

The Integration Process in Israel

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1. Introduction: Processes of Integration in Israel

In most of the countries of the European Union, North America, and in Australia and New Zealand the problem of immigrant integration is very significant, vivid, and relevant. For Israel, integration of different parts of its society is a very important issue as well. The meaning of the word “integration”, in the sense of the American expression “de-segregation” meaning elimination of separation, illustrates how Israel attempts to facilitate the processes of absorption. Israel strives to unite diverse components of its society and integrate new immigrants from different countries into local society. This issue is connected to different aspects such as education, employment, and social institutions, etc.

Israel is a nation of immigrants. More than a million immigrants from the former Soviet Union and 100,000 from Ethiopia came to Israel in the late 80's and 90's and first-generation Israelis comprise only 32 percent of the population.

The State of Israel is built on immigration and that is why the issue of immigrant integration into Israeli society has been the main political goal. The integration process of immigrants in society is one of the Ministry of Absorption's central tasks. At this stage the government tries to be aware of the differences between new immigrants and the local population and provide common ground wherever possible in a non-homogenous society. The government supports reaching common goals such as wealth, security and the establishment of rules that apply to all members of society.

The integration of immigrants into the social fabric of the community has been one of the central objectives of the State of Israel from the day of its founding, and, as such, it stands at the forefront of the government's priorities. The initial idea of the Jewish melting pot forced Israel to work towards common goals .

Large scale immigration and positive integration are not only overall goals of the nation and the State, but also serve as a powerful impetus to Israel's development and progress in all areas.

Extracting conclusions from the lessons collected over a decade teaches the importance of investing directly in immigrants. Because each sector of the population is involved in its own unique challenges, a specific response to immigrants' needs must be provided in separate frameworks.

2. The Law of Return (Parliament, 1950)

The Law of Return is Israeli legislation, enacted in 1950, that gives Jews, those of Jewish ancestry, and their spouses the right to migrate to and settle in Israel and acquire citizenship. Follow-up legislation on immigration matters was included in the Nationality Law of 1952. These two pieces of legislation combine religion, history, nation, and democracy in a way that is unique to Israel. Together, the legislation grants special rights to Jews with the aim of facilitating their immigration to the Jewish ancestral homeland.

The Law of Return declares that Israel constitutes a home not only for the inhabitants of the State, but also for all Jewish people everywhere whether they are living in poverty and fear of persecution or in affluence and safety. The law gives the right of return to those born Jews (having a Jewish mother or grandmother), those with Jewish ancestry (having a Jewish father or grandfather), and converts to Judaism (Orthodox, Reform, or Conservative denominations - not secular - though Reform and Conservative conversions must take place outside the state, similar to civil marriages).

In 1970, Israel took another historic step by granting automatic citizenship not only to Jews, but also to their non-Jewish children, grandchildren, and spouses, and to the non-Jewish spouses of their children and grandchildren. This addition not only ensured that families would not be broken apart, but also promised a safe place in Israel for non-Jews subjected to persecution because of their Jewish roots.

3. A State Integrates Immigrants

With nearly a million immigrants arriving in Israel during the final decade of the 20th century, the face of Israeli society has been irrevocably and drastically changed. This group, as a whole, has flourished, and brought about unprecedented economic growth, cultural innovation, and technological advancement.

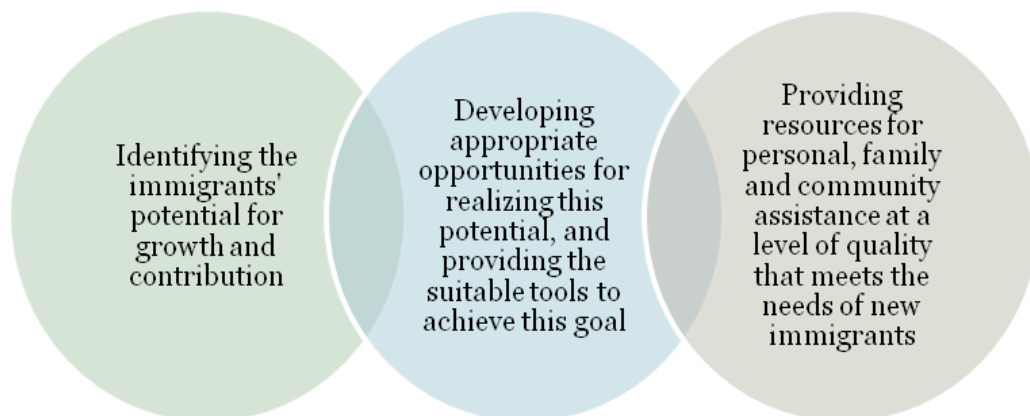
Tens of thousands of engineers and academics, along with thousands of scientists, artists and musicians, constitute unique "human capital". They are educated, professional, and dedicated with an inestimable capacity for advancing the economy, technological knowledge, and creative culture in Israel.

As the summation of a process, this human aspect accelerates the integration of immigrants into society, significantly contributes to preventing emigration, and encourages further immigration.

4. Ministry of Immigrant Absorption

Immigration has always been a serious Israeli concern, as evidenced by the ministerial rank given to the chief official in charge of immigration and the absorption of immigrants. Various institutions and programs have helped integrate immigrants into Israeli society. The Ministry of Immigrant Absorption is a main resource responsible for providing government assistance to new immigrants and returning residents. The Ministry assists immigrants from the day they enter the country, striving to facilitate their full integration into every area of Israeli society. Absorption assistance is provided through dialogue and cooperation with the immigrants and their organizations.

The main areas of activity are:



4.1 The Departments of the Ministry of Absorption

- Ministry Administration
- Employment Department
- Housing Department
- Center for Absorption in Science
- Community Absorption Department
- Student Authority
- Planning and Research Department
- Ben Gurion Airport Department
- Publication Department
- Business Entrepreneurship Department
- Returning Residence Department
- Public Inquiries Department
- Information System Department
- Quality of Service
- District, Bureau, and Branch Offices
- Department of Documentation and Eligibility
- Unit for Absorption of Ethiopian Immigrants
- The Legal Bureau
- Director of Budgets
- The Comptroller
- Internal Auditing Division
- Human Resources
- Training Division
- Security Department Description
- The Spokesman's Bureau and the Information Officer
- The Division for Improvement of Service

Ministerial Departments

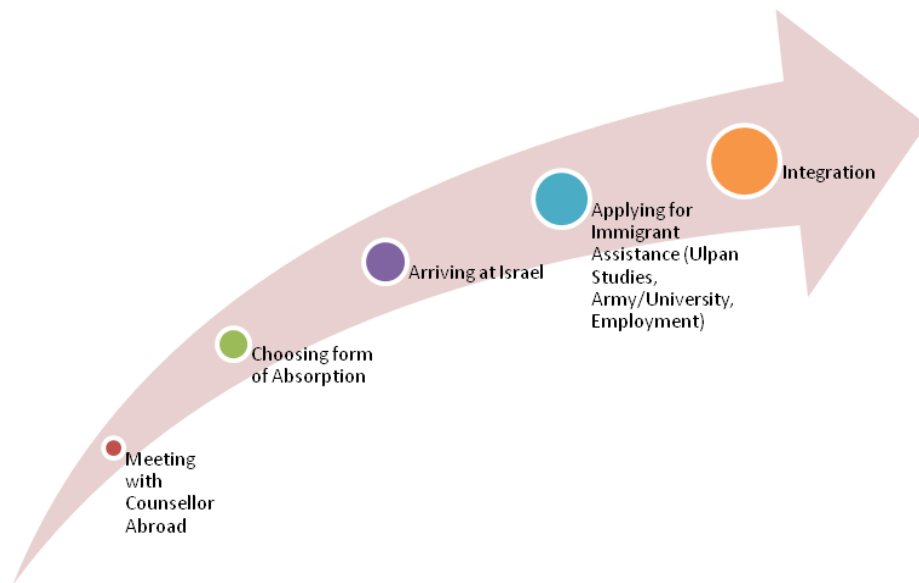


4.2 Immigrant Publications

The Ministry of Immigrant Absorption produces informational booklets designed for new and veteran immigrants, tourists, repatriation candidates overseas, returning residents, and absorption workers. The publications provide reliable and up-to-date information about absorption procedures in Israel, rights and obligations, types of assistance, advice and guidance, and cultural orientation. Publications are available at all Ministry branch and district offices throughout the country, as well as at Ministry of Immigrant Absorption offices at ports of entry. Publications are also distributed from time to time through intensive Hebrew classes, information centers, local authorities, immigrant associations, and other sources.

