



Annual Report 2020

ELNET

EUROPEAN LEADERSHIP NETWORK



Looking forward to 2021, ELNET plans to ramp up its educational activities on key strategic issues such as Iran's destabilizing role, the Hezbollah ban, support for Israeli-Arab normalization, pragmatic policies on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, legal warfare, transatlantic dialogue, cooperation on key regional issues, expanding Europe-Israel ties, and the fight against antisemitism and BDS. ELNET plans to open a new office in the UK, increase activities in Spain, and launch a Strategic Dialogue in Italy and Norway.



+71%

decision-makers engaged vs. 2019

2,227

participants from policy community

52

online and in-person activities, including delegations, strategic dialogues, conferences, briefings

Executive Summary

In 2020, the world was hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. Europe faced additional challenges including Brexit and terrorism, while Israel enjoyed relative calm, with Iran still posing the most severe threat. Israel signed historic agreements with the UAE, Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco, paving the way to broad regional normalization.

In the past two years, seven European countries and three parliaments banned Hezbollah, sending a clear message against violence and hatred. ELNET welcomed this legislative effort and initiated a comprehensive educational campaign on Hezbollah. Moreover, the European Parliament passed landmark legislation, banning aid to terrorism and incitement to violence, holding the Commission accountable. ELNET has raised awareness to improve the monitoring of EU funding.

Europe has been warming up to the Abraham Accords, which ELNET strongly supports. Europe also became increasingly vocal against Iran's destabilizing activities, on which ELNET continuously raised awareness.

Israel increased cooperation with key European member states, yet disagreements remained on important policy issues including Iran and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. UK-Israel relations underwent a significant transformation, the atmosphere in high-level Spain-Israel dialogue changed positively, and Israel improved relations with Greece, Cyprus, Austria, the Visegrad Group, and the Baltic states.

There is also a growing willingness among member states to support convening the EU-Israel Association Council, which has not met since 2012. ELNET mobilized more than 100 senior lawmakers to reconvene the high-level dialogue.

Since the pandemic, ELNET has been pursuing creative approaches to continue our educational activities, immediately launching the Online Policy Exchange (OPE) program, which included dozens of online video conferences, briefings, and strategic dialogues with close to 3,000 high-level participants from 38 countries.

To build bridges between Israeli innovation and Europe's largest economy, ELNET launched the German Israeli Network of Startups & Mittelstand (GINSUM). The two-year program aims to connect Israeli startups with German medium-sized companies (Mittelstand).

***ELNET engaged
close to 1,200 top
decision-makers in
its programs, a 71%
increase over 2019.***

The pandemic unleashed a new wave of antisemitic hate speech and conspiracy theories, particularly online. ELNET's educational campaigns drove further action to address this. In the last two years, 12 European countries adopted the IHRA definition of antisemitism that includes Israel hatred. In December, the EU urged all remaining member states to adopt the definition.

ELNET strongly supports initiatives to encourage Israel's deeper integration in the Middle East and new pragmatic policies on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Finally, to address transatlantic disagreements, we held the third Trilateral U.S.-Europe-Israel Strategic Dialogue with the Hudson Institute, a leading U.S. public policy think tank.

This year ELNET increased its impact by engaging close to 1,200 top decision-makers in its programs, marking a 71% increase over 2019, and reaching an audience of over 2,200 participants from the broader policy community. We led and took part in 16 online and in-person conferences, 13 briefings, eight Strategic Dialogues, seven delegations to Israel, seven roundtables and workshops, and one visit to Europe.

Looking forward to 2021, ELNET plans to ramp up its educational activities on key strategic issues such as the Iran's destabilizing role, the Hezbollah ban, support for Israeli-Arab normalization, pragmatic policies on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, expanding Europe-Israel ties, and the fight against antisemitism and BDS. ELNET offices will increasingly take on regional responsibilities with the aim of covering the entire continent. We plan to open a new office in the UK, and expand our reach into Spain, Italy, and additional priority countries.

