



Towards Countering Misinformation and Disinformation in Israel

Stakeholder Analysis

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The Israel Internet Association (RA) is a non-profit organization that has been operating since the early 1990s to optimize internet integration for the benefit of the Israeli public. The organization manages critical internet infrastructure in Israel, including the national domain name registries “.il” and “ישראל” and the intra-national internet exchange point IIX. The Israel Internet Association’s extensive base of knowledge and expertise in internet technology research, development and operations serves to inform and support its activities in academic research, policy formulation and community empowerment. The organization’s activities include: The Internet Safety Hotline and the Block.org.il site, both of which supply the general public with guidance, knowledge and tools to improve personal safety and security online; Various projects and activities for the bridging of digital societal gaps and the promotion of internet literacy awareness in Israeli society; The data.isoc.org.il data repository, which collects quantitative statistical data about the Israeli internet and its users, making the findings available to the public; Professional policy research studies aimed at informing and enhancing the local and global internet arenas at various intersections of law, society and technology.

Disinformation Resilience Israel (DRI) Project

This publication is part of the *"Developing a Comprehensive Response to Online Misinformation and Disinformation in Israel"* (DRI) project, led by the Israel Internet Association (ISOC-IL) with support from the European Union. The project aims to strengthen the resilience of Israeli society to counter misinformation and disinformation by enhancing the fact-finding capacity of media and civil society organizations, raising public awareness and media literacy, and advancing research. It engages journalists, educators, tech entrepreneurs, activists, and the broader public to foster a more informed, critical, and inclusive information ecosystem.

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Executive Summary

Misinformation and disinformation pose significant threats to democratic processes, social cohesion, and public trust worldwide. In Israel, these challenges are exacerbated by deep societal divides, regional instability, and a rapidly evolving digital media landscape. This Stakeholder Analysis on Countering Misinformation and Disinformation in Israel provides a comprehensive overview of Israel's information ecosystem by mapping key actors and audiences, identifying gaps and vulnerabilities, and outlining actionable measures to strengthen resilience against false information. Conducted as part of the *Developing Comprehensive Response to Online Misinformation and Disinformation in Israel (DRI)* project, led by the Israel Internet Association (ISOC-IL) with the support of the European Commission, this document serves as a resource for understanding and addressing false information in the Israeli context.

The analysis highlights that Israel is particularly vulnerable to mis- and disinformation due to low levels of media literacy, extensive exposure to unverified content, high societal polarization, insufficient government action, and weak information safeguards, particularly within civil society and the media. Domestic and regional political and security instability further create fertile ground for local and foreign actors to exploit societal divisions and erode trust in democratic institutions. Some groups, such as ultra-Orthodox, Arab-speaking, Russian-speaking, and senior citizens, are particularly vulnerable due to lower media literacy, limited access to fact-checking resources, and a lack of public service programs and civil society initiatives tailored to their unique needs. At the same time, Israel's strong innovation ecosystem, advanced technological sector, engaged civil society, and robust digital infrastructure provide valuable assets that may be leveraged to combat false information and prevent its dissemination, for example, by developing technological solutions, strengthening fact-checking initiatives, and enhancing public awareness and media literacy efforts.

Addressing these challenges requires a collaborative multi-stakeholder approach that involves policymakers, media outlets, civil society, academia, the private sector, and digital platforms. *The Israeli government* should develop a strategy and establish a clear regulatory framework for misinformation, and define the responsibilities of

relevant authorities. Any regulatory measures must balance the need to combat misinformation with protection of free speech and democratic values. The government should prioritize independent journalism, support public awareness campaigns and media literacy programs, and integrate them into the education system. *Media outlets* should strengthen fact-checking mechanisms, equip journalists with digital investigative tools, and foster public trust through transparent and balanced reporting. *Civil society* should expand fact-checking initiatives, particularly for underserved communities, and promote research into mis- and disinformation trends in collaboration with academia. The *private sector*, particularly Israeli startups and tech companies, can play a critical role in developing innovative solutions to detect and counter false information.

This document serves as a foundation for policymakers, media professionals, civil society organizations, and technology companies working to address misinformation in Israel. It consists of five sections: The first section, *Problem Statement and Definitions*, introduces the concepts of misinformation and disinformation and discusses their harms and risks. The second section, *Misinformation and Disinformation in Israel*, analyzes the specific factors that make Israeli society particularly vulnerable to false information. The third section, *Audiences: The Israeli Public and Vulnerable Groups*, explores how different segments of society are affected by misinformation. The fourth section, *Stakeholder Analysis*, maps key actors in Israel's information ecosystem, such as government agencies, media outlets, and civil society organizations, assessing their roles and capacities for addressing misinformation. The fifth section, *Countering Disinformation in Israel*, outlines key intervention goals to enhance resilience against misinformation, such as media literacy, fact-checking, regulation, and public awareness, and details specific recommendations for each stakeholder group. The document also includes an appendix listing key actors to provide additional context and resources to better understand Israel's information landscape.

I. Introduction

Problem Statement and Definitions

This Stakeholder Analysis document lays the foundation for the *Developing Comprehensive Response to Online Misinformation and Disinformation in Israel (DRI)* project, led by the Israel Internet Association (ISOC-IL) with the support of the European Commission. The project aims to strengthen Israel's response to mis- and disinformation by equipping key stakeholders with the tools and knowledge needed to counter false information, promote media literacy, support fact-checking initiatives, and foster a more resilient information ecosystem. This document serves as a window into the Israeli information ecosystem, highlighting gaps, opportunities, and challenges, and serving as a foundational tool for guiding future initiatives. We believe this document will assist a variety of actors who wish to understand the Israeli information landscape and the challenges of Israeli society in tackling the growing threat of false online information.

The first section, *Problem Statement and Definitions*, introduces the concepts of misinformation and disinformation and discusses their harms and risks. The second section, *Misinformation and Disinformation in Israel*, analyzes the specific factors that make Israeli society particularly vulnerable to false information. The third section, *Audiences: The Israeli Public and Vulnerable Groups*, explores how different segments of society are affected by misinformation. The fourth section, *Stakeholder Analysis*, maps key actors in Israel's information ecosystem, such as government agencies, media outlets, and civil society organizations, assessing their roles and capacities for addressing misinformation. The fifth section, *Countering Disinformation in Israel*, outlines key intervention goals to enhance resilience against misinformation, such as media literacy, fact-checking, regulation, and public awareness, and details specific recommendations for each stakeholder group. The document also includes an appendix listing key actors to provide additional context and resources to better understand Israel's information landscape.

While false or manipulated information is not new, the digital age continually creates new challenges and complexities and makes it more difficult to detect

and counter its spread and harm.¹ Advances in digital technologies and platforms and novel communication forms have transformed how information is produced, disseminated, and consumed, dramatically increasing the volume, speed, and reach of information, with global dissemination and a diverse range of actors promoting it. These new trends have created a global information environment marked by disorder driven by technological, political, cultural, and ideological factors. The rise of social media as a platform for unfiltered content, coupled with advances including generative AI and bots, has lowered the cost and increased the ease of producing and spreading highly false content. Meanwhile, trust in traditional and legacy media has been steadily declining worldwide.²

The rise of populist regimes and post-truth politics, characterized by the prioritization of emotions and personal beliefs over objective facts, combined with growing ideological polarization, have further exacerbated this distrust. The eruption of crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic and armed conflicts around the world has also played a role in the spread of false information, as such crises often serve as fertile ground for the propagation of false narratives and propaganda. These trends are acutely evident in Israel, where domestic and regional instability has been amplified by the growing domestic polarization, the government's assault on the legal system and independent media, and the regional conflict following the October 7th attacks.

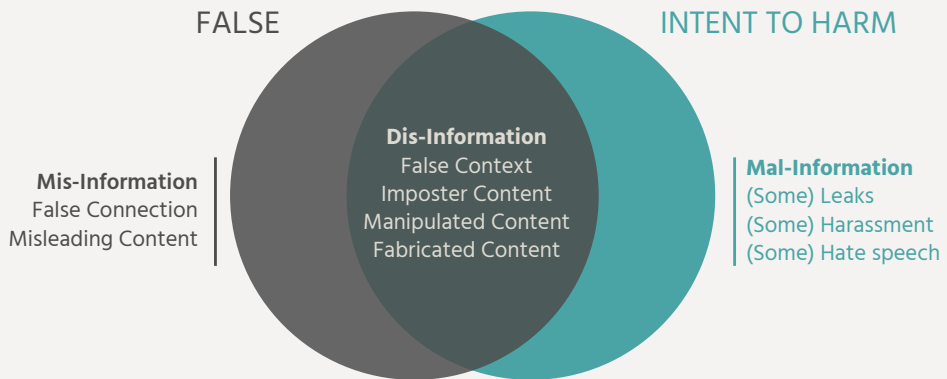
This chaotic information landscape has given rise to what experts describe as information disorder, consisting of three main elements: disinformation, misinformation, and malinformation.³

1. See: European Commission. Communication — [Tackling Online Disinformation](#). (European Commission, April 2018); European External Action Service. [Action Plan Against Disinformation](#) (EEAS, December 2018); European Commission. [European Democracy Action Plan: making EU democracies stronger](#) (European Commission, December 2020); European Parliament. [Resolution on foreign interference in all democratic processes in the European Union, including disinformation \(2020/2268\(INI\)\)](#). (European Parliament, March 2022). For a review of the European approach to online disinformation, see: A. Casero-Ripollés, J. Tuñón and J. Bouza-García, ["The European Approach to Online Disinformation: Geopolitical and Regulatory Dissonance"](#), *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* 10, (2024).

2. OECD, [Facts not fakes: Tackling Disinformation, Strengthening Information Integrity](#). (OECD, 2024).

3. C. Wardle and H. Derakshan, [Information Disorder: Toward An Interdisciplinary Framework For Research And Policy Making](#). (Council of Europe, 2017).

INFORMATION DISORDER



Disinformation: Information that is false and deliberately created to harm a person, social group, organization, or country.

Misinformation: Information that is false but not created with the intention of causing harm.

Malinformation: Information that is based on reality, used to inflict harm on a person, organization, or country.⁴

An effective response to information disorder must account for the following factors, which affect the choice of counter-strategies and measures:⁵

- **PHASES OF INFORMATION DISORDER:** Mis- and disinformation typically unfold in three main phases: creation, production, and distribution, with different actors at play in each phase. For example, the distribution of false information is significantly facilitated through social media platforms.
- **CONTENT:** Both misinformation and disinformation involve false information. However, determining whether information is false may be a complex and delicate task. This ambiguity partly arises from the normative challenge of

4. This document focuses on misinformation and disinformation, as it specifically addresses the challenges of false information. Therefore, malinformation is beyond the scope of this analysis.

5. Wardle and Derakshan, [Information Disorder](#); A. Wiener, [Review of Anti-Disinformation Legislation](#) (ISOC-IL, 2022). [Hebrew].

determining what constitutes truth, particularly in democracies. Moreover, in contrast to child abuse materials or hate speech, false information may be harmful yet not illegal.⁶ Disinformation is also distinct from other forms of deliberate but not misleading distortions of facts, such as fiction, satire, and parody.

- **INTENT AND MOTIVE:** Disinformation entails malicious intent – a deliberate aim to deceive or cause harm. In contrast, misinformation refers to the sharing of false information without an intent to mislead, based on the sender's misunderstandings or errors rather than malicious motives. As a result, attributing blame to the actor who created or spreads disinformation based on intent is challenging. Closely tied to the question of intent are the diverse motives driving disinformation actors, which encompass financial, political, social, personal, and psychological.⁷ Understanding these underlying motives offers valuable insights into how disinformation campaigns operate and can inform strategies to resist them. However, uncovering such motives is often challenging, as they are frequently concealed or obscured.
- **HARM:** Disinformation is inherently intended to cause harm. However, the definition and scope of harm varies across policy frameworks. Some definitions adopt a broad perspective, encompassing harm directed at various actors, while others focus specifically on public harm. Importantly, most definitions do not require harm to have actually occurred for information to qualify as disinformation.

In 2024 and 2025, The World Economic Forum ranked the growing phenomenon of mis- and disinformation as the most pressing risk in upcoming years.⁸ Indeed, false information poses four main threats:

6. On the challenges in distinguishing disinformation from illegal content see: Ronan O. Fathaigh, Natali Helberger and Naomi Appelman, "[The Perils of Legally Defining Disinformation](#)," *Internet Policy Review* 10, no. 4 (2021); Louisa Bartolo and Ariadna Matamoros-Fernandez, [Online Harm](#). (Yale Wikimedia Initiative on Intermediaries & Information, 2023).

7. Carme Colomina, Héctor Sánchez Margalef, Richard Youngs, and Kate Jones, [The Impact of Disinformation on Democratic Processes and Human Rights in the World](#) (European Parliament Policy Department, 2021).

8. World Economic Forum, [Global Risks Report 2024](#), [Global Risks Report 2025](#).

Threats to Democratic Processes: One of the most significant threats of mis- and disinformation is the threat to democracy and democratic institutions. False information may undermine the legitimacy of the electoral process by introducing doubt in its reliability. Deepfakes of political candidates, for example, have become a major concern in recent years due to their ability to mislead the public and interfere with election processes.⁹ According to Freedom House's annual report on internet freedom,¹⁰ misinformation from pro-government commentators and content manipulation in at least 21 of 41 countries fueled voter mistrust, casting doubt on election integrity and democratic institutions. This report found that social media platforms' reduced transparency hindered independent oversight, enabling misinformation to thrive and eroding voters' access to reliable information. Efforts by independent fact-checkers to counter disinformation faced significant challenges, and government attacks and restricted access to platform data further weakened public trust in credible information sources. In addition to the institutional harm, false or misleading information also threatens to undermine citizens' ability to make informed decisions, particularly in the context of elections.¹¹ This erodes the ideal of democracy, which is fundamentally based on an informed and engaged electorate making decisions grounded in accurate and reliable information. Mis- and disinformation may also undermine the legitimacy of and trust in formerly respected sources of factual information, data, and analysis, such as the media and government agencies, which play a key role in safeguarding democracy and informing citizens with reliable information.¹²

Personal Harms: False information may cause significant harm to individuals by undermining basic human rights, such as the right to freedom of thought and speech and the right to privacy. It may also undermine one's economic, social, and cultural rights, as well as one's well-being. Disinformation on vaccinations, for example, may cause harm to one's health.¹³ Deepfake technology poses

9. Nazar Syvak, ["AI Deepfakes and EU politics: is there a threat to democratic procedures?"](#) EU Neighbors East, February 28, 2024.

