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# Wikipedia as a Battlefield: The Gaza “WikiRights” Trainings and the Information War Against Israel

Many Americans treat Wikipedia as a neutral reference shelf. It is not built that way. It is a volunteer-edited site where motivated groups can shape what casual readers see, especially on emotional, fast-moving conflicts. A recent report describes a Gaza-based training program designed to produce “professional Wikipedia editing” tied to the Israel-Hamas war. The program’s stated aim is not neutral education. It is advocacy, paired with a “genocide” framing. That matters because hostile narratives do not need to win a debate to damage Israel. They only need to saturate search results, classrooms, and social feeds with claims that paint Israel as uniquely evil.

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## Key takeaways

- Euro Med Human Rights Monitor [announced](https://euromedmonitor.org/en/article/6981/Euro-Med-Monitor-launches-third-round-of-WikiRights-project-to-document-genocide-in-Gaza) (<https://euromedmonitor.org/en/article/6981/Euro-Med-Monitor-launches-third-round-of-WikiRights-project-to-document-genocide-in-Gaza>) a third “WikiRights” project in Gaza that trains participants in Wikipedia editing tied to the war.
- Euro Med says trainees will add documentation-based articles rooted in “live testimonies” and present “stories of genocide victims.”
- Watchdog reporting describes [ties](https://ngo-monitor.org/ngos/euro-med-human-rights-monitor/) (<https://ngo-monitor.org/ngos/euro-med-human-rights-monitor/>) between Euro Med leadership and Hamas, including an Israeli administrative seizure order tied to work with a Hamas-linked entity.
- ADL [reported](https://www.adl.org/resources/report/editing-hate-how-anti-israel-and-anti-jewish-bias-undermines-wikipedias-neutrality) (<https://www.adl.org/resources/report/editing-hate-how-anti-israel-and-anti-jewish-bias-undermines-wikipedias-neutrality>) evidence of a coordinated group of editors pushing anti-Israel and antisemitic bias on Wikipedia content related to the conflict.
- Members of Congress cited the ADL findings and urged Wikimedia to [address](https://wassermanschultz.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=3330) (<https://wassermanschultz.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=3330>) manipulation risks on Israel related pages.

## What the “WikiRights” program says it is doing

Jewish Onliner [reports](https://jewishonliner.org/p/alleged-hamas-front-group-launches-third-wikipedia-training-program-in-gaza) (<https://jewishonliner.org/p/alleged-hamas-front-group-launches-third-wikipedia-training-program-in-gaza>) that Euro Med Human Rights Monitor launched the third round of its “WikiRights” project in the Gaza Strip and that the training includes creating and updating content on Wikipedia in Arabic and English. The same report notes that the program emphasizes “live field documentation and interviewing victims and witnesses” and frames the work as countering efforts to conceal the “true story” of events.

Euro Med’s own announcements make the advocacy goal explicit. In December 2025, Euro Med opened registration for a “Third WikiRights training course” aimed at “enriching Wikipedia with the narratives of Gaza genocide victims.” In February, Euro Med described the project as producing Wikipedia articles rooted in live testimonies to “showcase the stories of genocide victims” for the international community.

That is not neutral editing. It is a planned campaign to push a contested legal and political claim, “genocide,” into an encyclopedia that millions of people treat as settled fact.

## Why this clashes with Wikipedia’s core rules

Wikipedia’s content rules rely on neutral point of view, verifiability, and a ban on original research. Jewish Onliner points directly to those core policies and argues that a course built around producing first-hand “field documentation” and turning it

Even if trainees cite sources, a pipeline that trains a cohort to enter a single topic area with a preset conclusion creates a predictable outcome. Pages tilt. Language hardens. Counterevidence is portrayed as "propaganda." Readers who arrive from Google see a polished story with footnotes and assume it reflects a broad consensus.

## **Alleged Hamas links and the credibility risk**

The training itself would be concerning even without questions about the organizer. NGO Monitor's profile of Euro Med cites an Israeli administrative seizure order against Euro Med's founder Ramy Abdu in connection with alleged work linked to an entity Israel designated as acting on behalf of Hamas. There are reports "alleged ties" between Euro Med leadership and Hamas, citing watchdog documentation.

