 12.2: Perceptions about religious and cultural diversity - by country

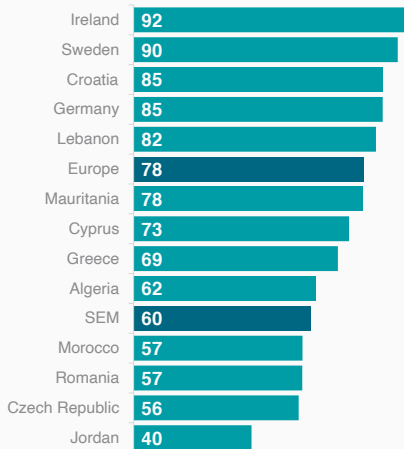
**Having a person from a different cultural background as a work colleague**



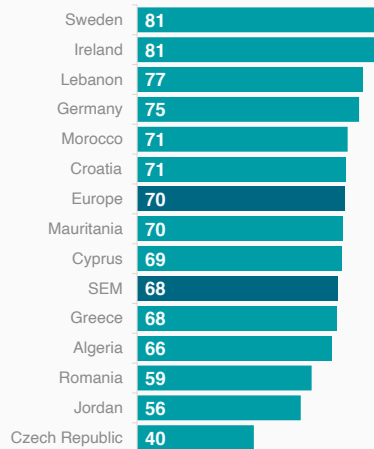
**Having a person from a different cultural background as a neighbour**



**If your children were to go to school with children from a different cultural background**



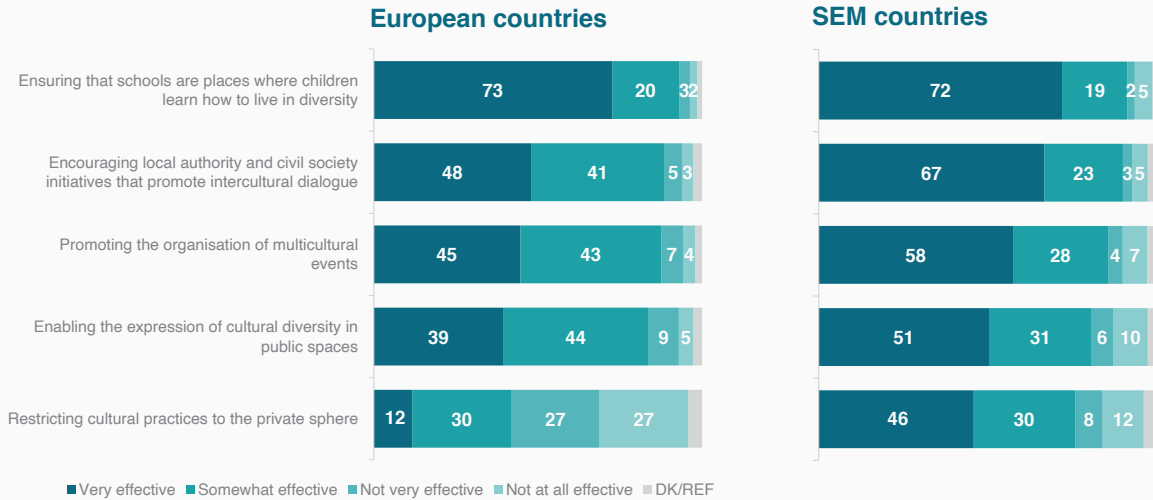
**If one of your close relatives were to marry someone from a different cultural background**



**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 (% "not mind at all"), by country (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**Chart 12.3: Living together in multicultural environments - by region**  
 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 multicultural environment?  
**Base:** All respondents (%), by region (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

backgrounds, with 93% of respondents in Europe and 84% of respondents in SEM countries either strongly or somewhat agreeing that ‘people from differing cultural and religious backgrounds should have the same rights and opportunities’. However, respondents from SEM and European countries have slightly differing opinions with regards to whether cultural and religious diversity is a threat to the stability of society, with 30% of SEM respondents strongly agreeing that cultural and religious diversity is a threat, compared with only 10% of European respondents, though it should be noted that a similar share in each country group ‘strongly disagree’ with this statement (47% in European countries and 43% in SEM countries).

**Respondents’ level of tolerance towards other cultures**

In order to strengthen social cohesion and promote greater solidarity in the international community, it is necessary to promote and foster cultural tolerance. Cultural tolerance requires that people do not discriminate against those from other cultures. Indeed, discrimination is a key cause of communication breakdown and animosity between countries. Without cultural tolerance, countries may experience rising xenophobia, racism and unilateralism which are detrimental to cultural cohesion and international cooperation.

As shown in Chart 12.1, the majority of respondents from both country groups appear tolerant of other cultures. However, respondents from SEM countries are less accepting than those in European countries of their children attending schools with children from differing cultural backgrounds (30% would ‘mind a lot’ or ‘mind a little’ in comparison to 10% in European countries who would ‘mind a lot’ or ‘mind a

little’). Responses varied greatly at an individual country level, with the highest levels of tolerance displayed in Ireland (where 92% of respondents would ‘not mind at all’ if their children went to school with someone from a different cultural background) and the lowest levels of tolerance displayed in Jordan (where only 40% of respondents would ‘not mind at all’).

**The cultural richness of Euro-Mediterranean societies is rooted in the region's diversity, expressed through the variety of religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and communities which have been present across the region for many centuries.**

The principles of coexistence and tolerance are of great value in building mutually acceptable relationships between very diverse communities. Intolerance can create fertile ground for populism and nationalism to grow; whilst the data show that in general both SEM and European countries are tolerant of other cultures and accepting of diversity, there is variation between countries, as shown in Chart 12.2. Therefore, it is imperative that members of the EuroMed community work together to promote tolerance and inclusion by creating opportunities for dialogue and exchange between individuals of different cultures and religions.

**Living together in multicultural environments**

One of the most pressing and troublesome challenges facing modern multicultural societies is the need to reconcile social unity

with ethnocultural, racial and spiritual diversity. In order for different cultures to coexist, a general consensus is needed in the society. As elusive and context-specific as the responses to questions of 'living together in diversity' may be, societies must find a way to respect different cultures and live together in peace and reconciliation. In light of the above, actions that facilitate people from different cultural and religious backgrounds living and working together in multicultural environments are crucial in order to promote cultural cohesion and diversity. In European and SEM countries, actions that promote cultural cohesion are more popular than those that inhibit cultural diversity (Chart 12.3). As seen in this chart, 'restricting cultural practices to the private sphere' is perceived to be the least effective action to facilitate better living together in multicultural environments, particularly in Europe, with just 42% of European respondents and 76% of SEM respondents perceiving it to be either 'somewhat effective' or 'very effective'.

In contrast, ensuring that schools are places for children to learn how to live in diversity is seen by 93% of respondents in European countries and 91% of respondents from SEM countries to be either a 'very effective' or 'somewhat effective' action for helping people to live better together in multicultural environments – the action most frequently perceived to be effective in both country groups (seen previously in Chart 12.3). Moreover, encouraging initiatives via local authorities and civil society that promote intercultural dialogue was also widely perceived to be effective in both regions (89% European respondents answered 'very effective' or 'somewhat effective'; 90% SEM respondents answered 'very effective' or 'somewhat effective').

In Europe, respondents who displayed higher levels of cultural tolerance overall based on their Survey responses were more likely to think that the expression of cultural diversity should be allowed in public spaces than those who displayed low levels of cultural tolerance (46% of 'high tolerance' respondents saw this action as 'very effective' compared with 24% of 'low tolerance' respondents). There were no statistically significant differences between high tolerance and low tolerance individuals in relation to the perceived effectiveness of this action in SEM countries. This finding may indicate that additional targeted measures may be needed to encourage dialogue and cultural exchange, and subsequently to encourage cultural tolerance, among those who are already predisposed to lower levels of tolerance.

### Conclusion

According to the Survey results, the majority of citizens in both Europe and SEM countries consider cultural and religious diversity to be an important asset for their society and, if properly managed, a source of prosperity.

Moreover, the majority of citizens on both sides advocate equal opportunities and rights for people of different cultural and religious backgrounds. In order for this to be realised, all stakeholders (civil society, city authorities, educational institutions, and private sector organisations) must ensure equal access to services and goods and cultivate spaces for interaction between various groups in the population.

Another means of achieving equal rights and opportunities, and helping people to live together in multicultural environments, is through education. The data suggest that respondents see education as the best mechanism through which to instil learned behaviours associated with diversity, and indeed education at all levels has the privileged position of being able to cultivate intercultural understanding, solidarity, and respect for others.

The Survey findings support the creation by policymakers and practitioners of approaches and tools based on dialogue, exchange, education, and training programmes; looking at both short- and long-term perspectives to solve the conflicts in the region. With this in mind, I suggest a new programme co-created with ALF countries and Civil Society. This can include investment in education and intercultural learning; promotion of youth-led dialogue and virtual exchange; working with local authorities/cities and associated global partnerships to develop circles of trust; and the establishing of a media platform on cross-cultural trends.

In addition, I also propose the development of a "Social Erasmus Exchange Programme", which can be supported by organisations such as the ALF and policymakers at the EU level, and would apply the benefits of the Erasmus exchange programme to civil society, facilitating exchanges and opportunities to engage with international civil society via mechanisms such as Erasmus internships and European Voluntary Service. It is paramount that these opportunities should be open to all ALF Members in 42 countries, especially those who are less frequently exposed to cross-cultural exchange programmes, such as people living in rural areas.

The cultural richness of Euro-Mediterranean societies is rooted in the region's diversity, expressed through the variety of religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and communities which have been present across the region for many centuries. In order to maintain the rich cultural diversity in the region, whilst also facilitating the creation of multicultural societies, intercultural dialogue and intercultural learning are essential to counter and overcome mutual prejudices and aid cultural cohesion. ■

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## Dialogue in action | Morocco

### The roles of civil society towards 2030

The Moroccan ALF Network organised a national conference on 'The roles of civil society towards 2030', with a large participation of network members, professors, researchers, specialists, social partners and media.

The work of this conference focused on:

- The objectives and roles of civil society in achieving development goals
- Challenges facing civil society in political dialogue
- The role of education for multicultural citizenship in the promotion of a culture of diversity, the management of difference and the management of social transformations in the Mediterranean region.

The panelists classified the societal dimension of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, which essentially aims to create a real balance between linguistic, religious or ethnic specificity, and the need to build a logic of regional integration of citizens in pluralist societies at Horizon 2030, as offering an alternative vision and a new framework for understanding and studying cultural diversity. They explained this through the following points:

- The societal security framework attaches great importance to the new aspects of threats which aim to harm the ethical and identity aspect of human beings, in particular by refusing the enjoyment of the right to cultural diversity.
- Societal security focuses on the need to enshrine the conditions of cultural security for persons, individuals

and groups, starting with the strengthening of the cultural dimension of human rights; preserving cultural dignity by ensuring the maintaining of the effective enjoyment of collective rights, in particular the rights of minorities, and allowing them to have their right to a cultural identity; strengthening governance in order to reverse situations devoted to unequal cultural status; and promotion of coexistence and democratic peace in culturally diverse societies.

- The speakers evoked seven fundamental principles of citizenship encompassing cultural diversity, which are, respectively: recognition of diversity, development, development and change, cultural partnership, equality between citizens in rights and duties, living together and social justice, rejection of intolerance and openness to the world.

- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which is the international path to development, stresses the importance of partnering with civil society organisations to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

- Dialogues about the centrality of civil society in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals must include the subjects of the role of civil society organisations in activating the participation of young people in political dialogue, through awareness-raising of the different opportunities for participation, and the tools and mechanisms that must be followed to communicate the ideas and demands of young people and to identify the obligations and duties they impose.

The Moroccan ALF Network

# Youth in the Arab Mediterranean Region: The Prospects for Building Bridges to Solve Common Issues

Fares BRAIZAT

Discussing intercultural dialogue between youth on both shores of the Mediterranean, Fares Braizat highlights the shared values and challenges faced by young people across the region. He argues that these mutual challenges, which have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, provide opportunities for young people to work together to address societal issues, for example through educational exchange or environmental programmes.

## Youth in the Mediterranean region

Youth, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, have often been portrayed as either perpetrators or victims of conflict. This inaccurate and generalised portrayal ignores that most youth do not fit into these groups. It also alienates them in their own countries and hinders their aspirations to contribute to their own development, leading many young people to consider emigration.

This misrepresentation of youth as either perpetrators or victims of violence has also led to youth in the Arab World being viewed as a human resource 'curse' (Urdal, 2004). The conflicts that engulfed the region over the past two decades have utilized youth as firewood, with violent extremist organisations and unorganised terrorist groups targeting young people to propagate violence ingrained in a destructively nihilistic ideology of exclusion.

The often overlooked dynamic of the past two decades is that youth have in fact contributed positively to their societies. The Arab Spring movement saw young people prioritising issues of national interest over the interests of any single group. Furthermore, many young men and women have been elected to public office and continue to advocate for solutions to the challenges facing young people, such as unemployment. Young people have also championed advancements in entrepreneurship and technology including, but not limited to, Maktoub, Kareem and Aramex.

As such, youth have contributed to both the good and the bad of the events that led in and out of the Arab Spring. The incubating environment surrounding the growth and development of young people can either utilise them as positive change agents or push them towards the vengeful and destructive arms of terrorist groups.

## Youth and intercultural exchange during 2020

Young people are more connected now than in previous generations, perhaps in part due to the pressing political constraints and economic pressures they face. Youth have been hit hardest economically by the ongoing pandemic, with the ILO reporting that more than one in six young men and women have lost their jobs (ILO, May 2020).

When facing shared challenges, the prospects for intercultural cooperation improve (Mattesich and Monsey, 1992).

Young people also face other challenges pertaining to hate speech and opposing cultural views, which may hinder intercultural cooperation. The Anna Lindh/Ipsos Intercultural Trends Survey reveals that most respondents in the Arab Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (SEM) nations (Algeria, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania and Morocco) see exchange programmes involving people across the region as an effective means of preventing and dealing with these challenges. On average, 50% of respondents from these countries indicated that exchange programmes are 'very effective' and an average of 37% stated that they are 'somewhat effective' in preventing and dealing with challenges such as hate speech and polarisation. Results were very similar among respondents in European countries, which illustrates that the attitudinal environment is conducive to a more constructive engagement with youth exchange programmes. Based on these findings, and in line with the SDGs (UN Dept. of Economic and Social Affairs, 2015), youth exchange programmes ought to be developed to enhance tolerance and acceptance. These programmes could focus on topics of shared interest to people on both shores of the Mediterranean, such as the natural environment and the impact of climate change, which 89% of respondents in European countries and 76% of respondents in SEM countries said they were either 'very interested' or 'somewhat interested' in hearing about in relation to the other country group).

The Survey data also found that 52% of respondents from European countries and 46% from SEM countries say they have spoken with or met someone from the other country group in the 12 months prior to the Survey (Chart 13.1). Whilst we might expect intercultural interactions such as these to change one's views of the other culture, 55% of European respondents and 37% of SEM respondents say that their views remained unchanged, although 41% of SEM respondents say their views changed in a positive way.

Among SEM respondents, chatting online or through social media was the most popular medium through which these interactions

occurred, followed by business-related and then tourism-based interactions. Young people’s high use of online and social media for communication (with 66% of respondents aged 15-29 in SEM countries saying their recent interactions took place online or through social media) presents an opportunity to create a Mediterranean Socio-cultural Entrepreneurship Forum, where youth from EU and MENA countries present their ideas, concepts or startups in an open competition to enhance competitive cultural exchange.

**How difficult is the road ahead?**

The Survey data indicate that intercultural communication and exchange opportunities can plant the seeds for building bridges. But how difficult is it to reap the fruits?

The Survey findings highlight a number of perceived barriers to intercultural interaction. Language is a ‘big barrier’ when meeting with or talking to people from different cultures according to 44% of respondents from Europe and 38% from SEM countries. Visa and travel difficulties were cited by 42% of respondents from the SEM nations compared to only 22% of those from Europe. This view was especially prevalent in Algeria and Mauritania and less so in Jordan, Lebanon and Morocco.

On the bright side, religion, social and cultural constraints, and cultural tensions and conflicts throughout history were not perceived to constitute big barriers by the majority, which is significant given that traditional views to intercultural communication tends to emphasize these aspects as important challenges to be overcome.

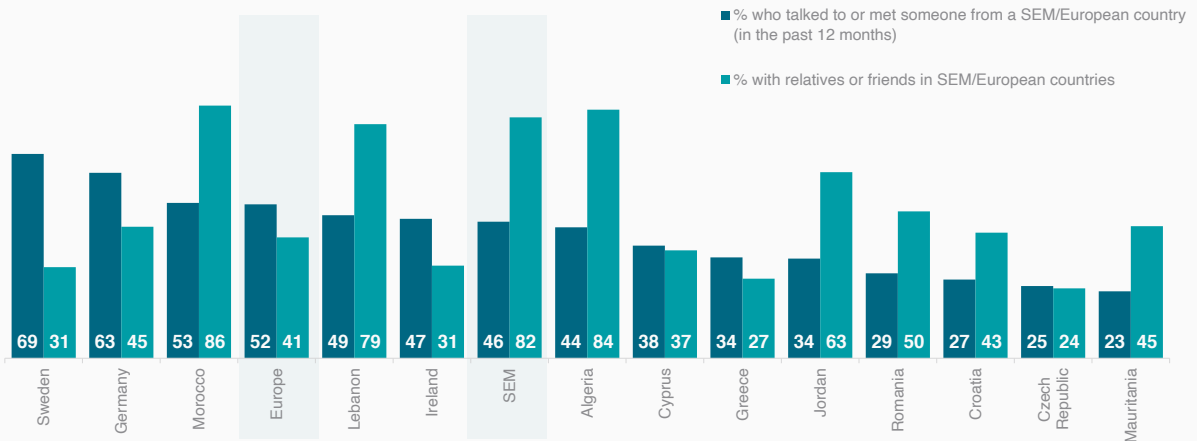
**Are youth being retained in the folds of acceptance, tolerance and shared values?**

One of the most important challenges in building effective bridges for intercultural communication is the extent to which the core values that form the foundation for communication are passed on to children. The Survey inquired about respondents’ most important values when raising their children (Chart 13.2). Whilst respondents from Europe valued family solidarity (25%), respect for other cultures (25%) and curiosity (22%), and downplayed the importance of religious beliefs and practices (which only 4% saw as the ‘most important’ value), in the SEM states, conversely, religious beliefs and practices was cited most often as the most important value (42%), followed by obedience (21%) and family solidarity (18%). Only 11% saw respect for other cultures as the ‘most important’ value.

**These emigration waves pose challenges to the EU around ensuring the integration of youth migrants from the MENA region. These waves also pose challenges to the MENA region in terms of a ‘brain drain’.**

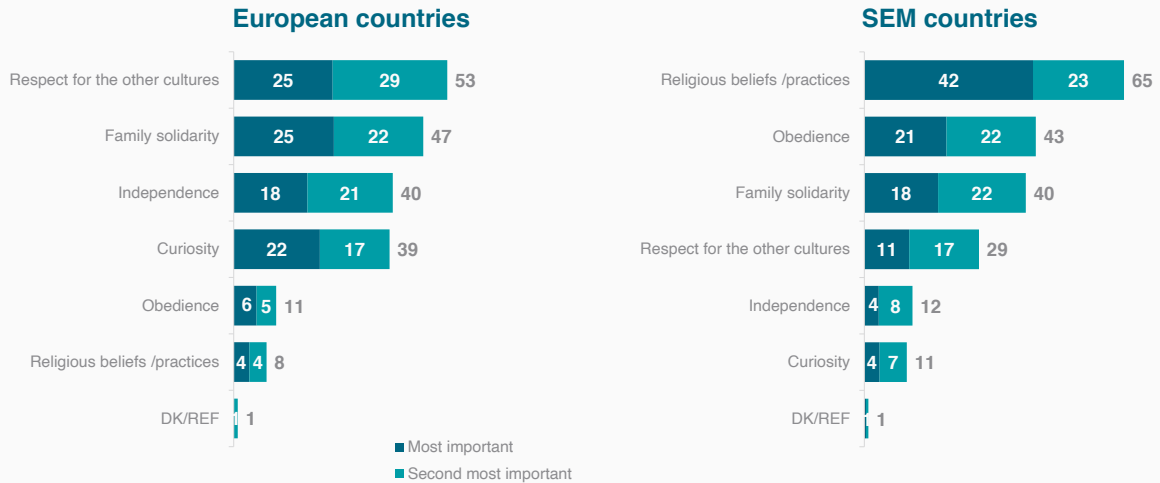
Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel (2005) produced a World Cultural Map in which they placed every country into a quadrant composed of traditional vs secular values, and survival vs self-expression values, based on data from the World Values Survey. The World Values Survey, which grouped responses into ‘materialists’, ‘mixed’, and ‘post-materialists’, shows that, on average, Arab nations tend to value materialism more than post-materialism,

**Chart 13.1: Interactions with people from different countries - by country**



**Survey question:** In the past 12 months, have you talked to or met someone from a country bordering the southern and eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea (asked in European countries)/a European country (asked in SEM countries)? Do you have any relatives or friends who live 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 country (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**Chart 13.2: Key values when raising children - by region**

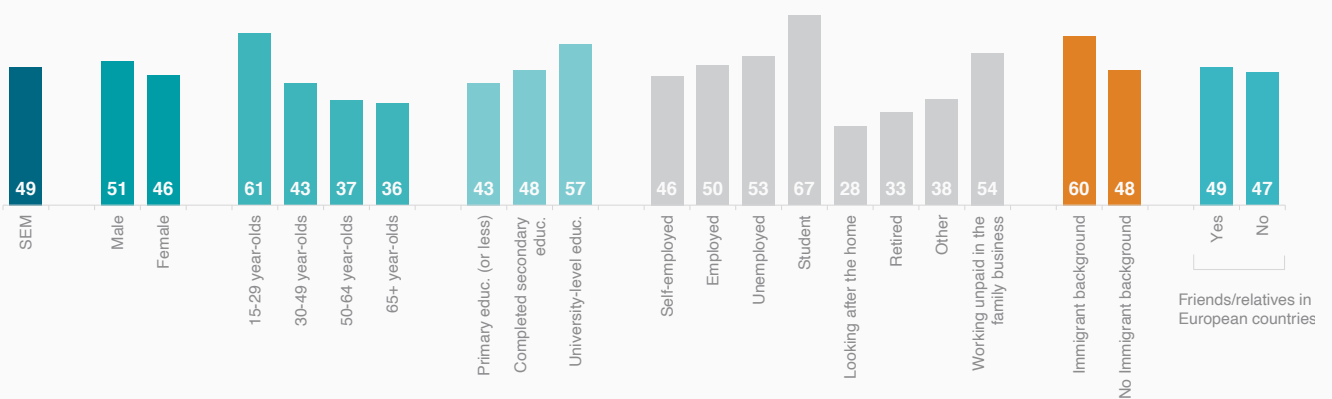


**Survey question:** In bringing up their children, parents in different countries may place different emphasis on different values. Assuming that we limit ourselves to six values only, I'd like to know which one of these is most important, to you personally, when raising children? And the second most important?  
**Base:** All respondents (%), by region (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

unlike European nations. According to Inglehart and Welzel, the ramifications of the materialist value system are reflected in lower levels of tolerance and less acceptance of the 'other' because of the prevalence of traditional values. Despite these traits, there is a higher desire to emigrate.

As such, the Mediterranean region is a hub for emigration, especially from the southern to the northern shores. Emigration waves from the Arab states in the Mediterranean toward the European nations may also be attributed to economic challenges and conflicts. In fact, looking at data collected by the Arab Barometer since 2011, we find

**Chart 13.3: Preferred countries to start a new life - by socio-demographic**  
 % of SEM respondents who would start a new life in another country



**Survey question:** If you could start a new life, in which country of the world would you start it?  
**Base:** All respondents (%), SEM countries, by socio-demographics (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

that young people aged 18-29 are more willing to emigrate than those older than 30. This corroborates findings from the Anna Lindh/Ipsos Survey data which asked 'if you could start a new life, in which country would you start it' and found that SEM respondents aged 15-29 are significantly more likely than those aged over 30 to say they would choose to live in another country (61% vs 41%, respectively) (Chart 13.3).

**As the ongoing global pandemic has halted effective exchange programmes, we must resume and enhance such programmes, albeit virtually for the time being.**

These emigration waves pose challenges to the EU around ensuring the integration of youth migrants from the MENA region. These waves also pose challenges to the MENA region in terms of a 'brain drain'.

