

TECHNICAL ITEM I

Long distance transport of live animals: WOAH's standards and best practices including societal perception and communication aspects

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for Animal
Health
Founded as OIE

Organisation
mondiale
de la santé
animale
Fondée en tant qu'OIE

Organización
Mundial
de Sanidad
Animal
Fundada como OIE



Introduction

The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH: founded as OIE) Regional Commission for Europe recognised the crucial importance of implementing WOAH Standards on animal transport, in particular for long distances in all its Members.

Therefore, it was decided to assign the topic “Long distance transport of live animals: WOAH standards and best practices including societal perception and communication aspects” as one of the two Technical Items of the Conference of the Regional Commission for Europe



Background

- WOAH and animal welfare standards
- The Regional Platform on Animal Welfare for Europe
- WOAH second Global Forum (April 2019, Paris)
- Network of Contact Points and National Focal Points on animal welfare
- EU Regulation 1/2005
- Animal welfare and society



Objective

To analyse the level of implementation of WOAH International Standards and current best practices in a long-distance transportation of animals by sea and by land, to provide insight for the Regional Commission for Europe when planning future activities to address identified gaps in standards implementation whilst taking into consideration specific Members' needs



Materials and methods

An online questionnaire was designed by a multi-disciplinary team:

- experts appointed by WOAHA headquarter and Sub-regional Representation in Brussels
- expert of WOAHA Collaborating Centre Consortium.

The questionnaire has been distributed by WOAHA Sub-Regional Representation office in Brussels to all 53 Members of the Regional Commission for Europe. The survey was carried out from 21 June to 8 July 2022 (with minor finalisations by August 2, 2022) and completed by 47 Members.



Materials and methods

The questionnaire is divided into different thematic sections

- Legislative framework that explores different key aspects
- Major gaps/or shortages for the Competent Authorities to implement standards and requirements on animal transport
- Civil society and business operators' awareness regarding animal welfare issues during long distance transportation and the impact on the protection of the animals
- Expected actions or activities by WOAH to assist the Competent Authorities in the implementation of standards and requirements on animal transport.



