

# Israel

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JNUL - Israel National Library

Israel population reached 7,123,600 at the end of January 2007<sup>1</sup>. The GDP grew by 5.1% in 2006 despite the fighting in the summer. The unemployment rate fell significantly to an 8.4% average compared to 9.0% in 2005.<sup>2</sup> The index of civilian RTD expenditure per capita in 2006 stands at 124.5 points (USA – 100), second only to that of Sweden (133.6). It is the largest RTD expenditure in the world as a percentage of the GDP: 4.5% (Sweden - 3.7%, Finland – 3.5% and Japan 3.1%).<sup>3</sup> Israel is a full partner of the EU RTD Framework Program achieving substantial success. Preliminary summaries for FP6 show that there were 4,117 proposals with Israel participation and 784 among them were successful (19%). The grants received by Israeli partners totaled 204 million Euro with a total value for the projects with Israel participation of 3,550 million Euro.<sup>4</sup>

## A. Users and content

### Land of Israel Digitised Photography Collections – University of Haifa and the Bitmuna Lab

The University of Haifa announced the availability for online Web access of several of its digitised photography collections. The University curates about 1,500 photography collections. This is a joint initiative of the University Library and its Department of Land of Israel Studies together with the Bitmuna Lab run by Nadav Man from the Kibbutz Merhaviah. Photography collections belonging to photographers, families and institutions are identified and digitised by the Bitmuna Lab. They are catalogued by the Haifa University partners. The purpose is to enable wide public access by categories like subject matter, chronology, geographical and social aspects. All the pictures are included in a database available online to the public. Among the collections just opened to the public (April 2007): *Oppenheim Collection* – founder of the Kibbutz Ein Gev that documented children and people building of the Jordan Valley

settlements. *Schwartz Collection* – photographers employed by the British Mandate Information Office.

*The Kinneret Village (Tiberiades Lake) Collection* – includes pictures from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century up to the '80 years of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Other online available collections include the Hadasah Medical Organisation; the families – Abramsohn, Hefetz, Halevy, Izreeli, Cavshana, Cohen.

The conference "Israeli Photography: Historiography and Iconography" will inaugurate this archive and its opening to the public (25.4.2007). See:

<<http://liblog.haifa.ac.il/images/stories/pdf/photo1.pdf>> (Hebrew)

Dr Zehava Yacoby and the photographer Zeev Radovan are carrying out an special research project dealing with Crusades Sculpture. Already 509 pictures have been included in the catalogue and another 300 are being processed. This joint Crusades digitisation project is planned to be implemented with Cambridge Research Technology from the UK.

<<http://lib.haifa.ac.il/bitmuna/>>

### Maps of the Holyland

The Laor Collection is an outstanding, worldwide, collection of maps at the Israel National Library (JNUL). It includes about 1,100 maps of the Land of Israel and neighbouring areas dated since the 15<sup>th</sup> Century up to the 1920'ies. The maps were digitised and uploaded to a site open to the public. The maps are presented through colour photographs at three resolution qualities; the user is able to zoom and enlarge his view of the map. Every map includes a detailed bibliographic description prepared by the collection curator, Aielet Rubin. The earliest item is from 1462 (an outline following Rashi); the Cranach Map from the 16<sup>th</sup> Century (only remaining copy); the Pierre Jacotin maps (1818) that begins the scientific mapping of the region; and the British Ordnance Survey maps. Many maps are engraved or painted with images

related to the Holy Land. They reflect the importance attached to the Holy Land which enjoyed of many more maps than those describing other areas in the world.  
<<http://jnul.huji.ac.il/dl/maps/pal/html>>

### Scanned and Digitised Books

The Jewish National and University Library announced the first stage of a project to digitize rare and out-of-print monographs from its collection. An initial group of some 400 volumes has been digitized with the generous support of the Dorot Foundation. Additional works are now added weekly (five a week). Selection is based on considerations of demand, preservation and funding. The aim of this project is to make these works freely available not only to on site users but also to the public worldwide. The initial selection of titles ranges from 15th century incunabula to early 20th century works.  
<<http://www.jnul.huji.ac.il/eng/digibook.html>>

