



# ISRAEL

## Southern Neighbourhood



### Key milestones

- NOVEMBER 1995**  
Signature of the **EU-Israel Association Agreement**, which entered into force in June 2000
- APRIL 2005**  
Signature of the **EU-Israel Action Plan**. The validity is being further extended to January 2025.
- NOVEMBER 2009**  
Signature of the **EU-Israel additional agreement on trade in agriculture**
- JUNE 2013**  
Signature of the agreement associating Israel with **Horizon 2020**
- JUNE 2020**  
Ratification of the **EU-Israel 'Open skies' Aviation Agreement** (in place since 2013), which has led to a substantial decrease in airfares, alongside a significant increase in the number of flights, passengers and tourists.
- DECEMBER 2021**  
Signature of the association agreement for Horizon Europe



### EU-Israel relations

The EU and Israel enjoy close political and mutually beneficial trade and investment relations, together with significant economic, financial, research and innovation, cultural, people-to people and security cooperation.



### Trade & investment

- The EU is Israel's main trading partner: the EU represented **29.3%** of total good imports by Israel and **21.9%** of total good exports from Israel to the world in 2020.
- In 2019 trade in services between the EU and Israel was worth €15.9 billion.
- Total inward and outward FDI stocks reached €100 billion in 2018.



### Mobility & Erasmus+

- Israel benefits from a visa-free regime.
- 8,415** Israeli students professors and university staff travelled to Europe and **6,582** European counterparts travelled to Israel between 2015 and 2020.



### EU funding<sup>1</sup>

- Through the **European Neighbourhood Instrument** (period 2014-2020):
  - The EU provided **€2 million** annually for institutional twinning projects. Twinning in the fields of waste management, energy, children out of home and support to the national qualifications framework (NQF) are still ongoing.
  - Israel benefits, together with Palestine\*, from the regional programme '**European Peacebuilding Initiative**'. The annual EU contribution to the Initiative of €5 million supports and promotes the conditions for a sustainable resolution of the Israeli-Palestine conflict through civil society projects and citizens' positive engagement.
  - In 2021, Israel's public administration benefited from 19 events of the EU's Technical Assistance and Information Exchange instrument (**TAIEX**), tackling issues such as the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on cybercrime, digital policy, youth employment, electricity trade, sustainable production and consumption and the Green Deal and green recovery.
- The **Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument - Global Europe (NDICI)** is the main instrument for the EU's cooperation and development with the European neighbourhood partners, including in the Southern Neighbourhood, for the period 2021-2027. Support will continue to be provided to strengthen Israeli institutions in key priority areas.
- Israel participates actively in **Horizon 2020**, the EU's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, and benefited from cooperation projects worth close to **€170 million** per year in the period 2017-2020. The EU-Israel Horizon Europe Association Agreement was signed on 6 December 2021 and will allow continued cooperation and contribution to global science and innovation.
- Israel benefits from loan financing for infrastructure and investment projects channelled by the European Investment Bank with notable recent interventions in desalination (**€150 million**) and innovation in the context of the coronavirus (**€50 million**).
- Israel also benefits from EU thematic programmes and instruments, such as the **European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights** and the Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities programme under the **Development Cooperation Instrument** for a total of over **€14.6 million** in 2014-2020.



### COVID-19 crisis response

The EU has supported the engagement of Israel in Horizon 2020 dedicated calls for coronavirus treatments, testing and vaccines. Since 15 September 2021, digital COVID certificates are mutually recognised between the EU and Israel.

<sup>1</sup>All programmes comply with the requirements set in the 'Guidelines on the eligibility of Israeli entities and their activities in the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967' published in the Official Journal of the European Union on 19 July 2013. All figures refer to grant financing unless otherwise specified.

\* This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of Member States on this issue.