



masa מסע ISRAEL JOURNEY

BNEI AKIVA UNITED KINGDOM

ISRAEL YEAR PROGRAMS · WORLD BNEI AKIVA

WORLD BNEI AKIVA

HACHSHARA - ISRAEL YEAR PROGRAMMES

KADIMA, TORANI & MECHINA OLAMIT





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Discover Israel. Develop your Jewish Identity. Have the time of your life!





Welcome to **Bnei Akiva**

WORLD BNEI AKIVA, a non-profit organisation with headquarters in Jerusalem, works with Jewish communities in the Diaspora, assisting and strengthening the local Bnei Akiva snifim (branches), as well as the wider Jewish community. We are active in 23 countries, 43 cities, with over 100 snifim and represented by over 100 shlichim (emissaries). Among our many endeavours is a range of year programmes known as Hachshara, meaning “preparation”, which is one of the largest and most popular Gap Year programmes in Israel.

Bnei Akiva UK is the UK's largest Orthodox Jewish youth movement, inspiring generations of young Jews to develop a lifelong commitment to Am Yisrael, Eretz Yisrael and Torat Yisrael.

Rooted in the values of Torah Ve'Avodah, we combine Jewish learning, meaningful action and a deep connection to Israel. Through weekly Svivot, Summer and Winter Machanot, Israel Machane, Hachshara programmes, and leadership opportunities, we empower young people to explore their Jewish identity, build lasting friendships and take an active role in shaping the future of the Jewish people.

Hachshara is the next step in this journey, offering a meaningful year in Israel to deepen your learning, develop your independence and strengthen your connection to Am Yisrael and Eretz Yisrael!



Who? What? When?
Kadima is a programme where you will experience living independently in Israel, encounter Israeli society firsthand, and engage with Judaism like never before. The programme runs from September to June (see details below).



KADIMA

A transformative year in Israel of growth and discovery:

Your first year after high school is more than just a break - it's your chance to discover who you want to become. Kadima offers highly motivated young adults an integrated gap-year experience that will deepen your Jewish identity, strengthen your connection to Israel, and prepare you to lead in your community and beyond.

Experience Israel Like Never Before:

Work the land on kibbutz, save lives volunteering with MDA, intern in a local Israeli company, hike Israel's most breathtaking trails, and celebrate the Chagim alongside Am Yisrael! Through all these hands-on experiences and many more, you'll engage authentically with Israeli society while building lifelong friendships with Jewish peers from around the world

Learn and Grow:

Kadima combines meaningful Torah learning with Zionism to life, connecting ancient texts to cutting edge contemporary issues. You'll explore your Judaism and Zionism in a positive, supportive environment as you forge your own individual path guided by timeless Jewish values.



AT A GLANCE

SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN
Welcome Seminar	Chagim Prep Sukkah Building	Kibbutz	Work Experience or Yeshiva/ Midrasha	MDA or Volunteering

FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
Tikun Olam Seminar	Ketura Experience Poland Journey	Learning & Leadership Zionism	Shvil Yisrael Shabbat Hachshara Amazing Race	Closing Seminar

**Exact Calendar is subject to change*

Make a Real Impact:

At World Bnei Akiva, we live by Torah Va'Avodah— learning must be matched by action. You won't just observe Israeli society; you'll contribute to it. Through volunteer work and community engagement, you'll make a tangible difference to people and communities across Israel while building yourself in the process.

The Impact Continues:

And Kadima doesn't end there. Graduates carry their experience forward-many become active in Bnei Akiva, engaged in Jewish communities worldwide, and maintain lasting connections to Israel. They make ongoing commitments to giving back, applying the growth and values they discovered during their transformative year.











YOUR HOME

A Global Community

Kadima has been uniquely created to meet your needs as young Jews. Most of the programme is with like-minded youth from North America, England, mainland Europe and beyond. Additionally, significant parts of the year have been designed to cross paths with other World Bnei Akiva Hachshara programmes from around the world. This means you will have the opportunity to learn, hike and celebrate Chagim with other young Jews from over 15 different countries; Americans, Canadians and Europeans together with you on Kadima, and others from Australia to Italy, and from Uruguay to South Africa.

The coming together of future Jewish leaders from so many different countries and backgrounds will enrich your year and give you friends from around the world.

Leadership-focused learning

Education is at the heart of Bnei Akiva, and there are set periods of time dedicated specifically to Jewish learning, when you will become equipped with the skills and motivation to become future Jewish leaders. Kadima aims to give you a broad knowledge base while focusing on relevant and engaging topics, and we're not afraid to ask difficult questions about faith, religion and identity.









Another feature of Kadima is that our learning isn't in a vacuum - rather it's integrated within a framework of real-life experiences, living independently in Jerusalem.