With consecutive emigration waves, societies have become more diverse and thus require specific measures to ensure proper integration of migrant groups into their destination countries, especially given the stark difference in the cultural value systems asserted by the Inglehart-Welzel Cultural Map. The Survey data find that respondents from both European and SEM countries believe that there are several actions that could help migrants and host communities live together in a multicultural environment, and indeed, the action pertaining to children and young people, 'ensuring that schools are places where children learn to live in diversity', is perceived to be the most effective.

### Dialogue in action | Luxembourg

#### Letter to a friend

In view of the EuroMed Forum 2020, the network proposed the action entitled 'Letter to a friend'. This project invites everyone to write a letter to an unknown person, in one of the three official languages of the ALF, and to write a response to the letter of another participant. Each person has the possibility to remain anonymous and will receive a response to their letter by another participant. A selection of letters can be translated in order to further promote intercultural dialogue.

Due to the current pandemic, this project will now be carried out online and all ALF networks will be invited to participate. Participants will be invited to write about subjects which currently move them in their everyday lives or fundamental questions they are currently reflecting on. The current situation caused by the pandemic will increase participation in this digital instrument promoting intercultural dialogue.

The project thereby aims to foster mutual understanding among citizens of all ALF countries. This will help the ALF

Our Common Future

#### Conclusion

Cultural values among youth from European countries and youth from the southern shores of the Mediterranean differ on the surface. These differences are attributed to varying environmental upbringings, the incubating environment throughout formative years, and the general socioeconomic and political atmosphere in which they live. However, these differences are not mutually exclusive and there are several shared values and challenges.

The Survey data reveal many promising opportunities. As the ongoing global pandemic has halted effective exchange programmes, we must resume and enhance such programmes, albeit virtually for the time being. As previously discussed, the creation of a youth Mediterranean Socio-cultural Entrepreneurship Forum, as well as youth exchange programmes focusing on educational and environmental tourism, are examples that could provide socio-cultural benefits whilst helping to overcome environmental and economic challenges.

In doing so, both ends of the Mediterranean stand to benefit. Creating more economic opportunities in the southern shores will help retain young people, enhancing the security of the Mediterranean basin and reducing populism, whilst increasing cooperation and trade. ■

Fares Braizat is a Political Scientist and Chairman of NAMA Strategic Intelligence Solutions.

bridge cultural divides and prevent hate speech in the future. The initiative will further have a substantial media impact on mutual perceptions and cross-cultural reporting, as a selection of letters will be published anonymously with the consent of their authors. The initiative can also contribute to a more harmonious coexistent living between migrant communities and host communities. It can further help to counter gender stereotypes and views on women's role in society.

The web portal of the initiative will indeed present the most enriching exchanges within topical categories. Similarities and differences in value systems and varying perceptions about cultural and religious diversity will come to the fore and subsequently be debated with the use of video challenges.

The initiative will be open to all age groups and participants will need to comply with a set of guidelines.

Project website: [www.ourcommonfuture.org/letters/](http://www.ourcommonfuture.org/letters/)

# Towards Intercultural Integration: The Role of Non-State Actors in Bridging the Gaps

Jelnar AHMAD

Arguing that at a local and cross-community level, non-state actors play an essential role in integration, Jelnar Ahmad uses the Survey data as a basis for investigation into where and how civil society is needed, finding that community integration is necessary in order to alleviate gaps left by official integration policies; argument is focused on the creation of a framework of two-way intercultural interaction between migrants and host communities utilising artists and cultural actors to create collaborative tools which bridge the gaps left by official national integration policies.

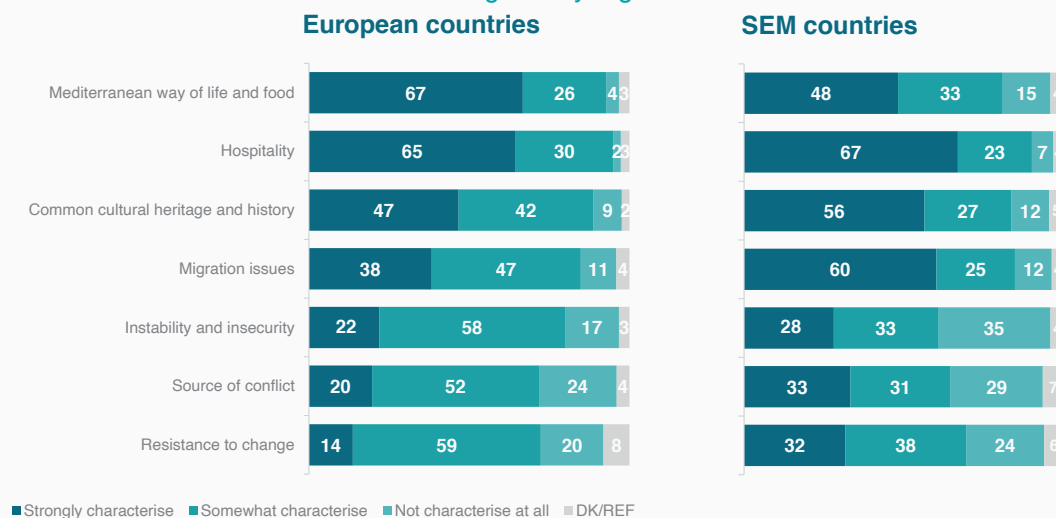
Migration across the Mediterranean is not a new phenomenon. However, during recent years debate has intensified in the EuroMed region surrounding migration and migration issues, due to a rise in populism and xenophobic rhetoric, as well as the increased focus on transnational issues such as security, climate change and globalisation in the digital era. This has perpetuated the idea of the European Migration crisis. As highlighted by the Anna Lindh/Ipsos Intercultural Trends Survey, migration issues are considered to strongly characterise the Mediterranean region by 38% of respondents in Europe and 60% of Survey respondents in countries on the Southern and Eastern shores of the Mediterranean (SEM) (Chart 14.1).

The data from the Survey suggest there may be a relatively high inclination towards migration among people in both country groups. When asked where in the world they would start a new life, if they could do so, more than half of respondents in Europe (57%) and almost half of respondents in SEM (49%) countries say they would

prefer to start a new life in a country other than their country of residence. The data suggest there is a notably higher tendency for south to north migration, as 20% from SEM countries would prefer to start a new life in Europe, whilst only 2% of respondents in European countries would start a new life in an SEM country.

The continuous debate about migration and migration issues extends as well to integration policies as a way to mitigate the impact of migration and increase tolerance and ability of co-living between migrants and host communities. Integration policies in the EuroMed area range drastically in regard to scope, narrative and goals, as well as actors and stakeholders. Whilst state actors remain the developers and implementers of official integration policies at national levels, non-state actors, including civil society, grassroots movements and cultural initiatives, play an essential role in integration at both local and cross-community levels. This article investigates the significance of civil society contribution to integration and explores potential ways and channels for meaningful civil society interaction.

Chart 14.1: Characteristics of the Mediterranean region - by region



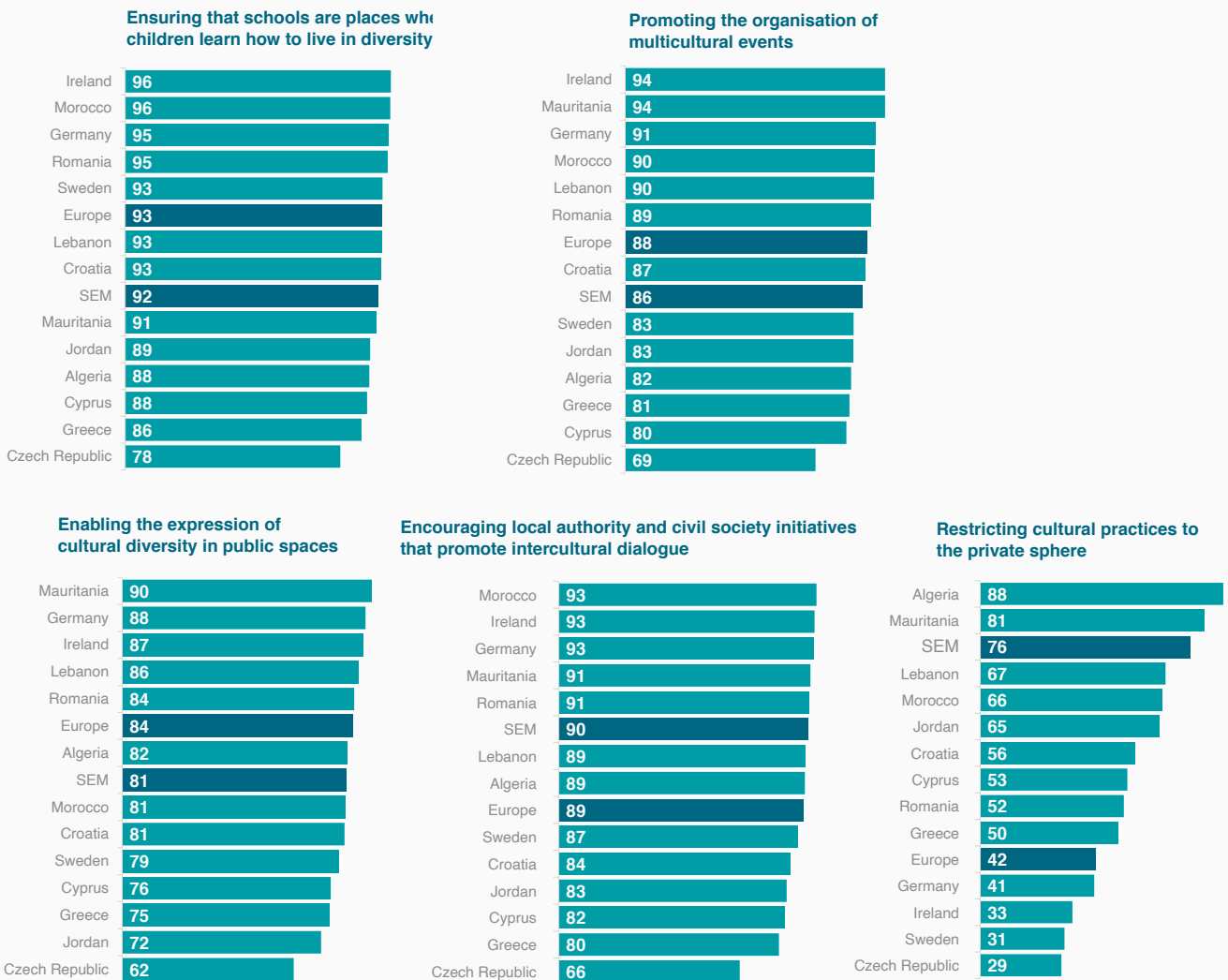
**Survey question:** Different people have different thoughts about what the Mediterranean region represents. I will read out a set of ideas and images; please tell me if you think these characterise the Mediterranean region strongly, somewhat or not at all.  
**Base:** All respondents (%), by region (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

The vast majority of respondents (89% in European countries and 90% in SEM countries) considered local authorities and civil society initiatives that promote intercultural dialogue to be either 'somewhat effective' or 'very effective' actions...which suggests a high level of confidence in local authorities and civil society.

**Role of non-state actors**

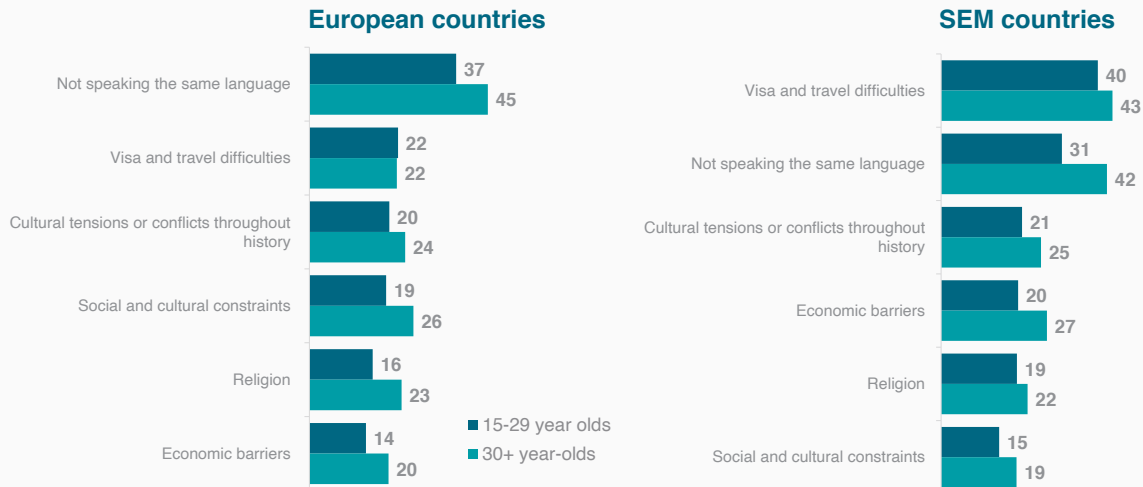
Respondents of the Survey were asked to rank the effectiveness of different actions in helping people to live better together in diverse multicultural societies. The vast majority of respondents (89% in European countries and 90% in SEM countries) considered local authorities and civil society initiatives that promote intercultural dialogue to be either 'somewhat effective' or 'very effective' actions (Chart 14.2), which suggests a high level of confidence in local authorities and civil society. This level of confidence provides a base to investigate where and how civil society action is needed.

**Chart 14.2: Living together in multi-cultural environments - by country**



**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 multicultural environment?  
**Base:** All respondents (% effective – sum of "very effective" and "somewhat effective" responses), by country (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**Chart 14.3: Barriers to cross-cultural encounters - by age**



**Survey question:** To what extent, if at all, are each of the following a barrier, when meeting with or talking to people from different cultures?  
**Base:** All respondents (%), by region and socio-demographics. [share who say it is “a big barrier”] (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

State-led initiatives and policies on integration conceptualise it as a one-way process of integrating migrant communities into the host community, which is often conditional and embedded in existing policies designed to integrate migrants into the labour market, welfare, and education systems, rather than a two-way intercultural framework. Overall, recent initiatives of integration politics, such as the German Integration Act, ‘exhibit a strong understanding of integration being first and foremost an obligation of the immigrants’ (Chemin and Nagel, 2020:16).

These state-led policies create gaps and discrepancies in which the needs of certain migrant individuals and/or groups are deprioritised, mainly affecting those who are stuck in a bureaucratic limbo or not recognised as eligible for state-supported integration measures.

In addition, state-led policies rarely include measures to support the wider participation of migrant communities in policy debates and formulation, nor do they target migrant and host communities as integral parts of a holistic integration approach. These gaps increase the need for, and importance of, non-state actors to complement official integration policies with flexible, localised, and relevant interventions, and to contribute to creating an environment of dialogue and interaction that is more conducive to living together. More specifically, civil society actors have the potential and space to explore other channels for integration; for example, offering spaces for meeting and interaction, facilitating access to policymakers and participation in decision making, and organising events and actions with a greater focus on societal and cultural interactions.

**Cultural diversity: a link and a barrier**

Cultural diversity in the Mediterranean region can be presented as either a link to, or a barrier to, intercultural and cross-cultural interaction. Data from the Survey show that residents see the Mediterranean region as characterised by its common cultural heritage and history, with 89% of respondents in European countries and 85% in SEM countries considering it as somewhat or strongly characteristic of the region (as seen in Chart 14.1). There are also high levels of interest in the culture and lifestyle of the ‘other’ respective country group (84% in European countries and 70% in SEM countries are ‘very interested’ or ‘somewhat interested’ in hearing about the cultural life and lifestyle of neighbouring countries).

However, cultural and social factors are also viewed as barriers to such interaction. More specifically, not speaking the same language is considered to be ‘a big barrier’ or ‘somewhat of a barrier’ by 81% of respondents in European countries and by 68% in SEM countries. With regards to socio-demographic differences, it is worth mentioning that language difficulties present more of a barrier to those aged over 30 than under 30 in SEM countries (42% 30+ SEM vs 31% 15-29; there were no significant differences by age within European countries) and among those with lower levels of education. ‘Other social and cultural constraints’ are also perceived to be barriers to dialogue by 65% and 46% of respondents in European countries and SEM countries respectively (Chart 14.3).

The above data provides an insight into priority interests and issues that could inform intercultural initiatives. The shared interest in other cultures and lifestyles and the foundation of common



culture across the Mediterranean region presents a window of opportunity to develop and implement initiatives that tackle barriers to cross-cultural interactions. This, in turn, could assist in reducing polarisation and tensions stemming from cultural differences by encouraging dialogue and interaction. Creative arts, for instance, present a channel to express cultural diversity, enhance visibility and understanding of under-represented cultures, and mitigate the negative impact of language as a barrier to communication. In a report by the EU Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (2017) on intercultural dialogue in the context of migratory and refugee crisis, the authors stress that 'Experience shows that the arts and cultural projects in particular can create a level playing field to allow persons of different cultural backgrounds to interact, learn and experience on a par with each other'.

### The shared interest in other cultures and lifestyles and the foundation of common culture across the Mediterranean region presents a window of opportunity to develop and implement initiatives that tackle barriers to cross-cultural interactions.

Indeed, evidence from the Survey data suggests that there is support for such measures. Half of Survey respondents in SEM countries (50%) and almost two-fifths (38%) in European countries believe that cultural and artistic initiatives are 'very effective' measures for preventing and dealing with conflict. Furthermore, contrary to official mainstream integration policies on language that are mostly trapped in a framework of language trainings and certifications to facilitate assimilation, alternative methods and interventions, such as innovative approaches to learning languages through theatre and other forms of art, could prove more effective in targeting wider socio-economic groups such as those with lower levels of education

or older age groups. One such example is the TrickMix project, a Berlin-based initiative targeting school-age children to learn German through storytelling and film production (TrickMix, 2021). This could work in tandem with programmes which promote methods of translation and multilingual knowledge production, to make resources, literature and other kinds of linguistic materials available in many languages and to a wider audience.

#### Recommendations

The engagement of civil society actors needs to be more focused on issues related to intercultural interactions, specifically in terms of community integration, in order to alleviate gaps left by official integration policies. Programmes such as the ALF's Arts for Dialogue and Translation for Dialogues present clear examples on how arts and culture could be more widely embedded in programming as a cross-cutting theme with various implementation modalities, to respond and adapt to specific issues in varying contexts. Similar actions should be encouraged in the framework of addressing integration issues and fostering a two-way intercultural interaction between migrants and host communities. Civil society initiatives which aim to bring together artists and cultural actors can contribute to collaborative work by various stakeholders (local, national and transnational state and non-state actors) by highlighting common ground and building synergy in the effort towards integration in the EuroMed area. Arts and cultural activities can be effective tools for bridging the gaps left by official integration policies across the EuroMed region, whilst also tackling language and communication barriers. ■

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## Dialogue in action | Mauritania

### Hand-Washing Devices

As part of our awareness campaign and the fight against the coronavirus, we have installed hand-washing devices and educated populations on hand-washing techniques and the precautions to be taken to avoid possible contamination.

These activities took place along the Carrefour BMD and Marché Capitale, which are areas frequented by many city-dwellers and taxi users who take public transport.

We have targeted these places as sources of community contamination where most people do not take precautions.

The devices have been placed at the garages and entrances to markets and public spaces so that passengers can access them.

These activities are carried out in a spirit of citizenship, to get involved to better participate in the response: A Voluntary Act, A Citizen Commitment.

Club UNESCO pour la culture en Mauritanie

# Differences in Perception Illustrate the Need For Place-Based Integration Policies

Claire CHARBIT and Margaux THARAUX

Focusing on the Survey findings of the OECD countries (Germany, Sweden, Ireland and Greece), the OECD argues for a place-based response, highlighting the differences of rural and urban spaces across the OECD countries. Using the concepts of spatial and temporal perceptions and the interaction of the two, focus is placed on a move away from ‘parallel lives’ of migrant and host communities and a mixed approach to be adopted at school, in cultural and economic activities, in civil service and political representatives, etc.

When countries will start rebuilding their economy after the COVID-19 pandemic, effective integration measures will represent levers for recovery. When enabled to, refugees and migrants contribute energy and ideas that drive economic and social development. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately harmed these populations whilst affecting local perceptions of migration. As such, special support for migrants and efficient integration policies are needed (OECD, 2020a).

**...COVID-19 is likely to have disproportionate impacts on migrants and their families, who are dependent on public policies and host communities' willingness to treat them as part of the community...**

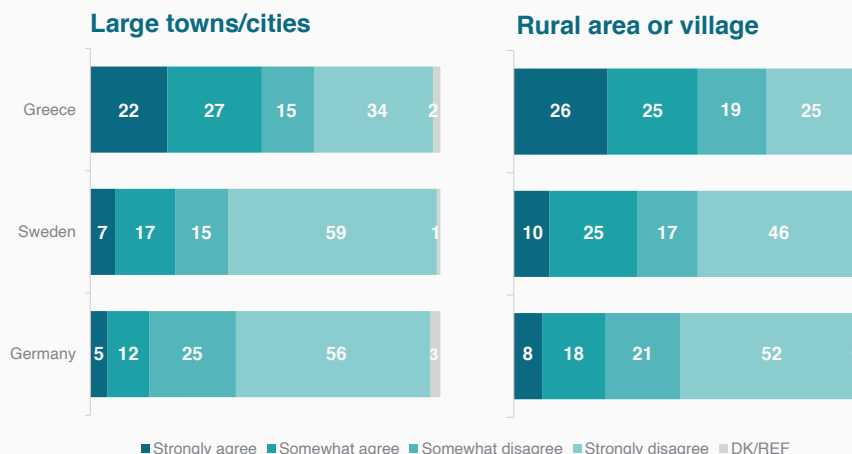
In this context, the Anna Lindh/Ipsos Intercultural Trends Survey is particularly timely. Its results notably appear to reinforce knowledge from previous research; namely, that people hold different values

and perceive integration policies differently depending on where they live. Thus, migrant integration policies must, firstly, be place-based and, secondly, reflect temporality and address public perceptions during implementation in order to benefit both newcomers and the local community in the short and long term.

### Context

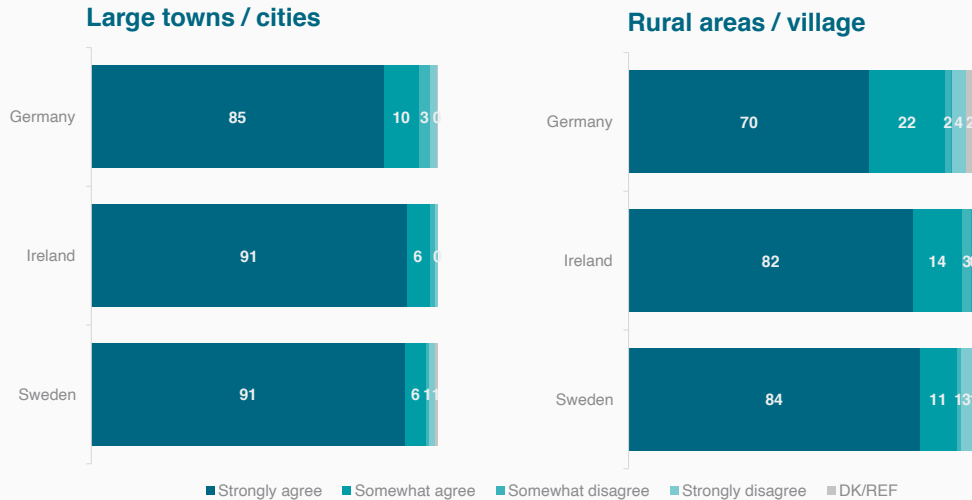
The COVID-19 crisis has brought into sharp relief the interdependence of OECD territories and migrants; due to this, two contrasting narratives on migration have unfolded during the crisis. The first celebrates the economic and social contribution of immigrants to their host economies (OECD, 2020b). Whilst countries are in lockdown, migrants are at the frontline in many essential sectors (14% of key workers across European regions are migrants, OCDE, 2020c) and filling unexpected labour gaps in urban areas and rural areas (Charbit & Tharaux, 2020). The media have highlighted their plight, exposing their often-precarious living and working conditions and publishing data revealing immigrants are at a higher risk of

**Chart 15.1: Perceptions about religious and cultural diversity - by living area**  
Cultural and religious diversity constitute a threat to the stability of society



**Survey question:** How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?  
**Base:** All respondents (%), by living area (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**Chart 15.2: Perceptions about religious and cultural diversity - by living area**  
 People from different cultural and religious backgrounds should have the same rights and opportunities



**?** Survey question: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?  
 Base: All respondents (%), by living area (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

COVID-19 infection, at least twice as high as the native-born in some countries (OECD, 2020a).

