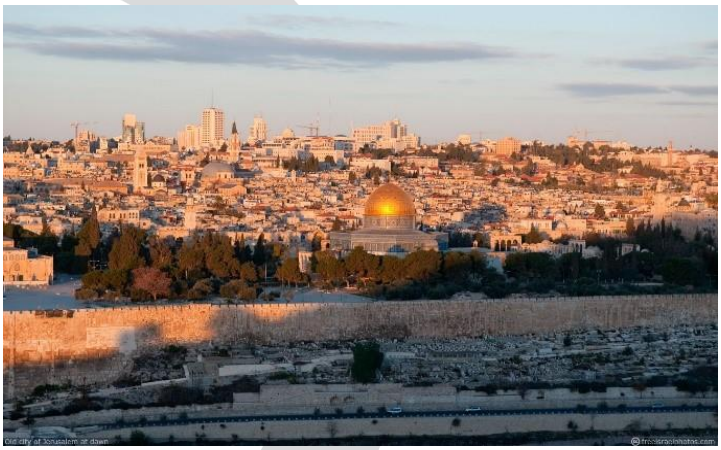

1 EURAXESS Country in Focus: Israel

Country size: 22.072 sq.km

Population: 8,798,000 (2018); 9,092,000 (2019)

Language: Hebrew, Arabic

Capital: Jerusalem

Median Age: 30.2

Currency: New Israeli Shekel

Economy:

GDP Per Capita: 40.270,25 USD (2017)

Unemployment rate: 3.7% (2019)

All based on: https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/publications/DocLib/isr_in_n/isr_in_n18e.pdf

1.1 Introduction

Israel is a country in Western Asia, located on the south-eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea and the northern shore of the Red Sea. The country contains within its relatively small area. Israel's economic and technological centre is Tel Aviv, while its seat of government and capital is Jerusalem. The State of Israel currently has a population of approximately 9.1 million inhabitants.

Due to its immigrant nature, Israel is one of the most multicultural and multilingual societies in the world. Hebrew is the official language of the country, and Arabic is given special status, while English and Russian are the two most widely spoken non-official languages. A certain degree of English is widely spoken and is the language of choice for many Israeli businesses. Today Israel is an industrialized country with most of its manufacturing, including many traditional fields, based on intensive and sophisticated research & development and hi-tech processes, tools, and machinery. This is the outcome of very rapid and intensive development.

Hi-tech companies in areas ranging from software to biotechnology and cyber-security are a major driver of growth in the country's economy. Many leading international technology firms have opened research and development centres in Israel. In the last few years, out of the members of the OECD, Israel has spent the highest percentage of its GDP towards R&D, and in 2019 was ranked the world's fifth most innovative country by the Bloomberg Innovation Index.

Israel has a long tradition of academic excellence, boasting world class universities, colleges and research institutions. Israeli higher education institutions provide a diversity of academic programs in English for international students at the Bachelor and Master's degree level ranging

from short-term courses to full degree programs. Israeli Institutions also welcome international students and researchers for PhD and Post-Doctoral research who collaborate with leading researchers in their fields.

1.2 Facts and Figures

Universities in Israel

Education is highly valued within the national culture of Israel, and its higher education sector has been praised for helping to encourage the country's economic development and recent technological boom. The high quality of Israel's higher education system was also recognized in the QS Higher Education System Strength Rankings, published for the first time in 2016, in which it ranks as the world's 28th strongest national system.

Israel has 62 intuitions for higher education (recognised by the Council for Higher Education), comprised of universities and other higher education institutions, both private and government funded. These institutions teach 262,591 students for all academic degrees.

There are nine universities in Israel, as well as many higher education colleges; the main difference is that the universities offer degrees all the way up to the doctorate level. Courses are often taught in Hebrew, but many leading Israeli universities also offer English-taught programs. Six of Israel's nine universities were featured in the QS World University Rankings® 2018.

Israel is especially recognised for research in the fields of:

- **Science and Engineering:** Israel is a world leader in science and engineering. Israeli scientists have won 4 Nobel Prizes in chemistry, 3 Turing Awards (computer science) and 1 Fields Medal (mathematics). Israel ranks 7th globally in the number of citations per scientific publication and is particularly strong in fields such as computer science, engineering, chemistry, and life sciences.

- **Innovation and Entrepreneurship:** Leading companies from around the world chose to open R&D centres in Israel and some programs include opportunities to undertake internships in top companies from around the world, giving students the opportunity to 'advance your career' development.

- **Agriculture and Sustainability:** Israel's challenging environment and lack of natural resources has led it to become a kind of agricultural "incubator" of ideas, developing new kinds of plants as well as revolutionary agricultural technologies. Drip irrigation technology is one famous example of Israel's success in this field.

- **Art, Design & Music:** Areas of study include a range of arts-related fields including fine arts, fashion and jewellery, photography, industrial and urban design, and traditional and contemporary music. Many programs offer innovative and multidisciplinary elements, allowing you to develop your own particular interests.

- **Israel and Mideastern studies:** Higher education institutions in Israel offer a range of programs from ancient to contemporary studies of Israel and Middle Eastern states, to Hebrew and Arabic language. Israel offers an unparalleled opportunity to acquire an in-depth understanding of its and the region's political, social and economic dimensions

- **Jewish studies:** Studying in Israel gives students the opportunity to work with leading scholars in this field and to immerse themselves in both ancient and contemporary Judaism.

Innovation and Excellence

To learn more about our unique country visit: Ministry of Foreign Affairs at https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/Pages/default.aspx

For those interested in innovation and technology, Israel is the place for you! Israel is the land of innovation, also known as the “Start-Up Nation”. It is a hotbed of hi-tech activity, with the world’s highest investment per capita in start-up companies. Israel was ranked the 3rd most innovative country in the world (World Economic Forum Global Competitive Index). Studying in Israel gives you the opportunity to experience and participate in Israel’s vibrant start-up culture and eco-system.