Education - the Education System in Israel	Information Booklet for Immigrant Students	Housing	Military Service
National Insurance	Guide to Services for the Disabled	Transportation Services in Israel	First Steps
Financial Assistance- Absorption Basket	A Guide to Ulpan Study	Employment Guidance Centers	Guarding Your Health
The Life Cycle	Pensioners	Registration in a Health Fund	Where to turn?
Information on Conversion - Address and Telephone Guide	General Conditions of Employment	Accountants	Artists and Writers
Engineers and Architects	Lawyers	Medical Professionals	Nurses
Psychologists	Scientists and Researchers	Social Workers	Teachers and Kindergarten Teachers
Hi-Tech Employees	Higher Education in Israel Pamphlet	Scholarship Program for Research Students	The New Aliyon magazine
	Information Newspaper for Immigrants	"Shiluv" Magazine	

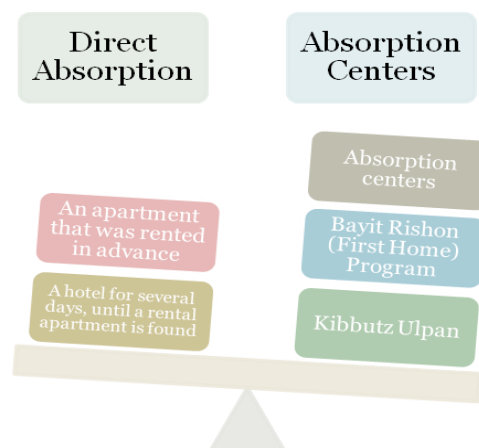
5. Process of Absorption



Receiving immigrants at the airport

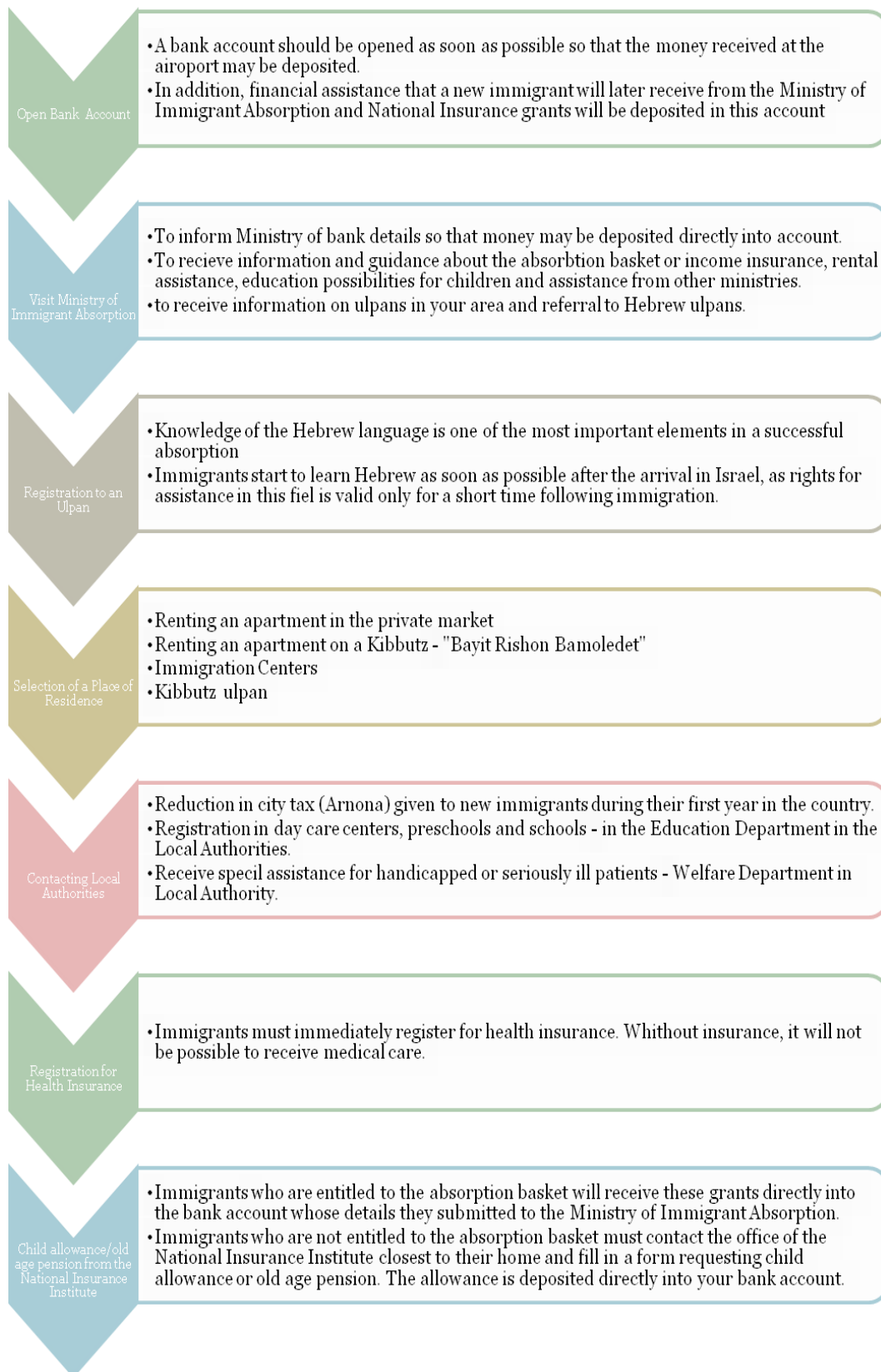
After new immigrants land and before they undergo a passport inspection, a representative from the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption will meet them. Representatives ensure the safety of new immigrants and assist them in the processes necessary for them to enter. New immigrants will be provided with a sum of money in accordance with the Program of Absorption. In some cases Ministry representatives escort new immigrants to their accommodation, for example to a kibbutz or absorption center or a taxi will take new immigrants to their place of choice in Israel free of charge. New immigrants are also provided with the necessary forms and documents (immigration certificate, health insurance form, etc).

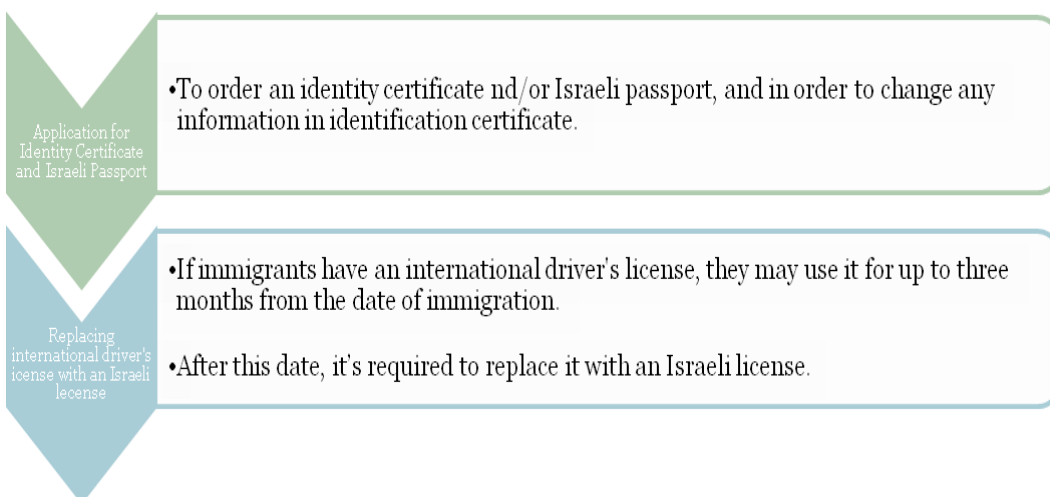
There are two paths to absorption in Israel - direct absorption and absorption centers:



