Multiple Perspectives and Pluralism
Roughly seventy researchers cover a broad range of topics. They adopt different perspectives, employ different methods — and sometimes come to different conclusions.

Policy Relevance
Our research is policy-oriented. The objective is to feed our expertise into policy- and decision-making processes of the German government and the Bundestag, as well as European and international institutions. We offer analyses, options for decision-makers to take actions and scenarios for discussion.

Confidentiality
SWP is a venue for exchange and communication between researchers and politicians, where issues and ideas can be discussed freely and in confidentiality. SWP meetings are by invitation only and held under the Chatham House rule. Our publications, website and social media circulate our research findings to a broader audience and promote exchange with academic colleagues.
Advice and Analysis

The German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) is an independent research institute. We advise the German government and parliament on questions of foreign and security policy on the basis of our own research.

We also advise decision-makers in relevant international organisations such as the European Union, NATO and the United Nations.

Our liaison office in Brussels presents our research in the European Union’s capital and facilitates cooperation and dialogue with Brussels-based institutions, principally the EU and NATO.

Think-Tank

With a permanent staff of about two hundred, we are one of Europe’s largest foreign policy think-tanks. We also host visiting researchers, project fellows and interns.

We have seven research divisions, plus the Centre for Applied Turkey Studies.

Africa and Middle East
The Americas
Asia
Eastern Europe, Eurasia
EU/Europe
Global Issues
International Security
Centre for Applied Turkey Studies (CATS)

How We Work

Our work is characterised by the following five interlocking attributes:

Academic stringency
Our policy advice is based on the knowledge and experience of our researchers. Every two years we adopt a research framework setting out our principal fields of interest in broad terms. Individual research agendas emerge in a process of continuous reflection and discussion within the Institute, in international research collaborations and with political decision-makers — always responsive to the latest developments in international politics. Our publications are subject to a stringent quality control process built around internal peer review.

Independence
Our research and policy advice is independent. We are beholden to no political party or other institution, and to no programme or interest group. We set our own research priorities and avoid prejudging outcomes. We do not take research commissions, but do apply for external funding for projects to expand and deepen our expertise, open up new fields and support recruitment.

Our oversight body, the SWP Council, is composed of three groups: one representative from each of the groups in the Bundestag; a government contingent with senior ministerial representatives; and members representing public life and academia. None of the contingents has a majority on its own — and elections require a two-thirds majority.