A reader does not need to accept every allegation to see the risk. When a political advocacy group with serious credibility disputes trains editors to populate Wikipedia with claims of "genocide," the goal is biased advocacy, not knowledge.

## **This fits a wider pattern of coordinated pressure on Wikipedia**

Euro Med is not the only actor in this space. ADL's Center for Technology and Society published a [report \(https://www.adl.org/resources/press-release/new-adl-report-finds-evidence-biased-coordinated-campaign-wikipedia-related\)](https://www.adl.org/resources/press-release/new-adl-report-finds-evidence-biased-coordinated-campaign-wikipedia-related) stating it found evidence that at least 30 editors worked in concert to introduce anti Israel bias, antisemitic narratives, and misleading information on conflict related pages.

The issue reached elected officials. A May 2025 press release from Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz's office describes bipartisan lawmakers urging Wikimedia to rein in coordinated manipulation, citing the ADL findings.

Wikimedia has publicly addressed controversies around "reliable sources" processes, including debate about how ADL is treated on Israel Palestine topics. That dispute shows a core vulnerability. If advocacy labeled "human rights" is treated as a preferred source and Jewish civil rights monitoring is treated as suspect, the sourcing ecosystem can drift in one political direction even when editors claim neutrality.

## **Why the target is global hatred of Israel**

Hamas and its supporters have a strategic reason to fight on the information front. Israel wins military battles when it defends its people and dismantles terror capacity. Hamas tries to win by turning Israel into a pariah, so pressure mounts for arms embargoes, diplomatic isolation, sanctions, and legal warfare. Wikipedia pages, which feed search snippets and school assignments, are a high value target.

When millions of people read “genocide” in an encyclopedia entry without context or dispute, the moral verdict is baked in. Once that verdict spreads, Israelis become villains by default and Hamas becomes “resistance” by reflex. That shift fuels hate, threats, and harassment aimed at Jews in the United States, since Israel is treated as a stand in for Jews as a group.

## Conclusion

The Euro Med “WikiRights” effort is not a harmless media literacy class. It is described, in Euro Med’s own words, as a program to seed Wikipedia with a “genocide” narrative built from curated testimonies. Reports cite alleged Hamas links tied to Euro Med leadership. This sits inside a broader, documented concern about coordinated editing and anti Israel bias on Wikipedia pages related to the conflict.

If you want to stay anchored to reality, treat Wikipedia as a starting point, not a verdict. Check primary documents, read across outlets, and watch for campaigns that announce their intent to “enrich” pages with one side’s story. Israel faces rockets, tunnels, and terror. It faces narrative warfare too. The second fight shapes what the world thinks it is seeing.

## Frequently Asked Questions about Wikipedia Bias

### What are the main biases found in Wikipedia articles about Israel?

Wikipedia serves as a battleground for narratives, particularly regarding contentious geopolitical topics like Israel. While it aims for a neutral point of view (<https://cognitura.org/counter-narrative-campaigns>), the collaborative editing model can lead to **bias**, as articles are shaped by editors with strong prior beliefs. Recent developments indicate that highly contested pages can change rapidly, turning small editorial choices into significant narrative shifts. It is essential to recognize that discussions around Israel often intersect with broader themes, such as the presence of antisemitic tropes emerging in policy (<https://cognitura.org/blog/category/policy-analysis>) debates, complicating the landscape of information.

Common pressure points in editing include:

- **Framing bias:** language that subtly implies intent or moral judgment (for example, describing actions as “crackdowns” vs. “security operations”).
- **Selection bias:** the emphasis or omission of certain details...prioritizing one type of harm, actor, or timeframe over others.
- **Source bias:** reliance on a narrow set of outlets, think tanks, or advocacy-linked sources, even if generally considered “reliable.”
- **False balance:** disproportionately representing minority claims to create an appearance of neutrality.

