

ELNET

EUROPEAN LEADERSHIP NETWORK



ISRAEL SURVEY

Europe 2024



European-Israeli relations at a glance

Europe and the Middle East are both experiencing historical turning points. Two major conflicts are unfolding: the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and the Hamas-Israel War, ignited by Hamas' terrorist attack on October 7, 2023. The changes are not only geopolitical, but they are increasingly affecting domestic politics and the social climate of many European countries. Antisemitic sentiments are becoming more openly voiced.

Against this background, the European Leadership Network (ELNET) conducted the Israel Survey for the third time. A total of 317 Members of Parliament (MPs) from 29 European countries participated, making it the largest political survey of its kind.*

The goal of this edition is to shed light on relations between Europe and Israel and gain insights into European Middle East policy. It also examines the political significance of Jewish life in Europe.

Method:

The survey was conducted from February 1 to March 8, 2024, and was distributed via email to Members of Parliament from most parties in each country.

Approximately 59 percent of the participating parliamentarians have visited Israel. Additionally, 58 percent of the respondents reported that relations with Israel are significant or relatively significant in their political activities. Furthermore, 47 percent of the MPs are in regular or very regular contact with Jewish communities in their country.

Limitations:

The Israel Survey represents the most comprehensive parliamentary analysis of European-Israeli relations. However, it cannot claim to be fully representative. This limitation is due in part to the current composition of the study's participants and in part to the changing demographics of respondents over time. Nonetheless, the results presented provide significant indicators and trends for further political discussions.

Executive Summary:

- **Unwavering commitment for cooperation with Israel:** 73 percent of the participating Members of Parliament (MPs) from Europe perceive the bilateral diplomatic relations with Israel as good or fairly good. Furthermore, 72 percent express a desire for closer cooperation with Israel.
- **Identifying antisemitism as a pressing issue in European societies:** 54 percent of European MPs acknowledge antisemitism related to Israel as a serious issue, and more than 80 percent advocate for more robust government efforts to tackle antisemitism. The two forms of antisemitism most frequently identified by the parliamentarians are those stemming from radical Muslim communities and latent antisemitism across all layers of society.
- **Foreign policy recommendations:** 77 percent of European MPs see the Abraham Accords as a mechanism to facilitate peace between Israel and the Palestinians. A considerable consensus exists among these MPs that their respective countries should participate in an „Abraham Plan“ for the reconstruction of Gaza.
- **UNRWA under scrutiny:** 90 percent of European MPs see a need for reform of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

* Germany (48), Romania (30), Sweden (25), France (20), Spain (20), Greece (16), Austria (12), Denmark (11), Ireland (11), Turkey (11), Switzerland (10), Czech Republic (10), Poland (9), Italy (8), UK (8), Belgium (7), EU Parliament (7), Finland (7), Croatia (7), Norway (6), Luxembourg (5), Slovakia (5), Hungary (5), Cyprus (5), Latvia (3), Netherlands (3), Portugal (3), Lithuania (2), Malta (2), and Estonia (1).

Fig. 1

► *Distribution of MPs participating in the survey*

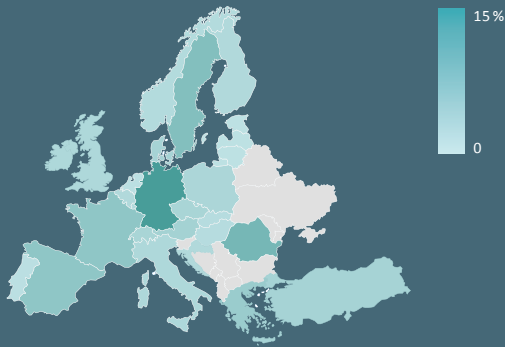
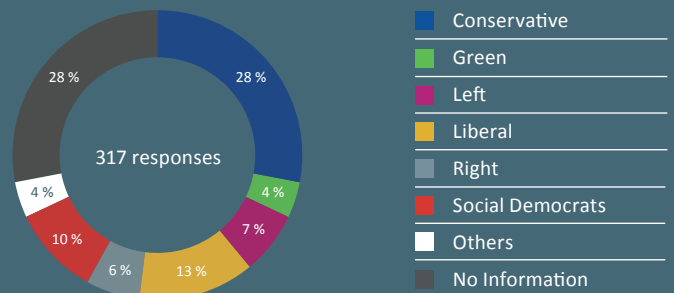