Through celebrating Shabbatot and Chagim as part of a community, you will feel the pulse of life in modern-day Israel and make connections that will last beyond your year. You'll be guided throughout, and different levels are catered for. To be a participant on a World Bnei Akiva Hachshara programme you don't need prior knowledge in Jewish studies – you just need the commitment to learn and to grow



Experience Your Israel Unleash Your Potential

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERING

You'll volunteer in neighborhoods within Israel's socioeconomically disadvantaged areas where volunteers are genuinely needed. This will bring you to experience a part of Israel that you would not necessarily encounter elsewhere. Volunteer placements may include teaching English, assisting in soup kitchens, supporting the elderly, or coaching sports.

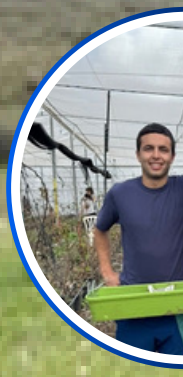
You'll also take part in a learning programme and evening activities. These experiences will deepen your understanding of the social challenges faced by different communities in Israel today.













KIBBUTZ

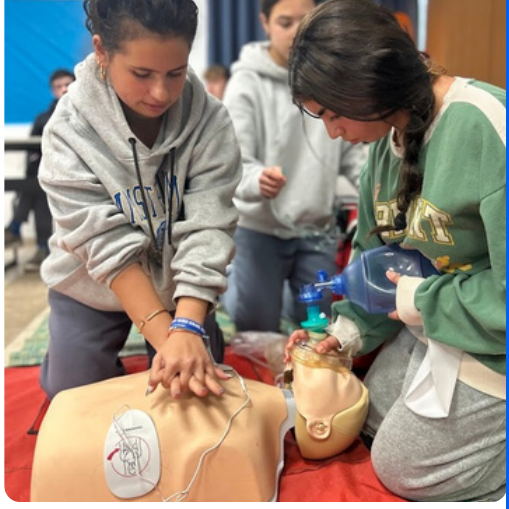
From the early days of the State, kibbutzim had a sense of duty, serving as a pillar of strength for Zionism. The members lived under extreme conditions, while tilling the soil, draining the swamplands, and building a settlement. Today, World Bnei Akiva's Hachshara participants are viewed as valuable contributors to the kibbutz movement.

Working alongside kibbutz members, you'll share duties in the fields, gardens, factories, kitchen, with animals, in the dining hall, or in childcare facilities. You'll be offered placements according to the work requirements of the kibbutz, and you'll live together in kibbutz housing. Lunch is together in the communal dining room, and dinners and breakfasts are prepared by the participants - encouraging responsibility and independence. You'll greatly improve your Hebrew through such interactions and with Ulpan classes. Down time is enjoyed relaxing at the local spring, and you'll discover the area with weekly tiyulim.

The group will also become involved in kibbutz social and communal activities such as Shabbat and holiday celebrations, enabling you to have a closer view of what kibbutz life means for the children and adults who reside there permanently.









Magen David Adom

Magen David Adom provides effective emergency first-aid treatment. You'll be part of this mission and gain valuable hands-on experience giving basic medical treatment while experiencing "real life" in Israel. After completing a training course, you'll volunteer alongside Israelis on ambulances at various MDA stations across the country. You'll be a certified "First Responder", recognised throughout MDA Israel.

Kadima will be assigned a station based on the needs of MDA. Depending on the number of volunteers, the group may be split into various stations. Participants must be in good physical and mental health, and basic conversational Hebrew is required.

The work you will do saves lives and has a lasting effect on Israeli society. It is highly rewarding and is ideal for people who enjoy working with and helping others.

Important: Before coming on World Bnei Akiva Hachshara, participants wishing to volunteer for MDA must have had Hepatitis B, MMR, and COVID-19 vaccinations, and must bring the accompanying documentation.

In addition, the MDA application includes a Hebrew test. Conversational Hebrew may be acceptable, but we strongly recommend beginning Hebrew study prior to the start of the programme. The number of MDA participants may be limited depending on the need for volunteers, and final acceptance is up to MDA.

Seminars, Chagim & Field Expeditions

Throughout your year on Kadima, learning, leadership, and personal growth come alive through immersive seminars, active expeditions, and full integration into Israel's vibrant holiday calendar - including a complete Pesach preparation seminar and group Seder.

You'll engage with pivotal ideas shaping our world today through seminars on Modern Zionism - "When a Nation Becomes a State," Israeli Society, Leadership & Hadracha, Contemporary Judaism, Israel Advocacy, and more. You'll experience desert life during the Ketura Desert Experience - exploring sustainable living, meditation, and ecology, and take part in our own Mechina highlights, including navigation, physical training, and the transformative Body & Soul week. To wrap it all together, test your skills and teamwork in the Amazing Race, an exhilarating country-wide scavenger hunt across Israel.