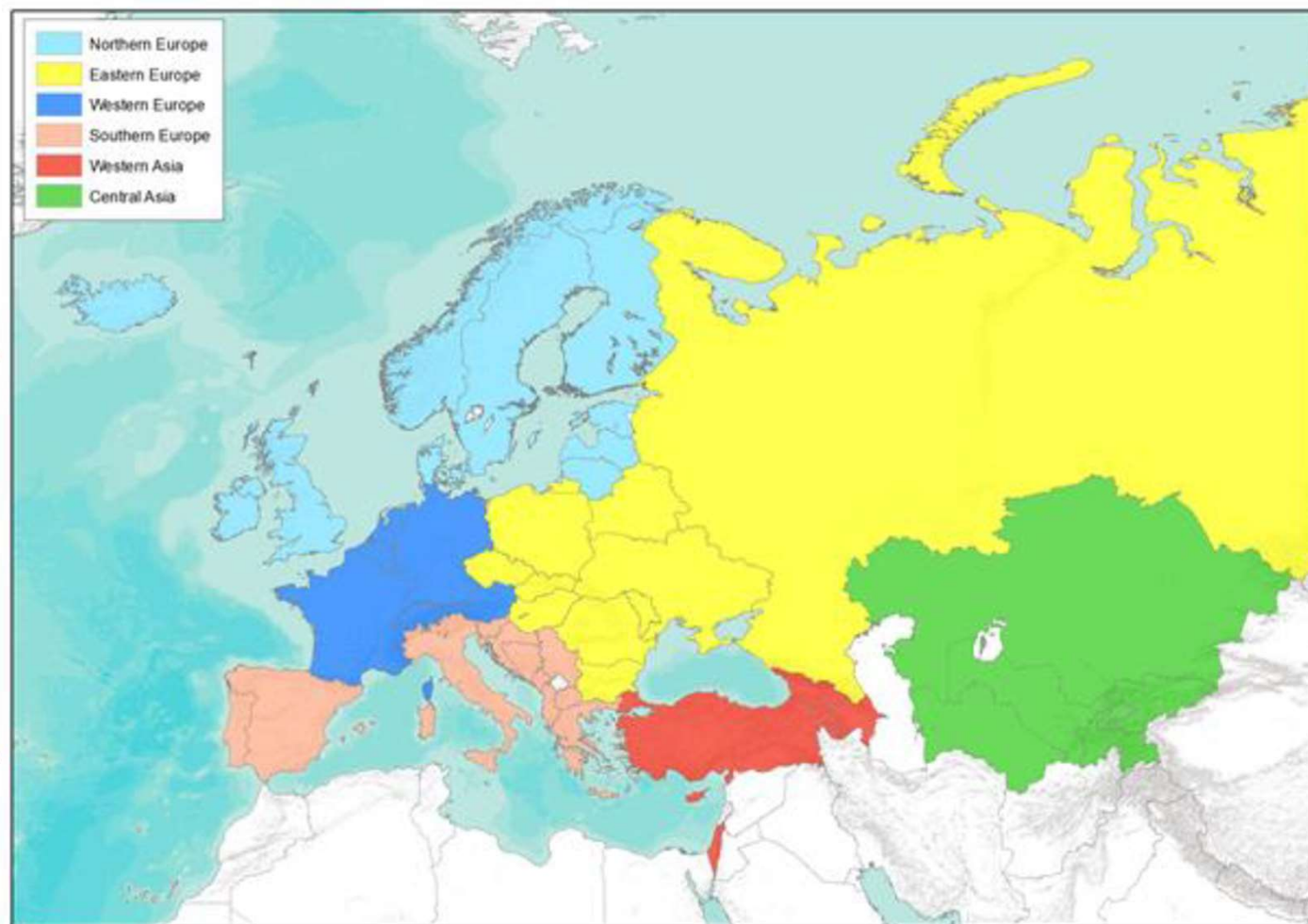
Materials and methods

- The analysis of the data obtained was carried out by grouping similar answers and expressing the result obtained as a percentage or as an absolute value.
- For the analysis of some information, the geographical distribution proposed by the United Nations geoscheme (created only for statistical analysis) was used to highlight, when proper, any spatial clustering of the results.



Materials and methods

United Nations
geoscheme





Results and discussion



Results and discussion

Specific legislation on animal welfare during transport

Legislative framework

- Forty six out of 47 Members gave a positive response and in forty one cases the legislation generally reflects WOAH Standards.
- Thirty three out 47 (70%) of Members stated they have non-legislative documents such as working/operating procedures and/or best practice guidelines and/or foresee the application of voluntary schemes covering animal welfare issues during transport.
- Fourteen (30%) of the Members do not have non-legislative documents concerning animal welfare during transport by land and sea.

The results show that most Members declared to have relevant legislation in place; however, its implementation in many countries in the Region could be further supported by non-legislative documents.



Results and discussion

Existence of specific regulations related to some key aspects for ensuring the welfare of the animals to be transported or during transport (inspection of animals before and during their travel, certification, record keeping, the approval of facilities, vehicles, vessels, containers, and roll-on/roll-off vessels

Legislative framework

- Forty four (44) out of 47 responding Members (93%) indicated their existence.

In particular:

- Ninety eight percent (98%) of Members pointed out that the legislation in their country concerns the inspection of animals before and during their travel, certification, and record keeping.
- Thirty-one (71%) of the Members declared to have specific regulations for inspection of animals plus approval of means of transportation, including the approval of facilities.



Results and discussion

Legislative framework

The legislative obligations guarantee the verification of the minimum requirements related to the fitness of the animals for the journey and to prevent the establishment of unfavourable and stressful conditions for animals during transport. In the overall, key elements mentioned are included in the regulatory framework in the majority of Members; however, further detailed information on the application of those key elements is necessary for assessing their effect on ensuring the welfare of the animals during transport.



Results and discussion

Responsibilities during transport operations

- Animal owners or managers (39 out of 47),
- Drivers (37 out of 47),
- Animal handlers (37 out of 47),
- Transport companies (36 out of 47),
- Exporters (30 out of 47).

