



# Annual Report 2021

ELNET

EUROPEAN LEADERSHIP NETWORK



Looking forward to 2022, ELNET plans to ramp up its educational activities on key issues such as Iran, Hezbollah, Israeli-Arab normalization, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, transatlantic dialogue, Europe-Israel ties, antisemitism, and delegitimization of Israel. 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 increase activities in Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, the Baltics, the Visegrad, and other priority countries, as well as launch a Strategic Dialogue in Norway and/or the Eastern Mediterranean.



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# 1,088

decision-makers engaged

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# 25,217

participants from policy community,  
11 times more than 2020

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# 57

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

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# Executive Summary

In 2021, the world continued to be plagued by the COVID-19 pandemic. Europe was faced with one crisis after the next, while Israel continued to be pre-occupied with the Iranian threat and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. On the positive side, the Abraham Accords gained stability and depth.

With Biden's election as President, Europe has regained a more central role on the world stage, including on the critical Iran negotiations. Europe became increasingly vocal against Iranian destabilizing activities, on which ELNET continuously raised awareness.

ELNET engaged in intense educational work during the Gaza flare-up when European leaders from 18 countries unequivocally supported Israel's right to defend itself. ELNET also initiated a campaign to oppose the ICC investigation against Israel, to which a growing group of European nations expressed opposition. Europe continued to warm up to the Abraham Accords, which ELNET strongly supports.

2021 was the most antisemitic year in the last decade. ELNET's educational campaigns drove further action to address the issue. 22 European countries boycotted the Durban IV conference due to its antisemitic nature, while two additional countries adopted the IHRA definition of antisemitism. ELNET-Germany initiated a new flagship project "Words Matter" to fight antisemitism and Israel-related online hate speech in Germany. Additionally, ELNET affiliates in France and Germany launched campaigns to counter Israel's delegitimization at the UN.

Following the German ban of Hezbollah, ELNET-Germany focused efforts on Austria and Switzerland to follow suit. Austria became the 12th European country to vote for a full Hezbollah ban. Continuing its educational campaign on Hezbollah in Europe, ELNET took various delegations to Israel's North to witness first-hand the complex threat posed by the terrorist group. France passed a law to fight Islamist extremism, and the UK officially banned Hamas in its entirety as a terrorist group. Finally, following last year's landmark vote to prevent EU funding for entities linked to terrorism, the 2021 discharge for the general budget of the European Commission went even further, an issue ELNET EU & NATO has consistently raised awareness on.

Europe-Israel relations have been improving and there is growing willingness to convene the EU-Israel Association Council. As the crisis between Poland and Israel intensified, ELNET supported much-needed communication between the two countries. Further extending its reach in Europe, ELNET opened its fifth European office in London, launched a new Italy-Israel Strategic Dialogue, and continued expanding its outreach to additional countries.

ELNET responded to the COVID challenge by launching the Online Policy Exchange (OPE), which included more than 80 programs, attended by over 2,000 policymakers and professionals from 43 countries in the last two years.

Building bridges between Israeli innovation and Europe's largest economy, ELNET-Germany executed the German Israeli Network of Startups & Mittelstand (GINSUM) and established the German Israeli Health Forum for Artificial Intelligence (GIHF-AI).

Renewed transatlantic relations and the critical Iran negotiations were at the heart of our fourth Trilateral U.S.-Europe-Israel Strategic Dialogue. As the U.S.-China rivalry intensifies, ELNET also launched a new Europe-Israel Strategic Dialogue on China.

This year ELNET engaged close to 1,100 top decision-makers in its policy programs and reached an audience of over 25,000 participants. We led and took part in 25 conferences, eight briefings, eight Strategic Dialogues, six delegations to Israel (incl. strategic tours), seven roundtables and seminars, and three visits to Europe. We had an additional 1,900+ participants in GINSUM, GIHF-AI, "Words Matter" events, and workshops.

As Brig. Gen. (ret.) Michael Herzog became the new Israeli Ambassador to the U.S., Israel's top security and foreign policy expert, Maj. Gen. (res.) Amos Yadlin, joined ELNET as a senior adviser and chair of ELNET's flagship Forum of Strategic Dialogue (FSD).