Fig. 2

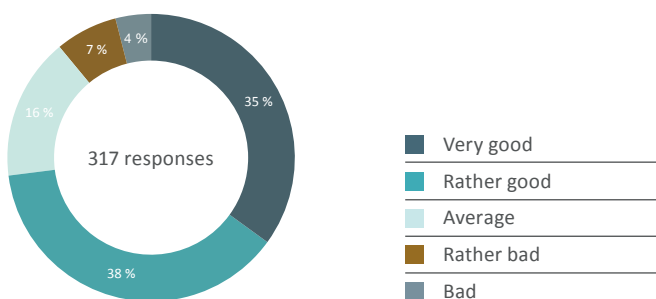
► *Party affiliation of participants*



Status and Nature of Relations with Israel

Fig. 3

► *How would you rate your country's current relationship with Israel?*



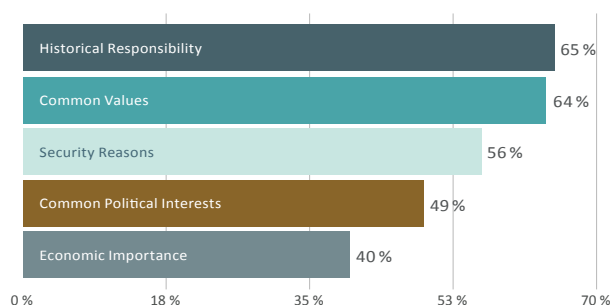
- Approximately 73 percent of the participating European MPs perceive the relations between Israel and their respective country as very good or rather good. This represents a notable increase of approximately 11 percent compared to the previous year.
- European MPs from various political spectrums, including the left (78 percent) and conservatives (80 percent), generally view their countries' relations with Israel favorably.
- Comparative analysis across nations reveals that MPs from Italy (87 percent), Romania (96 percent), and Germany (83 percent) report particularly positive relationships with Israel.
- In contrast, a much smaller proportion of MPs from Ireland (9 percent), Spain (20 percent), and Turkey (18 percent), as well as from Belgium (43 percent), describe their country's relations with Israel as good or very good.

► *Do relations with Israel have a special significance for your country compared to relations with other countries?*

- A majority of **83 percent** of the participants (317 responses) agree with this statement.
- All MPs from Austria, Germany, Greece, and Czechia unanimously acknowledge the special significance of their relations with Israel. Conversely, a smaller proportion of MPs agree in other countries: 36 percent from Ireland, 50 percent from Italy, and 65 percent from Spain.

Fig. 4 (221 responses, multiple answers)

► *If so, what is the reason for this special status in your opinion?*



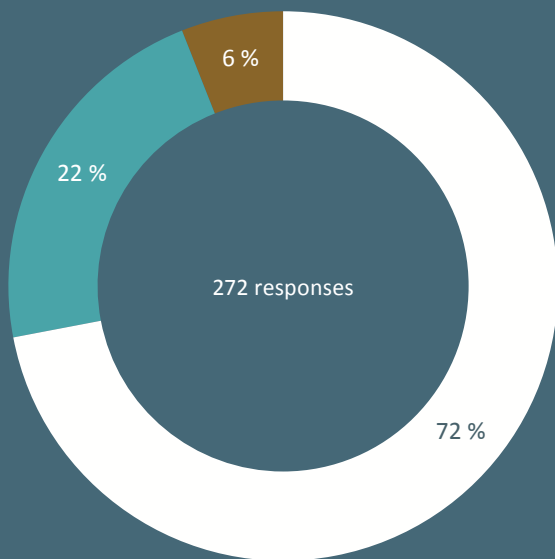
Percent of respondents endorsing each given reason

- Similar to last year's survey, the participating parliamentarians most frequently cite historical responsibility and shared values as the reasons for the special status between their respective countries and Israel.
- MPs from Greece (92 percent) and the UK (86 percent) most frequently mention security reasons as the primary rationale for the special status.
- Meanwhile, MPs from Sweden (78 percent), France (83 percent), and Romania (58 percent) most often cite shared values.
- MPs from green and social democratic parties predominantly cite historical responsibility as the primary reason for their stance, while conservative MPs most often emphasize shared values. Meanwhile, parliamentarians from liberal parties frequently identify both security reasons and shared values as their top justifications.

