Opinion Poll Report:

Recent European Measures Against Political Islam Groups

Executive Summary

Composition of the Sample:

- 89 percent of the respondents were males, and 11 percent were females.

- 26 percent of the respondents were aged 18-29 years, 21 percent were aged 30-39, 17 percent were aged 40-49, and 36 percent were aged 50 and above.

- 57 percent had postgraduate degrees, and 43 percent had bachelor's degrees.

- 62 percent were specialists in political affairs, 21 percent in sociology, 15 percent in security/military affairs, and 2 percent in economic affairs.

- 74 percent of the respondents were of Arab nationalities, and 26 percent of other nationalities.

Results of the Poll:

- 81 percent of the respondents showed interest in following the activities and issues of political Islam.

- The vast majority of the respondents said political Islam groups pose a great danger to European societies, with 78 percent citing Daesh and Al-Qaeda, 74 percent citing the Muslim Brotherhood, 69 percent citing the Lebanese Hezbollah, and 66 percent citing Turkish diaspora groups as being high risk groups.

- 87 percent of the respondents expressed their support for the recent European laws and measures to curb the activities of political Islam groups. 45 percent said these laws and measures will contribute significantly to curbing the activities of political Islam groups in Europe, while 45 percent said they will contribute moderately.

- 67 percent said the recent European laws and measures against political Islam groups will affect Muslim communities in Europe, with 22 percent believing the effect will be positive, 32 percent believing that it will be negative, and 46 percent feeling uncertain about the outcome.

- 30 percent of the respondents said they expected other European countries, such the United Kingdom and Scandinavian countries, to adopt similar laws and measures against political Islam groups.

- 67 percent of the respondents said the reason for the recent actions taken by the European countries under study (France, Austria, Germany and Switzerland) against political Islam groups was the "extremism of these groups which may lead to the use of violence".

- 90 percent of the respondents believe that the Muslim Brotherhood has influence in Europe, with 52 percent saying that the influence is significant.

- 25 percent of the respondents said the Muslim Brotherhood's contributions to the economies of European countries - through its funding activities - influences Europe's decisions related to the Middle East.

- 61 percent of the respondents expressed their support for the designation of the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization in Europe.

- 60 percent said the reason why the Muslim Brotherhood has not yet been designated as a terrorist group in Europe is that "the Muslim Brotherhood is being used in internal political issues, especially those relating to European Muslim communities".

Introduction:

As part of its opinion poll series, TRENDS Research & Advisory conducted a poll on the attitudes toward political Islam groups and extremist organizations, and the impact of the recent measures taken by some European countries – namely France, Germany, Austria and Switzerland – to restrict the activities of these groups and organizations. The poll sought to explore the opinions of experts and specialists as regards the level of risk posed by political Islam groups and extremist organizations to European societies, and the effectiveness of the measures taken by European countries to curb their activities.

The poll included eleven questions:

1. How interested are you in following the issues and activities of political Islam groups?
2. What degree of danger do the following political Islam groups pose to European societies?
3. To what extent are you supportive of the recent European laws and measures to curb the activities of political Islam groups?
4. Do you think the recent European laws and measures will affect Muslim communities in Europe?
5. Do you expect that other European countries will adopt similar laws and measures in the future?
6. What are the reasons for the recent actions taken by European countries against political Islam groups?
7. Do you think the Muslim Brotherhood has any influence in European countries?
8. To what extent do you think the Muslim Brotherhood's contributions to the economy of European countries – through its funding activities – influences Europe's decisions regarding the Middle East?
9. To what extent does the Muslim Brotherhood influence Muslims in Europe?
10. To what extent are you supportive of the designation of the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization in Europe?
11. Why has the Muslim Brotherhood not yet been designated as a terrorist organization in Europe?

Objectives:

- To determine the level of danger posed by political Islam groups to European countries.

- To understand the extent of support for the recent European laws and measures to suppress the activities of political Islam groups, and the extent to which these laws and measures will achieve their purpose.

- To determine whether these laws and measures will affect the Muslim communities in Europe and, if so, how they will be affected.

- To predict whether other European countries, such as the United Kingdom and Scandinavian countries, will adopt similar laws and measures in the future.

- To pinpoint the reasons that recently led European countries (France, Austria, Germany and Switzerland) to take action against political Islam groups.

- To determine whether the Muslim Brotherhood has any influence in European countries, and to determine the extent of the influence.

- To assess the Muslim Brotherhood's contribution to the economy of European countries and determine whether this contribution influences Europe's decisions regarding the Middle East.

- To predict the level of influence the Muslim Brotherhood has on Muslims in Europe.

- To determine whether experts and specialists support the designation of the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization in Europe.

- To understand the reasons why the Muslim Brotherhood has not yet been designated as a terrorist organization in Europe.

Methodology

Data Collection:

Given the precautionary measures in place due to Covid-19, an electronic data collection method was used. The questions were digitized and coded using approved electronic programs and posted on the TRENDS website to ensure the accuracy of answers and ease of response.

The Sample:

a- Sample Selection Method:

Due to difficulties reaching the target audience, snowball sampling method was used. Experts from various think-tanks and academic institutions were contacted via the databases available at TRENDS Research & Advisory. A link to the poll was sent to the experts, who would then forward the link to other experts.

b- Sample Characteristics

The sample consisted of experts in political, economic, security/military, and sociological affairs, and represented both men and women across different age groups and nationalities.

c- Margin of Error:

The margin of error was small and fell within a statistically acceptable range in electronic surveys. This was taken into account in the analysis to ensure the precision of the findings.

The Questionnaire:

An electronic questionnaire was designed for the purpose of this poll. The questionnaire consisted of eleven questions, which aimed to explore attitudes toward political Islam groups and the effectiveness of the measures recently taken against them by some European countries.
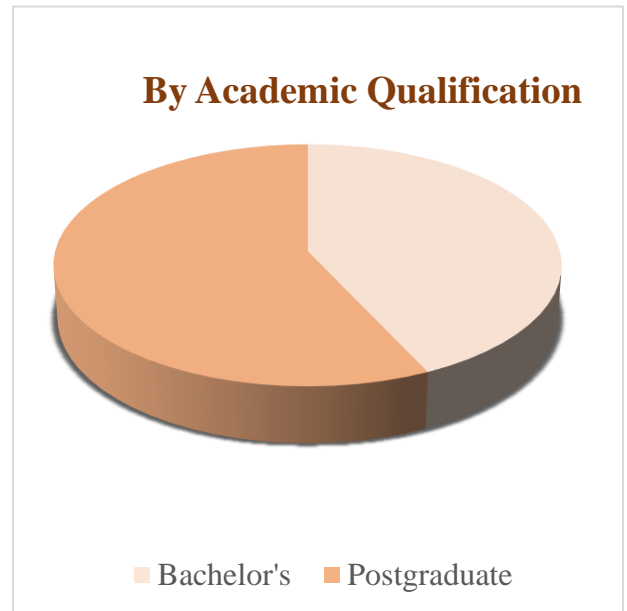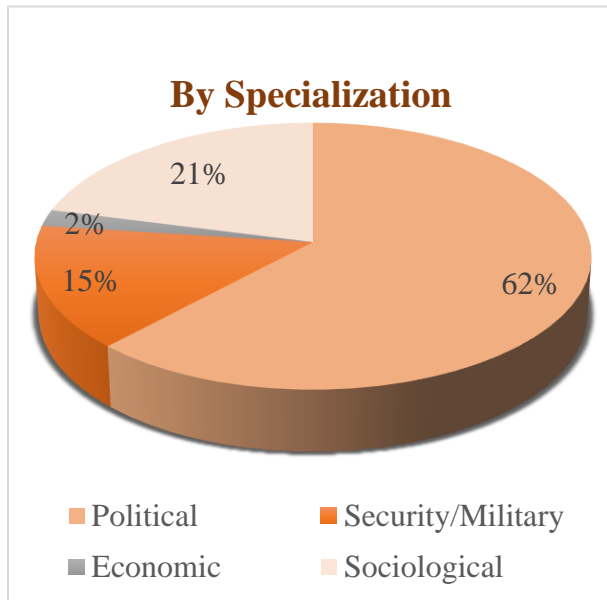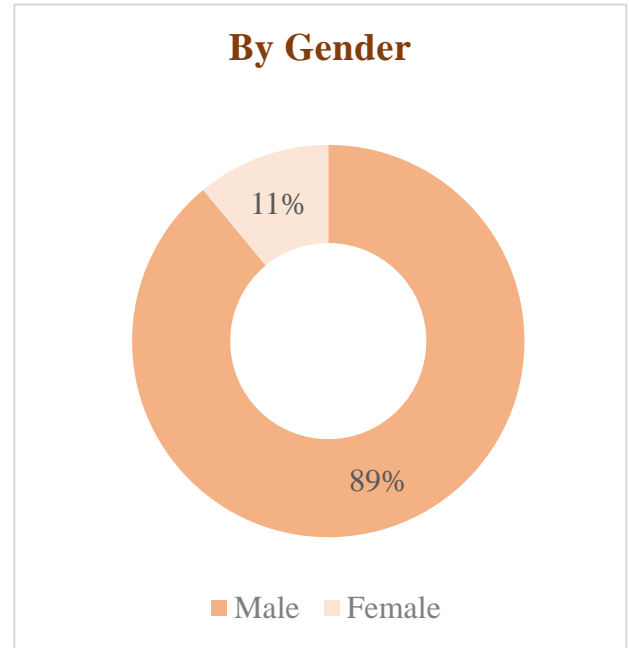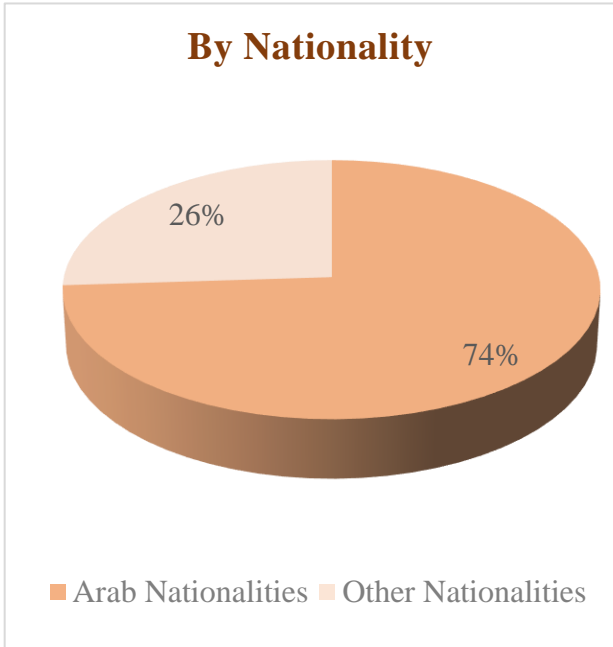
Duration of the Poll:

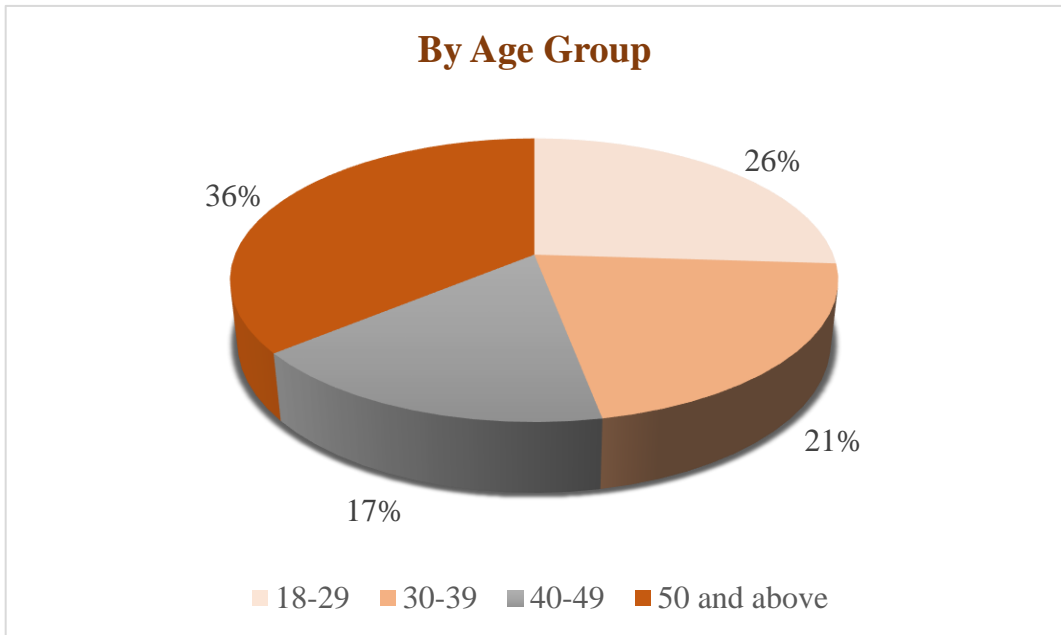The data was collected over a period of two weeks.

Data Analysis:

SPSS and Excel statistical programs were used to process and analyze the data, extract tables and graphs, and prepare the statistical report.

Sample Distribution

By Nationality

- 26% Arab Nationalities
- 74% Other Nationalities

By Gender

- 11% Male
- 89% Female

By Specialization

- 62% Political
- 15% Security/Military
- 2% Economic
- 21% Sociological

By Academic Qualification

- Bachelor's
- Postgraduate

By Age Group

26%

36%

21%

17%

■ 18-29　■ 30-39　■ 40-49　■ 50 and above

# The Findings and Analysis

Question 1: How interested are you in following the issues and activities of political Islam groups?
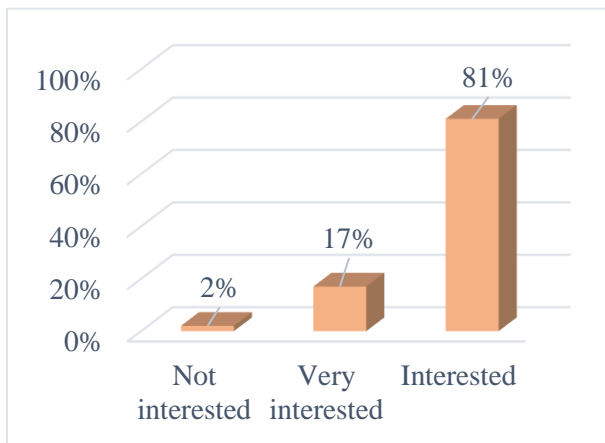
The majority of the respondents were either interested (81 percent) or very interested (17 percent) in the activities and issues of political Islam groups, while only 2 percent said they were not interested.
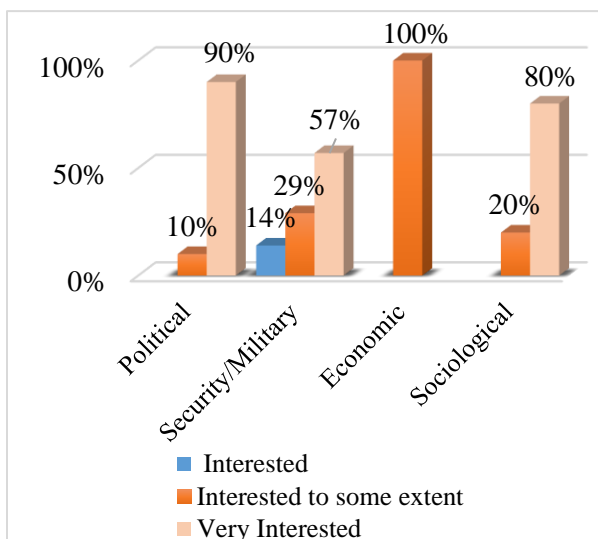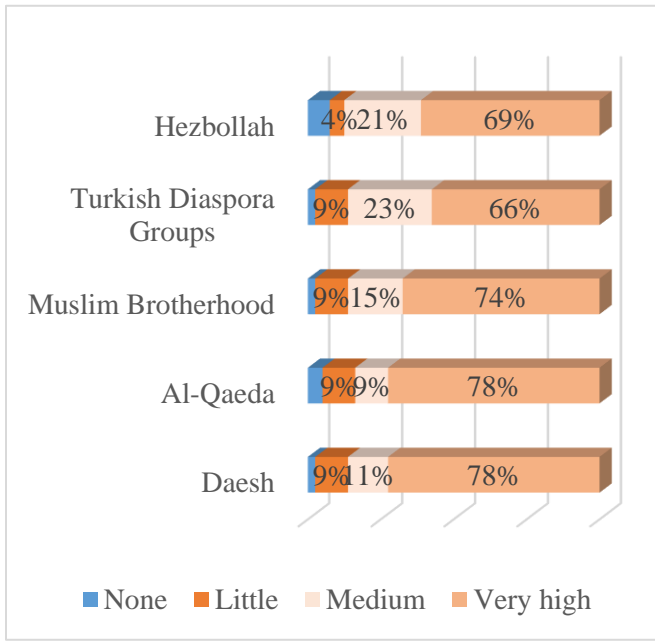

The findings showed that 90 percent of political experts and 80 percent of sociological experts were very interested in following the issues and activities of political Islam groups, compared to 57 percent of security/military experts. However, 100 percent of economic experts were only interested to some extent.
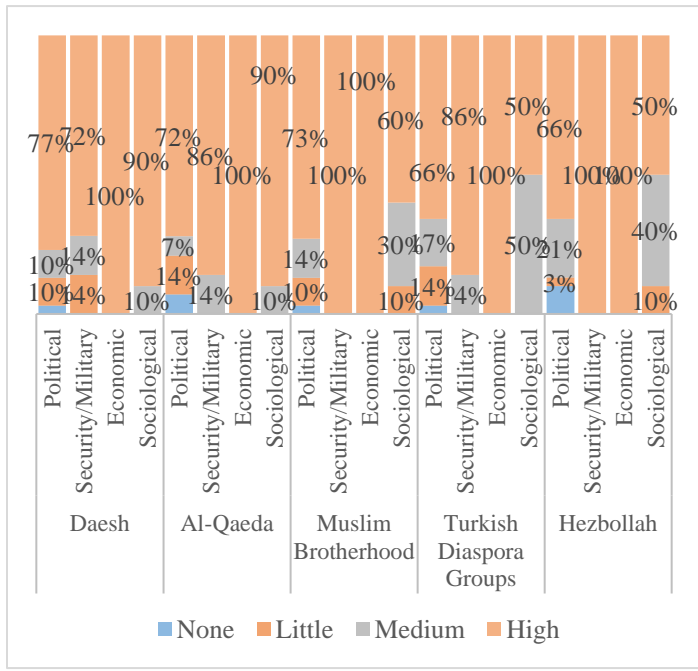
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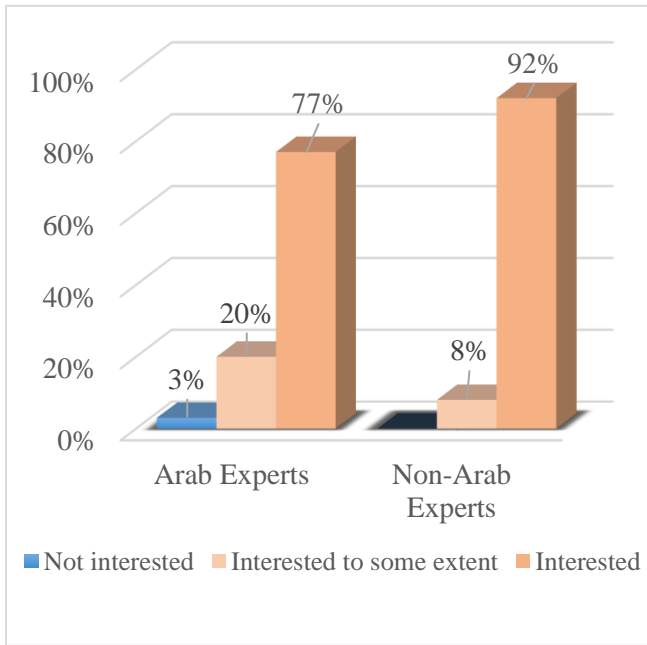
In terms of nationality, 92 percent of non-Arab experts were interested in following the issues and activities of political Islam groups, compared to 77 percent of Arab experts.