Hezbollah designation

In the past two years, seven European countries, including the UK and Germany, introduced a full ban on Hezbollah, and parliaments in three countries passed a resolution to fully designate Hezbollah as a terrorist organization, ending the false distinction between its military and political wings.



Opposing Iran's destabilizing activities

Europe became increasingly vocal against Iran's destabilizing activities. The E3 (France, Germany and the UK) issued seven joint statements, condemning Iran, and initiated the JCPOA dispute resolution mechanism.



Arab-Israeli normalization

Europe has been warming up to the Abraham Accords. ELNET strongly supports this development discussed in multiple Strategic Dialogues, contributing to a better European understanding of the shift in the paradigm of the Middle East.



EU-Israel Association Council

There is growing willingness among member states to support convening the EU-Israel Association Council. ELNET mobilized 100+ senior European and Israeli lawmakers to reconvene the high-level dialogue, which has not met since 2012.

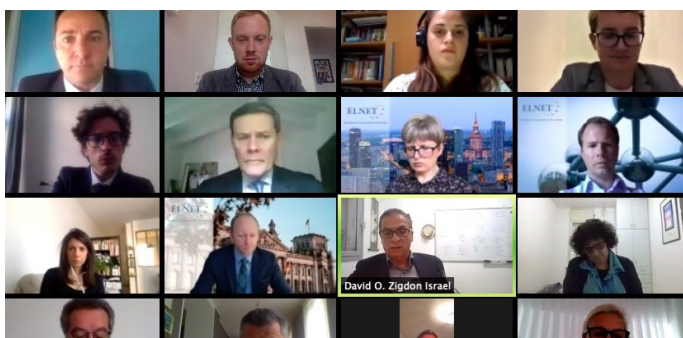
Adopting IHRA definition

In the last two years, 12 European countries, including France, Spain and Italy, adopted the IHRA definition of antisemitism that includes Israel hatred. In December 2020, the EU urged all remaining Member States to adopt the definition.



Online Policy Exchange

Since the outbreak of the pandemic, ELNET launched the Online Policy Exchange (OPE) program, increasing its policy outreach, engaging over 1,100 decision-makers from 30+ countries.



Israeli innovation in Germany

ELNET launched the German Israeli Network of Startups & Mittelstand (GINSUM) to build bridges between Israeli innovation and Europe's largest economy, with a grant of over \$850,000 from the German government.



Media Exposure

ELNET's work was covered by 146 articles in eight languages in key European, Israeli and Jewish media outlets in 2020, an increase as compared to 2019.



On the ground activity

ELNET was the first and only organization able to resume its activities on the ground with a strategic tour of Israel's border with Gaza for 14 European ambassadors and senior diplomats.



Europe-Middle East Forum

Following the historic breakthrough of Arab-Israeli normalization, ELNET launched a new Europe-Middle East Forum encouraging European support for regional realignment.

Support to regional integration

85 French leaders urged an end to Arab boycott of Israel. ELNET strongly supports initiatives to encourage Israel's deeper integration in the Middle East.



Banning EU aid to terror

The European Parliament passed landmark legislation in May 2020, banning aid to terrorism and incitement to violence, holding the European Commission accountable.

ELNET 2020 Policy Issues



Iran, regional issues and Arab-Israeli normalization

- Increase European understanding of Iran's destabilizing activities on multiple levels: nuclear, regional activities and missiles - special focus on European members of the P5+1 and the EU
- Encourage Europeans to join the process of Israeli-Arab normalization



Counterterrorism (Hezbollah, Hamas)

- Expand the European ban on the political arm of Hezbollah
- Promote dialogue and cooperation on counterterrorism and cybersecurity
- Increase understanding of the threat posed by Hezbollah and Hamas



Israeli-Palestinian conflict

- Support the pursuit of peace in the Middle East through direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians
- Educate on Israeli security needs and complexity of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict
- Broaden European perspectives on Israel's security and political challenges