10. Allie Funk, Kian Vesteinsson and Grant Baker, [Freedom on the Net 2024 – The Struggle for Trust Online](#) (Freedom House, 2024).

11. European Court of Auditors, [Audit preview: EU Action Plan Against Disinformation](#) (2020). European Court of Auditors, Special Report 09/2021: [Disinformation Affecting the EU: Tackled but Not Tamed](#) (2021).

12. World Economic Forum, [Global Risks Report 2024](#); Jennifer Kavanagh and Michael D. Rich, [Truth Decay: An Initial Exploration of the Diminishing Role of Facts and Analysis in American Public Life](#) (RAND, 2018).

13. Colomina et al., [The Impact of Disinformation](#).

unique potential harm to individuals as it may be used to create the impression that individuals say or do things they did not actually say or do. Common uses of deepfakes include targeting individuals or organizations for exploitation, blackmail, intimidation, or reputational damage. Marginalized groups and women are especially vulnerable to deepfakes exploiting sexual identity.¹⁴

Threats to Societal Cohesion: Disinformation is not always designed to deceive but to deepen existing societal divides, amplifying political, cultural, or social tensions, leading to an erosion in societal trust and cohesion. Disinformation campaigns, often sponsored by foreign actors, may exploit these divisions. Moreover, social media platforms and personalized algorithms create echo chambers where users are mainly exposed to information that aligns with their pre-existing beliefs, further entrenching individuals in polarized views.¹⁵ In such a polarized environment, dialogue breaks down, mistrust in institutions arises, and social solidarity weakens, which makes it harder to resolve conflicts or find common ground. In some cases, manipulated content may not even be needed as information that does not confirm one's belief is approached with doubt and skepticism.¹⁶

Repression and Violence: Disinformation may increase the risk of repression and violence in several ways. As authorities seek to crack down on spreading false information, there is a growing risk of repression and erosion of rights, as political actors may exploit this situation to gain further political dominance.¹⁷ States may use technologies to monitor, control, and silence dissent through tactics including digital surveillance, hacking, and even disinformation campaigns. Disinformation is also associated with a rise in digital violence, such as harassment on social media and hate speech. Disinformation has been used to attack minorities and human rights defenders around the world, and coordinated online hate speech against racial and ethnic minorities has led to violence in real life.¹⁸ By deepening polarized views, disinformation may more easily trigger civil unrest and confrontation.

14. Henry Ajder, Giorgio Patrini, Francesco Cavali and Laurence Cullen, *The State of Deepfakes: Landscape, Threats and Impact* (DeepTrace Labs, 2019).

15. Jon Bateman and Dean Jackson, *Countering Disinformation Effectively: An Evidence-Based Policy Guide* (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2024).

16. World Economic Forum. *Global Risks Report 2024*.

17. World Economic Forum. *Global Risks Report 2024*.

18. Colomina et al., *The Impact of Disinformation*.

II. Misinformation and Disinformation in Israel

False information thrives in societies experiencing economic insecurity, extremism, and cultural changes that generate anxiety and create fertile ground for campaigns designed to foster polarization and distrust. Such situations may be exploited by political actors, organizations, and foreign entities that use disinformation to manipulate public discourse and policy debates.¹⁹ In Israel, structural, political, social, and technological factors have combined to create an environment with particularly acute vulnerabilities to mis- and disinformation. These vulnerabilities are exploited by both domestic and foreign malicious actors who disseminate false narratives designed to destabilize Israeli society, escalate conflicts, deepen social divisions, and incite against minorities. These vulnerabilities, exacerbated by a surge in demand in Israel for news on social media platforms such as X and Telegram following the October 7 events, triggered an unprecedented inundation of false information across social media and communication platforms.²⁰ The number of calls to ISOC-IL's Internet Safety Hotline also soared, particularly reports of exposure to false information.²¹ Malicious activities tied to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict were reported, with several platforms coming under EU investigation for failing to adequately address the spread of false or harmful content as obligated under the EU Digital Service Act (DSA).²²

The ongoing war also fostered a hostile information environment marked by mistrust and militant discourse involving many actors, including the government. Polarization has intensified – not only between pro- and anti-government voters but also along ethnic and religious lines, such as between Jews and Arabs. The war has also intensified conspiracy theories of all kinds. To illustrate, in some discourses following the October 7 attack, the left, anti-government protesters, and Israeli Arabs were accused of treason, fueling conspiracy theories that Israelis

19. European Commission, [Communication – Tackling Online Disinformation](#).

20. Gal Yavetz, "Iron Screens – Information and Media Consumption During the Swords of Iron War," *Media Frames: Israeli Journal of Communication* 26 (2024): 236–246. [Hebrew].

21. ISOC-IL, [Internet Safety Hotline Activity](#) (ISOC-IL, 2023).

22. ISOC-IL, [Content Regulation and Platform Policy for the Israeli Arena during "Iron Swords"](#) (ISOC-IL, 2024). [Hebrew].

collaborated with Hamas – a narrative that has been gaining increasing traction among certain segments of the population.²³

Key factors that exacerbate the risks of mis- and disinformation in Israel:

- **High Social Media Usage and Shifting News Consumption Patterns:** Israel is among the leading countries in internet access (92%) and social media usage, with a significant portion of the population relying on digital platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Telegram for news and information.²⁴ According to a 2024 survey, 59.5% of Israelis obtain their news from social media platforms, and 52% obtain it from WhatsApp groups and Telegram channels on a daily basis.²⁵
- **Limited Media and Digital Literacy:** Despite the widespread use of social media, digital literacy in Israeli society remains below the OECD average, with approximately 73% of individuals between the ages of 16 and 65 exhibiting low or very low digital literacy.²⁶ The 2023 Media Literacy Index by the Open Society Institute ranked Israel 32nd of 47 countries in resilience to false information.²⁷ This deficit is partly due to the lack of public awareness campaigns and digital literacy curricula in the education system, particularly programs targeting youngsters. Currently, no centralized body in Israel is dedicated to promoting public education in these critical areas, creating a significant gap in building societal resilience to false information.
- **Polarization and Societal Divides:** Israel is a diverse society, encompassing a wide range of ethnicities, political affiliations, cultural backgrounds, and

23. Oren Persico, ["The Frequency of Watching Channel 14 Increases Belief in Conspiracies,"](#) *The Seventh Eye*, December 12, 2023. [Hebrew].

24. Jacob Poushter, Sneha Gubbala and Sarah Austin, ["8 Charts on Technology Use Around the World,"](#) *Pew Research Center*, February 5, 2024. See also: OECD, *OECD Digital Economy Outlook 2024* (Volume 2): [Strengthening Connectivity, Innovation and Trust](#) (OECD Publishing, 2024).

25. Tehila Schwartz Altshuler and Inna Orly Sapozhnikova, [Media and Social Media Consumption, Trust, and Literacy](#) (Israel Democracy Institute, 2024). [Hebrew].

26. The State Comptroller of Israel, [Preparing for the Changing Labor Market: Instilling Digital Literacy Throughout Life](#) (2021). [Hebrew]

27. Open Society Institute. [The Media Literacy Index: Assessing Resilience to Online Disinformation and Misinformation in Global Contexts](#) (2023).

religious identities. While such diversification presents unique opportunities for mitigating the threats of false information, it also poses challenges. In recent years, Israel has experienced deepening polarization across political, ethnic, and religious lines, exacerbated by contentious government policies, rising societal and security-related tensions, and divisive public discourse. These divisions have created fertile ground for the spread of disinformation, which stresses conflicting narratives that further entrench opposing sides and fuel mistrust within society.

- **Financial And Political Pressures in Mainstream Media:** Traditional mainstream media face economic pressures, particularly as a result of the digital advertising crisis, but also due to political pressures and circumstances. These financial and political constraints limit the ability of media outlets to conduct thorough fact-checking and in-depth investigations, which require substantial resources and may provoke political backlash. As a result, the media's capacity to counter mis- and disinformation and serve as a watchdog is compromised.
- **Declining Trust in Traditional Media:** Public trust in traditional media is steadily declining as more people turn to alternative media for news. This trend is exacerbated by government actions that undermine traditional media's credibility and independence, as well as financial pressures that limit the ability of these outlets to maintain rigorous journalistic standards and investigative reporting. Overall, only about 25% of the population express high or moderate levels of trust in the media, with notable disparities across political and ethnic lines. Among right-wing individuals, trust stands at a mere 15%, compared to 48% among left-wing individuals. Similarly, trust is higher among Jews (26.6%) than among Arabs (15.8%).²⁸
- **Post-Truth Politics:** In line with global trends, Israel's domestic landscape is increasingly influenced by post-truth dynamics, where emotions and personal beliefs often outweigh objective facts in shaping public opinion. In this environment, policymakers frequently prioritize divisive narratives

28. Tamar Hermann, Lior Yohanani, Yaron Kaplan and Inna Orly Sapozhnikova, [*The Israeli Democracy Index 2024*](#) (The Israel Democracy Institute, 2024).

over truth to garner support or achieve short-term objectives. Thus, many political actors lack the incentive to counter misinformation, as false or misleading statements often serve their political agendas, which significantly hampers efforts to combat mis- and disinformation.

- **Relatively Weak Civil Society:** Civil society organizations in Israel play a critical role in identifying and combating the spread of false information, but their efforts are severely constrained by limited resources, lack of expertise, and lack of wide public legitimacy. As a result, fact-check initiatives are few, those for marginalized groups are absent, and existing efforts to counter false information are often fragmented and insufficiently coordinated.
- **External Threats and Regional Tensions:** Israel's complex geopolitical situation and ongoing regional conflicts make it a prime target for foreign actors, such as Iran, Russia, and Hamas, seeking to exploit societal divisions and destabilize the country. These actors leverage disinformation to deepen polarization, undermine trust in institutions, and exacerbate existing conflicts.
- **Limited Digital Governance and Regulatory Mechanisms:** Israel lacks comprehensive regulations to prevent the spread of false information, particularly on social media and messaging apps.²⁹ The country's existing legal frameworks are outdated and have failed to keep pace with the rapid dissemination of information in the digital age and constantly changing media technologies and platforms. This regulatory gap not only allows disinformation campaigns to thrive but also does little to encourage accountability of those responsible for creating or spreading harmful content.

In the short term, the surge of mis- and disinformation intensifies societal divisions and polarization in Israel and deepens rifts among groups divided by ethnicity, political orientation, culture, and religion. These divisions foster heightened antagonism as each group becomes entrenched in its own perceived "truths" and

29. Asaf Wiener, [*National Preparedness for Foreign Influence and Interference via Social Media: Global Findings and the Israeli Landscape*](#) (Institute for National Security Studies, 2024). [Hebrew]

beliefs. This is particularly alarming in the context of the fragile security environment in the Middle East, which provides fertile ground for the spread of disinformation. Foreign actors are likely to exploit these circumstances to demoralize Israel, radicalize others in the region against it, or advance their own strategic interests. Simultaneously, local actors may seek to shape narratives during this volatile period to influence public opinion and decisions on critical issues, such as hostage negotiations, the situation in Gaza, debates over recruiting ultra-Orthodox Jews into the army, the judicial overhaul, the protest against Netanyahu's government, and the public debate surrounding his trials.

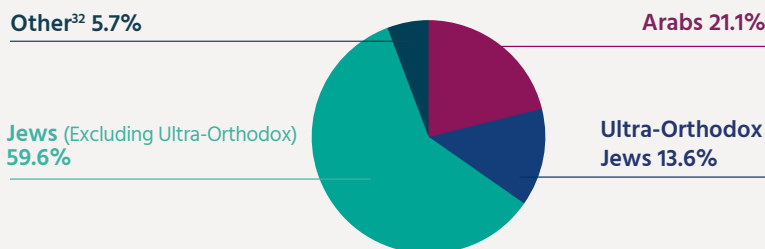
In the longer term, the unchecked spread of false information threatens to erode trust in democratic institutions, undermine societal resilience, and entrench polarized discourse, further destabilizing the country's social fabric and leaving Israeli democracy increasingly fragile and vulnerable. The demonization of specific groups and the intensification of extremist ideologies are likely to hinder reconciliation and undermine prospects for peace in the region.

III. Audiences

The Israeli Public and Vulnerable Groups

Israeli society is characterized by a diverse mix of ethnicities, political orientations, cultures, and religions. In 2023, Israel's population reached 9.9 million, with a significant 77% Jewish majority of 7.6 million and a significant Arab minority of approx. 21%. Among the Jewish population aged 20+, 43.5% identify as secular, 19% are Masortim ("traditionalists," neither strictly religious nor secular), 13% identify as somewhat religious, 12.5% identify as religious, and 11.3% identify as ultra-Orthodox ("Haredim"). The country's fertility rate (2.85 children per woman) is the highest in the OECD, and 35% of the population is under the age of 14. Net average monthly household income in 2022 was 18,237 ILS, with expenditures at 17,600 ILS, employment was 61.3% (64.5% men, 58.3% women). The vast majority (91.1%) of the population aged 20+ expressed satisfaction with their quality of life, economic conditions, and outlook.³⁰ This section maps the different sectors of Israeli society, outlining their main vulnerabilities to false information, and identifying the key requirements needed to mitigate the risk of mis- and disinformation.

KEY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS IN ISRAEL³¹



30. Israel Central Bureau of Statistics. [Israel in Figures Selected Annual Data](#) (2024). [Hebrew], [Immigration to Israel](#) (2022). [Hebrew], [The Population in Israel by Age at the End of 2022](#) (2024), [Population of Israel on the Eve of 2024](#) (2023). [Hebrew]; OECD, [Society at a Glance: OECD Social Indicators](#) (2024).

31. Israel Central Bureau of Statistics. [Population on the Eve of 2024](#) (2023); Lee Kahaner and Gilad Malach. [Statistical Report on Ultra-Orthodox in Israel 2023](#) (Israel Democracy Institute, 2023).

