

2024 Annual Report

iNSS

המכון למחקרי ביטחון לאומי

THE INSTITUTE FOR NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES



אוניברסיטת תל אביב
TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY

2024 - The Year of Iron Swords

A common sentiment heard in Israel throughout 2024 was that this year was part of an endless 2023, beginning on the devastating morning of October 7. Whereas 2024 is most certainly its own story, it will be remembered as the year of "Iron Swords." With the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas War and the subsequent multi-front attack on Israel, the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) was called upon by the IDF and the Ministry of Defense (MoD) to leverage its security experience and knowledge to draft resolutions for the war cabinet on key strategic issues assigned by the Minister of Defense and his advisory team, led by INSS Executive Director Maj. Gen. (Res.) Tamir Hayman.

In support of this process, INSS established nine task forces, covering a wide range of topics, including a comprehensive strategic outline of the war, the strategy for Gaza the day after the war as well as an outline for its civilian government. Dozens of the INSS reports submitted to the advisory team were influential in affecting decisions taken by the war cabinet and those of other senior government and IDF officials.

In addition to INSS team members serving thousands of days in active service, senior researchers were drafted by the Ministry of Defense and the IDF to provide analysis, insights, and strategy recommendations to the war cabinet and key divisions of the Ministry and the army. A few examples are Senior INSS researchers, Brig. Gen. (Res.) Udi Dekel, director of the "From Conflict to Agreements" program (see below); and Brig. Gen. (Res.) Assaf Orion, director of the INSS Diane and Guilford Glazer Israel-China Policy Center, who were called to reserve duty by IDF headquarters strategic planning division on the first day of the war. The MoD political-military division called upon senior INSS researcher Dr. Carmit Valensi, expert on Syria and the northern arena, and Brig. Gen. (Res.) Dror Shalom, who had until recently worked at the INSS, to provide analysis and policy recommendations on their areas of expertise.

From that time on, the INSS became a household name, with our researchers becoming even more sought after by local and international media outlets. Their recommendations were presented and discussed in a plethora of interviews on traditional and social media platforms, and in hundreds of articles, podcasts, and posts appearing on the INSS Website.





Organizational Focus and Restructure

Recognizing the changing global landscape and Israel's position within it, the INSS made significant efforts in 2024 to refine and sharpen its research foci and impact strategies toward ensuring Israel's ability to flourish as a Jewish and democratic state in the spirit of the Israeli Declaration of Independence, founded on the principles of freedom, justice, peace, and equality. Four core programs, and a cross-arena research team work to deepen the knowledge of decision-makers in areas relevant to their work in support of policy planning, formulation, and implementation.

National Security Policy: Addressing internal security challenges, military strategy, and IDF power-building policies, and critical domestic factors such as economic issues, societal resilience, and military-civil relations.

Key 2025 project:

Outline for Reforming the Government-IDF Relationship

Israel and the Global Powers: Develops policy with a deep understanding of Israel's role in the evolving world order. Key issues include strengthening Israel's ties with the US and Europe, and understanding the evolving CRINGE (China, Russia, Iran, Global Extremists) network.

Key 2025 project in partnership with the National Security Policy program:
Foundational Security Documents Underpinning the Special Israel-US Relationship



Iran and the Shi'ite Axis: Monitoring Iran's nuclear program, military buildup, foreign relations, regional activities, and national security doctrine. The program focuses on the activities of the fluid status of Iran's proxies, particularly Hezbollah, Syria, Shiite militias in Iraq, and the Houthis in Yemen.

Key 2025 projects:

- Preparation for a Future Nuclear Agreement and a No-Deal Scenario
- Israel's Strategy Against Iran's Proxies

From Conflict to Agreements: The weakening of the so-called Iranian led "Axis of Resistance" set against the weakening of Hamas and the destabilization of the Palestinian system, make it possible, perhaps for the first time, to advance an ambitious diplomatic security vision to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from a clear position of power while connecting Israel and the pragmatic Gulf states.