Question 2: What degree of danger do the following political Islam groups pose to European societies?

Chart data:

Group	None	Little	Medium	Very high
Hezbollah		4%	21%	69%
Turkish Diaspora Groups	9%		23%	66%
Muslim Brotherhood	9%		15%	74%
Al-Qaeda	9%	9%		78%
Daesh	9%	11%		78%

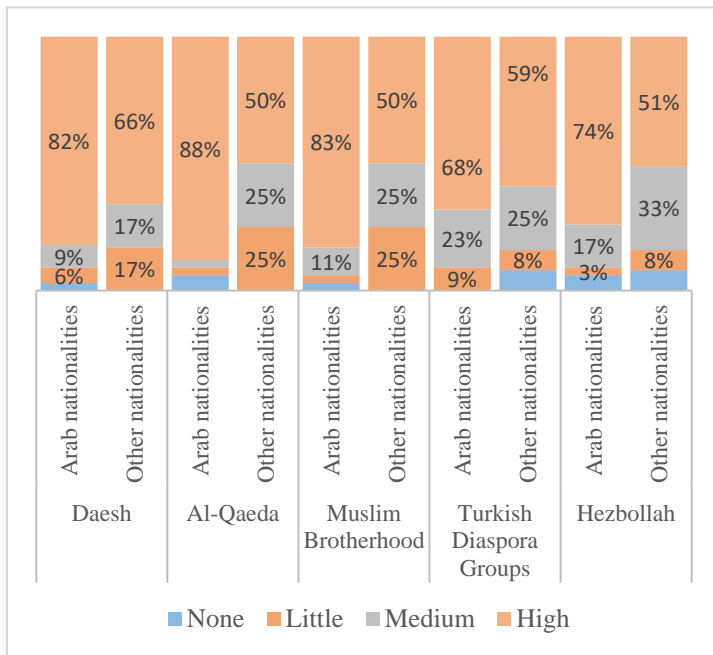Legend: ■None ■Little ■Medium ■Very high

The general consensus was that political Islam groups pose a very high degree of danger to European societies. 78 percent of the respondents said Daesh and Al-Qaeda pose the greatest danger, followed by the Muslim Brotherhood (74 percent), Hezbollah (69 percent), and Turkish diaspora groups (66 percent).

Chart 1 (category labels): Daesh — Political, Security/Military, Economic, Sociological; Al-Qaeda — Political, Security/Military, Economic, Sociological; Muslim Brotherhood — Political, Security/Military, Economic, Sociological; Turkish Diaspora Groups — Political, Security/Military, Economic, Sociological; Hezbollah — Political, Security/Military, Economic, Sociological.

Visible values: 77%, 72%, 90%, 72%, 86%, 100%, 90%, 100%, 73%, 100%, 100%, 60%, 86%, 66%, 50%, 66%, 100%, 100%, 100%, 50%, 40%, 10%, 14%, 14%, 7%, 14%, 14%, 10%, 30%, 17%, 14%, 50%, 21%, 10%, 64%, 10%, 10%, 10%, 14%, 24%, 3%, 10%

Legend: ■ None ■ Little ■ Medium ■ High

Based on the specializations of the respondents, political experts believe that Daesh (72 percent), Al-Qaeda (77 percent), the Muslim Brotherhood (73 percent), Turkish diaspora groups (66 percent) and Hezbollah (66 percent) all pose a high level of danger to European societies, while security/military experts believe that the Muslim Brotherhood (100 percent) and Hezbollah (….. percent) pose the greatest danger to European societies, followed by Al-Qaeda (86 percent), Turkish diaspora groups (86 percent), and Daesh (72 percent).

Chart 2 (category labels): Daesh — Arab nationalities, Other nationalities; Al-Qaeda — Arab nationalities, Other nationalities; Muslim Brotherhood — Arab nationalities, Other nationalities; Turkish Diaspora Groups — Arab nationalities, Other nationalities; Hezbollah — Arab nationalities, Other nationalities.

Visible values: 82%, 66%, 88%, 50%, 83%, 50%, 68%, 59%, 74%, 51%, 9%, 17%, 25%, 25%, 23%, 25%, 17%, 33%, 6%, 17%, 25%, 11%, 25%, 9%, 8%, 3%, 8%

Legend: ■ None ■ Little ■ Medium ■ High

In terms of nationality, 88 percent of Arab respondents said Al-Qaeda poses the highest level of threat to European societies, followed by the Muslim Brotherhood (83 percent), Daesh (82 percent) and Turkish diaspora groups (68 percent). Non-Arab respondents, on the other hand, believe Daesh (66 percent) poses the greatest danger, followed by Turkish diaspora groups (59 percent), the Muslim Brotherhood (50 percent) and Al-Qaeda (50 percent).

Question 3: To what extent are you supportive of the recent European laws and measures to curb the activities of political Islam groups?

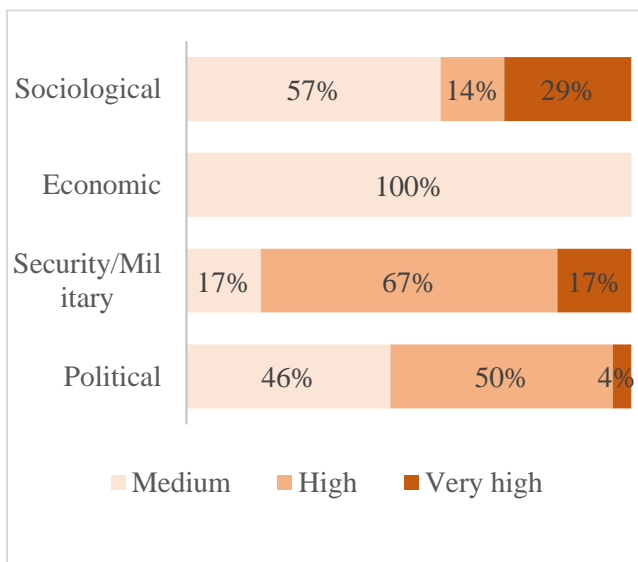
Unsupportive ■ Neutral ■ Supportive
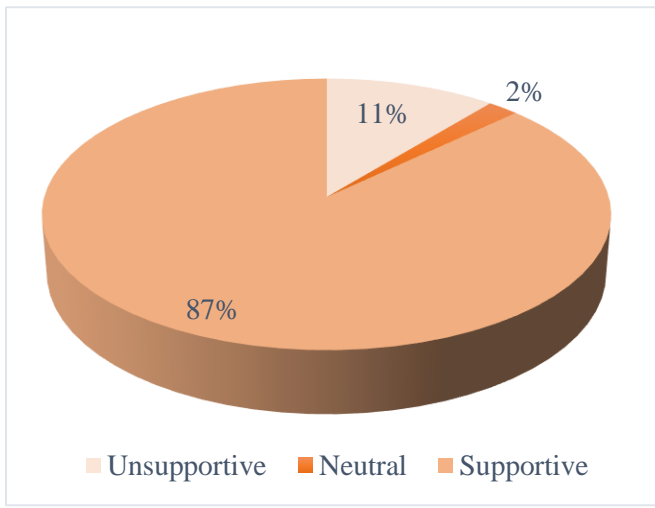
Most of the respondents (87 percent) were supportive of the recent European laws and measures to restrict the activities of political Islam groups. In terms of effectiveness, 45 percent of those who were supportive said that these laws and measures will highly contribute to curbing the activities of political Islam groups, while 45 percent said their contribution will be at a medium level.


medium ■ High ■ Very high
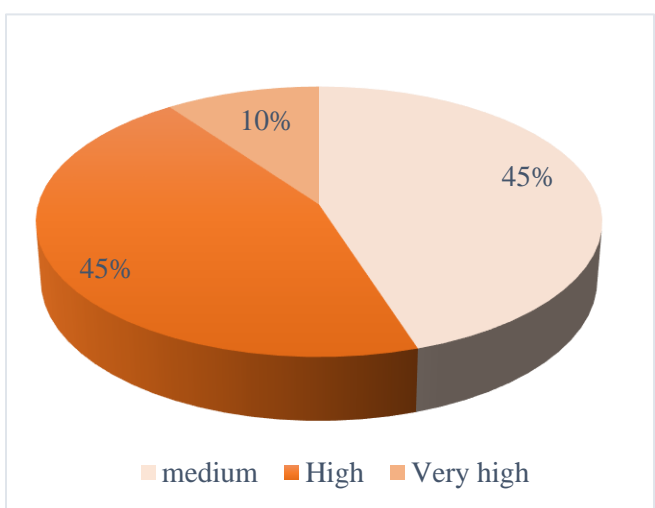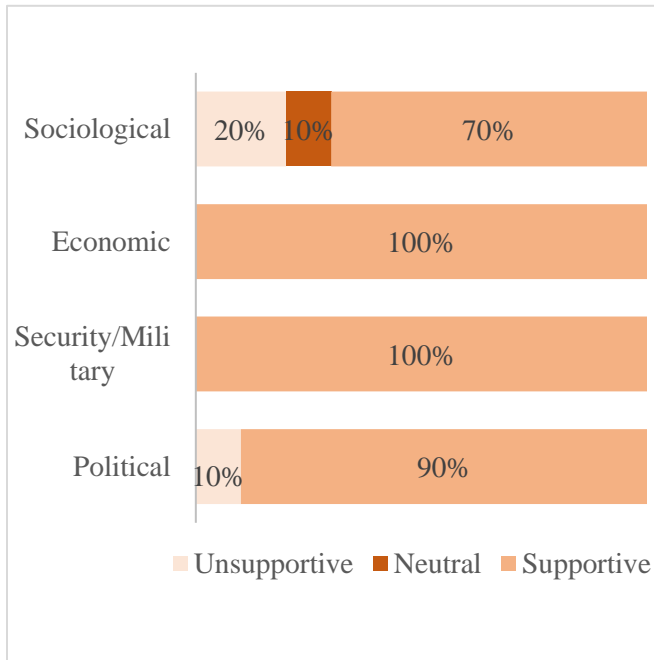
Based on the specializations of the respondents, 100 percent of economic and security/military experts, 90 percent of political experts, and 70 percent of sociological experts were supportive of the recent European laws and measures to curb the activities of political Islam groups.