To identify bias, compare the lead section to the body, check the *Talk* page for disputes, and verify whether key claims are supported by multiple independent sources. Understanding the nuances of how bias manifests can help in recognizing when critiques might reflect underlying prejudices rather than objective analysis.

## How do the Gaza “WikiRights” trainings influence Wikipedia content?

“WikiRights” trainings exemplify organized efforts to influence Wikipedia content by educating participants on **Wikipedia’s rules**...particularly **verifiability** (claims must be backed by reliable sources), **neutral point of view** (content should be presented fairly without advocacy), and **notability** (topics require significant coverage in independent sources). Such training can enhance editor networks by increasing the number of contributors capable of adding citations, improving structure, and flagging weak sourcing.

However, this organized training can also direct attention to specific topics, shaping what gets edited. The safeguard is that Wikipedia content is publicly reviewed, and edits can be challenged if they appear to reflect **advocacy** or *cherry-picking* of sources. For instance, a focus on antisemitic tropes in discussions about Israel can be addressed through precise criticism and credible sourcing, crucial for balanced representation.

To evaluate influence, look for practical signals:

- Do changes introduce **independent**, high-quality citations?
- Are contested claims discussed on the article’s **Talk** page?
- Do edits adhere to conflict-of-interest and disclosure guidelines?

## What is the importance of critical thinking in consuming online content?

**Critical thinking** is essential in navigating Wikipedia and other online platforms because it empowers individuals to pause, check evidence, and make informed decisions without succumbing to fear or outrage. Current trends show that emotionally charged posts can spread faster than careful reporting, making *truth verification* a vital skill in understanding current events.

This critical approach also mitigates the risk of manipulation by propaganda and recruitment efforts. Extremist movements often utilize a **recruitment pipeline**, a staged process that builds trust and rewards conformity. Critical thinking disrupts this process by testing claims against reliable sources and questioning what might be missing.

Use a simple checklist:

- Check the source: Who published it, and what is their track record?
- Confirm with at least two independent outlets or primary documents.
- Watch for tactics: “us vs. them” framing, repeated slogans, and pressure to share immediately.

- Ask: What would change my mind, and what evidence would I accept?

### Research Areas

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Prevention Strategies and Deradicalization (<https://cognitura.org/prevention-strategies-and-deradicalization>)

### Resources

Case Studies in Indoctrination-to-Exit (<https://cognitura.org/case-studies-in-indoctrination-to-exit/>)

How Often Israel Policy Criticism Uses Antisemitic Tropes: What The Data Shows (<https://cognitura.org/how-often-israel-policy-criticism-uses-antisemitic-tropes-what-the-data-shows/>)

Why Does Israel Draw Outsized Global Attention (<https://cognitura.org/why-does-israel-draw-outsized-global-attention/>)

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Research and education platform exploring radicalization prevention through truth and moral resilience.

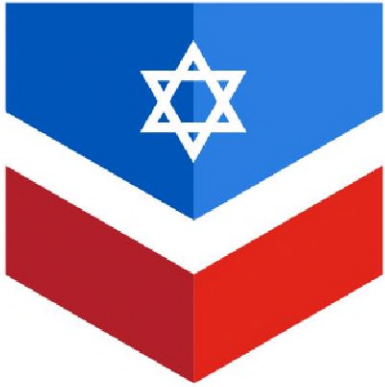
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# ALLYVIA

## Christians in Israel Are Growing, Christians Across The Rest of the Middle East Are Shrinking

February 24, 2026 • Allyvia

Christianity was born in the land of Israel, and the region remains central to Christian faith and history. The condition of local Christian communities offers a measurable way to compare Israel with its neighbors. As of February 2026, Israel's official statistics continue to show a Christian population that is stable and gradually growing, with strong education and workforce outcomes. Across much of the surrounding Middle East, under Arab and Muslim rule, Christian communities remain under pressure from war, repression, economic collapse, and emigration.

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  - 7.2. What historical and cultural factors contribute to the current status of Christians in the region?
  - 7.3. How does the growth of Christians in Israel align with shared Western values?