### Enlargement of Online Treasury of Talmudic Manuscripts Program

The JNUL Online Treasury of Talmudic Manuscripts. This project brings together images of major Talmudic manuscripts from libraries throughout the world. The manuscripts are indexed to enable access by standard citation (tractate, daf and amud for the Talmud Bavli, and tractate, chapter and mishna for the Mishna). The project continues its expansion and lately additional manuscripts have been included – parts of the Genizah of the Mishna from the University of Cambridge and for the first time a manuscript of the Tosafta.  
<[http://jnul.huji.ac.il/dl/talmud/intro\\_eng.htm](http://jnul.huji.ac.il/dl/talmud/intro_eng.htm)>

### Mahzor Worms

Festival prayer book according to the Ashkenazi rite, for the use of hazanim (cantors) in the synagogue, containing mainly cycles of piyyutim (liturgical hymns). 2 vols. of different origin, written on parchment, in beautiful Ashkenazi calligraphy, with illumination and decoration in ink and color, including arcaded pages to open the main divisions of the book. Vol. I: copied in 1272. 224 fols., 390x310mm. The vocalization follows the Palestinian-Tiberian and an ancient

pre-Ashkenazi tradition .Vol. II: copied ca. 1280. 450x310mm. The Mahzor was in use in the community of Worms until the synagogue's destruction on Kristallnacht, November 1938. It was rescued by the city's archivist, who hid it in the cathedral.  
<[http://jnul.huji.ac.il/dl/mss/worms/about\\_eng.html](http://jnul.huji.ac.il/dl/mss/worms/about_eng.html)>

### Israel National Archives: more than a million digitized documents to be open for the public

Dr Yehoshua Freundlich the Israel State Archivist announced at the end of 2006 its intention to open to the public a collection of its digitised resources, including more than a million documents. It will become available in the first semester of 2007 and can be searched and retrieved at the web site to be inaugurated soon. A large proportion of these documents is in English and pertains to the Foreign Ministry (about 700,000 images); the pre-State British Mandate Economic Advisor, 32,000; the lists of immigrants to Israel (Mandate and State) - 60,000; German documents: German consulates 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century – 40,000; non-official German archives 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century – 15,000; maps – 2,380; Archives of the 1947 committee setting the structure of the State of Israel – 50,000; and other archives. Dr. Freundlich expressed the commitment of the State of Israel, as an open society, to transparency and openness. He expressed also the worries that accompany such dramatic step: the need to guarantee the authenticity of the scanned documents; the misuse that may be made for propaganda purposes of some documents; and so on. Despite the envisaged pitfalls Dr. Freundlich got the full endorsement and support of the Israel National Archives Advisory Council for this dramatic step.  
<<http://www.pmo.gov.il/PMO/PM+Office/Departments/archive.htm>>

### The Friedberg Genizah Project

Hundreds of thousands of the Cairo Genizah fragments around the world include Bible texts and commentaries, rabbinic dictionaries, halakhic works, poetry, liturgical texts, philosophical and polemic treatises, commercial documents and letters. This sea of primary source material – written in Hebrew, Aramaic, Judeo-Arabic,

Arabic, Judeo-Persian and Yiddish – dates from the 8th century until after the 15th century. The Friedberg Genizah Project, initiated in 1999 by Mr Albert D. Friedberg of Toronto, seeks to develop a unified catalogue of all fragments located around the world, digitise them and provide public access.

On March 2007 the site of the project was open with more than 60,000 high-quality images covering the collections of the JTS (North America), JNUL (Jerusalem) and smaller collections from Bar Ilan, Tel Aviv and Haifa Universities, The Central Archives of the Jewish People and the Ben Zvi Institute. Additionally, the whole Nachum collection of Yemenite manuscripts containing about 100,000 manuscripts will be included through 2007.