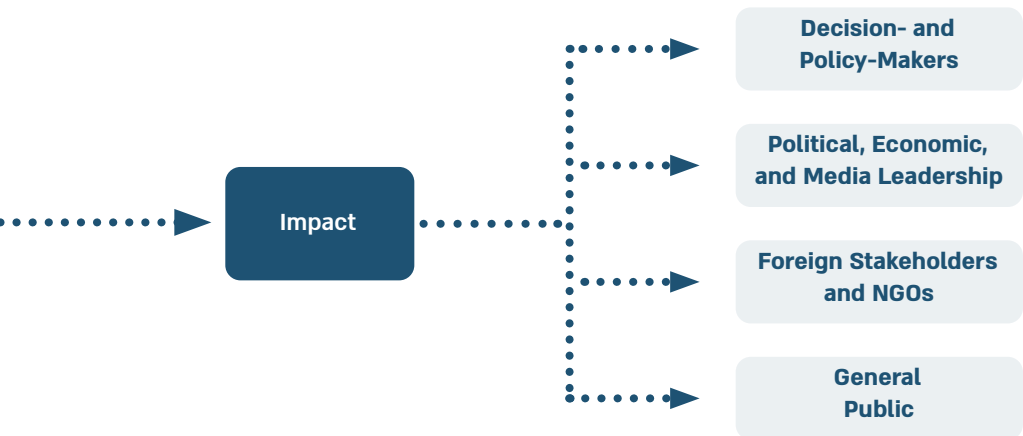
Key 2025 projects:

- Renewed Outline for Israeli Separation from the Palestinians
- Israel's Strategy for Regional Cooperation

The Cross Arena Research Team supports core programs through research on how law, advanced technology, cognition and foreign influence, and economics effect Israel's national security and resilience, particularly during ongoing conflict.

Key 2025 project:

The Consequences of the Ongoing War on Israel's Security and National Resilience



INSS Data Analytics Center

Since the onset of the war, the INSS Data Analytics Center has played a pivotal role in monitoring and analyzing a vast array of war-related dynamics. Our cutting-edge real-time tracker translates complicated data into concise, actionable insights, providing clarity into the complexity of war. Ongoing, consistent surveys have been carried out to assess shifts in Israeli public opinion on critical issues, including trust in governmental and military institutions, societal resilience, public support for operational strategies, and perspectives on regional and internal affairs.

Each monthly survey comprises a consistent core of recurring questions (two-thirds of the content) and a rotating selection of new questions (one-third), ensuring both continuity and adaptability. The INSS research team collaborates closely with key government bodies, IDF units (Chief of Staff's Office, Spokesperson's Unit, Adjutant General Branch, Northern Command, Education Corps, Intelligence Corps, and Homefront Command), Shin Bet, Israel Police, the Prime Minister's Office, and the Deputy Speaker of the Knesset ensuring our analysis directly informs national strategy and decision-making.

Survey findings have emerged as a powerful barometer of public sentiment, drawing significant national and international attention. The data we produce transcends political and religious boundaries, shaping discourse in Israeli media and beyond.

In 2025, INSS will extend its research scope to survey the Palestinian public in the West Bank, assessing their perspectives on the broader conflict, as well as their views on Hamas and the Palestinian Authority.

In a major technological advancement, the Center has introduced ArcGIS-powered interactive maps that visually narrate the war's unfolding events. With an intuitive, user-friendly interface, these maps detail Israeli military activity and the movements of regional military powers across the Gazan, northern, and Yemenite fronts.

Our commitment to accessibility and factual reliability is evident in the widespread reach of our work. To date, the English and Hebrew INSS platforms have been accessed by hundreds of thousands of users, with a potential audience extending into the hundreds of millions seeking authoritative insights.

