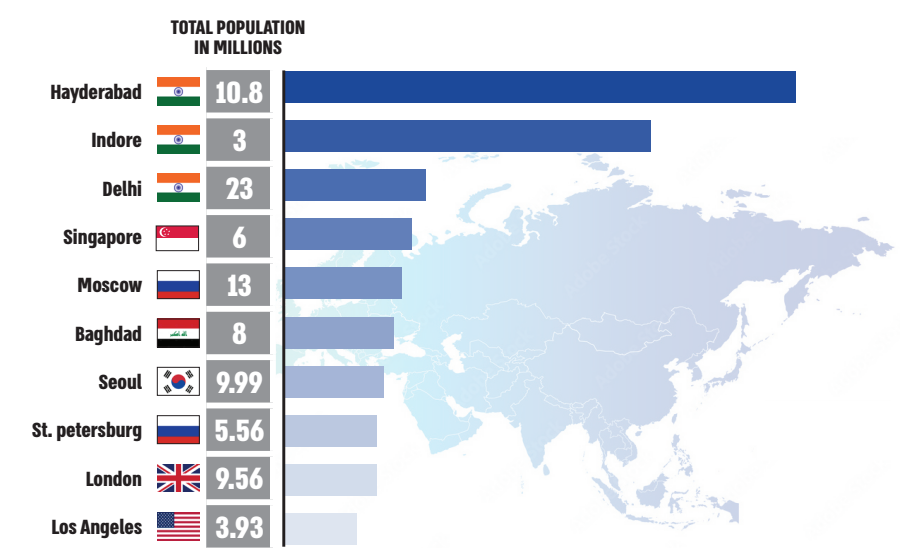


Local Authorities obligation to protect citizens' constitutional right to privacy



In recent decades, the use of surveillance cameras for remote visual monitoring of public spaces has increased in Israel and worldwide. These cameras, significantly impact public space in Israel. This impact can be positive, as they help reduce criminal behavior that harms individuals and society. However, it can also be harmful, as many of the activities captured by these digital recording devices are routine and innocuous, not the behavior society seeks to prevent. Hence, documenting these activities can infringe on the right to privacy.

The World's leading Cities in the number of Surveillance Cameras per 1000 people, 2023



Key Recommendations



1

The Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Justice should consider establishing regulations for the requirement to appoint a Privacy Protection Officer, similar to the requirement in the European Union. Appointing a Privacy Protection Officer would enable local authorities to minimize the privacy impact of the surveillance cameras installed in public spaces.



2

The audited local authorities should evaluate the cameras' effectiveness by analyzing all the data in their possession. In case that the circumstances that initially justified the installation of the cameras are no longer valid, they should consider removing or relocating the cameras according to the authority's needs. Regularly assessing the benefits of the ongoing use of surveillance cameras in public spaces and sharing this information with residents could increase public trust in the local authorities operating the cameras and reduce concerns about privacy violations due to their use.

3

According to the guidelines for implementing the technological setup, and the guidelines for preparing a multi-year plan for establishing the technological setup in local authorities - July 2019, the Local Authorities should collect and use the Israel Police's data for mapping the areas for locating the surveillance cameras.