Legislative framework

Specific competencies documented through formal training or practical experience

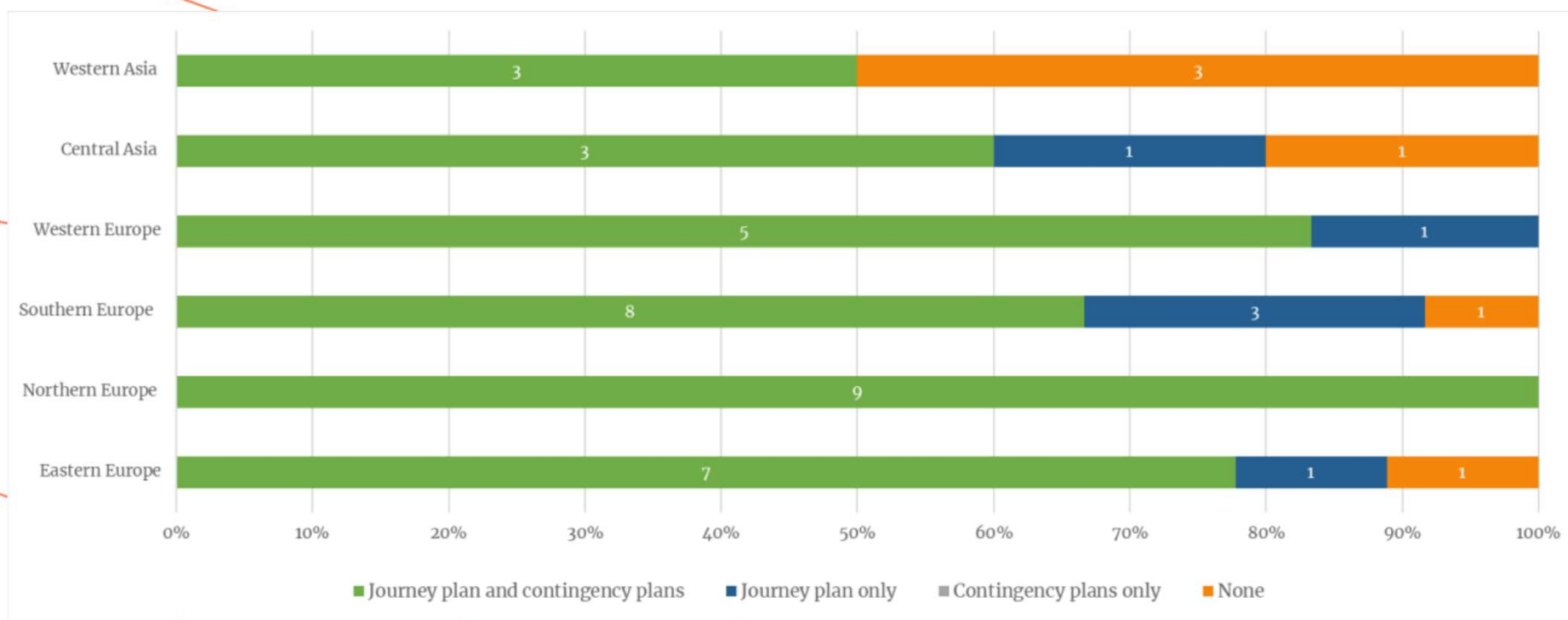
- Drivers (33 out of 47),
- Animal handlers (28 out of 47),
- Transport companies (23 out of 47),
- Animal owners and or managers (13 out of 47).



Results and discussion

Legislative framework

Geographical distribution of WOAH Members where legislation in force requires a journey plan before departure or contingency plans addressing emergencies during transport and geographical distribution of Countries without both tools.





Results and discussion

Monitoring and evaluation

Legislative framework

- Almost all the respondents (45 out of 47) declared that monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the legal requirements concerning animal transport are regularly carried out by the Competent Authority or other certification bodies.

This is congruent with the fact that almost all the countries that replied to the questionnaire have in place legislation on animal transport. The results provided by Members' monitoring and evaluation processes may provide further detailed feedback on the implementation of WOAH standards. In addition sharing the methods and best practises for monitoring and evaluation may further contribute to strengthening collaboration between Competent Authorities and improving welfare of the animals.



Results and discussion

Official controls

Legislative framework

- To assure the enforcement of the legislation concerning the welfare of animals during transport, all the 47 responding Members organize or carry out official controls.
- In most European Countries (27 out of 47), the Central and the local Competent Authority organize or carry out official controls. In 13 out of 47 Members , official controls are conducted only by the local Competent Authority and in 7 of them, by the Central Competent Authority only.
- A low percentage of European Countries (38%) have a reporting system to analyse - at central level - the legal infringements.

