**Between Solidarity and Silencing: Representations of *Unity* in Israeli Media and State Documents**

## **Scientific Abstract**

In recent years, and especially during moments of crisis, the theme of “unity” has become increasingly prominent in Israeli public discourse. The invocation of unity is not confined to the political arena but resonates across multiple spheres of communication and practice: it appears in news media, educational curricula, advertising campaigns, state-sponsored messaging, and even in everyday cultural imagery. Although “unity” is typically regarded as an inherently positive value, it suffers from considerable conceptual vagueness, and is frequently deployed as a catchword without precise definition. The appeal to unity becomes especially salient in moments of emergency and collective trauma—wars, terror attacks, or natural disasters—when public discourse emphasizes civic mobilization, social cohesion, and a shared sense of belonging as both coping mechanisms and national imperatives.

Since the outbreak of the *Iron Swords* War in October 2023, the rhetoric of “unity” has emerged as a dominant feature of Israeli public discourse. Yet appeals for unity have been neither uniform nor uncontested. On one side, political leaders, media outlets, and public campaigns have demanded that citizens “close ranks,” silence dissent, and prioritize cohesion in the name of collective survival. On the other, critical voices have stressed that genuine solidarity cannot be achieved without confronting underlying divisions and holding institutions accountable—arguing that exposing fractures is itself an essential part of the national conversation. This tension highlights the ambivalent character of unity discourse: simultaneously invoked as a rallying cry for resilience and as a mechanism for curtailing criticism. The complexity of these competing narratives underscores the need for a critical examination of the ways in which “unity” is constructed, by whom, and in what contexts.

The aim of this study is to analyze the various uses of the term “unity” in Israeli public discourse, by examining both journalistic articles and institutional documents- particularly those dealing with the newly-formed national “Unity Day.” The research focuses on two primary arenas of discourse: the mainstream press and official government documents. The main research questions are: (1) Who are the actors using the term “unity” in the Israeli press following the outbreak of the war, and in what contexts do they employ it? (2) How is the term “unity” defined and framed in the official documents of the state, with a focus on materials related to *Unity Day*? By addressing these questions, the study aims to deepen the understanding of unity discourse in the Israeli arena and to offer tools for the critical examination of public and institutional language during times of crisis.

## **Scientific Background**

## **The Concept of Unity and Its Expressions in Israeli Public Discourse**

In recent decades, “national unity” has become a recurrent theme in Israeli public discourse, particularly during times of national crisis. After the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995, commentators and political leaders increasingly invoked the language of achdut (unity) as a way to heal divisions and stabilize the nation. Yet, such calls for unity were not merely conciliatory; they also had political consequences. Waxman (2006) demonstrates that after Rabin’s death, appeals for national unity became a precondition for political legitimacy, framing dissent as potentially harmful to the nation. Arguably, this tension—between the necessity of unity for collective survival and its possible use as a political instrument—has shaped Israeli discourse ever since.

Unity is generally perceived as a positive ideal: it symbolizes cohesion, shared sacrifice, and resilience in the face of external threats.

ROOTS GO BACK TO כור היתוך melting pot

Bar-Tal (2013) identifies belief in unity as one of the core socio-psychological foundations of Israel’s conflict ethos. During crises, Israelis are socialized to close ranks against external dangers, often suspending ordinary disagreements. While this fosters solidarity and morale, it can also discourage legitimate criticism. Scholars note this duality in the aftermath of the October 7, 2023 Hamas attacks. Cohen (2024) shows how government leaders insisted that criticism of coalition policies would “undermine unity.” Similarly, Saliaka (2025) argues that the rally-around-the-flag effect, so prominent in Israel during wartime, can be exploited by leaders to consolidate power and suppress opposition under the guise of national cohesion.

The invocation of unity spans Israel’s media, politics, and education. In the media sphere, studies of wartime journalism highlight how crises produce a strong rally-around-the-flag effect, with journalists adopting patriotic frames and suppressing critical voices. The press frequently depicts national embrace, unified front, and solidarity, sometimes at the expense of diverse voices and complex social contexts (Dor, 2004; Yadgar, 2002; Lev-On & Yehezkelly, 2024). Galily (2025), analyzing Israeli media during the 2023–24 Gaza war, argues that this reflex is particularly pronounced in Israel, where existential threats dominate the news agenda. Unity thus shapes not only public sentiment but also the professional norms of journalists, who often see criticism as inappropriate or disloyal during war.