Israel's Technion Institute of Technology has been rated no. 77 in the Shanghai Academic Rating of World Universities (2018), and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 95th place (2018).

Patents: Israel has seen a steady rise in patent applications over the years. Between 2014 to 2018 the number of applications has risen by 17.37% to 7,363 patent applications in 2018.

Learn more about Study and Research in Israel:
http://studyinisrael.che.org.il/

1.3 Funding Opportunities

Israel supports its R&D through many grants and scholarships; in 2018, the Ministry of Science and Technology signed 356 new engagement agreements to fund research, scholarships and Scientific Knowledge centres that include a program for Scientific Infrastructure Development and a program for Applied Engineering Research. In 2018 the total budget allocated for research, scholarships and knowledge centres was 147 million NIS. Applying to study in Israel only takes 3 Steps: 1) Search for a program; 2) Complete the forms; 3) Get a visa. Israeli higher education tuition fees are competitive on an international scale and tuition fees for PhD degrees are generally waived by the host institution.

Bilateral and international cooperation: As of 2019 Israel has 38 ongoing bilateral agreements with 29 countries all around the globe. Today there are significant collaborations through bilateral and multilateral agreements between institutions and organizations that include joint research funds, projects, exchange of researchers and faculty, and more. Israel's key collaborations today include: US-Israel Binational Science Foundation (BSF), German-Israeli Foundation for Scientific Research and Development (GIF), Israel-China Research Foundation (ISF-NSFC), Israel-India

Research Foundation (ISF-UGC), and Israel-Singapore Research Foundation (ISF-NRF). Promoting Israel's international research relations is one of the key objectives in transforming Israel's higher education system to a high quality and competitive international level. The Israeli Ministry of Science and Technology helps organize and fund International Conferences, Bi-national conferences, Young Scientists Schools, the COST program, and offers assistance with international conferences in Israel. Israel is also an active member in several international organizations and programs such as CERN, Horizon 2020, EMBL, EMBC, GSF, SESAME, ICDP and more.

In the academic year of 2019-2020 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Israel has funded scholarships for foreign students following cultural agreements, and special scholarship arrangements. The PBC Fellowship Program for Outstanding Chinese and Indian Post-doctoral Fellows– 2020/2021 is one of the specific programs of the Israel Council of Higher Education (CHE). A scientific and technological collaboration agreement between the science ministries of India and Israel was signed in 1993; and since that time, more than 60 research studies have been conducted in a variety of fields: agricultural biotechnology, medical biotechnology, nanotechnology, advanced materials, electro-optics and lasers. The collaboration is conducted by publishing joint calls for proposals. In recent years, joint studies have been conducted in the fields of energy engineering, agricultural and medical biotechnology, nanotechnology, advanced materials, etc.

1.4 MSCA in Israel

Experienced researchers willing to move to Israel can apply for an Individual Fellowship (IF) of the Marie Skłodowska - Curie Actions (MSCA), irrespective of their country of origin. Since 2014, forty researchers from various countries (including Italy, India, Portugal, China, Germany and others) have come to Israeli organisations as part of the Individual Fellowship (IF) program. Eighty-seven other researchers came to Israeli as part of the RISE and ITN programs.

Israel is a very active member of Marie Skłodowska - Curie Actions, with hundreds of collaborative links with countries, such as the United Kingdom, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy and France. The success rate of Israeli applicants is 15.7%, which is higher than the European average rate (12.66%).

1.5 EURAXESS Israel

Six academic institutions are currently members of the Israeli forum of EURAXESS: Technion Institute of Technology, Weizmann Institute of Science, Hebrew University, Ben-Gurion University, Haifa University and Bar-Ilan University. IP&D is an SME which serves as the EURAXESS Centre for Industry and as an organisation representing EURAXESS' Bridge Head Organisation in Israel on behalf of the Ministry of Science.

EURAXESS Activity in Israel:

- Continuous contact throughout the year on issues relating to international researchers and the promotion of national policy on the subject;
- Participation in EU training and management meetings for the network;
- Organising conferences and study visits in Israel in accordance with network activities;
- Conduct two meetings a year on forum topics;
- Additional hosting and collaboration activities within Europe and biennial conferences of the entire network;
- Continuous activity of the European and Israeli portal, which includes information for mobile researchers in all countries as well as the publication of relevant positions for researchers.

1.6 Israel as a destination

Israel's higher education institutions are known worldwide for their academic excellence, and many institutions offer programs in English, providing a unique international learning environment designed for students to learn and succeed. But there are a number of other reasons that Israel is an attractive destination for study and research. Israel, the land of innovation, also known as the "Start-Up Nation", is the place to be for innovation and technology. It is a hotbed of hi-tech activity, with the world's highest investment per capita in start-up companies. Israel was ranked the 3rd most innovative country in the world (World Economic Forum Global Competitive Index). Studying in Israel offers you the opportunity to experience and participate in Israel's vibrant start-up culture and ecosystem.

Whether you live on campus or off, in or out of the city, there's more to studying in Israel than just hitting the books. Israel has a vibrant student social scene with the opportunity to make life-long friendships with Israelis and other students from all over the world. You will also find yourself at the heart of a diverse, dynamic and constantly developing culture, with over 4,000 years of history, which have incorporated many different cultural influences. Whether it's food, history, art or music, you will have many opportunities to immerse yourself in Israel's fascinating culture throughout your studies. You can experience world-famous historical sites, float in the Dead Sea, go hiking in the beautiful Sea of Galilee region or the Negev Desert, marvel at the Baha'i Gardens in Haifa or enjoy a sunset on Tel Aviv beach.