Second, as cross-border movements explain the initial spread of the virus, there have been anecdotal reports of discrimination against migrants around the world (WHO, 2020) and this could worsen as unemployment among native-born, which is increasing in certain places hard hit by the crisis, is negatively correlated with views on migration (OECD, 2018). As preliminary evidence suggests, COVID-19 is likely to have disproportionate impacts on migrants and their families, who are dependent on public policies and host communities' willingness to treat them as part of the community and provide them with extra support.

As the crisis continues to hit territories unevenly, its impact on public opinion regarding immigration is likely to vary widely (OECD, 2020d). Policymakers need to support key migrant workers and make visible their contribution to building local resilience, in order to limit the pandemic's potential detrimental effect on integration. To this end, they must adopt a place-based approach. Results of the Survey illustrate existing variations in local citizens' perceptions and values, giving support to the idea that a territorial approach is needed. This article focuses on four OECD countries selected to enable longitudinal comparison from previous work: Germany, Greece, Ireland and Sweden.

**Presentation of Survey results**

Results from the Survey confirm that within countries, perceptions vary according to the type of area in which people live: rural area or village, small or middle-sized town, suburbs of large town or city, large

town or city. This is different from the OECD classification of small regions into predominantly urban, intermediate and predominantly rural that is based on population density at grid level. In all countries, rural residents tend to hold more negative perceptions about migration than urban residents. Four main examples illustrate this:

- In Germany, Sweden and Greece, people living in rural areas were more likely than people in urban areas to regard cultural and religious diversity as a threat to the stability of society. In Germany for instance, 25% of rural areas/village respondents strongly or somewhat agree with this statement, compared with just 16% in large towns/cities (Chart 15.1).
- Across all surveyed countries, residents of rural areas were on average more likely than those in small/middle-sized towns to say that closer cooperation between European countries and Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (SEM) countries will not lead to any gains in terms of economic growth and employment.
- In Germany, Ireland and Sweden, rural residents were the least likely to strongly agree that people from different cultural and religious backgrounds should have the same rights and opportunities (Chart 15.2). In Sweden for instance, 91% in large towns/cities agree, compared with 84% of rural residents. Whilst the same pattern can be observed in Greece, the differences are not statistically significant.
- Overall, in each of the four countries, among four possible intercultural interactions, respondents found it hardest to accept a close relative marrying someone from a different cultural

background. Yet, despite this apparent similarity, levels of tolerance toward specific interactions can differ between living areas within countries. In Greece for instance, respondents living in small/medium-sized towns are slightly less tolerant of the idea of a close relative marrying someone with a different cultural background than respondents living in large towns/cities (61% 'do not mind at all', compared with 71%, respectively).

Although the sample size is small, results from the Survey indicate that inhabitants' perceptions of migrants differ according to their place of residence, especially between urban and rural areas. Results also reinforce previous research that found migrants' perceived contribution to the local economy to be positively correlated with the share of foreign-born people in a location, which is usually bigger in urban places (OECD, 2018).

### ...perceptions vary according to the type of area in which people live: rural area or village, small or middle-sized town, suburbs of large town or city, large town or city

It is therefore crucial that policymakers implement localised integration policies and communication strategies, including to support the adoption of local civic codes (Choi, Poertner & Sambanis, 2019), to reflect place-based differences.

#### Priorities and orientations for the future

In 2018, the OECD proposed a checklist of 12 priorities to guide policymakers on integration. The Survey results support many of its conclusions, most notably reinforcing the relevance of objectives that address the temporal and spatial dimensions of integration.

The objectives emphasise that integration takes time as migrants develop knowledge of their new community, improve their language skills and build networks; native-born communities may then realise the benefits that migrants bring to their local societies. Using data on migrants' length of stay could thus be a relevant step towards:

- Local integration policies that respond to migrants' needs, which evolve throughout their integration path;
- Relevant political commitment and communication adapted to the evolution of locals' sensitivities;
- Monitoring the political acceptability of integration programmes using evaluations of migrants' contributions to local development and regular public opinion surveys.

Canada already measures migrants' contributions in terms of entrepreneurship, tax contributions, international economic and trade links, etc. (OECD, 2018). Monitoring should also ensure that measures implemented to promote integration are cost effective. To measure the cost effectiveness of the Amsterdam Approach to

refugees, the municipality contracts a specialised firm to conduct a cost-benefit analysis every six months. It compares all costs associated with activities for refugees against all the benefits, such as less unemployment benefits, more taxes, more educational benefits and enhanced quality of life. Analysis shows that for every euro invested, €1.50 was gained (OECD, 2018a). These results, when communicated to the public, can contribute to changing perceptions.

However, temporal perception changes are dependent on spatial dimensions. Migrants tend to cluster in specific neighbourhoods of large cities, a spatial arrangement which lends itself to local segregation and co-existence instead of inclusion. To address this challenge of 'parallel lives', population groups must be mixed (at school, in cultural and economic activities, in civil service and political representatives, etc.). Past studies have shown that cultural interaction between communities with different backgrounds indeed brings them closer. The results of the Survey support them and show the willingness of respondents to interact with other cultures. A low-hanging fruit for governments therefore is to increase diversity in civil service by ensuring equitable treatment in the recruitment of public servants.

Governments and public services can also adopt strategies to make public places more attractive to mixed groups. From 2015 to 2020, a former hospital in Paris transformed into the biggest temporary regularised occupation in Europe, containing an emergency shelter and administrative consultancy for refugees, alongside start-up offices, artist studios and shops, as well as a bar and an event location; thus becoming a key meeting point for Parisians and migrants alike and allowing different communities to mix together (OECD, 2018b). In the much smaller rural city of Altena, Germany, 'decentralised' housing solutions where newly arrived refugees and asylum seekers are housed across the city have been successful in preventing segregation between population groups, by creating spaces to settle long term and build relationships within the neighbourhood (OECD, 2018c).

The Survey has responded to the growing interest in reducing intergroup conflict through the promotion of place-based integration policies by illustrating the differences in local perception. As the crisis affects economic sectors, social groups and territories unevenly, utilising a territorial approach to design policies will become all the more crucial in the coming months and years. ■

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## Dialogue in action | Sweden

### Celebrating Our Diversity — Building Inclusive, Sustainable and Intercultural Cities

In 2018, the ALF Swedish network coordinator, National Museums of World Culture, launched the regional programme, Celebrating Our Diversity. We are an intercultural, networking and capacity-building platform for ALF civil society members and alumni and citizens in the EuroMed region.

We invite participants to share their dreams for the EuroMed region's future and to exchange good practices on how to build inclusive, sustainable and intercultural cities. Celebrating Our Diversity includes cultural activities such as concerts, spoken words, dance, comedy, storytelling and theatre.

So far, we have engaged with more than 200 network members from Europe and the MENA region. In 2021, we organised an intercultural forum, a capacity-building course on leading change and learning processes in the non-profit sector and an online cultural festival.

The programme is funded by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, National Museums of World Culture and the Anna Lindh Foundation (2021 edition). We established regional partnerships with other ALF network coordinators in Finland, Germany and Lebanon.

Project website: [www.varldskulturmuseerna.se/en/projects/anna-lindh-foundation/activities/celebrating-our-diversity-2021/](http://www.varldskulturmuseerna.se/en/projects/anna-lindh-foundation/activities/celebrating-our-diversity-2021/)

Anna Lindh Stiftelsen i Sverige

# Enhancing Euro-Mediterranean Cultural Relations

Stephen CALLEYA

Examining the success of the Barcelona Process, Stephen Calleya focuses his analysis on political and security cooperation, economic and financial relations, and social, cultural and human relations. The Survey data show inequality in interactions between SEM and EuroMed countries, leading his argument to the existence of prevailing barriers to communication; concluding that the Neighbourhood Policy should focus on the regional common values and shared principles via education and training to improve the outcomes of the Barcelona Process.

Many Euro-Mediterranean states recognise that dialogue between the cultures and civilisations of the region, and exchanges at a human, scientific and technological level are essential to bringing their peoples closer, thereby promoting understanding and improving mutual perceptions. This can be seen through their participation in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the Barcelona Process.

The launching of the Barcelona Process in November 1995 commenced the most comprehensive European Union external relations programme towards the Mediterranean since the EU was established in 1957, as can be seen in the Barcelona Declaration signed by all fifteen EU foreign ministers at the time and their twelve counterparts across the MENA region, including Malta and Cyprus. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership focused on three specific sectors of cooperation: the political and security dimension; economic and financial relations; and social, cultural and human relations.

A decade after the Arab spring, however, the Anna Lindh/Ipsos Intercultural Trends Survey suggests that there is still a need to promote a better, shared understanding and mutual acceptance of the cultures, religions, and civilisations that make up the EuroMed area. Indeed, despite the geographical proximity of Europe and the Mediterranean, less than half (46%) of the Survey respondents in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (SEM) have interacted with someone from Europe in the last 12 months (Chart 16.1). Specific measures need to be introduced that focus on the fact that people across the Mediterranean do not speak the same language, and have different social and cultural experiences, which may act as barriers to dialogue.

The EU, through its Neighbourhood Policy, should prioritize an approach that highlights the common values and shared principles that exist across the Mediterranean in its forthcoming agenda. The Survey data suggest that education and training to reinforce EuroMed cooperation needs to be given greater prominence to support this agenda.

## Strengthening the Euro-Mediterranean human dimension

In order to foster future peaceful EuroMed relations, it is important to dedicate attention to the development of the human dimension of each EuroMed society. This can only be achieved if individuals are

taught from a young age – during primary and secondary school – to respect and trust those who are different from themselves. Mutual respect for diverse values should be a cornerstone of every school curricula, and indeed, the Survey data suggest (Chart 16.2) that people across the EuroMed think that making schools places where children learn to live in diversity would be an effective way of helping people to live better together in multicultural environments (93% in European countries and 92% in SEM countries see this as a 'very effective' or 'somewhat effective' action).

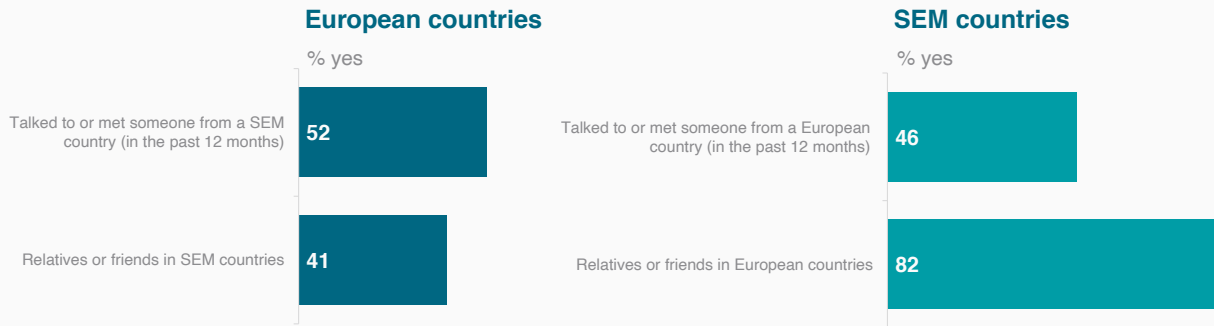
**This can only be achieved if individuals are taught from a young age – during primary and secondary school – to respect and trust those who are different from themselves.**

The Survey also suggests that people see the development of human resources, with regards to both the education and training of young people and to intercultural education, as effective actions to prevent and deal with challenges such as hate speech and opposing cultural views (Chart 16.3).

In practice, little progress has been made so far in improving the education and training offered to young people across the Mediterranean area. Whilst European Studies programmes have become commonplace in secondary- and tertiary-level education, no equivalent agenda exists to provide insight into the cultural diversity of the Mediterranean. Nurturing cooperative cross-cultural patterns of interaction that address the deficit that exists when it comes to cultural education and training programmes is a prerequisite to improving economic disparities and eliminating ethnic divisions.

The Mediterranean is the historic crossroads for diverse ethnic, cultural and religious traditions. How can these be safeguarded and respected whilst simultaneously promoting tolerance and understanding? Can the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) – the only regional and multilateral process that brings together the EuroMed states – and its social, cultural and human affairs proposals for educational exchanges, be turned into practical and dynamic programmes that have a direct positive impact at a grassroots level?

**Chart 16.1: Interactions with people from different countries**



**Survey question:** In the past 12 months, have you talked to or met someone from a country bordering the southern and eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea (asked in European countries)/a European country (asked in SEM countries)? (top bar in the chart)  
 Do you have any relatives or friends who live in countries bordering the southern and eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea (asked in European countries)/European countries (asked in SEM countries)? (bottom bar)  
**Base:** All respondents (%), by region (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**A more dynamic intercultural dialogue**

A dialogue of cultures and civilisations has become the rallying cry of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership since it was launched in 1995. There are three areas, however, where the ENP needs to adopt a more dynamic agenda: education, human rights and women’s rights. Although each area remains underdeveloped, the ENP must nevertheless be credited for starting a process of regional cooperation where little or no positive interaction was previously taking place.

A programme of activities that increases awareness of existing trends in each of the aforementioned areas, and also seeks to further cooperation, is essential for EuroMed relations; otherwise, a social, cultural and human partnership worthy of such a name will remain a chimera.

A concerted effort is required to address misperceptions and prejudices which continue to exist across the Mediterranean. This is where international cultural activities, including cultural and artistic initiatives, can play a strategic role. Exposing societies to cultural interaction can encourage relations based on respect and trust, as individuals in one society learn more about the diversity of cultures found in the Mediterranean. Tangible proposals that initiate cross-cultural ventures of cooperation and seek to further the principles of respect and understanding are still lacking and long overdue across the Mediterranean.

Human rights, the enhancement of democracy, and the importance of tolerance in contemporary world affairs need to be given more

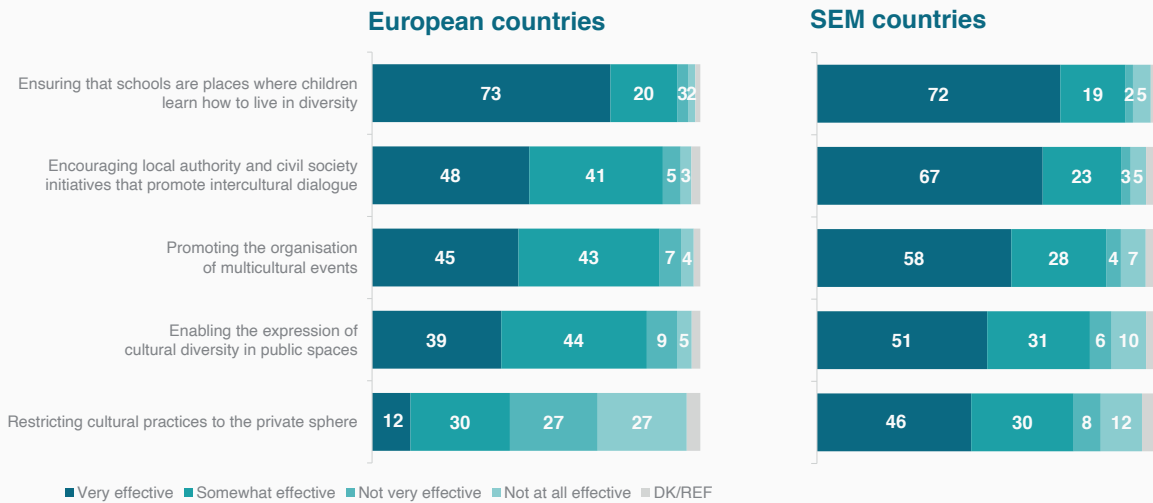
prominence in future EuroMed policy initiatives. Civil society plans that help people to gain a better understanding of complex issues such as those pertaining to migration and terrorism should also be supported. Too often, in such instances a narrative is communicated by the media that triggers emotional sentiments of nationalism. Civil society information campaigns based on facts are essential in such circumstances if tolerance and respect are to be advanced.

**A programme of activities that increases awareness of existing trends in each of the aforementioned areas, and also seeks to further cooperation, is essential for EuroMed relations...**

The EU has always sought to promote the idea that EuroMed countries should work to encourage the participation of civil society in EuroMed regional relations. Such an agenda needs to involve more joined-up efforts between civil society organisations in education and training, social development, and in developing policies designed to reduce migratory pressures, fight against drug trafficking, terrorism and international crime, and promote judicial cooperation.

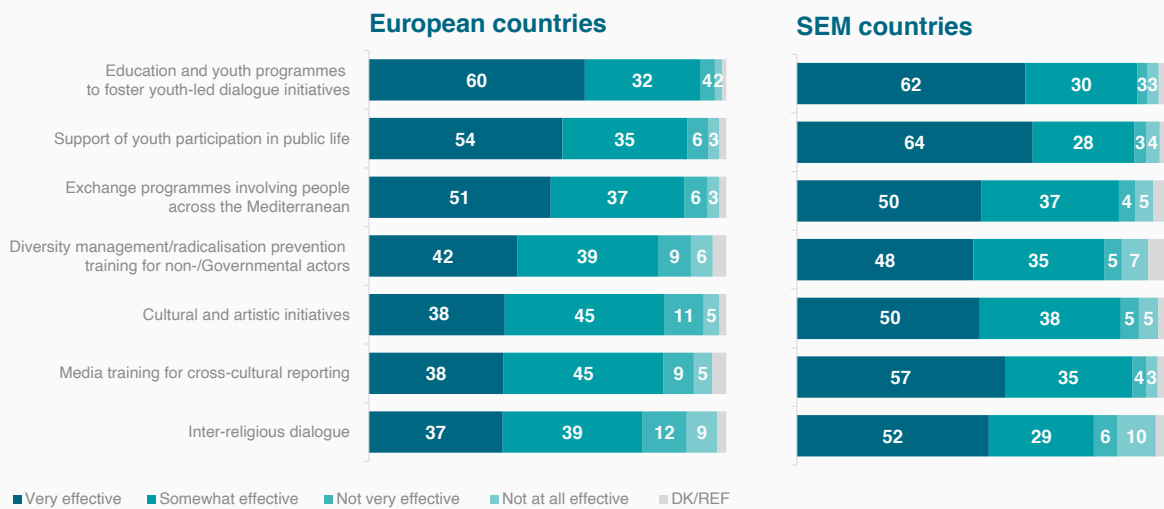
Further ideas that have been proposed include joint efforts with regard to culture and media, health policy, and the promotion of exchanges between young people in the framework of a decentralized cooperation programme. A civil societal dialogue can be an effective factor in bringing people closer together, promoting understanding between them and improving their perceptions of one another, if it is

**Chart 16.2: 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 multicultural environment?  
**Base:** All respondents (%), by region (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**Chart 16.3: Tackling polarisation and hate speech**



**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 (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).



seen to be addressing an area of common concern. Indeed, 89% of respondents in European countries and 90% of respondents in SEM countries agree that 'encouraging local authority and civil society initiatives that promote intercultural dialogue' can be either a 'very effective' or 'somewhat effective' action to help people live better together in multicultural environments.

Too often, as was the case during the first decade of the Barcelona Process/ENP at the turn of the millennium, political and security interaction and economic and financial relations were the primary focus of multilateral relations across the EuroMed region. The social and cultural dimension was largely relegated to a series of long debates and discussions. This strategic approach was adopted to accommodate the fact that Arab and European views often differ sharply on issues such as human rights, immigration, terrorism, the right of political asylum and the role of civil society in governance.

**As access to the information age has become more widely spread, the EU and its Mediterranean partners should launch an agenda that promotes a more objective portrayal of cultural characteristics found across the Mediterranean.**

### Looking ahead

The Barcelona Declaration of 1995 acknowledged the essential role civil society must play in EuroMed relations. Yet, it is clear that more tangible results need to be achieved in the field of cross-cultural cooperation if regional relations in the Mediterranean are to improve.

Three decades after the end of the Cold War, it is clear that civil fora must play a more direct role in the implementation phase of the ENP if this multilateral initiative is to be further strengthened and sustained. It is only through the direct participation of non-governmental organisations that a more grassroots type of EuroMed community will be nurtured. So far, this has not happened.

Civil society activists also need to raise the profile of such basic economic and social challenges, including the right to work, healthcare, education, civil protection, tolerance and the elimination of discrimination. As access to the information age has become more widely spread, the EU and its Mediterranean partners should launch an agenda that promotes a more objective portrayal of cultural characteristics found across the Mediterranean. Fleshing out such a renewed agenda will have an immediate positive impact upon the contribution civil fora are making to regional stability across the EuroMed area.

In order to address EuroMed misperceptions, countries should increase resources dedicated towards social issues in general and improve basic programmes such as those of education and training. The EU should also upgrade the role of civil fora in EuroMed relations by giving them a higher profile. Unless civil society is allowed to participate on a regular basis in high-level meetings, it is almost certain that their support will not be forthcoming during the implementation stage of cooperative projects.

The most important dimension of EuroMed relations is the human dimension. It is clear that a dialogue of cultures and civilisations across the EuroMed area is urgently required, especially in areas pertaining to education and human rights, including women's rights. The ALF Survey suggests that people in both SEM countries and in Europe see the need for more civil society participation when it comes to nurturing EuroMed relations, particularly with regards to education and training. ■

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## Dialogue in action | Albania

### The Reporting Diversity Network 2.0: A joint effort to replace divisive narratives with positive discourse in the Western Balkans

Along with the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, a tremendous spread of fake news, hate speech, conspiracy theories and divisive narratives was noticed. In the Western Balkans, as in many other countries, these phenomena were present long before the pandemic situation but peaked during this time. The negative images of 'others' have still not been deconstructed; on the contrary, they have been revived in the selfish interests of local and regional politicians alike. Media, an important player in this aspect, haven't fully respected diversity whilst reporting, contributing in heating up the rhetoric and even deploying fake news in an effort to spread atrocities. Media and politicians are the main actors aggravating the negative image of 'others'. Media unselectively transmit political messages as well as make harmful reports on their own. As an immediate effect, this creates a fragile regional cohesion, and a fragile cohesion within each individual Balkan country as a rule composed of diverse ethnic and religious groups. Media reporting of 'others' shapes perception of other people and, by doing so, affects the individual, its group, and society in general. When reporting of diversity is misleading and inaccurate, it leads to the strengthening of inequality, religious/cultural intolerance, ethnic division, exclusion, prejudice and discrimination.

Reporting Diversity Network 2.0 came into action with the purpose of responding to divisive narratives and replacing them with positive discourse to contribute to the respect for human rights, respect for diversity and good neighbouring relations. Financed by the European Commission, the project began in April 2020 and will last for four years. It empowers a regional network of CSOs to work together with the aim of influencing the quality of media reporting about issues of ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation and age.

RDN 2.0 provides tools and resources for the entire civil society to perform actions that will influence more inclusive media. It also supports effective policy-making in areas promoting tolerance, both nationally and regionally. RDN 2.0

is implemented in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia. Partners of the project are Media Diversity Institute (lead partner), South East European Network for Professionalization of Media (SEENPM), Centre for Investigative Journalism Bosnia and Herzegovina, Centre for Investigative Journalism Montenegro, KosovaLive, Institute for Communication Studies, and Media Diversity Institute Western Balkans.

Key Activities include:

- Developing Media Monitoring Methodology and training project staff to monitor and create responses/complaints.
- Media Monitoring: Monitoring of traditional and new media uncovers hate speech and divisive discourses.
- Publicise Complaints: When monitoring efforts detect hate speech and discriminatory discourses in the media, the partners expose and counter them using the most appropriate mechanisms, such as articles and blog posts, letters and meetings with editors.
- Social Media Campaign: A project-dedicated website and social media platform will be developed to promote project outputs and initiate debate over hateful narratives in the media.
- Reporting Diversity ToT: This training took place in Fazana, Croatia, in September 2020, during which a group of Network representatives, as well as additional CSOs and interested media representatives and/or those experienced in the topic, were trained to perform media monitoring and reporting.
- Sub-granting: Supporting 30 projects overall across the region by providing programme and financial support.

Project website: [www.reportingdiversity.org/](http://www.reportingdiversity.org/)

The Albanian Media Institute

# The Social Side of Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation: Fostering Trust In and Between Societies

Daniela HUBER

Examining the level of social trust as a basis for social cohesion and EuroMed cooperation, Daniela Huber juxtaposes people's high degrees of openness to cultural and religious diversity across the region with increasing phenomena of polarisation within societies. She investigates and discusses the ways in which transnational and intercultural cooperation play a large part in this new future.