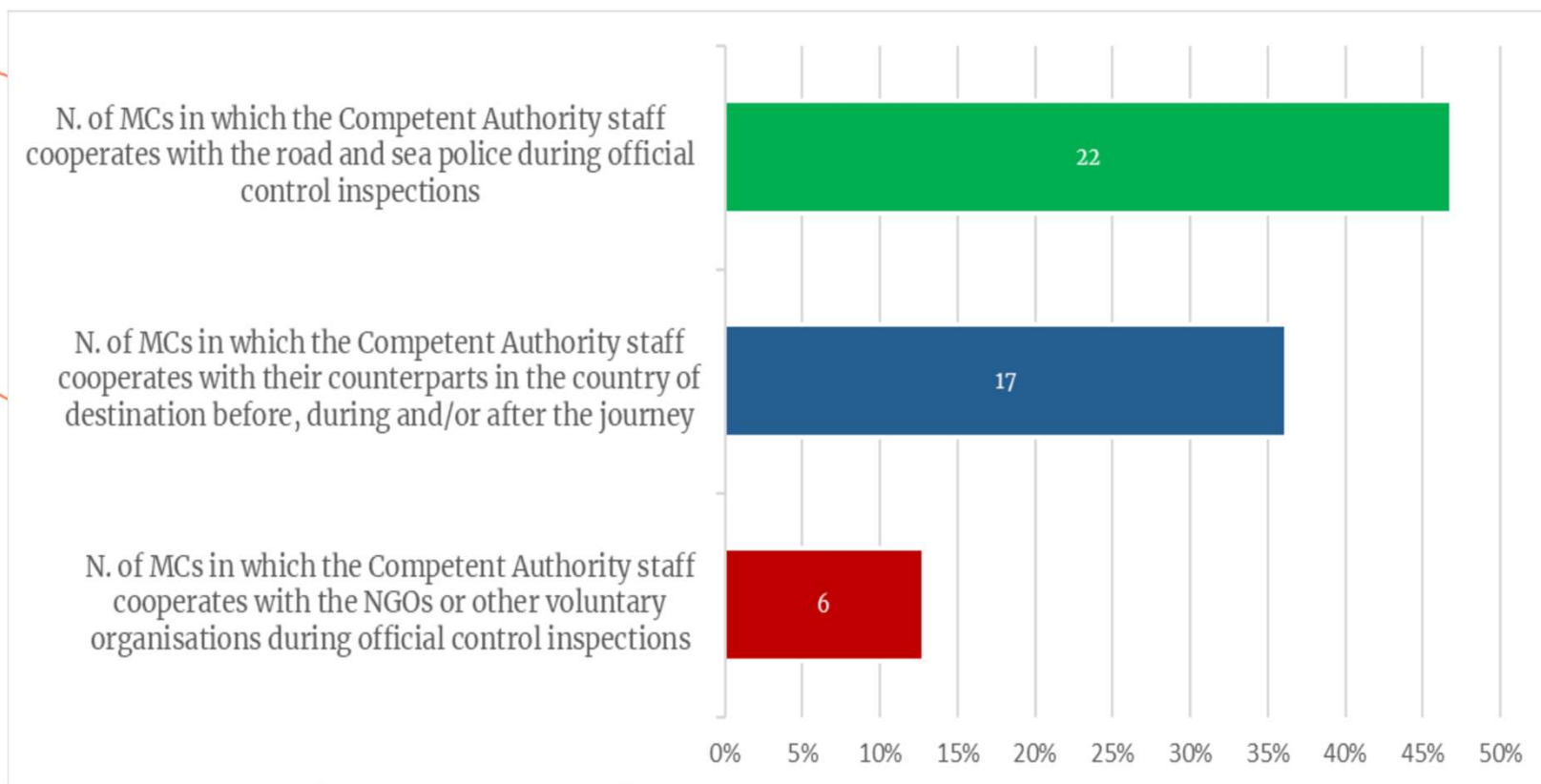
As less than 50% of Members have this type of system, it could be interesting for the Members to share their experience in order to establish the system in the Members without.



Results and discussion

Legislative framework

WOAH Members Cooperating with other organizations during official control inspections or before, during and/or after the journey per type of organization