32. Others include non-Arab Christians and individuals not classified by religion in the population registry.

1. Arab Society

The Arab population of 2.08 million constitutes approx. 21% of Israel's total population.³³ The majority of Arabs are Muslims (83.3%), followed by Christians (7.7%) and Druze (9%). Geographically, most of the Arab population resides in northern Israel (50.8%), with others in the Triangle region (19.6%), the Negev (18.1%), and mixed cities with a Jewish majority (8.4%). Among the Muslims, 3.5% are Bedouin, almost all of whom live in the Negev.³⁴ In 2021, 39.1% of Arab families lived below the poverty line, significantly higher than 17.12% of Jewish families. In 2023, employment in Arab society was 47.9%, lower than the national average of 61.3%. Wage gaps between Arabs and Jews persist but are narrowing, particularly among men. Satisfaction levels in the Arab population remain high, with 87.8% expressing satisfaction with their quality of life, economic situation, and future prospects – only slightly below the Jewish population's satisfaction (91.1%).

Educational attainment in the Arab sector has increased over the last decade. The percentage of Arab undergraduate students in Israeli academia nearly doubled from 10% in the 2009/10 academic year to 19% in 2021/22. Enrollment in master's degree programs also rose from 6.5% to 17% in this period, partly due to incentives granted to teachers and public sector employees. Despite these advances, significant gaps remain, and the proportion of individuals in Arab society holding an academic degree is almost half that in Jewish society.³⁵ Digital gaps between the Arab population and the general population have diminished yet remain considerable.³⁶ For example, in 2022, 65.3% of the Arab population had access to computers, compared to 87% of the Jewish population. That year, 88% of the Arab population reported using the internet, marking an increase of 7% from the previous year, yet lower than the figure for the Jewish population (92%).

33. This includes the Palestinian residents in East Jerusalem.

34. Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, [Israel in Figures 2024](#) [Hebrew]; Oriana Elmasi, [Data on the Bedouin Population in the Negev](#), (Knesset Research and Information Center, 2023). [Hebrew].

35. Nasreen Haddad Haj-Yahya, Muhammed Khalaily, Arik Rudnitzky and Ben Fargeon, [Statistical Report on Arab Society in Israel – Executive Summary 2021](#) (Israel Democracy Institute, 2021); Muhammed Khalaily, Ahmad Badran and Arik Rudnitzky, [Arab Society Statistical Report Summary 2023](#) (The Israel Democracy Institute, 2023); Brachi Ben Simon, Viacheslav Konstantinov, Ahmad Badran, Lilach Zohar, Yoa Sorek and Nasreen Haddad Haj-Yahya, [Arab Youth in Israel: Comprehensive Statistical Review](#) (Myers-JDC-Brookdale, 2023).

36. Jonathan Mendels and ISOC-IL, [Connected But Not Equal: Digital Gaps, Internet Infrastructure, Usage Trends and Online Safety in Arab Society in Israel](#) (ISOC-IL, 2024).

SUSCEPTIBILITY TO MIS- AND DISINFORMATION

- **High Social Media Usage:** Compared to the Jewish population, the Arab population in Israel tends to use the internet more frequently for entertainment purposes, such as gaming and surfing on social media, than as a means to achieve practical goals, including improved employment, educational, and financial opportunities.³⁷ This high social media usage is accompanied by the risk of exposure to mis- and disinformation when used as a form of information. Furthermore, surveys indicate that in Jewish society, mainstream media is considered more credible than social networks, while in Arab society, social networks are perceived as the most reliable source of information.³⁸ Additionally, the Arab population predominantly accesses the internet via smartphones rather than computers, which further amplifies these risks, as smartphone usage is often associated with less critical engagement and more problematic online social behaviors.
- **Low Media Literacy:** 87% of the Arab population between the ages of 25 and 64 lack basic digital skills, and only 13% have moderate or high digital media literacy, compared to 59% of the Jewish population (excluding the ultra-Orthodox sector).³⁹ Poor media literacy is associated with higher chances of falling victim to disinformation and manipulation.
- **Information Inaccessibility:** Only 53% of the Arab society report that they are proficient in the Hebrew language, and 46% are unable to read Hebrew.⁴⁰ Despite official government resolutions (No. 922 passed in 2016 and No. 550 passed in 2021), a significant portion of the information on government websites contains no Arabic text and is therefore inaccessible to Arabic speakers. Furthermore, the scarcity of Arabic-language fact-checking resources further limits this community's access to reliable and verified information and increases its vulnerability to false information.⁴¹

37. Mendels and ISOC-IL. [Connected But Not Equal](#).

38. Oren Persico, "[Suppressing a Minority is a Destructive Phenomenon](#)," *The Seventh Eye*, June 8, 2024. [Hebrew]

39. Hila Axelrad, Hanin Mater and Marian Tehawkho, [The Digital Challenge in Arab Society](#), Policy Paper 2021.5 (IDC Herzliya, Aaron Institute for Economic Policy, 2021). [Hebrew]

40. Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, [Selected Data from the 2020 Social Survey on Mastery of the Hebrew Language](#) (December 2021). [Hebrew].

41. Mendels and ISOC-IL. [Connected But Not Equal](#).

- **Constrained Arab Civil Society:** There are very few organizations dedicated to addressing mis- and disinformation within the Arab community, and those that exist lack the resources, institutional capacity, and infrastructure needed to create a large-scale impact or effectively scale media literacy efforts, fact-checking initiatives, and public awareness campaigns.
- **Low Trust in Mainstream Hebrew-Language Media:** Part of the high social media usage among the Arab population in Israel is due to low trust in Hebrew mainstream media and the feeling that they are excluded from it or negatively represented in the media.⁴² Only 29% of the Arab population believes traditional media outlets provide reliable information, compared to 36% of the Jewish population. Still, 41% of the Arab population believe that those media outlets provide a variety of opinions, compared to 45% of the Jewish population.⁴³ Low trust in traditional media increases susceptibility to false information disseminated on social media.
- **Low Trust in the State and Enforcement Authorities:** Arab citizens in Israel consistently report lower trust in state institutions—including the IDF, police, Supreme Court, and Knesset—compared to Jewish citizens. In 2024, the average trust level across eight key institutions was 35% for Jewish citizens but only 18.5% for Arab citizens, which is in line with a long-standing trend of disparity.⁴⁴ This distrust also affects citizens' decisions on where to seek help regarding safety, justice, and digital threats. A survey on online victimhood found that only 30% of Arab citizens would report a cyber incident to the National Cyber Directorate, and 39% were unsure how to do so. As a result, many turn to informal networks for information and support, increasing their exposure to misinformation.⁴⁵

42. Persico, "[Suppressing a Minority](#)" [Hebrew].

43. Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, [Selected Data from the 2022 Social Survey on Attitudes Regarding Communications and Social Media](#) (June 2023). [Hebrew].

44. Hermann et al., [The Israeli Democracy Index 2024](#).

45. Mendels and ISOC-IL. [Connected But Not Equal](#).

2. The Ultra-Orthodox (Haredi) Community⁴⁶

Ultra-Orthodox (Haredi) Jews make up approximately 13.6% of Israel's population, numbering around 1.34 million as of 2023.⁴⁷ With an annual growth rate of 4%, the Haredi community is expected to constitute 16% of the population by 2030. Over one-half of the Haredi population is under the age of 16, reflecting the community's high average fertility rate (6.4 children per woman). Haredi Jews typically live in tight-knit communities, and the majority (78%) live in predominantly Orthodox neighborhoods.

Economically, Haredi Jews have significantly higher poverty rates than the general population, primarily due to large family sizes, low male workforce participation, and relatively low wages. In 2023, 40% of Haredi Jews lived below the poverty line even after social benefits state transfers, compared to 21% of the general population and 12% of non-Haredi Jews. Haredi education differs significantly from the general Israeli education. The majority (73.5%) of Haredi students are enrolled in "recognized but unofficial" institutions, and an additional 22.5% study in "exempt" institutions. Both types of institutions operate with minimal government oversight and focus almost exclusively on Torah study, and often exclude core subjects such as mathematics and English. Only 4% of Haredi students attend public schools, and only 16% qualify for a matriculation (Bagrut) certificate, compared to 86% of the general population.

Technology use among Haredi Jews is increasing yet remains significantly lower than in the general population. Internet and social media use among Haredi Jews has increased steadily from 18% in 2015 to 32% in 2020 and 39% in 2024, driven primarily by the use of platforms such as WhatsApp. Nevertheless, most online activities by Haredi Jews are instrumental or site-specific and include email and information searches (66% and 57%, respectively), with social media and gaming reported by only 20% and 8% of users, respectively. According to figures

46. Kahaner and Malach. [*Statistical Report on Ultra-Orthodox*](#); Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, [*The Social Survey 2020: The Digital Age*](#) (October 2022). [Hebrew]; Eitan Regev and Yehudit Miletzky, [*State of Haredi Society Annual Report 2023*](#) (The Haredi Institute for Public Affairs, 2023).

47. These data might differ from Central Bureau of Statistics data due to difference in definitions and respondents' self-definitions.

for 2024, 71% of Haredi Jews use the internet (excluding smartphone access), compared to 91% among non-Haredi Jews. However, only 46% of Haredim use the internet daily, compared to 84% of non-Haredi Jews. Moreover, only 47% of Haredi Jews use smartphones, compared to 68% of non-Haredi Jews.⁴⁸

SUSCEPTIBILITY TO MIS- AND DISINFORMATION

- **Insular Information Ecosystem:** The Haredi community relies largely on sector-specific community media outlets that align with its values, interests, and cultural norms. Sectoral media enjoy relatively high trust within the community despite a lack of critical reporting and poor journalistic standards. Fact-checking is rarely conducted, and content often aligns unquestioningly with the positions of community and political leaders. As a result, it does not provide a reliable framework for verifying information or countering mis- and disinformation. While some of these outlets are more integrated with mainstream media than others, the typical Haredi individual remains within a self-contained media ecosystem that resists the penetration of external news and perspectives. This insular environment limits exposure to information and viewpoints of other population groups, creating an echo chamber that is reinforced by community leaders and norms. In such an exclusionary information environment, false information can spread more easily, as individuals have limited access to external fact-checked sources and alternative perspectives.
- **Strong Influence of Community Leaders:** Community leaders and sector-specific media play a critical role in shaping opinions within the Haredi community. Their influence often dictates public discourse, news consumption, and decision-making, reinforcing the community's insular media environment and limited exposure to alternative viewpoints. Their influence on the community was particularly evident during the COVID-19 pandemic, when community rabbis often served as primary sources of information and guidance that occasionally conflicted with official state

48. Regev and Miletzky, [*State of Haredi Society*](#).

recommendations and was inaccurate, contributing to misinformation.⁴⁹

- **Low Media and Digital Literacy:** The Haredi population exhibits significantly lower levels of digital literacy compared to the non-Haredi Jewish population. One of the primary reasons for this gap is the substantial differences in the manner, extent, and purpose of digital content consumption.⁵⁰ Furthermore, survey findings show that the majority of respondents in the Haredi community report having little to no knowledge of essential online safety practices and critical information literacy skills, such as blocking advertisements and identifying secure websites, raising further concerns about their ability to navigate the online space safely.⁵¹
- **Low Trust in Mainstream Media:** In line with their relative isolation from mainstream media, Haredi Jews also express low trust in these outlets. Only 21% of Haredim believe traditional media provides reliable information, compared to 40% of non-Haredi Jews. Similarly, only 32% of Haredi Jews think traditional media offers diverse perspectives, and a mere 12% feel it is free from political or commercial influence, compared to 49% and 21% of non-Haredi Jews, respectively.⁵² Low exposure to and trust in traditional media undermines efforts to counter mis- and disinformation spread by unreliable sources as corrective information may be dismissed as biased or agenda-driven.
- **Covert and Unsupervised Use of Smartphones and the Internet:** Covert smartphone and internet use is increasingly popular among younger Haredi Jews, as many secretly own devices and access websites and groups prohibited by their community. While this exposure provides access to broader information, it occurs without guidance on evaluating the quality or credibility of the content, which heightens their vulnerability to scams, misinformation, and disinformation.

49. Yitzhak Tesler, "[From Frankincense Preachers to the Genetic Change Rabbis: COVID Fakes and Conspiracies in the Haredi Sector](#)," *Ynet*, January 13, 2021. [Hebrew]; For a review on the Haredi community's susceptibility to false information, see: Nili Steinfeld, Yehudit Miletzky, Tamar Barenblum and Elazar Kornfeld, "[Identifying False Messages in Haredi Society: Eye-Tracking Study on Web Pages as an Expression of Digital Literacy](#)," *Kesher* 60 (2023): 130-157. [Hebrew].

50. Steinfeld et al., "[Eye-Tracking Study](#)." [Hebrew].

51. ISOC-IL, [Internet and the Haredi Society](#) (ISOC-IL, March 2021). [Hebrew].

52. Israel Democracy Institute, [Ultra-Orthodox in Israel](#). [Hebrew].

- **Absence of Fact-Checking or Civil Society Initiatives for the Haredi Community:** The Haredi community lacks tailored fact-checking initiatives that address its unique cultural and media consumption patterns. This absence, coupled with its isolation from mainstream media, leaves the community with limited access to fact-checked information, increasing vulnerability to false information.

3. The Russian-Speaking Community

Since the late 1980s, over 1 million individuals immigrated to Israel from the Soviet Union (USSR) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). This number includes the large wave of immigrants who arrived following the collapse of the USSR in 1991. Most of these immigrants were Jewish (72%), while 27% were classified as having no religious affiliation. In 2021, Israel's Russian-speaking population accounted for 12% of the population, with an additional 3.5% using Russian as a second language. In 2022 and 2023 alone, an additional wave of close to 100,000 immigrants arrived from Russia and Ukraine due to the Russia-Ukraine War.