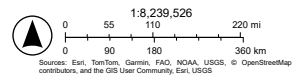
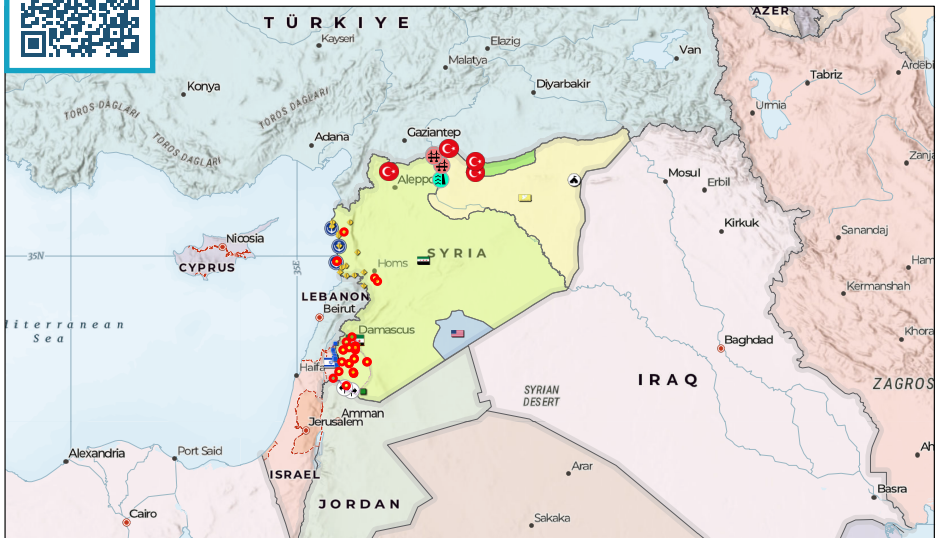
Beyond the immediate conflict, the Center has launched a new initiative to systematically track and visualize protests in Iran. This project will map and analyze demonstrations, whether directed against Israel and the US, in response to economic and social grievances, or opposing the Iranian regime itself, through comprehensive trend analysis and geographic data representation.

The INSS Israel-Hamas War Dashboard delivers real-time, data-driven insights into key war-related events. Our survey results have gained widespread media attention, with featured coverage on all major national television networks.

The Center recently contributed to a Parliamentary Commission Report prepared by the All-Party Parliamentary Group and published by the UK House of Lords, analyzing and accurately documenting the events surrounding the attack.



Map of Syria - INSS Data Analytics Center



Impact

INSS is the **premier destination for national security briefings in Israel**, serving diplomats, government officials, and foreign correspondents. The Institute hosts a wide range of local and international conferences, workshops, and training programs for Israeli security agencies and government ministries. Many of these events are held in partnership with corresponding organizations worldwide, providing a platform for the exchange of knowledge, in-depth analysis, and the dissemination of INSS research.

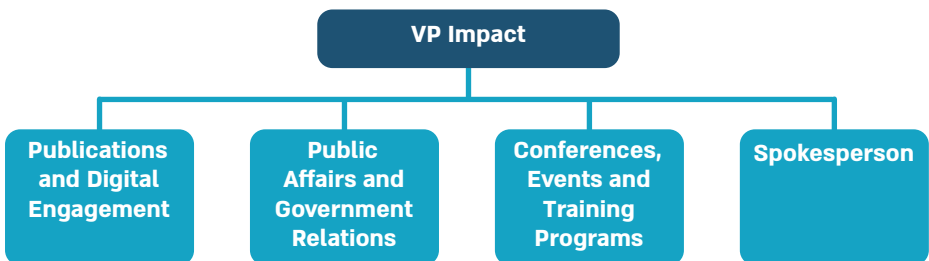
Our insights and policy recommendations reach a broad audience through **analytical reports, a podcast series, video blogs, and active engagement on Hebrew and English social media channels**. INSS is widely followed in Israel and globally on platforms including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Telegram, TikTok, and YouTube.

We measure our influence and effectiveness in shaping and helping to implement domestic and international policy by monitoring policy change, diplomatic engagement, and collaboration with correspondent think tanks. Internationally we track government-to-government (G2G) dialogue and increased cooperation with policymakers. Domestically, we assess policy shifts and legislative changes by tracking INSS insights that are translated into concrete policy adjustments by Israeli government and security agencies. Much of this work remains confidential and is shared primarily with trusted partners.