In politics, unity often serves as a recurring justification for controversial policies. Waxman (2006) documents how peace initiatives were frequently framed in terms of whether they would safeguard or fracture national unity. Barzilai (1996) adds historical depth, showing that in Israel’s early decades, dissent during wartime was largely suppressed, with criticism surfacing only after the crisis had passed. This precedent normalized the expectation that national emergencies demand silence—a pattern that continues to shape contemporary politics. In 2024, following the outbreak of war, the Knesset formally established a dedicated *Unity Day* to enshrine the theme of unity as a national value.

Education is another arena in which unity is explicitly cultivated. According to surveys conducted by the Israel Democracy Institute (2024), nearly half of Jewish respondents that year believed the primary lesson schools should convey during wartime was the importance of national unity and cohesion. This emphasis reflects a long-standing tradition of embedding unity into civic education as a central value. As mentioned, a prominent example is the establishment of *Unity Day*, which was later formally institutionalized as a national occasion dedicated to teaching and celebrating the ideals of unity.

Yet, as several Hebrew commentators note, the meaning of unity is far from uncontested. Georgi (2024), writing in *TheMarker* about the legislative process that established *Unity Day*, argued that calls for unity after Rabin’s assassination functioned to mute accountability rather than promote genuine reconciliation. More recently, Sagi (2025) critiques the wartime slogan *“Together we will win”* as an instrumental form of unity that erases diversity and reduces individuals to mere tools of victory. He warns that unless reconceptualized, such unity risks silencing the pluralism essential to democratic life.

The Israeli case demonstrates that unity is a *double-edged ideal*. On the one hand, it sustains resilience, bolsters morale, and facilitates collective action at moments when fragmentation would be perilous. On the other, it can be *weaponized*—invoked to delegitimize dissent, enforce conformity, or shield leaders from accountability.

## **Unity in International Comparison – The United States, the European Union, and India**

This part seems too superficial – will be extended in the final project itself- What do you think? Azi

The concept of unity takes on different forms across cultures and political structures. To enrich an understanding of unity, it helps to examine in a nutshell how it manifests in other complex democratic contexts characterized by ethnic, religious, or political pluralism. Below, I look at three large and diverse democratic systems – the United States, the European Union, and India – to illustrate that “unity” is a multifaceted and often contested concept in each environment.

In the United States, the ideal of unity is embedded from the nation’s founding. The motto *E Pluribus Unum* — Latin for “Out of many, one” — was adopted along with the Great Seal in 1782, symbolizing the union of separate colonies into a single federated nation (Deutsch, 1923). This phrase encapsulated the ethos of uniting diverse states, peoples, and cultures under one framework. Throughout U.S. history, leaders have invoked national unity as a rallying cry in times of crisis, including wars, the civil rights movement, and periods of social unrest (Hartman, 2019).

In recent decades, however, this unifying ethos has eroded amid deepening ideological polarization. Partisan identity increasingly shapes how Americans perceive politics and society, fostering “tribal” divisions and making compromise more difficult (Mason, 2018). Research shows that partisan sorting and identity-driven politics have contributed to a climate in which unity is less about shared civic ideals and more about reinforcing group boundaries (Mason, 2018). Thus, the historic ideal of *E Pluribus Unum* remains aspirational but contested in a polarized media and political environment.

The European Union approaches unity differently, as a supranational project rather than a nation-state. Its official motto, *“United in Diversity,”* adopted in 2000, reflects the aspiration to reconcile diverse national cultures, languages, and political traditions within a common framework (Shore, 2013). This vision has been institutionalized through shared institutions, a common market, and symbolic markers of European identity, while still respecting national sovereignty (Risse, 2010).

Yet, European unity faces persistent challenges. Economic crises such as the Eurozone debt crisis, political resistance from member states like Hungary and Poland, and contentious debates over immigration and multiculturalism have all tested the limits of integration (Cram, 2009). These pressures highlight the fragile and contested character of European unity, where supranational ideals continually collide with national interests and rising populist movements.