## Key Takeaways

- Israel's Christian population stands at roughly 185,000 and has shown steady annual [growth](#) in recent years, according to the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics.
- Christian students in Israel record high matriculation eligibility rates and strong participation in higher education.
- Labor force participation among Christians in Israel remains high compared to regional benchmarks.
- Pew Research Center [data](#) show that Christians make up a shrinking share of the population across much of the Middle East and North Africa.
- The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom continues to [document](#) serious religious freedom violations affecting Christians in several regional states.

## A Snapshot of Christian Life in Israel in 2026

Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics reported on the eve of Christmas 2025 that approximately 185,000 Christians live in Israel, representing about 1.9 percent of the population. The Christian population has grown modestly year over year. About four-fifths are Arab Christians, concentrated in cities such as Haifa, Nazareth, Jerusalem, and Nof HaGalil.

Education outcomes remain a defining feature. In recent reporting years, Christian high school students have recorded matriculation eligibility rates [above](#) the national average. A significant percentage pursue university studies within several years of graduation, including strong representation in fields such as medicine, law, and engineering. These trends reflect long standing investment in Christian schools and family emphasis on higher education.

Labor force participation among Christians in Israel remains high. Israeli government data show strong employment [rates](#) for both men and women relative to regional norms. Christian citizens vote, serve in

public institutions, and participate in Israel's legal and economic systems under equal protection of the law.

Israel's legal framework protects freedom of religion. Churches operate openly, Christian institutions manage schools and charities, and holy sites remain accessible to local worshippers and international pilgrims during stable security conditions.

## The Regional Picture in 2026

Across much of the Middle East, the demographic trajectory looks different. Pew Research Center demographic studies covering 2010 to 2020 show that Christians make up about 4 percent of the Middle East and North Africa region overall, down from earlier decades in many individual countries. In several states, Christian communities have declined sharply due to persecution, emigration and instability.

In Iraq and Syria, years of persecution and conflict displaced ancient Christian populations. Many families emigrated after attacks by extremist groups and have not returned in large numbers. In Lebanon, severe economic collapse accelerated Christian emigration. In Egypt, Christians continue to face legal and social restrictions documented by international observers.

The [United States Commission on International Religious Freedom](#) in its 2025 and early 2026 reporting, continues to identify multiple countries in the region where religious minorities, including Christians, face systemic discrimination, harassment, or violence. These include restrictions on church construction, blasphemy prosecutions, and limited legal protection for converts from Islam.

## Compare and Contrast: Why Outcomes Differ

### Governance and Rule of Law

Israel maintains competitive elections, an independent judiciary, and enforceable civil rights protections. Christian citizens petition courts, organize politically, and operate institutions under Israeli law. In contrast, several neighboring states struggle with weak institutions, militia influence, or authoritarian controls that restrict minority rights.

### Security Environment

Israel invests heavily in internal security and counterterrorism. Although security tensions exist, the state actively protects religious communities and holy sites. In contrast, civil wars in Syria and Iraq created power vacuums that exposed Christian towns and villages to attack and mass displacement.

## **Economic Stability**

Israel's diversified economy provides employment opportunities for minorities. Christian Israelis participate in the workforce at high rates and pursue advanced degrees. In Arab states suffering from inflation, corruption, or limited opportunity, Christian families often view emigration as the safest long-term option.

## **Religious Freedom Protections**

Christian clergy, churches, and institutions operate publicly in Israel. Religious courts for recognized Christian denominations function alongside Jewish and Muslim courts. In parts of the region, restrictions on conversion, public worship, or property ownership create sustained pressure on Christian life.

## **The Broader Significance**

The contrast between Israel and much of the region is measurable through population data, education statistics, and international religious freedom reporting. Israel's Christian minority remains active in civic life, maintains strong academic achievement, and continues modest demographic growth. In many neighboring countries, Christian communities face contraction due to insecurity and limited protections.

## **Conclusion**

Data indicates that the Christian population in Israel is stable and gradually increasing, with strong education outcomes and solid labor participation. Regional demographic studies and U.S. government religious freedom reporting show that Christians in several neighboring Arab and Muslim countries continue to experience decline tied to war, repression, and emigration.

