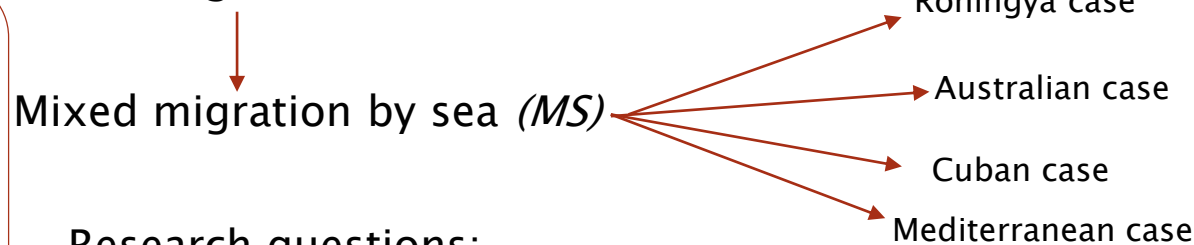


THE MARITIME SEARCH AND RESCUE OPERATIONAL RESPONSE TO MIXED MIGRATION FLOWS

VASILEIOS KOSMAS
MICHELE ACCIARO
MARIA BESIOU

vasileios.kosmas@the-klu.org
vk.om@cbs.dk

Mixed migration



Research questions:

1. What stakeholders are involved in maritime SAR operations in the context of MS in terms of disaster management and how do their actions impact SAR operational effectiveness?
2. What additional factors need to be taken into account in enhancing SAR operational effectiveness in the context of MS?

Focus on the Mediterranean Sea crisis

- operational complexity and involvement of multiple stakeholders

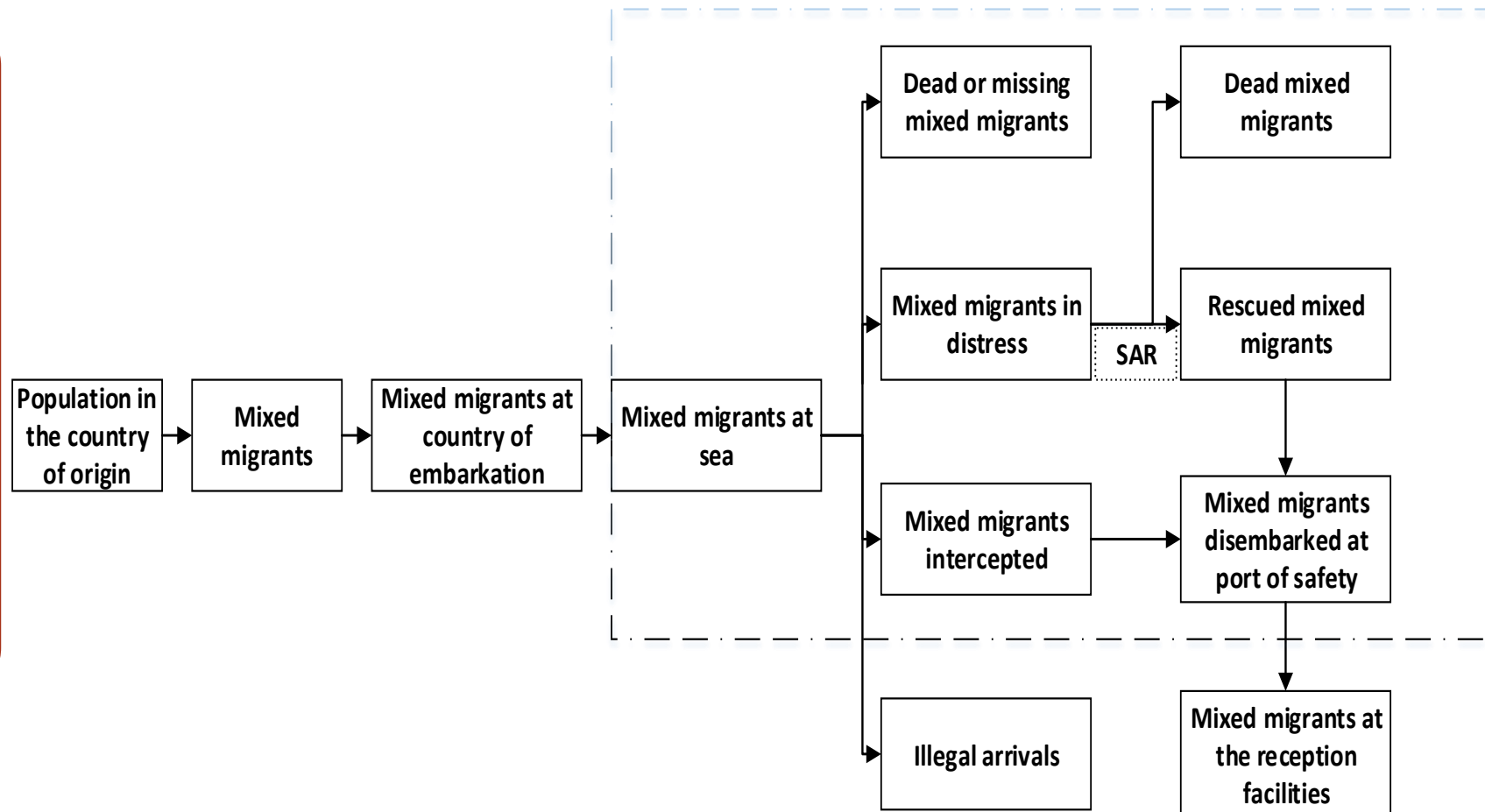
Next steps:

- 1) Literature in disaster management
- 2) Participation in knowledge dissemination activities:
 - Session “Rescue at sea” in the International Association Maritime Economists (IAME) 2016 conference.
 - “Shared Awareness and DE–confliction in the MEDiterranean Sea (SHADE MED) forums organized by the European Naval Force in the Mediterranean operation Sophia
 - “Migration and Human Rights” program organized by the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI)
- 3) Design the MS system, the preliminary theoretical framework and update it

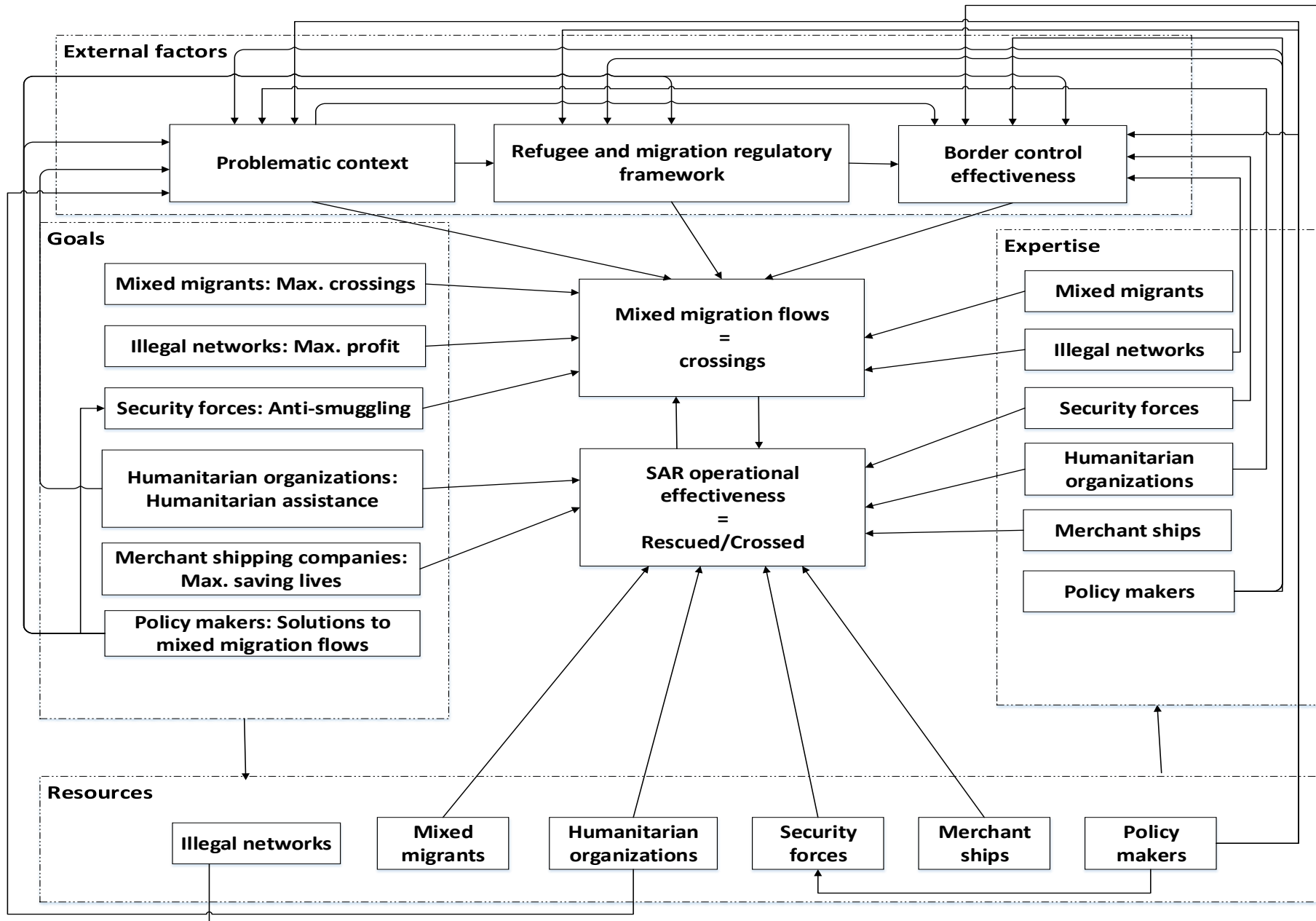
The involved stakeholders, their goals and operations in the MS sea system