India represents a unique case of seeking unity amid extraordinary internal diversity. Since independence, the country has embraced the motto *“Unity in Diversity”* as a guiding principle, drawing from Gandhi’s vision of tolerance and pluralism as foundations for coexistence (Nussbaum, 2007). Institutions were designed to hold together India’s vast mosaic of religions, languages, and castes (Varshney, 2002).

At the same time, unity in India remains deeply contested. Communal violence—especially between Hindus and Muslims—has periodically erupted, exposing the fragility of the pluralist ideal (Varshney, 2002). The rise of Hindu nationalism, particularly under the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), has sharpened debates about whether India’s unity should be based on secular inclusivity or Hindu-majoritarian identity (Jaffrelot, 2007). These tensions illustrate how unity can be mobilized as both an inclusive civic value and an exclusionary political tool.

The experiences of the United States, the European Union, and India (that will be greatly elaborated on the final project) demonstrate that the ideal of unity is never self-evident or stable. It is always politically charged, contested, and shaped by context. In pluralistic environments, unity requires balancing diversity with shared narratives and institutions. Rather than a static condition, unity emerges as an ongoing negotiation of identities and values—a fragile pursuit of “one” from “many.”

**Israel’s Deep Divides as a Context for Unity Discourse**

The study of unity discourse during wartime must be situated against the backdrop of Israel’s deep social cleavages. As Kimmerling (2001) argued in his seminal analysis of Israeli society, the country is structured around multiple lines of division—including religious, political, national, and ethnic cleavages—captured in his well-known *Ahusalim* framework. These enduring divides shape the ways in which appeals to “unity” are received, contested, and instrumentalized. In this study, I focus on several of the most salient cleavages that are particularly relevant to the question of unity in times of national crisis.

One major societal cleavage is the national divide between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel. Jews comprise roughly 80% of Israel’s population, while the Arab Palestinian minority makes up about 20%. Sociologists have long seen this Jewish–Arab split as a fundamental fault line “riven” with conflict potential. Horowitz and Lissak (1989) note that the national cleavage between Jews and Arabs carries a “constant potential for intense conflict.” Recent public opinion surveys also confirm that Jewish–Arab relations remain the most severe social tension in Israel (Israel Democracy Institute, 2023).

A second key cleavage is the religious divide, especially between secular Jews and the ultra-Orthodox (Haredim). Kimmerling (2001) argued that Israel has struggled to unite its citizenry above religious and ethnic sub-identities. This rift is manifest institutionally: the state maintains parallel public school systems for secular, religious, and Haredi students, and Haredi yeshiva (seminary) students have traditionally been exempt from military service (Horowitz & Lissak, 1989). Conflicts regularly flare over issues of religion and state (such as Sabbath laws, marriage, and conscription), reflecting an ongoing culture clash between the secular majority and the ultra-Orthodox minority (Horowitz & Lissak, 1989).

A third major cleavage is the ideological divide between the political right and left. In Israel, the left–right dichotomy has historically hinged on questions of territory and security: the left tended to support land-for-peace compromises (e.g., a two-state solution), whereas the right favored a more maximalist “Israel-dominated” vision (Shafir & Peled, 2002). In recent years, Israeli public opinion has shifted decidedly rightward. Notably, about 73% of Jewish Israelis aged 18–24 identify as right-wing, compared to roughly 46% of those over 65 (Israel Democracy Institute, 2023). Across all age groups, the share of self-identified right-wingers has grown over the past two decades (Israel Democracy Institute, 2023). This generational trend has produced an electorate that leans heavily to the right, far outnumbering the left.

Given these deep societal cleavages, an important question for this study is who invokes the “unity” discourse during wartime, and whether such calls for unity resonate across all segments of society. Past research suggests that Israeli civic culture has been “differential, hierarchical, and in service of the political interests of the Jewish majority” (Shafir & Peled, 2002, p. 20). It is therefore plausible that wartime “unity” narratives are promoted primarily by certain groups – for example, by Jewish citizens (and not Arab citizens), by secular or national-religious Jews (more so than Haredim), and by those on the political right (more than the left). The proposed research will examine whether the rhetoric of unity in times of war is an inclusive national ethos or a discourse dominated by these majority groups.