## European Solidarity

During the latest conflagration with Hamas in Gaza, European leaders from 18 countries unequivocally supported Israel's right to defend itself. The remarkable support for Israel across Europe is a testament to more than a decade of ELNET's educational work across the continent.



## Ambassadors Tours

With COVID-19 bringing travel to a halt, ELNET increases its outreach to European ambassadors in Israel with individual meetings and strategic tours to experience the complexities facing Israel on the ground - Iran, Hezbollah, and Hamas - and develop energy cooperation.



## COVID-19-era Delegations

In the midst of the pandemic in between COVID-19 waves, ELNET hosted four delegations in Israel, including the largest foreign diplomatic delegation to visit Israel in 18 months and the first to meet with Israel's new political leadership.



## Growing Policy Outreach

ELNET increases its policy outreach to 27 European countries through its online educational and advocacy activities, attended by more than 2,000 policymakers and professionals over the past two years; ELNET offices are becoming regional hubs.



## ELNET Expands to the UK

British leaders welcome ELNET's new UK affiliate - ELNET's fifth office in Europe after Paris, Berlin, Brussels, and Warsaw. Former Labour MP Joan Ryan, who resigned from the Corbyn-led party in protest against antisemitism, became the head of the London office.



## ELNET's Health Diplomacy

ELNET brings Israel's capabilities in healthcare to the forefront in Europe, by bringing top Israeli COVID-19 expert Prof. Ran Balicer to brief parliaments in France, Germany, Spain, and Poland, and by establishing the German Israeli Health Forum for Artificial Intelligence (GIHF-AI).





## Israel Joins EU R&D Program

Israel announced a hard-fought deal with the EU on joining Horizon Europe, a flagship \$111 billion R&D program, which ELNET strongly supports.



## Europe's Growing Diplomatic Clout

With Biden's election as President, Europe is taking a more central role on the world stage, including on Iran. Europe became increasingly vocal against Iranian aggression. The E3 (France, Germany, and the UK) issued 13 joint statements, condemning Iranian nuclear violations.

## Europe Boycotts Durban

22 European countries boycotted the Durban IV conference this fall. ELNET intensely raised awareness on the antisemitic nature of the conference.



## Amos Yadlin Heads FSD

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## Hezbollah Ban in Europe

Austria becomes the 12th European country to vote for a full Hezbollah ban, ending the false distinction between its military and political wings and sending a clear message to Iran and its proxies. ELNET has been implementing a comprehensive educational campaign on Hezbollah in Europe.



## Strategic Dialogue on China

As the U.S.-China rivalry intensifies, ELNET launched a new Europe-Israel Strategic Dialogue on China, designed to generate an ongoing China policy discussion between Europe and Israel.



## UK Fully Designates Hamas as Terrorist Organization

The UK officially banned Hamas in its entirety as a terrorist group, bringing it in line with U.S. and EU policies.



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## Combating Islamist Extremism

France passed a law to fight Islamist extremism and separatism in an attempt to tackle the root causes of jihadist violence. ELNET launched a European Summit on Islamist Radicalization and the Terrorist Threat to discuss this issue at the highest levels.



## Italy-Israel Strategic Dialogue

Set on increasing its foothold in Italy, ELNET launched a new Italy-Israel Strategic Dialogue to discuss current developments and outlooks on the Middle East and the East Med, as well as advance the Italy-Israel relationship.



## Europe Against Anti-Israel ICC Investigation

A growing group of European nations, including Germany, the UK, Austria, Czech Republic, Lithuania, and Hungary expressed opposition to the anti-Israel ICC investigation.

## New German Government

The political changes in Germany and formation of a new government mark the end of the Merkel era. The new coalition agreement reaffirms Germany's special responsibility towards Israel, embraces the Abraham Accords, and calls for a change at the UN.



## Building Bridges in Poland

As the crisis between Poland and Israel intensified, ELNET supported much-needed communication between the two countries and served as a bridge in these challenging times.