Kadima gives you an all-encompassing, unforgettable dive into the very heart of Israel.





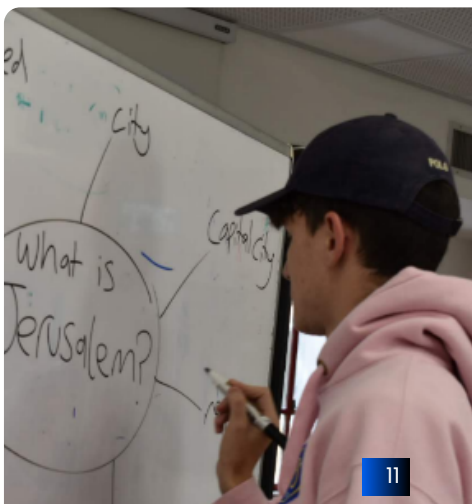
















WORK EXPERIENCE

We believe that your year in Israel should give you the tools to shape your future life direction in a truly holistic way. That's why we offer work experience - an opportunity to experience day to day work life in Israel in a field of your interest. Whether in journalism, politics, medicine, teaching, finance or education, we aim to find a placement suited to you, in an industry of your interest*.

Building connections with people and experiencing the Israeli workplace will give you an authentic and diverse appreciation of what it means to live and work in Israel, and hone your Hebrew skills.



SHOAH SEMINAR AND JOURNEY TO POLAND

Kadima offers young participants to have the special opportunity of visiting Poland as part of their year with World Bnei Akiva. Starting with preparation sessions in Israel, and ending back in Israel to process and conclude, the journey focuses on the experiences of Polish Jewry throughout its history. We explore the immense and beautiful Jewry of pre-war Poland, dating back 800 years, and examine the years of the Holocaust by visiting Jewish ghettos, death and labour camps, and other significant sites. The trip is prepared meticulously by our educational team to ensure a most powerful and meaningful experience.

WORLD BNEI AKIVA







DISCOVERING ISRAEL

Israel has a dynamic, multi-layered society, where every person and family has a story to tell. On Kadima, you'll travel the length and breadth of Israel, taking part in seminars that explore how the Zionist dream became reality, the diversity and complexity of Israeli society, the impact of the Holocaust on Israeli identity, and how the Land of Israel has been shaped in modern times.

Kadima aims to inspire and equip the Jewish leaders and activists of tomorrow. Through our seminars, you'll meet the movers and shakers of Israeli society, from politics and religion to charity and hi-tech, gaining insight into what it takes to make a meaningful difference in the world around you.





HIKES & SHVIL YISRAEL

In addition to an abundance of hikes throughout the year, you'll experience Shvil Yisrael! It's a two week country-wide hiking & camping trip together with new friends from other World Bnei Akiva programmes. You'll delve into the grand scale of Biblical landscapes on some of Israel's best trails. It's a challenge, but the experience of a lifetime!









TORANI

Torani is designed to enhance your year of learning. When you are not in Yeshiva or Midrasha we'll provide a variety of programmes to let you live and feel the pulse of the Land and State of Israel. Torani will be your family in Israel. A year in Midrasha or Yeshiva will be the most independent that you have ever been in your life, yet with Torani you can relax with the knowledge that your needs are being looked after. From welcoming you at Ben Gurion Airport and taking you to your Midrasha or Yeshiva, to arranging shabbat hospitality for whenever you need, you can always rely on us to be there for you!

Torani is an uplifting, inspiring and empowering gap year programme in Israel with World Bnei Akiva. You'll learn new skills, enhance old ones, develop your Jewish identity and adapt to new environments - all while enjoying the group experience.

On Torani, you'll spend most of your year in Yeshiva/Midrasha, as well as having the Bnei Akiva experience of Israel, which includes enriching seminars, leadership training, Shabbatonim, and living on a Kibbutz.



Who? What? When?
Torani is a Yeshiva/Midrasha based programme. World Bnei Akiva will enhance your year with diverse and exciting programming and providing you with a "family" while away from home.
The programme runs from September to June (see details below)

AT A GLANCE

SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN
Opening Tiyul & Shabbat	Sukkot Seminar	Tiyul	Shabbat Ha'Irgun	Community Shabbat

FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
Shabbat Shevet	Pesach seminar	Pesach Seminar	Shabbat Hachshara	Closing Seminar

**Exact Calendar is subject to change*

On Torani, you will learn about Judaism as you never had before, and gain the skills, drive and passion to develop your own Jewish identity. Torani is all about learning: learning about yourself and learning to be a leader.

It's a year for yourself, but it is especially a year to learn how you can make an impact on society around you.