## **Public Discourse during Wartime**

## Communication scholarship offers important tools for understanding how societies use media in moments of crisis. The *Uses and Gratifications (U&G) framework* emphasizes that audiences are not passive recipients but active, purposive users who turn to media to satisfy psychological, social, and cognitive needs, including identity building, belonging, and affirmation of shared beliefs (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1973). A particularly relevant yet understudied dimension is the *integrative use of media*—their capacity to foster social cohesion and a sense of collective “we,” especially during emergencies (Katz et al., 1973).

## In Israel’s earlier broadcasting era, when Channel 1 dominated the landscape, this integrative function was especially strong: a single news source created shared symbolic experiences and reinforced national cohesion (Katz & Haas, 2001). Today’s fragmented digital ecosystem—marked by personalized feeds and niche communities—makes such unified experiences more difficult to produce. Yet in times of war or national trauma, media outlets and other communicators still attempt to recreate common narratives that bind the public together.

## During states of emergency, the *integrative function of media* becomes highly salient. Beyond delivering updates, media offer *emotional anchors*: they frame crisis through shared slogans (“Together We Will Win,” “Am Yisrael Chai”), celebrate collective resilience, and spotlight symbolic figures such as soldiers, volunteers, and bereaved families. At the same time, this rallying discourse carries a double edge. Calls to unite often draw symbolic boundaries between “us” and “the threat,” bolstering morale and trust in institutions but narrowing space for dissent.

## In contemporary Israel, these dynamics unfold across a hybrid media environment that blends mainstream news, state-led campaigns, social platforms, and grassroots initiatives. Unifying messages circulate virally, but so do counternarratives that question the authenticity or inclusiveness of such calls. This tension—between the desire for solidarity and the need for open debate—forms the backdrop for analyzing the rhetoric of “unity” during the Iron Swords War.

## **The *Iron Swords* War**

The *Iron Swords* War erupted on October 7, 2023, when Hamas launched an unprecedented terrorist onslaught against Israeli communities near the Gaza Strip and in southern Israel. In the early hours of that Simchat Torah morning, hundreds of armed militants breached the border, overrunning towns, kibbutzim, and IDF bases. They perpetrated a massacre of civilians and soldiers, inflicting the deadliest single-day security calamity in Israel’s history – over 1,200 people were killed, thousands more wounded, and around 240 taken hostage into Gaza (Sabag, Reznikovsky-Koras, & Arazi, 2024). The shock of this attack rippled through Israeli society, shattering a sense of security and creating an immediate state of national emergency (Neria et al., 2025). In response, Israel formally declared war and launched a full-scale military campaign in Gaza – code-named “Iron Swords” – aimed at decimating Hamas’s infrastructure and rescuing hostages.

Alongside the military response, Israel experienced an extraordinary wave of civilian mobilization. Within days, thousands of volunteers and grassroots initiatives emerged to provide critical assistance: evacuations, temporary shelter, distribution of supplies, and psychological support (Sabag et al., 2024). Surveys indicate that nearly half of Israel’s population engaged in some form of volunteerism in the first weeks of the war—an unprecedented level of civic participation that cut across age, gender, and community lines. In this atmosphere, public discourse widely celebrated solidarity and national strength.

Yet this emphatic rhetoric of unity also underscored Israel’s deep societal fault lines. The war came on the heels of months of mass protests over judicial reform and declining trust in institutions (Yavetz, Zumofen, & Mabillard, 2025). While slogans proclaimed togetherness, researchers and commentators noted that unity was often more aspirational than real. A survey found a surge in desire for compromise across political divides, but also persistent mistrust in government leadership as an obstacle to national cohesion (Braun-Lewensohn et al., 2025). Some analysts cautioned that unity discourse risked becoming an “empty slogan” if underlying rifts—notably between Jews and Arabs, and possibly also between secular and Haredi, left and right—remained unresolved (Abu-Kishk, 2025).