As for the effectiveness of these laws and measures, 67 percent of security/military experts and 50 percent of political experts who were supportive said the contribution of these laws and measures to curbing the activities of political Islam groups will be very high. However, 100 percent of economic experts and 57 percent of sociological experts believe their contribution will be at a medium level.

Non-Arab Experts: 33% | 67%

Arab Experts: 94%

■ Unsupportive ■ Neutral ■ Supportive
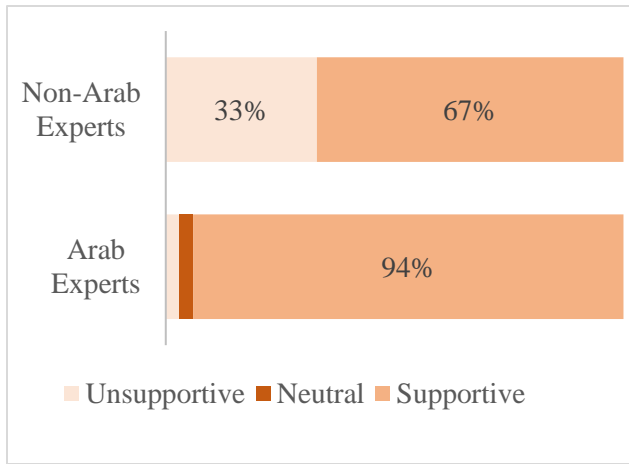
In terms of nationality, the results showed that 94 percent of Arab experts were supportive of these laws and measures, compared to 67 percent of non-Arab experts.

Non-Arab Experts: 29% | 71%

Arab Experts: 48% | 39% | 13%

■ Medium ■ High ■ Very high
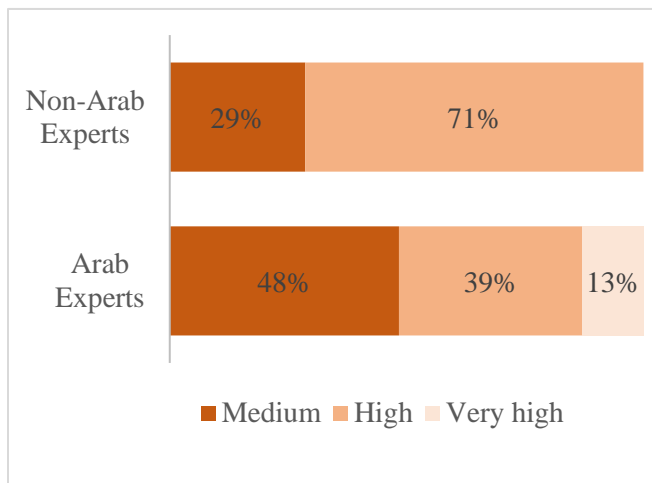
In addition, while 48 percent of Arab experts who were supportive of these laws and measures said their contribution to curbing the activities of political Islam groups will be at a medium level, 71 percent of non-Arab experts said their contribution will be high.
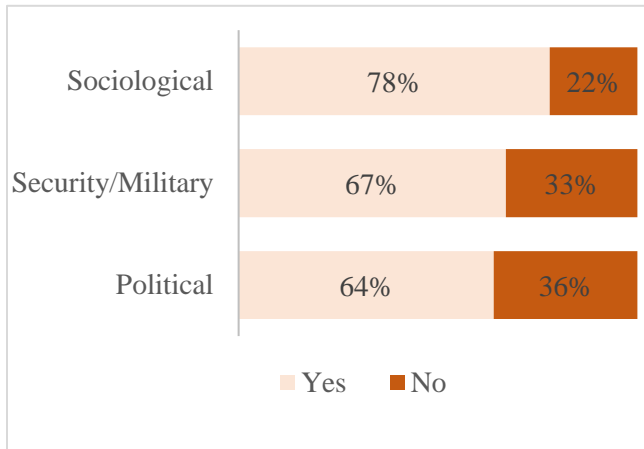
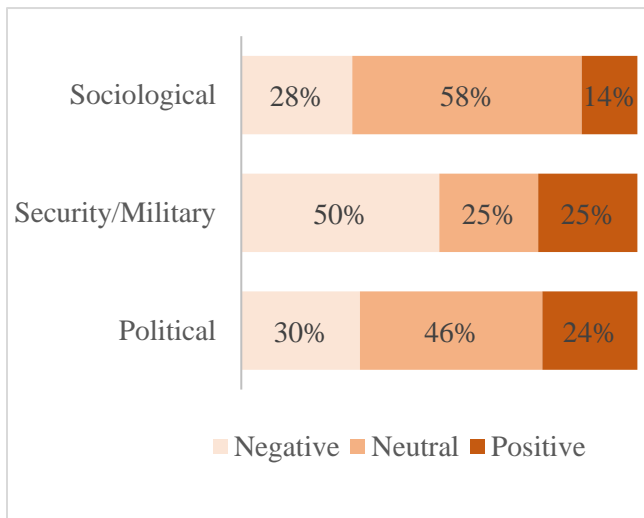## Question 4: Do you think the recent European laws and measures will affect Muslim communities in Europe?
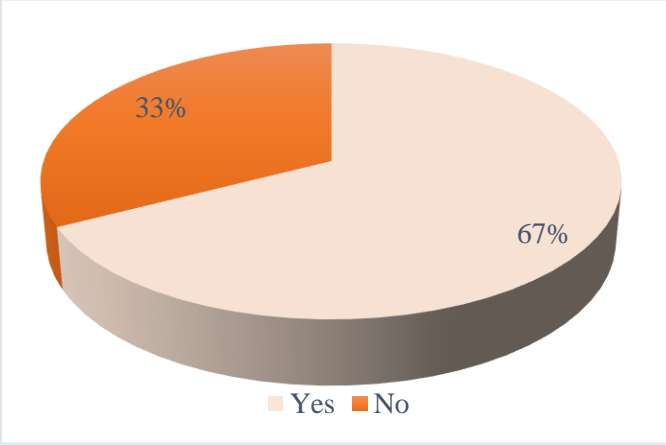
67 percent of the respondents said the recent European laws and measures will affect Muslim communities in Europe, while 33 percent believe they will not be affected.
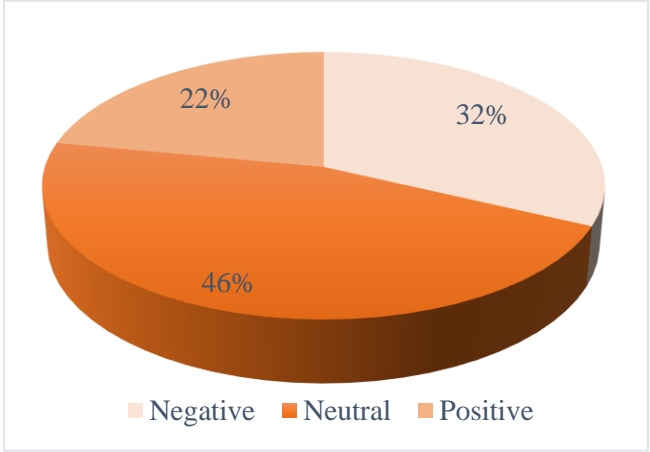

22 percent of the respondents who said these laws and measures will affect Muslim communities in Europe believe the effect will be positive, compared to 32 percent who feel the effect will be negative. 46 percent of the respondents were neutral about the effect these laws and measures would have on Muslim communities in Europe.

Sociological — Yes 78%, No 22%
Security/Military — Yes 67%, No 33%
Political — Yes 64%, No 36%

Yes · No

Based on the specializations of the respondents, 64 percent of political specialists, 67 percent security/military specialists and 78 percent of sociological specialists said these recent laws and measures will affect Muslim communities in Europe.