Stakeholders	Goals	Operations
Mixed migrants (MMs)	Reaching intended destination	Sea-crossings
Illegal networks (INs)	Maximization of profit (exploiting the “need” of MMs)	Facilitation of illegal sea-crossings
Security forces (SFs)	Prevention of illegal activities	Tackling illegal activities (anti-smuggling and anti-trafficking) and SAR
Humanitarian organizations (HOs)	Humanitarian aid (exclusively or through implementing partners)	SAR
Commercial shipping companies (CSCs)	Minimization of financial loss (commercial character)	SAR (obligation by international maritime law)
Policy-makers (PMs)	Solution to MM flows while respecting human rights	Managing regulatory immigration policies, enhancement of the security, long-term development operations

The mixed MS system (dotted line indicates the system)



Preliminary theoretical framework



DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Primary data; 15 Interviews with:

- ☐ HOs involved in the displacement crisis and/or conducting SAR operations
- ☐ Commercial shipping companies associations representing their members
- ☐ Security forces experts and officers
- ☐ Policy experts

Secondary data:

- ☐ Reports (UNHCR, Europol, Frontex, ICS, etc.), other published materials, etc.

THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA CRISIS

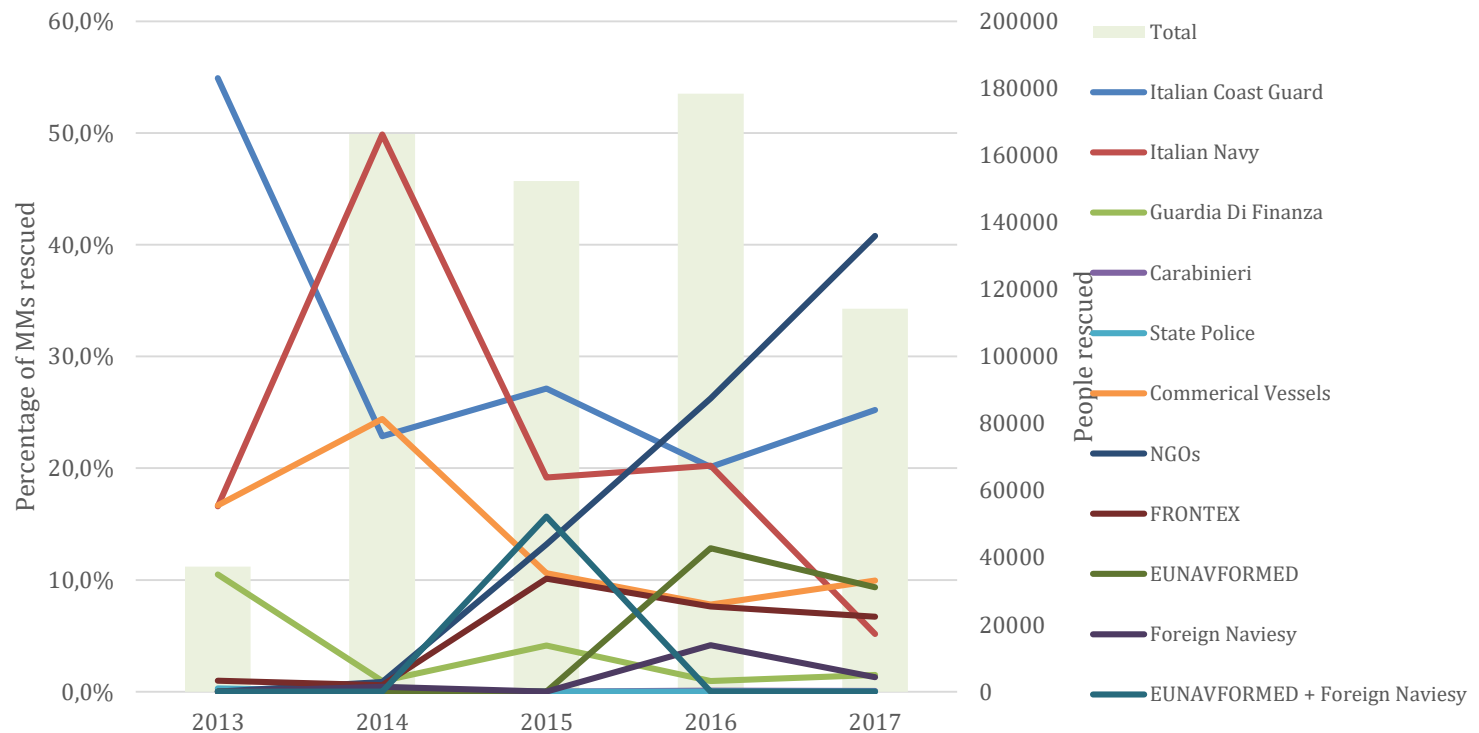
- Mixed migration drivers: poverty, political instability, war, persecution, etc.
- 80% of MMs (from Africa to Europe) have turned to INs
- Main sea-routes: Eastern Med., Central Med., Western Med..
- 1,046,599 total arrivals in 2015
- 387,739 total arrivals in 2016 (EU-Turkey “agreement”)
- Libya = the main MM embarkation hub since 2016
- 5,096 in 2016 (deadliest year so far)

Maritime operational response and SAR

- Security operations: FRONTEX, EUNAFORMED op.”Sophia”, NATO, “Mare Sicuro”
- Humanitarian operations: NGOs e.g. MSF, SOS Méditerranée, MOAS etc., “Mare Nostrum” (Italian navy; lasted one year),
- Commercial ships (SOLAS and SAR convention)
- National coast guards

SAR activity and rescued people in the Central Mediterranean Sea;