Potential for cooperation

Fig. 5

► *What would you recommend regarding your country's current cooperation with Israel?*

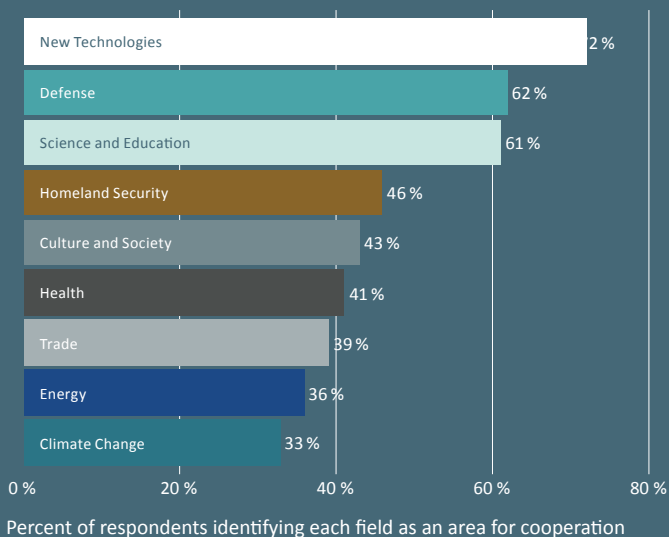


- Among the participating MPs, 72 percent express a desire for increased cooperation between their country and Israel, while only 6 percent favor a decrease in cooperation.
- Notably, MPs from Spain (78 percent), Germany (80 percent), and France (86 percent) show particularly high interest in expanding cooperation.
- Participants who have visited Israel agree 1.2 times more often that there should be more cooperation between their country and Israel (77 percent), compared to MPs who have not visited Israel (62 percent).
- Additionally, 80 percent of MPs who evaluate their country's relations with Israel as very bad or rather bad agree that their countries should increase cooperation with Israel.

- There should be more cooperation between my country and Israel.
- The current level of cooperation is sufficient.
- The cooperation should be reduced.

Fig. 6 (270 responses, multiple answers)

► *In which areas would you like to see particularly close cooperation with Israel?*



- This year, 72 percent of participating parliamentarians advocate closer cooperation with Israel in the realm of new technologies.
- A total of 85 percent of conservative party members indicate a preference for increased cooperation in new technologies.
- Among MPs from the green spectrum, 92 percent express the greatest desire for enhanced collaboration against climate change, followed by 69 percent in the energy sector.
- Participants from the left parties agree most often to increase collaboration in new technologies (65 percent), followed by science and education (56 percent).
- This corresponds with liberal party MPs, who favored cooperation in new technologies (72 percent) and science and education (67 percent).
- Spanish MPs show the highest interest in joint initiatives in defense (56 percent) and homeland security (61 percent). In contrast, Swedish MPs primarily show a preference for engagement in the realms of science and education (91 percent).
- Compared to the previous year, there has been a notable increase of 26 percentage points in MPs expressing a preference for closer defense cooperation between their country and Israel.
- In contrast, interest in collaboration on climate change-related issues has declined by 19 percentage points.
- However, collaboration in science and education has consistently remained high, with 62 percent of MPs supporting it both this year and last year.