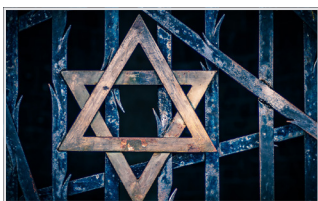
Understanding of Israel & bilateral ties

- Educate on Israel as a pillar of stability and democracy in the Middle East
- Promote dialogue and cooperation on various issues
- Enhance bilateral ties between Europe and Israel
- Re-establish the EU-Israel Association Council



Innovation & business

- Promote close bilateral relations, trade and cooperation on innovation and hi-tech between Israel and Europe
- Educate on Israel as a start-up nation
- Promote trade



Antisemitism & delegitimization of Israel

- Fight growing antisemitism (with a focus on its new forms as related to Israel) and conspiracy theories in the times of pandemic
- Oppose BDS and Israel's delegitimization
- Block financing of BDS by European governments and the EU



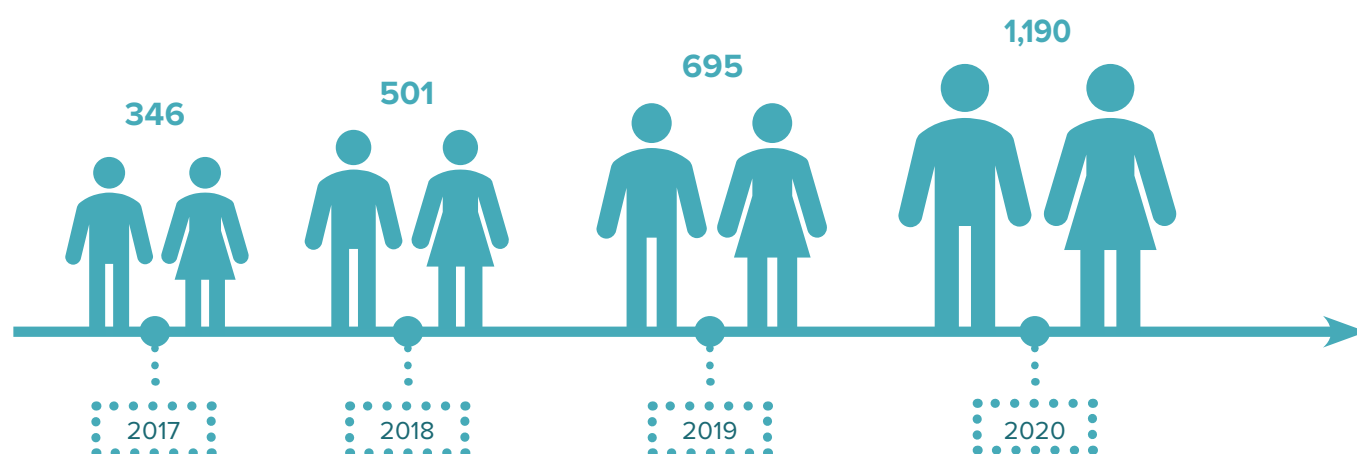
Transatlantic relations

- Promote closer transatlantic cooperation on key issues in the Middle East

Development of the organization

This year ELNET increased its impact by engaging close to 1,200 top decision-makers in its online and in-person programs, marking a 71% increase over 2019, and reaching an audience of more than 2,200 participants from the broader policy community.

Evolution of number of decision-makers in ELNET's activities



We initiated a host of new partnerships such as with the **EU Delegation in Israel**, the **French Institute of International Relations (IFRI)** in France – the number 3 think tank in the world (according to 2019 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report),⁵ **PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC)** and the **Hanns-Seidel-Foundation (HSS)** in Germany, and **Center for International Relations** in Poland.

ELNET started transforming toward regional offices covering the whole of Europe, extending to Austria, Switzerland, and Baltic, Visegrad, Eastern Mediterranean and Scandinavian countries. ELNET also expanded its platform connecting major pro-Israel NGOs in Europe, further increasing communication and cooperation.