MIDRESHET AMIT

Midreshet Amit, located in Jerusalem, offers an amazing combination of challenging Torah study along with a life-changing chessed experience. The Midrasha provides a serious learning experience with caring staff who are committed to teaching and encouraging the students to advance their learning through a variety of exciting course options. The home is Beit Hayeled, a foster home for Israeli children run by the Amit network. The Torani participants' connection to the people of Israel is deepened through the unique experience of living and interacting daily with disadvantaged Israeli youth and dedicated foster parents.

www.midreshetamit.org





MIDRESHET HAROVA

Midreshet Harova is located in the heart of the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem's Old City, and is one of Israel's leading seminaries. The Midrasha offers an ideal setting for students to achieve spiritual and intellectual growth in a religious Zionist framework. The open intellectual environment, combined with the wide variety of teachers, is particularly attractive to the creative student interested in exploring a range of ideas and approaches.

www.harova.org

YESHIVAT ERETZ HATZVI

Yeshivat Eretz Hatzvi is situated in the Givat Mordechai neighbourhood of Jerusalem, and places emphasis on teaching the skills to enable students to become independent in their studies. Featuring prominently in the schedule are Gemara, Tanach, Halacha and Machshava classes. While the curriculum is devoted to Limmudei Kodesh, the Yeshiva is sensitive to issues that students face during their growth process in Israel, and that they will encounter in their subsequent university years.

www.eretzhatzvi.org





YESHIVAT HAKOTEL

Yeshivat Hakotel overlooks the Western Wall and aspires to give students the opportunity to learn Torah in an Israeli Yeshiva environment, fostering a true love of Am Yisrael, Eretz Yisrael and Torat Yisrael through intense learning and interaction with Israeli students.
The Yeshiva offers multi-level Gemara classes, Halacha, Machshava and Tanach shiurim, as well as special guest lectures on varied topics.

www.hakotel.org.il

OPENING TIYUL

You'll stretch your mind and your legs on the Torani Tiyul. It takes place at the start of the year to give you the chance to bond as a group while seeing some of Israel's most beautiful landscapes and walking where our ancestors walked.



PREPARING TO LEAD

We believe in the importance of developing Jewish leadership around the world. You'll be introduced to leaders of the past, inspired by leaders of today, and gain practical skills to help you be the leaders of the future. By the end of Torani, you'll be well-prepared for a future in Bnei Akiva and the wider community.



TIYULIM

As well as various trips you'll take with your Yeshiva or Midrasha, you'll get to see more of Israel with World Bnei Akiva. Our Southern Tiyul will give you the opportunity to enjoy water sports, hike the land, and see how Ben Gurion's dream of making the desert bloom is coming true.



SUKKOT & PRE-PESACH SEMINARS

This is the time when you really get to know Israel. Whether it's going off the beaten track to meet different types of people or volunteer where society needs you most, these two seminars expand your horizons and add an extra dimension to your knowledge and love for Israel.





SEDER

Ask people who have been on Torani what the highlight of their year was – and you will likely hear that it was the Pesach Seder! Torani is your family in Israel, and the experience of singing, learning and discussing Seder Night with your friends, each bringing their own unique customs and traditions, is very special.



GROUP SHABBATOT

At various points during the year, Torani will spend Shabbat together. We choose the venues carefully so that each Shabbat adds a new and unique dimension to your year. You'll sing, share Divrei Torah, and enjoy meals together – all while seeing much more of Israel.



SHABBAT HACHSHARA

Torani isn't the only World Bnei Akiva - Hachshara programme. There are loads more from all over the world! On Shabbat Hachshara, everyone joins together to enjoy Shabbat. There will be around 250 people, from every continent, and while you might not all speak the same language, you'll all have one thing in common – you are all part of Bnei Akiva.



SHABBAT HA'IRGUN

Shabbat Ha'Irgun is the highlight of the year for members of Bnei Akiva in Israel. You'll be joining one of the local branches of Bnei Akiva to share in the celebrations, and getting to know your Israeli counterparts. Shabbat Ha'Irgun in Israel is the culmination of a month of celebrations, which includes a special ceremony at which the new Shevet name is revealed.



MECHINA OLAMIT

The “Mechina” model is one of Israel’s great success stories. Every year, tens of thousands of young Israelis join preparatory academies (Mechinot) across the country, preparing for the challenges of transitioning from high school to the next stages in their life. Many emerge as leaders - during their national service, and beyond.

Our Mechina Olamit brings this proven model to Jewish high school graduates from around the world as they transition to university students or taking on community leadership roles. **We bring together Israeli and international participants** for a challenging, intensive, and deeply rewarding year of leadership development in Israel - equipping you with skills and values for life, wherever your path may lead.