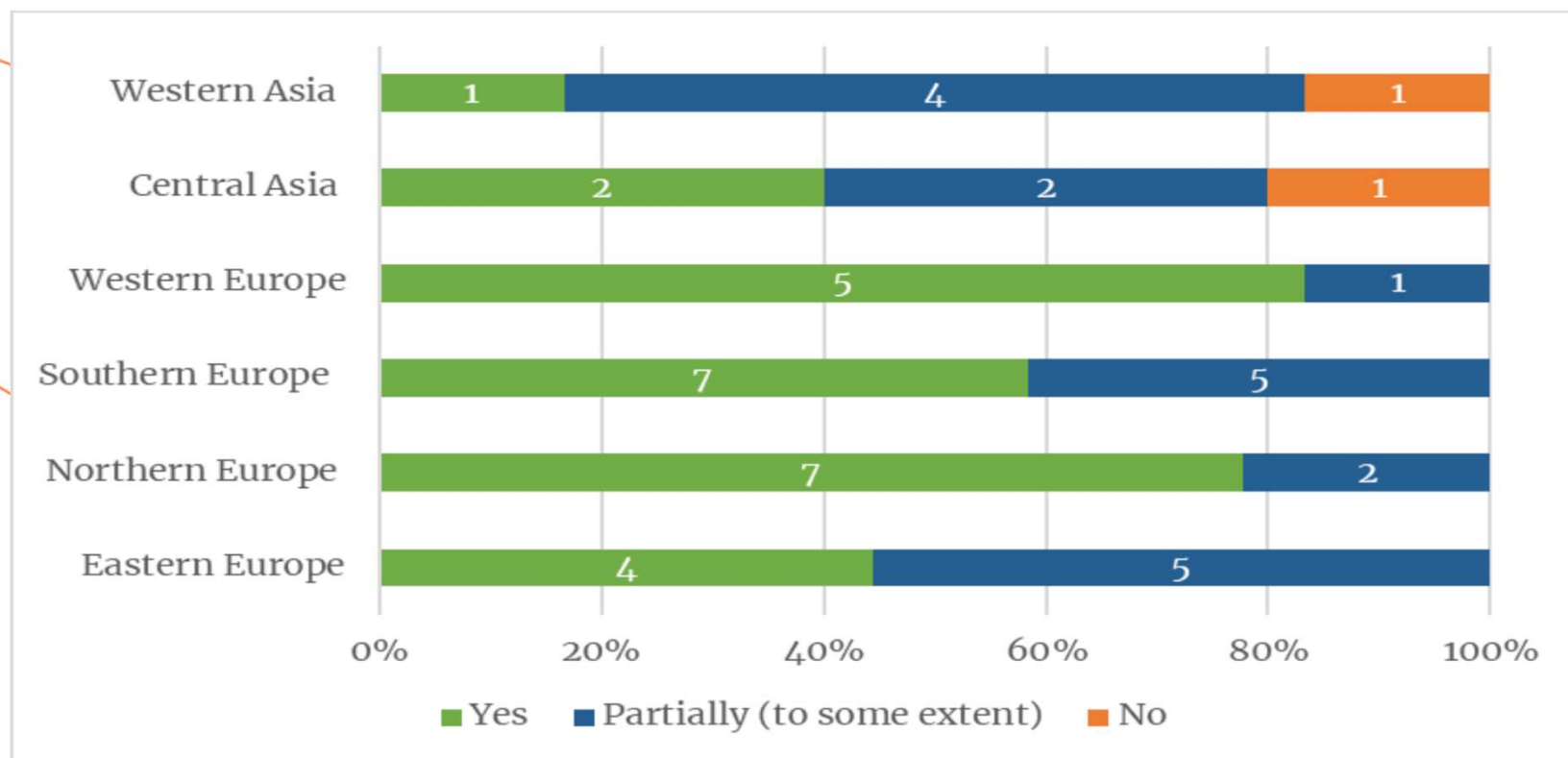




Results and discussion

WOAH Members where Competent Authority has full, partial or no technical capacity, trained personnel, and additional capacity to implement standards and requirements on animal transport