First steps in Israel







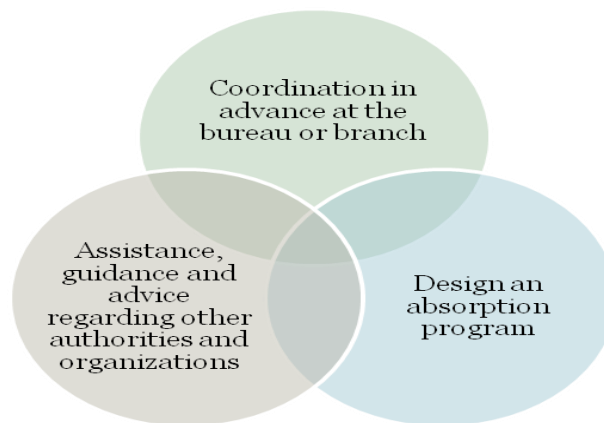
Check list of Initial Arrangements

Initial guidance and counselling	•Ministry of Immigrant Absorption
Finance assistance	•Ministry of Immigrant Absorption
Referral to ulpan	•Ministry of Immigrant Absorption
Opening of bank account	•Commercial banks
Returning Minors' and Immigrant Citizens' registration with a national health fund	•Post office branches
Request for child allowance	•Institute of National Insurance
Registration of children to daycare centers / nursery schools / schools	•Local authority
Issuance of Identification Certificate	•Ministry of Interior
Registration of address in Identification Certificate	•Ministry of Interior
Receiving Eligibility Certificate from Ministry of Housing	•Branches of mortgage banks
Request for assistance in rent	•Matan Chen, Amidar and Migar Companies
Pregnant women, children up to 4, development follow-up, vaccinations	•Family Health Centers
Referral to kibbutz ulpan	•Jewish Agency – Information Centers
Exchange of drivers' licences	•License Bureau
Authorization of academic degrees	•Ministry of Education and relevant ministries based on field of study

The Personal Absorption Counsellor

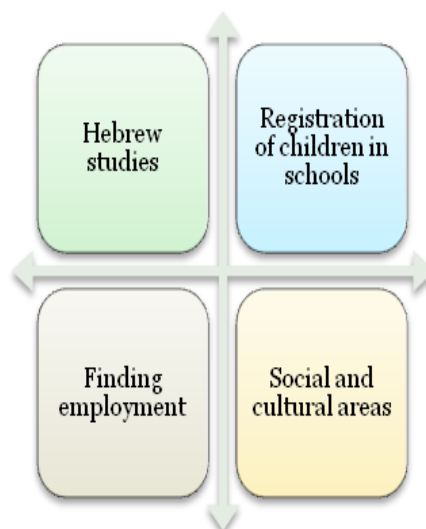
The initial process of immigration starts abroad. When one immigrates to Israel, he/she will be entitled to ongoing assistance and guidance from a personal absorption counsellor, who speaks the local language and will provide general service. In almost every country in the world there are representatives from the Jewish Agency and Ministry of Absorption. The service is provided by the personal counsellor at one service location, where all the services are offered in one place and by one person.

The tasks of the personal absorption counsellor are:



Group Repatriation and Absorption

In order to encourage repatriation and improve absorption procedures, the Ministry of Absorption, in cooperation with the Jewish Agency and local authorities, has initiated a group repatriation and absorption plan for immigrants. The program guarantees guidance throughout the absorption processes by a proctor who will accompany the family during initial absorption in various areas such as:

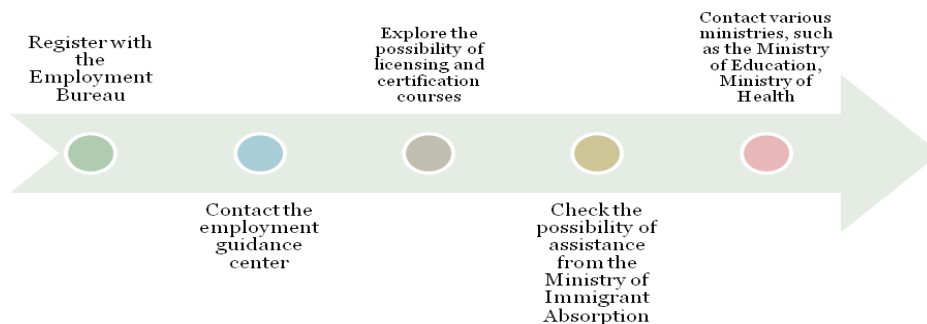


Follow-up Arrangements at the Ministry of Absorption

What happens after completion of the Hebrew courses?

At the completion of Hebrew courses, immigrants will begin looking for work or participate in licensing courses, professional training, or retraining courses. During this time, he/she will receive assistance from the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption.

Integration in the Job Market



Immigrants may receive income insurance, if they have registered with the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption or are studying in morning courses recognized by the Ministry. If immigrants cannot register with the Bureau of Labour or cannot study due to age, family status, or medical condition, they may receive financial assistance as income support.

What happens after the end of the first year in Israel?

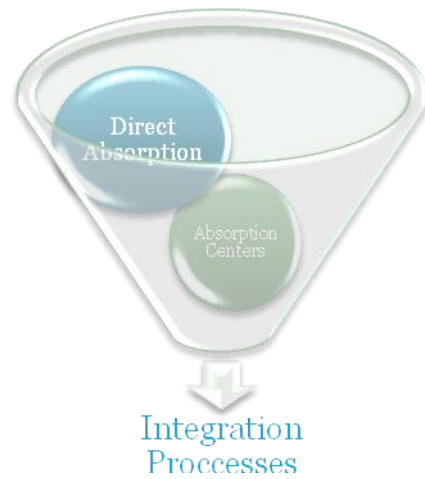
In addition to the absorption basket immigrants will receive rental assistance. Those not entitled to the absorption basket must contact one of the following companies – “Amidar”, “Matan Chen”, or “Migar”.

Continued Financial Assistance

If immigrants are unemployed and registered with the Employment Bureau or are studying in a Ministry of Labour course or have received income support from the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption, immigrants must contact the National Insurance Institute to check the requirements and terms for receiving insurance assistance.

If immigrants are studying in a course from the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption, they will continue to receive assistance from the Ministry of Absorption until the end of the course. They may participate in licensing, certification, or retraining courses as well as training to improve professional standards after their first year as well. They should periodically check which courses are being offered.

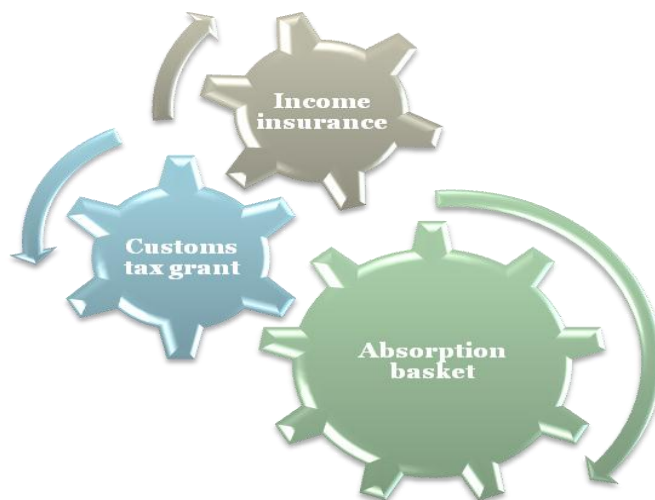
6. Programs and Forms of Absorption



6.1 Direct Absorption

With the direct absorption program, immigrants receive financial assistance, rent an apartment for themselves, register at an ulpan Hebrew Intensive Course, and independently integrate into Israeli society. Usually immigrants receiving support from relatives who came to the country many years before choose this form of absorption as they are still eligible for the Ministry's assistance.

The forms of assistance are:



6.2 Absorption Center

The “merkaz klita”, or absorption center, was developed in the late 1960s to accommodate the increased immigration that occurred between 1969 and 1975 of relatively well-off and educated Jews from the West, particularly from the United States. These centers combined intensive Hebrew courses with long-term (often exceeding one year) accommodation for families. With representatives of all the major ministries ideally on hand or on call, these centers were supposed to cushion the entry of the new immigrant into Israeli society.