Scholarly research quickly emerged examining multiple facets of the war’s impact. Psychological studies revealed unprecedented rates of trauma: PTSD prevalence doubled in the aftermath, alongside increases in depression and anxiety (Levi-Belz, Groweiss, Blank, & Neria, 2024; Feingold, Neria, & Tzur-Bitan, 2024). Other studies traced resilience processes among first responders, youth, and soldiers (Saar-Ashkenazy, Bergman, Ashkenazy, & Guez, 2024; Hazan-Liran & Walter, 2025). Media and communication research highlighted 24/7 news exposure as a significant stressor (Kaim & Bodas, 2024), the role of viral atrocity videos in shaping public memory (Turin & Krämer, 2024), and the spread of rumors and disinformation on social networks (Elishar, Ariel, & Weimann Saks, 2025).

Despite this growing body of scholarship, the specific *uses, meanings, and rhetorical functions* of unity discourse during the Iron Swords War remain underexplored. How was “unity” constructed and circulated across different media? Did calls for unity serve primarily to inspire solidarity, or also to silence dissent? Who invoked it, and how was it received across Israel’s diverse communities? Addressing these questions is essential to understanding the power and limits of “unity” as both a binding narrative and a potentially exclusionary tool in times of national crisis.

## **II. Research Objectives and Expected Significance**

This project has three main objectives:

1. **To map the rhetoric of “unity” in Israeli media during wartime.** I will systematically analyze how “unity” is invoked across news platforms during the year following the October 7, 2023 attacks. The goal is to identify who uses the term, in what contexts, and with which rhetorical functions—whether to foster solidarity, demand conformity, or suppress dissent.
2. **To examine how state institutions conceptualize unity.** By analyzing official documents surrounding *Unity Day*, the study will uncover how the state defines and promotes unity as a civic and moral value. Special attention will be given to asking whether these frameworks encourage inclusivity or privilege particular groups.
3. **To compare public and institutional discourses.** Juxtaposing media discourse with state educational materials will highlight convergences and divergences in the use of unity rhetoric. This comparison will show whether “unity” operates as a shared cultural code or whether competing interpretations emerge between journalistic and governmental spheres.

The proposed study is expected to generate significant theoretical and practical contributions:

* **Conceptual innovation.** Unity is often treated as a self-explanatory value, yet this project shows that its meanings are contested, situational, and politically charge. By theorizing unity as a rhetorical resource rather than a fixed ideal, the study will contribute to broader communication and political sociology literature.
* **Empirical insight into wartime discourse.** The research will provide one of the first systematic mappings of how “unity” was used in Israeli discourse during the Iron Swords War. This adds an important case study to the growing scholarship on crisis communication, media framing, and the politics of solidarity.
* **Practical implications for civic education.** Findings from the analysis of *Unity Day* materials will inform debates about the role of education in shaping collective values. By revealing both the strengths and the limits of current approaches, the study may guide policymakers, educators, and civil society actors in fostering more inclusive narratives of cohesion.
* **Comparative relevance.** While focused on Israel, the study’s conceptual framework has implications for other pluralistic societies where calls for unity coexist with deep social cleavages. The project thus contributes to comparative research on nationalism, identity, and crisis rhetoric.

## **III. Detailed Description of the Proposed Research**

1. **Research Design and Hypotheses**

This study seeks to examine the uses and meanings of the term *“unity”* in the Israeli public sphere following the *Iron Swords War*. To that end, two primary arenas were selected, which together provide a broad picture of “unity” as it appears in Israeli society: the media arena and the institutional-educational arena. *Study A* focuses on media discourse in Israel’s mainstream news outlets, while *Study B* explores the conceptualization of unity through official documents related to *“Unity Day”*—a socio-educational initiative held annually since 2015.

**Study A: Representations of “Unity” in Media Discourse During the Iron Swords War**

This study focuses on identifying and analyzing instances of the term *“unity”* within Israeli media discourse during the year following the outbreak of the Iron Swords War (from October 2023 to October 2024). For this purpose, all relevant articles containing the word *“unity”* were obtained from *Ifat*, Israel’s leading media monitoring organization. The sample included articles published on Israel’s most prominent news websites: *Ynet*, *Walla*, *Mako*, *N12*, *Kan* (Israeli Public Broadcasting Corporation), *Reshet*, and *Channel 14*—selected based on popularity rankings published by the ICE website. These platforms represent the majority of Israel’s digital and broadcast media landscape.