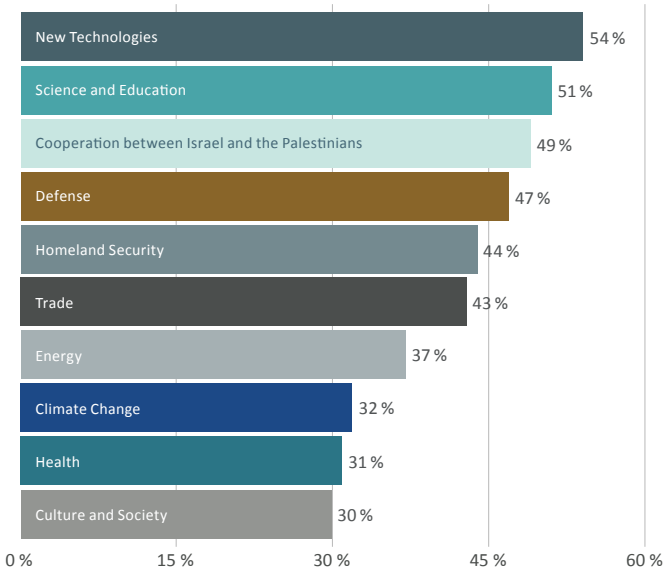
Regional Cooperation

► *Should your country actively promote further agreements between Israel and Arab/Muslim countries?*

- Of 273 European parliamentarians, **85 percent** indicate some level of agreement with the proposition that further agreements between Israel and Arab/Muslim countries should be promoted.

Fig. 7 (247 responses, multiple answers)

► *Within the framework of the normalization agreements (Abraham Accords), should your country engage in the following topics in particular:*

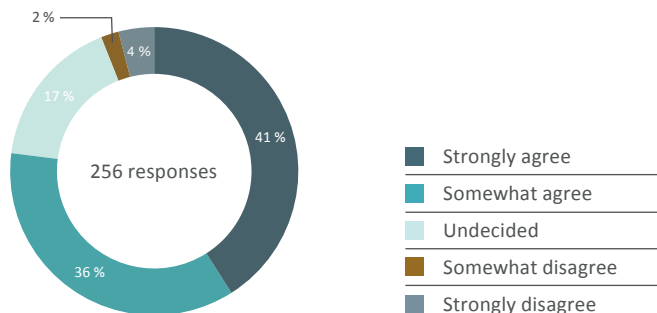


Percent of respondents identifying each field as an area for cooperation

- European MPs participating in the survey most frequently emphasize that, within the framework of the normalization agreements, their countries should prioritize cooperation in new technologies, science and education, as well as fostering collaboration between Israel and the Palestinians.
- There has been a 53 percent increase in MPs advocating for engaging in the field of cooperation between Israel and the Palestinians through the accords, compared to last year.
- Additionally, the importance of cooperation in culture has risen by **87 percent** this year compared to 2023.
- Parliamentarians from Turkey, Croatia, Italy, and Germany most commonly express a desire for increased cooperation between Israel and the Palestinians. In contrast, Spanish MPs prioritize defense cooperation, while French MPs focus on homeland security initiatives.

Fig. 8

► *Given the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas, should the Abraham Accords serve as an effective framework for Arab countries to participate in mediating peace and facilitating the reconstruction process in the context of an "Abraham Plan"?*



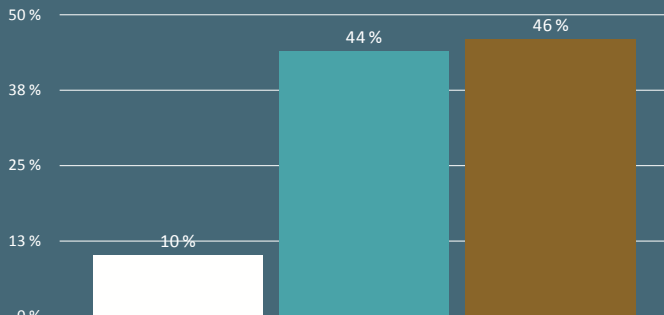
- Regarding the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas, 77 percent of participating European MPs agree or strongly agree that the Abraham Accords should be utilized as an effective framework for Arab countries to assist in mediating peace and facilitating the reconstruction process under the auspices of an "Abraham Plan".
- Scandinavian MPs demonstrate lower support for joining the Abraham Plan compared to their counterparts in other countries, yet a majority of 67 percent still affirm participation.
- MPs from Turkey, the UK, Austria, and Croatia unanimously advocate for their countries' involvement in the plan.

Of those who agree, somewhat agree, or are undecided **84 percent** support the idea that their nation should actively participate in the "Abraham Plan".