Historically, immigrants from the USSR faced challenges assimilating into Israeli society, particularly in language, culture, and employment. In surveys conducted at the beginning of the current decade, 74.9% of CIS immigrants reported that they primarily spoke Russian at home rather than Hebrew, and only 52% aged 20 and older reported having good or very good proficiency in Hebrew.⁵³

SUSCEPTIBILITY TO MIS- AND DISINFORMATION

- **Information Inaccessibility and Media Literacy Challenges:** Language barriers, especially among adults, limit access to reliable local information. While digital literacy has improved among younger immigrants, many older immigrants lack basic digital skills, limiting their ability to access online services and information, participate in the digital economy, and stay informed, making them more susceptible to inaccurate and manipulative information.

53. Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, [*Mastery of the Hebrew Language*](#). [Hebrew]; Viacheslav Konstantinov, [*Trends in the Integration of Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union into Israeli Society in the Last Three Decades*](#) (Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute, 2024). [Hebrew].

- **Distinct and Inclusive Information Consumption Patterns:** The Russian-speaking community in Israel exhibits unique information consumption habits that increase its vulnerability to foreign disinformation. Many members of this community consume state-controlled Russian media channels or other Russian-speaking foreign news sources, which are accessible in Israel and frequently disseminate misleading or false information. A 2023 survey revealed significant penetration of Russian news channels and websites among the Russian-speaking population in Israel, with 10% of respondents reporting regular viewership of RTVI and the First Channel of Russian Television.⁵⁴ This exposure makes the community a prime target for disinformation campaigns. Several reports have uncovered efforts by the Russian government and affiliated groups to influence public opinion in Israel, specifically targeting Russian-speaking citizens.⁵⁵

4. Other Minority Groups

In addition to the groups mentioned above, there are other vulnerable minority populations in Israel, including Jewish immigrants from France, Ethiopia, and South America; migrant workers, particularly from Africa, Southeast Asia, and South America; and refugees. Many of these individuals face language barriers and do not consume local media.

5. Senior Citizens⁵⁶

Senior citizens (65+) represent 12.4% of Israel's population. This group exhibits distinct internet and social media usage patterns. Relatively low levels of digital literacy make them particularly vulnerable to online misinformation.

54. Newsru.co.il. "[Media and Social Networks in the Lives of Russian-Speaking Israelis](#)". *Newsru.co.il*, July 2, 2023. [Russian].

55. Uri Blau and Milan Czerny, "[Russian Influence Plan Exposed](#)," *Mako*, September 16, 2024. [Hebrew]; Milan Czerny, Vera Michlin-Shapir, and David Siman-Tov, "[Russian Influence Campaign Against Israel: Strategic and Cognitive Implications](#)," *INSS Insight* No. 1852 (2024).

56. Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, [Selected Data on Various Topics Regarding Israeli Senior Citizens Aged 65 and Over](#) (September 2023). [Hebrew]; ISOC-IL. [Internet Usage and Safety Among the Elderly in Israel](#) (2023). [Hebrew]; ISOC-IL. [Internet Use and Online Services Among the Elderly Population](#) (2022). [Hebrew].

SUSCEPTIBILITY TO MIS- AND DISINFORMATION

- **High Rates of Internet and Social Media Usage:** 70% of people aged 65+ in Israel use the internet, positioning the country high in global comparisons of internet use by this age group. Social media is also widely used, accounting for 54% of all internet use.
- **Lower levels of Digital Literacy:** Despite senior citizens' relatively high social media and internet usage, their digital literacy is relatively low. A 2022 survey shows that nearly 49% of seniors rely on family or friends for help with digital tasks and technical operations.
- **Susceptibility to Online Harms and Misinformation:** Senior citizens are particularly vulnerable to online fraud, with 44% experiencing attempts to obtain personal details and 25% encountering commercial fraud. This susceptibility to online fraud may also suggest heightened vulnerability to online manipulation and disinformation.

6. Young Adults

The young adult population (ages 15-24) comprises approx. 15.2% of Israel's total population, with 7.9% aged 15-19, 7.3% aged 20-24, 6.7% aged 25-29, and 6.5% aged 30-34.⁵⁷ Young adults exhibit very high levels of Internet and social media usage, with the most popular platforms being WhatsApp, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and Telegram (in descending order). Notably, Telegram usage among this age group increased significantly, rising from 62% in 2023 to 77% in 2024. Similarly, TikTok experienced the most significant growth, with usage jumping from 71% in 2023 to 80% in 2024.⁵⁸

SUSCEPTIBILITY TO MIS- AND DISINFORMATION

- **High Social Media Use and Limited News Consumption:** Young adults dedicate substantial time to the internet and social media while their

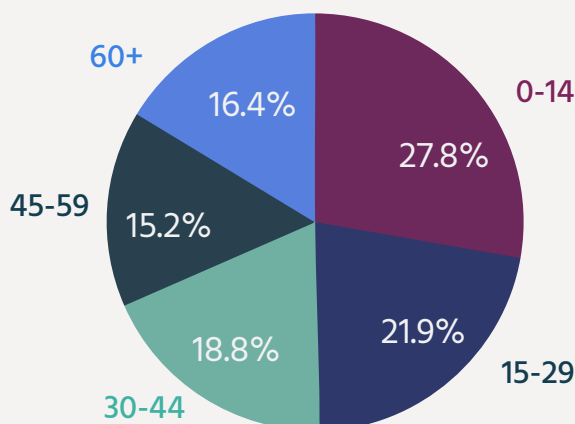
57. Israel Central Bureau of Statistics. [The population in Israel](#) (2024).

58. ISOC-IL. [The Use of Social Networks and Online Services in Israel in 2024](#) (ISOC-IL, 2024). [Hebrew].

engagement with traditional news sources is typically limited, heightening their exposure to unverified information.

- **Low Awareness of Risks and Threats:** Despite high internet and social media use, young adults are generally less aware of online risks in general, and specifically of mis- and disinformation. This limited awareness leaves them more vulnerable to manipulation, particularly through platforms such as TikTok and Instagram, where content is often consumed quickly and without critical evaluation.
- **Lack of Educational Programs to Foster Media Literacy:** The absence of sufficient resources and educational programs to promote critical information consumption and media literacy among the younger population, including within formal education, creates a significant gap. These programs are essential for cultivating critical thinking skills and ensuring that young people can navigate the digital information landscape responsibly.
- **Limited Ability to Manage Risks:** Young adults often lack the knowledge, awareness, and self-discipline needed to effectively manage online risks.

THE POPULATION IN ISRAEL BY AGE⁵⁹



59. Israel Central Bureau of Statistics. [The population in Israel](#) (2024).

IV. Stakeholder Analysis

The Israeli Information Ecosystem

This section maps the key actors in the Israeli information ecosystem, providing an overview of each actor alongside a detailed analysis of their current capacity to counter mis- and disinformation. The analysis reviews factors such as public trust, financial resources, structural limitations, and expertise, identifies critical gaps and outlines the essential actions required to strengthen these stakeholders' ability to effectively address the challenges and mitigate the threats posed by mis- and disinformation.

1. Institutions and Authorities

1.1. State Actors

State actors across the legislative, executive, and judicial branches play a crucial role in mitigating the threats of false information as they possess the resources and authority needed to influence various segments of society. Each branch has a stake in ensuring a resilient information environment – either by developing policies, regulatory regimes, and oversight mechanisms and enforcing transparency standards; implementing public awareness campaigns and programs; or ensuring that these measures align with democratic principles and protect fundamental rights. Effective state intervention potentially helps to safeguard the integrity of the information environment, protect democratic processes, and foster public resilience against manipulative narratives. Such efforts must be guided by principles of open government, transparency, inclusivity, and accountability.⁶⁰

Currently, Israel lacks a comprehensive strategy and regulatory framework to prevent and respond to false information, both from internal and external sources.

60. OECD. [Good Practice Principles for Public Communication Responses to Mis- and Disinformation](#) (OECD, 2023).

There is no clear accountability or assignment of responsibility among authorities tasked with countering these threats, creating significant gaps in the country's ability to mount an effective national response. Additionally, the absence of a coordinated national media literacy strategy means that no structured program is integrated into the education system, nor is there significant government support for public awareness campaigns to equip the public with critical evaluation skills.

This lack of a national strategy and government action is compounded by policymakers' limited understanding of the risks posed by false information and its potential impact on public opinion. Additionally, in some cases, policymakers may lack incentives to address disinformation, particularly when it aligns with or supports their political agendas, further undermining efforts to combat the issue effectively. As a result, counter-disinformation efforts are often fragmented, underfunded, and deprioritized.

1.2. Civil Society Organizations

Experience in other countries highlights the crucial role of civil society organizations (CSOs) as key actors in identifying and countering misinformation and disinformation, often serving as first responders to counter mis- and disinformation. Such organizations include fact-checking projects, independent policy and research institutes, journalist associations, and professional associations.

Israeli CSOs face significant challenges in addressing false information, particularly during crises. Despite their critical role, they struggle to provide real-time, actionable responses due to limited resources and infrastructure. The number of CSOs with expertise in monitoring and combating false information is extremely small. Currently, only one organization in Israel is affiliated with the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN).

Existing efforts often fail to address the needs of vulnerable and minority groups, and many initiatives do not sufficiently engage with or represent minority populations. For example, there are no Arabic-speaking fact-checking initiatives, leaving these communities underserved in efforts to counter false information. Additionally, CSOs face considerable obstacles in gaining public legitimacy,

including government efforts to delegitimize their work, which have further eroded trust. This combination of limited capacity, inadequate representation, and diminished public trust underscores the urgent need for increased support, resources, and collaboration to strengthen CSOs' ability to effectively combat misinformation and disinformation.

1.3. Academia

Academia and research institutions play a crucial role in advancing knowledge and addressing societal challenges, including research on the motivations and sources of misinformation and the development of social, educational, and technical solutions to counter it.

While there is growing academic interest in information integrity, research in this field remains underdeveloped in Israel. Funding for research is limited, particularly for studies that aim to develop practical interventions or address the vulnerabilities of specific groups. There are currently no academic and educational institutions, units, or programs dedicated to media and information literacy, and few academic scholars in Israel across social sciences, humanities, and exact sciences specialize in disinformation.

2. Israeli News and Media Outlets

2.1. Commercial and Public Traditional Mainstream Media

Commercial and public traditional mainstream media in Israel face declining public trust, with only 35% of Israelis in 2022 believing that mainstream media offer reliable information.⁶¹ Many outlets are subject to significant political and financial pressures, and concentrated ownership among a few powerful individuals and corporations raises concerns about biased coverage influenced

61. Israel Central Bureau of Statistics. [Attitudes Regarding Communications and Social Media](#). [Hebrew].

by political, commercial, or other interests.⁶² Indeed, 73% of Israelis do not believe that traditional media outlets in Israel are free of political or commercial pressures.⁶³ These low rates of trust in the media are further exacerbated by Israel's domestic political polarization, which is clearly reflected in media consumption habits. Right-and left-wing voters gravitate towards distinct outlets, creating segmented audiences. For instance, 46% of right-wing voters view Channel 14 daily, while 60% of opposition voters prefer Keshet 12, and only 4% of them view Channel 14 daily. Interestingly, however, Kan 11, the Public Broadcasting Corporation, is considered the most trusted media outlet in Israel.⁶⁴ The increasing fragmentation of media consumption deepens ideological divides and allows disinformation to spread unchecked, making it significantly more difficult to build a shared foundation of credible information.

Furthermore, as noted, especially since 2022, media outlets in Israel have faced unprecedented attacks by the government. These include a government ban on advertising and communication with Haaretz in response to the newspaper's criticism of state policies and advancing legislation to privatize Kan, Israel's Public Broadcasting Corporation. Additionally, the proposed Rating Law seeks to grant the Minister of Communications full control over audience measurement, which is currently managed by the independent Israel Audience Research Board (IARB) and determines the allocation of government budgets to the media. Such measures have raised significant concerns about freedom of the press, with critics warning that they are designed to silence dissent and restrict diverse public discourse. The government has also intensified efforts to weaken state-funded media, particularly the Public Broadcasting Corporation and the Army Radio (Galei Tzahal), with significant budget cuts and plans to privatize them, raising alarms about a deliberate effort to undermine independent journalism and tighten political control over media narratives.⁶⁵

62. Asaf Wiener and Tehilla Shwartz Altshuler, *Concentration and Ownership in the Israeli News Markets* (Israel Democracy Institute, 2020). [Hebrew].

63. Israel Central Bureau of Statistics. *Attitudes Regarding Communications and Social Media*. [Hebrew].

64. Oren Persico. "Survey: Kan 11 (Public Broadcasting Corporation) is considered the most trusted media outlet in Israel." *The Seventh Eye*. December 14, 2024. [Hebrew].

65. Public Media Alliance. "How Israel's government is putting pressure on KAN," February 6, 2025; Sam Sokol. "Criticizing own party, Likud MK blocks bill to shutter public broadcaster," *The Times of Israel*, January 15, 2025.

In addition to a lack of trust in traditional media, increased polarization, and attacks on freedom of the press, most media outlets in Israel suffer from insufficient investment and capacity for fact-checking and digital investigation, particularly during real-time crises. Few have in-house fact-checking mechanisms, and limited technological and digital literacy restricts their ability to adopt innovative tools for combating misinformation and disinformation effectively.

2.2. Sectoral and Non-Hebrew Media and News Outlets

As a diverse, immigration-based society, Israel's media landscape reflects its unique composition, with numerous sectoral and non-Hebrew news outlets catering to different linguistic, cultural, and religious communities. While these outlets promote pluralism and enable broader access to information, their specific targeting of distinct communities also risks reinforcing echo chambers, where similar ideas are repeatedly amplified, limiting exposure to diverse perspectives and fostering polarization.

Sectoral and non-Hebrew outlets serve specific audiences, including Haredi, religious Zionist, Arab society, and Russian-speaking communities. These outlets tailor their content to cultural and linguistic needs but frequently rely on syndicated news from mainstream media instead of producing original reporting.

Many of these outlets are weak and heavily reliant on commercial, political, and community support to sustain operations. They usually lack the resources and expertise to conduct investigative or critical journalism and are generally unable to independently support fact-checking or digital investigation efforts, leaving them ill-equipped to counter false information effectively.

2.3. Independent Nonprofit Journalist Outlets

Independent and nonprofit journalist outlets play a vital role in providing investigative, unbiased reporting, making them key actors in countering mis- and disinformation. These outlets prioritize social justice, human rights, and democratic

transparency, often addressing marginalized or overlooked topics such as feminist issues and issues related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Free from commercial or political pressures, they rely on crowdfunding and donations to maintain their independence.