For readers seeking to understand the Middle East beyond headlines, examining measurable indicators such as population growth, education levels, and religious freedom reports provides clarity. The evidence shows that Israel stands out as a country in the region where Christian communities are not disappearing, but participating fully in national life.

## **Frequently Asked Questions About Christians in Israel and the Middle East**

### **Why are Christians in Israel experiencing growth while those in the rest of the Middle East are declining?**

Current trends indicate that **Christians in Israel** are experiencing growth due to the ability to practice their faith openly within a framework of **rule of law**, regular elections, and [robust legal protections for religious communities](#). These conditions foster a stable environment where families can remain, build institutions, and plan for the future, contrasting sharply with the [declining Christian populations](#) in neighboring countries.

In much of the region, Christians face significant challenges, including insecurity, harassment by extremists, and inadequate protections for minority rights. Such instability often compels individuals to emigrate in search of safety and opportunity, highlighting the urgent need for advocacy and support for these vulnerable communities.

In Israel, several practical factors contribute to the thriving Christian community:

- **Religious freedom** and access to legal recourse enhance community stability.
- Relatively strong **public safety** and civic institutions promote a secure environment.
- Consistent operation of schools, churches, and community services ensures continuity for families.

These contrasts are significant for Americans: a stable, values-aligned partner like Israel enhances the **U.S.–Israel alliance**, promoting regional security and protecting shared Western values.

## What historical and cultural factors contribute to the current status of Christians in the region?

Christian communities in the Middle East have roots that trace back to the earliest centuries of Christianity, predating modern nation-states. Their current status is shaped by historical changes in borders, governance, and social norms...sometimes providing protection for minorities and at other times leaving them vulnerable during conflicts or political shifts.

Several long-term factors influence the current situation:

- **Minority status** in many countries limits political influence and visibility.
- **Legal frameworks** vary by state; some emphasize equal citizenship while others intertwine public life with religious identity.
- **Migration patterns**, driven by economic pressures and insecurity, have led to significant emigration and shrinking communities.
- **Local culture and interfaith relations** can range from coexistence to social pressure against minorities.

In Israel, Christians are a small but visible minority within a democracy that prioritizes the **rule of law**; in neighboring areas, *current trends indicate* a wider variation in conditions based on governance and security.

# How does the growth of Christians in Israel align with shared Western values?

Current trends indicate that Christian communities in Israel are actively building institutions, engaging in public life, and practicing their faith openly...outcomes that resonate with **shared Western values** such as freedom of religion, equal civic rights, and the **rule of law**. For many Americans, this alignment is significant as it reflects a society where religious minorities are afforded protections amidst regional pressures.

This alignment manifests in practical terms:

- **Religious liberty:** churches, schools, and worship communities operate within a supportive legal framework.
- **Pluralism:** Jewish, Christian, and Muslim citizens coexist with respect for diverse traditions.
- **Civic accountability:** disputes and protections are managed through courts and public institutions rather than private force.

Viewed through the lens of the U.S.–Israel alliance, these dynamics reinforce a partnership grounded in democratic ideals...an American interest in stability, rights, and dependable allies in a region marked by instability.

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# The Jewish People and the Land of Israel: A Relationship Built on Indigeneity, History, Identity, and Continuity

Published February 2026

The connection between the Jewish people and the land of Israel is rooted in documented history, archaeology, language, and continuous communal life. Long before the rise of modern nationalism, Jewish civilization developed in the land known historically as Israel and Judea. Jewish religious practice, national identity, and the Hebrew language all originated there. Even after large numbers of Jews were exiled by foreign empires, the bond to the land remained central to Jewish life, and Jewish communities continued to live there in an unbroken presence.

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- 7. Frequently Asked Questions about Jewish Indigeneity
  - 7.1. What evidence supports the Jewish people's claim of indigeneity to the land of Israel?
  - 7.2. How does Jewish identity relate to the modern understanding of this relationship?