Foreign and Security Policy

Fig. 9 (248 responses, multiple answers)

► *The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has long been criticized. What measures should be taken regarding to UNRWA's future?*



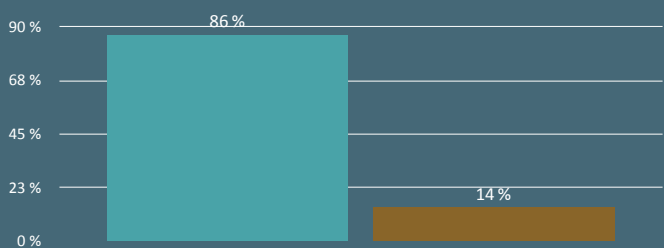
Percent of respondents endorsing each given reason

- No additional measures, current conditions and oversights are sufficient.
- UNRWA should be dismantled and integrated into other UN agencies.
- UNRWA should be reformed and more closely monitored.

- A significant majority (90 percent) support changes to the structure of UNRWA. Within this group, opinions diverge on the preferred approach: 46 percent advocate for reforming UNRWA and imposing stricter oversight, while 44 percent propose integrating the agency into other UN bodies.
- National perspectives show considerable variation.
- In Czechia, 66 percent of MPs support dismantling UNRWA, a position more strongly held only in Sweden, where 90 percent of MPs endorse this action.
- Conversely, in Ireland, 66 percent of MPs see no need for additional measures.
- Spain displays a mixed stance: approximately 26 percent believe no further reforms are necessary, 33 percent support dismantling the agency, and the remaining 41 percent call for reform and enhanced oversight.
- Regarding party affiliation, a notably higher percentage of MPs from the left (23 percent) and social democratic parties (15 percent) believe no further actions or oversight for UNRWA are needed.
- Conversely, a greater number of conservative (60 percent), liberal (59 percent), and right-wing party MPs (55 percent) lean toward dismantling UNRWA.
- Despite these differences, there is broad consensus across all parties on the need for reforming UNRWA and enforcing more stringent oversight.

Fig. 10 (271 responses)

► *Islamist terrorist organizations such as Hamas, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), Hezbollah, ISIS, and Islamic Jihad are just some of the actors that are becoming increasingly active in the Middle East and also in Europe. Should your country become more involved in the fight against radical Islamist terrorism?*

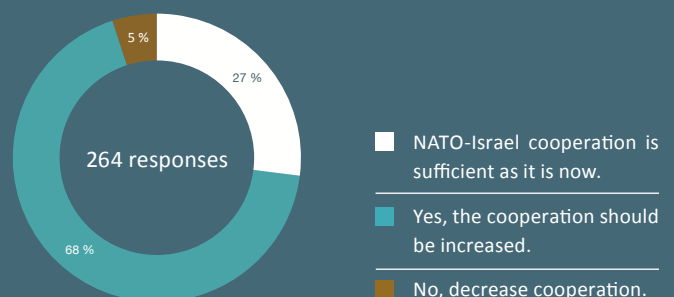


- Yes
- No

- **86 percent** of MPs advocate for heightened efforts to combat radical Islamist terrorism.
- MPs from Denmark, the European Parliament, France, Italy, Sweden, and Switzerland are in unanimous agreement on increasing involvement in their respective countries to address this issue.
- In contrast, only 54 percent of Greek MPs and 50 percent of Irish MPs support expanding involvement in these counterterrorism measures.

Fig. 11

► *The Russo-Ukrainian War and the new security threats to Europe give new impetus to the importance of NATO as Europe's main security organization. Should NATO cooperate closer with Israel in order to enhance Europe's defense capabilities?*

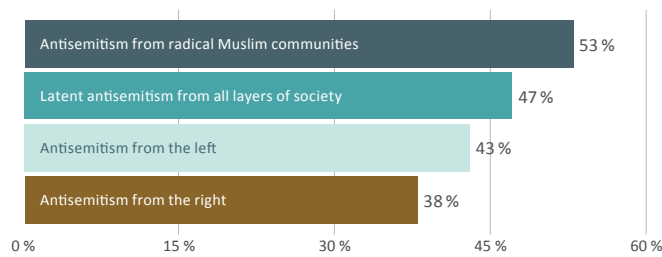


- **68 percent** of the participants favor strengthening ties between NATO and Israel.
- Ireland stands out as the only participating country where a clear majority (66 percent) of MPs advocate reducing NATO-Israel cooperation.