Despite their important role in investigative journalism and countering misinformation, independent and non-commercial journalism outlets in Israel face significant limitations. They are few in number and struggle with financial and organizational challenges, relying heavily on public donations and philanthropic support without a sustainable economic model for long-term stability. Their reach and audience ratings remain relatively small, and some of these outlets are often associated with left-wing and liberal audiences, which can limit their appeal to and impact on broader population segments.

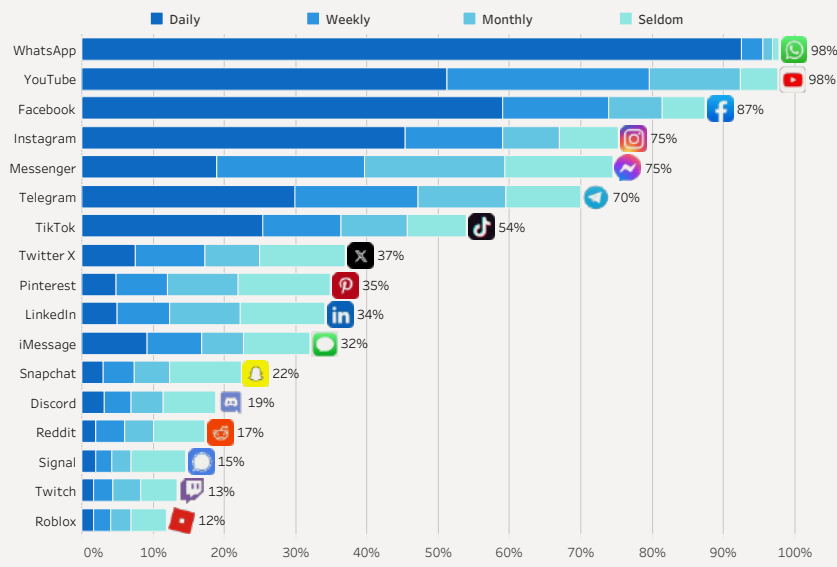
These constraints limit their capacity to recruit skilled personnel, invest in advanced technologies, and conduct in-depth investigative journalism. Additionally, while some outlets possess basic technical skills, they often lack the advanced expertise and resources needed to fully leverage modern digital tools, which undermines their ability to counter mis- and disinformation effectively and keep pace with the rapidly evolving media landscape.

3. Alternative Social Media Actors

Israel is among the leading countries in social media usage, with a significant portion of the population relying on platforms including Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Telegram for news and information.⁶⁶

66. ISOC-IL. ["Social Media and Digital Platform Use in Israel."](#)

AT WHAT FREQUENCY DO YOU USE EACH OF THE FOLLOWING SERVICES?



The rise of digital and social media platforms has significantly reshaped the landscape of information production, dissemination, and consumption, giving rise to independent alternative media actors. Alternative, independent media actors often operate outside traditional journalistic frameworks, blending personal commentary with reporting. Their direct connection to participatory audiences enables them to spread information rapidly, often surpassing traditional media in speed and accessibility. However, their unregulated nature, reliance on user-generated content, and lack of commitment to ethical or journalistic standards make them vulnerable to the spread of unverified information and disinformation. Indeed, a recent study found that six in ten social media content creators do not verify the accuracy of information before posting it.⁶⁷

3.1. Channels and Groups on Social Media and Messaging Apps

Social media channels and messaging app groups have become key sources of real-time updates on breaking news events. These channels often share images

67. Dan Milmo, "[Online influencers need 'urgent' fact-checking training, warns UNESCO](#)", *The Guardian*, November 26, 2024.

and videos they capture in the field, typically without detailed context or verification. Their unregulated nature and lack of professional journalistic training, and the competition to report first contribute to the rapid spread of unverified information, fueling disinformation and public confusion. Additionally, their motives are often opaque – ranging from opportunistic pursuit of exposure and financial gain to a desire to spread biased interpretations of events, possibly under the influence of foreign or domestic political activists or even governments.

Telegram has emerged as a particularly popular platform and source of information on current events in Israel, especially after the events of October 7th, rising from 54% usage in early 2023 to 70% in early 2024. Notable Telegram "pseudo-news" channels include "News from the Field," "Israel News on Telegram," and "Abu-Ali Express." These channels have hundreds and thousands of followers and are run by private individuals working independently and earning revenue from advertisements published on their channels. Many operators prefer to maintain anonymity, avoid public disclosure of their identities, and refuse to be interviewed.

It is important to note that such channels and groups do not necessarily operate from Israel or in Hebrew but may gain popularity among Israelis in other countries, particularly those with limited proficiency in Hebrew or low media literacy. Furthermore, news content on Telegram is brief, accessible, and often superficial, making it particularly appealing to individuals less engaged with traditional news sources. In the Arab community, Facebook and especially TikTok have become increasingly popular alternative sources of news updates for certain groups.

3.2. Individual Media Activists

Media activists are individuals who leverage digital platforms to advocate for specific causes and beliefs. While they often adhere to some journalistic practices, they are not affiliated with any formal news outlet and operate independently. Independent media activists are driven by creating and disseminating news on topics they consider significant, often identified with certain social movements or areas of interest. In Israel, notable figures include Or-ly Barlev, renowned for her independent, publicly funded coverage of political and social issues, focusing on anti-corruption and social justice, and Tomer Avital, an advocate for governmental transparency and accountability.

3.3. "Newsfluencers"

Newsfluencers — an emerging category of alternative media actors – are platform-based creators who merge social media creator practices with news production, blending personal commentary with reporting.⁶⁸ Figures such as Daniel Amram have gained substantial influence in Israel, amassing large social media followings and positioning themselves as legitimate, alternative sources of information. Newsfluencers differ from independent media activists in their primary motives and focus: while independent media activists often pursue a clear social or political agenda, newsfluencers are primarily driven by self-promotion, opportunism, a desire for exposure and engagement, and the financial benefits associated with high visibility.

4. Israeli Startups and Companies

The rise of mis- and disinformation has spurred the emergence of private tech companies and startups dedicated to developing solutions to counter the problem. Leveraging their technological expertise and innovative capabilities alongside growing investments in the sector, these companies play a critical role in combating the spread of false information. They employ a variety of tools, from digital forensics to detect synthetic content and advanced AI for fact-checking and content moderation to algorithms designed to identify and flag false information.

Building on Israel's reputation as a global technology hub, a growing number of firms leverage Israel's advanced expertise in artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and digital innovation to develop tools that address the proliferation of false information. These companies are also active players in global collaborations, providing solutions to international organizations, governments, and social media platforms. Despite these advances, as private entities, they often prioritize commercial applications of their technologies over targeted disinformation solutions. Additionally, the unstable political and security situation in Israel in recent years has negatively impacted investment in Israeli tech companies, prompting some to relocate operations abroad and weakening their local capacity.

68. Hurcombe, E. (2024). [Conceptualising the "Newsfluencer" : Intersecting Trajectories in Online Content Creation and Platformised Journalism](#). *Digital Journalism*, 1–12.

V. Towards Countering Disinformation in Israel

KEY INTERVENTION GOALS

The combination of extensive exposure to unverified online information, poor media and digital literacy, weak information safeguards, significant societal divides, and a lack of government strategy to confront the issue makes Israeli society highly vulnerable to the harmful effects of false information. These vulnerabilities, coupled with domestic and regional political and security instability, create fertile ground for local and foreign actors to exploit societal divisions, spread false narratives, and undermine trust in democratic institutions.

However, the complex situation in Israel also presents opportunities. For example, Israel has a strong ecosystem of innovation and technology that may be leveraged to develop advanced tools for combating misinformation and to support the efforts of independent media and civil society. Additionally, its vibrant civil society and academic institutions provide a foundation for fostering collaboration and promoting research to address the issue. Israel's highly engaged public and widespread internet connectivity also offers significant potential for implementing media literacy programs and awareness campaigns to build resilience against misinformation.

MEDIA LITERACY AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

Promoting media literacy and public awareness is crucial for equipping all segments of society with the skills and knowledge to critically evaluate online information. Both formal and informal education initiatives should be developed, integrating media literacy into school curricula and creating targeted programs for vulnerable communities such as Haredi, Arab-speaking, Russian-speaking, and senior populations. Public awareness campaigns should be tailored to different communities, ensuring that messages about misinformation risks and responsible content consumption resonate with each group. Digital engagement strategies, including interactive tools, gamified learning, and partnerships with online creators, should be leveraged to make media literacy education and awareness campaigns more accessible and impactful.

PUBLIC TRUST IN RELIABLE INFORMATION SOURCES

Raising awareness and building public trust in reliable sources is essential to counteract the influence of misinformation. Public awareness campaigns should be tailored to different communities, ensuring that messages about misinformation risks and responsible content consumption resonate with each group. Transparency in journalism and media practices should be prioritized to rebuild confidence in professional news outlets, while interactions between enforcement authorities and marginalized communities should be improved to foster greater trust in institutions.

AVAILABILITY OF VERIFIED INFORMATION

Ensuring the availability and accessibility of verified and reliable information is essential to reducing susceptibility to false information, especially among vulnerable groups. This includes expanding multilingual access to government services and public information, as well as strengthening fact-checking initiatives tailored to different communities, such as dedicated Arabic-language fact-checking platforms and culturally relevant fact-checking for the Haredi sector.

POLICY AND REGULATION

Developing and enforcing a national strategy on information integrity is essential for creating a coherent and balanced regulatory framework. Responsibilities among authorities must be clearly defined to avoid fragmented efforts, while regulatory measures should ensure platform accountability, transparency in algorithmic content moderation, and robust oversight mechanisms to prevent the monetization of disinformation. These regulations must be designed carefully to uphold democratic values and freedom of speech while effectively countering false information.

FACT-CHECKING ECOSYSTEM

Strengthening fact-checking capacity is critical to verifying and debunking false information in real time. Fact-checking organizations should be expanded and diversified to reflect Israel's political, ideological, cultural, and linguistic landscape. Journalists and media professionals should receive technical training in verification, digital forensics, and investigative journalism to enhance their ability to counter disinformation. Fact-checking bodies should be financially and institutionally independent to maintain their credibility and neutrality.

FUNDING AND RESOURCES

Enhance funding and resources for initiatives aimed at countering mis- and disinformation, including those led by civil society organizations, independent media, and academia. Support should come from government, private sector, international sources and donors to strengthen fact-checking efforts, digital literacy programs, and public awareness initiatives. Funding mechanisms should ensure independence and transparency to prevent undue influence over fact-checking and media integrity efforts.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (R&D)

Investing in and promoting research and development is essential to staying ahead of emerging disinformation threats. Increased funding for academic research should focus on interdisciplinary fields such as social sciences, communication, and computer science to develop effective countermeasures. Establishing research centers and supporting the development of tools to identify and counter false information will enable continuous monitoring of disinformation trends, providing insights into Israeli audience behaviors and vulnerabilities. Incentivizing the development of technological solutions for misinformation detection, verification tools, and counter-disinformation strategies through hackathons, grants, and public-private partnerships will further drive the creation of practical, scalable solutions.

DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

Strengthening domestic and international collaboration is essential for aligning with global best practices and enhancing Israel's resilience to disinformation. Cross-sector partnerships between academia, media, tech companies, and civil society should be fostered to develop joint strategies for countering false information. Engaging with international fact-checking networks will help align Israel's information ecosystem with global standards, facilitate knowledge exchange, and contribute to broader efforts in combating disinformation.

MEDIA LITERACY AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

Promote formal and informal education initiatives to enhance media literacy, particularly for vulnerable groups, while raising awareness of misinformation risks and the importance of credible sources.

TRUST IN RELIABLE SOURCES

Rebuild confidence in credible sources through transparency, responsible journalism, and stronger engagement with diverse communities and institutions.

AVAILABILITY OF VERIFIED INFORMATION

Ensure the availability and accessibility of verified information by expanding multilingual access to government services and public information and strengthening community-specific fact-checking initiatives.

POLICY AND REGULATION

Develop a national strategy to enhance information integrity, define responsibilities, and ensure balanced regulation.

FACT-CHECKING ECOSYSTEM

Enhance fact-checking efforts and capabilities, strengthen journalists' verification skills, and support fact-checking initiatives, including outreach to minority communities.

FUNDING AND RESOURCES

Enhance funding and resources for initiatives countering mis- and disinformation through government, private, and international support.

R&D

Increase funding for misinformation research and support the development of solutions to identify and counter false information.

DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

Leverage knowledge sharing, adopt global standards, and strengthen Israel's information ecosystem through coordinated efforts, including outreach to minority communities.



RECOMMENDATIONS BY STAKEHOLDER

Countering disinformation in Israel requires a comprehensive, multi-stakeholder approach, ensuring that efforts across government, civil society, academia, media outlets, technology companies, and other key actors are coordinated and mutually reinforcing. The following section outlines key recommendations tailored to each stakeholder group.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STATE ACTORS

- **Develop Robust Policies and Regulations:** Establish and enforce regulatory frameworks that promote platform accountability and transparency, combat the spread of false information, and foster a transparent online ecosystem.
- **Clearly Define Responsibilities Among Authorities:** Clearly allocate responsibility among relevant authorities and entities tasked with addressing the problem of false and harmful content. A clear division of labor is crucial for avoiding fragmented efforts, ensuring accountability, and helping the public understand which authorities to turn to when encountering online harm.
- **Engage with Digital Platforms:** Use both regulatory and cooperative approaches to incentivize digital platforms to combat misinformation by improving transparency in algorithmic processes, promoting fact-checking tools, and developing joint strategies to identify and mitigate harmful content. Partnerships with these platforms should also support public education initiatives that enhance digital literacy and critical evaluation of online information.
- **Enhance Policymaker Awareness:** Improve policymakers' understanding of misinformation risks and societal impacts by providing targeted training, research-based insights, and regular updates on emerging trends and threats.