### Key Takeaways

- Jewish civilization formed in the land of Israel over 3,000 years ago.
- The kingdoms of Israel and Judah existed as sovereign Jewish polities in the land.
- Hebrew, the Jewish national language, originated in the land of Israel.
- The Roman exile did not end Jewish presence in the land, and Jewish communities remained there continuously (<https://www.israelnationalnews.com/news/392414>).
- Jewish religious practice and identity remained centered (<https://www.ajc.org/news/5-facts-about-the-jewish-peoples-ancestral-connection-to-the-land-of-israel>) on the land of Israel throughout nearly 2,000 years of Diaspora.
- Modern Israel reflects the restoration of Jewish self-determination in its ancestral homeland.

### Ancient Jewish Civilization in the Land of Israel

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Archaeological (<https://cityofdauid.org.il/en/the-siloam-inscription-eng/>) and historical records show that the Israelites emerged as a distinct people in the land of Canaan during the late second millennium BCE. The Hebrew Bible, alongside external sources such as the Merneptah Stele from ancient Egypt dated to around 1208 BCE, refers to "Israel" as a people living in the land. This is one of the earliest extra-biblical references to Israel.

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The time of the United Monarchy, Kings Saul, David, and Solomon, is a key period in Jewish history, as it established Jerusalem as the political and spiritual center (<https://www.camera.org/article/backgrounder-history-of-jerusalem/>) of the Jewish people. The kingdoms of Israel and Judah followed, with Jerusalem serving as the capital of Judah until the Babylonian conquest in 586 BCE.

#### Get Involved

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Archaeological excavations in Jerusalem, including the City of David (<https://cityofdauid.org.il/en/>), have uncovered structures and inscriptions tied to the First Temple period. The Second Temple, rebuilt after the Babylonian exile, stood in Jerusalem from 516 BCE until its destruction by the Romans in 70 CE. The Dead Sea Scrolls

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([https://www.deadseascrolls.org.il/?locale=en\\_US](https://www.deadseascrolls.org.il/?locale=en_US)) and the Dead Sea Scrolls found near Qumran, further confirm Jewish religious life in the land during the Second Temple era.

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These sources confirm that Jewish civilization developed in the land of Israel and that Jerusalem functioned as its spiritual and political center.

### Exile and Continued Presence Under Foreign Rule

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While suppressing the Jewish revolt in 70 CE and again after the Bar Kokhba revolt in 135 CE, the Roman Empire exiled many Jews and renamed the province Syria Palaestina (<https://www.hudson.org/node/44363>) in an attempt to sever Jewish ties to the land. Yet exile did not mean total removal.

Jewish communities remained in places such as Tiberias, Safed, and Jerusalem. The Mishnah was compiled around 200 CE in the land of Israel, and the Jerusalem Talmud was completed there in the following centuries. These foundational texts of Judaism demonstrate that Jewish intellectual and religious life continued on the soil of the ancestral homeland.

Tiberias, Safed, and Jerusalem served as major centers of Jewish life during the Byzantine and later Islamic periods. In the 16th century, Safed became a leading center of Jewish mysticism, home to figures such as Rabbi Isaac Luria.

Throughout the Crusader period, the Ottoman era, and into the modern age, Jewish communities maintained a presence in the land. Though often small and subject to discrimination or economic hardship, they never disappeared.

### Language, Culture, and National Identity

The Hebrew language originated in the land of Israel and remained the language of Jewish prayer, scripture, and scholarship throughout the Diaspora. For nearly two millennia, Jews in Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East prayed facing Jerusalem and recited the phrase "Next year in Jerusalem" at the end of the Passover Seder and Yom Kippur services.

Jewish law contains hundreds of commandments tied directly to the land, including agricultural laws that apply only there. Major holidays such as Passover, Shavuot, and Sukkot are rooted in the agricultural cycle of the land of Israel.

The preservation and revival of Hebrew as a spoken language in the late 19th and early 20th centuries reflected a return to a language born in the land itself. This revival, led by figures such as Eliezer Ben Yehuda, did not create a new identity but reactivated an ancient one.