The absorption center is a unique Israeli housing arrangement where new immigrants can start their initial absorption process. Located throughout the country, they are temporary living quarters offering a supportive framework, tailored to immigrants' needs. The centers' furnished rooms or apartments are available for rent at lower rates than in the private market, providing the new immigrant with a first destination and warm atmosphere as he becomes acquainted with Israeli society. Hebrew courses are available at most of the absorption centers and are staffed by highly professional teams who have long-term experience in assisting new immigrants' families in the absorption process.

Residence in the absorption center is usually for a period of up to six months, though participants in specific student or other repatriation programs may stay for the duration of their program. Spaces are limited and potential new immigrants are required to register with an Emissary of Repatriation prior to repatriation.

In absorption centers there are workers with specific responsibilities. The head of the center is the manager and is responsible for all the immigrants who arrive at the absorption center daily. The manager also meets every new immigrant personally. Every center is under protection of the superintendent – “Av Bait”, literally a father of the home, who is responsible for cleaning, repairs, etc. Another interesting position is that of “Em Bait” – literally a mother of the home. She takes care of immigrants like a doctor/psychologist and acts as a liaison between immigrants and management. A social worker also does interviews with new immigrants, helps them contact different ministries, and has an important influence in recognizing the new immigrants' difficult situations and conditions.

Another important role is the Coordinator of Culture with a vast range of responsibilities, such as organizing public holidays, trips in the country, and different cultural events. It is

also part of his/her responsibility to manage relations with the Ministry of Absorption and other authorities. After understanding the cultural differences between different groups of immigrants, absorption centers were provided with instructors. In every absorption center there are instructors for immigrants from the former Soviet Union and Ethiopia as major immigration countries of origin. But after a certain period of time, new immigrants must rent an apartment for themselves.

Current absorption centers are located throughout the country in Arad, Ashdod, Beersheba, Haifa, Ibim Student Village, Jerusalem, Karmiel, Kfar Saba, Raanana, and Upper Nazareth.

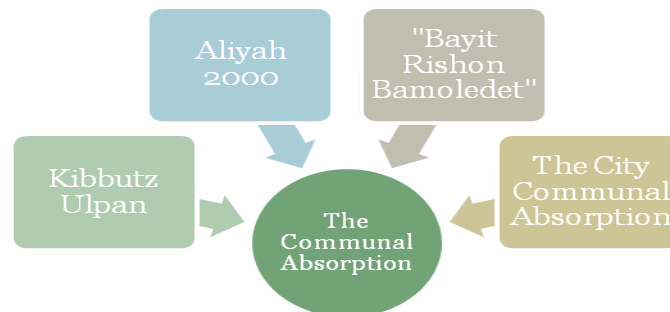
Ulpan in the Absorption Center

Almost every absorption center has a school for learning Hebrew, or an ulpan. A few absorption centers do not offer classes on site, but they are associated with nearby ulpans. In any case, the five-month ulpan is compulsory for all absorption center residents. Hebrew study is central to the absorption center's goal, which represents rapid and relatively painless entry into Israeli society. There are usually several levels of study and immigrants will be tested to determine their placement level. There are special clubrooms for older children, where they can receive help with their Hebrew studies and homework, make friends, and participate in social activities. Adult residents from around the world benefit from each other's support and encouragement in the challenging task of learning a new language. There is also financial aid provided for day care fees. This is only for the duration of the parents' Hebrew course (5 months) and does not cover all of the costs of day care. Cultural events organized by the absorption center staff contribute to the informal Hebrew learning environment. These events also introduce new immigrants to Jewish culture and traditions, which are as important as the Hebrew course in becoming a part of Israel.

The City Communal Repatriation and Absorption Projects

The Jewish Agency for Israel and the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption have initiated the integrative "Communal Repatriation Project – Better Together" – Aliyah V'Klita Kehilatit, for new immigrants from North America. The program's goal is to help potential new immigrants form a like-minded group to exchange information, provide emotional support and share experiences and preparation for repatriation. The group will then be repatriated to select cities in Israel and receive a special comprehensive absorption package.

Even before an immigrant arrives in Israel, a limited stay at an absorption center can be arranged through immigration emissaries from the Jewish Agency. In some particular cases immigrants are eligible to stay in an absorption center until they finish their first year stay.



“Kibbutz Ulpan”

The “Kibbutz Ulpan” is considered the most suitable absorption option for young immigrants, enabling them to combine studies and work. It is designed for immigrants between the ages of 17-35, singles, or couples without children. The ulpan runs for 5 months and includes Hebrew language studies based on a Ministry of Education program and work in one of the market sectors. Students live on the kibbutz and receive their meals in the kibbutz dining room. In addition to the Hebrew language studies in the ulpan, social and cultural activities are provided as well as tours around the country.

Aliyah 2000

The Department of Immigration and Absorption in the Jewish Agency, in conjunction with Ministry of Immigrant Absorption, organizes special absorption and study programs within the framework of the Aliyah 2000 program. The programs are composed of 2 stages:

- Stage A – Hebrew studies
- Stage B – Preparation for entrance exams to institutions of higher education or for professional training or retraining courses such as tourism, nursing, English teachers, doctors, lawyers, etc.

"Bayit Rishon Bamoledet"

In the "Bayit Rishon Bamoledet" program, immigrant families can rent an apartment on a kibbutz and receive all kibbutz services including meals, access to an ulpan, and schooling for their children.

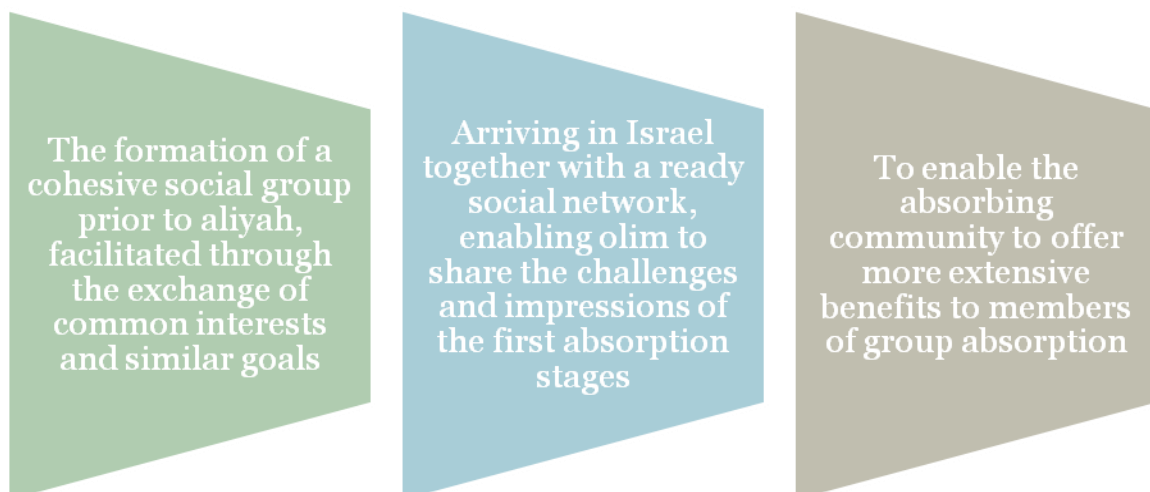
Family Plan

Families engaged in repatriation have their own unique set of issues involving the challenge of making things work on all fronts and meeting the needs of family members. Family Plan has over 18 years of experience with thousands of new immigrant families, many of whom chose to stay in their first home in the kibbutz.

Single Plan

One of the most challenging aspects of repatriating for a single person is finding a social network. The "Bayit Rishon Bamoledet" program provides a built-in social environment for the new immigrant. It offers an inviting framework as a springboard to life in Israel, plus a support group of other immigrants wishing to explore a variety of new experiences together. Living on a kibbutz involves a very social way of life and is an excellent option for the single person looking to get connected.