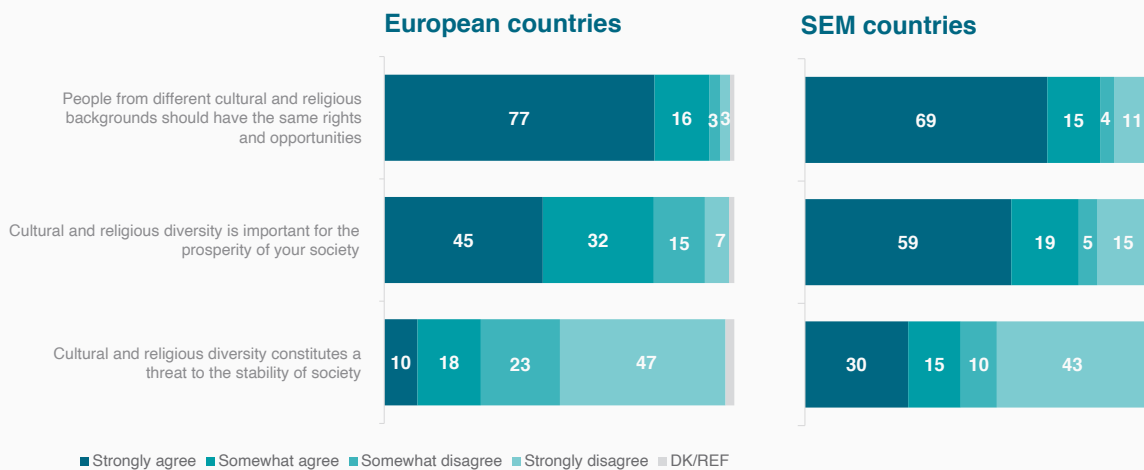
Generalized social trust, defined as 'a cooperative attitude towards other people based on the optimistic expectation that others are likely to respect one's own interests' (Draude et al., 2018), is the glue that holds societies together. However, on the shores of the Mediterranean, societies are becoming increasingly polarised, which damages social trust. In Europe, polarisation has been driven by the rise of populist nationalist movements 'rooted in an exclusionary project to bring the state into congruence with the nation as nationalists imagine it: typically linked to ethnic, geographic, heritage-based, linguistic and cultural understandings of belonging' (Miller-Iriss, 2019). As these movements seek to occupy public spaces and national parliaments (and in some cases also governments) in Europe, they are influencing the public discourse. (It should be remembered, however, that – as Ayhan Kaya has pointed out – 'contemporary right-wing populist parties have become rooted in an Islamophobic and anti-multiculturalist context, which was actually

generated by mainstream parties and political leaders in Europe', particularly since 9/11 and the onset of the so-called 'war on terror'.)

In the Middle East and North Africa, polarisation implies the mobilisation of political, ethnic or religious identities for political purposes (Hashemi and Postel, 2017). Such sectarianising strategies work particularly well in contexts where the welfare state has been retracted and social services have been outsourced along other lines of attachment, such as religion, ethnicity, or the family (Guazzone and Pioppi, 2012).

The above phenomena undermine social trust and foster divisions within societies along ethnocentric lines. They also affect generalised social trust between societies, as they reinforce boundaries between self and other, rather than dialogue.

Chart 17.1: Perceptions about religious and cultural diversity - by region



**Survey question:** How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?  
**Base:** All respondents (%), by region (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

## EUROMED INTERCULTURAL TRENDS ANALYSIS

At the same time, in Europe, new social movements have emerged, most notably the #fridaysforfuture movement, the #metoo movement, and the anticolonial movements inspired by #rhodesmustfall. They fight for deeply connected progressive environmental, gender, and historical justice causes. In the Arab region, the Arab uprisings exemplify a socially, politically, and economically encompassing imagination of a new future towards self-determination and inclusive state-building (Khouri, 2012). These movements have the potential for building generalised trust within and between societies.

In this current context, it is not clear which trend will prevail and agency will play a key role in fostering social trust within and between societies. To understand the social potential and impact of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in the larger Mediterranean region, this essay examines the data provided by the Anna Lindh/Ipsos Intercultural Trends Survey from a social trust perspective.

The general trend from the Survey shows that people from across both European and Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (SEM) countries view religious and cultural diversity as a benefit to their society (Chart 17.1). In general, the data show much reason for optimism. Large majorities in all countries surveyed see cultural and religious diversity as important for their societies' prosperity (77% in Europe and 78% in SEM countries 'strongly agree' or 'somewhat agree'); they do not perceive it as a threat to societal stability (just 28% in Europe and 45% in SEM countries 'strongly agree' or 'somewhat agree' that it is a threat); and they agree that minorities should have the same rights and opportunities in their societies (93% in Europe and 84% in SEM countries 'strongly agree' or 'somewhat agree').

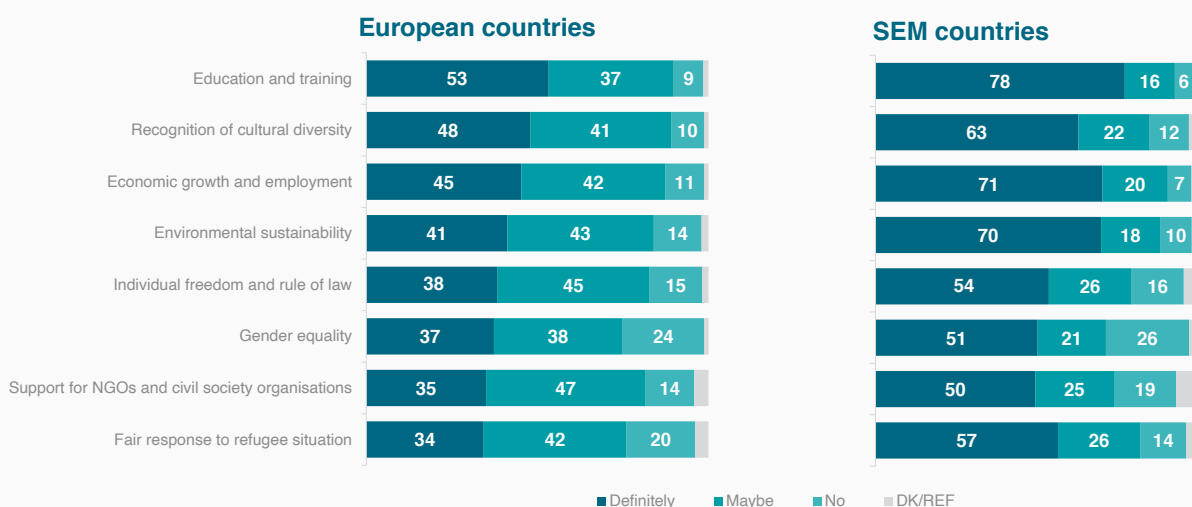
### Social trust in multi-ethnic and immigration societies

Social trust 'plays an important role, particularly when considering multi-ethnic groups living in the same society', is important to sustaining peace; and 'can effectively build bridges and be a catalyst for the acquisition of knowledge about the society and its surroundings' (Alijla, 2020). Whilst it is difficult to measure social trust with concrete parameters, the Survey data on perceptions about religious and cultural diversity can offer an approximation. As discussed above, the majority of respondents do not believe that diversity constitutes a threat to the stability of society; however, there is some variation between countries, with a majority of respondents in Algeria (57%) and Mauritania (56%) viewing diversity as a threat.

In comparison to previous waves of the Survey, the proportion of respondents who 'strongly agree' that diversity constitutes a threat to the stability of society has declined within certain countries; for example, in Germany from 43% in 2012 to 6% in 2020, or in Morocco from 31% in 2012 to 22% in 2020.

Regarding the statement that 'cultural and religious diversity is important for the prosperity of your society', a majority (50% or above) 'strongly agree' in all countries except Jordan (46%), Germany (43%) and Czech Republic (20%). Indeed, support for this statement in Germany and Jordan has fallen from previous waves. The strongest levels of support are evident in Lebanon (74%), Morocco (70%) and Mauritania (67%). On balance, countries surveyed in the Survey are open to diversity, are tolerant to different cultures and see value in a multicultural society. This facilitates the building of social trust across societies as biases towards other groups decrease (Foddy and Yamagishi, 2009).

**Chart 17.2: Gains from EuroMed cooperation - by region**



**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 (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

### Building trust through Euro-Mediterranean cooperation

Social trust as a concept is rarely applied to the interaction between societies; however, the increase in transnational social interaction allows for deeper social trust to be fostered via networks and knowledge production about the 'other'. The Survey data show positive attitudes towards Euro-Mediterranean cooperation across SEM and European country groups (Chart 17.2), with SEM countries more positive about cooperation than European countries. The top four areas where respondents think there will be gains from Euro-Mediterranean cooperation include 'education and training' (53% of European respondents and 78% of SEM respondents say there will 'definitely' be gains from closer cooperation); 'economic growth and employment' (45% of European respondents and 71% of SEM respondents say there will 'definitely' be gains from closer cooperation); 'environmental sustainability' (41% of European respondents and 70% of SEM respondents say there will 'definitely' be gains from closer cooperation); and 'recognition of cultural diversity' (48% of European respondents and 63% of SEM respondents say there will 'definitely' be gains from closer cooperation). Younger Europeans (15–29) perceive larger gains than older Europeans (30+ years), whilst the younger SEM (15–29) population is more sceptical than the older SEM population (though still more positive than their European peers) (Chart 17.3).

**Finally, from a cultural diversity perspective, the Anna Lindh Foundation has become a crucial institution in EuroMed cooperation, and its activities need to be further supported...**

In terms of barriers to cross-cultural encounters, there is consensus among SEM and European countries that 'not speaking the same language' is the biggest barrier (particularly among women in SEM countries); however, there is country-specific variance in relation to other barriers. For SEM countries, the main perceived barriers are visa and travel difficulties (67% see it as a 'big barrier' or 'somewhat of a barrier') and economic barriers (50% see it as a 'big barrier' or 'somewhat of a barrier'); whilst for European countries, it is mainly social/cultural constraints (65% see it as a 'big barrier' or 'somewhat of a barrier') and cultural tension/conflicts throughout history (62% see it as a 'big barrier' or 'somewhat of a barrier'). This speaks to an asymmetry in the EuroMed region in relation to freedom of movement and an economic asymmetry between the EU and SEM countries. As the EU's HRVP, Joseph Borrell, has highlighted, 'In the Southern Mediterranean, income per capita is 13 times lower than in Europe' (Borrell, 2020). This bias needs to be addressed to enable cross-cultural encounters.

Furthermore, it is also interesting to note that European countries are much more likely to perceive cultural tensions and conflicts throughout history as barriers to dialogue than SEM countries. Looking at this by country, in Europe, Germany, Greece, Cyprus and Czech Republic are most likely to perceive this to be a barrier

to dialogue, whilst in SEM countries, Algeria and Mauritania are most likely to do so. One might speculate that this is related to the colonial experiences of Algeria and Mauritania, whilst for European countries it might be rooted in historical self – other distinctions, but more research would be necessary to understand what drives these perceptions. Transnational cultural exchanges could be used to bridge perceptions of social, cultural, and historical constraints.

**Education and training remain key. Besides the idea of Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci programmes particularly for the Mediterranean, the EU could also consider setting up a research foundation for the Mediterranean...**

### Conclusions

This essay initially pointed out that social trust in and between societies in the Mediterranean might be undermined by ethnocentric polarisation on one hand, and fostered by new movements for ecological, gender and historical justice on the other. Agency is crucial in this situation and Euro-Mediterranean intercultural exchange can play an important role. The data analysed indicate that there is more reason for hope than concern as the surveyed societies appear as open to diversity and Euro-Mediterranean cooperation. However, they have also indicated areas for prioritisation and barriers which still need to be overcome.

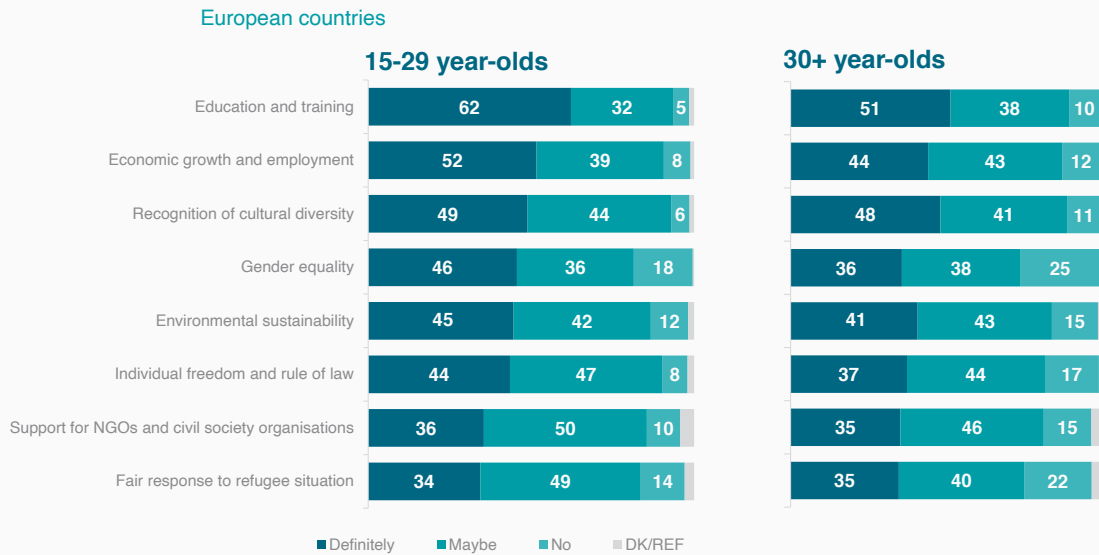
Education and training remain key. Besides the idea of Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci programmes particularly for the Mediterranean, the EU could also consider setting up a research foundation for the Mediterranean (Huber and Paciello, 2019).

In terms of economic growth and employment, research points to the need to build socio-economic rights and social justice into EU policies, particularly in the area of trade and development (Teti et al., 2020). Regarding environmental sustainability, it would be important to enlarge the EU's Green Deal to the neighbourhood from an environmental justice (instead of an investment) perspective (Huber, 2020).

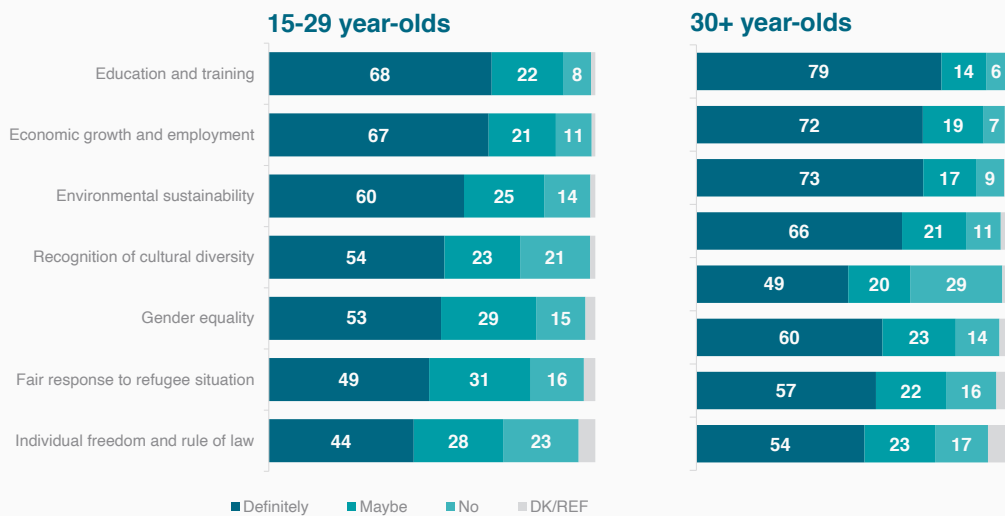
Finally, from a cultural diversity perspective, the Anna Lindh Foundation has become a crucial institution in EuroMed cooperation, and its activities need to be further supported and boosted with the understanding that intercultural dialogue can be an important driver for the economic, social and cultural sustainability of societies.

Visas and economic barriers to intercultural encounters are particularly evident in SEM countries. This is corroborated by qualitative research which has shown that due to European migration (visa) policies and the huge economic disparity between Europe and the Middle East and North Africa, the Mediterranean is increasingly perceived as a space of division, disparity and separation in SEM countries (Huber et al., 2018). Indeed, Euro-Mediterranean relations could not be further away from a shared

**Chart 17.3: Gains from EuroMed cooperation - by age**



Results by age group, SEM countries



**Survey question:** Your country, along with other European countries, has decided to reinforce closer cooperation with countries on the southern and eastern shore of the Mediterranean. Which of the following do you think your society can improve by reinforcing such cooperation?  
**Base:** All respondents (%), European and SEM countries, by socio-demographics (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

area of prosperity, as originally envisaged in the Barcelona Process 25 years ago. Thus, it is this author’s recommendation that the EU revises its migration, trade, development and aid policies at large if it wants to enable a broader transnational societal exchange. It is crucial that the EU continues its support for intercultural exchange and, ultimately, this intercultural exchange might also help Europe to overcome the forces which populist nationalism seeks to awaken. ■

Daniela Huber is Head of the Mediterranean and Middle East Programme at the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI) and Editor of *The International Spectator*.

## Dialogue in action | Estonia

### Intercultural encounters, impact on mutual perceptions and barriers

For the last 13 years, NGO Mondo has been building its network with schools and youth centres, providing teachers and students with visits to schools, free seminars, educational material, and facilitators addressing topics related to global issues such as, migration, climate change, fair-trade and human rights; many side topics such as education, gender equality and women's empowerment were included. NGO Mondo has also recruited volunteers who were themselves migrants and have been to many schools and presented a wide array of topics such as the war in Syria, the issue of refugees, Islamic and/or Arabic culture, etc.

In addition to these activities, NGO Mondo has also produced many educational materials for schools and kindergartens to be used in the classroom by the teachers; these materials have been produced with the help and feedback of teachers and based on their expressed needs. It has also produced a board game about asylum seekers; the idea of the game is

to provide a glimpse into the life of someone who is fleeing their home because of war.

We have hosted many free events that provide an overview of an array of topics. Very often we have volunteers from our partner countries such as Kenya, Ghana, Uganda, Ukraine and Myanmar, talking to the public about their experiences and answering questions.

All of these different activities have contributed to the growth of awareness in Estonian schools specifically and society as a whole.

NGO Mondo has also contributed to the production of many television documentaries and news clips in which many of the issues of humanitarian aid, and development cooperation projects are showcased.

NGO Mondo

# Trends In Focus





# Cultural Diversity and Tolerance in Algeria: A Typology of Challenge

Naouel ABDELLATIF MAMI

Focusing on cultural diversity and tolerance in Algeria, Naouel Abdellatif Mami compares Algeria with other countries in the EuroMed region, measuring the degree of openness to cultural diversity and tolerance. The author discusses education as the key to successful intercultural dialogue for the reduction of barriers to intercultural encounters (such as language); together with building networks between academics, universities and governments, creating a positive discrimination structure for women, and investing in public resources such as the Internet.

Algeria has witnessed many changes since the last Anna Lindh Foundation poll was conducted in 2016. The influence of history, culture, languages and religion remain unchanged; however, multiple events in the geo-political space have undoubtedly influenced the way Algerians perceive the new economic, political, social and cultural position of the country within the Euro-Mediterranean region.

This article focuses on cultural diversity and tolerance in Algeria. It brings together a comparative analysis of the Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020 Intercultural Trends Survey pertaining to Algeria, in comparison to other countries of the EuroMed region, in order to measure the degree of openness to cultural diversity and tolerance.

## Values and mutual perceptions

From the results of the poll, it is clear that Algeria remains a conservative country that bases its key values on religious beliefs and practices. More than 50% of respondents consider that religious beliefs and practices are their most important value when raising children (Chart 18.1), whilst only 7% of respondents prioritise 'respect for other cultures'. Undoubtedly, such findings, which reflect a focus on national unity, often imply the exclusion of others. Obedience and family solidarity also occupy an important place in childrearing.

## Perceptions about the role of women in society vary by country...women are increasingly welcomed in fields that have long been monopolized by men, such as politics and government.

These results may be explained by the impact of historical events on Algerian society. They reflect an Algerian culture affected by 132 years of colonial rule followed by a bitter independence struggle and broad mobilisation policies of the post-independence regime. In the aftermath of independence, the Algerian people were nearly rootless and their cultural heritage had been deeply undermined. Consequently, religious beliefs and practices based on Islamic rules have been the strongest link to preventing social disintegration.

However, there is a contradiction in Algerian society. The Algerian population cultivates the Arab-Berber-Islamic heritage whilst calling

for a radical modernisation of society. This cultural confrontation puts the Algerian society at the crossroads of traditions that no longer command their total living and a modernism that is attractive yet does not seem to satisfy their needs and aspirations. Such contradictions may be detrimental to cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue. How the 'national self' is defined in a multicultural setting and how intercultural values can play a role in education are key issues for those working in the area of intercultural dialogue in Algeria.

## Perceptions about women's roles in society

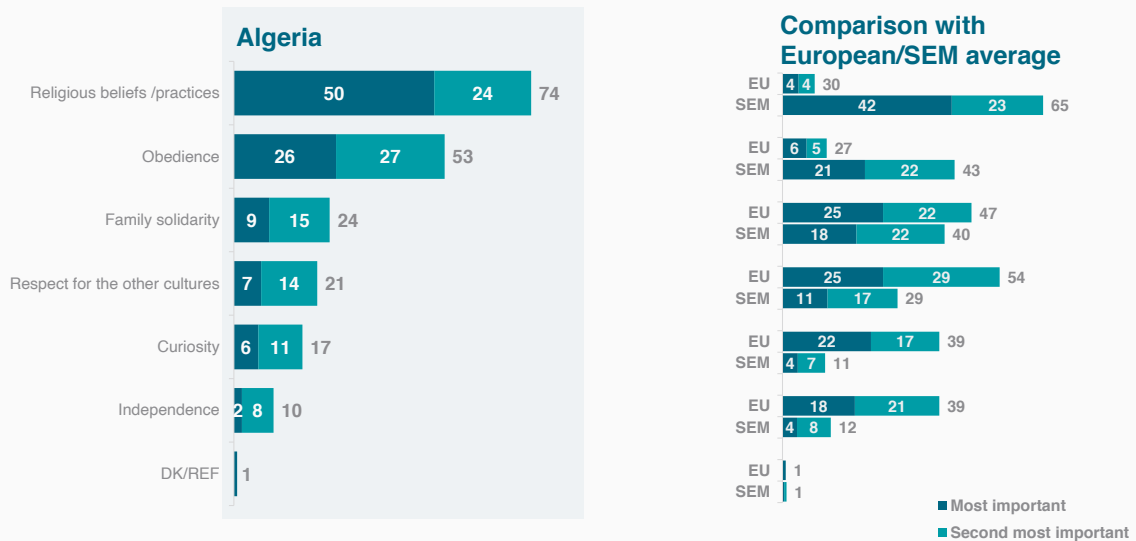
Another broad dimension that reflects levels of cultural diversity and tolerance is the role attributed to women. Perceptions about the role of women in society vary by country. The Survey results show that women are increasingly welcomed in fields that have long been monopolized by men, such as politics and government. European societies are more prepared to allow women to be active participants in building the futures of their countries.

However, in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (SEM) region, some classical perceptions survive, which tend to push women to the fringe of the developmental process. Whilst it is important not to deny or devalue the tremendous role women play as mothers and wives, these roles should not be manipulated to the disfavour of women by preventing them from contributing to the development of their societies.

The poll reveals (Chart 18.2) that more than 86% of respondents in Algeria (more than in any other country) want to see women playing an even bigger role in looking after children and the home. Women also have a recognised role in domains which have often been portrayed as reflecting feminine ideals, such as education, arts and culture.

Perceptions of women's roles in Algeria are still influenced by the strong pull of traditional values, which are practiced largely as a set of social prescriptions and ethical attitudes, rather than serving a revolutionary ideology. Most commonly, stereotypical images are the result of traditions, culture or a personalised interpretation of religious texts which may manipulate the status and the roles of women in society.

**Chart 18.1: Key values when raising children - by country and country group**



**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 country and country group (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

However, to give justice to the present reality in Algeria, it is necessary to contextualise these results and acknowledge the progress that Algeria has made with relation to women’s empowerment in recent years. Since 2005, Algeria has adopted a Working Woman’s Charter which aims to reconcile family and professional obligations and improve the participation of women in company management bodies, as well as improve their representation in trade unions.

Since 2005, Algeria has adopted a Working Woman’s Charter which aims to reconcile family and professional obligations and improve the participation of women in company management bodies, as well as improve their representation in trade unions.