Track 1.5 and Track 2 dialogues with influential think tanks and research centers

closely connected to their governments remain a central pillar of INSS's regional engagement. INSS equips foreign delegations, diplomats, and military attachés with in-depth insights into regional geopolitics, enabling them to brief their governments effectively and offer informed policy recommendations. In 2024, despite the challenges of ongoing tensions, INSS expanded its network of relationships with research institutes and key figures across the MENA region—particularly in the Gulf States, Egypt, Jordan, and Morocco—with the goal of establishing sustained dialogue mechanisms, conducting joint research, and formulating policy recommendations aimed at advancing a comprehensive regional arrangement.

The INSS Impact Team Structure



The Impact Team tailors its messaging, outreach strategies, and engagement efforts to target four distinct audiences each of which plays a critical role in shaping policy and public discourse ensuring that its recommendations meaningfully contribute to policymaking and corresponding public support.

- **Decision - and Policy-Makers** - Government and defense agency representatives and public officials.
- **Political, Economic, and Media Leadership** – Senior civil servants, business leaders, and media stakeholders; publishers, editors, and reporters.
- **Foreign Stakeholders and NGOs** – Ambassadors and diplomatic staff stationed in Israel, international media correspondents and bureau chiefs, relevant local and foreign NGOs.
- **General Public**

Expanding Global Reach

A significant rise in audience engagement across platforms, reflected an increased interest in INSS research and analysis in 2024. A major milestone was the launch of a new podcast in collaboration with i24 News (English), further extending INSS reach to international audiences. In addition to increased engagement, total references to INSS surged, particularly in foreign media coverage. Growing international attention underscores the Institute's expanding influence beyond domestic discourse, highlighting the global relevance of its research and policy recommendations.



New in 2025



Behind-the-Scenes Unpublished Recommendations for:

- Prime Minister's Office
- National Security Council
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Regional Cooperation
- IDF, Shin Bet, Mossad

Case Studies

Conscription Law

INSS strongly advocates for broad societal participation in active duty and has been at the forefront of discussions on conscription, analyzing its impact on military effectiveness and social cohesion. A key focus has been the integration of the ultra-Orthodox community into the IDF as part of a broader strategy for Israel's long-term security. Our recent analysis, examines the framework for gradual recruitment targets. This approach clashes with the IDF's stated readiness to recruit all eligible ultra-Orthodox men starting in 2026. The head of the IDF Personnel Directorate, warned that without sufficient enlistment, reservists will face an increased burden. The IDF estimates it requires 6,000–7,000 additional combat soldiers and 10,000 for technological and support roles to maintain operational readiness.



Swords of Iron War Cabinet Approves INSS Policy

At the outset of the war, INSS published a policy paper clarifying that Israel's primary adversary was the so-called Iran-led "Axis of Resistance." The strategic goal of the campaign, it argued, should be to create a powerful regional counterbalance to the Axis, with the active support of the US, defeat the Axis, and establish a sustainable regional architecture. This program was approved by the War Cabinet as the most viable method for regaining regional stability. To date, no formal progress has been made toward creating a regional coalition that could help secure a long-term ceasefire in Gaza, create a counterweight to the so-called Axis and address the gradual reduction of US presence in the Middle East. As such we were aware that this working paper served as a backbone of Israeli strategic policy.



Strategic Technology and National Security

Since 2023, Israel and the United States have made significant progress in their strategic dialogue on technology transfer. The INSS Diane and Guilford Glazer Israel-China Policy Center has played a crucial role in shaping Israel's policy regarding TikTok and national security through:

Participation in the Knesset Artificial Intelligence Subcommittee, contributing to discussions on national security risks posed by TikTok; and in the first Israeli parliamentary session on TikTok-related issues (June 2024), highlighting Israel's relative legislative lag.

Publication of the INSS National Technology Plan in Israel policy memorandum including comparative research on TikTok-related risks in other countries was launched at a high-level conference focusing on security, privacy, and influence risks associated with TikTok.