Guided by a dedicated team of educators, and in a Religious Zionist, co-ed environment, you’ll live, learn, and grow side by side with your new Israeli friends. You’ll take part in seminars, volunteering, hikes, physical training, and daily communal living.

The experience fosters self-confidence, responsibility, and vision - preparing you for university or leadership roles in your community and professional life.

Partnership with Kol Ami

Kol Ami, a subsidiary of the Jewish Agency, is a non-profit organisation that offers gap year programmes modeled on the Israeli "mechina" experience. It was founded out of a deep understanding that the most effective way to build a sustainable connection between Jewish youth and the State of Israel is by creating personal relationships with the people of Israel.

Kol Ami offers a range of gap year experiences that pairs post-high school Israeli teens with Jewish teens from around the world. World Bnei Akiva's Mechina Olamit partnered with Kol Ami in 2017, and is the only religious Mechina of the 6 programmes they offer.



AT A GLANCE

SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN
Orientation Chagim Jerusalem Seminar	Navigation Week Israel Week	Agriculture Week Hasbara Week	Chanukah Break Southern Challenge	Body & Soul Week Yeshiva & Sem Week

FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
2-Week Chovek Yisrael	Start of 3rd Semester Program Beit Midrash or Internship Purim	Poland Journey Pesach Break	Israel's National Holidays Northern Hike	Shavuot Closing

**Exact Calendar is subject to change*

Mechina Olamit alternates between "in" weeks, focused on classroom-based learning and discussion around Torah, Jewish Peoplehood, Zionism and Israeli society, and "out" weeks that put learning into practice through leadership training, community involvement, Hasbara, Israeli exploration and personal challenges — from navigation treks to fitness training and more.

Along the way, you'll build lifelong friendships and global Jewish connections.

Our goal is to shape a new generation of Religious Zionist leaders, instilling purpose, resilience and the drive to create meaningful change. Mechina is an opportunity to find a home in Israel through its people, its land and the experience of living and learning alongside Israelis.

Programme Components

LEADERSHIP

With our professional guidance, and carefully crafted activities and workshops, you'll develop your own unique leadership skills, and the confidence to serve as a personal example. Through your own initiative and teamwork you'll establish and run committees that steer the very course of the programme, and work on individual and group projects to hone your skills. Committees are responsible for many aspects of Mechina life including: Educational, religious and social programming, PR and recruitment, logistics and meal prep, next-steps, tiyulim, and more.



TORAH LEARNING & LIFESTYLE

Our learning programme teaches a religious Zionist and Modern Orthodox educational philosophy. We believe in learning for the sake of growing which makes classes lively, positive, relevant and involved. Topics studied include Torah and Jewish texts, tfilla, emuna, Jewish history, Zionism, and philosophy. You'll be guided throughout, and different levels will be catered for. To be a participant on the Mechina, you don't need prior knowledge in Jewish studies – you just need a commitment to learn and to grow.



COMMUNITY SERVICE

As part of the immersion into Israeli society and to contribute to it, you will dedicate time to volunteer within a local community. Projects include teaching English in schools, visiting the elderly, working with people with disabilities, and agricultural work.



Body & Soul: Fitness & Resilience

Physical well-being and personal growth are integral parts of the Mechina experience. Through activities carefully designed to foster health, mindfulness, ethics, and leadership, participants develop both physical strength and mental fortitude. Twice a week, participants engage in physical training classes led by professionals as well as by the students themselves. Through navigating physically challenging situations, participants gain self-empowerment, build physical fitness, and cultivate deep inner strength, discipline, and emotional resilience.





LOVE OF ISRAEL

You'll discover Israel both geographically and socially, as we encourage you to challenge your pre-existing perceptions of the country and the people. You will be exposed to all sectors of the Israeli population, and develop your own understanding of how the pioneering spirit is still very much alive in contemporary Israel. With the love and connection to the Land of Israel being such a core element of the programme, our participants grow to become the newest link in the chain of pioneers.

HEBREW LEARNING

Throughout the programme, our international participants take part in our own dedicated "Ulpan" – intensive Hebrew learning course, with 2 classes a week divided according to 3 different levels: beginner, intermediate and advanced. However the best Hebrew learning is through your daily interactions with your Israeli peers at the Mechina with whom you share each day.



JEWISH PEOPLEHOOD

The Mechina Olamit strives to bolster the link between Israel's Jews and Diaspora Jewry through our common historical, religious, and cultural heritage. We actively work to instill within all our participants a desire for mutual action and commitment to a stronger and positive Jewish future.

SEMINARS & TRIPS

There are regular three to six-day seminars and trips around the country to expose the participants to a wide array of topics and build an intimate familiarity with the land of Israel. Seminars include: Israeli society, Shoah, Zionism, Jewish Peoplehood, Gush Etzion, Navigation, Desert Survival and Chovek Israel – the final two-week trip from North to South of Israel planned entirely by participants. Participants help plan and run many aspects of each trip and seminar, including building educational elements, accommodation, cooking, navigating, and guest speakers.