<http://www.genizah.org/about.html>

The Chief Computerization Scientist of the Friedberg Genizah project is Prof. Yaacov Choueka. Prof. Choueka is a worldwide pioneer in Cultural Heritage digitisation. He was one of the directors of the Responsa, the first large scale digitisation project established back in 1963.

<http://www.biu.ac.il/ICJI/Responsa/history.htm>

## IMAGINE

The Israel Museum holdings of Art, Archaeology, Judaica and Jewish Ethnography comprise well over 250,000 objects and sets. IMAGINE is the in-house image search engine. Already 56,000 objects have been entered in the database. In addition there are 11,000 scans adding a further dimension to the catalogued objects. As the program develops the database is being made available online when both local and remote visitors will be able to access collections. A customized, multilingual lexicon was constructed built of 18,000 museum legacy terms. Presently English and Hebrew are supported with Russian and Arabic planned for the next stage. The technology is provided by IDEA.

<http://www.idea-alm.com>

## The Schwartz Collection of Dada and Surrealist Art

Dada and Surrealism rank among the most significant art movements of our time. The Israel Museum owns an extensive library and documentary materials that make its collection an important international research source with more than 700 works. The Vera

and Arturo Schwartz Collection includes unparalleled holdings of individual artists. The digitisation of the collection enables now the public to access photos and documentation of these extensive holdings.

[http://www.imj.org.il/Imagine/dada\\_surrealism/index.asp](http://www.imj.org.il/Imagine/dada_surrealism/index.asp)

## The Gabriel Sherover Information Center for Israeli Art

It includes biographical information and images from over 7,000 Israeli artists. Visitors to the museum may search the files and computers, which include biographic notes, press cuttings, videos, slides, photographs of works of art as well as current and past exhibitions both in Israel and abroad.

<http://www.imj.org.il/eng/resources/israeli-ac/index.html>

## The Jerusalem EVA/MINERVA 2006 Conference

The Jerusalem EVA/MINERVA 2006 Conference on Digitisation of Cultural Heritage held last November provides a good overview of the state of art of digitisation in Israel. See the presentations at the conference: <http://www.minervaisrael.org.il/program.html?rsID=525>

## Digitisation of Palestinian and Arab Israeli newspapers

The most complete collection of Palestinian and Arab Israeli newspapers is located at the Peace Library at the Givat Haviva Center in Israel. In collaboration with Dr. Merav Mack and Peter Jacobsen from Cambridge Research Technology they now seek to digitally preserve this rare historic collection dated from the beginning of the 20th century and provide online access to it. They intend to photograph the materials onto microfilm (35 mm reels) and from microfilm digital scanning (300 DPI) to Tiff format (Version 4.2 or higher). Compression will be LSB. Color: all output images will be in 8-bit grayscale. The data would be stored on a server with another backup and made available online using Greenstone, UNESCO's free software for digital libraries.

<http://www.givathaviva.org.il/english/library>

### Learning Resources Initiative

A comprehensive initiative for providing access to learning resources for pupils, students and the wider population is being enacted through the collaboration between the universities (IUC-CEITAL) <<http://www.iucc.ac.il>>; the Ministry of Education with the MAKASH Institute <<http://makash.org.il>>; and the Israel Internet Association <<http://www.isoc.org.il>>. The initiative will adopt a federated distributed approach for integrating existing repositories. It will support the development of further contents and the adoption of updated standards, including a definition of an Israel application profile for LOM. The MELT eContentPlus project, lead by the European consortium of Ministries of Education (EUN – European Schoolnet), serves as one of the main models for such initiative.