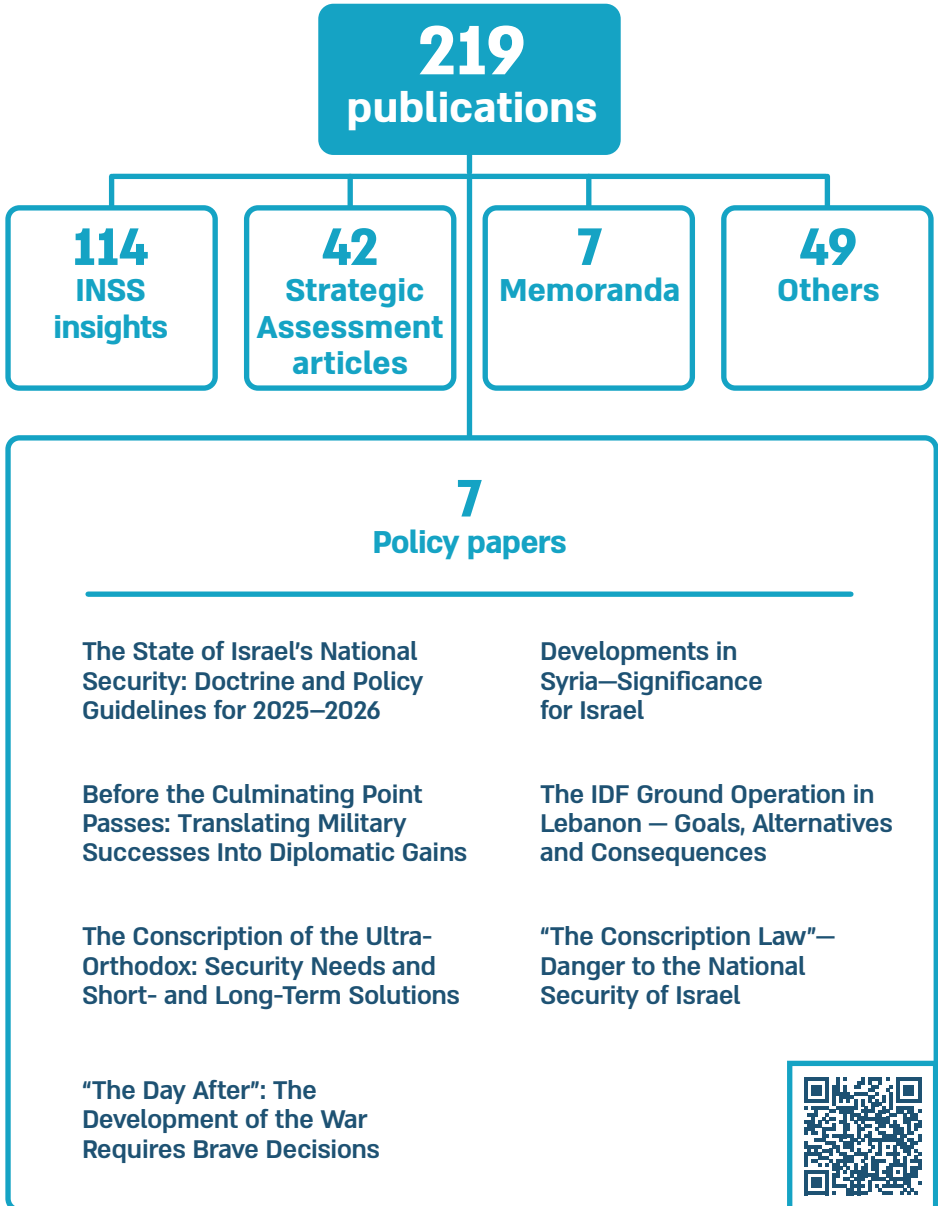
Key INSS recommendations to address TikTok-related concerns:

Mitigating risks to sensitive information on officials' and politicians' devices

- Implementing methods to prevent data leaks
- Addressing TikTok's impact on public diplomacy and Israel's global image
- Developing urgent policies to protect Israeli technologies
- INSS is committed to continuing its efforts in advancing policies in this domain, ensuring Israel maintains its position at the forefront of technological security and resilience.