# ELNET 2021 Policy Goals



## Iran, regional challenges, & 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 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 like anti-Zionism)
- Expand the IHRA antisemitism definition to additional European countries
- Oppose BDS and Israel's delegitimization
- Block financing of BDS by European governments and the EU
- Counter Israel's delegitimization at the UN



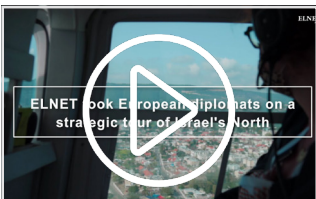
## Transatlantic relations

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

## Watch ELNET Videos



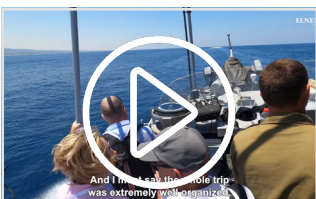
ELNET Hosts Senior European Parliament Members in Israel for a First Post-Covid-19 Visit



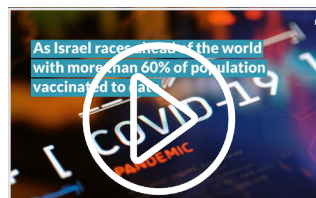
European Envoys Assess Hezbollah Threat Above and Below Ground - Tour Highlights



European Envoys Assess Hezbollah Threat Above and Below Ground - News Report



European Ambassadors Join ELNET's Energy and Maritime Security Tour



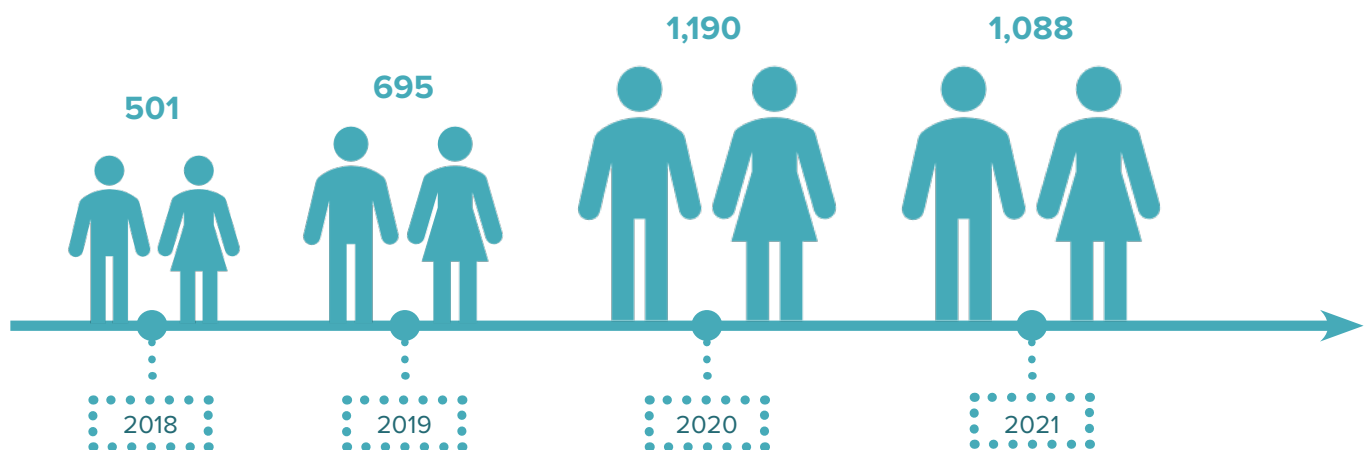
Europe Eager to Learn from Israel's Vaccination Campaign Success



# Development of the organization

This year ELNET engaged close to 1,100 top decision-makers in its policy programs, and reached an audience of over 25,000 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 **Institut Montaigne** in France, **Royal United Services Institute (RUSI)** in the UK, **Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI)** in Italy, **UN Watch**, and the **Senate of Poland**. **ELNET greatly increased its reach in Europe**, opening a new office in the UK, launching a Strategic Dialogue in Italy, through its online activities, increasing its outreach to European ambassadors in Israel, and further transitioning its national offices