Focal points of the Communal Repatriation Absorption Program are:



6.3 What is an Ulpan?

An ulpan is an educational institution run by the Ministries of Immigrant Absorption and Education and the Jewish Agency, designed for learning Hebrew. Some ulpanes were funded by municipalities, others by the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption, or the Jewish Agency. Because they were heavily subsidized, ulpanes were free or charged only nominal fees to new immigrants. Some ulpanes were residential, offering dormitory-like accommodations with board. They were mainly intended for single immigrants and offered half-day instruction in a course that lasted six months. The municipal ulpanes also offered intensive night classes in order to increase language acquisition.

Many kibbutzim also ran ulpanes, which combined half-day language instruction with a half-day's labour on the kibbutz.

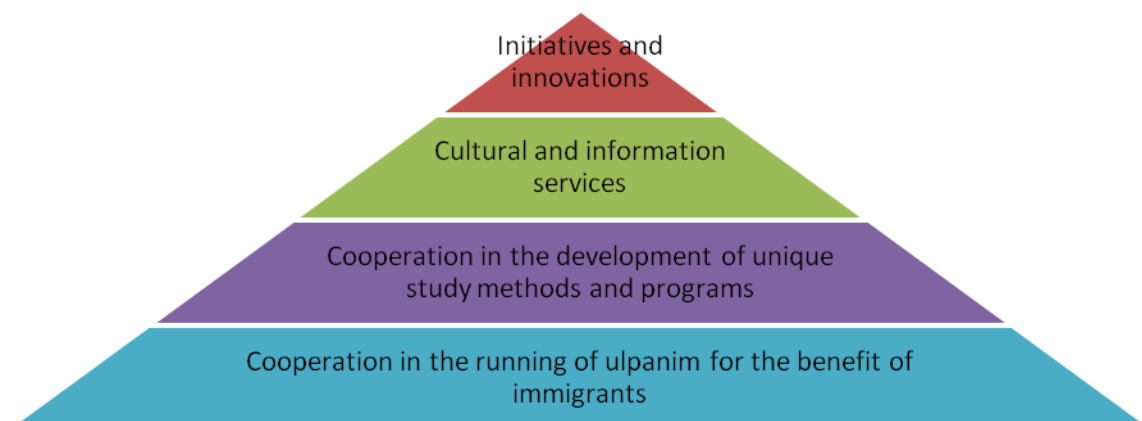
Hours of Study

There are several study programs, the most common of which is the five-day-a-week morning program. There are also evening programs.

Duration of Ulpan

A morning ulpan lasts about five months and an evening ulpan about 10 months, depending on the study program. In total, students study approximately 500 hours during the language course.

The Ulpan Department operates in the following areas:



6.4 Types of Ulpan

Bayit Rishon BaMoledet
Kibbutz Ulpan
Student Ulpan
Ulpan for Pensioners
Supplementary Ulpanim
Vocational Ulpanim
Second Chance Ulpanim
Additional Ulpanim
Virtual Hebrew Studies

Services Offered During The Ulpan Studies			
Counselling and Referral to a Suitable Ulpan	Funding of Ulpan Studies	Funding of Living Costs for New Immigrants	Travel Costs

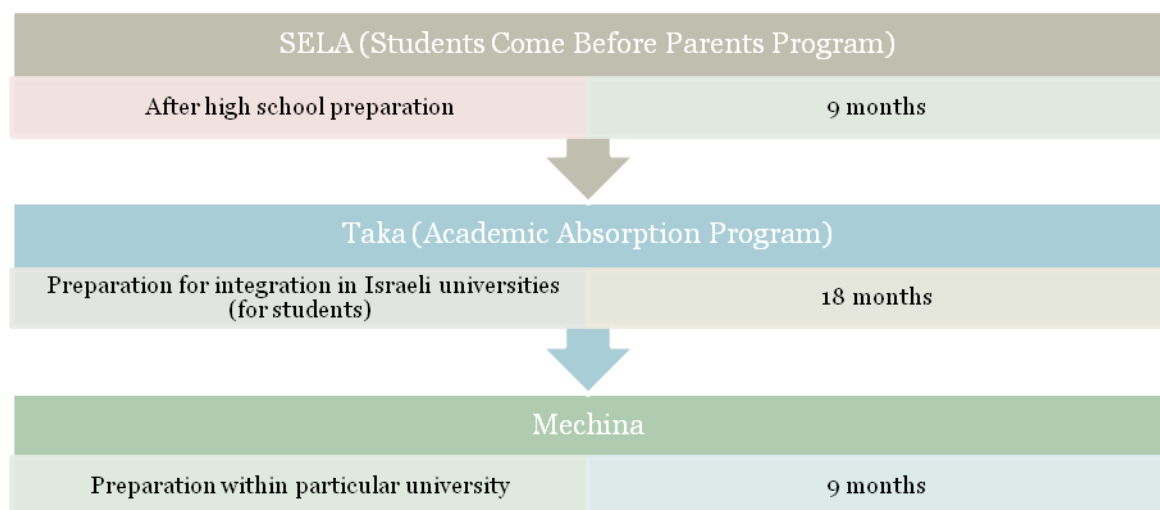
Student Villages

The Student Village represents a precedent-setting concept for the absorption of young people into Israeli society. It offers a framework which combines educational opportunity with a comprehensive support system.

A variety of students studying at different frameworks make up the population of the villages. Some of the students residing in the Village study at the different Regional Colleges, which is ideal for their gradual yet steady absorption into Israeli society. Most of the students are from the former Soviet Union, the youngest being 17-year-olds who participate in “Selah” (the Hebrew acronym for “students come before their parents”), a ten-month program designed to prepare them for subsequent higher education in Israel or military service. The older students either study in an ulpan or attend academic courses. Additional programs including “Kedma” for Ethiopian students, “Atid” for South American youth, and “Aleh” for students from the former Soviet Union make up the rest of this unique cultural mixture.

In addition to low-cost student apartments, the Village provides the residents with daily services including a dining room, grocery store, and launderette.

Pre-Academic Study Programs



6.5 About the Kibbutz

More than 90 years ago the first kibbutz (from the Hebrew word kvutza, meaning group), was established. It was a revolutionary idea of a voluntary society in which people live in accordance with a specific social contract, based on egalitarian and communal principles in a social and economic framework. The main characteristics of Kibbutz life were established in adherence to collectivism in property alongside a cooperative character in the spheres of education, culture, and social life. With this came the understanding that the kibbutz member is part of a unit that is larger than just his own family.

The kibbutz operates under the premise that all income generated by the kibbutz and its members goes into a common pool. This income is used to run the kibbutz, make investments, and guarantee mutual and reciprocal aid and responsibility between members. Kibbutz members receive the same budget (according to family size), regardless of their job or position. In terms of education, all children start equally and are given equal opportunity. The kibbutz is governed by a system of direct participatory democracy, where the individual can directly influence issues and events in the community. In this mostly self sufficient community, the collective and the work ethic play major roles.

There are kibbutzim where the members receive differential salaries and pay for services, but in all the kibbutzim that have chosen the differentiation model, the members are "insured" regarding the minimum income level. Having grown out of the pioneering era and thinking of the early twentieth century, kibbutz ideology was established and developed during the pre-state and early years of Israel's statehood. During the initial years and for many years after, the kibbutzim assumed prominent roles in almost every sphere of the developing country. Although encompassing only three percent of Israeli society, the kibbutz has made a dramatic mark on Israeli production, culture, and ideology. Today, the kibbutz movement is undergoing a process of change. Some aspects that were included in the public domain in the past are now under the care and responsibility of each member and his or her family. Today there are approximately 250 kibbutzim in the country where about 125,000 people live. The majority of kibbutzim are secular, but there are about twenty religious kibbutzim, as well as kibbutzim connected to both the Conservative and Reform streams. The different characters of kibbutzim are dictated by their historical origins, the ages of members, and the general social and financial success and security of the Kibbutz.

They are located throughout the country and vary in size, location, climate, agriculture, types of industry, population, ideological or religious persuasion, and general character. In addition, issues of privatization and the extent of the continuation of communal life are factors influencing the style and development of most kibbutzim today. Some have more or less solved the issue while others are still engaged in heated discussions as to their character and the character of kibbutz life as it has been known for most of the last century. It is clear that much will be preserved, but at the same time generations have been raised and lessons learnt that will shed light on the future of the kibbutz lifestyle.