Implementing a common communication strategy, ELNET significantly upgraded its online presence through its multiple websites and Twitter accounts and greatly increased press outreach in Europe, Israel and the U.S.

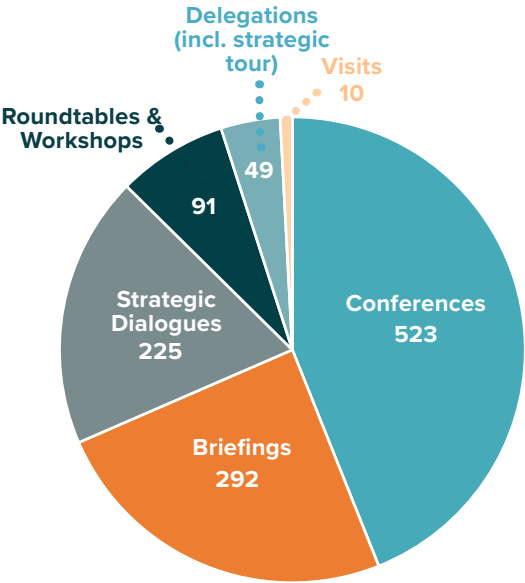
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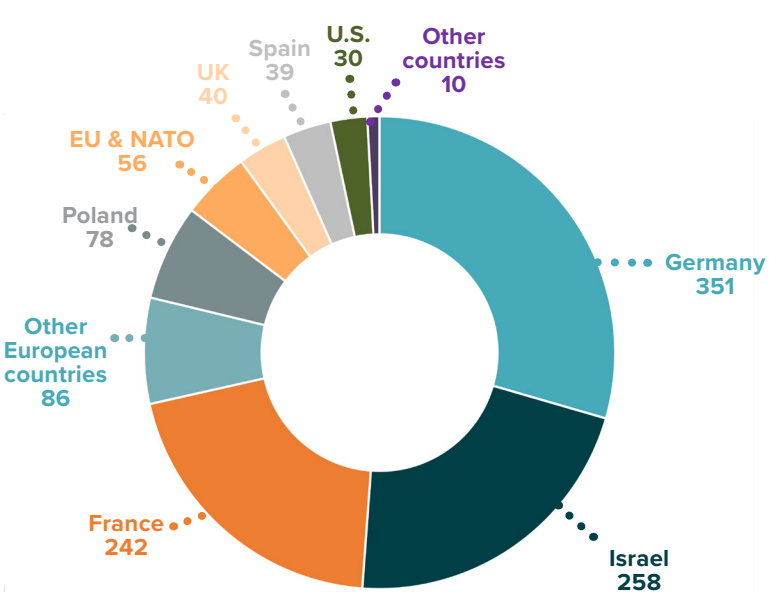
ELNET's activities across Europe and Israel in 2020 reached an audience of 2,227

Close to 1,200 European, Israeli and U.S. senior officials, policymakers, leading journalists, experts and opinion leaders took part in ELNET's activities or spoke at major international conferences. Through these activities, ELNET reached a **total audience of more than 2,200 participants** from the broader policy community. In the following graphs, the numbers are broken down for each category and country of activity.