Between 2010 and 2013, Algeria established a joint programme for gender equality and the empowerment of women, in collaboration with the United Nations. The joint programme had a particular focus on improving access to employment.

At the national level, institutional and organic laws were introduced in order to reinforce the role of women in the different spheres of social, economic, political, social and cultural life. However, these efforts have not yet led to satisfactory levels of female participation in fields that would improve self-determination. Empowering women with decision-making authority and enabling women to take control over their lives is of crucial importance to building equitable and sustainable societies.

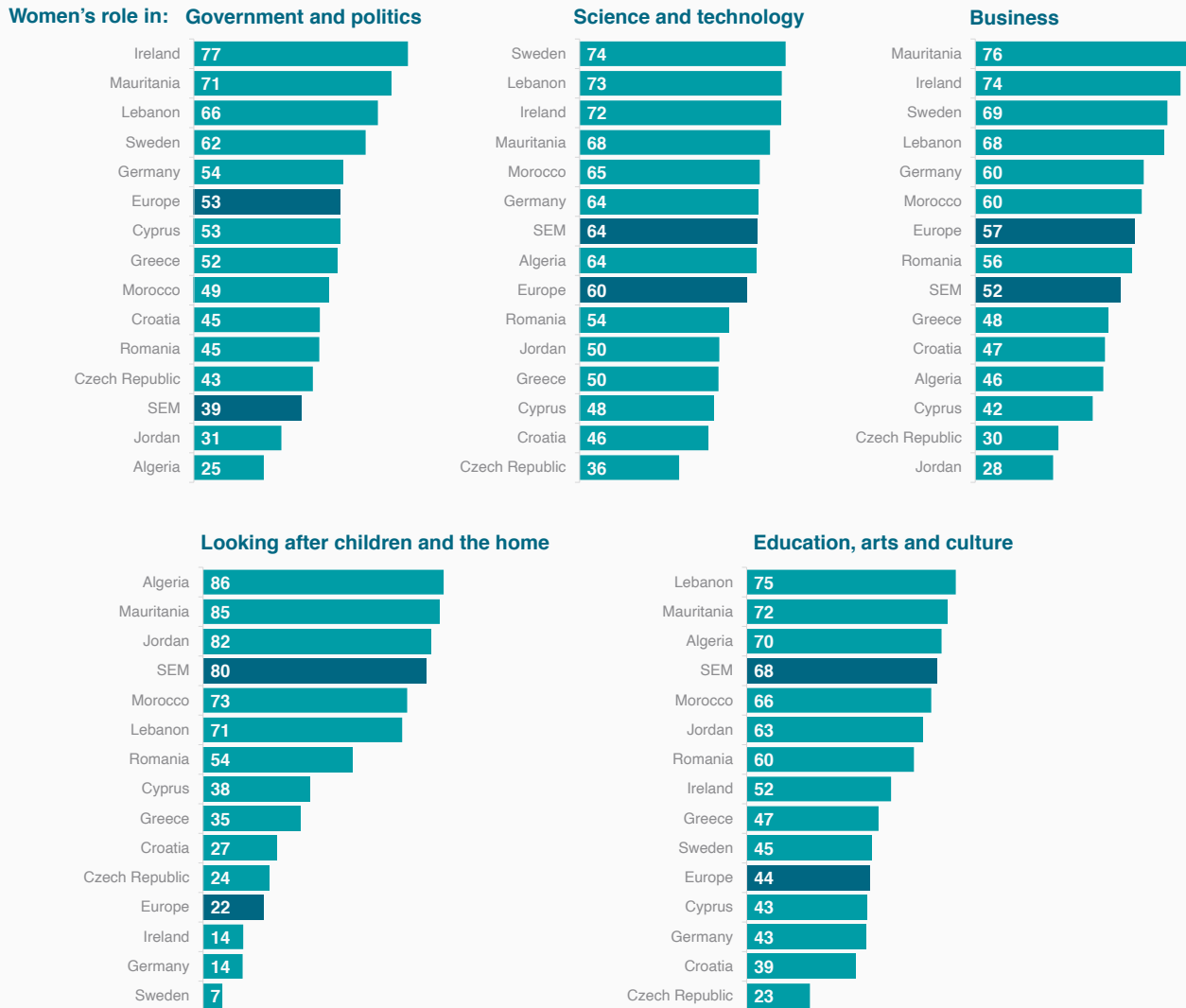
**Living together in multicultural environments**

According to the Survey, online dialogue and digital communication have proven to be effective methods for enabling interaction between people from different countries.

In Algeria, 81% of the respondents ‘strongly agree’ that digital technology can play an important role in facilitating dialogue between people from different cultures (Chart 18.3). In addition, 71% ‘strongly agree’ that digital tools can enhance skills for intercultural dialogue and that cultural barriers are less of an obstacle during online and digital communication. The COVID-19 pandemic has proven that digital technology can be of great benefit to society by enabling and maintaining contact between peoples and nations. Digital technology has shortened the distance and eliminated many of the barriers that persist in face-to-face contact, such as visa and travel difficulties.

The situation in Algeria appears paradoxical. Whilst Algeria is a culturally conservative country, in many ways it is open to change. According to the Survey data, more than 84% of Algerian respondents have relatives in a European country and, of those, 44% believe that interacting with people from other countries and cultures has had a positive impact on how they view the world, compared with just 12% who say this interaction has had a negative impact. Respondents in Algeria do not see problems in exploring new cultures and ways of life. For most respondents, the main barriers to cross-cultural encounters reside in practical travel and language difficulties, rather than cultural difficulties – barriers which can be easily overcome.

**Chart 18.2: Perceptions about women’s role in society - by country**  
(% “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 (% “greater role”), by country (@Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

These results illustrate positive progress towards cultural diversity and tolerance in Algeria. Most respondents perceive religious and cultural diversity positively, though 39% of respondents in Algeria ‘strongly agree’ that cultural diversity constitutes a threat to the stability of society. To this end, it is necessary to strengthen the roles of schools as places where children learn to respect cultural differences.

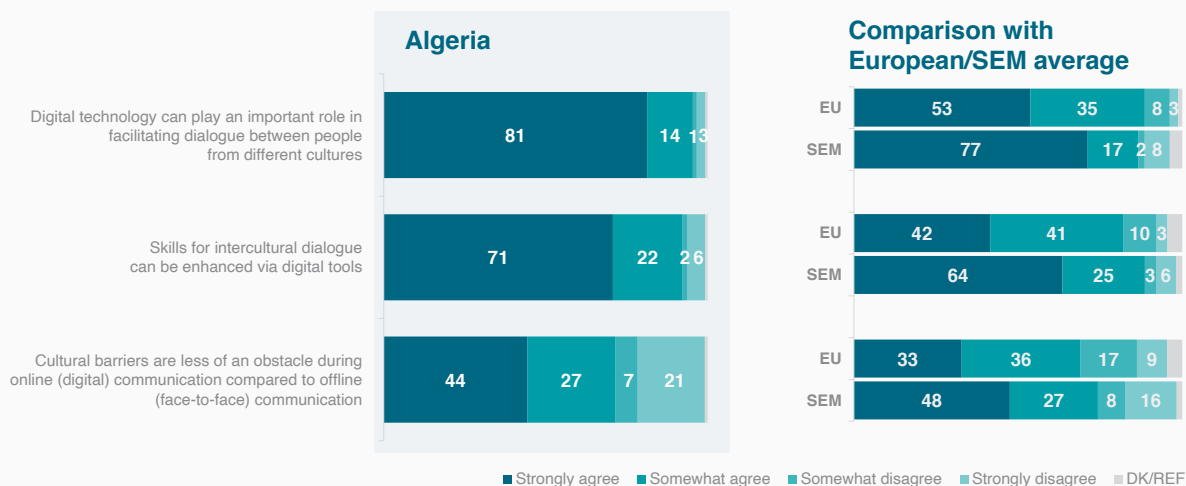
Cultural diversity and tolerance seem to be a typology of challenge, between xenophobia, Islamophobia and hate speech. Enabling

intercultural dialogue will depend on our capacity to promote cultural diversity and tolerance.

**Conclusion**

The Survey has delivered major insights that actors in Algerian society can explore further. Whilst most of the results are overwhelmingly positive, it is necessary to emphasize that in order to encourage intercultural dialogue and promote tolerance, we need to develop intercultural competences in society. Intercultural competences help

**Chart 18.3: Impact of digital technology - by country and country group**



**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 (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

people interact and communicate with people from different cultures in a respectful and effective way. They can constitute a bridge between diversity and inclusion.

To cater for both diversity and social unity is a major challenge. That is why education is key to intercultural dialogue. Intercultural dialogue is, above all, an educational process. Recognition of diversity through education will counter attitudes of intolerance, violence and rejection of differences. In Algeria, new reforms have been introduced in the educational system in favour of the recognition of diversity in society. To what extent these measures will be accepted, tolerated and applied remains to be seen.

**Recommendations**

- The government and higher education institutions should pursue common research projects and build networks with other academics, universities, and governments, in order to share data and expertise, develop collaborative study programmes, and reinforce their commitment to intercultural cooperation.
- The government should provide financial support for women, as well as adaptive measures, as a form of positive discrimination to support them in their existing roles whilst also encouraging them to become active entrepreneurs in Algerian society.
- Language barriers need to be eliminated to encourage intercultural encounters. Language centres could play a key role in easing intercultural tensions by delivering language courses.

- The government should fund the development of online language courses and tutors in order to make language courses more inclusive in the face of social and cultural constraints. Transversal units on cross-cultural communication should also be included in the curriculum.
- Visa-free travel should be established through bilateral agreements with other Euro-Mediterranean countries. Efforts to promote intercultural dialogue will not succeed if practical barriers remain in place.
- The government should invest in an expansive programme to extend affordable high-speed Internet to all, given the importance of digital technology to intercultural communication – as illustrated by the Survey data.
- Lastly, virtual education and training should be included in the national education priorities agenda under the umbrella of lifelong learning, and affordable IT training programmes should be offered. ■

Naouel Abdellatif Mami is a Professor and Vice Rector in charge of the External Relations and Cooperation at Sétif 2 University in Algeria.

## Dialogue in action | Lithuania

### Create a Puppet, Create Yourself. Theatre for Social Integration.

The 'Create a Puppet, Create Yourself. Theatre for Social Integration' is a new methodology working with people for their social integration. Targets may be from different backgrounds, different ages and cultures. We were working with the group of 'women at a crossroad', as we called their situation (unemployed, retired, looking for a way to recover after hard situations, to fill their lives with meaningful activities). Method flexibility and technique variety (theatrical etudes, psychodrama techniques, group building exercises, exercises boosting creativity) made the process challenging, interesting and fruitful both for trainers and participants. The trust in participant creativeness led to surprising results in the looks of puppets, their characteristics and creating the etude as well. During one of the sessions, we asked participants to spend 20 minutes of personal meditation time with their puppets: to talk to them, to listen, to dance, to play. It was amazing how deep some conversations reached, and what a rich spectrum of participant emotions and reflections it raised.

*Puppet was laughing, whispering, she wants to go out, to recognize the world...my puppet has surprised me—she was laughing so much...she is becoming a grown up...we can celebrate...*

*I can support her in so many things. She seems happy, because she knows that she can trust me...*

*We were together in silence, but so calm and well; we told each other that peace is so important; it's good to be together; closeness;...I felt that connection; but we both need more time to open...*

*My puppet was laughing so much, but she is alone, very lonely, ...she told me that I have tightened her neck too much...my relationship with her has changed—I don't want to burn her any more...*

*She was asking if I still love her when she isn't perfect at all (one hand is shorter, one leg is longer). That question was such a surprise to me—how can't she see that she is important for me...*

*My puppet was dancing slowly and crooning, she gave me her arm to go together, I don't know where...that means she really trusts me...it was something very melancholic in all her movements...*

*I was so surprised by that puppet, I was even about to cry, but I won't...it's sad to me, that she thinks that I don't love her...*

It was safe and much easier for participants to tell about oneself indirectly, behind the puppet that was 'mirroring' their authors in different situations.

To develop puppet animation into a meaningful etude required team work: a lot of understanding, common decisions, attentiveness, patience, tolerance, coordination etc., improving social competencies.

After completing two workshops, we feel much stronger in using puppetry for social inclusion and have a strong confidence in the method; we see an evident progress in participant attitudes, self-esteem, creativity, growing abilities for self-analysis and acting in the group. The feedback from participants confirmed the efficiency of using puppetry in supporting the unemployed and retired women in their struggle for social recovery. We are going to continue, even finding a way to lead the workshops online.

Project website: [www.centrasbabilonas.lt](http://www.centrasbabilonas.lt)

# Following the Intercultural Mediterranean Path in Greece

Georges MARIS and Nicoletta PANTELI

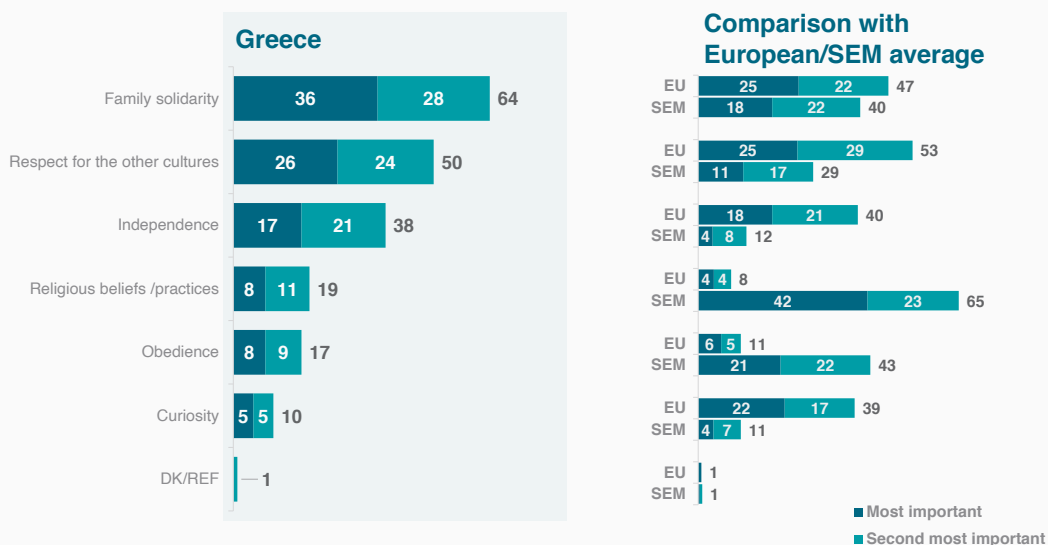
Comparing the ways in which cross-cultural trends and challenges have differed across the EuroMed region, Georges Maris and Nicoletta Panteli analyse Greece’s COVID-19 impact on the prevalence of intercultural encounters, highlighting the importance of tourism as a mechanism for encounters which shape perceptions. In the absence of such physical encounters, relying on and fostering intercultural interaction through the creation of a more coherent institutional framework enables people to interact and protect each other’s rights through its dominant cultural code and European intercultural norms.

The Mediterranean region is one of the most vital and interesting areas of the world. It is a place where citizens, cultures, and ideas interact to such an extent that they lose the meaning of ‘the national’ and become ‘the Mediterranean’. The Mediterranean way of life, and the perceptions and ideas that characterise the Mediterranean are unique to this region. This is not to say that the states, government systems, and citizens of the Mediterranean do not face individual and shared challenges. On the contrary, they face many – especially since the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. The main purpose of this paper is to investigate Greece’s position regarding cross-cultural trends and challenges in the Euro-Mediterranean Region (EuroMed), as shown through Respondent answers to questions posted in selected countries in Europe and the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (SEM) regions, in the Anna Lindh/Ipsos Intercultural Trends Survey. It finds that, although Greece shares many values

and characteristics with other countries in the region and has a strong tradition of intercultural engagement, Greece also has its own unique heritage and history, which supports its key industry of tourism and informs respondents’ perceptions of their country and region. Tourism, in turn, has provided a vital setting for intercultural interaction to take place between residents of Greece and those from other countries. However, the data suggest that few intercultural encounters have arisen from tourism over the last 12 months, possibly as a result of travel restrictions associated with the pandemic.

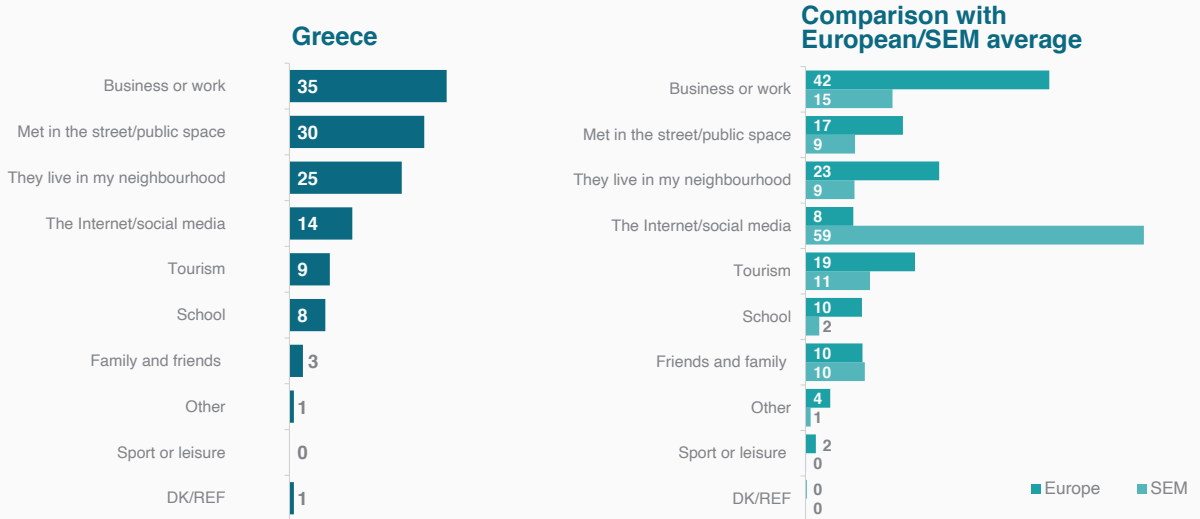
**The shared Mediterranean lifestyle is deeply embedded in Greece. This may have a strong impact on the population’s beliefs about a common cultural heritage and history.**

**Chart 19.1:** Key values when raising children - by country and country group



**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 country and country group (@Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**Chart 19.2: Cross-cultural encounters - by country and country group**  
Method of interactions



**Survey question:** Thinking of this/these person(s) you have interacted with, was this mainly through:  
**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.  
**Base:** Respondents who have talked to or met someone from a SEM/European country in the past 12 months (%), by country and country group (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

The Mediterranean way of living and hospitality never absconded from Greece. Indeed, Greece has retained the belief that the main ideas that characterise the Mediterranean region are the Mediterranean way of living and food and hospitality. Conversely, relatively few respondents in Greece view the Mediterranean as characterised by a common cultural heritage and history, though it is important to emphasise that other countries surveyed in the region share this skepticism.

The shared Mediterranean lifestyle is deeply embedded in Greece. This may have a strong impact on the population's beliefs about a common cultural heritage and history. Whilst there is a rich history of international interaction across the Mediterranean, Greece – like many other Mediterranean countries – has a unique national heritage and ancient history that differentiates it from its neighbours. Indeed, there is no second 'Parthenon'. A possible explanation, therefore, is that some Mediterranean countries, including Greece, rely on their highly developed hospitality industries and natural heritages to promote themselves as cultural destinations. As such, whilst sharing common traits and customs, respondents in Greece may pride themselves on, and promote, those unique cultural and historical characteristics that differentiate them from other Mediterranean countries.

Furthermore, there is variation between countries in terms of the key values that residents perceive to be important when raising children, such as respect for other cultures, family solidarity, religious belief and practices, obedience, independence and curiosity. Exploring key values when raising children can help us to understand the prevalent value systems in Greece and identify similarities and differences with

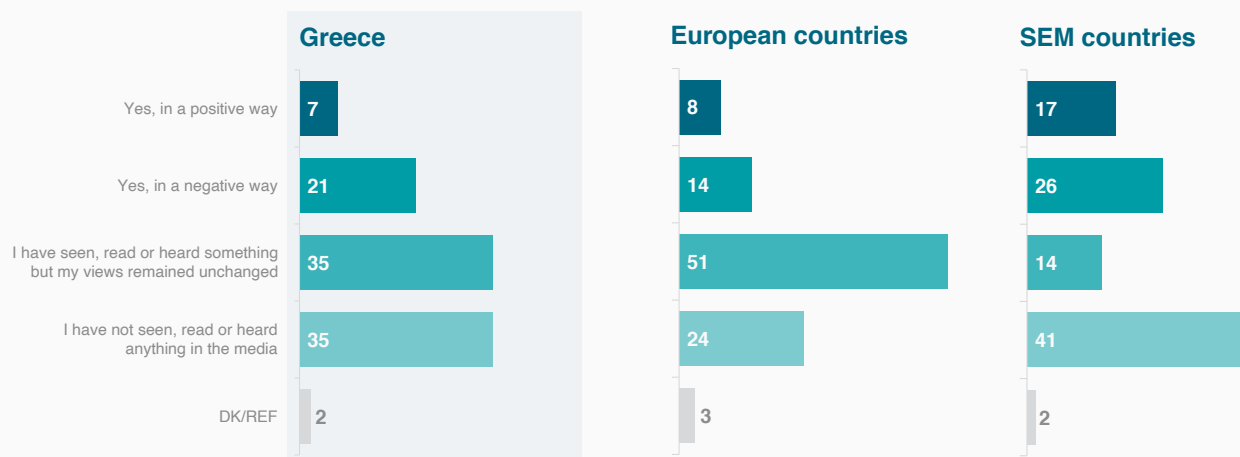
other EuroMed countries. The most important key value when raising children in Greece, according to the Survey, is the value of family solidarity (64%), followed by 'respect for other cultures' (50%) (Chart 19.1). Key values in Greece, therefore, align more closely with those of other European countries than SEM countries, with 'respect for other cultures' and 'family solidarity' being the most important values on average for respondents across European countries. It should be noted, however, that 'family solidarity' is also a key value in SEM countries, ranking third below 'religious beliefs and practices' and 'obedience', representing a shared value among many Greek and SEM respondents.

**In order to speculate as to why people's opinions have or have not changed, either positively or negatively, it is also necessary to explore the extent to which people trust the various media platforms they use to consume media.**

These results are not surprising, given the importance bestowed to culture and familial institutions in Greece. Furthermore, cultural interaction and solidarity have always been considered as pillars of Greek society. For instance, in the 1980s, Melina Merkouri – the Greek ex-Minister of Culture, conceived of and established the 'European Capital of Culture' initiative, which sought to enable cultural interaction and create bonds between European populations, with Athens being the first city to be awarded the title, in 1985.

The Survey also asked about barriers to cross-cultural communication. For respondents in Greece, the biggest barrier when talking to

**Chart 19.3: Did media cause a change in views about people from SEM / European countries?**  
- by country and country group



**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 country and country group (©Anna Lindh/ipsos 2020).

people in or from SEM countries is not speaking the same language. According to the data, 72% of the respondents in Greece agreed that not speaking the same language is either a 'big barrier' or 'somewhat of a barrier' to cross-cultural communication.

In addition, the results show that in the past 12 months (Chart 19.2), of those respondents in Greece who had interacted with someone from another country, 30% interacted with that person in the street or public place (compared with 11% in 2009), and 25% interacted with them in their neighbourhood (compared with 12% in 2009). Conversely, only 9% of respondents said they had interacted with someone through tourism in the 12 months before the Survey, compared with 22% in 2009. Most cross-cultural communication took place through business or work (35%). These results may have been impacted by lockdowns and government restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. If the population had been living under normal circumstances during the past 12 months, we would perhaps expect to see much more cross-cultural communication associated with tourism, though it should also be noted that fieldwork took place during the early stages of the pandemic, so travel restrictions alone cannot fully explain the apparent decrease in tourism-related interaction.

Nevertheless, the proportion of respondents in Greece who say that they have interacted with a person from another culture in the last 12 months has increased from 24% in 2009 to 34% in 2020. We can speculate that this figure may have been even higher in the years prior to the pandemic.