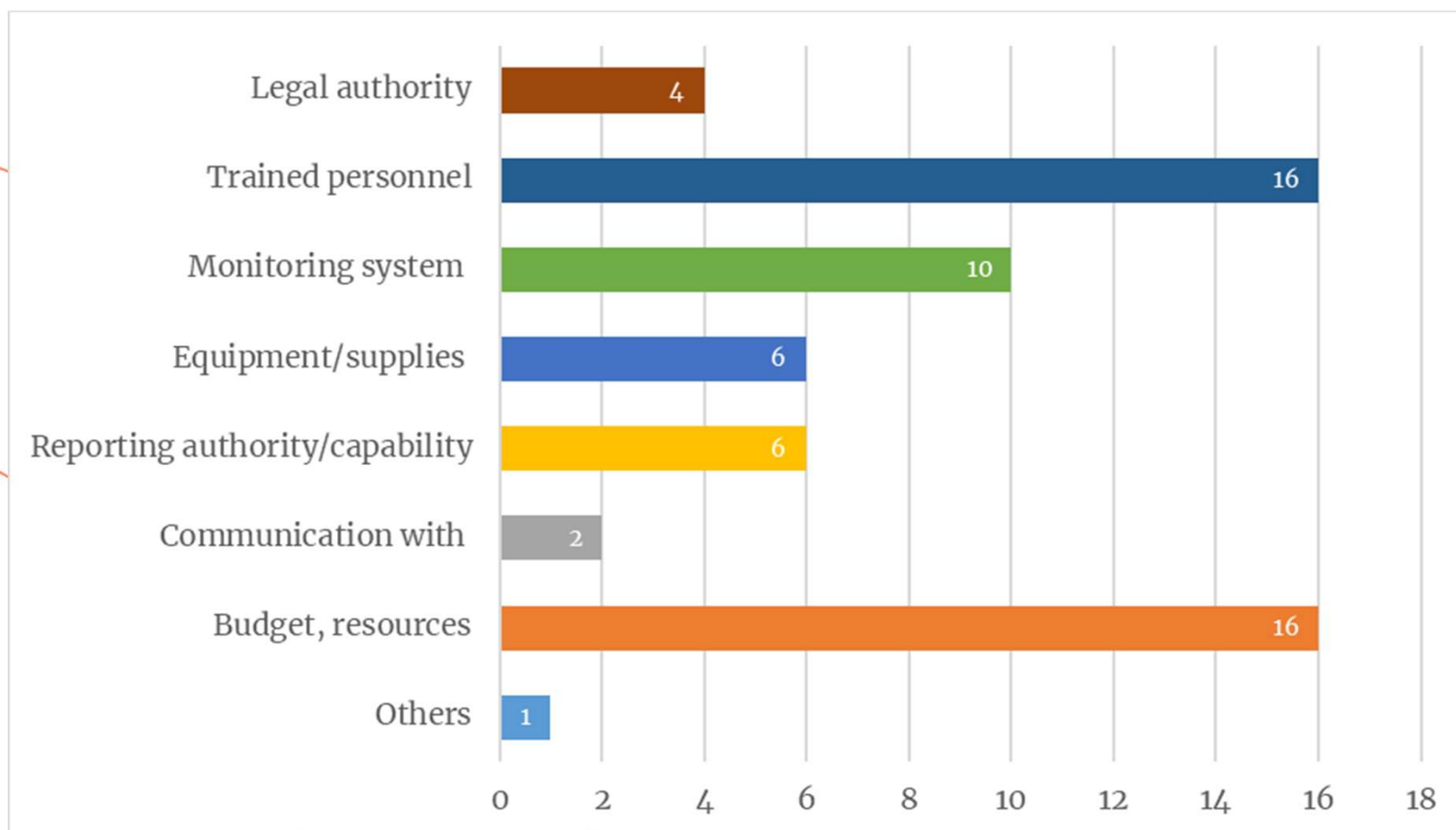
Major gaps/or shortages





Results and discussion *Major gaps/shortages*

Major gaps/or
shortages





Results and discussion *Major gaps/shortages*

Major gaps/or shortages

- Regarding the shortage of trained personnel, almost all Members (14 out of 16), which made explicit the problem, are located in Eastern and Southern Europe and Western and Central Asia. For the same geographical areas, 9 Countries out of 10 also showed a lack of a monitoring system for the correct implementation of the standards and requirements on animal transport.

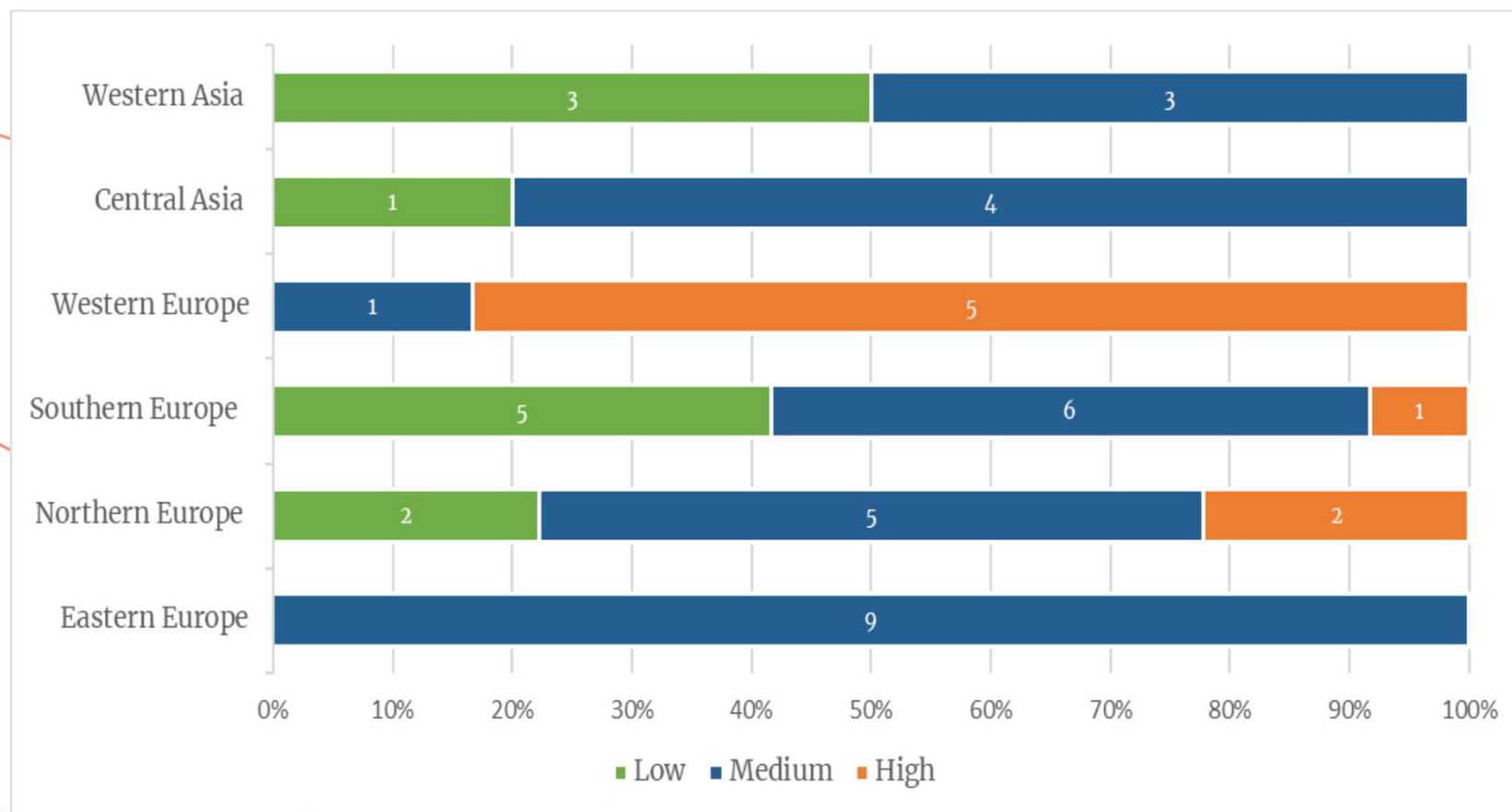
An adequate budget and resources also seem necessary to address the other identified gaps, such as trained personnel and monitoring systems. Ensuring sufficient funding available for the Competent Authority is a complex and multi-factorial issue, including economic aspects as well as long-term political commitment and executive actions to address animal welfare issues during transport.