Antisemitism and Jewish Communities

Fig. 12 (270 responses, multiple answers)

► **Which forms of antisemitism pose the greatest threats in your country?**

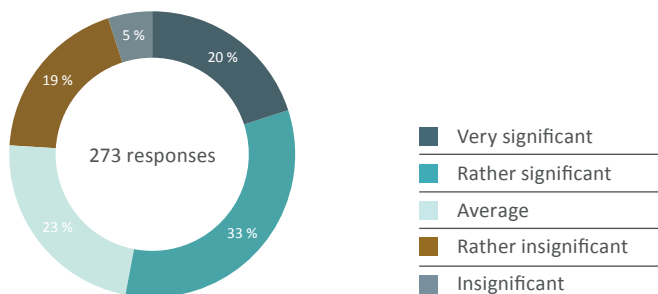


Percent of participants who agreed with each statement

- European MPs identify antisemitism from radical Muslim communities and antisemitism across all societal layers as the two primary threats in their countries.
- There has been a notable shift from last year, evidenced by a 16 percent increase in MPs recognizing antisemitism from the political left as a threat, while the perception of antisemitism from the right as a threat has decreased by 36 percent.
- Compared to 2023, there is a general increase in the recognition of antisemitism from the left and from all societal layers as threats.
- In Austria, MPs most frequently mention antisemitism from the right as their country's major threat (73 percent). In Germany, MPs equally highlight antisemitism from the right and from radical Muslim communities as significant threats (72 percent). In Greece, 71 percent of MPs cite antisemitism from all societal layers as a threat to their country. In Italy, 62 percent of MPs most commonly identify antisemitism from the left as a significant threat.
- MPs who frequently interact with Jewish communities recognize antisemitism originating from radical Muslim communities and from all layers of society as the two major threats.

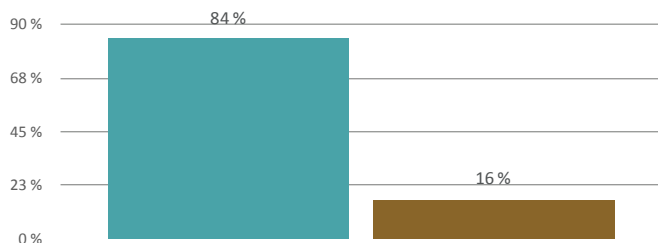
Fig. 13

► **To what extent is Israel-related antisemitism a problem in your country?**



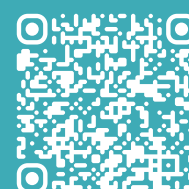
- 53 percent** strongly agree or agree that antisemitism related to Israel constitutes a significant issue in their respective country. Meanwhile, 24 percent regard it as rather insignificant or as insignificant.
- In terms of national perspectives, significant proportions of MPs recognize Israel-related antisemitism as a considerable concern: 100 percent in France, 100 percent in the UK, 91 percent in Sweden, 80 percent in Turkey, and 70 percent in Germany.
- Conversely, in countries such as Ireland (66 percent), Romania (62 percent), and Greece (57 percent), a substantial portion of MPs view Israel-related antisemitism as rather insignificant or of no concern at all.