Part of the ideology of kibbutzim has always been the good of the collective and a thorough involvement and ideological belief in the social issues and agenda of the country. An extension of these beliefs has led to ongoing involvement with new immigrants over the years, from developing programs and assisting in providing accommodation to opening their communities and homes. The kibbutzim have been historically involved with repatriation and continue to be interested in this important aspect of building the country.

6.6 Student Kibbutz Ulpan

The Student Kibbutz Ulpan Program offers a unique experience of living on a kibbutz, while combining studies and work. Designed for young people and students preparing for higher education in Israel, full room and board is available. The Kibbutz Ulpan Program has long been considered one of the most successful programs for young adults who want to spend time in Israel and learn Hebrew. This program offers the opportunity to experience a lifestyle unique to Israel. It combines intensive Hebrew language instruction with the experience of working and living in the kibbutz environment. In addition, it gives young Jews from all over the world the opportunity to meet in an inexpensive program, while sharing the excitement of being introduced to Israel.

7. Student Authority

The Student Authority “Minhal haStudentim” was established by the Jewish Agency for Israel and the Ministry of Absorption to assist immigrant students from all over the world. Their staff helps prospective students with information and guidance through the application process. The Student Authority also gives tuition subsidies to eligible immigrants and organises cultural enrichment activities. Eligible students can receive three years of coverage for their tuition fees towards a bachelor's degree and two years of coverage towards a master's degree.

In certain institutions where fees are higher than those charged by universities, the Student Authority will pay the amount of regular tuition, and the student pays the balance.

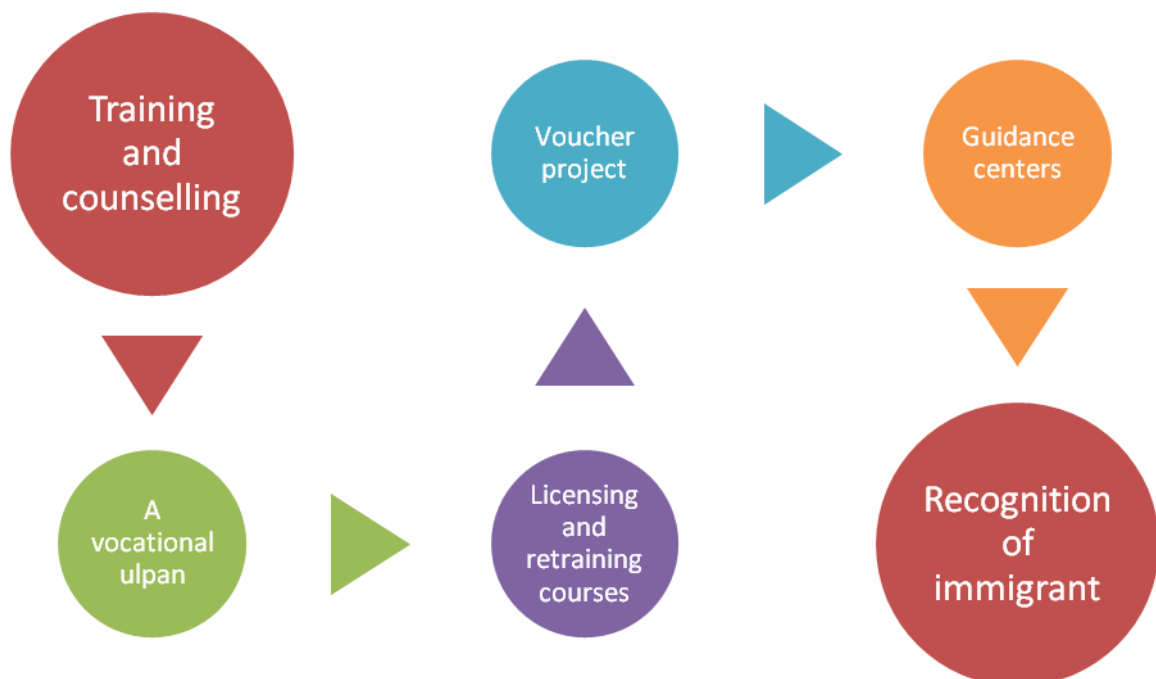
8. Employment

The Ministry of Immigrant Absorption operates in a number of ways to help new immigrants integrate into the local job market in accordance with their education and work experience.

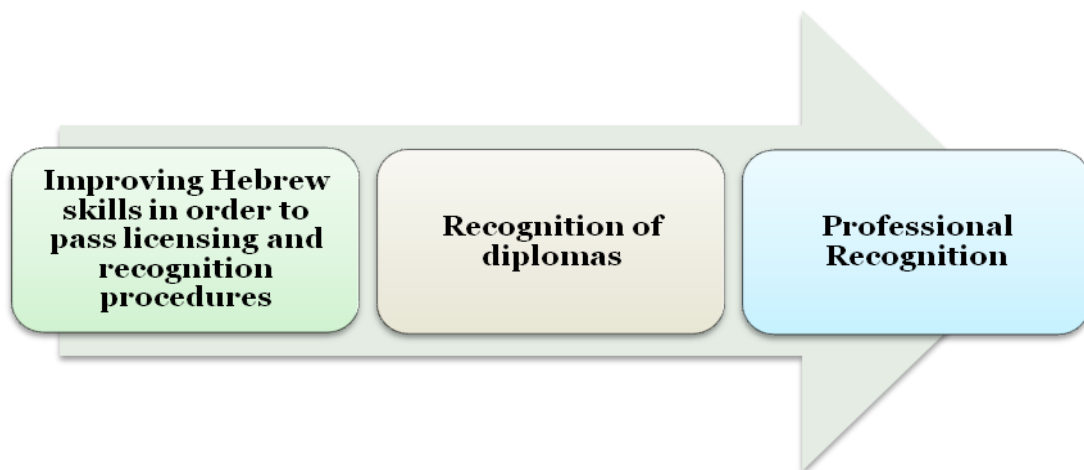
Programs vary based on the immigrant's profession, personal capabilities, and professional requirements in Israel. Some professions do not require any preparation other than study of Hebrew.

These professionals may be able to find employment through help wanted ads, through Ministry of Immigrant Absorption Employment Guidance Centers, the government employment service, through associations or other volunteer organizations in the field, or through personal contacts. A large number of other professions do require a preparatory period that includes vocational Hebrew studies, licensing or qualifying exams, and a specified period of internship. In some cases, after investigating job possibilities and attempts to integrate into their fields, immigrants choose to undergo retraining for jobs that are in greater demand.

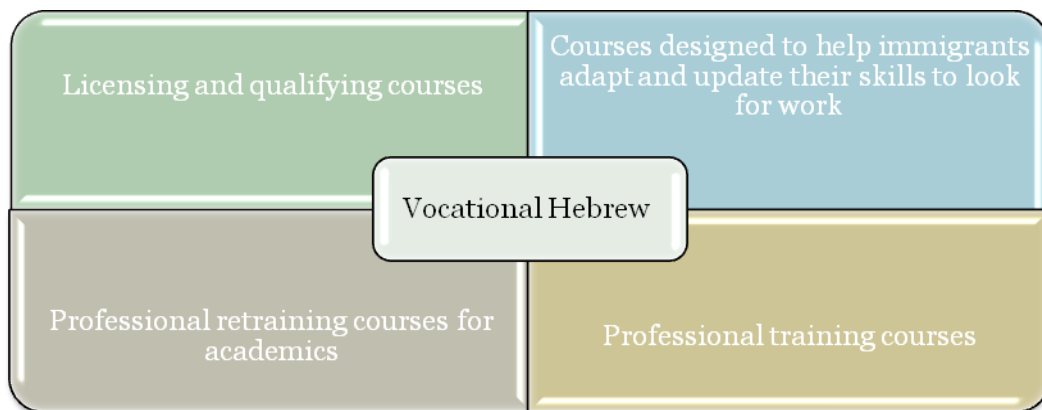
The Employment Division provides new immigrants and returning residents with a range of services in order to facilitate their integration into the job market:



8.1 First Steps in Employment



Many professionals undergo preparatory procedures in one or more of the following frameworks before commencing employment:



8.2 The “Voucher” Project

The Voucher Project is designed to facilitate and simplify employment absorption processes for new immigrants. The purpose of the project is to expand the range of choices available to eligible candidates regarding their professional placement in the job market and to allow them to maximize their skills based on their education, experience, and abilities.