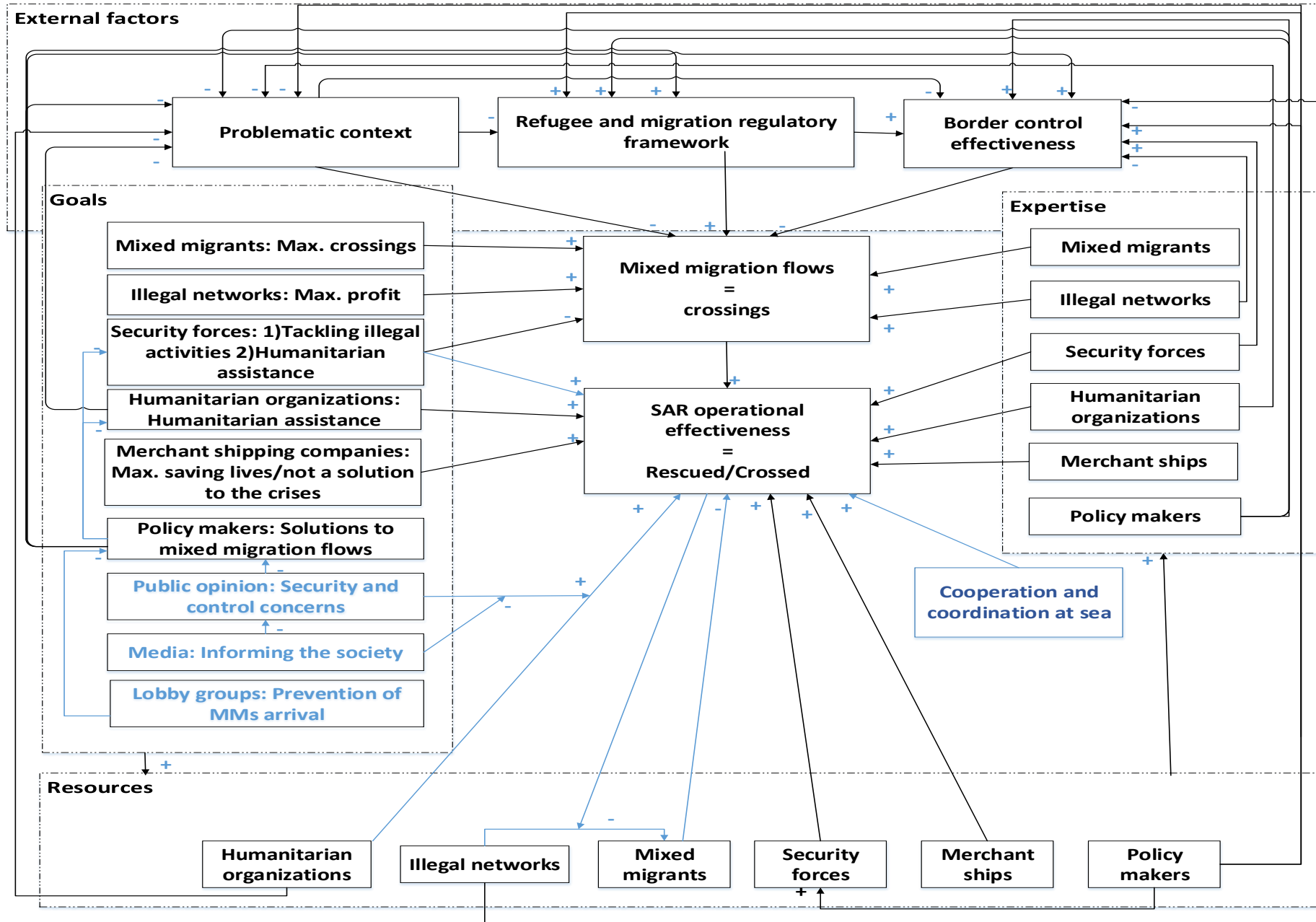
Source: Authors' compilation based on data from Guardia Costiera (2018)



KEY FINDINGS

External factors		
Problematic context		Long term (humanitarian) development
Refugee and migration regulatory framework		Expansion and establishment of legal pathways: Enhances the border control effectiveness
Border control effectiveness		Stricter control regimes lead the MMs to more dangerous and riskier routes
Internal factors		
NGOs	1) SAR or <i>search and secure</i> , 2) resources and expertise limitations, 3) funding’s importance	
PMs	1) influence the operations of SFs and HOs, 2) liable for the external factors	
CSCs	1) Extra costs are covered within the industry, 2) no solution to the crises/should not be institutionalized, 3) SOLAS and SAR have not been designed for MS crises	
INs	1) should be dismantled completely, 2) partial disruption leads to new more ruthless and sophisticated criminal groups, 3) “engineered helplessness” behavior	
Public Media	1) affect the funding of NGOs, 2) not ready to accept high volumes of MMs 1) affect the public opinion and indirect the funding of NGOs	
Unknown and lobby groups	1) Different Libyan coast guard militia and Right wing actors 2) Can reduce the SAR effectiveness	
Cooperation and coordination	Needs to be improved so as to increase SAR operational effectiveness	The main barriers are the goals, the missions and the mandates of the involved stakeholders

Updated theoretical framework



CONCLUSION

- ❑ First contribution to investigate SAR operations in the context of MS
- ❑ Policy makers the most critical stakeholder
- ❑ Shipping sector should not be seen as a solution
- ❑ Operational challenges: assets availability, competence, resources etc.
- ❑ Cooperation and coordination through resources and information sharing is needed so as to increase SAR operational effectiveness
- ❑ An enhanced SAR operational effectiveness is not a pull factor for MMs
- ❑ Further research: application of the framework to other cases, behaviour of the involved stakeholders etc.