A total of approximately 8,000 articles containing the term *“unity”* were retrieved. Following an initial screening process, a representative sample will be closely examined by a team of coders. The content will be coded based on predefined variables: the type of speaker or author (politicians, journalists, public figures), the context in which the term appears (political, civic, security-related), the core message (positive or negative), and the media format (headline, opinion piece, news report, etc.). The research will be guided by the following questions: (1) In what contexts does the term *“unity”* appear? (2) Who are the actors using the term, and how do they define it? (3) What narratives, messages, or positions are associated with it?

**Study B: “Unity” in Official State Documents – The Case of Unity Day**

This complementary study focuses on examining how the state and its institutions construct the concept of unity in a formal and intentional manner, using the case of *Unity Day* as a point of reference. Unity Day was established in 2015 at the initiative of the families of the three teenagers—Gil-Ad Shaer, Naftali Fraenkel, and Eyal Yifrah—who were kidnapped and murdered in June 2014. The families sought to commemorate the sense of public solidarity that emerged in response to the tragedy and to transform it into an educational and civic initiative (Unity Day website: [unityday.org.il](https://www.unityday.org.il)). A legislative proposal was submitted to the President and the Knesset and was approved, and since then, Unity Day has been officially marked each year on the first day of the Hebrew month of Sivan.

Unity Day includes a wide range of activities in schools, local authorities, youth movements, pre-military academies, IDF units, Jewish educational institutions in the diaspora, and civilian communities. Numerous institutional partners have joined the initiative, including the Ministry of Education, the President’s Residence, and various nonprofit organizations. In addition to the field activities, an institutional framework of official documents has been developed to accompany the commemoration of the day: educational kits, lesson plans, videos, presentations, and moral-educational values. Within this framework, there are both explicit and implicit definitions of the concept of “unity” as a social, moral, and national value. The educational emphasis is placed on open dialogue, acceptance of difference, bridging between sectors, and fostering a sense of mutual responsibility.

Although Unity Day is not widely recognized in Israeli public life, our analysis identifies it as the most significant occasion in which the term “unity” is used in an official and deliberate manner. For this reason, it was selected as the focal point of our institutional discourse analysis.

For this analysis, all available documents related to Unity Day—particularly those published by the Ministry of Education and the Pedagogical Secretariat—will be collected and subjected to qualitative content analysis. The guiding research questions are: (1) How does the concept of unity appear in the documents? Is there a consistent definition or recurring messages? (2) What additional values are associated with the concept of “unity”? (3) In what ways do the documents seek to shape the public and educational discourse surrounding the topic?

The two studies complement each other: on the one hand, the analysis of public media discourse reveals how the term “unity” is used politically, emotionally, and ideologically during a time of national crisis; on the other hand, the examination of institutional documents provides insight into how the state seeks to instill this value as part of a long-term educational policy. Together, this analysis is expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of how collective values are shaped in Israel.

In addition, preliminary background conversations will be conducted prior to the main research. These will include exploratory interviews with public figures such as politicians and thought leaders, aimed at enriching the conceptual framework surrounding the term "unity." These conversations will not serve as formal data sources but will help refine the research focus and contextual understanding.

1. **Preparatory Work**

**Study 1 – Media Discourse Analysis** In preparation for the first study, a large corpus of relevant material was obtained from IFAT, consisting of approximately 8,400 documents. A dedicated script was written to systematically process and extract data from these documents, allowing for efficient organization and initial analysis. To gain a preliminary understanding of the content, a sample of around 100 documents was read closely. This exploratory reading provided both a sense of recurring themes and a clearer direction for the subsequent coding and analysis procedures.

**Study 2 – Educational Materials on Unity Day** For the second study, all publicly available and relevant documents regarding Unity Day were collected and organized. This process involved downloading policy documents, speeches, and educational resources associated with the initiative. In addition, background readings on the institutional framing of Unity Day and its role in Israeli civic education were conducted. These preparatory steps provided an initial conceptual framework and contextual knowledge, which will guide the detailed textual and discourse analysis in the next stages of the study.