3rd Semester

The final 3 months of the program, known as the "3rd Semester", is for the international participants only. After intensive programming throughout the beginning of the Mechina, the 3rd Semester offers you the opportunity to now live more independently, and focus on an experiential track of interest of your choice.

Living together on the Mechina campus, you'll spend 3 days of each week in one of two tracks. The remaining 2 weekdays and weekends incorporate programming at the campus including sports, classes, seminars, field trips and more. International participants who are considering leaving together with Israelis after 6 months should inquire during registration.



Choose your own track

Beit Midrash
Joining an inspiring Torah learning programme in a Yeshiva (boys) or Midrasha (girls) in Jerusalem, you will be able to further your spiritual and intellectual Jewish journey.

Work Experience
According to personal skills and interests, you will be placed in a Jerusalem-based internship to gain first-hand experience in the Israeli workplace, and build valuable skills and connections for the future.



Shoah Seminar and Journey to Poland

A highlight of the 3rd Semester is the journey to Poland. In preparation for this journey a special seminar exposes you to different issues related to the Shoah, including pre-war European Jewry, the partisan forces, the relationship with the foundation of Israel, the role of the Zionist youth movements during this period, and how survivors were treated in Israel after the war. Visits to Israel's Holocaust museums, and survivor testimonials help to frame the experiences to come on the Journey to Poland.

Starting and ending in Israel, the trip focuses on the experiences of Polish Jewry throughout its history. We explore the immense and beautiful Jewry of pre-war Poland, dating back 800 years, and examine the years of the Holocaust by visiting Jewish ghettos, death and labour camps, and other significant sites. The trip is prepared meticulously by our educational team to ensure a most powerful and meaningful experience.



YEAR HIGHLIGHTS



JEWISH PEOPLEHOOD



NAVIGATION WEEK



AGRICULTURE WEEK



SOUTHERN CHALLENGE



JERUSALEM SEMINAR



TWO WEEK ISRAEL TREK

IN THEIR WORDS



"Torani isn't just a programme - it's a family. When I look back on my year in Israel, whilst I spent the overwhelming majority of it in Yeshiva, my favourite and most memorable moments come from Torani. The amazing experiences that you are provided with by Bnei Akiva create friendships and bonds that will last lifetimes and I'm so happy to be able to say that I was a part of Torani!"

- Daniel Ellis, Torani

"My mechina year was the best experience I've ever had. I was surrounded by the most motivated, down to earth people from all around the world. I felt both encouraged and challenged by both my friends and the staff at Mechina. My perspective on life has changed and my love and passion for Israel has grown indefinitely!"

- Shira Haron, Mechina Olamit





I chose Kadima because of the incredible opportunities it offers, from living on a kibbutz to gaining real-world experience through an internship.

My favourite part of the program was definitely living on Kibbutz Ein Hanatziv. We got to experience what it was really like to live and work on a kibbutz, contributing to Israeli society while working the land. It was such a valuable and unforgettable experience.

I came to Kadima by myself, not knowing anyone, which was completely out of my comfort zone. Looking back, I'm so grateful I took that leap because I left with 29 best friends from all over the world and memories I'll carry with me forever!"

-Alexis Kaganas, Kadima



My year pushed me outside my comfort zone, gave me the opportunity to learn about myself and my values, and brought me experiences and relationships that will stay with me for life.

From the 'sidra'/'out' weeks, like agriculture week and Chovek, to the more structured 'shigra'/'in' weeks, the year was so cool. Through both classroom learning and hands-on experiences, I expanded my knowledge and had so much fun. I genuinely had a life-changing year.

- Shira Hope, Mechina Olamit

I chose Kadima because of the diversity in activities and scheduling throughout the year and because I wanted the religious framework that Bnei Akiva provides. The programme showed incredible plans to live in different environments while participating in activities that I have never been able to do.
My highlight from the year so far was living on Kibbutz for a month where we helped the local farmers in the area with their farming and agricultural work. That was such a meaningful and fun experience that I might never get again, so it was really incredible."

– Daniel Platovsky, Kadima





"Torani was one of the highlights of my time in Israel. It gave me a chance to connect with and make new friends in other yeshivot/ midrashot who also cared about Bnei Akiva. I loved how there were programmes run during the holidays so that I didn't need to stress about what to fill my time doing. Instead we went on incredible tiyulim around the country. The highlight of my year in Israel was spending time working on a kibbutz for a couple weeks. I had the chance to milk cows, work the land and spend lots of time in the Ma'ayan (spring). Working on the Kibbutz culminated in spending Seder night together which was an incredible experience where we all shared our customs and thoughts on the Seder."