The Survey data also suggest that, for the majority of respondents in Greece, cross-cultural relationships between populations are not influenced by the media, though the media is a contributing factor for a small minority. A majority of respondents in Greece reported that their opinions had not changed at all after consuming media content about people in SEM countries, or that they had not seen, read, or heard anything in the media about people in SEM countries. Among those who said their views had changed, however, a higher proportion said that the media had a negative rather than positive impact on their views. Although this only accounts for two in ten respondents in Greece, it is important to identify the groups that are most likely to be influenced by the media, in order that organisations working in the field of intercultural dialogue can provide targeted interventions. For instance, the Survey data suggest that, across Europe, those aged over 30 are more likely to be negatively influenced by media stories about people in SEM countries than those aged under 30.

In order to speculate as to why people's opinions have or have not changed, either positively or negatively, it is also necessary to explore the extent to which people trust the various media platforms they use to consume media. As shown in Chart 19.3, the most trusted media source for respondents in Greece is online media; for example, news websites or online magazines (45%). Conversely, relatively few respondents in Greece said that social media was their most trusted source for cross-cultural information (14%). Surprisingly, we can also observe that respondents in Greece are far less trusting of TV media than respondents in other EuroMed countries. This is also confirmed by the Eurobarometer's (2017) report on media use in the



EU. This may be explained by a tendency among Greek citizens to associate the owners of large media platforms with political clientelism, corruption and intertwining interests, which many view as reasons for the economic crisis in Greece (Sklias & Maris, 2013; Iosifidis & Boucas, 2015).

### Conclusions and recommendations

Greece has much in common with other Mediterranean countries. It is open to, and engages in, intercultural communication. Respondents in Greece share key values with respondents from other countries in the EuroMed, particularly European countries. Nevertheless, like other EuroMed countries, Greece has its own unique history, geography and culture which distinguishes it from its neighbours and through which it promotes its key industry of international tourism. In the past, this industry has been a key source of intercultural encounters in Greece.

With the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent government restrictions, tourism in Greece has receded and, with it, opportunities for intercultural encounters – and the benefits they bring in terms of shaping perceptions about people from

other cultures – may have stagnated. Conversely, in the absence of tourism-related encounters, the media continues to play a role in shaping people's attitudes in Greece, though to a lesser extent than might be expected, and respondents in Greece are much less trusting of news and information consumed through TV programmes – the most trusted source of information about other cultures across the rest of the EuroMed.

Looking to the future, Greece can maintain and encourage intercultural interaction in the absence of tourism through the creation of a more coherent institutional framework that enables people to interact and protect each other's rights, based on the Greek *filoxenia* – the 'dominant cultural code' (Zsófia 2018, p. 396) and European intercultural norms. ■

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## Dialogue in action | Croatia

### Social impact of EuroMed cooperation

1) KEEP Programme: The KEEP Programme (Knowledge and Experience Exchange Programme) is a public international Call for Proposals offered by the National Foundation for Civil Society Development, in its capacity as the Head of the ALF National Network in Croatia, in partnership with IMPACT: Euro-Mediterranean Academy for Philanthropy and Social Development. It aims to enable the education and trainings (up-skilling) of representatives, selected by the ALF HoNs in IMPACT, for which an official certificate is issued by the Academy and is recognised in all of the EU states.

In the selection process, the involvement and expertise of the Heads of ALF National Networks is crucial, being essential for the proper evaluation of the candidates. Through this process, the relevance, accountability and social impact of the CSOs, but also the personal achievements and motivation of the candidates will be assured.

2) IMPACT: Euro-Mediterranean Academy for Philanthropy and Social Development

The IMPACT Academy was established in Zagreb in order to implement educational activities centred mainly on education and trainings (up-skilling) on-premises in both Zagreb and Zadar, Croatia. It is an officially registered educational institution, certified by the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Croatia. The Academy was founded by the European Foundation for Philanthropy and Social Development and supported by the National Foundation for Civil Society Development. The goal of the Academy is the education for the development of philanthropy, foundations, social innovations, local community, social entrepreneurship, digital civil society and cross-sectoral cooperation.

The Academy offers official certification to the scholars that is to be issued by the Academy and is recognised in all of the EU states.

The main focus of the Academy programme is to provide education to change-makers in local communities in order for them to gain additional knowledge and skills to be able to improve community potentials in their respective surroundings.

The National Foundation for Civil Society Development

# From Social Conservatism Towards Pluralistic Attitudes in Ireland

Piara MAC ÉINRÍ

Using the Survey data, Piara Mac Éinrí maps the evolution of Ireland on the periphery of Europe, to an Ireland which encompasses mainstream European norms; focus is placed on familial and gender norms and approaches to ethnic and cultural difference. Key findings for policymakers include the reduction in importance of religious beliefs and practises as a value when raising children, adding evidence to the contentious case for faith schools; and a general trend of Irish public attitudes being ahead of the constitutional position in terms of social issues.

It may be argued that history and geography have not been kind to Ireland – in the form of centuries of fractious relations with a more powerful neighbour, and through a peripheral location on the edge of Europe. Compared to most of its peers, the country was poor. People left in successive waves, generation after generation, in a pattern unique in Europe for its scale and longevity. The society they left behind was conservative, with fixed views on nation, religion, gender and social roles – which left painful legacies.

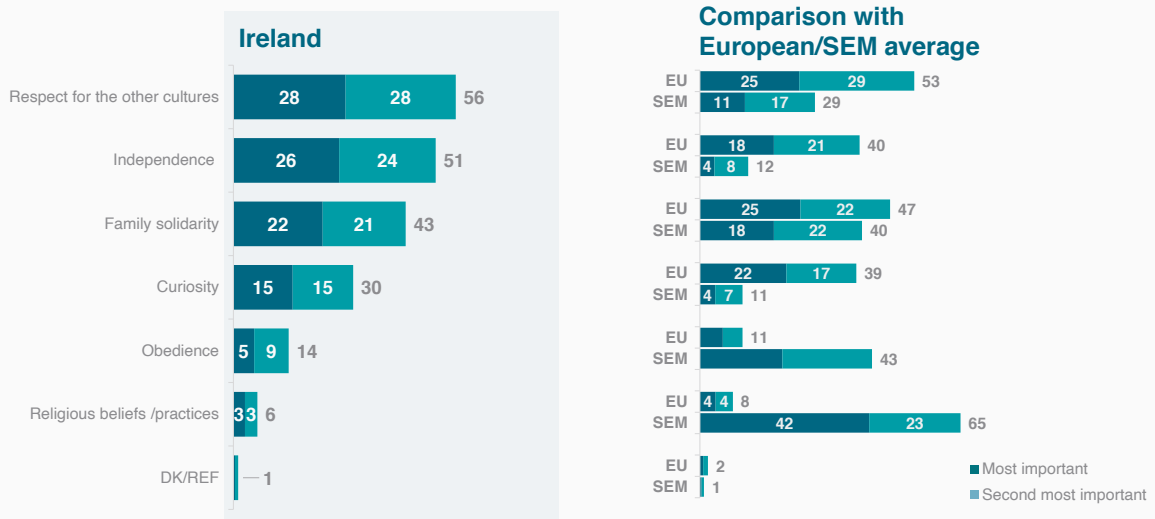
Yet, within the past three decades, Ireland has become a very different society. The signing of the Belfast Agreement in 1998 brought peace to the island after decades of conflict. There has also been a revolution in social attitudes. Legislation for abortion and same-sex marriage, for instance, reflect a sea-change in attitudes to women’s and LGBT rights.

Ireland, in less than one generation, has also become an immigrant society. The 2016 Census records that 17% of the population were born abroad, compared to the 1991 figure of approximately 5%, the majority of whom in the earlier case were born on the neighbouring island.

The country has thus undergone seismic societal changes, from social conservatism to more pluralistic attitudes, from net emigration to net immigration and from a largely monocultural to a much more diverse society.

The post-2008 period of extreme austerity has left deep scars and an ongoing series of major challenges in fields such as housing and healthcare.

Chart 20.1: Key values when raising children - by country and country group



**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 country and country group (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**Chart 20.2: Perceptions about women’s role 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 country and country group (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

During that time, it experienced considerable economic volatility, going from rapid economic progress during the ‘Celtic Tiger’ years of the 1990s and early 2000s, to a catastrophic crash in 2008. The post-2008 period of extreme austerity has left deep scars and an ongoing series of major challenges in fields such as housing and healthcare.

Against this economic backdrop, one might expect considerable turbulence and even political pushback against the rapid rate of social change. Indeed, such responses are not absent, as demonstrated by the decline of traditionally dominant political parties. Nonetheless, the system has proved remarkably stable.

In light of the above, the results of the latest iteration of the Anna Lindh/Ipsos Intercultural Trends Survey in the Euro-Mediterranean Region make fascinating reading. In the case of Ireland, they reveal a country which is now very much in the European mainstream when it comes to key attitudinal issues such as child-rearing, the role of women in society, and perceptions about religious and cultural diversity. This article focuses on a few key areas: familial and gender norms and approaches to ethnic and cultural differences.

**Children and child-rearing**

Attitudes towards children and child-rearing are one area where one might expect significant cultural differences across the 13 countries surveyed and this is indeed borne out in the Survey. Whereas 42% of respondents from countries on the Southern and Eastern shores of the Mediterranean (SEM) described ‘religious beliefs and practices’ as the ‘most important value’, the majority of European respondents

had a very different view, with a European average of only 4% and a figure for Ireland of just 3% (Chart 20.1). This represents a very striking contrast with common understanding of the traditional place of religion in Irish society, though it does tally with successive surveys in recent decades which have all suggested a fall in religiosity. It is all the more remarkable in view of Ireland’s hybridised model of public education, where the vast majority attend State-financed schools but most of those schools espouse a specific confessional ethos.

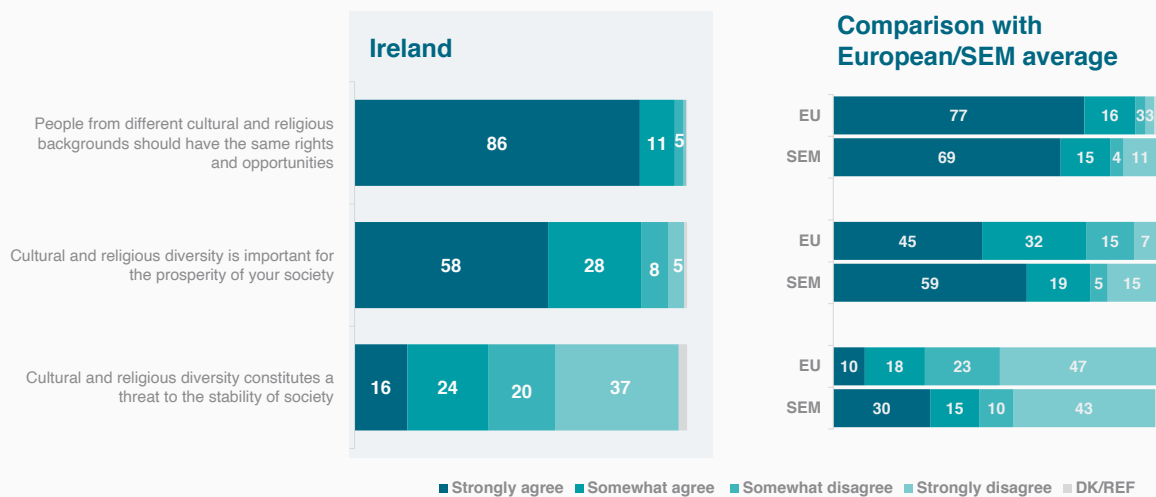
The indication that so few in Ireland view religious beliefs and practices as the most important value when raising children provides interesting material for policymakers with regards to faith schools – which has been a contentious area for decades.

**The status of women**

In a traditionally conservative country, the secondary status accorded to women was exemplified in many ways, including relating to women who became pregnant outside of marriage. The January 2021 report of the Mother and Baby Homes Commission of Investigation, for instance, detailed the appalling treatment meted out to over 100,000 unmarried mothers and their children from 1920 until 1998.

Furthermore, article 41.2.1 of the 1937 Irish Constitution states that ‘... the State recognises that by her life within the home, woman gives to the State a support without which the common good cannot be achieved’. Until 1973, most women in the public service were required to retire on marriage.

**Chart 20.3: Perceptions about religious and cultural diversity - by country and country group**



**?** **Survey question:** How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?  
**Base:** All respondents (%), by country and country group (©Anna Lindh/ipsos 2020).

Although Article 41.2.1 remains, evidence from the Survey suggests that public attitudes have changed. This reflects a trend visible through recent referenda and campaigns on social issues (e.g., same-sex marriage, legislation permitting abortion in certain defined cases), which suggest that the general public is ahead of the constitutional position.

When respondents were asked about whether women should play a greater role in politics, an overwhelming 77% of respondents in Ireland said yes (Chart 20.2), with similarly strong support for the involvement of women in other public roles such as business, science and technology, sport and media. On the other hand, women are still expected to play a role in ‘looking after children and the home’, with only 22% expressing the view that women should play a lesser role in this domain. The unresolved contradiction of this view was borne out during the pandemic with several studies suggesting that the burden of combining both household duties and working from home fell disproportionately on women.

**Perceptions about religion and cultural diversity**

Close to half of all Irish respondents reported interacting with people from different countries at business or work – nearly double the figure of the 2012 Anna Lindh Foundation Survey. The reality of a diverse, multicultural society is now seen in day-to-day life.

However, attitudes towards cultural and religious diversity are complex and nuanced. Whereas only 20% of German respondents ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘somewhat agreed’ with the proposition that

‘diversity constitutes a threat to the stability of society’, twice as many respondents in Ireland expressed this view (40%). Paradoxically, the vast majority of respondents in Ireland either ‘somewhat agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that ‘diversity is important for the prosperity of your society’, up from 90% in 2012 (Chart 20.3).

**Ireland has transformed itself from a peripheral, impoverished country of emigration to a modern economy characterised by ethnic and cultural diversity. The process has not been without its growing pains and much work remains to be done...**

Ireland also ranked at the more tolerant end of the spectrum when people were asked how they would feel about persons from different cultural backgrounds being work colleagues, neighbours, attending the same school and marrying a close relative. This is sharply different from the results of the best-known earlier national survey Prejudice and Tolerance in Ireland, which showed high levels of racism, antisemitism and anti-traveller sentiment – though it should be noted that the results of the two surveys are not directly comparable.

**Conclusions**

The reasons for these apparent changes are probably multifactorial. Women have driven the campaign for a more open and equal society, notably in calling for reform of legislation in such areas as abortion rights. Investment in education since the 1970s and a

## TRENDS IN FOCUS

recovery to relative prosperity have also made a difference. Ireland is now a porous society, with high rates of return migration as well as immigration. Moreover, as a society it is internationalist in outlook, with overwhelming support for EU membership and a strong record in foreign aid, NGO participation and UN peacekeeping, including an ongoing Irish presence in Lebanon since 1978.

One factor of particular note, in light of Ireland's changing ethnic demography, is the relative absence at political level of extremist views – a feature which makes this country, along with Portugal, a European outlier. It would of course be foolish to suggest that such views do not exist, or that they do not represent a threat in Ireland. Far-right activists espousing racist and xenophobic beliefs, conspiracy theories and anti-democratic political philosophies, have become active on social media but, thus far, have achieved little political traction.

Finally, one concerning statistic relates to the Survey question, 'If you could start a new life, in which country of the world would you start it?'. The historical default position of substantial numbers of young Irish people, faced with a crisis in jobs and economic opportunity, has been to leave. The evidence from the Survey suggests such thinking is still present, with a staggering 82% – far above any other surveyed country – saying they would start over somewhere else. Though an expressed intent may never be acted upon, Ireland is still living in the shadow of the recent 2008 crash, and it should thus serve as a wake-up call to policymakers with regards to building a society in which all are able to build a prosperous future.

### Recommendations

Ireland has transformed itself from a peripheral, impoverished country of emigration to a modern economy characterised by ethnic and cultural diversity. The process has not been without its growing pains and much work remains to be done, but overall the transition has been accomplished in a manner which has avoided the more extreme currents of intolerance.

If there is a lesson to be drawn from this, it surely lies in valuing and building on the shared spaces of public life. Among respondents in Ireland, 97% agreed that 'ensuring that schools are places where children learn to live in diversity' was an effective way of helping people to live together in multicultural environments. It might now be timely to revisit issues of confessionalism and governance in the primary and secondary-level education system. A shared and open education system which values and respects difference and encourages reciprocal interaction, knowledge and understanding may be the single most important policy. ■

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Piars Mac Éinrí lectures in Geography at University College Cork and has researched and published extensively on migration and integration issues.

## Dialogue in action | France

### 'Body / Voice: being cross-cultural'

An original training which aims to provide the bases of cross-cultural being has been put in place, utilising the use of body and voice. The focus questions were:

Is the voice political? What place does the voice have in a new society that favours the virtual? How does cross-culturality affect our conscience and our speech as citizens?

We have based the training details on a proverb from the Maghreb, 'a social being is a musical being'. TRANS-IRE Popular University deals with rituals of passage; therefore, we want to focus on a statement suggested to us by the present health emergency: 'the passage from immobility to a new, more conscious and responsible mobility'.

'Social being' today must correspond to 'cross-cultural being'. Humans probably already are, in their subconscious, but it is important to build human structure with words that resonate the difference and the different.

Mediterranean Women Forum

Actions Needed:

- Free and open training for members of TRANS-IRE and of the Anna Lindh Foundation
- Travel and lunch funded by the ALF to members of the French network

Together with TRANS-IRE, emphasis will be placed on organising training times and days to coincide with practice day. It is the approach to the voice / instrument, the placement of the voice, the encounter with one's own sacredness, a body work from a setting in motion by the principles of the Feldenkrais method, a panorama of multicultural therapeutic rhythms and a certain reconnection to its own archaic potential.

The training was held throughout the day on 15 October; the morning focused on the body, and the afternoon the voice. The following evening, we met for a simple staging of concepts passed on during the training.

# Enhancing Public Dialogue between Citizens Leads to Change in Lebanon

Sélim EL SAYEGH

Sélim El Sayegh draws an in-depth analysis of social and value changes incurred in Lebanon and recorded by the ALF Intercultural Trends Surveys 2009 and 2020. Recent years' events in Lebanon may have impacted in the value change priorities with a predominant importance of family solidarity in 2020 over religious beliefs and practices registered in 2009. The author also underlines the potential, but also limitations, of digital tools for social dialogue and the need to strengthen cooperation with NGOs and local authorities to overcome current social challenges.

## Background

Lebanon was last surveyed by the Anna Lindh Foundation in 2009. Since then, various major events have occurred such as the Arab Spring, the Syrian migration issue, the economic crash, poverty crisis, the 'very poor' grading of the Lebanese economy, poor performance in indexes related to democracy, peace, freedom of press and corruption, the polarisation of Lebanese politics, the October 17 uprisings, and the aborted negotiations with the IMF. These conditions have driven massive emigration, especially among the youth and the elite. All the above have impacted Lebanon and its people, which is reflected in changing perceptions identified in the Anna Lindh/Ipsos (or Anna Lindh/Gallup) Intercultural Trends Surveys between 2009 and 2020.

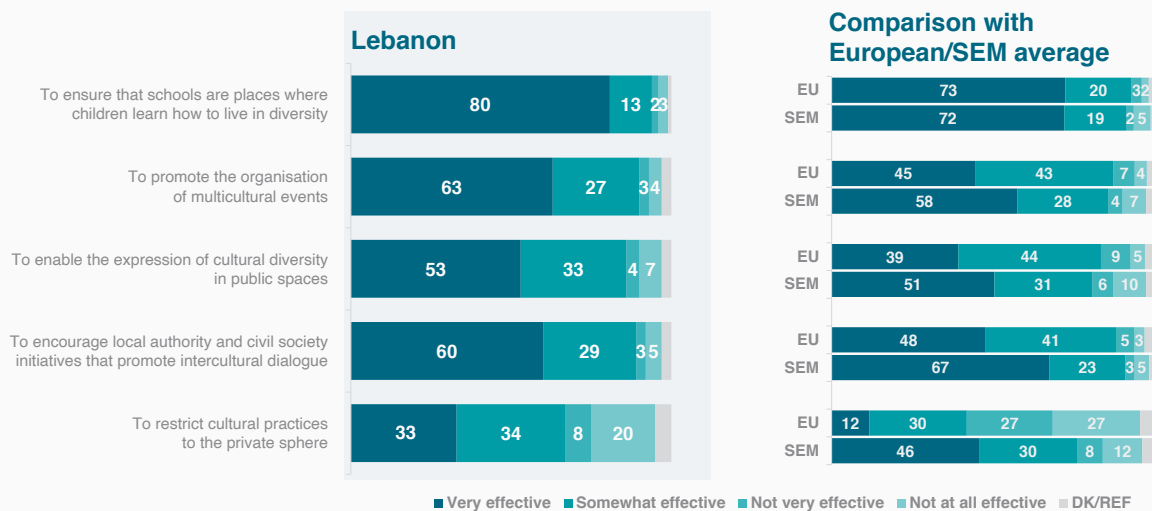
In the second part of 2020, after the issuance of the study, two major crises have stormed Lebanon: the COVID-19 pandemic and the Blast of Beirut. Though yet to be studied, their impact on intercultural trends and social change will be considerable.

**Lebanon is a very diverse state; this diversity is enshrined in personal status laws and social norms.**

## Shared values

Lebanon shares the collectivist culture dominant in Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (SEM) countries, rather than the individualist culture dominant in the EU, and respondents' key values when raising children generally reflect this. Family solidarity, respect of

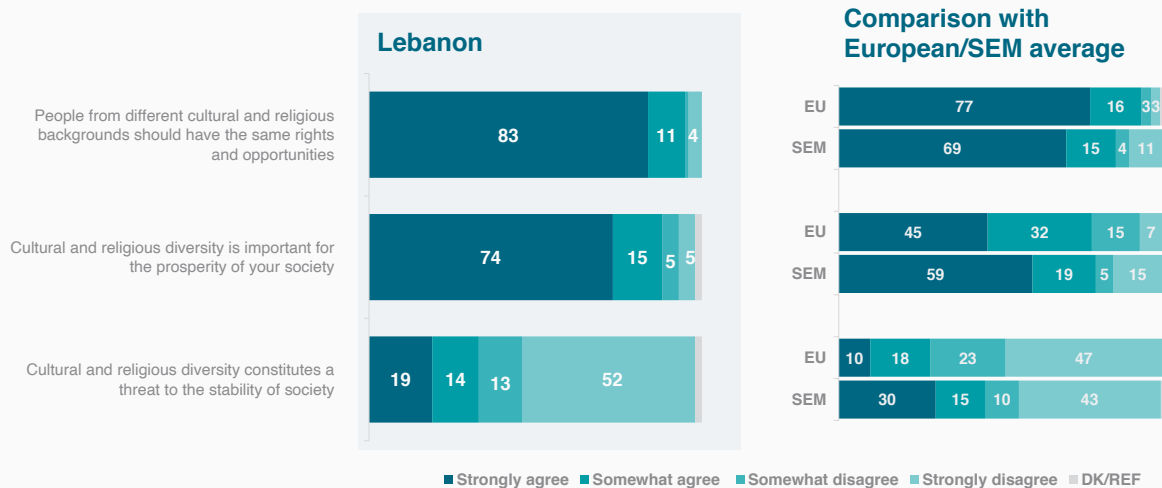
**Chart 21.1: Living together in multicultural environments - by country and country group**  
Actions that can help live better together



**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 multicultural environment?

**Base:** All respondents (%), by country and country group (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**Chart 21.2: Perceptions about religious and cultural diversity - by country and country group**



**Survey question:** How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?  
**Base:** All respondents (%), by country and country group (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

other cultures – taken from the standpoint of a person aware of their cultural identity and expressing themselves in that capacity – and religious beliefs and practices are the most important key values when raising children in Lebanon, whilst ‘curiosity’ is the most important value for just 5% of respondents, reflecting the prioritisation of community preference over individual choice.

The data show that the hierarchy of values when raising children has shifted in Lebanon from 2009 to 2020. The most frequently cited ‘most important’ value in 2020 is ‘family solidarity’ (64%, sum of ‘most important’ and ‘second most important’), whilst ‘religious beliefs and practices’ was the most frequently cited key value in 2009.

The cultural shift that was provoked by the October 17, 2019 uprisings, which illuminated the unstable foundations of Lebanese social and financial infrastructure, may explain this change. Due to the political instability, people have become reliant on the family as an alternative to the state system. Family is the cornerstone of Lebanese society, providing refuge from the crises and the accompanying reduction of safety nets.