Sociological — Negative 28%, Neutral 58%, Positive 14%
Security/Military — Negative 50%, Neutral 25%, Positive 25%
Political — Negative 30%, Neutral 46%, Positive 24%

Negative · Neutral · Positive

50 percent of security/military experts, 30 percent of political experts, and 28 percent of sociological experts believe this effect will be negative.

|	Yes	No
Non-Arab Experts	67%	33%
Arab Experts	68%	32%
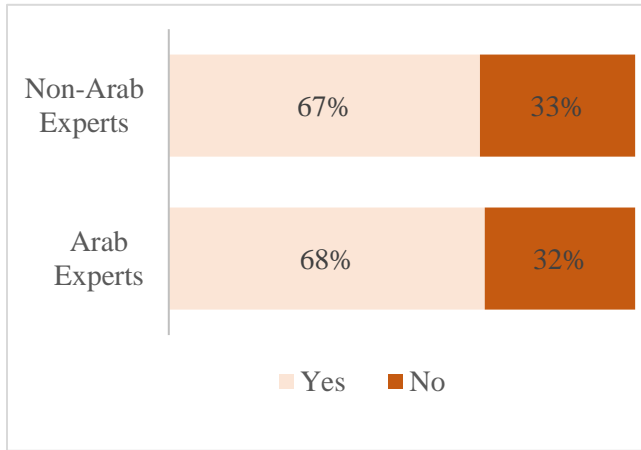
In terms of nationality, the results showed that 67 percent of non-Arab experts and 68 percent of Arab experts believe that the recent European laws and measures will affect Muslim communities in Europe.

|	Negative	Neutral	Positive
Non-Arab Experts	57%	29%	14%
Arab Experts	24%	52%	24%
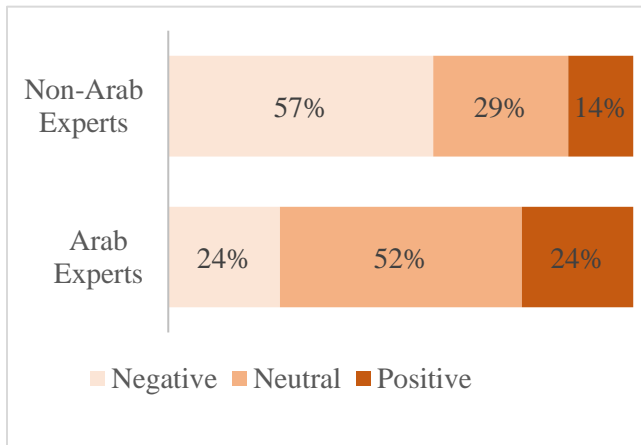
The poll also revealed that 57 percent of non-Arab experts and 24 percent of Arab experts believed that the effect of these laws and measures on Muslim communities in Europe will be negative.

Question 5: Do you expect that other European countries will adopt similar laws and measures in the future?
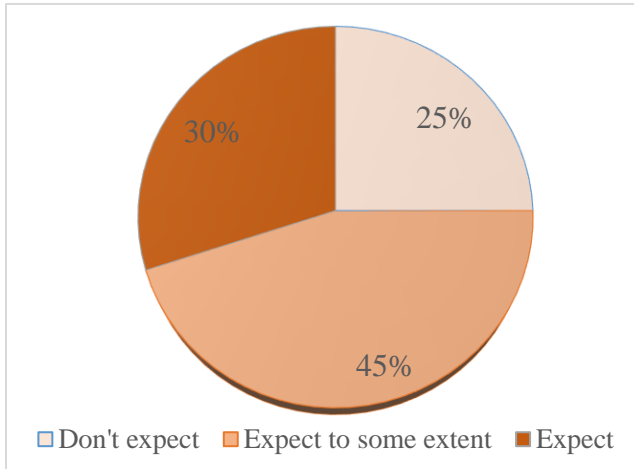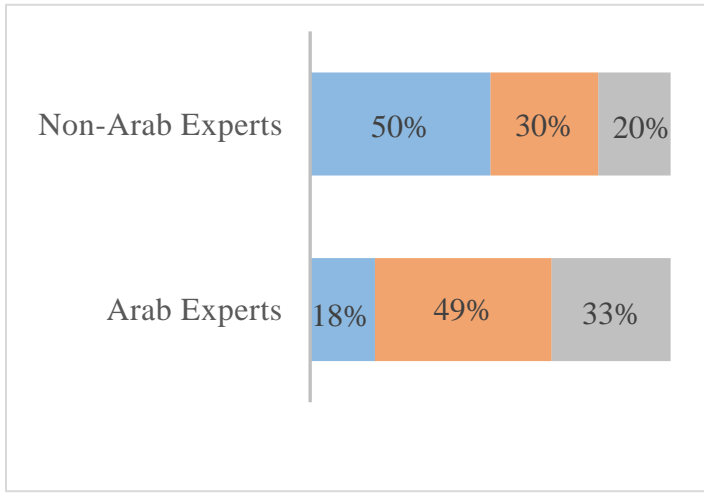

According to the poll, 30 percent of the respondents expected other European countries, such as the United Kingdom and Scandinavian countries, to adopt similar laws and measures against political Islam groups in the future, while 45 percent expected it to some extent.
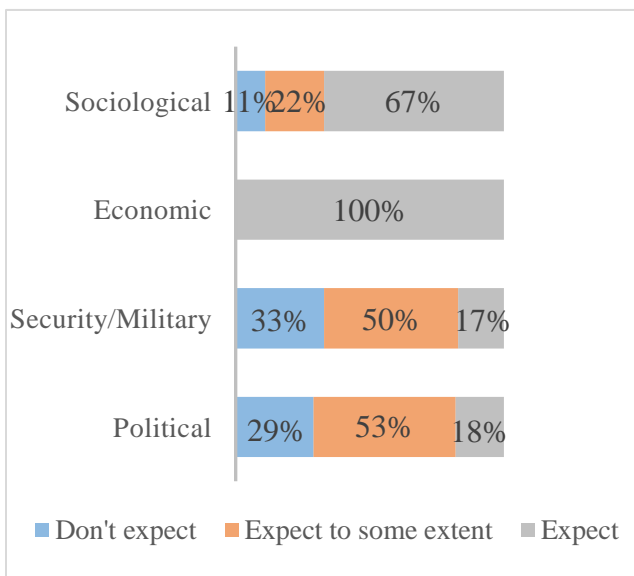
Based on the specializations of the respondents, while 100 percent of economic experts and 67 percent of sociological experts expected other European countries to adopt similar laws and measures against political Islam groups, only 18 percent of political experts and 17 percent of security/military experts had the same expectation. 53 percent of political experts and 50 percent of security/military experts said they expected other European countries to take similar measures to some extent.
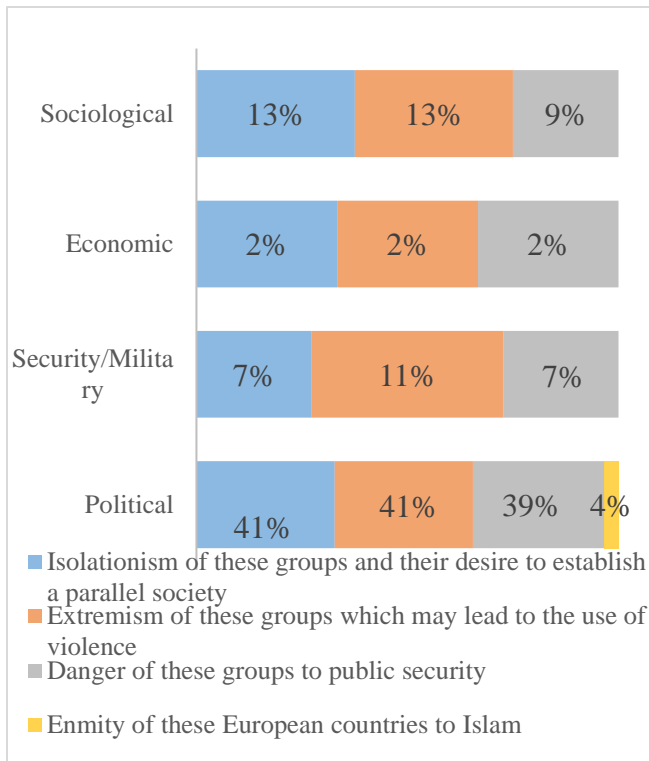
In terms of nationality, the findings revealed that 33 percent of Arab experts expected other European countries to adopt similar laws and measures against political Islam groups, compared to 20 percent of non-Arab experts.

Question 6: What are the reasons for the recent actions taken by European countries against political Islam groups? (*You can choose more than one answer*)
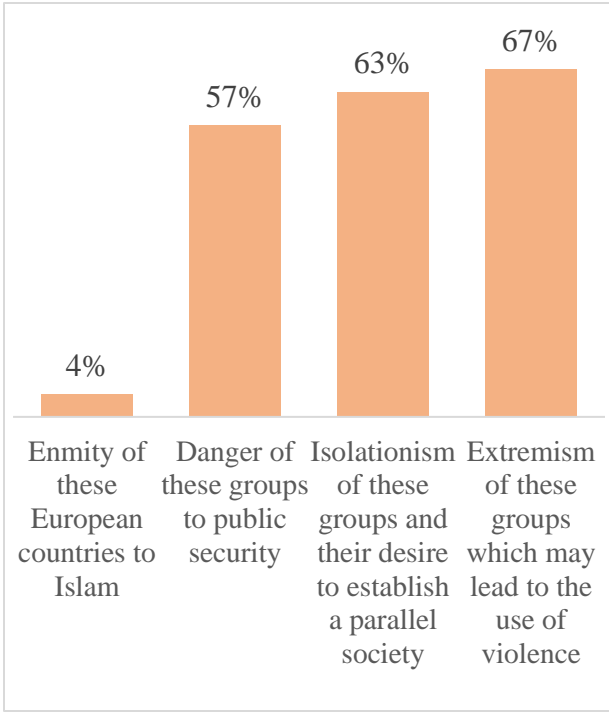
When asked about the reasons that have recently led European countries to take action against political Islam groups, 67 percent of the respondents said "extremism of these groups which may lead to the use of violence" was the main reason, while 63 percent said "the isolationism of these groups and their desire to establish a parallel society", and 57 percent "the danger of these groups to public security".