8.3 Participation in Salary and Employment Advancement

In order to encourage the employment of new immigrants and returning residents, the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption assists employers by funding the salaries of immigrants for a limited period.

Assistance is designed to help advance new immigrants in employment, and the employer must agree to continue to employ the immigrant at the conclusion of the assistance period and train the immigrant as necessary.

8.4 Employment Centers

Employment Centers for immigrants are designed for immigrants and returning residents who are not working in their professions or related fields.

The purpose of the center is to assist their integration into the job market by providing job-search skills and by reinforcing professional skills based on need and in accordance with the recommendations of a professional team.

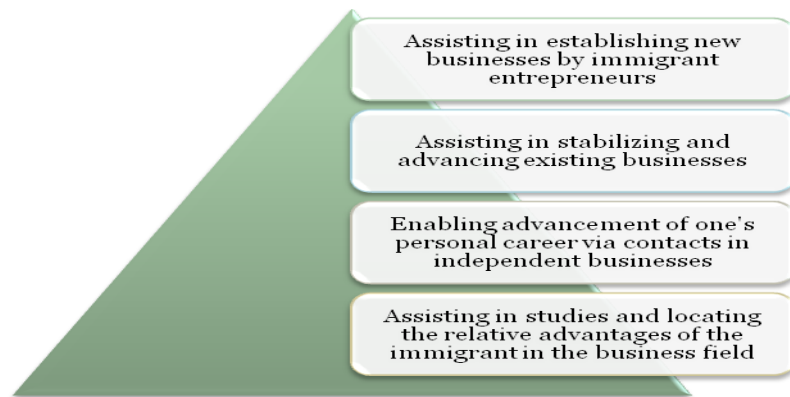
In order to achieve this goal, the employment centers provide the following services:

- **Counselling and Diagnostic services**
- **Professional upgrading of computer and English skills**
- **Professional Hebrew and terminology**

9. Entrepreneurship

The Ministry of Immigrant Absorption runs a program to encourage immigrant entrepreneurs. The program assists new immigrants and returning residents who are interested in opening and developing their own business.

Aims of the Program

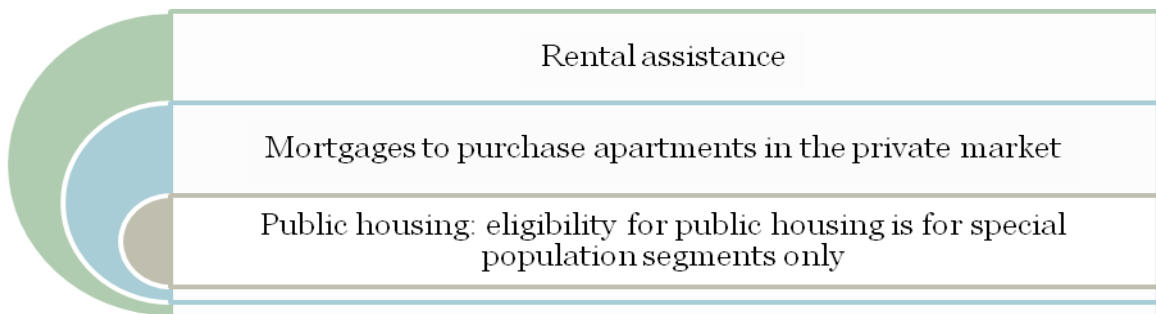


10. Housing

Two independent ministries are responsible for housing assistance for new immigrants. The Ministry of Immigrant Absorption works in conjunction with the Ministry of Construction and Housing and the Ministry of Finance to provide assistance with housing to eligible immigrants. There are two different kinds of housing assistance for the newcomers depending on the path of absorption that they choose. For example, if they want to be housed in the absorption center, they can apply abroad in the beginning of the process or at the airport when they meet the representatives from the Ministry of Absorption, who can provide them with transportation to the place that they choose.

The second way is when newcomers want to independently find their own apartment. In this case they get a certain amount of money according to the size of the family, their age, and other individual circumstances.

Areas of Assistance



Long Term Rentals

The Ministry of Immigrant Absorption and the Ministry of Construction and Housing are continuing the long-term rental track. The goal is to create an additional housing-solutions track for elderly immigrants that would enable them to live in the same rented apartment for a minimum of five years without having to be forced to move from one apartment to another at an average of once a year.

11. Welfare Services

The Social Services Department sees its purpose as helping immigrants who are having a severely difficult time during their absorption.

Department employees help various units in the Ministry to coordinate activities to aid immigrants in need and who are facing various difficult situations.

The professional activity of the department, within the confines of social work, takes place on two fronts of social welfare: individual and family, group and community. The activities are carried out by social workers and personal absorption counsellors.

11.1 Short-Term Individual Intervention

Social services are the link that takes the initiative to identify, mediate, and care for immigrants in distress, crisis, and hardship.

Identifying, diagnosing and locating the distress in addition to providing short-term treatment

Assistance in exercising rights and providing solutions to unusual problems faced by immigrants with special needs via the formal service system, informal organizations and by promoting solutions in the Ministry

Professional input and psycho-social opinions given in internal Ministerial committees such as the Appeals Committee, the Housing Exceptions Committee and the Debt Forgiveness Committee

Counselling, guidance and professional accompaniment to absorption counsellors in branches and in bureaus

Professional responsibility for the formation and implementation of intervention regulations during crises among immigrants who are the victims of hostile acts

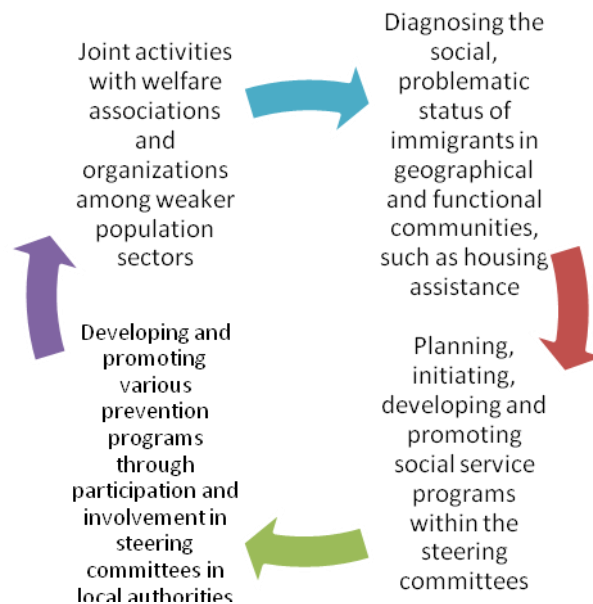
Responsibility for assistance procedures (budget and program): support regulation, district administration fund procedure, and refugee procedure

Responsibility for implementing the law that helps neutralize Chernobyl disaster results and coordination of the recognition committee of 'neutralizers'

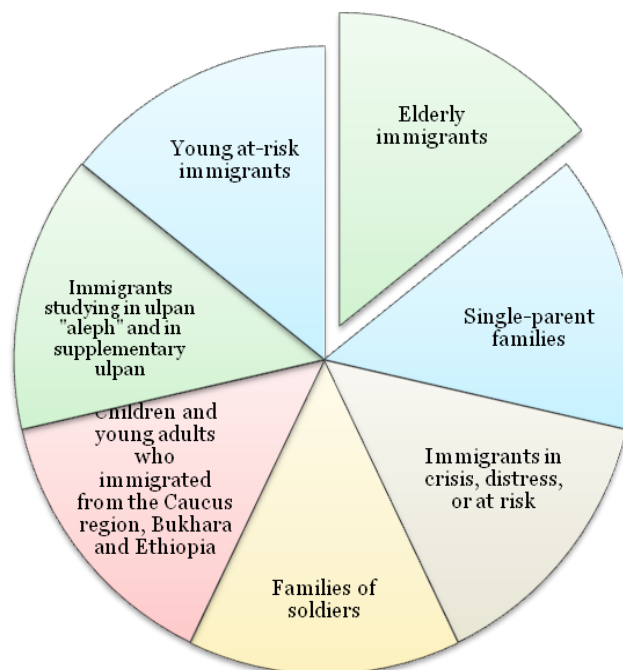
Individual, short-term treatment for mentally ill, homeless, battered women, alcoholics, youth at risk and immigrants who face difficulties from the moment they arrive

11.2 Community Social Work

Within the confines of its community activities, the Department of Social Services is involved in continuing to establish and promote specialization and the provision of tools to diagnose social status of immigrants who face difficulties and who have special needs.