OFFICE OF THE STATE COMPTROLLER  
AND OMBUDSMAN OF ISRAEL

Operation of Surveillance Cameras by Local Authorities in Public Spaces

Summary of Audit Report  
July 2024

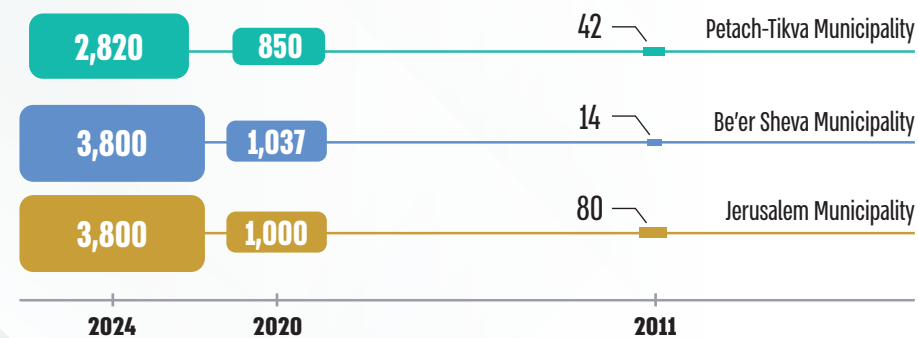


## Key Findings

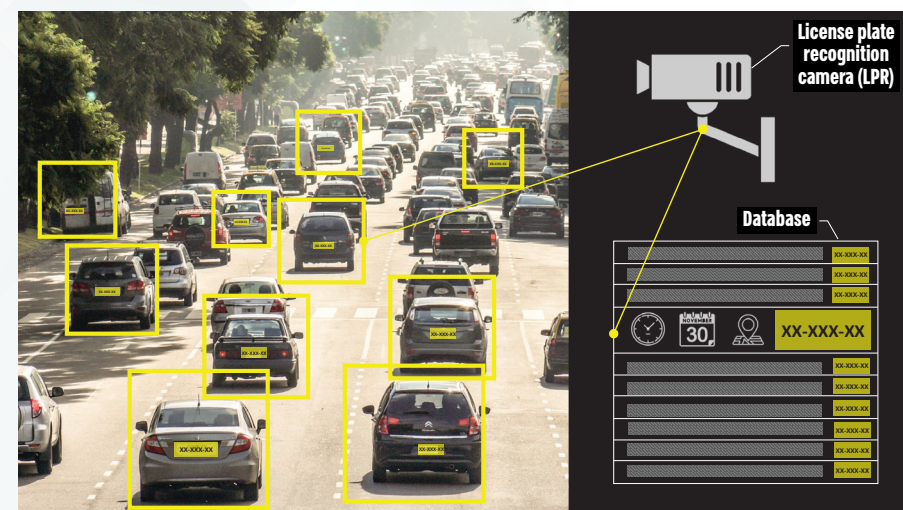


Over the past two decades, local authorities' use of surveillance cameras has accelerated significantly. Despite this increase in the number of cameras installed by the local authorities throughout the country, no public entity in Israel holds comprehensive data on the number, types, and technological characteristics of these cameras.

### The increase scope in the number of surveillance cameras in selected local authorities, 2011-2024



Although the use of License Plate Recognition (LPR) Cameras in public spaces requires explicit legal authorization due to the significant privacy impact on citizens, all the audited local installed LPR cameras in their public spaces without explicit legal authorization:



## Location of Surveillance Cameras in comparison to the Israel Police's Offences Data

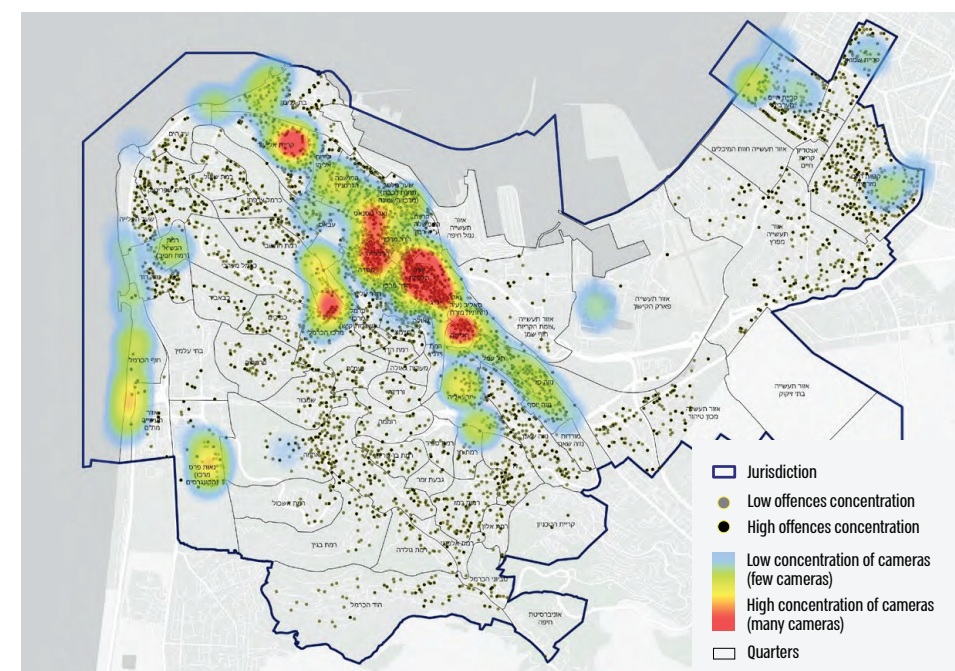
As part of audit, the audit team examined the Israel Police's Offences Data regarding offences occurred in the examined Local Authorities in 2022, in comparison to the location of surveillance cameras in the public space of those Local Authorities.

### The Distribution of Various Offences in the Examined Local Authorities in 2022

| Local Authority    | Security Offences | Offences against Morality | Offences against Property | Sexual Offences | Offences against a person | Offences against the Body | Offences against Public Order | Traffic Offences | TOTAL  |
|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|--------|
| Bnei Brak          | 12                | 130                       | 1,276                     | 171             | 6                         | 647                       | 1,034                         | 15               | 3,291  |
| Daliyat al- Karmel | 3                 | 10                        | 112                       | 2               | 1                         | 92                        | 187                           | 3                | 410    |
| Haifa              | 84                | 887                       | 5,205                     | 180             | 11                        | 2,108                     | 4,087                         | 46               | 12,608 |
| Nesher             | 7                 | 76                        | 317                       | 21              | 2                         | 122                       | 241                           | 2                | 788    |
| Rishon Lezion      | 38                | 439                       | 3,796                     | 201             | 9                         | 1,727                     | 2,624                         | 61               | 8,895  |

The audit found that four of the examined authorities - Bnei Brak, Haifa, Nesher and Rishon Lezion - did not collect full and detailed data from the Israel Police regarding offences in their public spaces over a period of time, in order to be able to make a data-based decision regarding the necessary locations for placing the cameras and for effectively prioritizing this process.

### Locations where offences occurred in 2022 In relation to the surveillance cameras locations in Haifa

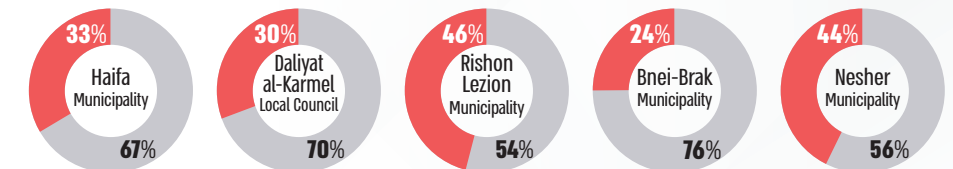


## Recommendation in protecting citizens' privacy



The local authorities audited should examine the presence of private spaces within the cameras' coverage area. In cases where surveillance cameras are directed towards private areas, and where it is impossible to avoid capturing these spaces, they should use masking techniques or alternately limit the camera's capability to focus on those areas.

### The rate of Cameras in which close-up photo of private spaces is possible, out of cameras sample in the Local Authorities examined in the audit



■ With close-up photos of private spaces ■ Without close-up photos of private spaces

none of the audited local authorities used technological tools to monitor and control the actions of users authorized to access the camera system. Supervising actions within local authorities' surveillance camera networks could help reduce the risk of authorized operators infringing on residents' constitutional rights to privacy.