‘Respect for other cultures’ has also shifted, from fourth most cited in 2009 (23% sum of ‘most important’ and ‘second most important’) to second in 2020 (47% sum of ‘most important’ and ‘second most important’). This upward trend can also be seen with regards to ‘independence’, which has risen from sixth most cited in 2009 (8% sum of ‘most important’ and ‘second most important’) to fourth in 2020 (26% sum of ‘most important’ and ‘second most important’).

The October 17, 2019 uprisings may also have had an impact on the value attributed to ‘respect for other cultures’. Lebanon is a diverse country and the movement enabled protesters from different cultural backgrounds to interact in shared public spaces. Moreover, online spaces have been established to discuss topics of common concern across different cultures. The emergence of common space and place for discussion represents a desire to transcend traditional cultural identification in order to build intercultural identity.

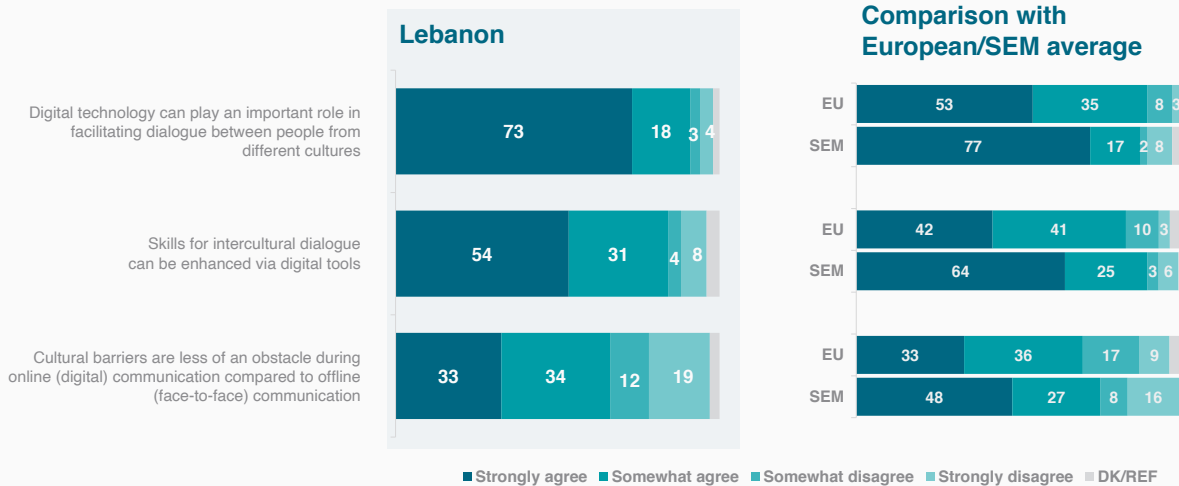
**In the second part of 2020, after the issuance of the study, two major crises have stormed Lebanon: the COVID-19 pandemic and the Blast of Beirut. Though yet to be studied, their impact on intercultural trends and social change will be considerable.**

**Living together and education**

The World Bank estimates that migrants in Lebanon made up 34% of the population as of 2015 (an increase of 15% since 2010), placing Lebanon among the countries with the highest percentage of migrants in the world (World Bank, 2015). Whilst in most countries such an issue could have increased extremism and chauvinism, there are no significant problems in Lebanon. The UN provides heavy subsidies which allow migrants to live decent lives; a significant proportion are involved in the labour force, with one-third of migrants engaged in construction and agriculture. Indeed,



**Chart 21.3: Impact of digital technology - by country and country group**



**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 (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

71% of respondents in Lebanon think that migration issues ‘strongly characterise’ the Mediterranean region.

However, migrants and Lebanese natives live side-by-side, in coexistence, rather than in a cohesive society. The Lebanese are afraid of greater integration of Syrians into Lebanese society. Therefore, it is not surprising that Lebanese respondents have high hopes for European involvement in the refugee situation, with 73% stating that closer cooperation with European countries will ‘definitely’ or ‘maybe’ benefit the Lebanese response to the refugee situation.

The Survey data suggest that respondents in Lebanon perceive that ensuring that schools are places where children learn to live in diversity is the most effective action to help people live better together in multicultural environments (Chart 21.1). However, the extent to which this approach can be applied in practice is questionable, in some cases due to community constraints, but also due to the reality of the educational system. This is particularly true with regards to the influx of migrants following the Syrian crisis. Education services are provided separately by the United Nations and the Lebanese government, characterised by different schedules and locations, meaning it is rare for Syrian migrants and Lebanese citizens to be schooled together. In practice, public spaces may be a more appropriate setting in which people can learn to live in diversity.

**Living together and Diversity**

Lebanon is a very diverse state; this diversity is enshrined in personal status laws and social norms. The 18 religious communities

and related personal status laws frame the complex citizenship and identities of the Lebanese population. Respect of otherness is not a matter of choice and education; rather, it is the way of life encoded by social norms and legal instruments.

Living together in a multicultural environment is not a cognitive individual choice; it is deeply rooted in the practice of reciprocal self-interest that brings about the notion of common interest. Common interest is not the same as public interest or common good; rather, reciprocity plays a major role in shaping a dynamic but fragile balance of power and interaction between shared values. Any crisis or threat to this balance of power produces a deep-seated fear of otherness. Therefore, it is not surprising that a contradiction is shown in the data between support for equal rights across cultural and religious backgrounds, and diversity being seen as a source of instability (Chart 21.2).

**Characteristics of the Mediterranean**

Respondents were asked to what extent they perceived that the Mediterranean region is characterised by various concepts. The proportion of respondents stating that the region is characterised by a ‘resistance to change’ has increased by seven percentage points from 2009. It could suggest that the ‘Arab Spring’ did not bring the expected fruits, so much as a mounting doubt about the ability of the October 17, 2019 uprisings to produce change. The backdrop of such a conclusion draws a thin line between resilience and resignation. There is a growing belief that it is difficult to bring swift change to the Mediterranean, be it via revolution or opposition.

### Digitalisation

Since this study took place, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the digitalisation of social relations. The 2020 Survey found that Lebanese respondents believe that digitalisation can facilitate cultural dialogue, that digital tools can enhance intercultural dialogue, and that cultural barriers are less prominent online as opposed to during face-to-face interaction (Chart 21.3).

However, digitalisation of social relations has created a virtual world that does not always materialize nor reflect reality. For instance, the study reveals that the most trusted media source in Lebanon is TV and not social media, reducing the potential for digital platforms to be tools for genuine intercultural information and communication.

With regards to online schooling, the family is now present during class time. Capacity-building and knowledge production should be influenced via binary relations in two directions, between the professor and the student, and among peers in the classroom. Through digitalisation, and due to the omnipresence of the family, the teacher-student relationship and peer-to-peer relationships are disrupted.

### Post-study major development and recommendations

The COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with the Blast of Beirut, have uncovered governance limitations. The EU and donors have diverted

all aid and developmental projects to civil society and local authorities. Short of the reforms that different international conferences have called for, in order for Lebanon to stay alive there need to be bold moves to strengthen cooperation with NGOs and municipalities, together with alliances of schools and universities, federations of hospitals and medical corps – creating incentives for the youth to stay in their country, among others.

The development of new models of digital education, such as Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs) should focus on peer evaluation as a prerequisite for accreditation. Within the MOOC framework, the teaching team should deliver webinars and forum discussions on a weekly basis, regardless of the length of the course. This will lead to the development of a digital community, creating better places for interaction and expression than the binary relation of classical distance learning that is still prevailing during confinement.

Local authorities need to be more involved in enhancing public dialogue between citizens, and between the citizens and Syrian migrants. Local stakeholders, both native and migrant, should be able to meet to discuss common issues. ■

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## Dialogue in action | Turkey

### Management challenges during the COVID-19 Pandemic

The year 2020 has definitely been the most challenging one. Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. Beneath the quiet calm lies a sense that society has been unhinged and that the usual rules no longer apply.

In this context, this year re-shaped the normal schedule of many institutions, enterprises, NGOs, etc.; it re-shaped our timetable of our activities as HoN of the Turkish Network of the ALF.

As the Coronavirus pandemic was stretching around the world, we as HoN Turkey were constantly active online by organising meetings, webinars, ALF talks, management trainings, etc. By organising these online events, we were not only keeping the ALF network alive, but also enriching their knowledge, updating them with the latest ALF trends and further fostering ALF values.

Aside from the online activities, under these pandemic conditions we successfully implemented in-person National Network Meeting and Capacity Building Training (July 2020).

Both activities aimed at boosting the working capacities of the institutions of the civil society sector and their internal management skills. Furthermore, these activities were a chance to strengthen the ties of the Turkish network. Thanks to these two meetings, the members established new partnerships at local level and were informed about funding opportunities—both key elements contributing to their sustainability.

HoN Turkey remains determined to give its best commitment towards promoting ALF values and ensuring a smooth communication within the Network.

# Maintaining Social Trust in a Culturally Diverse Population in Sweden

Kristof TAMAS

Focusing on Sweden, Kristof Tamas examines Sweden’s claim as one of the most tolerant and culturally diverse of the European countries. This claim is at odds with the high level of importance and attention given to migration in the Swedish political agenda. Kristoff examines welfare chauvinism in Sweden, whilst the 2020 Survey findings suggest that tolerance of cultural diversity remains high in Sweden, the author is cognisant of the growing differentiation between various groups in Swedish society and the impact of economic integration on social trust.

What does the Mediterranean region represent for citizens of European countries? What are the experiences of migration, cultural diversity and tolerance in Sweden? This article will explore Sweden’s profile as one of the most tolerant and culturally diverse of the European countries, despite migration remaining high on the political agenda. It argues that high overall levels of social trust in Sweden may contribute to high levels of tolerance, whilst recommending policymakers and practitioners to consider and address rising distrust and discontent among certain demographic subgroups.

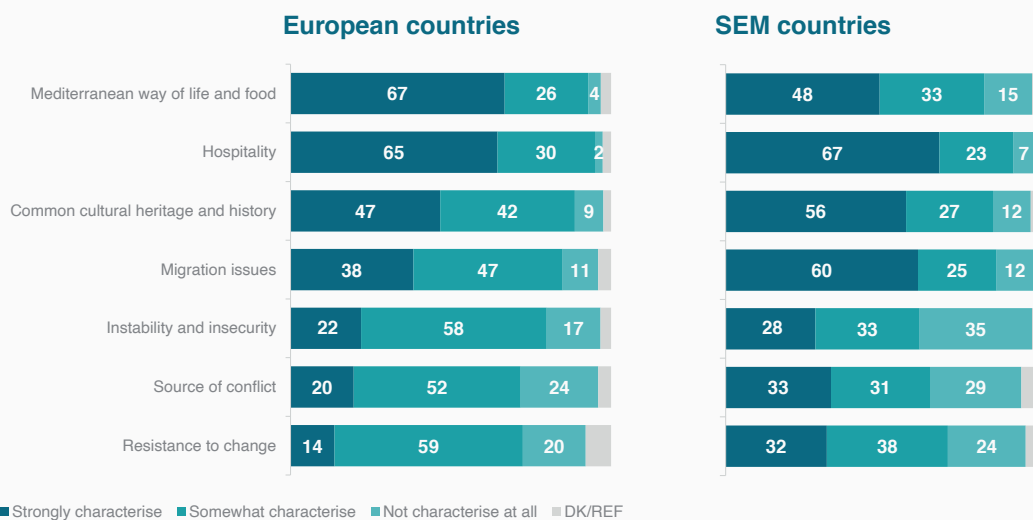
According to the Anna Lindh/Ipsos Intercultural Trends Survey, 38% of respondents in European countries think that migration issues ‘strongly characterise’ the Mediterranean region and 47% think they ‘somewhat characterise’ the region. Respondents in Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (SEM) countries are even more likely to think

that migration issues are strongly characteristic of the region, with 60% and 25% believing that migration issues ‘strongly characterise’ and ‘somewhat characterise’ the region, respectively (Chart 22.1).

**Migration was already high on the Swedish political agenda before the 2015 crisis.**

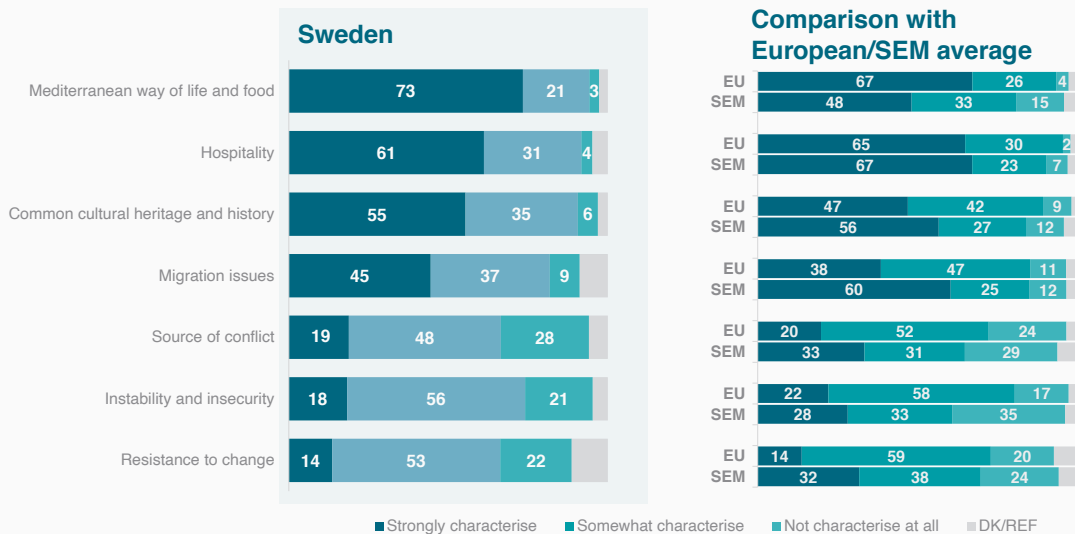
It is not surprising that migration remains high on the agenda in Europe following the 2015 migration and refugee crisis. In 2015, almost 39% of the 1.26 million first-time asylum applicants in the EU came from Syria and Iraq. Many of the African asylum seekers passed through the Sahara desert and the Mediterranean on dangerous journeys in their attempts to find a better life. More than 6,300 died during those journeys.

**Chart 22.1: Characteristics of the Mediterranean region - by 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 (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

**Chart 22.2: Characteristics of the Mediterranean region - by country and country group**



**?** **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 country and country group (©Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

Nevertheless, migration was already high on the Swedish political agenda before the 2015 crisis. Since the 2014 elections, there has been a major change in the political debate: ‘a new dominant policy paradigm acknowledging a need for a reduction in the number of asylum-seekers and family migrants, ... has emerged and is supported by a clear majority of the political parties’ (Emilson, 2018: 18). Sweden has a much higher share of its population born abroad (18.5%) than the EU average (7.2%), according to 2017 data. Globally, Sweden also has the seventh highest proportion of refugees per capita (Holloway and Leach, 2020: 1) and integration is a major challenge, according to most Swedes. Indeed, a 2019 survey found that 64% of respondents in Sweden doubted that refugees would be able to integrate well into Swedish society (Ipsos MORI, 2019).

In 2016, 44% of the Swedish population believed that migration was the most important issue for the country, up from 8% in 2011 (Holloway and Leach, 2020: 5). Half of respondents in 2017 believed that there were already too many immigrants in Sweden (Ipsos MORI, 2017). The Survey data reflect the high levels of attention given to migration among the Swedish public, with respondents in Sweden seven percentage points more likely than the EU average to think that migration issues ‘strongly characterise’ the Mediterranean region (Chart 22.2).

In this context, it is somewhat surprising that, in other ways, people living in Sweden remain among the most tolerant in Europe. The Survey data in Chart 22.3 show that 90% of respondents in Sweden

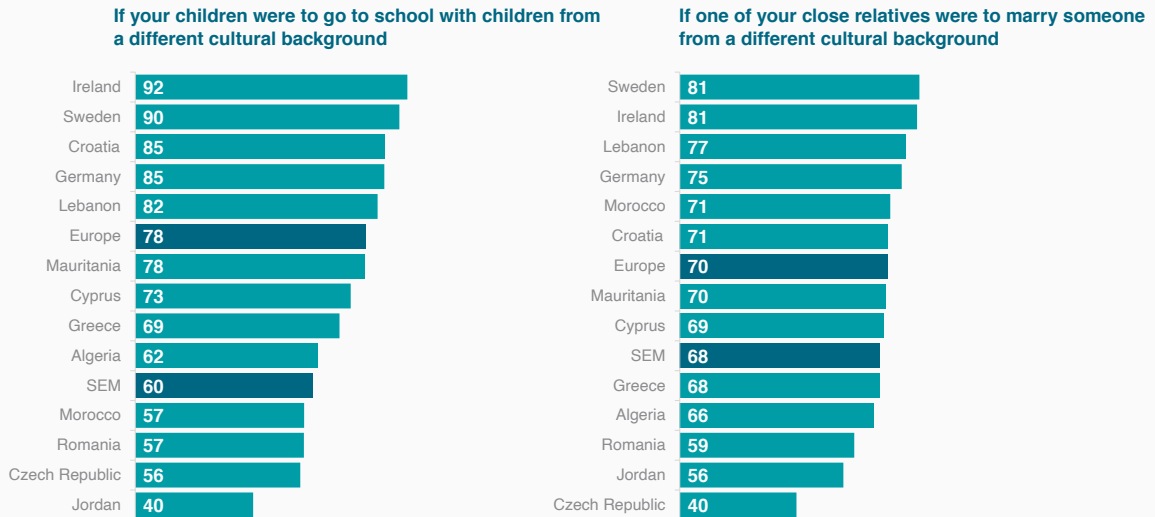
would ‘not mind at all’ if their children were to go to school with children from a different cultural background (second only to Ireland’s 92%); whilst 81% of Swedes (the joint highest across the study, alongside Ireland) would ‘not mind at all’ if one of their close relatives were to marry someone from a different cultural background.

**Sweden has a much higher share of its population born abroad...than the EU average...Sweden also has the seventh highest proportion of refugees per capita...and integration is a major challenge...**

The term welfare chauvinism is used to describe a trade-off between public spending on immigrants vis-a-vis investments for ‘natives’. ‘Prior research defines welfare chauvinism as support for the exclusion of immigrants from the receipt of all or certain kinds of welfare’ (Goldschmidt and Rydgren, 2018: 2). One recent study examined this concept in action. The study found a strong positive association between immigrant unemployment in the nearby neighbourhood and the likelihood of native-born Swedes to prefer public money to be spent on native elderly people rather than on immigrants. A lack of economic integration of immigrants may therefore reduce social solidarity (Goldschmidt and Rydgren, 2018).

The labour force participation rate among Swedish-born persons aged 20-64 in mid-2020 was 88.8% compared to 81.2% among foreign-born persons. The relative unemployment rate of Swedish-born persons was much lower (4.7%) than among foreign-born

**Chart 22.3: Cultural diversity and tolerance - by country**



**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 (% "not mind at all"), by country (@Anna Lindh/Ipsos 2020).

persons (17.8%) (LFS, 2020). Nevertheless, despite evidence that high immigrant unemployment rates may increase welfare chauvinism, data from the Survey suggest that tolerance remains high overall in Sweden, though there is variation among sub-groups.

Trust is another concept which has been the focus of much migration research. Perspectives differ with regards to the impact of immigration on trust. The ‘contact hypothesis’ posits that more diversity brings more interethnic contact and therefore increases tolerance and social solidarity. In contrast, ‘conflict theory’ suggests that as a society becomes more diverse, people tend to look further inward towards their ingroups, whilst simultaneously distancing themselves from their outgroups. A study by Putnam (2007) identified that conflict theory is more likely to be true in the short term, whereas the contact hypothesis would become more prevalent in the long-term, as new forms of social solidarity and more complex identities are created.

**Although the Survey findings suggest that tolerance of cultural diversity remains high in Sweden, we should be observant of the growing differentiation between various groups in Swedish society and the impact of economic integration – or lack of – on social trust.**

There is large variation in Sweden between what have been referred to as ‘high trusters’, ‘medium trusters’ and ‘low trusters’ (Holmberg and Rothstein, 2020). Since the mid-1990s, a majority of Swedes identify as high trusters (61% in 2014). The share of low trusters

has, however, increased over the years (reaching as high as 12% in 2017). Young people, blue-collar workers, people with only basic education, supporters of anti-immigrant parties, as well as immigrants from outside Europe tend to be low trusters. Moreover, unemployed people, people in poor health or with disabilities and people on sick-leave also show low levels of trust. In contrast, white-collar workers, the university educated, and those enjoying good health are far more likely to be high trusters (Holmberg and Rothstein, 2020: 5-7).

Considering the above, it is possible to draw the conclusion that ‘increased social stratification and inequality may be important for understanding the changing nature of social trust within a specific society’ (Holmberg and Rothstein, 2020: 20). Although the Survey findings suggest that tolerance of cultural diversity remains high in Sweden, we should be observant of the growing differentiation between various groups in Swedish society and the impact of economic integration – or lack of – on social trust.

Indeed, data from the Survey suggest that tolerance among respondents in Sweden may vary based on socio-demographic background. For instance, respondents who are not currently in paid work are more likely than those in paid work to either ‘strongly agree’ or ‘somewhat agree’ that ‘cultural and religious diversity constitutes a threat to the stability of society’ (35% compared with 25%, respectively). Similarly, respondents living in rural towns or villages are more likely to agree with the above statement than those living in large cities (35% compared with 24%, respectively). There were no statistically significant differences based on education level,

though caution should be exercised due to low base sizes and the potential for type II error.

### Conclusion

Migration, among other things, characterises the Mediterranean region. Migration brings cultural diversity as immigrants settle and become part of society (Koopmans et al., 2005). Sweden has one of the highest immigration rates and naturalisation rates in Europe, increasing its diversity. Findings from the Survey suggest that Sweden is also one of the most tolerant European countries in relation to cultural diversity. This is in line with the argument that self-expression values, which are broadly shared in Sweden, are associated with trust (Inglehart, 2018).

Nevertheless, trust is not guaranteed. Whilst social solidarity remains strong in Sweden (Borevi, 2015), increased diversity since

the mid-2010s seems to have decreased trust towards outgroups. Immigration leads to growing differentiation in society and may therefore lead to decreasing trust among certain groups – particularly those who are socioeconomically disadvantaged, at least in the short term. It is important to explore how trust can be maintained across various social strata in societies as cultural diversity increases. Both economic and social integration of immigrants appear key to counteracting tendencies of distrust (Goldschmidt, and Rydgren, 2018; Laurentsyeva and Venturini, 2017). This is of particular significance in relation to the Mediterranean region, from where many immigrants to Sweden originate. ■

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## Dialogue in action | Jordan

### Social impact of EuroMed cooperation

**Needs addressed:** Sometimes it is not easy for organisations with similar interests (including CBOs and CSOs) in Jordan to meet and work together on common topical causes. This is due mainly to lack of funding to organise events and venues in which to meet, as well as the variation of the capacity of such local organisations to reach out to other CBOs and widen their networks. There is also the need to widen the scope of intercultural exchange with other organisations in the EuroMed region on an international level, not only in Jordan. Such networking will enhance dialogue and allow for the exchange of new ideas that are not often tackled in the local framework.

The ALF Jordanian Network has adopted an agenda for the promotion of:

- Networking so that partners can cooperate with cultural venues and institutions, such as cultural centres and artistic venues, in order to introduce the young participants to such centres and their work within local societies and with well established artists who would act as role models who chose arts as a profession.
- Building strong inter-organisational relationships.
- Creating opportunities for participants.
- Creating space for and awareness of intercultural dialogue by EuroMed citizens.
- Facilitating the creation of EuroMed collaborations and partnerships.

Project website: [www.riifs.org](http://www.riifs.org)

# Annexes



# Annex 1

## Anna Lindh/Ipsos intercultural Trends Survey Questionnaire

### 1. Representation of the Mediterranean and Mutual Interest

1.1 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.

- A. Mediterranean way of life and food
- B. Source of conflict
- C. Common cultural heritage and history
- D. Hospitality
- E. Resistance to change
- F. Instability and insecurity
- G. Migration issues

Would you say they:

Strongly characterise.....	1
Somewhat characterise.....	2
Not characterise at all.....	3
[Don't know] .....	8
[Refused].....	9

### 1.2 If you could start a new life, in which country of the world would you start it?

- Open-ended question
- Europe
- North America
- South America
- SEM countries
- Africa
- Asia
- Australia
- Etc. List of countries.