- **Promote Public Media Literacy and Education:** Launch public education campaigns to promote media literacy, critical thinking, and responsible information consumption habits. These efforts should include embedding media literacy programs within the formal education system from a young age to ensure long-term impact. Integrating these skills into school curricula will empower future generations to navigate the digital information landscape effectively and build societal resilience against misinformation.
- **Enhance Access to Verified and Inclusive Information:** Increase the availability of reliable government information and public services to ensure accessibility by groups with lower digital literacy and non-Hebrew-speaking minorities, particularly the Arab community. This includes expanding multilingual resources and improving accessibility on official platforms, and offering accessible mechanisms for reporting online harms. Providing verified and trustworthy information in an inclusive manner is essential for bridging information gaps and strengthening public resilience against misinformation.
- **Invest in Research and Capacity Building:** Increase funding for civil society organizations, academic institutions, media outlets, and technology companies dedicated to studying misinformation, developing counter-strategies, and implementing practical solutions. Government efforts should focus on fostering an innovation-friendly ecosystem through R&D incentives, infrastructure development, and regulatory clarity.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

- **Tailored Media Literacy and Awareness Programs:** CSOs should develop and implement targeted media literacy and awareness programs that address the specific needs of different communities in Israeli society, ensuring that all groups have the tools to navigate online information responsibly, critically evaluate sources, and counter false information:
- **Haredi Community:** Programs should respect religious sensitivities while equipping individuals with critical thinking and digital literacy

skills to assess and verify online information. Content should be tailored to community-approved media channels and delivered in culturally appropriate formats.

- **Arab-Speaking Population:** Programs should be delivered in Arabic and account for cultural and linguistic barriers that impact information access. Initiatives should focus on educating the public on false information risks and responsible content consumption, and imparting the skills to identify and counter misinformation.
- **Russian-Speaking Community:** Programs should provide tools to critically evaluate information and recognize manipulative content and foreign propaganda tactics. Media literacy efforts should specifically target adults, who are more vulnerable to disinformation due to language barriers and more frequent consumption of foreign media. These initiatives should also enhance access to reliable sources in Russian.
- **Senior Citizens:** Awareness-raising campaigns should be accessible and engaging, educating older adults on the risks of misinformation and online scams while promoting responsible media consumption. Campaigns should include practical tips on verifying sources and identifying deceptive content. Programs should be customized to technological familiarity, ensuring that seniors can confidently engage with online content without falling prey to misinformation.
- **Young Adults:** Given their high social media engagement, awareness efforts should focus on increasing understanding of the risks and harms of mis- and disinformation, particularly in fast-paced social media environments. Campaigns should emphasize responsible content consumption, verification before sharing, and the role of influencers in spreading false narratives. Media literacy programs should equip young adults with critical assessment skills through interactive tools such as educational video games, digital simulations, and short-form content.

- **Empower and Diversify the Landscape of Fact-Checking Initiatives in Israel:** Given Israel's diverse political, ideological, cultural, and linguistic landscape, fact-checking initiatives must be expanded and diversified to ensure broad accessibility and credibility across different communities. Efforts should avoid adopting a centralized, one-size-fits-all approach and instead should cultivate a pluralistic fact-checking ecosystem that incorporates varied funding sources, methodologies, and actors. A key priority is the establishment of dedicated Arabic-language fact-checking platforms. Likewise, tailored fact-checking initiatives for the Haredi community should be developed, ensuring that content aligns with community values and is disseminated effectively through sectoral media and trusted community leaders. Promoting collaboration among local media, religious leaders, and fact-checking organizations will help enhance the legitimacy and reach of these efforts, making them more effective and widely accepted.
- **Capacity Building:** To effectively raise public awareness and foster community engagement, CSOs need a strong operational foundation that enables them to run sustained and impactful media literacy campaigns. Strengthening their institutional capacity, funding, and infrastructure will allow them to develop targeted initiatives that equip the public with critical evaluation skills and tools to recognize and respond to misinformation and disinformation in real time, especially during crises.
- **Enhanced Expertise:** To effectively counter online false information, CSOs require specialized knowledge and technical capabilities, particularly in advanced digital investigation and fact-checking. Training programs are therefore crucial to equipping them with practical tools and methodologies for real-time responses, especially during crises.
- **Strengthen Domestic Collaboration:** To inform effective initiatives involving the public, CSOs need access to research, fact-checking expertise, and technological advancements. Strengthening cooperation with academia, media outlets, and tech companies will ensure that CSOs have the necessary understanding and tools to develop and execute evidence-based strategies for countering false information in Israel.

- **Encourage International Collaboration:** Fostering partnerships with international organizations experienced in disinformation countermeasures, such as the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN), will provide Israeli CSOs with access to best practices and knowledge of emerging trends related to false information. Additionally, such engagement will strengthen their legitimacy and reputation both locally and internationally.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACADEMIA

- **Increase Research Funding:** Increase investment in academic research to support studies on disinformation, with a focus on practical applications, underexplored topics, and marginalized populations within Israeli society, particularly the ultra-Orthodox, Arab, and Russian-speaking communities.
- **Establish Dedicated Units or Programs for Studying Misinformation:** Develop specialized academic units or programs dedicated to studying information integrity and media literacy. These initiatives should encompass interdisciplinary approaches, including social sciences, communication, computer science, and behavioral studies. Such units would also serve as hubs for collaboration with CSOs, media outlets, and tech companies, advancing research on information integrity and creating practical solutions tailored to the Israeli context. Additionally, they can play a key role in training the next generation of experts in media and information literacy.
- **Leverage the Israeli Ecosystem Through Collaboration:** Harness the strengths of Israel's dynamic ecosystem by encouraging partnerships between academic institutions, CSOs, and tech companies. Such collaborations can be facilitated through joint research projects, co-development of technological tools for detecting and countering disinformation, and shared initiatives to promote media literacy and public awareness.
- **Expand International Collaboration:** Promote global partnerships to share expertise, tools, and methodologies, ensuring Israeli research aligns with and benefits from international advancements in the field.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEWS AND MEDIA OUTLETS

- **Awareness of Mis- and Disinformation Risks to Journalistic Work:** Media outlets, especially smaller and sectoral ones, often lack the incentive, awareness, or recognition of their role in countering mis- and disinformation. It is essential that they understand how online false information operates and recognize the threats it poses to their ability to perform their work, uphold professional standards, and maintain public trust. Strengthening this awareness is also crucial for enhancing their motivation to take action.
- **Information Verification and Fact-Checking Capacity Building:** Media outlets require structured frameworks, resources, and expertise to verify information swiftly, particularly during crises. This includes establishing in-house fact-checking and research units, adopting digital investigative tools, and developing standardized procedures to monitor and counter disinformation. Tailored training programs are also essential to equip journalists with advanced verification, digital forensics, and investigative skills, ensuring they can effectively assess and debunk false information. Special attention should be given to smaller, independent outlets that often lack the technical expertise and financial resources to conduct thorough fact-checking. Unlike well-established mainstream media outlets, independent journalism struggles with financial instability, often relying on donations and limited funding. Consistent financial backing is thus essential to stabilize their long-term operations.
- **Support Sectoral and Non-Hebrew Journalism:** Sectoral, multilingual, and non-Hebrew outlets serving communities such as Haredi Jews and Russian- or Arabic-speaking populations require the capacity to create accurate, culturally relevant content and to tackle mis- and disinformation. Strengthening their ability to do so is crucial for improving their journalistic standards and fostering trust in the media within these communities.
- **Build Public Trust:** Transparency initiatives, such as open reporting processes and accountability measures, are needed to rebuild public trust in media. Demonstrating credibility through accurate, ethical, and transparent journalism can help restore faith in professional news outlets. Additionally,

providing balanced coverage that includes counter-arguments to their main themes can help media organizations appear more fair and impartial, further enhancing their legitimacy and credibility in the eyes of the public.

- **Diversify the Media Landscape:** Ensuring diverse representation and amplification of the voices of minority groups is essential for fostering an inclusive media environment. Expanding coverage of underrepresented communities, increasing newsroom diversity, and supporting independent media outlets that cater to different linguistic and cultural groups will help make media more reflective of society and will also increase trust in media among these communities. Diversification should also include adapting traditional media to younger audiences by employing youth-oriented strategies that align with digital consumption habits. This includes leveraging social media, video platforms, and collaborations with influencers and online creators to create engaging, accessible, and interactive content.
- **Collaboration Opportunities:** Building partnerships among independent media outlets and with international organizations is particularly important in countering problems such as mis- and disinformation, given their transborder and pervasive nature. These collaborations can provide access to shared resources, expertise, and advanced tools, enabling a more coordinated and effective response.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ISRAELI STARTUPS AND COMPANIES

- **Encourage Tech Solutions to Counter Online False Information:** Promote the development of technological tools to detect, flag, and mitigate false information online, focusing on solutions tailored to Israel's unique linguistic and cultural diversity.
- **Strengthen Collaboration Initiatives:** Incentivize domestic innovation by supporting grants, hackathons, and public-private partnerships with academia, civil society, and international companies. These collaborations can enhance the effectiveness, scalability, and impact of technology-based solutions tailored to counter online false information within the Israeli context.

- **Balance Commercial and Ethical Considerations:** Tech companies should be encouraged to balance commercial interests with the development of effective and ethical solutions that address the challenges of mis- and disinformation while safeguarding free expression and public trust. This can be done, for example, by aligning with international standards such as the EU Code of Practice on Disinformation, which aims to create industry standards to combat false information through transparency, accountability, and content integrity. Additionally, participation in high-profile national and international initiatives can offer reputational benefits, industry recognition, and expanded collaboration opportunities, making ethical compliance a strategic advantage rather than a commercial burden.

VI. Appendix

Key Actors in The Israeli Information Ecosystem

1. Institutions and Authorities

1.1. State Actors

1.1.1. The Legislative Branch: Lawmakers and Parliamentary Committees

The Science and Technology Committee: Responsible for advancing legislation and policies related to science, technology, and innovation. It addresses issues such as policy on civilian research and development (R&D), advanced technologies, environmental R&D, and scientific research. It oversees the National Council of R&D, research foundations, and chief scientists in government offices. In 2023, the Subcommittee on AI and Advanced Technologies was established to address the civilian aspects of AI, including the spread of disinformation, and to advance Israel's leadership in the field.

The Constitution, Law, and Justice Committee: Established to oversee matters related to constitutional law, civil rights, and justice, the committee is responsible for proposing and reviewing laws on issues including constitutional amendments, human rights, criminal and civil law, and judicial reforms.

The Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee: Oversees matters related to Israel's national security, foreign policy, and defense infrastructure. This committee develops legislation and policy involving the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), intelligence agencies, and national security issues. It shapes Israel's defense and foreign affairs strategies, addressing military budgets, diplomatic relations, and responses to security threats. The committee's subcommittees include the Subcommittee for the Examination of Home-Front Readiness and the Subcommittee for Foreign Policy and Public Diplomacy. Former subcommittees included the Subcommittee for Cyber Defense, which focused on countering cyber threats and maintaining data protection.

The Central Elections Committee: The official body responsible for overseeing and managing Israel's parliamentary elections. Its primary tasks include ensuring the fairness and integrity of the electoral process, supervising vote counting, and addressing any electoral violations. The committee is chaired by a Supreme Court Justice and consists of representatives from various political parties. It plays a critical role in safeguarding Israel's democratic process by maintaining transparency, addressing disputes or challenges related to elections, and actively combating election-related disinformation through various means, including digital campaigns.

1.1.2. Government Ministries and Regulators

Ministry of Justice: Oversees the Israeli judicial system and is responsible for developing and enforcing laws to prevent the spread of false information while protecting human rights. The Ministry also provides legal counsel to government entities.

Ministry of National Security: Israel's main governmental body for law enforcement, countering crime, and ensuring public safety and order. It oversees several agencies, including the Israel Police and the National Headquarters for the Protection of Children on the Internet.

Ministry of Education: Addresses false information primarily through educational programs that promote media literacy and awareness of the risks associated with disinformation, aiming to foster resilience against its influence. However, current efforts remain sporadic and inadequate.

National Cyber Directorate: Established in 2015, the directorate is entrusted with protecting Israel's cyberspace from cyber threats and advancing its capacity in this field. The directorate warns against disinformation and foreign influences and issues public guidelines to mitigate these risks. It includes the National Cyber Event Management Center (CERT) for real-time cybersecurity support and operates emergency line 119, which citizens use to report incidents. Additionally, it develops strategies and technical tools to combat fake news and disinformation.

Ministry of Communications: Responsible for setting national communication policy, developing infrastructure, and providing regulatory oversight of the

telecommunications industry. Key functions include licensing and supervising communication service providers, regulating service tariffs, and monitoring cable television services.

[The Second Authority for Television and Radio](#): The authority regulates and supervises commercial television and radio broadcasts throughout Israel. It exercises its authority by granting broadcast licenses, monitoring content standards, and enforcing compliance with ethical and legal requirements.

[Consumer Protection And Fair Trade Authority](#): A governmental body established under the Consumer Protection Law of 1981 to safeguard consumers from misleading practices, unfair trade, and deceptive advertising. It enforces laws and regulations against consumer deception, monitors financial sector practices, and holds platforms accountable for illegal ads targeting minors.⁶⁹

[Israel Competition Authority](#): An independent professional authority established in 1994 under the Antitrust Law to promote competition and protect the public from competition-related harms and to promote competition.

[The Privacy Protection Authority](#): An independent authority established in 2006 under the Privacy Protection Law to regulate personal digital information. Primarily focuses on safeguarding personal data and privacy but has also addressed issues related to disinformation technologies, such as guidelines on the use of Deepfake technologies, emphasizing their potential misuse for spreading disinformation and manipulating public opinion.⁷⁰

1.1.3. Law Enforcement and National Security Agencies

[The Office of the State Attorney](#): Oversees legal prosecution and represents the state in civil and criminal cases. Operating under the Ministry of Justice, the State Attorney plays a key role in shaping legal policy and ensuring the rule of law. The

69. Report of the State Comptroller of Israel. [Consumer Protection Issues](#) (Ministry of Economy and Industry, 2022).

70. Israel Privacy Protection Authority. [Privacy and Data Protection in Deepfake Technology](#) (2022). [Hebrew].

office has a Cyber Unit that is responsible for combating cybercrime and cyber terrorism. It handles criminal cases involving internet offenses, works on the removal of illegal online content, and provides professional guidance to all State Attorney's Office units on matters related to wiretapping and digital evidence.