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**Chapter 4: Timeline and Work Plan**

| **Research Objective Title** | **Beginning** | **End** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Finalizing literature review and theoretical background | 10/2026 | 11/2026 |
| Formulating detailed coding scheme and research tools | 11/2026 | 12/2026 |
| Retrieving and filtering media items (in collaboration with Yifat) | 12/2026 | 1/2027 |
| Collecting official documents from Ministry of Education and Unity Day site | 12/2026 | 1/2027 |
| Conducting content analysis of media items (Study A) | 2/2027 | 4/2027 |
| Conducting content analysis of educational/government documents (Study B) | 2/2027 | 4/2027 |
| Comparative synthesis of findings from both studies | 5/2027 | 6/2027 |
| Drafting initial chapters (intro, theory, methodology) | 6/2027 | 7/2027 |
| Writing findings and discussion chapters | 7/2027 | 9/2027 |
| Final revisions and feedback from advisors | 10/2027 | 12/2027 |
| Preparing final submission | 1/2028 | 2/2028 |
| Submission of thesis and preparation for publication | 3/2028 | 9/2028 |

**Explanatory Notes:**

Finalizing the literature review and constructing the theoretical framework are scheduled for **Months 1–2** : Formulating the coding scheme, retrieving media content and collecting official documents are planned for **Months 2–4**. Conducting the content analysis of media items and governmental/educational documents will take place in **Months 5–7**. A comparative synthesis of both studies and initial writing of core chapters (introduction, theoretical background, methodology) are planned for **Months 8–10**. Writing the findings and discussion chapters is scheduled for **Months 10–12**. Final revisions and advisor feedback will be integrated in **Months 13–15**, and the final submission and preparation for publication will be completed in **Months 16–24**.

**Budget Details**

| **Personnel Name (last, first)** | **Role in project** | **% time devoted** | **Salaries (in NIS)** | **Year 1** | **Year 2** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Lev-On, Azi | PI | 30% | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Yehuda, Raz | Research Assistant | 50% | 4,000/month | 48,000 | 48,000 |
| **Total Personnel** |  |  |  | **48,000** | **48,000** |

**Justification for Requested Personnel**

Calculation is based on 50% occupation (4,000 NIS per month; 48,000 NIS annually) for the two years of the project. Throughout the study, the research assistant will be responsible for coordinating communication with external suppliers and official bodies, retrieving media and institutional materials, participating in content analysis coding, assisting with documentation and writing, and managing the workflow of both sub-studies. This role is essential to ensure the consistency, accuracy, and continuity of the research process across all phases.

**Services**

| **Item** | **1st year (NIS)** | **2nd year (NIS)** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Statistical consultation | 20,000 | 20,000 |
| **Total Services** | **20,000** | **20,000** |

**Justification for requested Services:**

Statistical expertise is essential for this research, especially for analyzing coded content from thousands of media items and comparing patterns across variables. A professional statistician will support the selection of appropriate tests and techniques, ensure data reliability, and assist in identifying confounding variables and drawing valid conclusions.

**Computers**

| **Item** | **1st year (NIS)** | **2nd year (NIS)** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Personal computer for the researcher | 5,000 | 0 |
| Personal computer for students/research assistants | 5,000 | 0 |
| Software (e.g., GPT, transcription tools, Atlas.ti) | 5,000 | 0 |
| **Total Computers** | **15,000** | **0** |

**Justification for requested Computers:**

Funding is requested to purchase basic computing infrastructure for the researcher and research assistant. In addition, software licenses are required for transcription, AI-based text analysis (e.g., GPT), and qualitative coding software such as Atlas.ti- all essential for carrying out the research at each stage.

**Miscellaneous**

| **Item** | **1st year (NIS)** | **2nd year (NIS)** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Photocopies and office supplies | 0 | 10,000 |
| Publication charges in scientific journals (incl. editing/translation) | 0 | 20,000 |
| Memberships in scientific associations | 2,000 | 0 |
| **Total Miscellaneous** | **2,000** | **30,000** |

**Justification for requested Miscellaneous:**

Budget is required to cover basic office supplies in the second year, as well as editing, translation, and open-access publication charges. Additionally, membership in relevant academic associations during the first year is important for research networking and dissemination.