– Raphael Kastner, Torani

Frequently Asked Questions

Why Hachshara?

If you are looking for more than just a GAP between high school and University, and want to Grow Jewishly, Acquire important and relevant tools & skills for life, and to develop Personally, then our Hachshara programmes are the ideal choice for you! As one of the largest and most popular providers of Israel Gap Year programmes, and the primary organisation catering to Religious Zionist youth, you can trust World Bnei Akiva's Hachshara programmes to deliver what you are looking for and more!

Will I see my friends on other programmes?

Yes, there are various times when the different World Bnei Akiva-Hachshara groups are together. You'll also have ample free time and Shabbatot to make your own plans and arrange visits to those on other programmes or at other Yeshivot and Midrashot.

What security measures are taken?

Your safety is our primary concern. As an approved MASA gap year programme, we follow the security advice of the relevant security agencies in Israel and run our activities with their approval. In the event of a change in the security situation, we will inform you. Occasionally, as a precaution, you may be asked to not go out, even during free time.

Will Hachshara be useful for my university application?

The value of gap year activities is widely acknowledged and most universities will allow you to apply for deferred entry. It is a good idea to include details of your proposed gap year in your personal statement to support your application. Additionally, courses provided on Hachshara may count for credits at certain colleges and universities

Are arrangements made for special diets and allergies?

If you require a special diet or have a severe allergy that may necessitate extra attention, please state this in a letter attached to your medical form. Although it may not always be possible, we will make every effort to cater for your needs

Are medical care and insurance provided?

Medical services and insurance for illness and injury during your time in Israel on Hachshara are included in the programme cost. Doctors affiliated with the plan are located throughout Israel and you can easily arrange to see one, no matter where you are based at the time. Treatment related to pre-existing conditions is not included in the coverage. You are advised to take out 'personal effects insurance' to cover your valuable belongings and we will be happy to send you the details from our recommended insurers

Do I need to arrange a visa for a year in Israel?

Yes, you will need a student visa prior to arrival in Israel. Once you have been accepted to the programme, our registration coordinator will guide you through the process. If you or your parents have Israeli citizenship, then the visa requirements are different. This must be discussed with your Israeli mission, who will advise you what steps are necessary to complete before arrival in Israel including army exemption. Please note that visa requirements are set by the Israeli Government and are subject to change.



Torani

Why Torani?

Why not? Torani is a year-enhancing programme within the context of a year of Jewish study, and you can rely on us to create a programme tailored to people from a Bnei Akiva background. Torani is geared towards what you, individually, want from your year in Israel and allows you the security and enjoyment of being part of a group sharing the same experiences.

What will the learning be like?

You've almost certainly never learned in the way you will on Hachshara, but don't worry – most people will be in the same boat. As long as you are motivated and do as much as you can, you will be able to look back at your year with pride and with the knowledge that you realised your potential. And you'll find that being on Hachshara is a learning experience itself. You'll find out more about Israel, pick up Ivrit and grow and develop as a person.

Will Torani help me when I need a place for Shabbat?

Yes. There are many Bnei Akiva Bogrim in Israel who love to host Hachshara participants. In fact, many of them were on Hachshara themselves, so you'll be able to share stories and experiences over the Shabbat table.

Will Torani take up all my free time?

No. We understand that you'll want time to see friends and family and explore Israel at your own pace. Torani offers bursts of fulfilling programmes at selected points during the year, enabling you to maximise your time in Israel and complement your own personal goals. Torani balances structure and independence, so you can manage the requirements of the programme while branching out on your own.

Am I expected to come to everything?

We hope you'll want to come to everything! As the shared experiences are so important on Torani, it can be disruptive to the group atmosphere if not all the group is present. Aside from special circumstances, we do expect a commitment to participate in the whole programme.

Kadima

Who is this programme for?

If you are seeking an experiential programme within a religious Zionist framework and are highly motivated to maximise your year in Israel, then Kadima is the ideal choice for you! With Kadima, you will have the opportunity to live independently in Israel, immerse yourself in Israeli society firsthand, and undergo Jewish and personal growth. You'll enjoy incredible experiences, and have fun with new friends from around the globe..

How do group Shabbatot work?

Kadima roughly follows an alternating in-out-out schedule which is adapted depending on the specific time of year. The group Shabbatot are both at home or visiting other communities in Israel. Staff members will ensure participants have somewhere to go on free Shabbatot.

Will there be vacation time?

Kadima is a nine-month programme and every day is important! In order to maximise participants' time in Israel, there is only vacation during Chol Hamoed Sukkot & Pesach after the Seder.

Should I bring bedding or a sleeping bag?