### The Israel Educational Television (IETV) Meida-Media Database

The IETV launched its media database including more than a thousand TV clips catalogued according to the contents of the Israel curriculum. In addition to the films other resources are also available like photographs and links to educational resources. <<http://www.meda-media.ietv.gov.il/>>

### The Israel Cultural Portal

It intends to demonstrate the synergy between cultural content providers in Israel responsible for the digitisation and long term preservation of Israel's digital heritage. It will serve as a pivot for the cultural production in the following areas: Visual and plastic arts, Galleries and Museums; Cinema and Audiovisual Media; Theatre, Dance, Opera Music and Performing Arts; Education and Training in the Arts; Literature, libraries; Exhibitions, Festivals and Events; Architecture and Design; Community Arts; Cross Media Arts; Visual Arts and Crafts. The basic directory is already in place and now the main challenge is the galvanisation of stakeholders and content providers so as to crystallize these players into viable cultural community. <<http://www.culture.org.il/directory/search.asp>>

### Books and Publishing Industry Site

The site <<http://www.text.org.il>> presents all major publishers in Israel. It includes reviews of more than 1,300 books classified by genres. Many of such books have their first chapter scanned and offered for browsing by the site visitors. This is an initiative of Dov Nifker who plans to continue and expand the service.

### B. Digital preservation

Several high level institutions in Israel have been coping lately with the issue of digital preservation: the Prime Minister Office; the Israel National Archives and the Ministry of Finance General Comptroller officer (who also chairs the Government Internet and Information Society Committee. This follows the 2004 report of the audit carried out by the office of the State of Israel Comptroller and Ombudsman. The audit indicated the growing importance of born digital records since the early nineties and the urgent need to set clear guidelines and appropriate tools for their selection and long term preservation. A substantial part of the audit report is dedicated to audio visual materials owned by the government focusing on the Israel Broadcasting Authority and the Israel Film Service. Following the report the Israel State Archives have issued several guidelines to the Ministries on long term preservation of born digital records. SIG on Long Term Preservation: following the EVA/MINERVA workshop on this matter, David Giaretta the coordinator of the CASPAR project was invited to Israel <<http://www.casparpreserves.eu>>. He was the keynote speaker at a seminar held at the Ministry of Finance (January 2007) establishing a Long Term preservation SIG in Israel.

### IBM Haifa Research (Israel)

It is a centre of excellence in the area of technologies for long term preservation of born digital resources. Following the above mentioned events a RTD joint pilot involving the Israel National Archives and IBM Haifa Research is at its final stages of planning. <<http://www.haifa.il.ibm.com/>>

## Olive Software technologies

It is used to generate user-friendly, searchable XML documents from any paper, film or digital source while maintaining the look and feel of the originals. A electronic publishing solution that allows to transform documents into intelligently tagged XML that can be viewed in its original format, searched at a granular level, or repurposed for other applications. <http://www.olivesoftware.com/>

## E. Monitoring progress

At the end of 2006 there were 3.9 million Internet users in Israel that are more than 13 years old. This is an increase of 300 Thousand since January 2006. The percentage of connected households is now (November 2006) 72% vs 69% a year ago <sup>5</sup>. There are clear indications that the average Internet surfer is widening the uses he makes of the Internet beyond the basics of email, information search, news reading etc. There is a substantial increase in instant messaging, buying services, finance operations, radio listening, participation in discussions and the use of Internet telephony:

	<b>Present Survey Jan 2007</b>	<b>Mean % use in 2005</b>
Instant messaging	62	55
Buying activities	55	41
Financial operations	54	47
Radio listening	41	30
Participation in forums and discussions	36	28
VoIP (Internet telephony)	32	27

Another trend is the increase use of Web 2.0 applications. The most frequent are: blogging (read and write); television viewing (live shows and recorded); music (listening and downloading); uploading and viewing video clips; participation in communities and networks; setting a personal/private site; and more.