[Israel Police](#): Israel's sole civilian law enforcement agency, responsible for crime fighting, traffic control, public safety, and counter-terrorism. It also includes a cyber department focused on information security and countering computer and Internet crime.

[IDF \(Israel Defense Forces\)](#): Israel's primary military organization responsible for national defense, including defense against information warfare and cyber threats. The IDF maintains specialized units dedicated to monitoring, identifying, and countering disinformation campaigns that potentially threaten national security. Through its Military Intelligence Directorate and specialized cyber units, it develops capabilities to detect and respond to coordinated foreign influence operations and disinformation efforts targeting Israel's security interests. The IDF Spokesperson's Unit actively works to counter false narratives about military operations and security matters.

[Shin Bet \(The General Security Service\)](#): The General Security Service Law of 2002 entrusts the Shin Bet with safeguarding the state's security, democratic order, and institutional integrity while promoting essential national security interests. This responsibility includes protecting against foreign influence and disinformation efforts that potentially undermine democracy and national security.

1.2. Civil Society Organizations

1.2.1. Fact-Checking and Grassroot Initiatives

[FakeReporter](#): Founded in 2020 as a nonprofit association and a public-participation research initiative that uses the wisdom of the crowd, researchers, and network experts to combat malicious online activity, including inauthentic campaigns, incitement to violence, hate speech, conspiracies, and fake news.

[Bodkim](#): A civil fact-checking initiative established in 2022 to improve the accuracy of political discourse in the media and on social networks by examining the accuracy and truthfulness of statements by politicians and journalists.

ActiveInfo: Founded in 2019 by a group of 3-5 anonymous volunteers who use OSINT techniques to fight disinformation, combat online hate, incitement, and real-world violence, and expose domestic and foreign coordinated inauthentic campaigns.

[Ma'at](#): A nonprofit organization specializing in web investigations and OSINT technologies to assist victims of sextortion and non-consensual image abuse to obtain information about their offender.

[The Whistle \(Ha-mashrokit\)](#): An independent fact-checking unit within Globes, established in 2019. It is the only body in Israel to receive the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN) certification.

1.2.2. Policy, Research, and Advocacy

[The Israel Democracy Institute \(IDI\)](#): Established in 1991 as an independent research center and nonpartisan think tank. The IDI supplies Israeli decision-makers and civil services with rigorous policy research on various social issues to strengthen democratic governance and address social and political challenges in Israel.

[Israel Internet Association \(ISOC-IL\)](#): Established in 1994, ISOC-IL is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting open, safe, and accessible Internet use in Israel. It operates the .il domain registry, advocates for digital rights, and works to enhance public awareness of online safety and digital literacy. Through research, education, and policy initiatives, ISOC-IL plays a key role in shaping Israel's internet ecosystem and advancing its digital infrastructure.

[Israel Tech Policy Institute \(ITPI\)](#): Founded in 2018, the Israeli office of the Future of Privacy Forum advances principled data practices supporting emerging technologies through research and expert forums involving stakeholders from industry, academia, government, and civil society.

[TACHLIT Institute for Israeli Public Policy](#): Founded in 2021 as a nonprofit and nonpartisan organization for policy research for decision-makers in areas of governance, law, public affairs, and national security.

[The Institute for National Security Studies \(INSS\)](#): Founded in 1977 and restructured in 2006 as an independent Israeli research institute specializing in national security, defense strategy, and foreign policy. It offers in-depth analysis and policy recommendations on Israel's security challenges, integrating academic research with practical insights from experienced professionals and former military leaders.

[Israel Public Policy Institute \(IPPI\)](#): An independent think-and-do tank and multi-stakeholder dialogue platform operating at the intersection of technology, society, and the environment. It was founded by a group of policy professionals to create international bridges between public policy leaders from Israel, Europe, and the US to advance sustainable societal transformation in the 21st century, including tackling disinformation. It collaborates closely with parliaments, government ministries, and NGOs, and it supports young professionals in their fields of interest.

[The Association for Civil Rights Israel \(ACRI\)](#): Founded in 1972, ACRI is Israel's oldest and most influential civil and human rights organization, advocating across a broad spectrum of rights, including minority rights, freedom of speech, and the public's right to know. ACRI actively initiates and promotes legislative proposals, files petitions to the High Court of Justice, conducts workshops for educators, and publishes reports to raise awareness and drive systemic change.

[The Freedom of Information Movement in Israel](#): Founded in 2004 by leading journalists and lawyers to implement the Freedom of Information Law. The movement works to ensure that public institutions provide timely and accurate information to citizens, empowering them to make informed decisions and fostering trust in democratic processes. Through legal advocacy, public campaigns, and educational initiatives, the movement challenges practices that obstruct access to vital information.

[Zulat](#): Zulat Institute for Equality and Human Rights is an Israeli nonprofit research institute founded in 2019. The organization aims to promote left-liberal policies,

focusing on human rights, civil rights, and equality in Israeli society. Zulat engages in research, lobbying, and information campaigns targeting decision-makers in the Israeli government and Knesset. Its work encompasses issues such as social equality, gender equality, media freedom, and the human rights of Palestinians in the West Bank.

[Il'am](#): The Arab Center for Media Freedom, Development, and Research is a nonprofit organization founded in 2000 to empower Palestinian society in Israel through media freedom, human rights advocacy, and capacity building. Based in Nazareth, the organization conducts research, provides training for Arab journalists, and promotes democratic values while addressing challenges such as biased media portrayals and social inequality.

[7Amleh](#): The Arab Center for Social Media Advancement is a nonprofit Palestinian organization dedicated to advocating for Palestinian digital rights, aiming to create a safe, fair, and free digital space. It is located in Haifa. The organization's work includes research and monitoring of digital rights violations, capacity building through training in digital security and online campaigning, and local and international advocacy efforts. In recognition of their efforts, they received the 2020 Index on Censorship Award for Digital Activism.

1.2.3. Journalism Societies and Professional Associations

[Israel Press Council](#): Founded in 1963 as an independent body that promotes high standards of journalism, ensuring fairness, accuracy, and accountability in the Israeli press. It protects freedom of the press and public access to reliable information and safeguards against unethical journalism. The council's volunteer members are experts in media and ethics.

[The Union of Journalists in Israel](#): Founded in 2012, the Union of Journalists in Israel is a labor union representing thousands of journalists from major media outlets, united by a firm belief that journalists must unionize to establish decent working conditions and maintain journalistic ethics and standards. It protects freedom of the press, ethical standards, journalists' rights, and the status of journalists and journalism through legal actions and public campaigns. The union also organizes events and seminars to enhance professional skills.

1.3. Academia

Cyber Research Centers in Israeli Universities:

[Federmann Cyber Security Research Center](#) at the Hebrew University
[ICRC - Blavatnik Interdisciplinary Cyber Research Center](#) at Tel Aviv University
[Meir Shamgar Center for Digital Law and Innovation](#) at Tel Aviv University
[Samuel Neaman Institute for National Policy Research](#) at the Technion

Tech Policy and Digital Rights Clinics in Israeli Universities and Colleges:

[Clinic on Human Rights in Cyberspace](#) at the Hebrew University
[Law, Technology & Cyber Clinic](#) at the University of Haifa

2. Israeli News and Media Outlets

2.1. Public Service Broadcasting and News Outlets

Israel Public Broadcasting Corporation (KAN): Israel's national public broadcaster, established in 2007 to succeed the Israel Broadcasting Authority. It operates under the brand name "Kan", providing a wide array of content across television, radio, and digital platforms. Kan 11: The primary television channel, Kan 11, delivers extensive news and journalistic coverage in Hebrew. Kan Bet: The news radio station offers hourly news updates, talk shows, and live coverage of significant national and international news. Kan Digital: Kan's online platform produces and distributes content tailored for online platforms to reach younger audiences. Kan also operates Makan, an Arabic-language division offering news and cultural programming. Makan's services include Makan 33, a television channel, and Makan Radio, which provide content tailored to Arabic-speaking audiences.

The Knesset Channel: Initially broadcasting on Channel 33 starting in 1995, the channel officially became dedicated to Knesset proceedings following the enactment of the Knesset Broadcasting Law in 2004. The law mandates a dedicated channel to broadcast Knesset discussions to the public, promote civic awareness, and strengthen democratic values. The Knesset Channel is available online via digital terrestrial and open satellite broadcasts.

Galei Tzahal & Galgalatz: Prominent radio stations operated by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), which broadcast a diverse array of content, including news, current affairs, cultural and music programs, catering to both military personnel and the general public. Galatz is renowned for its comprehensive news coverage, featuring hourly news bulletins, in-depth reports, and interviews with key figures. Both stations maintain a robust digital presence through their shared website and mobile applications, offering live streaming, on-demand content, and podcasts.

2.2. Commercial Mainstream Media⁷¹

Channel 12 News: Israel's leading commercial television broadcaster, operating through Keshet Media Group and its digital outlets (Mako, N12). The channel's news division, operated by the Israel News Company, dominates television news ratings with a significant market share, and its news programming usually leads ratings across all time slots.

Channel 13 News (Reshet): A major commercial television broadcaster competing with Channel 14 for second place in viewership rankings. Its news division achieves an average viewership of 6.1%.

Channel 14: An Israeli television broadcaster known for its right-wing editorial stance and strong support for the government. Launched in 2014 as Channel 20 and later rebranded, it primarily focuses on news, commentary, and cultural programming. The channel follows the rules of religious observance and does not broadcast on Shabbat or Jewish holidays. It has gained significant viewership in recent years, frequently ranking second in news ratings after Channel 12. However, it has faced criticism for allegedly promoting right-wing populism and disseminating inaccurate information. Surveys have also shown a correlation between viewership of Channel 14 and increased belief in polarizing conspiracy theories.⁷²

71. Exposure and market share of mainstream media in this section are based on TGI surveys (2023 and 2024).

72. Persico, "[The Frequency of Watching Channel 14.](#)"

i24News: An international 24-hour news channel based in Israel, broadcasting in English, French, Arabic, and since 2023, also in Hebrew. It focuses on Middle Eastern affairs and provides global coverage of events, particularly from Israel.

Israel Hayom: Israel's most widely read print newspaper, launched in 2007 and distributed free of charge. Published in Hebrew with an English website, commanding 26.6% weekday readership (first half of 2024) and leading weekend readership at 26.7%.

Yedioth Ahronoth: A leading daily Hebrew newspaper established in 1939, holding the second-highest readership with 17.6% weekday exposure and 21.8% weekend readership (first half of 2024). It is the publisher of the Ynet news website in Hebrew and English and Calcalist, the leading business newspaper in Israel, with 8.1% readership. Despite a recent decline from 11.1%, it maintains its position as the most-read financial publication in Israel.

Maariv: Founded in 1948, Maariv is one of Israel's oldest daily newspapers and remains a popular newspaper despite significant financial challenges. In 2014, it was acquired by Israeli businessman Eli Azur, who owns several media outlets, including Walla! and The Jerusalem Post.

Haaretz & TheMarker: Established in 1919, Haaretz is Israel's oldest daily newspaper, known for its liberal editorial stance and high-quality investigative journalism. The publication is available in both Hebrew and English, with an online news website launched in 2013. By 2019, Haaretz's Hebrew newspaper had approximately 110,000 print subscribers and 24,000 online subscribers. As of late 2021, the newspaper's weekday readership was 6.1%. TheMarker, its business-focused publication, ranks second in Israel's financial newspapers, with a 5.9% readership, and it is recognized for its investigative reporting on economic concentration.

Globes: A Hebrew-language daily business newspaper focusing on financial and business news. Since 2019, it has operated The Whistle (Ha-Mashrokit), an independent fact-checking unit within Globes, and the only body in Israel to receive the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN) certification.

Walla!: Established in 1995 as a web content portal, it evolved into one of Israel's leading news outlets and content websites, ranked among the top 10 sites by traffic originating in Israel.

2.3. Regional Commercial News Media

Regional Radio Broadcasters: Independent radio stations licensed to broadcast in specific geographic areas. These stations provide localized content, including news, music, cultural programming, and community-focused discussions. These stations are funded primarily through advertisements and operate under the oversight of the Second Authority for Television and Radio. Such broadcasters include Eco 99FM, 90FM Radio, North Radio, South Radio, Haifa Radio, Jerusalem Radio, and Lev HaMedina Radio, as well as sectoral and non-Hebrew broadcasters described below.

Regional Press (Mekomonim): These are regional newspapers in Israel that primarily serve local communities by covering news, events, and issues specific to their regions and municipalities. They heavily rely on ads to fund their activity, mostly from local authorities and businesses. Many of them have transitioned to online platforms. Such local publications include Mynet, Kol Ha-Ir, Ashdod Net, HaZman HaYarok, HaMekomon, Zman Tel Aviv, Hadashot HaShavuA, Kan Darom, Modiin News, Kav LaMoshav, and Kol HaSharon.

2.4. Sectoral Commercial News Media

Haredi And Religious News Outlets

In the Haredi community, platforms, content, or devices are often referred to as "kosher" if they comply with the religious and cultural standards of the Haredi community, typically under rabbinical supervision. These media filter inappropriate content, block external links, and emphasize topics like Torah study and community news.

Print: HaModia: This Hebrew-language daily newspaper founded in 1950 has served as the main Haredi daily for decades and is now primarily associated with the Gur Hasidic group and Agudat Yisrael political party. It also publishes English-language editions in several countries. Yated Ne'eman: a daily newspaper established in 1985, representing the Lithuanian (Litvak) non-Hasidic Haredi community, created in response to increasing Hasidic influence over HaModia. It is identified with the Degel HaTorah political party. HaMevaser: a daily newspaper launched in 2009 and

associated with the Agudat Yisrael political party, with a reported distribution of around 65,000 copies.