You should bring both. We provide a pillow and blanket, but you will need to have bedding. There are companies that hire out sets to gap year participants, to save you from schlepping it to Israel in your luggage.

What else should I bring?

A few weeks before the start of Kadima, we'll send you a packing list, containing all the essentials for an amazing year in Israel!



Mechina

Who manages the Mechina?

The Mechina is run both by a Rosh (head) and Menahel (director) - together managing all aspects of the mechina - education, logistics, budget, safety etc. Participants are divided into two groups, each one with 2-3 Madrichim (counselors) and headed by a Rakaz or Rakezet (head of group). Standing behind the Mechina are both World Bnei Akiva and the Jewish Agency.

Where is the Mechina Olamit based?

The Mechina Olamit is based in Beit Bnei Akiva, in the heart of Jerusalem

Where do participants come from?

There are two main groups on the programme: Israelis who are choosing to learn and grow before their national service, and participants from abroad who are looking for a unique gap year experience, to grow and challenge themselves.

What language is the programme run in?

The programme is split into three 3-month semesters. The first three months of the programme are run in English, after that the programme runs in Hebrew.

Where do the participants live and eat?

Participants from mixed backgrounds live in rooms of four. The rooms are basic and include air-conditioning and en-suite bathroom. Breakfast and dinner are prepared by the participants and lunch is in the kibbutz dining hall. Kashrut is strictly observed.

What is the religious observance at the Mechina Olamit?

The Mechina operates in religious Zionist framework. Participants at the Mechina Olamit are expected to observe halacha including Shabbat observance in public and private spaces, three tfillot a day for both male and female participants, and tzniut regarding dress code and modest behaviour.

How do Shabbatot work?

The Mechina will roughly follow an alternating "in"/"out" schedule, and will be adapted depending on the specific time of year. The group Shabbatot will be both either at the Mechina, or visiting another community in Israel. Staff members will ensure participants have somewhere to go on free Shabbatot.

Will there be free time / a vacation break?

The Mechina is a nine-month programme and every day is important! In order to maximise participants' time in Israel, there will only be vacation during parts of Sukkot, Channuka and Pesach.



APPLY NOW
How to do it?

1. For both programmes, apply online at www.worldbneiakiva.org/application
Once you have begun the application process, you can sign back in as many times as you like to continue. There is one application for all of our programmes, with an option to select your programme/s of interest.

2. Carefully read the Application Guidelines on the website before starting the application. This includes, among other requirements, completing the medical form which needs to be signed and stamped by a doctor, and uploaded to the application website.

3. Register with MASA at www.masaisrael.org | Masa is a project of the Israeli government that offers Hachshara participants an automatic grant, with further needs-based funding available.

Program Fees

Tuition for Kadima, Torani, and Mechina covers **all costs** during programming, including seminars, tiyulim, accommodation & food, programme related travel expenses, staff, medical insurance, visas. Exact fees for each programme can be found on our website.

Additionally for Torani, each Yeshiva or Midrasha will notify all applicants of their fee, and this should be paid directly to them. The programme fees do not cover costs for optical care, treatment of prior dental problems, medical care relating to per-existing conditions, vaccinations or additional check-ups (that may be required for MDA volunteers), laundry, and food during free Shabbatot/ chofesh times. In addition, you may be required to purchase your own books and learning materials for the study periods.

How will I know if I have been accepted?

After we receive your application, you'll be invited for an interview. Your interview allows us to get to know you a bit better and assess your suitability for the programme. It will also give you the opportunity to ask any specific questions you may have.

Shortly after the interview, you'll be informed of your acceptance. Your place will be confirmed only after the payment plan has been agreed.











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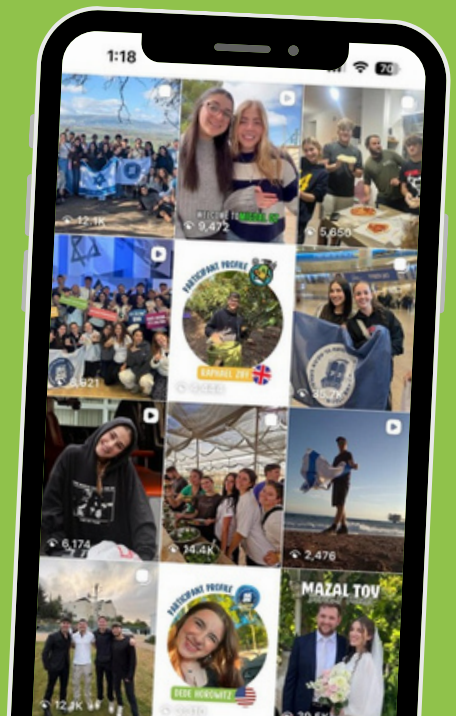
BURSARIES
For bursary information please email admin@bauk.org



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