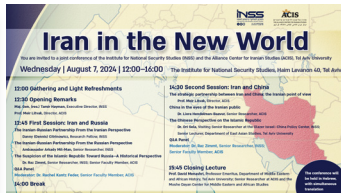
Publications



Conferences

14
Conferences
took place at the INSS

22
International Conferences
attended by INSS Staff

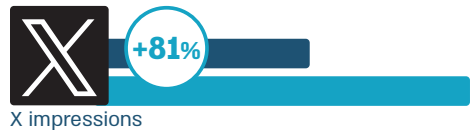
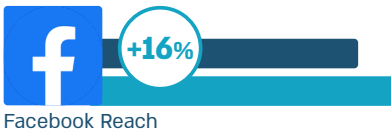


Traditional and Social Media



2023

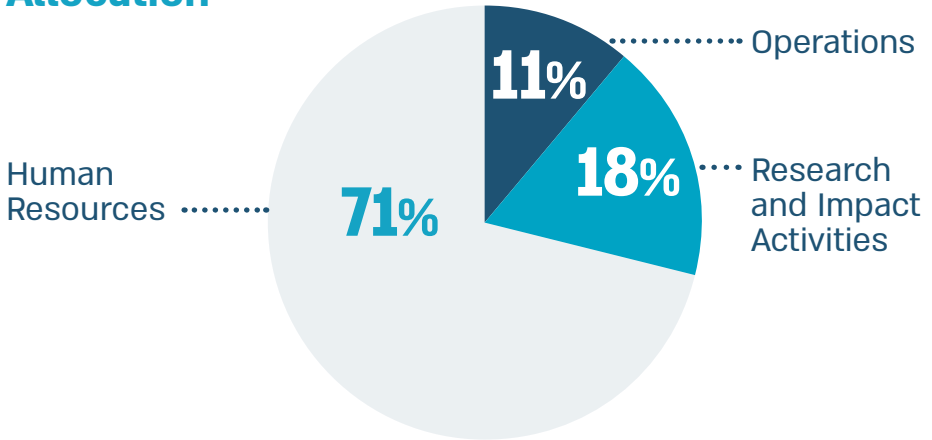
2024



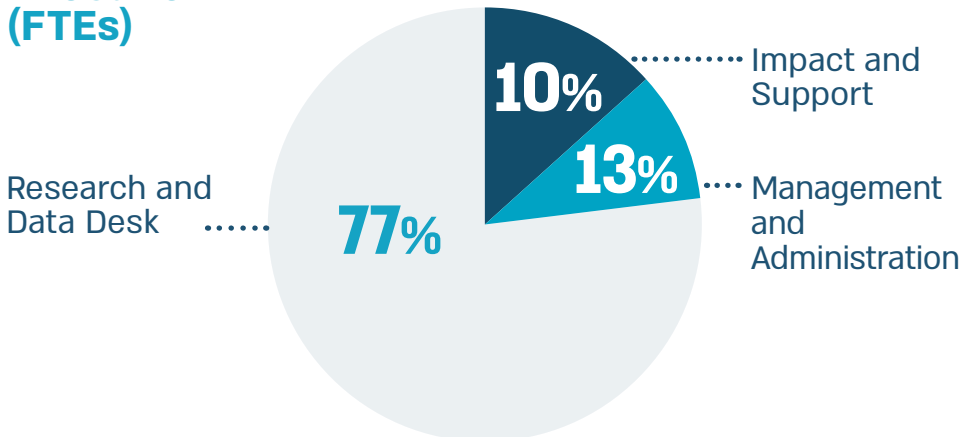
*Antisemitism has significantly impacted INSS's TikTok reach, as content related to Israel may be flagged or downranked by TikTok's algorithm, which is sensitive to negative engagement and censorship. Rising antisemitism online has led to more frequent reporting, which can suppress posts from organizations like INSS. Additionally, the platform's global audience, particularly younger users, may react negatively to politically sensitive topics, further reducing organic reach. Geopolitical tensions amplify these challenges, and as TikTok's algorithm prioritizes engagement, content related to Israel may be penalized, especially if it attracts controversial responses. It is the combination of these factors that have led to a 50% reduction in impressions.

INSS in Numbers

Budget Allocation



Staff Allocation (FTEs)



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**For additional information or directions on making a philanthropic contribution,
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