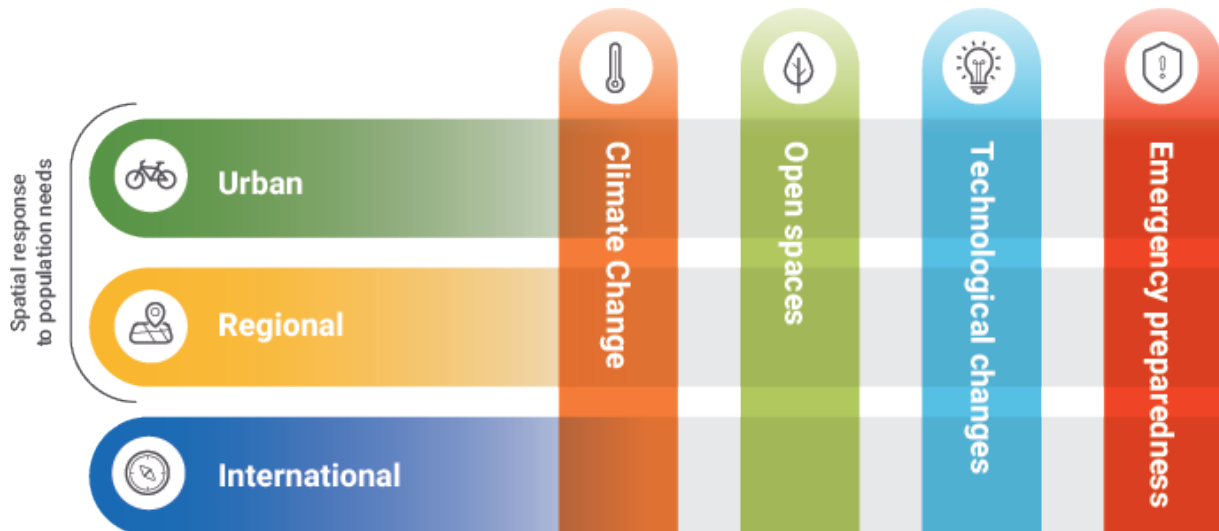


The Work Concept

INNSP's key strategic themes



The INNSP presents a key map which demonstrates its overall spatial concept. Thematic maps are included for some of the sections, as well as action items and policy recommendations to support implementation. Below is a summary of the main points for each section.

Executive Summary

Israel's National Spatial Strategic Plan (INSSP) defines the country's long-term, operative, planning vision. The INSSP is intended to address local and regional trends, such as Israel's rapid population growth and its tendency to concentrate development in the center of the country. Other challenges addressed in the INSSP are the need to protect Israel's natural resources and narrow socioeconomic gaps between and within different communities. Finally, the INSSP is framed around global trends including climate and technological changes, changes in lifestyles, and geopolitical processes.

The INSSP's preparation process lasted eighteen months between February 2023 and September 2024. The Plan was drafted by a professional team from the Israel Planning Administration, supported by stakeholder engagement, and expert consultation meetings, as well as engaging with the wider public throughout the work process.

The INSSP names seven objectives:

1. Guiding the development and supportive infrastructures in Israel to the urban environments and its four metropolitan areas, while prioritizing its northern and southern geographical peripheries. Development patterns will maintain local diversity and place-based uniqueness in both urban and rural environments. Proposing development principles for the urban environment and accelerating urban renewal processes while considering climate change adaptation.
2. Advancing regional planning as a tool to support stakeholder collaborations within areas and generating tailored responses to local needs.
3. Promoting resiliency and increasing opportunities for varied communities of all ages to narrow socioeconomic gaps.
4. Protecting resources and the functionality and continuity of open natural space, agricultural land, heritage landscape, and ecological systems, while considering climate adaptation.
5. Meeting infrastructure needs while maintaining functional land continuity and efficient land and resource use.
6. Reinforcing Israel's relative advantages by means of international cooperation in the area.

The INSSP consists of seven intertwined topics. Three of them represent different scales: urban environments, regional planning, and Israel within the international context. The remaining four topics relate to each of the three scales, and include: climate change adaptation, open spaces, technological changes, and emergency preparedness.

Israel within the International Context

- Israel and its neighboring countries face a range of spatial challenges – some are shared with neighboring countries (such as climate change threats in the Middle East), while others are unique to each country (such as Israel's population growth and density impacts).
- Adopting a long-term strategy for Israel and its neighboring countries could potentially support fruitful collaborations leveraging their relative advantages (such as the bilateral Abraham Accords), despite the current security conditions. Israel's strategic location on the geographical continuum between Asia, Africa and Europe holds additional opportunities.
- Early preparations can help Israel to exploit its regional advantages and ensure optimal implementation, once the conditions are right. For this purpose, the section identifies areas of opportunity. Planning principles are proposed to leverage these potential opportunities.