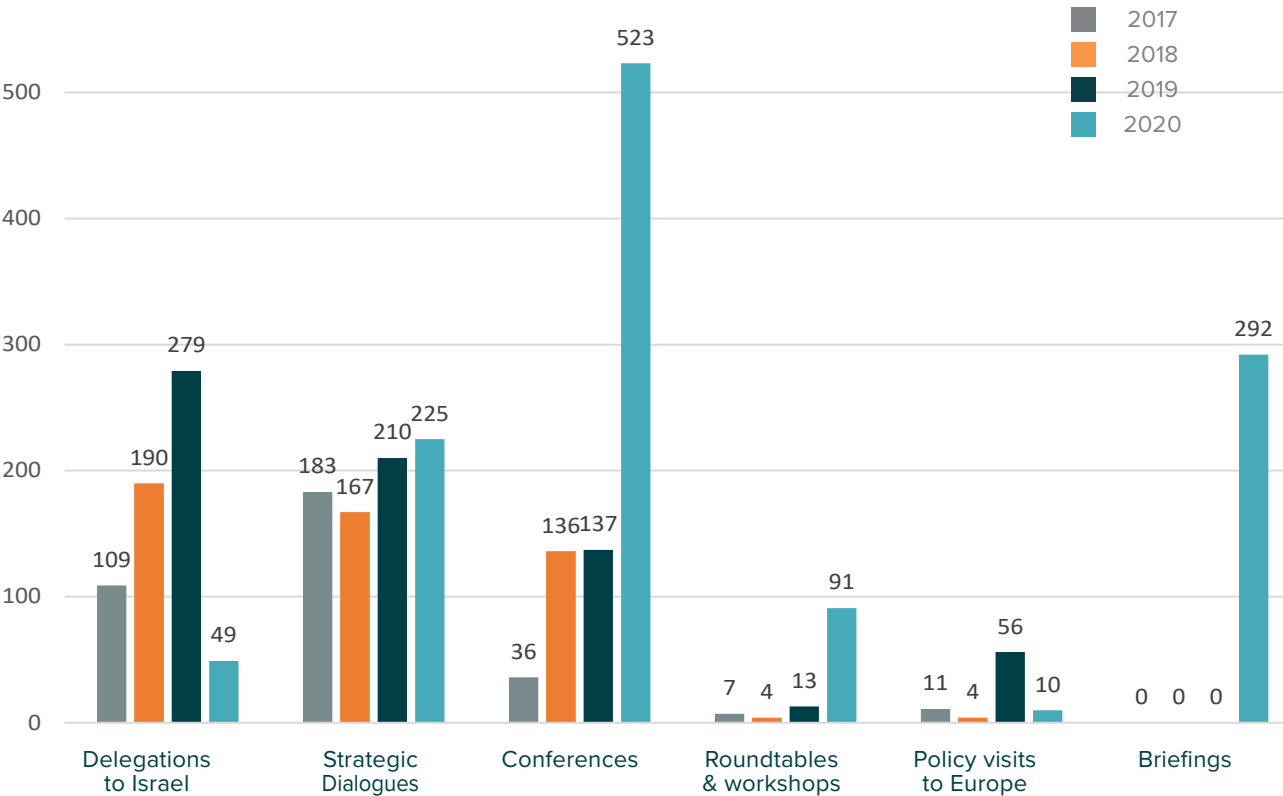
Number of decision-makers in ELNET's activities
PER CATEGORY 2020, total: 1,190



Number of decision-makers in ELNET's activities
PER COUNTRY 2020, total: 1,190



Number of decision-makers in ELNET's activities
PER CATEGORY



Looking Forward

The coming year will present ELNET with significant challenges and opportunities with yet another round of elections in Israel (held in March 2021), federal elections in Germany in September 2021, and presidential elections in France in 2022. ELNET plans to ramp up its activities in 2021 to engage new policymakers in Israel and Europe.

ELNET plans to increase educational activities on key strategic issues such as the Iran's destabilizing role, the Hezbollah ban, support for Israeli-Arab normalization, pragmatic policies on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, legal warfare, transatlantic dialogue, cooperation on key regional issues, upgrading EU-Israel ties, expanding bilateral ties, and the fight against antisemitism and BDS. ELNET will engage the UAE and other regional players to build on the Abraham Accords and involve the Europeans. The EU's focus on digital innovation and environment will present Israel with new opportunities as a leader on innovation.

ELNET plans to open a new office in the UK, increase activities in Spain, and launch a Strategic Dialogue in Italy and Norway.

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ELNET - European Leadership Network

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