

The Global Residence and Citizenship

REVIEW

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Residence and Citizenship in Israel

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Israel, which is commemorating its 68th anniversary of independence, is a young and small nation. It has a population of approximately 8.5 million people — 75% of which are Jewish, 21% Arabic and 4% not classified by religion. The majority of the Israeli nation are immigrants, which commenced in Biblical times.

After the destruction of the Second Temple around 586 CE, immigrants were those exiled by the Roman Empire, with around 1,490 people exiled from Spain and Portugal. Between the years of 1893 and 1948, approximately 500,000 people immigrated to the land that later formed the State of Israel, and specifically between 1933 and 1939, these people came from Germany.

Since the founding of the State of Israel in 1948, there have been a number of immigration 'waves' to the nation, mainly from European countries, the US, Canada and South Africa. In 1948, the Jewish population was approximately 630,000 people and today reaches around 6 million. It is a globally oriented society, economically focused on areas such as high-tech industry, biotechnology and foreign trade.

The Law of Return

In 1948 the State of Israel was established as a State for the Jewish people. The Law of Return of 1950 granted

every Jew wishing to immigrate to Israel the right to do so and to receive an immigration certificate to obtain Israeli citizenship (depending on certain qualifying factors). Israeli citizenship may be obtained without relinquishing foreign citizenship, unless such a requirement exists in the foreign country. The immigration certificate grants an individual the legal status of a new immigrant (*Oleh Chadash*) and permits residence in Israel with no visa requirements, while formal citizenship, including obtaining an Israeli passport, takes between 12 and 18 months.

There are also residence options for those who do not wish to formally immigrate to Israel, including for individuals who are not Jewish. These include different employment visas, which require administrative procedures, as well as temporary residence status with no requirement for formal immigration necessary.

Israeli Residence

Under Israeli law, an individual is presumed to be an Israeli resident if they are present in Israel for at least 183 days in a tax year, or at least 30 days in a tax year and a total of at least 425 days during a relevant tax year and the immediately preceding two tax years. The day count is a rebuttable presumption for both the individual and

Skyline of the Old City at the Western Wall and Temple Mount in Jerusalem, Israel.