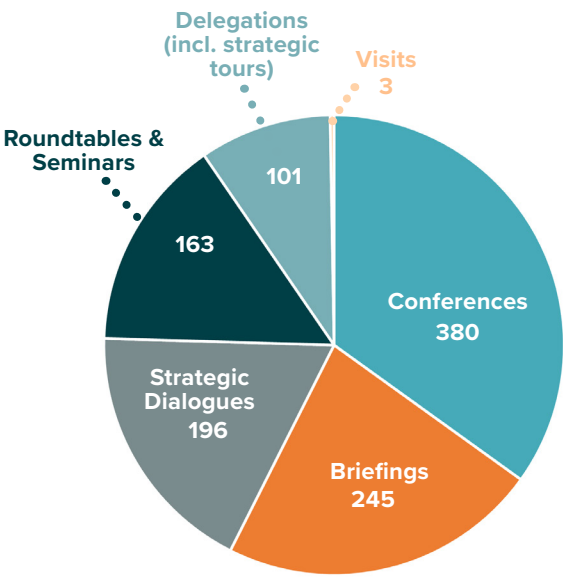
into regional hubs covering the whole of Europe, including Austria, Switzerland, the Baltics, the Visegrad Group, and Eastern Mediterranean and Scandinavian countries. ELNET also continued expanding its platform connecting major pro-Israel NGOs in Europe, further increasing communication and cooperation. Finally, 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.



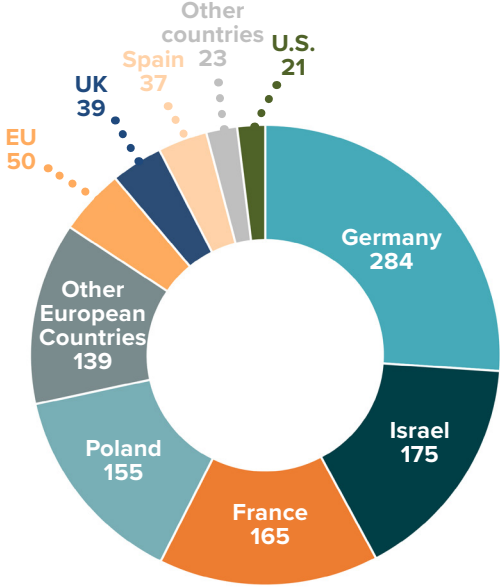
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11 times more than 2020*

In 2021, ELNET led and took part in 25 online and in-person conferences, eight briefings, eight Strategic Dialogues, six delegations to Israel (incl. two strategic tours), seven roundtables and seminars, and three visits to Europe. **Close to 1,100 European, Israeli, U.S. and Arab senior officials, policymakers, leading journalists, experts, and opinion leaders** took part in our activities or spoke at major international conferences in which ELNET was involved. Through these activities, ELNET reached a total **audience of over 25,000 participants** from the broader policy community. In the following graphs, the numbers are broken down for each category and country of activity.