Open Space

- This section analyzes open space aspects via the different INSSP lens, including: the urban environment, regions, the natural environment, and other aspects related to Israel's international context. Open spaces are also examined in light of the INSSP's key themes, including climate change adaptation and technological changes.
- The importance of open spaces and the need for statutory protection of sensitive natural areas, rivers and ecological corridors are emphasized.
- The section illustrates the importance of efficient land use and the need to improve and promote sustainable development tools.
- The role of agricultural land in maintaining food security for a growing population and the need for expanding research on this subject are highlighted.
- The importance of considering open spaces in regional planning is elaborated.

Climate Change Adaptation

- Climate changes are shown to have extensive impacts on humans, infrastructure, and ecological systems on land and in sea (for example, in 2022 alone 60,000 Europeans died amid heatwaves).
- Similar to the rest of the world, Israel is experiencing climate changes, some are felt more extremely due to its geographical location. In particular, rising air temperatures are expected to have significant planning and geopolitical implications on Israel and its neighboring countries.
- Prevention is shown to be the most efficient strategy to address climate threats (for example, preventing development in close proximity to the sea or in areas prone to flooding).
- The Section focuses on four climate spatial trends: rising sea levels, reduction of precipitation averages and increased frequency of extreme events, desertification, and extreme heat. Each trend is analyzed and includes practical adaptation and mitigation steps.

Urban Environments

- Urban development is a strategic subject of utmost importance to Israel. Attractive urban environments promote resiliency, support innovation and economic opportunities, and could potentially provide a viable alternative to accommodate Israel's growing population. Other benefits entailed in urban living include greater access to opportunities, fostering local identity and sense of belonging, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and improving public health.
- The section proposes eight principles for good urban environments, including: connectivity, continuity and sustainable transportation, density and efficient land use, urban and street design, planning and housing for varied populations, and climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- The proposed urban development framework brought in this section allows for flexibility. It is based on the understanding that good urban development adapts to the local environment and its unique cultural and social characteristics: actual implementation then depends on local conditions and a range of other considerations. The section therefore does not intend to provide a strict, unified model for urban development. Rather, the eight principles are viewed as a compass for promoting good urban environments.
- Further steps are proposed to support implementation, such as: establishing an expert urban forum and a government urban task force; expanding the urban knowledge base; analyzing best practice examples, empowering local authorities to plan and operate good urban spaces, and developing assessment tools for urban environments.

Regional Planning

- The section presents Israel's division into 28 functional areas based on which regional plans will be developed in the near future. The proposed regional borders are fuzzy and somewhat flexible. Defining precise regional borders is required in future planning stages.
- The regional division relies on a methodology that focuses on the individual and their daily life. It aims to provide an optimal living environment, reduce commute time, and narrow social and economic gaps.
- A Regional Plan outline is presented, including accounts for future regional border adjustment, choice of key themes, stakeholder engagement, and expected components and outputs of the Regional Plan.
- The regions sustain connections to other respective regions and to their metropolitan cores. In this sense the purpose of the regional division is strengthening Israel's metropolitans rather than replacing them.
- The potential in using regional planning to strengthen the north and south of Israel is emphasized.
- Practical steps are proposed to promote regional planning implementation as well as a characterization for each region according to a pre-defined set of criteria.

Emergency Preparedness

- The most effective strategy for emergency preparedness is taking prevention acts or minimizing exposure to the risk. Preparation also includes boosting resilience and formulating guiding principles to ensure rapid and quality recovery.
- While the government has been preparing for disasters such as earthquakes and flooding, the events of October 7, 2023 highlighted the importance of a comprehensive emergency planning framework to minimize damage and promote a rapid recovery in times of emergency.
- The INSSP recommends promoting the following action items:
- Risk reduction and prevention towards foreseen risks (a basic level of certainty is required). The action items need to be promoted today to minimize future damage. For example, generating a national interactive and detailed risk map.
- Building resilience and other preparation tasks towards emergencies and crises. The action items should ideally be promoted today to improve future coping with unexpected events. For example: designating and training of organizational emergency teams, preparing a framework for special recovery-oriented planning teams, and initiating necessary emergency legislation.
- The section details the emergency preparedness action items and guiding principles for reducing risks, building resilience, and promoting effective recovery.

Technological Changes

- New technological developments will change living environments in Israel and globally in the coming decades.
- Technologies develop faster than planning systems. Planning systems must therefore adapt to become more flexible to foster innovative technologies. It is also important for planning systems to actively minimize the potential negative effects of such technological advancement.
- Due to the uncertainty that characterizes this subject and the rapid pace of change, the section focuses on the possible spatial technological impacts rather than on the technology in and of itself. The key spatial impacts are as follow:
- Enhanced virtual access to services and employment opportunities which could potentially strengthen Israel's geographical peripheries.
- Advanced transportation, decentralizing production, and utilization of virtual space to support efficient land use and density.
- Improved quality, precision, and speed of planning processes through reliance on digital and artificial intelligence tools.
- The section provides an analysis of the technological spatial impacts. It includes opportunities and implementation recommendations.
- The section proposes a mechanism to ensure regular preparation for planning responses to future trends considering that technologies are constantly changing.