Digital: Kikar HaShabbat is a leading Haredi news and content website and was established in 2009. It also operates a YouTube channel. Behadrei Haredim is a news and content website established in 2002. As one of the first online platforms tailored to the Haredi community, it provides news, opinion pieces, and forums on topics relevant to the Haredi lifestyle. JDN (Jewish Daily News) group is one of the largest media groups in the Haredi sector. The group's platforms include JDN News, the digital newspaper Shacharit, the rabbinically approved news hotline Meda Lechol, and other services such as the Beit Shel HaNadlan real estate magazine, Kehillot magazine, and Geula FM radio. HaMehadash is a Haredi news website established in 2018 that offers culturally sensitive content. In 2021, it launched a mobile app.

Regional Radio Broadcasters: Kol Chai is a popular radio station established in 1996, targeting mainly Haredi audiences but also the Religious Zionist sector. It broadcasts halacha (Jewish law) lessons and weekly Torah portions; Kol BaRama is another popular Haredi radio station established in 2009. The station is closely identified with the Sephardi political party-Shas.

Haredi News Hotlines: With limited access to radios, televisions, or the internet, Haredim relies on news hotlines for breaking updates. These hotlines also offer rabbinic lectures, entertainment, business advice, and more. In Israel, dozens of prominent hotlines serve the Haredi community in Yiddish and Hebrew.

Dedicated WhatsApp and Telegram Groups: These groups have gained popularity in the Haredi community, as they provide direct updates without linking to websites or external sources, focusing instead on delivering relevant information in a "push" format.

Religious Zionist sector: Makor Rishon: Initially published as a weekly magazine before transitioning to a weekend edition, it has been owned by Israel Hayom since 2014. As of the first half of 2024, it has a reported readership of 4.5%. Arutz 7: a media network identified with the Religious Zionist sector, which publishes a weekly newspaper, B'Sheva, with the third-highest weekend circulation in the country. It also offers online news articles in Hebrew, English, and Russian. Srugim:

launched in 2010. Until 2016, it was part of Kikar HaShabbat group. The site offers content tailored to the Religious Zionist sector, including halachic rulings and consultations with rabbis. It operates a YouTube channel. Kipa is a website launched in 2002 featuring forums for questions on halacha and Jewish life.

2.5. Non-Hebrew News Outlets Operating in Israel

2.5.1. English

The Times of Israel: Founded in 2012, this English-language news website covers Israeli, Middle Eastern, and Jewish world news. It is also published in French, Arabic, and Persian. Since 2019, the website has operated a Hebrew version, called Zman Israel. It offers in-depth reporting and analysis of politics, culture, technology, and international affairs, appealing to a global audience. It is considered one of the most popular English-language websites on Israeli affairs.

The Jerusalem Post: The second-oldest newspaper in Israel, founded in 1925. It was originally established in English to inform British Mandate government officials in Israel about Zionism and provide information about Jews in the diaspora to the local population. Today, it is one of the most popular English-language newspapers and news websites in Israel.

Haaretz: The English version of the Haaretz website is one of the most influential Israeli media outlets internationally. In addition to translating materials from the Hebrew website, it has unique content covering a range of political standpoints and opinions.

+972 Magazine: Founded in 2010 by a group of Israeli and Palestinian journalists as an independent, activist nonprofit English-language magazine.

Israel National News (Channel 7, Arutz Sheva): The English website of this Israeli media network identifying with the Religious Zionist sector. It also operates an Internet radio station targeting primarily audiences in the US, Canada, and South Africa.

ILTV: Established in 2015, ILTV is an English-language media outlet based in Tel Aviv, offering news and insights about Israel to an international audience. The outlet also operates in Spanish, broadening its reach. As part of a collaboration with the Yedioth Achronoth team, ILTV's English content is featured on the Ynet English website.

English-versions of Hebrew Mainstream Media: Israel Hayom, Ynet, i24News, CTech (an English-language site related to 'Calcalist', focusing on news related to Israeli technology), Globes English.

2.5.2. Russian

Channel 9 (formerly Israel Plus): A television station in Israel that primarily broadcasts in Russian, aimed at over one million Russian-speaking veterans and new immigrants in Israel. Channel 9 plays a significant role in providing news and information to the Russian-speaking community in Israel, helping them stay connected to both local and international events.

Vesti: A prominent Russian-language daily newspaper in Israel, established in 1992 by Yedioth Achronoth Group. In 2017, it transitioned to a weekly format and, in December 2018, discontinued its print edition, currently focusing its presence through an online platform.

Novosti Nedeli: Founded in 1989, Novosti Nedeli is one of the oldest Russian-language weeklies in Israel, offering news and analysis pertinent to the Russian-speaking community.

Newsru.co.il: A popular Russian-language news site, the Israeli branch of the former Russian news site NEWSru.com, Newsru.co.il provides Russian-language news about Israel's domestic and international affairs, as well as world news.

Israel National News (Channel 7, Arutz Sheva): The Russian-language website of Channel 7.

Russia-based Media Outlets: Israeli citizens can access Russian TV channels through local cable networks, broadcasting satellite services, and the Internet. During the Russian-Ukraine war, Ukraine's ambassador and European communications ministers requested that Israel block these channels, citing concerns over the spread of Russian propaganda. However, Israel declined the request, opting not to take measures against Russian state media.⁷³

2.5.3. Arabic

Al-Arab Group: This private media group operates the popular news website Al-Arab and the weekly newspaper Kul al-Arab, which was established in 1987 and has a circulation of 38,000. It offers comprehensive coverage of local and regional news, catering to the Arab citizens of Israel.

Panet: A widely read Arabic-language news website in Israel, Panet offers comprehensive coverage of local and international news, entertainment, and cultural content.

Bokra: An online platform providing news, opinion pieces, and cultural articles, Bokra serves the Arab community with diverse content.

Arab48: An online news portal offering news, analyses, and opinion pieces on local and regional issues pertinent to the Arab community in Israel
Regional newspapers: Al-Ittihad; Panorama, As-Sinara.

Radio Al-Shams: Established in 2003, Radio Al-Shams is a prominent Arabic-language station in Israel, broadcasting from Nazareth. It is the most popular radio station among Arab Israelis. The station offers diverse programs, including news, cultural content, and music, catering to the Arab community's interests.

Radio Nas: Launched in early 2020, Radio Nas is an Arabic-language station broadcasting from Nazareth. The station offers quality content across current affairs, entertainment, sports, and the arts.

73. Itamar Eichner. "[Israel rejects Ukrainian ambassador's request to block Russian channels.](#)" *Ynet*, March 3, 2022 [Hebrew].

Foreign Channels: During the war following the October 7th events, Israel invoked the Prevention of Broadcasting Harmful to State Security Law (1982) for the first time. This law allows the government to restrict or block foreign broadcasts deemed a threat to national security, targeting media outlets suspected of incitement or supporting hostile entities. It was applied against Al Jazeera and Al-Mayadeen. However, the law's enforcement is limited to Israel's jurisdiction and Israeli broadcast suppliers, meaning these channels remain accessible via satellite and private antennas and also in areas under Palestinian Authority control.

2.6. Independent Nonprofit Journalist Outlets

[Shakuf](#): Founded in 2018 as an independent nonprofit media platform dedicated to investigative journalism free of commercial or political interests. It aims to provide unbiased, fact-based reporting on social issues, empowering the public to hold authorities accountable. To protect against the influence of foreign interests, Shakuf relies on crowdfunding from private individuals, called "publishers," who support the platform and participate in decision-making. Today, Shakuf encompasses a group of independent media outlets under its management.

[The Seventh Eye](#): Founded in 1996 as an independent, nonprofit media watchdog organization. Since 2008, The Seventh Eye has operated as an online magazine. It focuses on promoting transparency, ethics, and accountability in Israeli journalism. The platform provides in-depth analysis and critiques of media practices, aiming to improve the quality of public discourse and defend freedom of information. In 2020, The Seventh came under the management of Shakuf while maintaining its independence.

[Ha-Makom \(The Hottest Place in Hell\)](#): Founded in 2013 as an independent, nonprofit online magazine to promote investigative journalism and public-interest reporting. Ha-Makom provides in-depth analysis of social, political, and economic issues, often focusing on human rights, democracy, and social justice. In 2022, Ha-Makom came under the management of Shakuf while maintaining its independence. Its funding is based on crowdfunding from private individuals.

Local Call (Sikha Mekomit): Founded in 2014 as an independent nonprofit online magazine and the Hebrew-language sister site of +972 Magazine. It covers political, social, and human rights issues, particularly focusing on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Shomrim (The Center for Media and Democracy in Israel): Founded in 2019 as an independent, nonprofit investigative journalism organization. Its mission is to strengthen Israeli democracy by delivering trustworthy, fact-based reporting on critical social issues. Shomrim collaborates with various media platforms to publish its investigations and fosters a community of investigative journalists through training and partnerships with media outlets, academic institutions, and CSOs. The organization relies on donations to maintain its editorial independence and includes both in-house and freelance journalists.

[DemocratTV:](#) Founded in 2020 by the liberal movement "Darkenu" ("Our Path"), DemocratTV is an independent, nonprofit media platform that offers an alternative to mainstream media in Israel. It provides a space for underrepresented voices and focuses on issues related to governance, democracy, and transparency. The platform promotes liberal values, the rule of law, and social justice, aiming to strengthen democratic discourse. DemocratTV relies on viewer support and donations for its operations and its production of content that engages audiences on social and political matters.

[Zman Israel:](#) Launched in 2019 as the Hebrew edition of the English news website The Times of Israel. It provides a news feed-style platform featuring news articles, opinions, interviews, and investigative reports.

[Politically Koret:](#) A feminist news website launched in 2012, also active on social media, dedicated to promoting feminist perspectives and initiating public campaigns on gender-related topics. It is primarily funded through user donations. In 2022, it expanded its focus to include a feminist critique of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

[Under the Radar:](#) Established in 2021, Under the Radar is a youth-oriented initiative delivering news and content tailored for young audiences. Operating exclusively on social media, particularly Instagram, and hosting a podcast, it emphasizes concise texts, visual storytelling, and topics relevant to its demographic. The platform is entirely volunteer-run.

[Faraa Maai](#): An independent, nonpartisan, and non-commercial Arab media platform headed by Palestinian-Arab women. It provides a space for opinion writers, journalists, academics, and activists to contribute positively to public discourse by producing high-quality audiovisual and textual content on political, social, and cultural issues. The platform primarily serves the Arab citizens of Israel and extends its reach to Arabic speakers worldwide. Faraa Maai operates as a registered nonprofit, free from funding that could impose external agendas, relying instead on support from individuals and organizations that truly value independent journalism.

3. Alternative Social Media Actors

As of end 2024, the leading Telegram channels in Israel include:⁷⁴

- **News from the Field on Telegram (~567k)**: A channel that provides real-time updates on various incidents in Israel, including shootings, acts of violence, severe traffic accidents, and other significant events. The channel serves as an unofficial news desk, offering subscribers immediate access to on-the-ground reports. Its previous operator was a citizen who described the endeavor as something he did "for the soul," collaborating with self-appointed contributors who capture newsworthy content using their smartphones and a small team translating news from Arabic to Hebrew.
- **Abu-Ali Express (~520k)**: A channel allegedly run by a former IDF officer with extensive expertise in Arabic and Middle Eastern affairs. The channel provides Israelis with access to news from the Arab world by translating headlines, videos, posts, and articles, often adding personal commentary.
- **Daniel Amram Uncensored (~470k)**: A newsfluencer known for investigative reporting and doxing on social media, operating in both Israel and the US, where he sometimes reveals information subject to Israeli gag orders.
- **Israel News on Telegram (~354)**: A channel that provides real-time updates on news events in Israel, including reports on security, politics, society, and more.

74. Telemetrio. [Telegram Channels in Israel](#).

- **The Unapologetic Right-Wing of The Shadow (~329k):** A Hebrew-language channel managed by Israeli rapper and right-wing activist Yoav Eliasi, known by his stage name "The Shadow" . The channel shares content related to Israeli politics, security matters, and nationalist viewpoints, often featuring uncensored videos, images, and commentary reflecting right-wing perspectives.
- **Amit Segal (~307k):** A Telegram channel by a leading and popular Israeli journalist working as a political commentator on Channel 12 News.

4. Israeli Startups and Companies

[Cyabra](#) is an Israeli company focused on identifying and analyzing online disinformation, bot networks, and malicious activity on social media. Founded in 2018, the company uses advanced technology to examine digital conversations, helping organizations and governments detect threats, monitor crises, and better understand the spread of influence campaigns in the online space.

[XPOZ](#) is a platform designed to detect AI-generated threats and inauthentic user activity online. It identifies coordinated influence networks and tracks their geographic location and origin and their actions over time. XPOZ also offers tools to mitigate the impact of these threats, such as identifying key users in malicious networks and analyzing their activities.

[Scooper](#) is a platform that helps manage brand reputation online by providing real-time monitoring across social media and online media channels in 187 languages. It uses social listening to track brand mentions on over 150 million news sites, blogs, and forums, ensuring users stay updated and can protect their brand globally. Scooper's features include social media analytics, campaign tracking, and a custom dashboard for measuring reach, engagement, and sentiment. The platform also helps to identify influencers to amplify messages, monitor competitors, and allow clients to respond to issues instantly based on real-time insights.

[ActiveFence](#) is an Israeli company specializing in trust and safety solutions for online platforms. The company focuses on detecting and mitigating various forms

of online harm, including disinformation, child abuse, terrorism, hate speech, and fraud. ActiveFence combines intelligence research with AI-driven content detection and moderation services to help platforms with their trust and safety solutions and maintain compliance with global regulations. The company's solutions have been adopted by multiple industries, including social media, gaming, and e-commerce marketplaces.

[Vinesight](#) is a platform designed to detect and mitigate harmful online attacks in real time. Using AI technology, it scans social media posts, including fringe platforms, to identify potential threats before they go viral. Vinesight provides tools for identifying harmful narratives and includes a mitigation approach with counter-messaging, reporting, labeling, and fact-checking to prevent the spread of toxic attacks.

[Brinker](#) is a misinformation threat management platform that serves the public sector and major enterprises. It combats online harassment, from phishing to malicious narratives, using proprietary content analysis, AI-enabled detection, and automated OSINT investigations.

[MetekuAI](#) is a technology company that integrates AI with human expertise to address harmful and problematic online content on a large scale. The company provides tools for individuals and governments alike to identify and mitigate misleading or damaging information.