### Modern Recognition of Indigenous Connection

The 1917 Balfour Declaration recognized "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people." In 1922, the League of Nations Mandate for Palestine affirmed the historical connection of the Jewish people with the land and called for the reconstitution of their national home there.

League of Nations formally acknowledged ([https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\\_century/palmanda.asp](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/palmanda.asp)) this historic link in international law. When the State of Israel declared independence in 1948, it cited the Jewish people's ancient connection to the land and their continuous presence there.

Today, Israel is home to a majority Jewish population, and millions of Jews descend from Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.



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### Conclusion

The Jewish people formed their civilization, culture, language, and national identity in the land of Israel more than 3,000 years ago. Historical records, archaeology, religious texts, and continuous communal life all point to that origin. Although many Jews were dispersed after Roman conquests, Jewish communities remained in the land without interruption. The centrality of Israel in Jewish prayer, law, and identity sustained a national bond through centuries of exile.

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The modern State of Israel reflects the restoration of Jewish sovereignty in the land where Jewish civilization began. Understanding this history provides important context for current discussions about Israel and its place in the Middle East.

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Frequently Asked Questions about Jewish Indigeneity

## What evidence supports the Jewish people's claim of indigeneity to the land of Israel?

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When discussing **Jewish indigeneity** to the land of Israel, it is essential to highlight the enduring ties that connect Jewish people to this land through *historical records* (<https://culturavia.org/an-ancient-inscription-and-the-biblical-foundation-of-judeo-christian-civilization/>), *archaeology*, *continuous cultural memory* (<https://culturavia.org/cultural-diplomacy-initiatives-strengthening-the-u-s-israel-connection-through-art-heritage-and-shared-values/>), and *documented community presence*. No single artifact can solely affirm identity; rather, it is the convergence of multiple sources over time that strengthens this connection. Recent discoveries, such as ancient inscriptions near Jerusalem, underscore the deep historical roots of the Jewish people in this region, reinforcing the idea that these connections are not merely symbolic but are grounded in documented facts.

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Key evidence supporting Jewish indigeneity includes:

- **Ancient texts and inscriptions** that reference Israelite/Jewish life and institutions in the land, including Hebrew writings and contemporary regional accounts.
- **Archaeological findings** that demonstrate long-term Jewish settlement and religious practice, such as ancient synagogues, ritual baths (mikva'ot), and Hebrew/Aramaic inscriptions.
- **Continuous peoplehood ties:** The use of Hebrew as a liturgical language, prayers focused on Jerusalem, and holidays linked to the land's seasons and locations.
- **Ongoing communities** in cities like Jerusalem, Safed, Tiberias, and Hebron that have persisted across centuries, even amid displacement and diaspora.

Together, these threads illustrate a profound connection rooted in **faith • freedom • friendship**, highlighting the people-to-place relationship that defines Jewish identity.

## How does Jewish identity relate to the modern understanding of this relationship?

**Jewish identity** elucidates why many perceive the U.S.–Israel partnership as deeply personal...intertwined with **faith and heritage**, family narratives, and a shared commitment to **democratic principles**. For many American Jews, Israel is integral to their religious tradition and peoplehood; for others, it serves as a cultural reference point alongside a strong American civic identity.

In contemporary contexts, Jewish identity manifests constructively through **people-to-people partnerships** and **cultural diplomacy**, emphasizing pluralism and mutual respect. This is evident in practical initiatives such as:

- **Educational exchange** programs, campus partnerships, and language studies that foster understanding.
- Collaborations among synagogues and community centers focused on service and learning.
- Arts and culture events that showcase diverse Jewish, Israeli, and American voices.

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Our mission is to deepen the connection between the people of the United States and Israel by celebrating shared heritage, strengthening cultural and faith-based ties, and expanding opportunities for meaningful engagement. We empower students, communities, and leaders to experience Israel firsthand, explore the stories that shaped both nations, and build lasting relationships rooted in respect, learning, and a shared commitment to freedom.

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