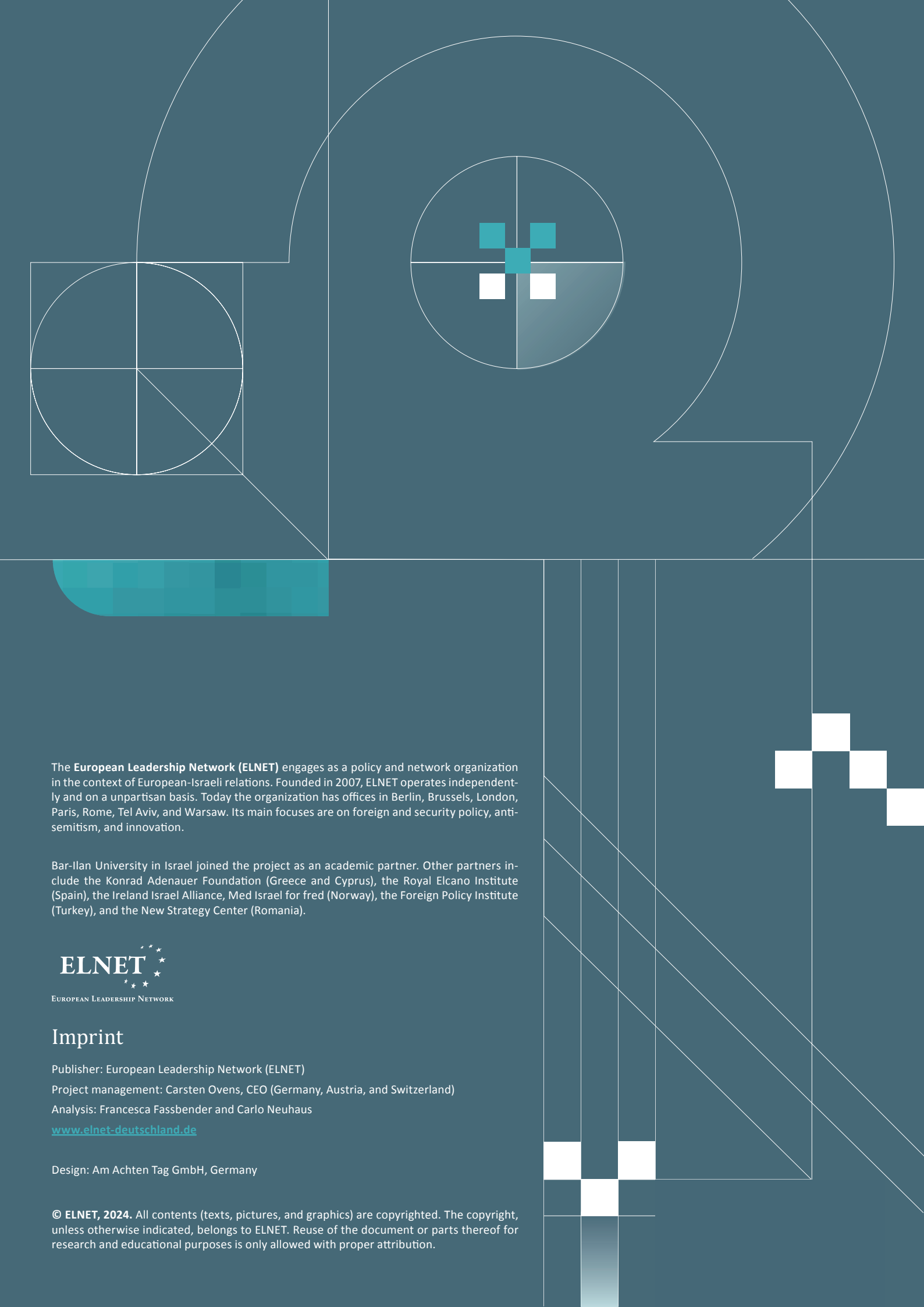
► **Should the government increase its efforts to counter antisemitism?**



- 84 percent** of the participating European MPs believe that further efforts are necessary to counter antisemitism in their countries.
- Notably, 85 percent of French MPs acknowledge the need for additional action. Similarly, 80 percent in Turkey, and 78 percent in Sweden and in Germany also recognize the necessity for increased efforts to combat antisemitism in their respective country.

For more information on the IHRA definition, including the definition of Israel-related antisemitism, please scan this QR-Code:





The **European Leadership Network (ELNET)** engages as a policy and network organization in the context of European-Israeli relations. Founded in 2007, ELNET operates independently and on a unpartisan basis. Today the organization has offices in Berlin, Brussels, London, Paris, Rome, Tel Aviv, and Warsaw. Its main focuses are on foreign and security policy, anti-semitism, and innovation.

Bar-Ilan University in Israel joined the project as an academic partner. Other partners include the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (Greece and Cyprus), the Royal Elcano Institute (Spain), the Ireland Israel Alliance, Med Israel for fred (Norway), the Foreign Policy Institute (Turkey), and the New Strategy Center (Romania).



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