Every day 73% from the total surfers use the Internet that is 3 million Israelis (versus 2.5 million a year ago). About 1.25 million households are connected, 95%

of them by a broadband connection, either ADSL or by cable TV. The percentage using the Internet at home is 96% with 61% using the Internet also from other places, outside home, like from work, school, friends houses or other public places. Still, more males than females are making use of the Internet: 53% men against 47% women while their proportion in the population is respectively 48% men and 52% women. The survey authors notice that there is a time trend for the demographic profile of Internet users become more and more similar to the overall demographic profile of the general population. <sup>6</sup> Data published by the company Comscore <http://www.comscore.com/> for Internet benchmarking indicates that Israel stands in the second place, after Canada, in the monthly mean number of hours spent by an user surfing the Internet. Canada stands at 39.6 monthly hours and Israel at 37.4 hours. The next countries are South Korea (34.0); USA (31.6); and Britain (31.2).<sup>7</sup>

The deployment of Internet connections of 5 Megabit/s is increasing. The incumbent telecom has just began an intensive campaign for this purpose intending to multiply several times the present number of 20,000 users connected at this speed. The Bezeq lowered its monthly fee for a 5 Megabits download/ 500 K/s upload package to about 18 Euro. It is also offering incentives for the connection (an almost free LCD screen). The infrastructure is now deployed in a way that about 60% of Internet users can be connected through this package.<sup>8</sup>

## Use indicators

Use indicators can be obtained from the survey of general commercial sites that also provide access to the Cultural Heritage resources. Israel has 3.9 million Internet users aged 13 or more – 55% of the whole population. The TIM survey carried out in December 2006 – January 2007 used the Recall methodology: the panel was asked whether and when they last visited each of the sites examined. The data express the proportion of respondents who visited at least once, in the week when the survey took place, in that given site. The results indicate that Google dominates (82.7% in the present survey vs. 79.1% last July); Walla is the most popular Israeli site (70.1% vs. 67.6% in the former survey); Ynet has an exposure of 55.2

down by one point from the former measurement (56.2); MSN continues to drop, with 32.1 against 34.5 in July and 38.3 in 2004. The second group of sites are: Tapuz (27.1%, up from 22.2 in July); NRG with 23.4%; and finally the Keshet TV channel whose Internet site got 18.4% exposure.<sup>9</sup>

Another indicator is the statistics for the Web site of the National Library (JNUL - Jewish National and University Library). In 2006 the site <<http://jnul.huji.ac.il>> registered 1,064,855 sessions from all over the world. The catalogues registered the following number of sessions: 462,841 at the general catalogue; 274,826 at the RAMBI catalogue (Jewish Studies Articles List); and 272,944 session at the ULS, Union List of Serials catalogue.

<sup>1</sup> CBS, <http://www1.cbs.gov.il/reader/mainind/indhebrew.html>

<sup>2</sup> Leumi Economic Outlook, March 26, 2007 – Bank Leumi Le-Israel, The Finance & Economics Division, <http://english.leumi.co.il/Home/>

<sup>3</sup> CBS, Statistical Abstract of Israel 2006, page 896.

<sup>4</sup> ISERD's General Presentation-FP7, Marcel Shaton, Director, ISERD <http://www.iserd.org.il/>  
[http://www.iserd.org.il/fp7/documents/FP7\\_General-presentation\\_Jan2007.ppt](http://www.iserd.org.il/fp7/documents/FP7_General-presentation_Jan2007.ppt)

<sup>5</sup> New TIM Survey, Gal Mor, Ynet 28.11.06 <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-3333639,00.html>

<sup>6</sup> TIM Survey: The Israeli Surfers are More Diverse, Gal Mor, Ynet 17.1.07 <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-3353648,00.html>

<sup>7</sup> Israel in second place in mean time surfing the Internet. Lior Haner, The Marker Hi-Tech and Communications, March 13, 2007.

<sup>8</sup> Energetic marketing: Bezeq offers a 5 Megabit connection package and subsidizes almost completely LCD screens., Eran Gabay, The Marker Online, 21.1.2007, <http://www.themarker.com>

<sup>9</sup> TIM Survey: Google, Walla and Tapuz increase their exposure; Ynet drops down. Uri Rodriguez-Garcia, IceNews, <http://www.ice.co.il/article.asp?pgID=102298&catId=4#>