Results and discussion

Number of WOAH Members responding per level of civil society awareness

Civil society and business operators' awareness





Results and discussion

Civil society and business operators' awareness

Impact of civil society's awareness on consumers and business operators

- Twenty three (23) out of 47 Members were in agreement on the possible influence on business operators
- A minor share of Members (16 out of 47) were in agreement on the fact that civil society awareness on animal welfare issues during transport could also impact on consumers choices
- Many Members were “neutral”

In both cases, Southern Europe seems to be the most sceptical area about the possible positive effects of the civil society awareness on the implementation of measures to protect animal welfare during long distance transportation (5 out of 10 “disagree” answers to these two questions were from this area). Northern and Western Europe are more in agreement with this approach (17 out of 30 answers from these areas).



Results and discussion

Civil society and business operators' awareness

Level of awareness on role and responsibilities to protect di animals expressed by business operators

- Transport companies highly aware of their role and responsibilities to protect the transported animals
- Farmers, exporters, business or buy/selling agents and animal truck manufacturers medium level of awareness
- Drivers, animal handlers, and resting point managers and personnel medium – high the level of awareness



Results and discussion

Civil society and business operators' awareness

Initiatives in place to increase the level of awareness of civil society and business operators

- The majority of the Members provided a positive answer (only 16 out of 47 stated “no” to initiatives to increase the level of awareness of civil society and business operators being in place)
- Members that organize awareness raising activities are quite evenly distributed among the different geographical areas



Results and discussion

Civil society and business operators' awareness

Final scope of initiatives to increase the level awareness of civil society and business operators

- Increase controls by the Competent Authorities and applying more severe sanctions/criminal convictions
- Increase the protection measures adopted by the business operators before departure and during long-distance transportation.
- Thirty one per cent (31%) of the respondents (9 out of 29) indicated, as a scope, to definitely stop long-distance animal transportation by law in the country or in the Region.