Sociological: 13% | 13% | 9%
Economic: 2% | 2% | 2%
Security/Military: 7% | 11% | 7%
Political: 41% | 41% | 39% | 4%

- Isolationism of these groups and their desire to establish a parallel society
- Extremism of these groups which may lead to the use of violence
- Danger of these groups to public security
- Enmity of these European countries to Islam

Non-Arab Experts: 15% | 15% | 9% | 4%
Arab Experts: 48% | 52% | 48%

- Isolationism of these groups and their desire to establish a parallel society
- Extremism of these groups which may lead to the use of violence
- Danger of these groups to public security
- Enmity of these European countries to Islam

Based on the specializations of the respondents, 41 percent of political experts indicated that "extremism of these groups which may lead to the use of violence" and "the isolationism of these groups and their desire to establish a parallel society" were the main reasons for the recent actions taken by European countries against political Islam groups, while only 11 percent of security/military experts felt "extremism of these groups which may lead to the use of violence" was the main reason.
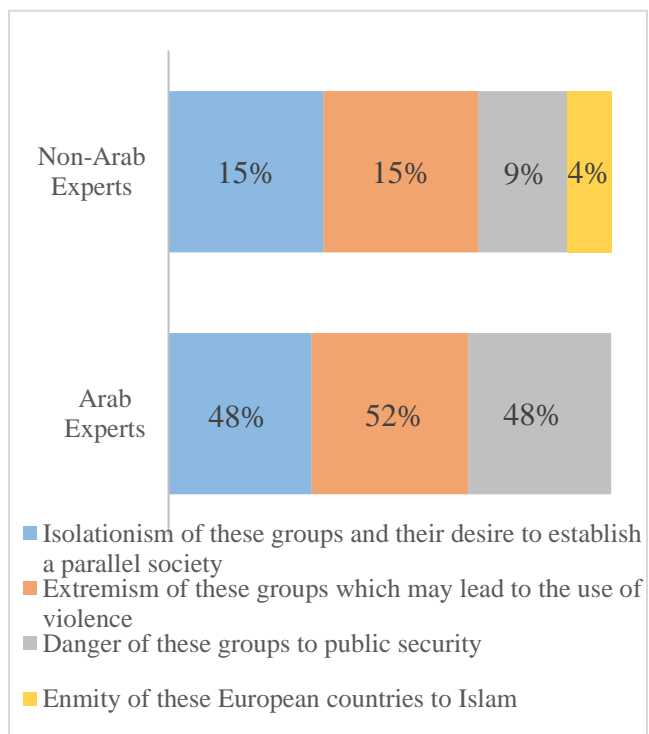
In terms of nationality, 52 percent of Arab experts said "extremism of these groups which may lead to the use of violence" was the main reason, while 48 percent said both "the isolationism of these groups and their desire to establish a parallel society" and "the danger of these groups to public security" were the main reasons. On the other hand, 15 percent of non-Arab experts said both "extremism of these groups which may lead to the use of violence" and "the isolationism of these groups and their desire to establish a parallel society" were the main reasons, followed by 9 percent indicating "the danger of these groups to public security" and 4 percent "the enmity of these European countries to Islam" as the main reasons.

Question 7: Do you think the Muslim Brotherhood has any influence in European countries?
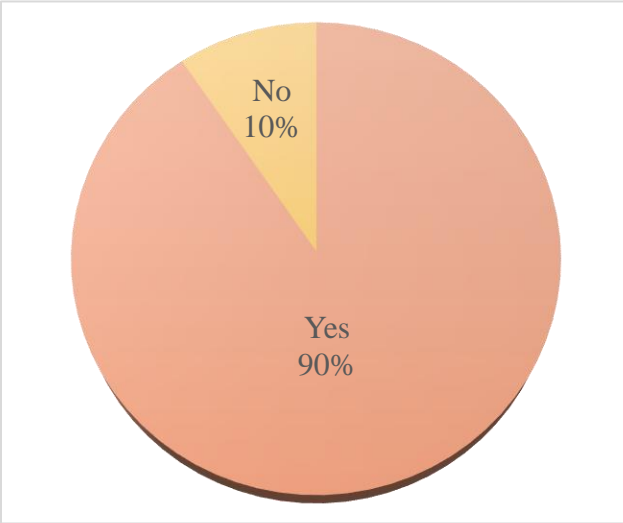

In response to the question about whether the Muslim Brotherhood has any influence in European countries, 90 percent of the respondents believe that the group has influence in the these countries. Regarding the level of this influence, 52 percent described it as significant, while 34 percent described it as medium.
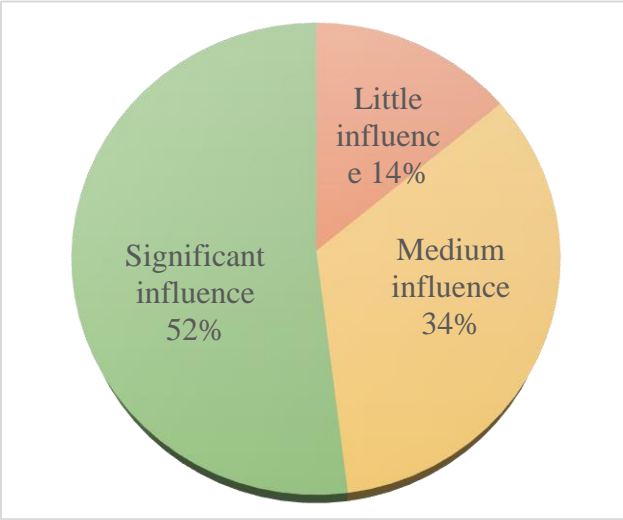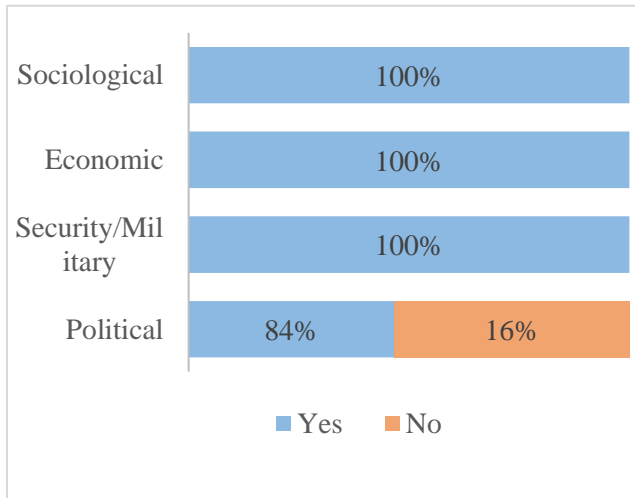
The results also showed that 100 percent of security/military, economic, and sociological experts believe that the Muslim Brotherhood has influence in European countries, compared to 84 percent of political experts.
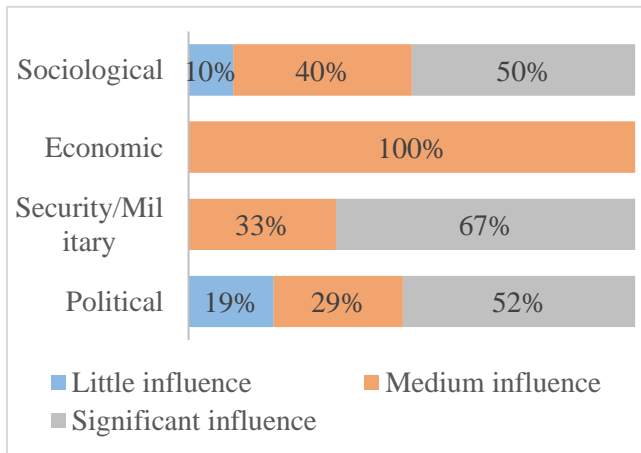
Among the experts who believe that the Muslim Brotherhood has influence in European countries, 52 percent of political experts, 67 percent of security/military experts, and 50 percent of sociological experts described it as significant.

Non-Arab Experts: 78% | 22%

Arab Experts: 94% | 6%

■ Yes ■ No
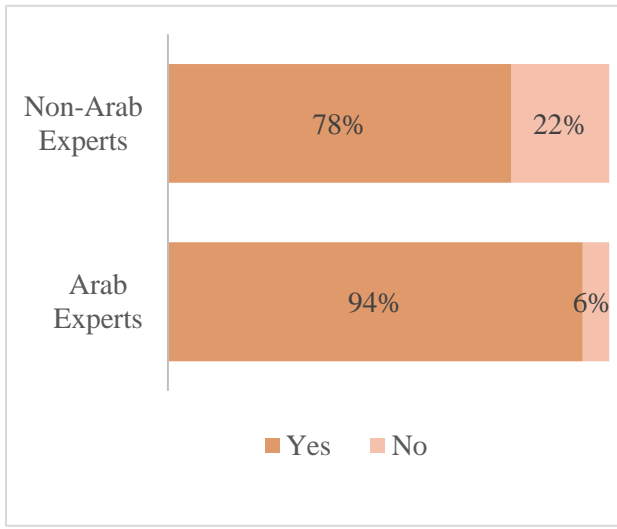
In terms of nationality, 94 percent of Arab experts believe that the Muslim Brotherhood has influence in the European countries, compared to 78 percent of non-Arab experts.

Non-Arab Experts: 14% | 43% | 43%

Arab Experts: 13% | 32% | 55%

■ Little influence ■ Medium influence
■ Significant influence
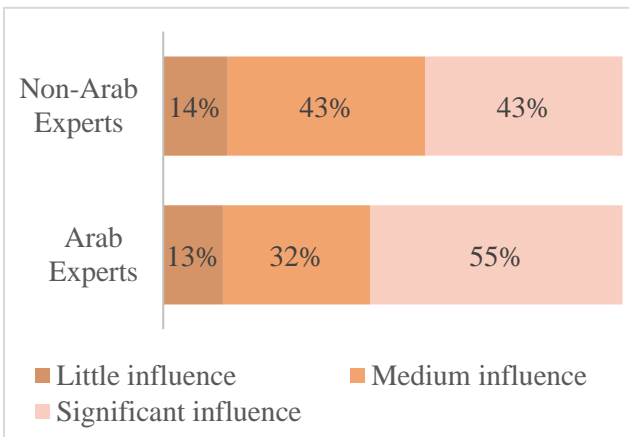
As regards the extent of the influence, 55 percent of Arab experts and 43 percent of non-Arab experts described it as significant.

Question 8: To what extent do you think the Muslim Brotherhood's contributions to the economy of European countries – through its funding activities - influences European decisions regarding Middle East issues?

When asked to what degree the Muslim Brotherhood's contributions to the European economy influences Europe's decisions regarding the Middle East, only 25 percent of the respondents believed that the Muslim Brotherhood's contributions are influential. While 30 percent said these contributions are influential to some extent, 45 percent did not believe they were influential at all.