Special attention is given to the following groups:



11.3 Social Services Department Programs

Cultural Sensitivity Intervention Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prevent alcohol abuse • immigrant teens 	"Hafuch al Hafuch" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coordinators in youth information • immigrant teens 	"Al Sam" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Program • immigrant youth
"Sikuim" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accompanying immigrant juvenile offenders • immigrant youth 	"Pinat ba Lev" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • intervention program • female youth at risk 	"Olim al Ha Kav" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • national switchboard • volunteer teens
"Batim Hamim" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coordination • immigrant female youth 	Town and Neighbourhood Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coordination • in particularly problematic towns 	Prevention and Treating Violence in the Family <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inter-ministerial and inter-organizational continual forum for learning and identifying needs • regional
Street Job Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accompanying and connecting to structured therapy programs. • alienated, immigrant youth 	Multicultural Program, Tour Programs with Society for Protection of Nature <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parent-child relations • Ethiopian and former Soviet Union immigrants 	"Kulanu Beyachad" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating a sense of belonging, prevention of drug and violence • immigrant youth

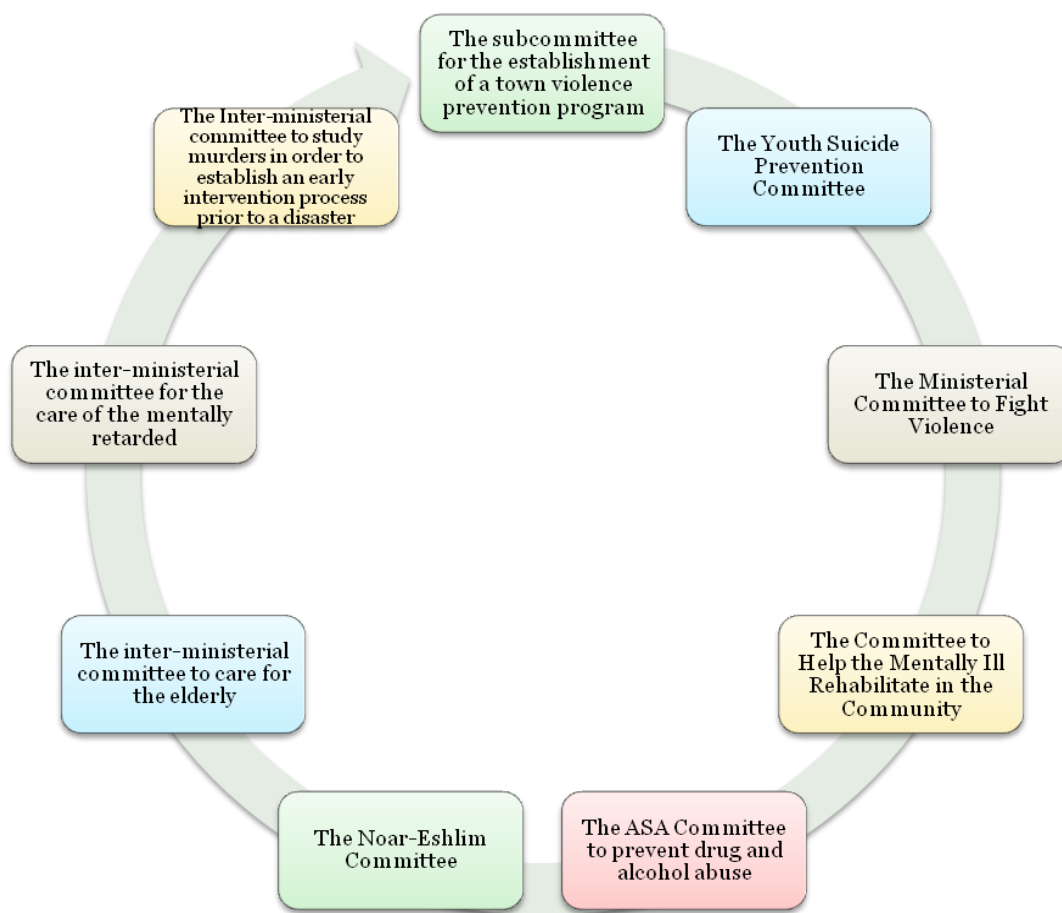
Young Entrepreneur	Mishpaha Tomechet	Efshar Aheret
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •entrepreneur development program •immigrant youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •support families whose children are under juvenile probation services care •immigrants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •therapeutic program for child victims of violence and their parents •immigrants

In addition, department employees are involved in the development and promotion of social services to immigrants in the towns, with an emphasis on key goals established by the Ministry administration:

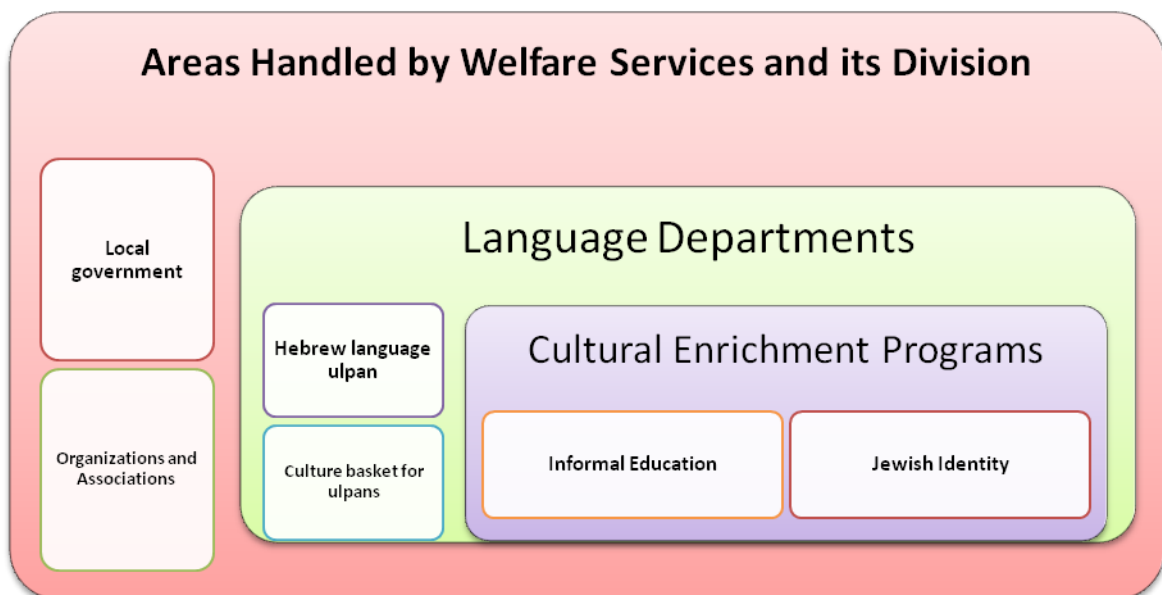
- **Coping with problems of youth at risk and in distress**
- **Coping with problems of family violence in immigrant families**

In order to succeed in the integration processes, the policy should espouse clear and non-assimilative aims, operative principles drawn from updated research-based evidence, and effective monitoring and evolution mechanisms. It is also important for the integration process to be more than just a transitory issue of integration for the new immigrants.

11.4 Involvement in the Inter-ministerial Committees



11.5 The Chart of Welfare Areas of Activity



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