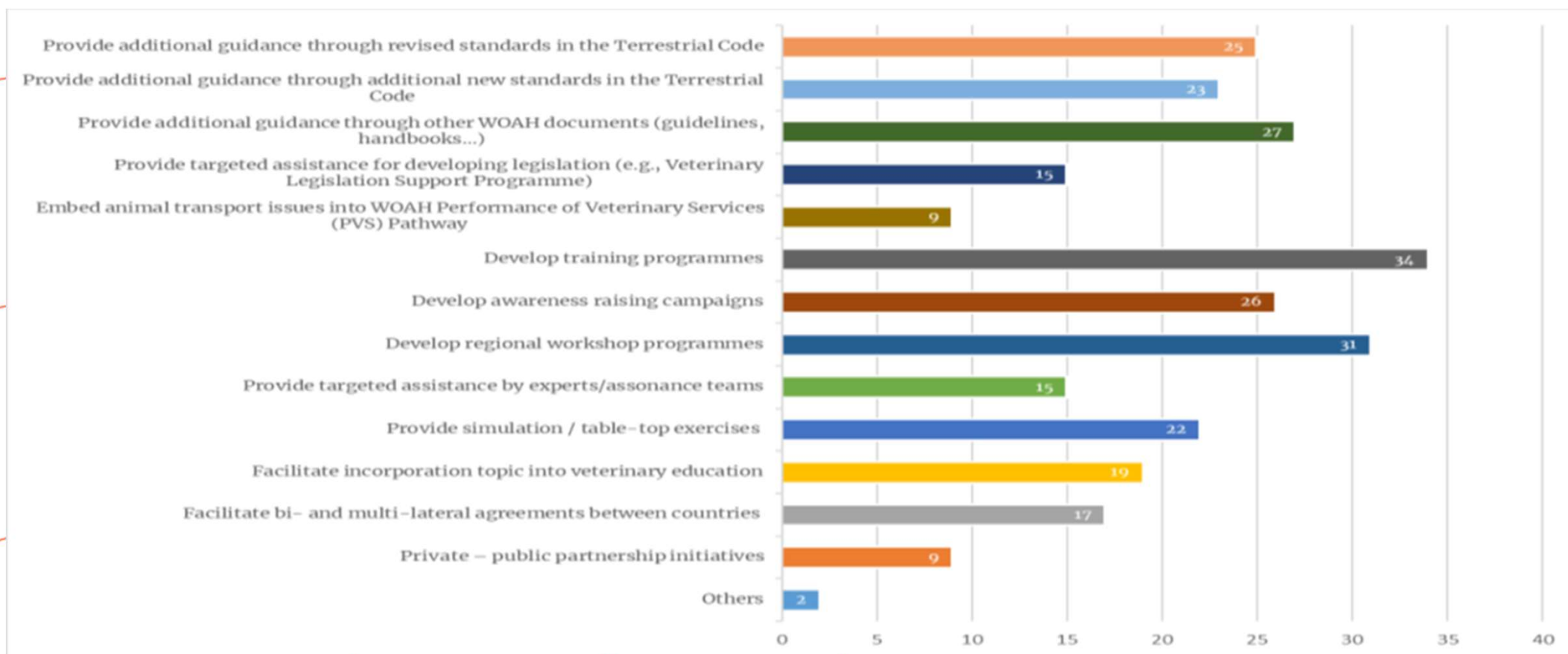
Results and discussion

Expected actions or activities by WOA

The conclusive question posed to the Members of the Europe Region concerned the indication of any possible action or activity by WOA to assist the Competent Authorities to implement or manage more effectively standards and requirements on animal transport



Results and discussion Total number per type of possible action or activity by WOAHA to assist the Competent Authorities





Results and discussion

Expected actions or activities by WOA

Capacity building and additional guidance

- Thirty-nine Members suggested to develop training or regional workshop programmes or provide simulation / table-top exercises and facilitate incorporation of the topic into veterinary education curricula.
- Thirty four Members have requested to WOA for additional guidance through revised standards in the Terrestrial Code or the development of new additional standards or through other WOA documents



Results and discussion

Expected actions or activities by WOA

Awareness campaigns and targeted assistance

- Most felt in Eastern and Southern Europe (13 out of 26), and less so in Northern and Western Europe (9 out of 26), and Western and Central Asia (4 out of 26).
- Twenty-two (22) Members have indicated i) the targeted assistance for developing legislation and ii) the targeted assistance by experts. Most of the Members that express these needs (17 out of 22) are from the Western and Central Asia (5 out of 17), and Eastern and Southern Europe (8 out of 17)



Results and discussion

Expected actions or activities by WOA

Setting bilateral and multilateral agreements, PVS and private - public partnership

- As regards WOA support to the process for setting bilateral and multilateral agreements between countries, 17 respondents expressed such a need, and in particular those belonging to Eastern and Southern Europe (9 out of 17) and Northern and Western Europe (6 out of 17).
- To embed animal transport issues into WOA Performance of Veterinary Services (PVS) Pathway, and to promote private - public partnership initiatives have been identified as possible WOA activities by 9 Members.



Conclusions



Conclusions

- Transport is a critical moment for animal welfare as it involves actions that are not part of the normal experience of animals, so they can be great stressors
- Many different actors could be involved in this delicate process, often in different countries
- WOAHA, as common reference organization, should favour the arising of a sense of collective and individual responsibility, effective communication and coordination amongst all participants in the transportation chain, on the basis of adequate regulatory frameworks
- The questionnaire highlighted some critical aspects relating the effective implementation of WOAHA standards on animal welfare during transport



Conclusions

- Legislations are “generally aligned” with Terrestrial Code standards, but certain crucial requirements often are not included
- Additional non-legislative documents could be useful to facilitate the implementation of requirements
- Journey/contingency plans and monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of AW regulations by Competent Authorities, inspection, approval of means of transportation are declared but further analysis on the level of application is needed
- Major gaps in budget or available resources and trained personnel: capacity building interventions are needed
- Efforts are needed to increase awareness among stakeholders involved in animal welfare issues during transport
- Additional training and guidance from WOAH in the field of AW during transport could facilitate the role of the Competent Authorities in effectively protect transported animals

Thank you

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