	Not influential	Influential to some extent	Influential
	45%	30%	25%

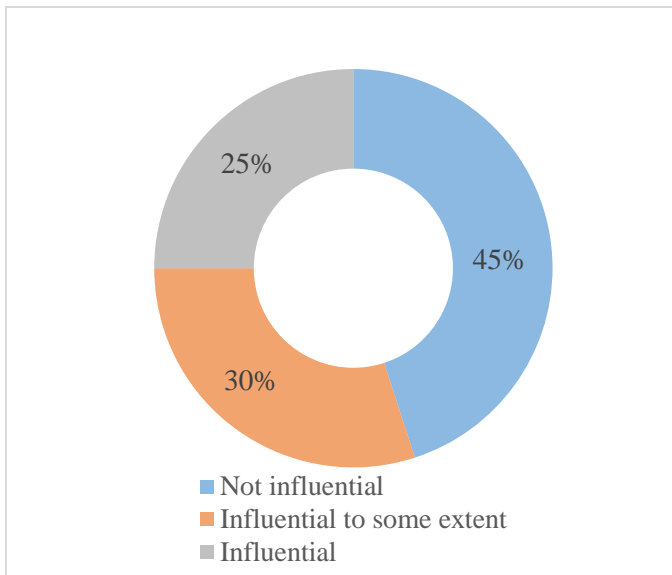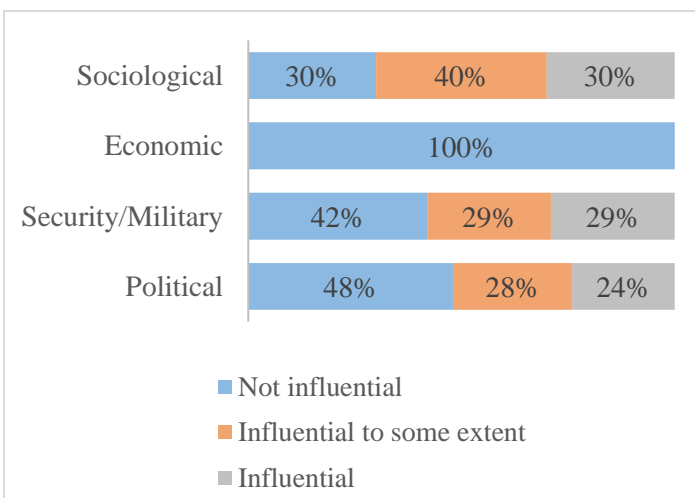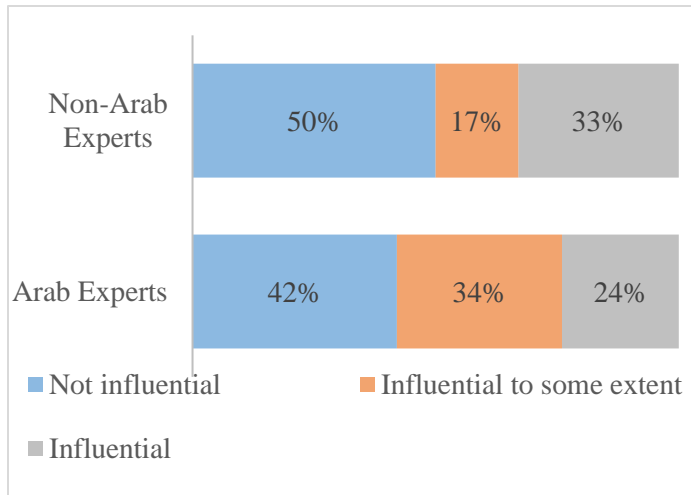Based on the specializations of the respondents, 24 percent of political experts, 29 percent of security/military experts, and 30 percent of sociological experts believe that the Muslim Brotherhood's contributions to the European economy are influential in Europe's decisions regarding the Middle East. However, all economic experts agree that the Muslim

	Not influential	Influential to some extent	Influential
Sociological	30%	40%	30%
Economic	100%		
Security/Military	42%	29%	29%
Political	48%	28%	24%

Brotherhood's contributions do not affect these decisions.

Non-Arab Experts	50%	17%	33%
Arab Experts	42%	34%	24%

■ Not influential   ■ Influential to some extent
■ Influential

In terms of nationality, 33 percent of Arab experts and 24 percent of non-Arab experts believe that the Muslim Brotherhood's contributions to the economy of European countries are influential in Europe's decisions regarding the Middle East.

Question 9: To what extent does the Muslim Brotherhood influence Muslims in Europe?

The respondents agree that the Muslim Brotherhood exerts influence over the Muslims of Europe, with 51 percent of the respondents believing the influence is significant and 39 percent saying the influence is at a medium level.
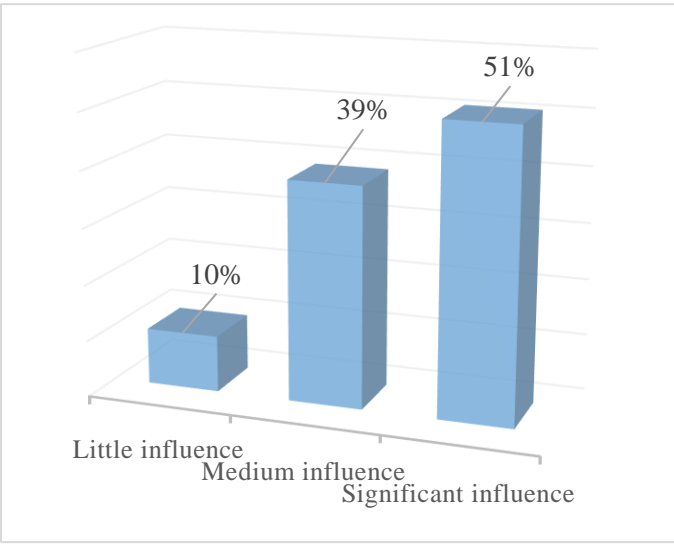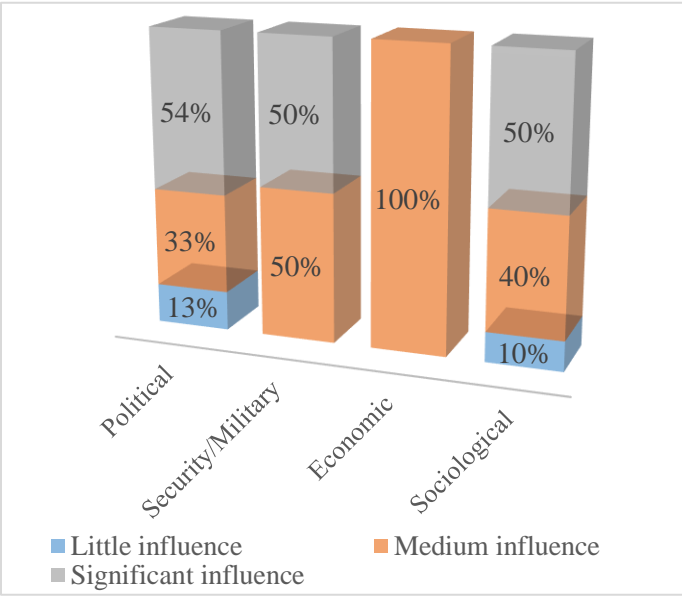

Based on the specializations of the experts, 54 percent of political experts, 50 percent of security/military experts, and 50 percent of sociological experts believe that the Muslim Brotherhood's influence on the Muslims of Europe is significant.

24%

34%

42%

33%

17%

50%

Arab nationalities

Other
nationalities

■ Influential ■ Influential to some extent ■ No influence
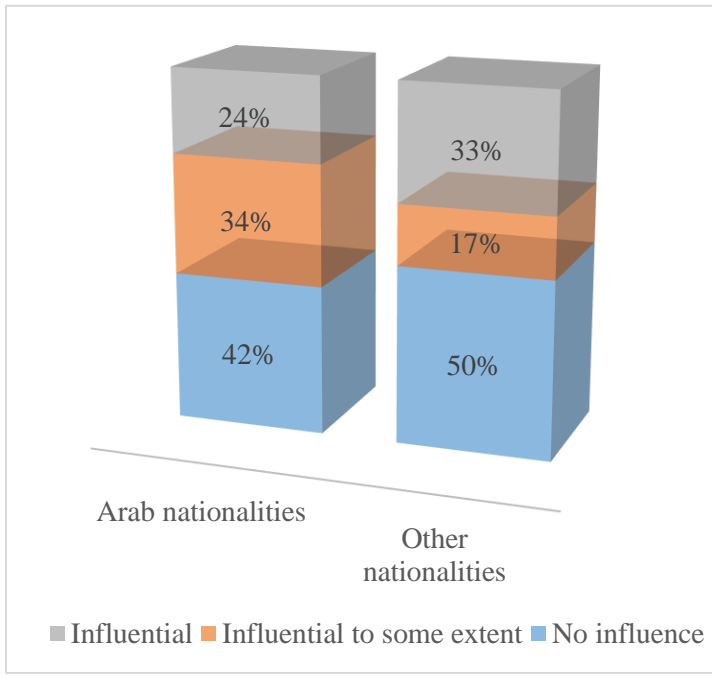
In terms of nationality, 50 percent of non-Arab experts and 42 percent of Arab experts believe that the Muslim Brotherhood has influence on the Muslims of Europe.

Question 10: To what extent are you supportive of the designation of the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization in Europe?

When asked whether they would be supportive of the designation of the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization in Europe, 61 percent of the respondents said they would be supportive, compared to 26 percent who said they would be unsupportive of such a declaration.