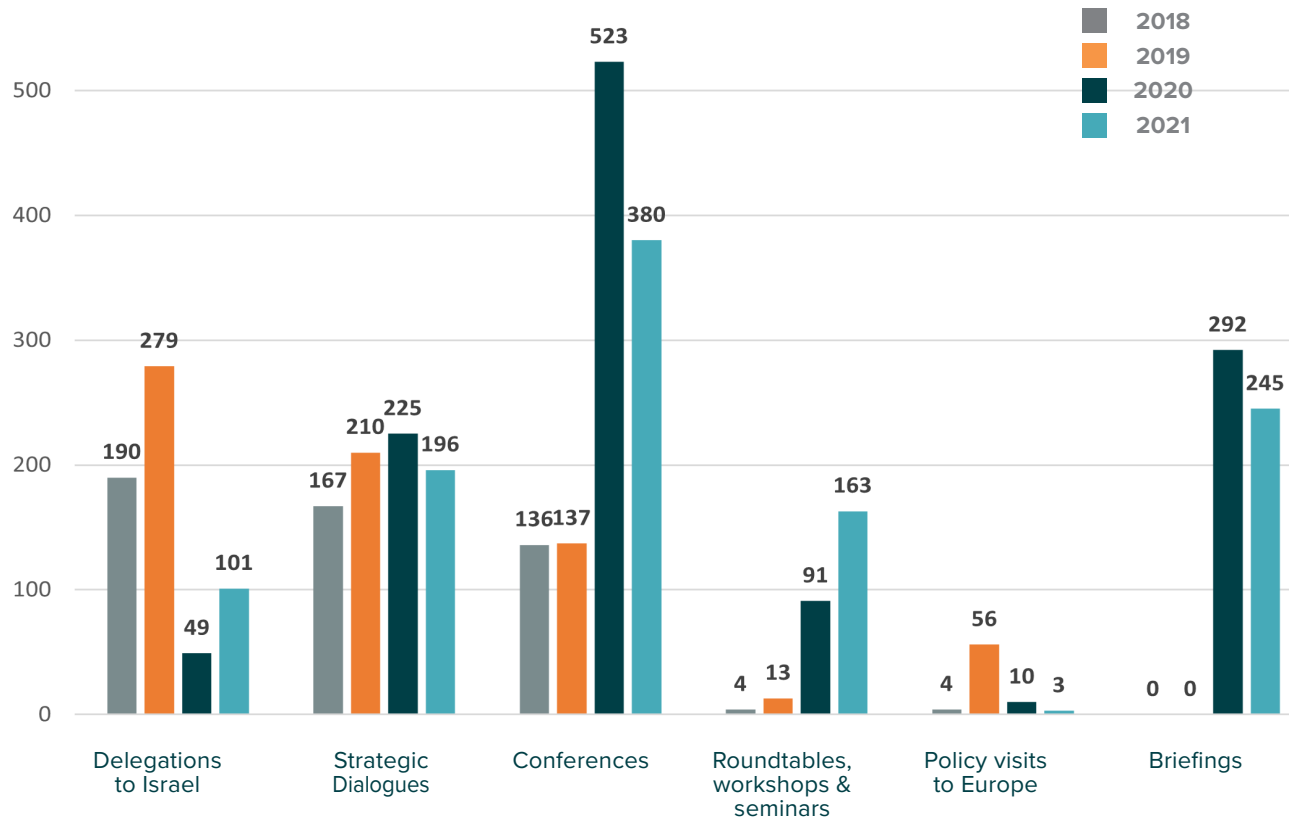
Number of decision-makers in ELNET’s activities  
PER CATEGORY 2021, total: 1,088



Number of decision-makers in ELNET’s activities  
PER COUNTRY 2021, total: 1,088



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





# Looking Forward

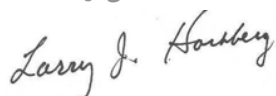
January 2022 will see France assume the Presidency of the EU. President Macron outlined his priorities for the presidency, which will include driving Europe's digital transformation, tackling migration issues at the EU level, and implementing climate suggestions from COP 26. The new German government will focus on implementing the priorities identified in the coalition negotiations. The UK will continue to develop its role on the global stage through its Global Britain strategy.

The coming year will present ELNET with significant challenges and opportunities with presidential elections in France in April. ELNET plans to ramp up its activities in 2022 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 delegitimization of Israel. 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.

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**Larry J. Hochberg**



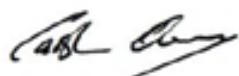
Co-Founder and Chairman,  
Friends of ELNET

**Dr. Arié Bensemhoun**



Chief Executive Officer,  
ELNET-France

**Carsten Ovens**



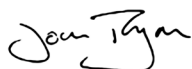
Executive Officer,  
ELNET-Germany

**Matthijs Schussler**



Executive Officer,  
ELNET-EU & NATO

**Joan Ryan**



Executive Officer,  
ELNET-UK

**Marta Kubica**



Executive Officer,  
ELNET-Poland

**Shai Bazak**



Chief Executive Officer,  
ELNET-Israel

**David Siegel**



President,  
FELNET

**Lee Rosenblum**



National Executive Director  
FELNET

**Maj. Gen. (res.) Amos Yadlin**



Chair,  
FSD





ELNET - European Leadership Network

[www.elnetwork.eu](http://www.elnetwork.eu)