### 1.3 A. Thinking about the countries bordering the Southern and Eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, how interested are you in knowing about:

### 1.3 B. Thinking about European countries, how interested are you in knowing about:

- A. Their economic conditions
- B. Their cultural life and lifestyle
- C. Their religious beliefs and practices
- D. Their political situation
- E. Their natural environment and the impact of climate change

Would you say you are:

Very interested.....	1
Somewhat interested.....	2
Not interested .....	3
[Don't know].....	8
[Refused].....	9



**1.4 A. Your country, along with other European countries, has decided to reinforce closer cooperation with countries on the Southern and Eastern shore of the Mediterranean. Which of the following do you think your society can improve by reinforcing such cooperation?**

**1.4 B. Your country, along with other countries bordering the Southern and Eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, has decided to reinforce closer cooperation with European countries. Which of the following do you think your society can improve by reinforcing such cooperation?**

- A. Economic growth and employment
- B. Education and training
- C. Individual freedom and rule of law
- D. Gender equality
- E. Environmental sustainability
- F. Fair response to refugee situation
- G. Recognition of cultural diversity
- H. Support for NGOs and civil society organisations

**Please state whether you think there will definitely be a gain, maybe a gain or no gain.**

Definitely.....	1
Maybe.....	2
No.....	3
[Don't know].....	8
[Refused].....	9

## 2. Values and Mutual Perceptions

**2.1 A. 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?**

Curiosity.....	1
Obedience.....	2
Religious beliefs /practices.....	3
Independence.....	4
Family solidarity.....	5
Respect for the other cultures.....	6
[Don't know].....	8
[Refused].....	9

**B. And the second most important?**

Curiosity.....	1
Obedience.....	2
Religious beliefs /practices.....	3
Independence.....	4
Family solidarity.....	5
Respect for the other cultures.....	6
[Don't know].....	8
[Refused].....	9

**2.2 A. And which one of these six do you think is most important to parents raising children in Europe?**

Curiosity.....	1
Obedience.....	2
Religious beliefs /practices.....	3
Independence.....	4
Family solidarity.....	5
Respect for the other cultures.....	6
[Don't know].....	8
[Refused].....	9

**B. And the second most important?**

Curiosity.....	1
Obedience .....	2
Religious beliefs /practices.....	3
Independence.....	4
Family solidarity.....	5
Respect for the other cultures .....	6
[Don't know].....	8
[Refused].....	9

**2.3 A. And which one of these six do you think is most important to parents raising children in countries bordering the Southern and Eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea?**

Curiosity.....	1
Obedience .....	2
Religious beliefs /practices.....	3
Independence.....	4
Family solidarity.....	5
Respect for the other cultures .....	6
[Don't know].....	8
[Refused].....	9

**B. And the second most important?**

Curiosity.....	1
Obedience .....	2
Religious beliefs /practices.....	3
Independence.....	4
Family solidarity.....	5
Respect for the other cultures .....	6
[Don't know].....	8
[Refused].....	9

**2.4 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**

- A. Cultural and religious diversity constitutes a threat to the stability of society
- B. People from different cultural and religious backgrounds should have the same rights and opportunities
- C. Cultural and religious diversity is important for the prosperity of your society

You would say you:

Strongly agree .....	1
Somewhat agree .....	2
Somewhat disagree.....	3
Strongly disagree.....	4
[Don't know].....	8
[Refused].....	9

**2.5 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:**

- A. Looking after children and the home
- B. In business
- C. In government and politics
- D. In sports
- E. In the media
- F. In science and technology
- G. In education, arts and culture

You would say they should be playing:

Greater role .....	1
The same role.....	2

## ANNEXES

Lesser role.....	3
[Don't know].....	8
[Refused].....	9

**2.6 A. 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?**

**2.6 B. During the past 12 months, have you seen, read or heard anything in the media that has influenced your view of people in European countries?**

Yes, in a positive way .....	1
Yes, in a negative way .....	2
Yes, I have seen, read or heard something but my views remained unchanged .....	3
No, I have not seen, read or heard anything in the media about people from these countries .....	4
[Don't know].....	8
[Refused].....	9

**2.7 A. Which of the following sources do you trust most for information about countries bordering the Southern and Eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea? Please select up to three sources.**

**2.7 B. Which of the following sources do you trust most for information about European countries? Please select up to three sources.**

Films/documentaries .....	1
TV .....	2
Print media (newspapers, magazines, etc.) .....	3
Online media (news websites, online magazines, etc.) .....	4
Books.....	6
Social media (Facebook, Twitter, blogs, etc.) .....	7
Radio .....	8
Other.....	9
[Don't know].....	88
[Refused].....	99

---

## 3. Interaction and Dialogue

**3.1 A. In the past 12 months, have you talked to or met someone from a country bordering the Southern and Eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea?**

**3.1 B. In the past 12 months, have you talked to or met someone from a European country?**

[Think of people you met recently, as well as those you've known for a long time; also think about meeting people in your own country or another country and consider any type of interaction, including online.]

Yes.....	1
No.....	2
[Don't know].....	8
[Refused].....	9

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

Business or work .....	1
School.....	2
Tourism.....	3
Chatting on the Internet, social media, Twitter .....	4
They live in my neighbourhood .....	5
In the street or public space, such as a park or restaurant .....	6
Other, please specify .....	7
[Don't know].....	8
[Refused].....	9

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**3.3 A. Thinking of your encounter(s) with this/these person(s), did meeting or talking to them change or reinforce your view of people from countries bordering the Southern and Eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea?**

**3.3 B. Thinking of your encounter(s) with this/these person(s), did meeting or talking to them change or reinforce your view of people from European countries?**

Yes, mainly in a positive way .....	1
Yes, mainly in a negative way .....	2
Yes, both positive and negative .....	3
No, my views remained unchanged .....	4
[Don't know] .....	8
[Refused] .....	9

**3.4 To what extent, if at all, are each of the following a barrier (obstacle or impediment), when meeting with or talking to people from different cultures?**

- A. Not speaking the same language
- B. Social and cultural constraints
- C. Visa and travel difficulties
- D. Economic barriers
- E. Religion
- F. Cultural tensions or conflicts throughout history

You would say it is:

A big barrier .....	1
Somewhat of a barrier .....	2
Not a barrier .....	3
[Don't know] .....	8
[Refused] .....	9

**3.5 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.**

- A. Having a person from a different cultural background as a work colleague
- B. Having a person from a different cultural background as a neighbour
- C. If one of your close relatives were to marry someone from a different cultural background
- D. If your children were to go to school with children from a different cultural background

You would:

Not mind at all .....	1
Not mind too much .....	2
Mind a little .....	3
Mind a lot .....	4
[Does not apply] .....	7
[Don't know] .....	8
[Refused] .....	9

**3.6 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?**

- A. Exchange programmes involving people across the Mediterranean
- B. Inter-religious dialogue
- C. Cultural and artistic initiatives
- D. Media training for cross-cultural reporting
- E. Trainings of governmental professionals and non-governmental actors in diversity management and radicalisation prevention

## ANNEXES

- F. Education and youth programmes to foster youth-led dialogue initiatives
- G. Support of youth participation in public life

You would say:

Very effective .....	1
Somewhat effective .....	2
Not very effective .....	3
Not at all effective .....	4
[Don't know] .....	8
[Refused] .....	9

### 3.7 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 migrants and receiving communities live better together in a multicultural environment?

- A. Ensuring that schools are places where children learn how to live in diversity
- B. Enabling the expression of cultural diversity in public spaces
- C. Promoting the organisation of multicultural events
- D. Restricting cultural practices to the private sphere
- E. Encouraging local authority and civil society initiatives that promote intercultural dialogue

You would say:

Very effective .....	1
Somewhat effective .....	2
Not very effective .....	3
Not at all effective .....	4
[Don't know] .....	8
[Refused] .....	9

### 3.8 With regard to the use of digital technology, please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

- A. Digital technology can play an important role in facilitating dialogue between people from different cultures
- B. Cultural barriers are less of an obstacle during online (digital) communication compared to offline (face-to-face) communication
- C. Skills for intercultural dialogue can be enhanced via digital tools

You would:

Strongly agree .....	1
Somewhat agree .....	2
Somewhat disagree .....	3
Strongly disagree .....	4
[Don't know] .....	8
[Refused] .....	9

---

## 4. Demographics

### D1. How would you describe yourself?

Male .....	1
Female .....	2
In another way .....	3
[Don't know] .....	8
[Refused] .....	9

### D2. In what year were you born?

[Don't know] .....	8
[Refused] .....	9

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**D3. Were you or your parents born in a different country than [COUNTRY]?**

Yes, I was .....	1
Yes, my parents were .....	2
Both me and my parents were.....	3
No.....	4

**D3A. In which country/ies?**

[Don't know].....	8
[Refused] .....	9

**D3B. Were any of your grandparents born in a country on the Southern and Eastern shore of the Mediterranean?**

**Were any of your grandparents born in a European country?**

Yes.....	1
No.....	2
[Don't know].....	88
[Refused].....	99

**D4. Do you have any friends or relatives who live in countries bordering the Southern and Eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea?**

**Do you have any friends or relatives who live in European countries?**

Yes.....	1
No.....	2
[Don't know].....	8
[Refused].....	9

**D5. What is the highest level of education you have completed?**

Never been in formal education/never completed primary education .....	1
Complete primary education.....	2
Complete secondary education .....	3
Technical/vocational education beyond secondary school level .....	4
University-level education.....	5
[Don't know].....	88
[Refused].....	99

**D6. Do you belong to a religion or religious denomination? If yes, which one?**

Does not belong to a denomination.....	1
Roman Catholic.....	2
Protestant .....	3
Orthodox (Russian/Greek/etc.).....	4
Jew .....	5
Muslim .....	6
Hindu .....	7
Buddhist.....	8
Other.....	9
Lutheran .....	10
[Don't know].....	88
[Refused].....	99

ANNEXES

**D7. Regardless of whether you belong to a particular religion, how religious would you say you are? On a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 stands for “not at all religious” and 10 for “very religious”, where would you place yourself?**

Not at all religious.....	0
.....	1
.....	2
.....	3
.....	4
.....	5
.....	6
.....	7
.....	8
.....	9
Very religious.....	10
[Don't know].....	88
[Refused].....	99

**D8. Would you say you live in a rural area or village, in a small or middle-sized town, or in a large city or town?**

Rural area or village.....	1
Small or middle-sized town.....	2
Suburbs of large town or city.....	3
Large town or city.....	4
[Don't know].....	88
[Refused].....	99

**D9. Which of these categories best describes your current situation?**

In paid work.....	1
Self-employed.....	2
Working unpaid in the family business.....	3
Not currently in paid work.....	4
[Don't know].....	8
[Refused].....	9

**D9 A. Does this mean you are...**

Unemployed.....	1
A pupil, student, or in training.....	2
Fulfilling domestic tasks and care responsibilities.....	3
In retirement.....	4
Other.....	5
[Don't know].....	8
[Refused].....	9

**D10. Do you happen to have a mobile phone or not?**

Yes.....	1
No.....	2
[Don't know].....	8
[Refused].....	9

**D10 B. Is this mobile phone your only phone, or do you also have a landline telephone at home that is used to make and receive calls?**

Has landline at home.....	1
Mobile is only phone.....	2
[Don't know].....	8
[Refused].....	9

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## Annex 4

### Biographies of the authors

#### Audrey AZOULAY

As head of UNESCO since 2017, Audrey Azoulay has launched a vast Strategic Transformation programme for the Organization with a view to position UNESCO at the heart of emerging challenges in the XXI century; focusing on the protection of cultural heritage and the achievement of universal quality education (in particular for girls and women), as well as UNESCO's role as a global laboratory of ideas, as a platform for humanist cooperation, a standards-producing arena and an agency of experts to disseminate knowledge and know-how throughout the world to the greatest number of people.

#### Naouel ABDELLATIF MAMI

Naouel Abdellatif Mami is a full Professor and is Vice Rector in charge of the External Relations and Cooperation at Sétif 2 University in Algeria. She holds a doctorate in Educational Psychology and Teaching Foreign Languages. A Higher Education Reform Expert, she has participated in and coordinated a number of international Research projects with the Council of Europe, the UN, the EU, UNIMED and UNESCO.

#### Shadi ABU-AYYASH

Shadi Abu-Ayyash is a Palestinian Researcher and Educator of Communication and Media Studies, with over 20 years of experiences in academia, media industry, non-governmental organizations and consultancy in Palestine and abroad. His research and professional focus are in the fields of journalism, intercultural communication, new media, public relations mediatisation, and social movements.

#### Haifa ABU GHAZALEH

Haifa Abu Ghazaleh is the Assistant Secretary General, Head of Social Sector at the League of Arab States and previously headed the Media and Communication Sector from 2013 to 2018. Previously, she was appointed as a Special Envoy for the LAS Secretary-General to the Civil Society, and as a Jordanian Representative to the Arab Women Organization and Member of the Executive Committee. Haifa holds two PhDs in Education & Psychology, an MA in Educational Counselling and a BA in Psychology and Sociology.

#### Jelnar AHMAD

Jelnar Ahmad is a Syrian consultant based in Germany, currently holding the position of Research and M&E Manager at IMPACT–Civil Society Research and Development. She has been active in the field of research and M&E for over eight years, with experience mainly related to non-profit actors in the Syrian context. Her areas of focus include role and space of civil society, gender in civil society, diaspora engagement and organisational development.

#### HRH Princess Rym ALI

Her Royal Highness, Princess Rym Ali is the President of the Anna Lindh Foundation. She is the Founder of the Jordan Media Institute and was a producer and correspondent for various prominent news organisations in London and New York until 2004, beginning as a producer and later a Baghdad correspondent. She holds a Master of Philosophy, Political Science from the Institut d'Etudes Politiques in Paris and is a graduate (MS) from Columbia University's School of Journalism. After joining the Jordanian Royal Family, she began working as a Commissioner at the Royal Film Commission of Jordan.

#### Riham BAH

Riham Bahi is an Associate Professor of International Relations at the Faculty of Economics and Political Science, Cairo University. Riham was a visiting Professor at the American University in Cairo from 2009 to 2018. She has received numerous awards and honours, including a Fulbright Pre-Doctoral award and expert teaching credentials from the Centre for Effective University Teaching at Northeastern University. Riham has conducted extensive research on international relations and global governance, gender studies, Egypt and U.S. Foreign Policies, Iran-Gulf relations and Euro-Mediterranean relations.

#### Katy BARWISE

Katy Barwise is a Senior Programme Manager at the United Nations Network on Migration Secretariat in Geneva, Switzerland, where she manages the EU-UN Migration Capacity-Building Partnership and previously supported the EU and partners to integrate migration into their development work, based in IOM Brussels. She has a Master's and undergraduate degree from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. Katy worked with the UN in South Africa, Zambia, Mozambique and Australia (covering the Pacific Islands region).

#### Fares BRAIZAT

Fares Braizat holds a doctorate and is Chairman of NAMA Strategic Intelligence Solutions, where he directs public policy-related projects. He served as the Minister of Youth 2019-2020; and Senior Adviser / Director of Strategic Studies and Evaluation at the Office of His Majesty, Royal Hashemite Court, Jordan from January 2012 to February 2016. Fares serves on the International Scientific Advisory Board of the World Values, and has led Transparency International surveys in the region of Jordan.

#### Stephen C. CALLEYA

Stephen C. Calleya is a Maltese International Relations Scholar with a focus on the concept of regionalism and security challenges in the Mediterranean. He is an advisor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Malta and is also visiting professor at the Centre for European Integration Studies (ZEI) at the University of Bonn. Stephen has written, edited and published several books and articles and is a regular commentator on international affairs on broadcast media. His most recent book is Security Challenges in the Mediterranean, Mare Nostrum (Routledge, 2013).

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## Claire CHARBIT

Claire Charbit is Head of the Territorial Dialogues and Migration Unit in the OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities. She holds a doctorate in Economics. She has developed the OECD's work programme on multi-level governance and a related standard methodology that informed studies in many countries, including recently on the local integration of migrants. She is now leading a project on Regions in Globalisation, gathering statistical and policy data on regional positions in globalisation and recovery strategies.

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## Mariam Traore CHAZALNOEL

Mariam Traore Chazalnoël is a Senior Policy Officer with specific expertise in how climate and environmental change impact the migration of people across the globe. Mariam has been working on policy issues related to climate-migration nexus since 2013 and has authored and edited several articles and publications on this topic. Mariam is currently based at the United Nations Migration Agency (IOM) Headquarters in Geneva. She has been working at IOM since 2008 in policy and operational positions in Geneva, Bamako and New York.

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## Elisabetta CIUCCARELLI

Elisabetta Ciuccarelli is a member of the editorial board of the journal *afkar/ideas* and coordinates the IEMed Inter-University Program Aula Mediterrània. She previously managed its Arabic fiction and documentary film series. Elisabetta holds a degree in Oriental Languages and Literatures (Arabic) from Ca' Foscari University in Venice, and a master's degree from MIM, Crossing the Mediterranean: towards Investment and Integration. While in Damascus and Cairo, she studied the Arabic language.

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## Karl DONERT

Karl Donert is a British Geographer specialising in the uses of geo-technology in learning, teaching and research. A UK National Teaching Fellow, the highest award an academic can receive from their peers, he is a former academic at Liverpool Hope University, where he was responsible for internationalisation. Karl is an expert to the European Commission and an elected member of Academia Europaea. He was a former elected President and currently Vice President of the European Association of Geographers (EUROGEO).

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## Latifa EL BOUHSINI

Latifa El Bouhsini is a Moroccan historian and Professor of Higher Education at the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Mohammed V University - Rabat. She is also a Researcher specialising in the history of women in medieval times, and is the co-coordinator of a work on the history of the human rights movement of women. Latifa is a member of the editorial board of the review "Bahithoun". She is active in civil society, and has led several conferences and training workshops for the benefit of young people.

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## Sélim EL SAYEGH

Sélim El Sayegh has been a Professor of Law at the University Paris-Saclay, France since 1993. He founded and directed two Master programs in Negotiations and NGO management, and developed the MOOC on the Competencies of Intercultural Dialogue in 2017. Sélim served as minister of Social Affairs in Lebanon and put together the Social Pact in 2010, the National Strategy for Social Development and the National Poverty Targeting Program with the World Bank in 2011.

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## Anne ESSER

Anne Esser is a Senior Research Expert at Ipsos European Public Affairs, where she has worked on a range of international social research studies, including projects for the World Bank, UN Women and the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights. Anne developed her research skills at the Centre of Sociological Studies of Lisbon's Nova University and the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth in Brazil, specialising in topics such as immigrants' cultural identity and gender-sensitive social protection. She holds a Master's degree in Migration Studies from Pompeu Fabra University.

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## Josep FERRÉ

Josep Ferré is the Executive Director of the Anna Lindh Foundation, and an Agronomic Engineer with extensive experience relating to the main issues of the Euro-Mediterranean agenda. He has held numerous positions, including Director General and Managing Director of the European Institute of the Mediterranean; Director General of the Spanish branch of the African Medical and Research Foundation; Executive Secretary of the Azahar Program of the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation; Head of Mission of the Spanish International Cooperation in Mauritania; and Programme Coordinator in the Spanish Embassy in Morocco.

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## Daniela HUBER

Daniela Huber is Head of the Mediterranean and Middle East Programme at the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI) and Editor of The International Spectator. She is also Adjunct Professor at Roma Tre University where she teaches a master's course on International Politics. She scientifically co-coordinated the European Commission-funded Horizon 2020 Project MEDRESET from 2016 to 2019.

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## Eleonora INSALACO

Eleonora Insalaco is the Head of Operations and Intercultural Research at the Anna Lindh Foundation. She is also the editor of four consecutive editions of the Anna Lindh Report on Intercultural Trends in the EuroMed Region (2010, 2014, 2018 and 2021 editions) and of the Anna Lindh Handbook on Intercultural Citizenship Education in the EuroMed Region. Eleonora is a graduate of the College of Europe, with academic expertise in Islamic studies and EuroMed relations in the field of education, research, youth, civil society, culture and media.

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## Piarras MAC ÉINRÍ

Piarras Mac Éinrí holds a doctorate and lectures in Geography at University College Cork and has researched and published extensively on migration and integration issues. He directed a major research project on Irish emigration after the crash of 2008 and was part of a three-year EU Horizon 2020 project on intra-EU migration. Piarras is actively involved in integration issues in Cork City. A former diplomat, he has served in Brussels, Beirut and Paris.

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## Dina MATAR

Dina Matar is a Reader in Political Communication and Arab media at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London. Her research and teaching are interdisciplinary, straddling the fields of communication, politics, cultural studies, gender, social movements and memory. She is also Chair of the Centre for Palestine Studies at SOAS. Before joining SOAS in 2005, she was a teaching fellow at the LSE Media and Communications Department. She has an MSc in Comparative Politics (LSE) and a PhD in Media and Communications (LSE).

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## Georgios MARIS

Georgios Maris is an Associate Professor at the Department of Mediterranean Studies, University of the Aegean in Greece. He was a Visiting Research Fellow at the Department of Politics and International Relations, Centre for International Studies at the University of Oxford, and Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Department of Political Science and Public Administration at the University of Athens. Georgios served as consultant at the Task Force in Greece for the European Commission.

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## Atte OKSANEN

Atte Oksanen is a Professor of Social Psychology and the leader of Emerging Technologies Lab. His research focuses on deviant behaviour online, emerging technologies and social interaction. Atte has led major cross-national projects over his career, and is the leading social science scholar in comparative studies on cyberhate. He has published over 160 peer-reviewed articles and almost 300 publications in flagship journals such as *Criminology*.

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## Nikolina PANTELI

Nikolina Panteli is a PhD candidate of the Department of Mediterranean Studies at the University of the Aegean, Greece. She holds a social and political science degree from the University of Cyprus. Nikolina also holds a bachelor's and master's degree in law from the Neapolis University Pafos law school. She has authored various publications in peer review journals in the fields of politics and law.

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## Necdet SAGLAM

Necdet Sağlam is a Turkish CSO activist and Professor of Business Administration at Anadolu University in Turkey; Director of the Association of Civil Society and Development Institute; and coordinator of the Turkish network of the Anna Lindh Foundation. He is also the director of 2N Innovation R&D Research Company and a former trainee at the European Union. Necdet has authored many publications, books, articles and teaching material on CSOs, SMEs, Audit, and IFRS. He conducts training for the governmental, private and CSOs sectors.

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## David Maria SASSOLI

David Maria Sassoli is an Italian politician from the centre-left Democratic Party, elected President of the European Parliament in 2019. Born in Florence in 1956, he had a successful career as a journalist and TV anchor before becoming a European Parliament Member in 2009. David focuses on the importance of tackling climate change; the need for politics to meet the aspirations of citizens, especially the youth; and the need to bolster parliamentary democracy and promote Europe's values.

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## Kristof TAMAS

Kristof Tamas is a Senior Adviser at the Ministry of Justice, Sweden. He is in charge of the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration in Sweden, and also represents Sweden within the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD). Kristof also works on the links between migration, climate change and the environment, and from 2014–2020 was the Director and Secretariat Head of DELMI, Migration Studies Delegation, based in Stockholm.

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## Margaux THARAUX

Margaux Tharaux is a Junior Policy Analyst in the Territorial Dialogues and Migration unit of the OECD. She focuses on migrant place-based integration, the allocation of competences across levels of government and actors in integration-related policy sectors, multi-level governance mechanisms for better integration, and territorial attractiveness. Margaux holds double Masters' degrees in Public Administration, and Economics and Public Policy from the London School of Economics and Sciences Po Paris. She has experience in lobbying and behavioural science research.

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## Lurdes VIDAL

Lurdes Vidal is Director of the Arab and Mediterranean Department at the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed). She is chief editor of the journal *afkar/ideas*, and Scientific Coordinator of the H2020 research project CONNEKT (Contexts of Extremism in MENA and Balkan Societies) and MAGIC (Muslim women and communities Against Gender Islamophobia in Society). She is a visiting professor at the University of Barcelona, at IBEI (Barcelona Institute of International Studies) and at Blanquerna–Ramon Llull University.



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## Krzysztof WASILEWSKI

Krzysztof Wasilewski is a Polish media scholar and Political Scientist, and associate professor and director of the Regional and European Studies Department at the Humanities Faculty of the Koszalin University of Technology, Poland. He has received a number of grants and scholarships, e.g. John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies; Freie Universität Berlin; Cambridge University; University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; Polish National Science Centre.

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## Robert WRAGG

Robert Wragg is a Senior Research Executive in Ipsos MORI's International Social Research Institute, where he specialises in coordinating multi-country research projects across Africa, Asia and Europe. Robert supports organisations working on a range of policy areas, from public health to migration; from violence against women and girls to education. He holds an MSc in International Social Change and Policy from the University of Sheffield.

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