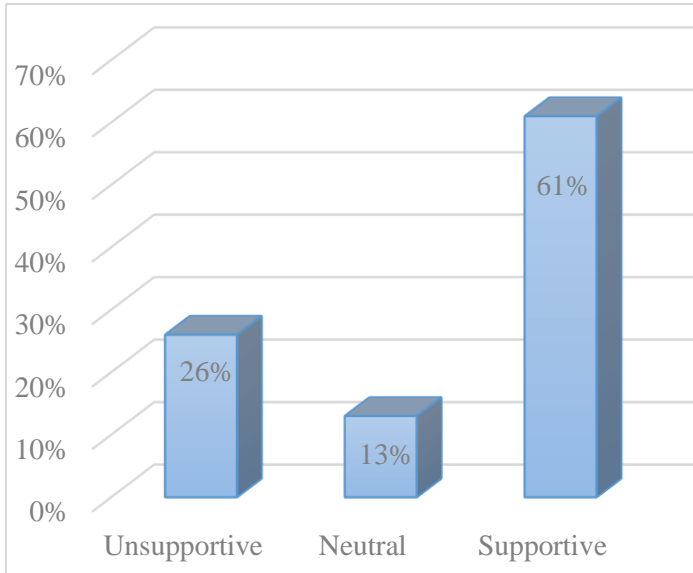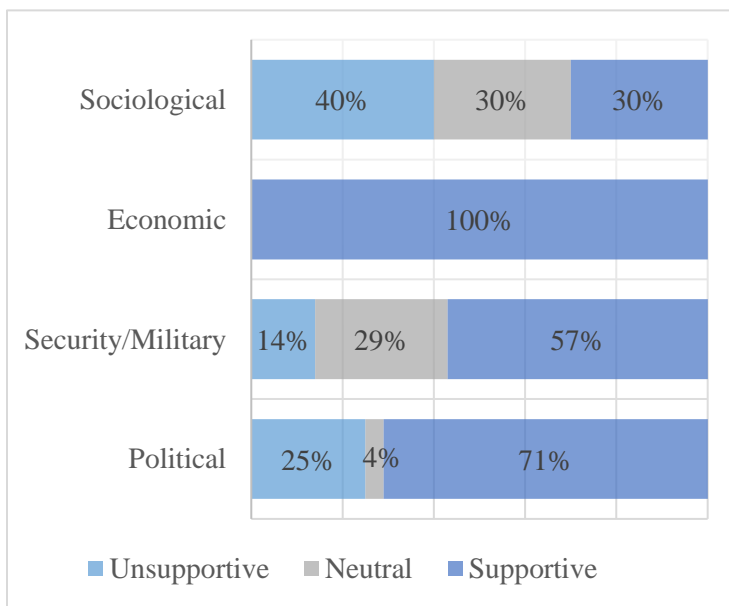
Based on the specializations of the respondents, 71 percent of political experts, 57 percent of security/military experts, 100 percent of economic experts, and 30 percent sociological experts expressed their support for the designation of the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization in Europe.

Non-Arab Experts: Unsupportive 50% | Neutral 8% | Supportive 42%

Arab Experts: Unsupportive 18% | Neutral 15% | Supportive 67%

■Unsupportive ■Neutral ■Supportive
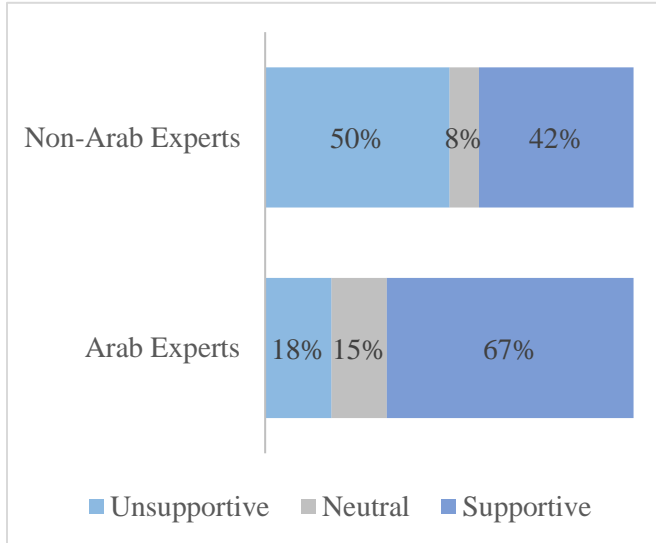
In terms of nationality, 67 percent of Arab experts and 42 percent of non-Arab experts said they would be supportive of declaring the Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist organization in Europe.

Question 11: Why has the Muslim Brotherhood not yet been declared a terrorist organization in Europe? *(You can choose more than one answer)*

As to why the Muslim Brotherhood has not yet been declared a terrorist organization in Europe, 60 percent of the respondents said it is because the "Muslim Brotherhood is being used in internal issues, especially those relating to European Muslim communities", while 57 percent said it is due to "lack of accurate knowledge of the nature of the Muslim Brotherhood".
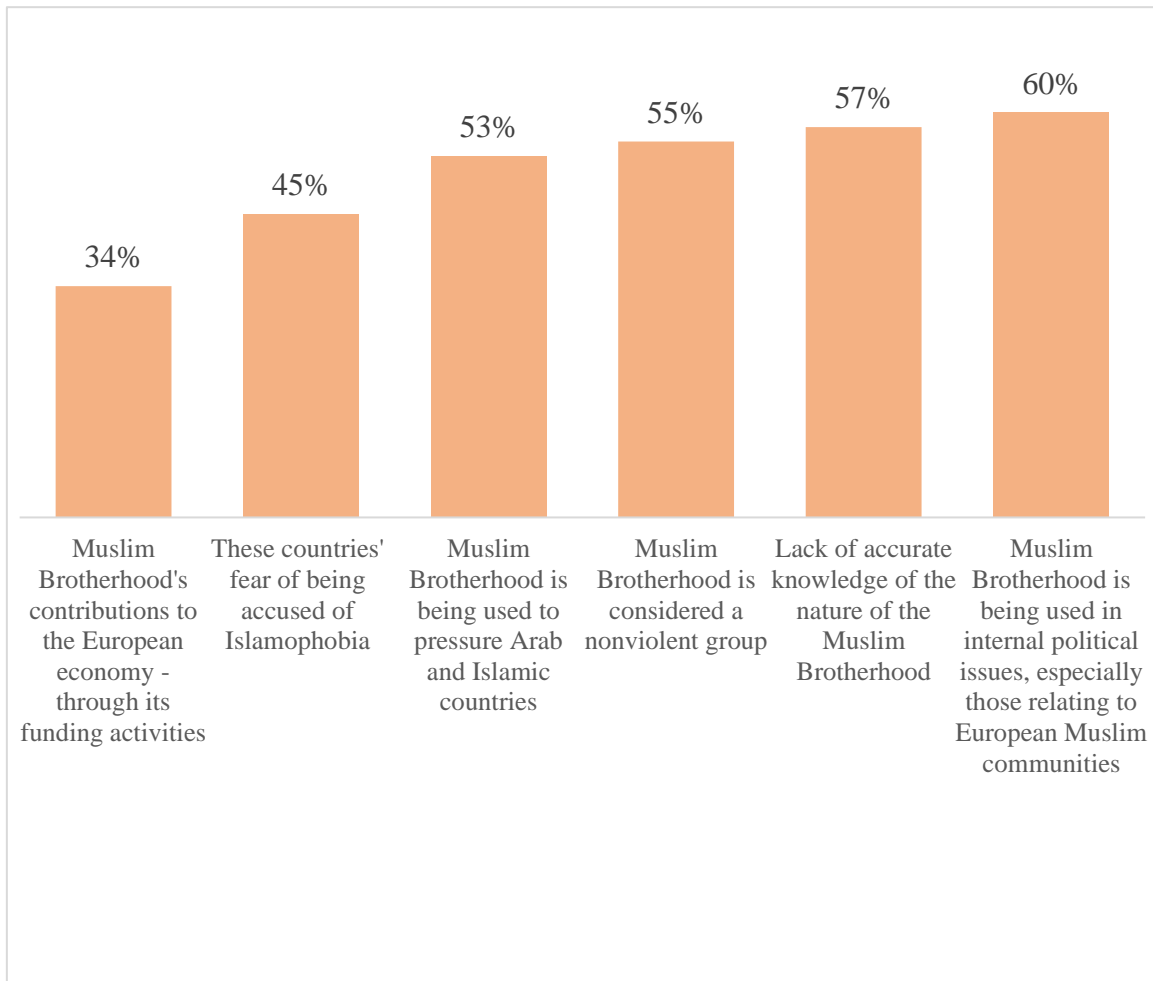
Based on the specializations of the respondents, 49 percent of political experts said the Muslim Brotherhood has not yet been declared a terrorist organization due to "lack of accurate knowledge of the nature of the Muslim Brotherhood", while 11 percent of security/military specialists said it is because "the Muslim Brotherhood is being used to pressure Arab and Islamic countries".

Sociological: 11%, 15%, 13%, 6%, 4%, 6%

Economic: 2%, 2%, 2%

Security/Military: 2%, 11%, 9%, 4%, 4%, 6%

Political: 40%, 28%, 36%, 32%, 49%, 21%

■ Muslim Brotherhood is considered a nonviolent group

■ Muslim Brotherhood is being used to pressure Arab and Islamic countries

■ Muslim Brotherhood is being used in internal political issues, especially those relating to European Muslim communities

■ These countries' fear of being accused of Islamophobia

■ Lack of accurate knowledge of the nature of the Muslim Brotherhood

In terms of nationality, 47 percent of Arab experts said the Muslim Brotherhood has not yet been designated as a terrorist organization in Europe because "the Muslim Brotherhood is being used in internal political issues, especially those relating to European Muslim communities", while 15 percent of non-Arab experts said the reasons were "these countries' fear of being accused of Islamophobia" and the fact that "the Muslim Brotherhood is considered a nonviolent group".

■ Muslim Brotherhood is considered a nonviolent group

■ Muslim Brotherhood is being used to pressure Arab and Islamic countries

■ Muslim Brotherhood is being used in internal political issues, especially those relating to European Muslim communities

■ These countries' fear of being accused of Islamophobia

■ Lack of accurate knowledge of the nature of the Muslim Brotherhood

■ Muslim Brotherhood's funds contribute to the European economy